

# Altoona 2034

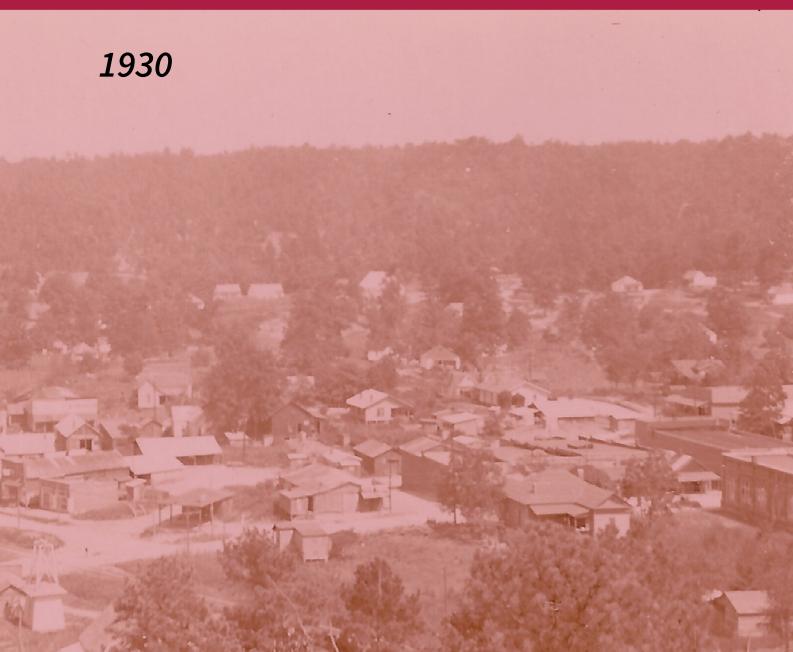
## Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by  
East Alabama Regional  
Planning & Development  
Commission

Adopted Date  
May 10, 2024

Prepared for  
Altoona Planning Commission  
Mayor Rick Nash

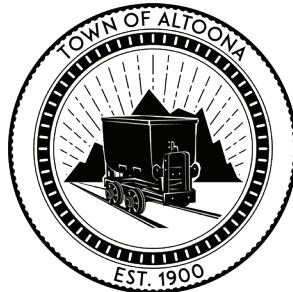
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2024



# **TOWN OF ALTOONA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



**This document was prepared under the direction of the  
TOWN OF ALTOONA PLANNING COMMISSION**

**by the EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

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**Abstract:**

The intent of this Comprehensive Plan is to serve as a guide for the future growth and development of the Town of Altoona, Alabama. This document is to be used as a basis for policy and land use decisions in the community through the year 2033. This study presents recommendations on the general location and extent of residential, commercial, and public land uses needed to serve the town's population.

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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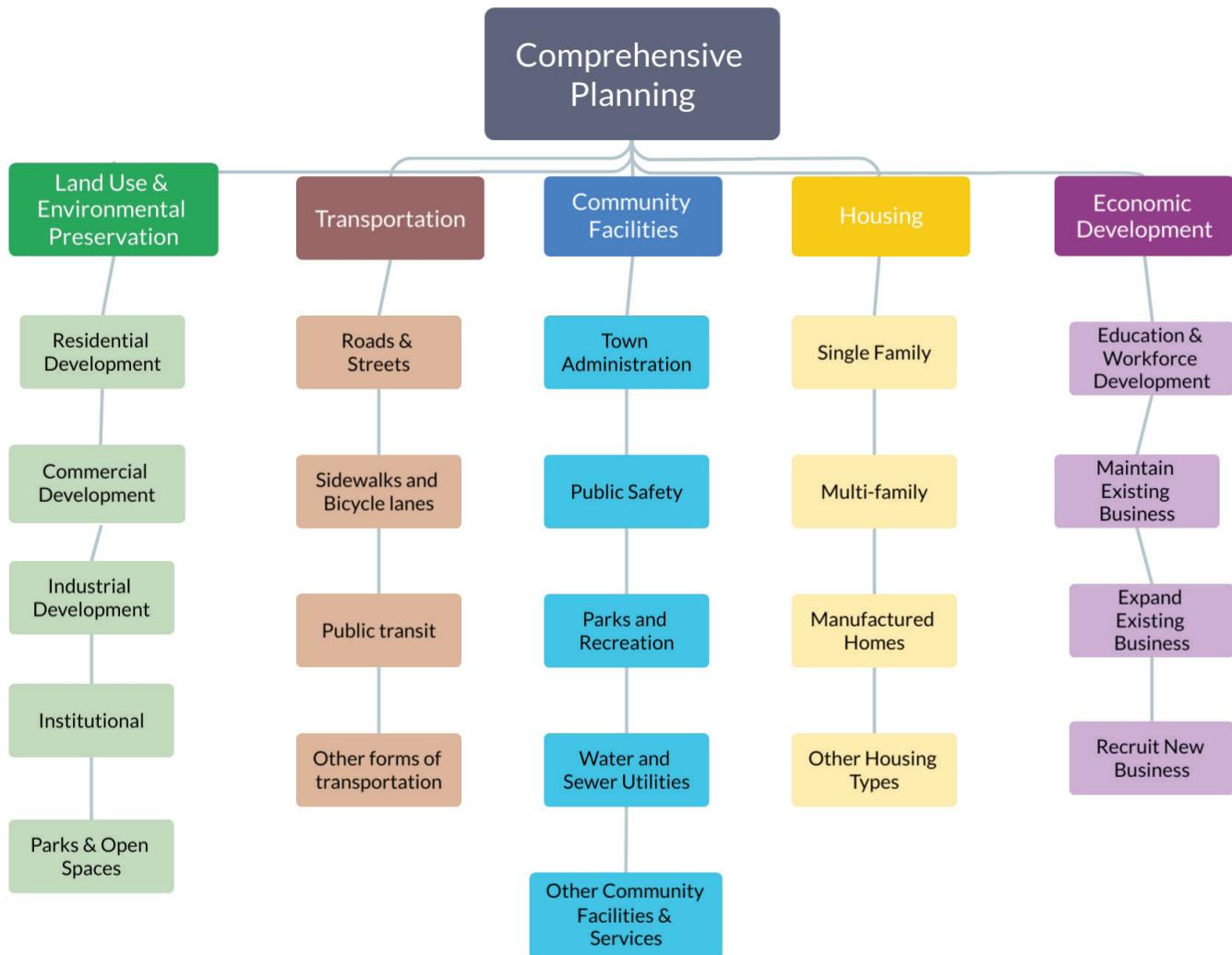
## *Comprehensive Planning*

Comprehensive planning strives to guide town officials and the public in making decisions for the future growth and development of their community through a Comprehensive Plan. The Local Comprehensive Plan, according to the American Planning Association's Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook, is defined as: "The adopted official statement of a legislative body of a local government that sets forth (in words, maps, and illustrations, and/or tables) goals, policies, and guidelines intended to direct the present and future physical, social, and economic development that occurs within its planning jurisdiction and that includes a unified physical design for the public and private development of land and water." The overall process of the Comprehensive Plan, and in comprehensive planning in general, is to determine important community goals and aspirations and establish a format which considers all planning aspects of the community such as transportation, land use, utilities, community facilities, housing, recreation, and economic development to build an all-encompassing plan for the community. From this plan, local government, along with resident support, may properly build, zone, establish policies, and develop their community in accordance with a wide variety of community needs.

Overall, comprehensive planning strives to account for the complete set of topic areas in which the entire town is comprised of and make goals and plans for each in accordance with community needs, hence the term comprehensive. In short, comprehensive planning focuses on making communities better places to live. As a general practice, a comprehensive plan may be organized into five comprehensive planning topic areas. These five areas constitute the following:

- ▶ Land Use and Environmental Preservation—entails the proper use and management of existing land uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and open space. Land use needs can be planned for and managed through zoning districts and the administration of a zoning map and zoning ordinance. The Future Land Use Map is also an important tool. Environmental preservation should also be considered for areas most suited for open space and wildlife conservation in accordance with the comprehensive plan.
- ▶ Transportation—primarily constitutes the building, expanding, and repaving improvements to town's streets and roadways, but also sidewalks, hiking and bicycling trails, and transit. Other forms of transportation planning could include airports and mass transit such as trains, buses, and subway systems in larger communities. Land use and transportation planning in the comprehensive plan should be considered together due to their close influence and overlap with one another.
- ▶ Community Facilities and Utilities—include facilities such as town administration, law enforcement, fire protection, parks and recreation, community centers, libraries, senior centers, educational facilities, and utilities services such as water, sewer, and gas infrastructure provision. The community facilities and utilities element plays a crucial role in the proper growth and development of neighborhoods and of the town in general.
- ▶ Housing—comprises, in general, single family, multi-family, and manufactured housing, however, other types of housing could include RV parks and houseboats. A community should provide and make plans to provide quality housing and different housing options in order to meet the housing needs of a diverse and often changing population.
- ▶ Economic Development—which is often spurred from proper planning with the other elements, could comprise four different approaches such as: education and workforce development, maintaining existing business, expanding business, and recruiting new business. Economic development plays a crucial role in planning simply because a community needs to provide good jobs and employment opportunities for their residents, which in turn draws in more population and a steady revenue stream in which to properly run town government and provide community services.

- ▶ Figure INTRO-1. Comprehensive Planning Topic Areas shows the five elements and their accompanying aspects of influence.



A comprehensive plan could be formatted and organized into these five topic areas and plans made for each category, however, in the case of planning for these different areas there is considerable and common overlap—that is, something that is planned in one area could have various and significant effects on other areas. For example, the extension of new roads into a residential neighborhood could open opportunities for new housing development and other land uses such as commercial, which would additionally result in economic development, improved commuting patterns, new jobs, enhanced infrastructure, and possibly tourism. On the other hand, the closure of a public school could have a substantially declining effect on nearby land use, housing, parks and recreation, and neighborhood attractiveness. Figure INTRO-2 Comprehensive Planning Overlap illustrates how these topic areas overlap and have influence on one another throughout the planning process and in implementation.

As previously mentioned, overlap within the planning topics is common and considerable. Land use planning certainly overlaps with transportation as land use needs are defined and orchestrated by road carrying capacities and vice versa. Community facility needs overlap housing as existing housing and potential housing developments must receive town services in the form of garbage collection, fire and police protection, and water and sewer service.

The overlapping areas furthest inside the circle—tourism, jobs, infrastructure, and neighborhoods—further indicate enhancement in these areas when the larger overlapping services are properly provided for or decline when not adequately provided for. For example, neighborhoods may either decline or grow when provided or not provided with nearby parks and recreation and community services while jobs may decline or grow as influenced by economic development and commuting patterns.

Planning topics are the vitally important parts of the Comprehensive Plan. The Altoona Comprehensive Plan follows the format of the five topics as follows:

- ▶ Demographics—data and analysis of population, economy, and housing.
- ▶ Community Facilities—provisions and needs assessment.
- ▶ Transportation—examination, analysis, and plan.
- ▶ Environmental Constraints—examination and analysis.
- ▶ Land Use and Zoning—examination, analysis, and plan.

The following chapters of the plan consider how these topics overlap and make goals, objectives, strategies, and projects for prioritization, implementation, and evaluation.

- ▶ Strategic Planning—summary and prioritization of elements.
- ▶ Goals and Objectives—listing along with strategies and projects.
- ▶ Implementation and Evaluation—which puts forth an implementation plan for prioritizing and accomplishing the most important projects and strategies and an evaluation procedure for tracking progress on each project/strategy.

## Planning History

The need for comprehensive planning first arose in the 1840s, out of demand for city services such as water and sewer, during the industrial revolution, when cities began to grow dramatically and centralize (urbanize) population and housing into dense clusters around industrial areas. This was done to provide homes and living arrangements for the working class close to their jobs. Prior to this turn in American history, most jobs focused on agriculture and clearing of large expanses of wilderness lands for farming and livestock raising. There was no practicality or need for cities to provide services to subsistence farmers in the open country. The industrial era quickly ushered in the Sanitary Reform Movement in newly developed industrial cities as overcrowding and improper disposal of waste in streets led to social disorder and wide-spread infestations of deadly disease. Accordingly, the



movement showed a clear and strong connection between disease and the lack of a quality sewer system in which to dispose of waste accumulating in concentrated population areas. This forced public officials to plan for the extension of sanitary services to the dirtiest and most infected parts of the city. People began to understand the environmental and social impacts of building cities and developing in ways to slow or cease the spread of disease in already crowded communities. The Sanitary Reform Movement, although not comprehensive in nature, was considered by many as the beginning of comprehensive planning because other factors besides people and jobs were considered and planned for.

In further response to overpopulation, crowding, the spread of diseases in confined areas, and increased importance placed on planning, the City Beautiful Movement was born. The movement, which began in Chicago in 1890 with the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 and lasted until the 1920s, showcased through beautification, design, and neoclassical architectural grandeur what a city could look like if created to be a work of art—providing an attractive alternative to the over-crowded and dirty nature of cities at the time. The City Beautiful Movement took hold and spread across the U.S., influencing the design of many major American cities such as Cleveland, Detroit, Baltimore, Denver, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. (Axial Plan for the Mall), thus illustrating the importance of planning and opening possibilities as to what can be done to make cities better places to live. From these movements, and after the turn of the 20th century, as cities continued to grow and develop, the American people began to more fully understand the need for local development and growth plans, looking at the city as a whole, and in which many aspects play important and overlapping roles in their community. Once again, Chicago led the way when Daniel Burnham created the 1909 plan of Chicago. Although Burnham re-created the city plan for Washington D.C., originally created by Pierre Charles L'Enfant for Paris in 1791, and city growth plans for Cleveland and San Francisco, the Chicago Plan was the first comprehensive plan because it not only focused on beautification, but also on ways to make the city function better in its entirety.

## ***Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan***

The primary purpose of the comprehensive plan is to provide direction for local public policy and planning implementation necessary for providing town residents and visitors a prosperous place where people live, work, learn, play, and invest time and resources into. This purpose incorporates four basic principles listed as followed:

- ▶ Promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public,
- ▶ Manage growth, change, and renewal of the community,
- ▶ Ensure a high quality of life for residents,
- ▶ Balance diverse community goals.

The comprehensive plan, also called a master plan, is the most basic public policy guide for a community and its development. All other plans, studies, and land use codes and ordinances should be adopted in accordance with the comprehensive plan and toward the promotion and advancement of its goals and objectives. A comprehensive plan consists of the following components:

- ▶ an inventory and assessment of population, housing, and economic trends and community resources (such as schools, roads, public buildings, undeveloped land, constrained land, and natural resources);
- ▶ a summary of community needs and goals; and
- ▶ a coordinated strategy for the management or improvement of community resources and the future growth and development of the town.

The comprehensive plan serves two major purposes:

1. to help local officials better understand growth and development trends and community problems; and
2. to develop strategies to use available resources effectively when addressing local problems and building capacity for future growth.

If the growth and development of a community can be compared to the construction of a house, then the comprehensive plan is the blueprint. It contains a list of building tools and materials (the inventory and assessment component), instructions on how to put the pieces together and in what order (the statement of goals, objectives, and policy recommendations, and implementation

schedule), and a picture or image of the desired product (the conceptual future land use map).

## ***The Benefits of the Comprehensive Plan***

A plan can provide many benefits to a community. In looking to the future, the comprehensive plan should strive to anticipate and properly plan to meet community needs, thus reaping the benefits associated with success and prosperity for the people. Benefits of a comprehensive plan may include the following:

- ▶ draw attention to important community problems or needs;
- ▶ promote the town to outside development interests;
- ▶ communicate public policies to residents of the community;
- ▶ help prioritize and coordinate investments in public improvements;
- ▶ help minimize wasteful spending of tax dollars;
- ▶ identify sources of funds that can be used to address local needs; and
- ▶ serve as a guide for local zoning ordinances and other development codes.

Although a plan can offer many benefits to a community, it is important to remember that the plan is only as good as the information it contains and can only benefit the community if it is used by the town and updated regularly to reflect changing needs and conditions. It is recommended that a community adopt a new comprehensive plan once every 10 years to accommodate changes in growth and development patterns and the most recent needs and desires of the community.

## ***Legal Authority***

Alabama law requires that every municipal planning commission prepare and adopt a plan for the community (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). Although the comprehensive plan is adopted by the planning commission, it should serve as the primary guide for the formulation of local public policy and for coordinating the future growth and development of the community. Therefore, the governing body of the community should be involved in the plan preparation process or should be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan before its adoption by the Planning Commission. In some communities, the City Council also has adopted the plan after its adoption by the Planning Commission. However, Alabama law recognizes only the Planning Commission's action on the plan, so adoption of the plan by a City Council cannot substitute for adoption by the Planning Commission.

According to Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, the Planning Commission may adopt a comprehensive plan in its entirety, or it may adopt individual sections or chapters of the plan as they are prepared. Before the plan or any section or portion of it may be adopted by the Planning Commission, a public hearing must be conducted. Alabama law does allow the Planning Commission to dispense with the public hearing, if the City Council conducts a public hearing on the plan or plan section prior to its adoption by the Planning Commission.

Once the comprehensive plan has been adopted by the Planning Commission, an attested copy of the plan must be certified to the City Council and the Probate Judge.

The law also requires local zoning to be prepared in accordance with the comprehensive plan (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 72 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). Some communities interpret this provision of law to mean that the zoning map and the future land use map in the comprehensive plan must be identical. However, this interpretation of the relationship between the zoning map and the comprehensive plan only constrains the plan's ability to guide future growth and development. The future land use map

contained in the plan should be developed as a general depiction of desired local development patterns at the end of the planning period, which may be ten to twenty years into the future. Therefore, it should identify areas that will be more desirable for more intensive development after the supporting infrastructure improvements have been completed to allow such development. However, zoning should guide land uses and development to occur in suitable areas given existing conditions and limitations. This distinction between the future land use map contained in the comprehensive plan and the zoning map gives the zoning map legal authority to regulate current development and allows the plan to serve as a guide for future zoning changes to provide for new growth and development.

The adoption of a comprehensive plan also gives the Planning Commission authority to review and approve the construction of public streets and squares, parks, public buildings, and public utilities (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 11 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). If the Planning Commission determines that a proposal to construct such public facilities is not consistent with the comprehensive plan, it may disapprove the proposal and provide written notice of its findings to the City Council or the applicable governing authority. The City Council or applicable governing authority can overturn the Planning Commission's disapproval by a two-thirds majority vote of its entire membership.

## ***Planning Process***

In the summer of 2022, the Town of Altoona contracted with the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) to create a comprehensive plan for Altoona to guide and direct land use and development in a logical manner, consistent with the goals and objectives of the town.

Overall, the planning process involved in the Altoona Comprehensive Plan utilized five elements to gather necessary information and formulate goals, objectives, strategies, and projects to guide the future growth and development of the town in conjunction with community needs and aspirations. These elements are listed and described as follows:

## ***Inventory and Analysis***

To initiate the planning process, an initial public hearing was called and conducted on August 2nd, 2022, at Altoona City Hall. The meeting was used to inform the city council and the public on the nature, benefits, and processes involved in creating and using a comprehensive plan for future land use and development in the town. Input for the plan at the inventory and analysis stage was gathered through surveys such as a community survey and a community facilities survey, and input and direction obtained from planning commission meetings.

To facilitate input through the planning process, EARPDC staff conducted regular meetings with working groups such as the planning commission, city council, and town staff when their expertise was needed. Meetings were held in conjunction with regularly scheduled planning commission meetings. Input from inventory and analysis consisted of the following:

- Results and discussion from the community surveys
- Results and discussion from the community facilities surveys
- Input from meetings

## ***Community Visioning***

From the information gathered and discussions conducted through the inventory and analysis portion of the plan, the community began the process of creating a vision statement for the general direction and guidance of the plan in forming goals, objectives, projects, and strategies for the plan. This is where the plan began to use input to create output as described. Public input was also gathered through a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). This information was recorded by staff for future use throughout the planning process. Output from the community visioning and work session consisted of the following:

- ▶ Vision Statement
- ▶ SWOT analysis

## Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives were established from results and discussions in the previous steps and listed in the comprehensive plan along with their respective projects and strategies as well as additional recommendations. These listings can be found in Chapter 10: Goals and Objectives.

## Implementation

Implementation of the comprehensive plan comprises a projects/strategies listing along with respective implementing agencies, potential partners and funding sources, prioritization, and timeframes for completion. The plan implementation process also acknowledges means of enforcing planning decisions. A prioritization survey was administered by the town to gather information from the planning commission, city council, and town staff on which projects and strategies should be high and low priorities for implementation.

## Evaluation

As the final stage of the comprehensive plan, evaluation tracks progress on established projects and strategies. However, the evaluation process does not end with the completion of the plan but should provide a practical and sustainable way to track progress after the plan is finished, at least on a yearly basis, with the goal of creating a seamless updating process until the comprehensive plan needs a complete update, depending on community change.

## Location

Located in the Western portion of Etowah County, and with a sliver of the town extending into Blount County in northeast Alabama, Altoona is characterized by a hilly and mountainous terrain, with neighboring Altoona Mountain lying to the south. The majority of the town sits at an elevation of 925 feet, with the highest elevation reaching 1,340 feet at nearby Altoona Mountain. Altoona Mountain was a major resource for Altoona's now extinct coal industry. Altoona is home to several waterways, many of which are fed from springs flowing from within Altoona Mountain. Mining Pond Branch, also known as Terrapin Creek, flows in western areas of the town. Whipporwill Creek flows near the town center, eventually joining the Locust Fork River. In eastern portions of Altoona, Locust Fork River, a tributary to the Black Warrior River, flows. A smaller waterway, Kinchelow Creek, also flows near the east of 10th Avenue. Other waterways include Hale Creek, also known as Drury Bynum Creek, and the Mining Pond. Altoona's rural setting in a remote part of Etowah County makes it an attractive, rustic destination while still offering moderate proximity to U.S. 278 and the Gadsden Metropolitan area.

For more details on Altoona's location in relation to the county, state, and nation, please see Diagram #1: Community Details.

## General Information

Altoona's climate is mild and pleasant in general and characterized by hot summers and mild winters, with summer temperatures averaging 81°F and winter temperatures averaging 47°F. Average annual precipitation is approximately 55 inches. Snowy days are rare in Altoona, averaging about one day per year. Average wind speed is approximately 6.25 MPH.

## Historical Background

The region now known as Altoona was originally Native American territory and began being settled by pioneers in the early 1800s. The area was first developed for coal mining, the operation of which was begun by W.T. Underwood in 1900; this is also the year a post office was established. Transportation was essential to a booming coal industry, and Altoona next saw growth in this area.

# DIAGRAM 01

## COMMUNITY DETAILS



AREA: approximately  
2,702 acres



**\$38,750**

Median Household Income



Population



**948**



**TOTAL  
HOUSEHOLDS**

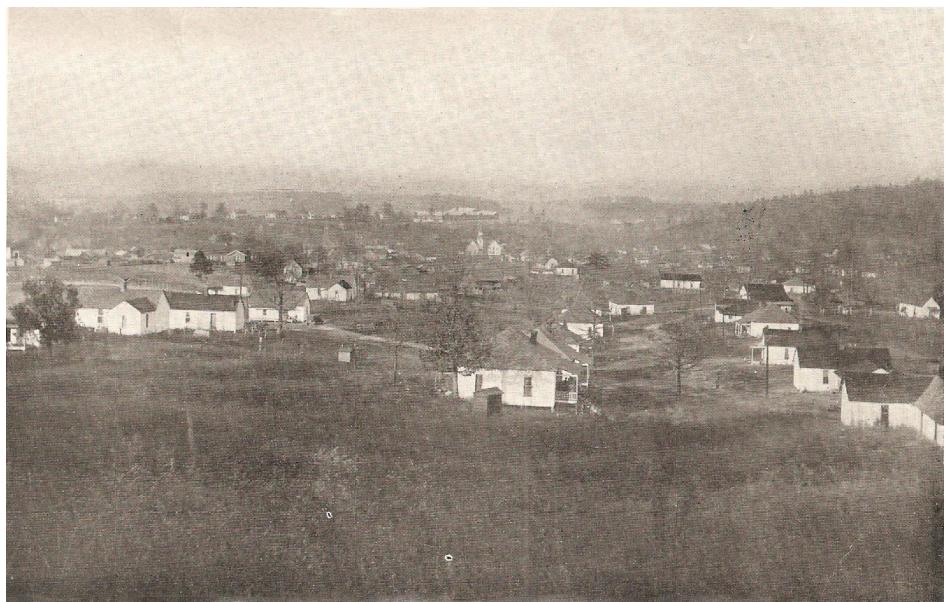
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In 1901, the first railroad was established to Altoona, along with the first train depot. In this period, the depot was the center of town activity. The depot would go through several upgrades and location changes from 1905 to 1910. Though it later relocated to Walnut Grove, the first telephone company was established in Altoona in 1907. The town was incorporated in December 1907, after several attempts and a lengthy process. Altoona had sought incorporation to have the ability to tax and provide public works, among other things; the town had previously been governed by a constabulary. However, in 1917 the Alabama Supreme Court determined the town's incorporation was illegal due to the indefinite original description of the area in 1907. Altoona was able to file a new petition and was re-incorporated the following year. The town was named after another mining town in Pennsylvania, influenced by coal miners who had relocated to Alabama. Around the time of incorporation, ownership of the mines changed hands, first from Underwood to Gadsden investors, and then to Republic Steel. The town's population was booming by 1916, with the population reaching 2,000. Eventually, the area in and around Altoona boasted eleven coal mines in operation. At this time, Altoona was home to two banks and a rail line, the "Mineral Line" of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. One of the banks, the First State Bank of Altoona, was established in 1909 by Altoona residents. The first school is thought to have been built in the early 1900s and was a simple structure. The second schoolhouse was more sophisticated, composed of two stories and housing grades

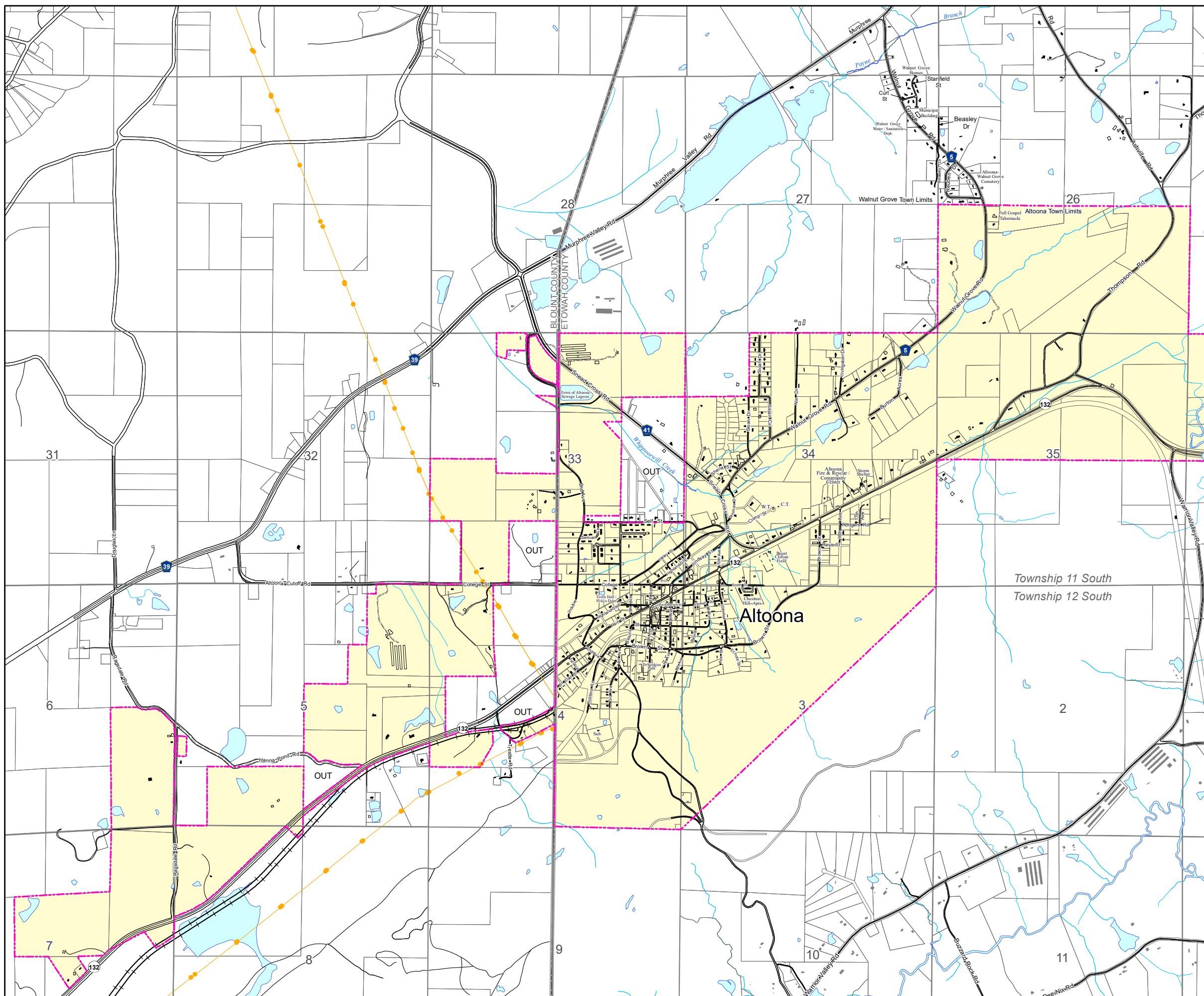


one through nine. Altoona High School was constructed in the early 1920s. During this time and extending through the 1930s, Altoona grew to include a hotel, movie theater, and even offered a taxi service. In 1929, Altoona gained a public water system, utilizing a well as a water source; although, the Altoona Water Works Board would not be incorporated until 1958. Water system updates took place in 1958, and in 1974 a new water tank, fire hydrants, and water lines were added to the town's water system. The

First State Bank of Altoona also moved to a new, modern facility in 1922. The bank still stands in Altoona today and is a historic landmark. In 1932, Republic Steel closed the coal mines, after which strip mining took place. The loss of this industry impacted the area immensely, with Altoona's previously growing population beginning a descent. Despite some mining returning to the area, and strip-mining taking place until the late 1960s, it never provided significant employment again and is now abandoned. The Altoona Housing Authority was incorporated in 1951, bringing an additional important public service to the town. The drugstore in town, Prince Drug Company, was another important gathering place for the community, operating from 1933 to 1985. The 1990s saw the addition of a library and the Department of Public Safety, with continuous coverage for fire and emergency situations. In 2001, the town was rocked by a tornado but was able to recover and expand services by 2003. In 2008, the A-Med ambulance service was incorporated, though it is no longer owned by the town today. The Town of Altoona continues to strive and grow to better its community and surrounding areas in the present day and looking toward the future.



Map 1  
Base Map  
The Town Of  
**ALTOONA**  
ALABAMA



## Legend

-  Altoona Town Limits
-  Residential Structures
-  Non-Residential Structures
-  Structures Not Evaluated
-  Road - Paved
-  Road - Unpaved
-  Lake / Pond
-  County Line

# CHAPTER 2: POPULATION

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Population characteristics and trends play a pivotal role in planning efforts. Since people constitute a town, the general population creates a town's identity, distinguishing it from other communities. Changes in population influence land use decisions, economic spending patterns and employment, public services, and needs for public improvements. Furthermore, a clear understanding of existing population characteristics and trends gives guidance to town officials for making the most informed and effective decisions in meeting growth and development needs in a diverse and changing community.

This chapter's purpose is to understand population change and composition in the Town of Altoona to help explore decisions and develop public policies and plans, which will best serve its present and future residents. This chapter examines historic population trends, place of birth, and place of residence. Population composition includes elements such as age, race, and gender distributions, and marital status. Finally, an analytical summary of population findings concludes the chapter.

Population information gathered in this section of the plan was obtained, in large part, from the American Community Survey. Total population for the years between decennial collection periods, such as 2016, was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, which is a separate program from the decennial and uses current data on births, deaths, and migration to calculate population change since the most recent decennial census.

Although Decennial Census information gives a dependable snapshot of the nation's population in 2000 and 2020, for making comparisons over consistent 10-year periods, the Census Bureau, in 2005, in realizing the limitations and shortcomings in using 10-year information, particularly in the latter years of any given decade, established the American Community Survey. The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nation-wide survey which produces estimates every year instead of every ten years to provide more up-to-date information on such characteristics as age, race, income, commute time to work, home value and other important data at the local level. In collecting information and providing these estimates, about 3.5 million housing unit addresses are surveyed in the American Community Survey annually.

The ACS produces both single-year estimates and multi-year estimates. Single-year estimates are produced only for geographic areas with a population of 65,000 or more, while multi-year—3-year are produced for geographies with 20,000 or more and 5-year are produced for geographies with less than 20,000. For multi-year estimates, data is collected within the timeframes given yet reported annually. For this plan's purpose, the 2016-2020 ACS (5-year estimates) applies since the Town of Altoona holds a population of less than 20,000 people. The 2016-2020 ACS in this chapter on population was used to gather population information on characteristics such as place of birth, place of residence, age distribution, marital status, race, and gender to provide a completer and more up-to-date picture of the recent population data and change.

*While the decennial census provides 100% count population data every 10 years, the American Community Survey provides more up-to-date estimate data every year.*

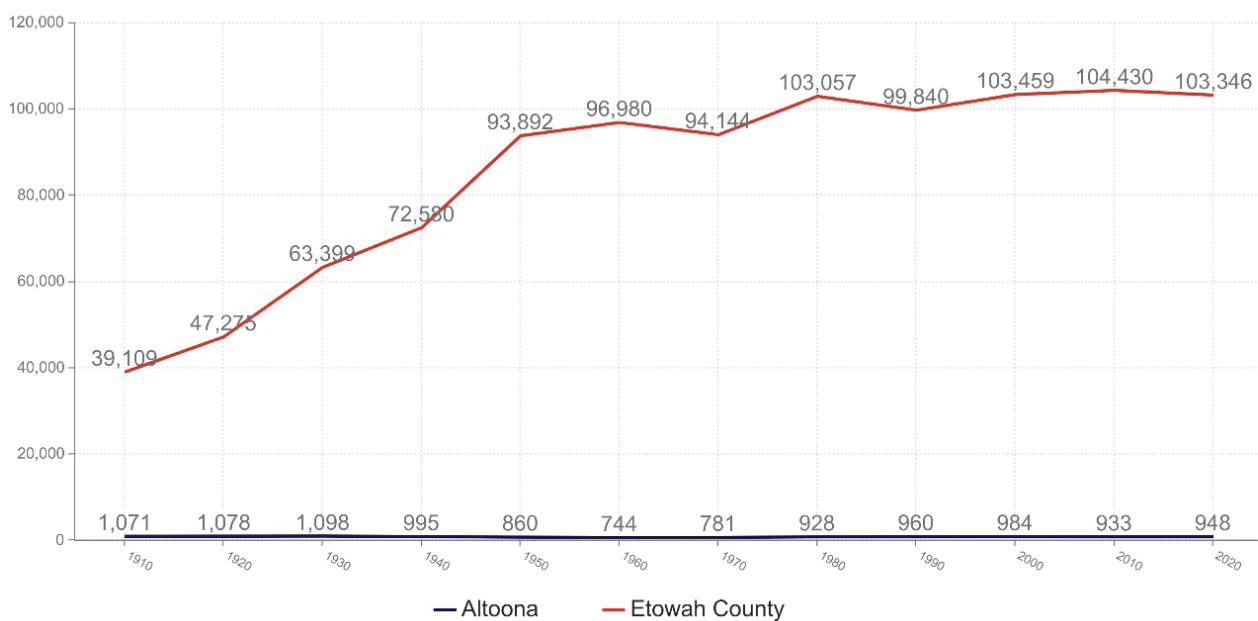
## *Population Trends*

### *Historic Population Trends*

All community populations change to some degree over a given span of time. Historic population trends are useful in showing when and to what degree the population has increased, decreased, or stabilized over a given period. Major trends usually identify and reflect our nation's goals and values and how communities respond to changing times and historical events. Although unfit for

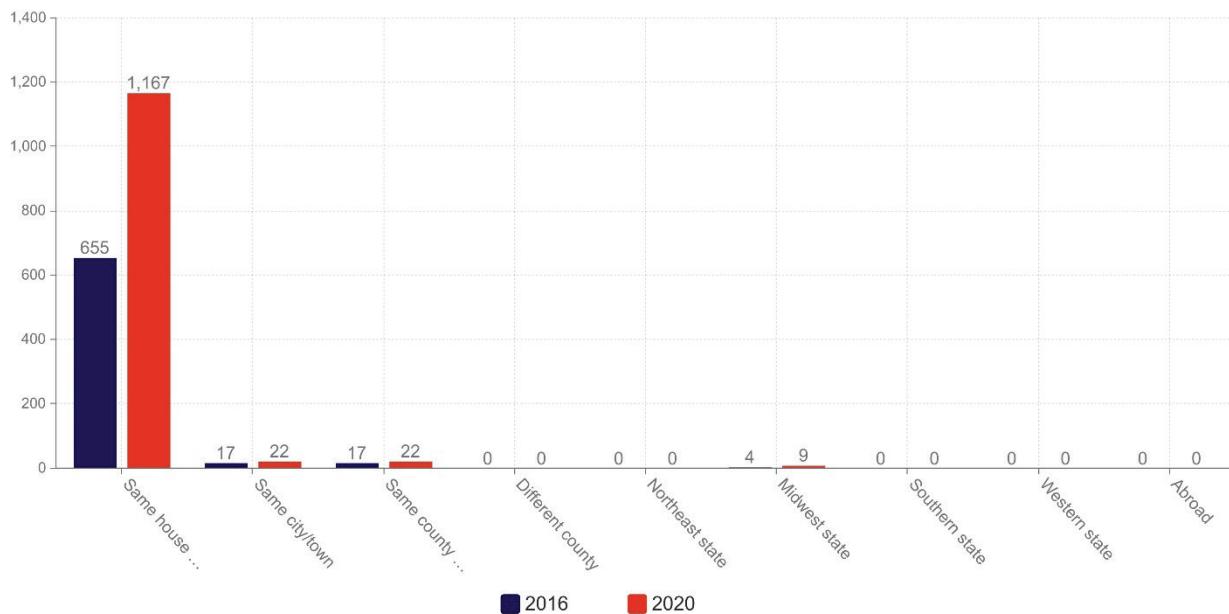
P-1: Historic Population, Altoona, AL  
Etowah County

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Regarding historic population trends, Altoona has shown, for the most part, a stagnancy in population since 1980. From its first Census recording in 1910, 1,071 persons were reported to live in the town with a decline in population between the 1940 – 1960 period. Altoona's most significant growth occurred between 1970 and 1980, with an 18.8% increase. The town had a conservative increase from 1980 to 2000 of approximately 5.9% and in 2010 faced a slight decline of 5.2% leading into 2020 where population climbed back upward approximately 1.6%. Figure P-1 illustrates historic population trends for Altoona and Etowah County from 1910 to 2020.

P-3: Place of Residence  
Altoona, AL



In comparison to Altoona, population trends in Etowah County showed somewhat differing patterns. The county has also experienced a mild stagnancy from 1960 to 2020. From 1910 to 1960, the county saw a steady increase of population with the highest growth rate being between 1940 – 1950 at approximately 29.4%. Both Alabama and the US, historically, have shown steady and continual increase in population, with the most substantial growth occurring around 1900 to 1920, most likely due to the progressive movement of the 20s and America's involvement in WWI, which spurred economic development and job growth for the nation. However, following the 20s, the great depression in 1929 led to a decline in growth as shown from 1930 to 1940. Then from 1940 to 1950 the nation resumed substantial growth with its involvement in WWII.

In more recent years, from 2000 to 2020, Altoona reported a slight population decline by -3.6%. The county population decreased by a minuscule -0.1% during this time while the state showed a 13% growth and the nation 17%. Such loss for Altoona, over 20 years, could be attributed to the popularity of nearby metropolitan areas. Table P-1 displays historic population trends for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. from 1910 to 2020.

**Table P-1. Historic Population Trends: Altoona, AL 1910-2020**

Year	Altoona	% Change	Etowah Co.	% Change	Alabama	% Change	U.S.	% Change
1910	1071	N/A	39,109	N/A	2,138,093	N/A	92,228,531	N/A
1920	1078	0.7%	47,275	20.9%	2,348,174	9.8%	106,021,568	15.0%
1930	1098	1.9%	63,399	34.1%	2,646,248	12.7%	123,202,660	16.2%
1940	995	-9.4%	72,580	14.5%	2,832,961	7.1%	132,165,129	7.3%
1950	860	-13.6%	93,892	29.4%	3,061,743	8.1%	151,325,798	14.5%
1960	744	-13.5%	96,980	3.3%	3,266,740	6.7%	179,323,175	18.5%
1970	781	5.0%	94,144	-2.9%	3,444,165	5.4%	203,211,926	13.3%
1980	928	18.8%	103,057	9.5%	3,893,888	13.1%	226,545,805	11.5%
1990	960	3.4%	99,840	-3.1%	4,040,587	3.8%	248,709,873	9.8%
2000	984	2.5%	103,459	3.6%	4,447,100	10.1%	281,421,906	13.2%
2010	933	-5.2%	104,430	0.9%	4,779,745	7.5%	308,745,538	9.7%
2020	948	1.6%	103,346	-1.0%	5,039,877	5.4%	331,449,281	7.4%

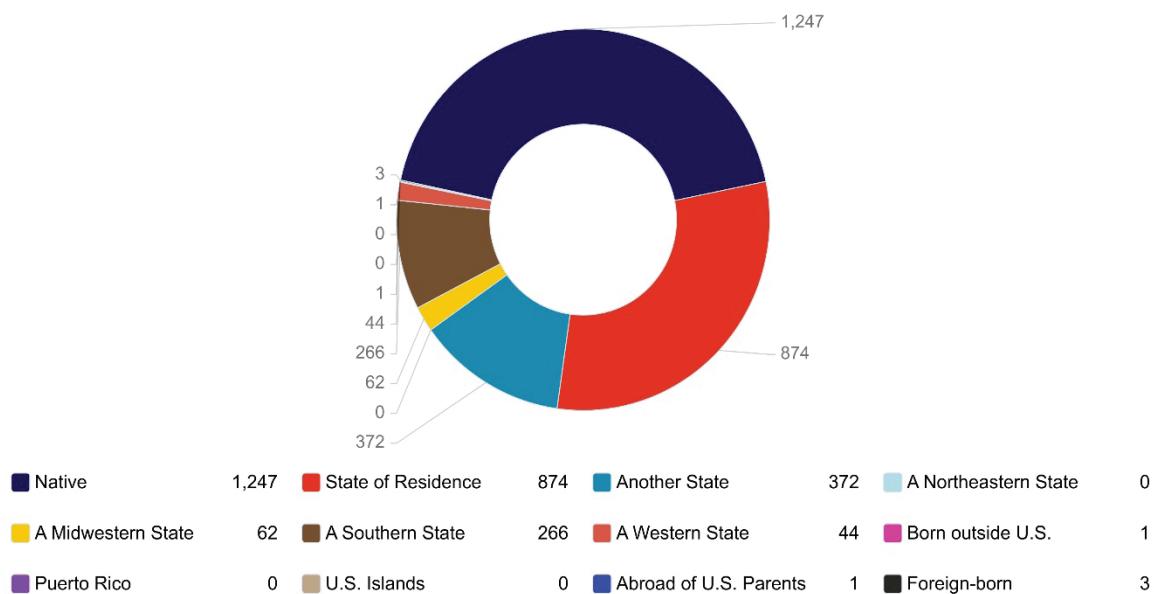
*Source: U.S. Census of Population*

## Place of Birth

Place of birth data is useful in determining population trends through migration patterns in the town's population. Examination of this data will show if the community is drawing population from other states and other countries or if the population is predominantly Alabama-born.

Place of birth patterns show that the substantial majority of Altoona residents were born in Alabama (69.9%) or born in another Southern state (71.5%) indicating minor in-migration from other places around the country or from another country. The town showed slight representation of residents born in other states outside southern with 11.8% migrating in from a Western state and 16.7% from a Midwestern state. Residents that were foreign born accounted for 0.2%. Figure P-2 illustrates place of birth for the Town of Altoona in 2020. For more information, see Table P-2: Place of Birth in Appendix A.

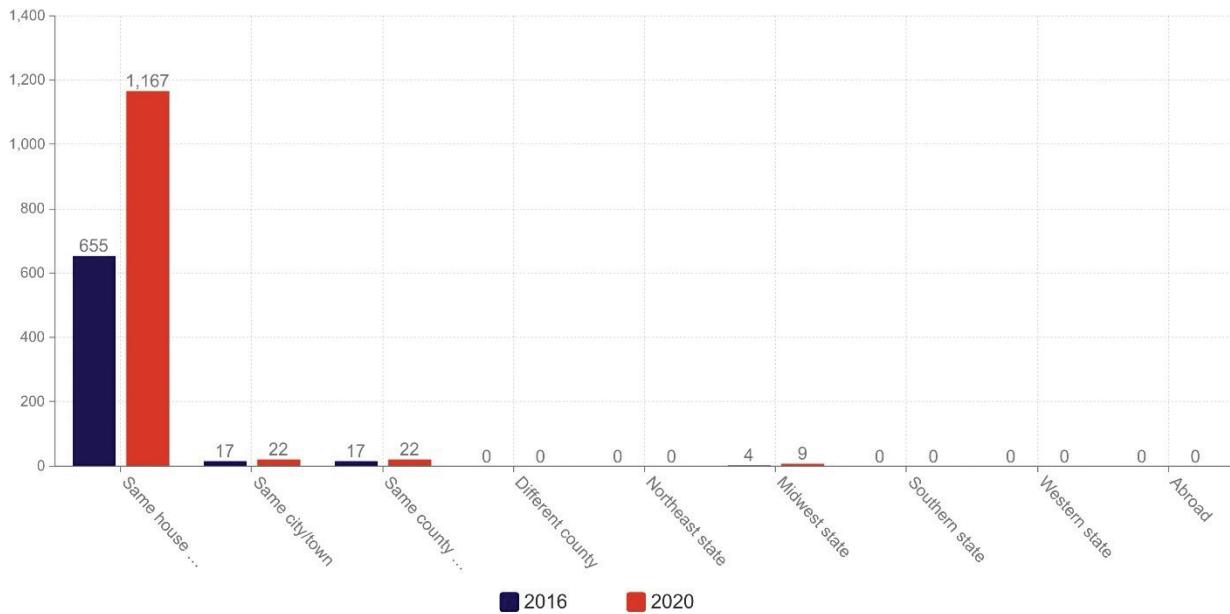
P-2: Place of Birth  
Altoona, AL



Place of residence is defined as: The area of residence 1 year prior to the reference date of those who reported moving to a different housing unit (U.S. Census Glossary). This data is useful to determine town migration patterns. Examination of this data will verify if the town has been gaining or losing in population previously living in other states and countries, and if its residents have been stationary or mobile.

According to Census data, Altoona residents have been reasonable stationary. Place of residence information shows that in 2016 the considerable majority of residents (87.4%) remained in their same home 1 year prior, however, in 2020 that figure increased to 94.3%, indicating little migration to another home outside of the Town.

P- 3: Place of Residence  
Altoona, AL



Overall, migratory patterns show slight mobility of residents transitioning to another home in the timeframe from 2016 to 2020. Although the Town of Altoona faced a minor decline of population from 2010 to 2020 of -3.6%, there was moderate growth in stationary residents from 2016 to 2020. Figure P-3 illustrates place of residence for the Town of Altoona from 2016 to 2020. From the chart notice the slight total increase in the portion of residents living in the same home from 2016 to 2020. For more information, see Table P-3: Place of Residence in Appendix A.

## Population Composition

### Age Distribution

Age distribution is a critical element in any population study. A community must structure their budget and resources to meet a wide variety of residents' needs. Needs tend to differ significantly from one age group to another, therefore a proper understanding of age distribution in the community is necessary. For the purposes of this study, age distributions are classified as followed: Toddler/Preschool (Less than 5

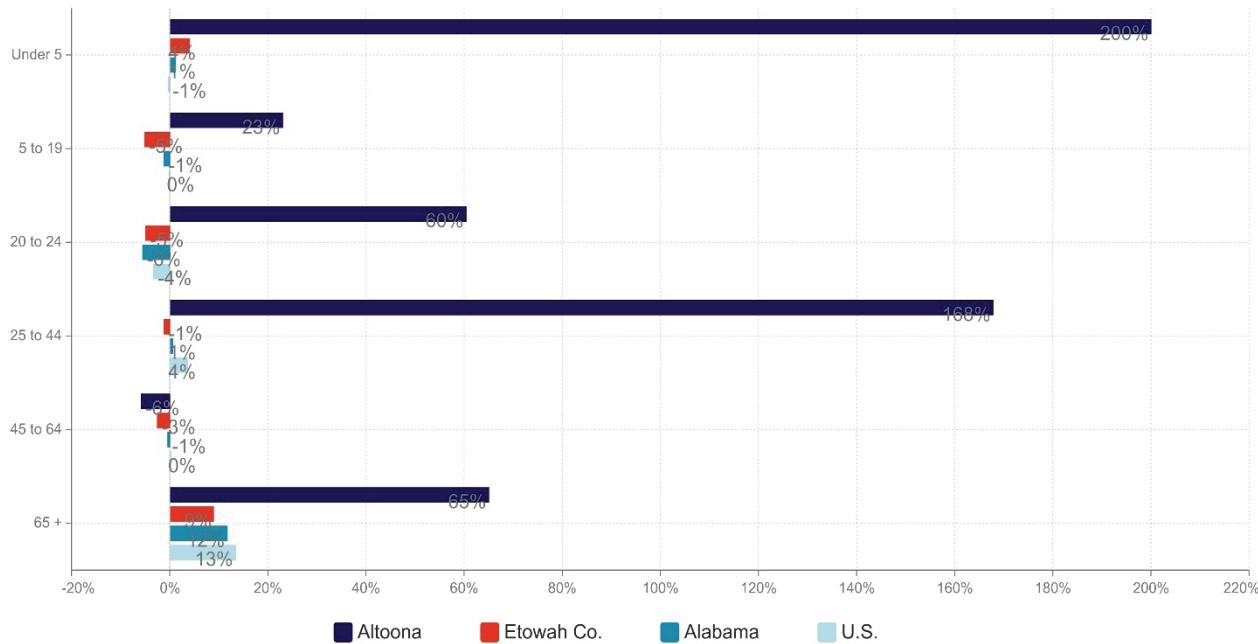
years in age), Youth/K-12 (5 to 19), Young Adult/College Age (20 to 24), Young Adult/ Beginning Worker (25 to 44) Middle Age/Working Adult (45 to 64), and Senior/Retired (65+).

### Change in Age Distribution

Altoona showed differing trends in age distribution compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In terms of change in age distribution between 2016 and 2020 the town's only decrease was in Middle Age/Working Adult (45 - 64), which declined by -6%. All other age groups grew in population, with the single largest gain in Toddler/Preschool age at 200%. For comparison, Etowah Coun-

ty showed differing changes with all age groups decreasing in population except for Toddler/Preschool age which increased by 4% and Senior/Retired, which reported an 8.9% increase. Similar to Etowah County, both Alabama and the U.S. showed the single largest gains in Senior/Retired with increases of 11.7% and 13.4%, respectively. Additionally, the state (-0.6%) and nation (0.2%) showed minor change in Middle Age/Working Adults, as the county dropped by -2.7%, which was like the decline in the town for this age group. However, the state and nation also decreased slightly in half of the age groups. Information indicates that the town has had a major increase in all age groups aside from Middle Age/Working Adults compared to the county which only increased slightly in the Toddler/Preschool age range and the Senior/Retired age range. The Town's decline in Middle Age/Working Adults could be attributed to this age range leaving the community to find employment in other places due to business closings and job losses influenced by foreign competition in business markets. Figure P-4 exhibits percent change in age distribution for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. from 2016 to 2020. From the figure, notice the substantial growth for the town in the majority of the categories. For more information see Table P-4: Age Distribution in Appendix A.

**P-4 : Percent Change of Age Distribution  
Altoona, AL (2016-2020)**



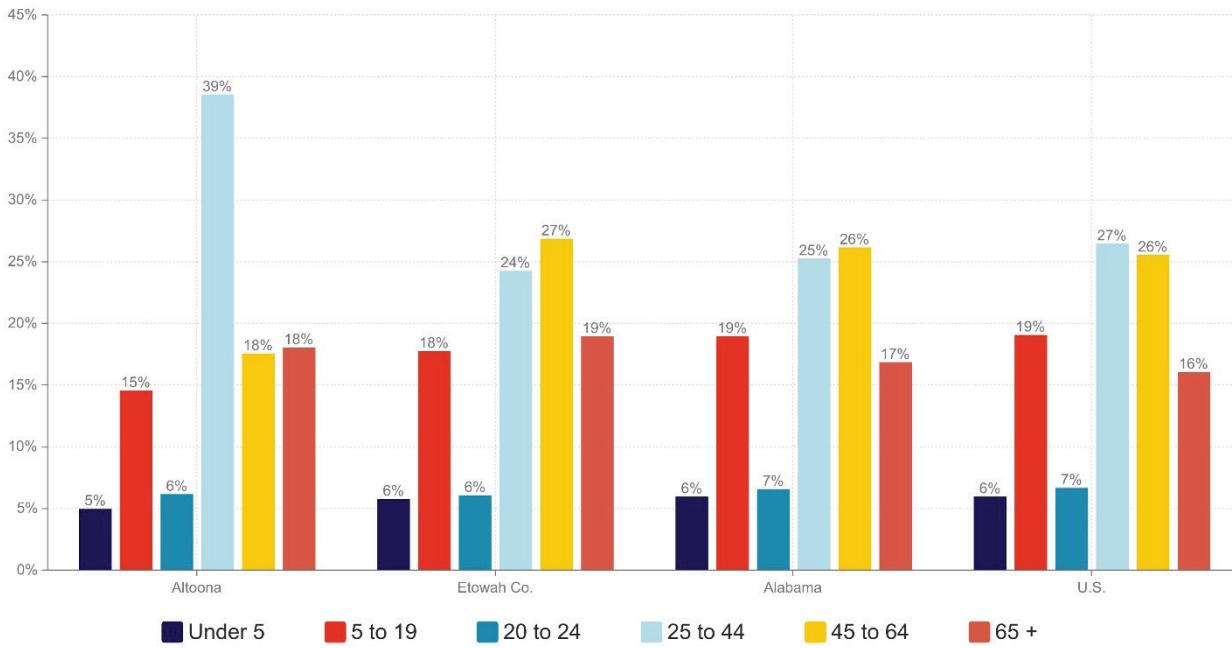
## Age Distribution

Age distribution for Altoona in 2020 was also examined in the population composition. In 2020, age distribution showed somewhat differing representation of age groups compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Young Adult/Beginning Worker ranked the single largest age group in the town at 38.6% of the population compared to the county at 24.3%, the state at 25.3%, and nation (26.6%). The Senior/Retired age group ranks next with a much lower representation at 18.1%, although this age group is still very prominent in the town. Together, these age groups comprise over half of Altoona's population at 56.7%, showing that while the town has a fair mix of young adults available to the local workforce, the population is aging. This information suggests proportionately more people in need of senior services and indicates that the town needs to account for senior needs as well as needs for younger people. Figure P-5 illustrates age distribution for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. For more information see Table P-5: Age Distribution (2016-2020) in Appendix A.

## Median Age

Between 2016 and 2020 the median age for Altoona declined slightly from 43.5 to 40.3 while the median age for Etowah County increased very little from 40.9 to 41.3. Alabama median age grew less considerably from 38.6 to 39.2 and the U.S. increased slightly from 37.7 to 38.2 during this time. This information shows that Altoona's median age has become slightly younger in comparison to Etowah County which reported a slightly higher portion of seniors than Alabama and the U.S. The Town also showed a slightly higher portion of young adults/beginning workers (aged 25 to 44) than the county, state, and nation, which could have contributed to the Town's lowered median age in 2020. Since both the town and county hold slightly higher older populations than the state and nation, as well as growing population in the young adult/beginning worker age group, the town needs to consider plans and policies to meet the needs of seniors and retired persons in addition to the younger, workforce ready, age groups.

P- 5: Age Distribution  
Altoona, AL (2016-2020)

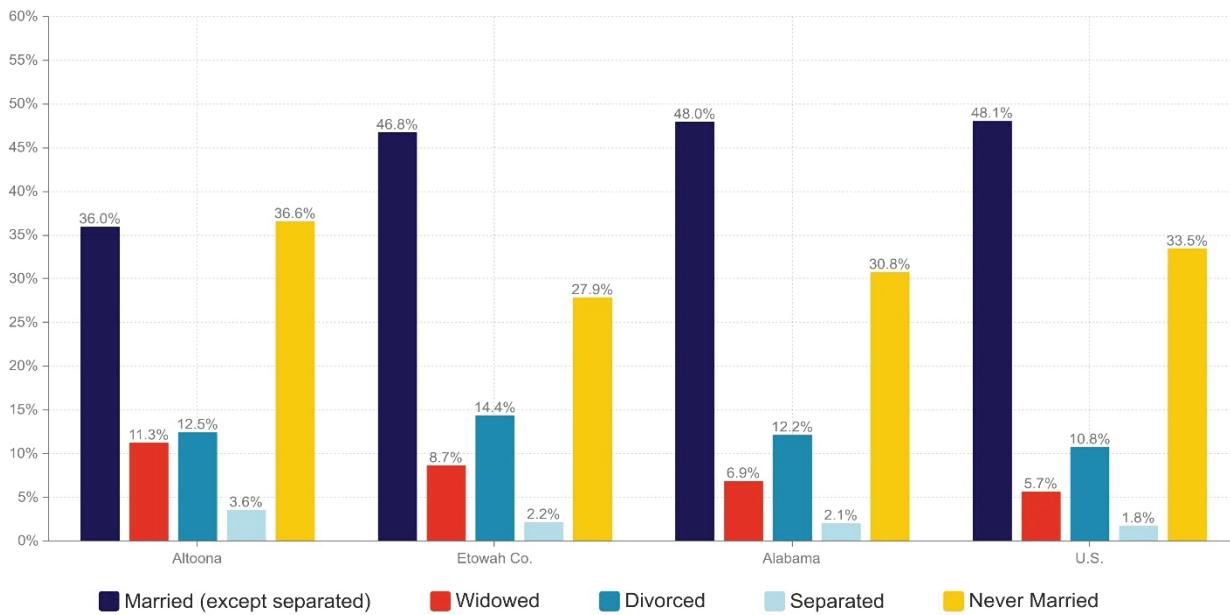


## Marital Status

Marital status also plays an important role in demographic studies. A thorough understanding of marital status allows a community to determine family needs and develop programs and policy toward building stronger families. For purposes of this study, marital status reports for all persons aged 15 and older and is organized into 5 categories which are as follows: 1) never married, 2) separated, 3) divorced, 4) widowed, 5) married (except separated). Separated was pulled from "married" status and placed in a separate category.

In 2020 Altoona reported somewhat similar portions in marital status compared to Etowah County in most categories, but slightly different portions compared to Alabama and the U.S. Approximately 48% of state and nation residents were married during this time, while the town at 36% reported a much lower portion of married residents in comparison; the county's portion of 46.8% also exceeded the town's. Lower portions of married residents could be attributed to the drastic growth in young adults in the town. The town also showed a somewhat larger representation in widowed residents at 11.3% compared to the county at 8.7%, the state at 7% and the nation at 5.7%. This could be attributed to a higher portion of seniors in the town, as previously discussed. Figure P-6 shows marital status for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice the town's higher portion of widowed persons compared to the county, state, and nation. For more information see Table P-6: Marital Status in Appendix A.

P-6: Marital Status  
Altoona, AL (2020)



## Race Distribution

A general understanding of racial diversity is necessary for a community to better serve its residents. Communities with varying races tend to have differing cultural and ethnic needs, however, these factors can spur greater opportunities for growth within the community.

Data from race distribution for Altoona, in 2020, shows the overwhelming majority (96.8%) of residents being white, while approximately 1.7% were black. Only 0.4% were of some other race and 1.1% two or more races. Etowah County reported slightly different findings with 79.1% white and 16.1% black. The county reported 2.6% were of some other race and 2.2% being two or more races. Both Alabama and the U.S. showed somewhat different race distribution from Altoona and Etowah County with a smaller portion of the population being white and higher black representation in the state; however, the nation has a smaller black representation compared to the county. The state reported 67.5% of the population being white and the U.S. showed 70.4%, while black population recorded 26.6% and 12.6%, respectively.

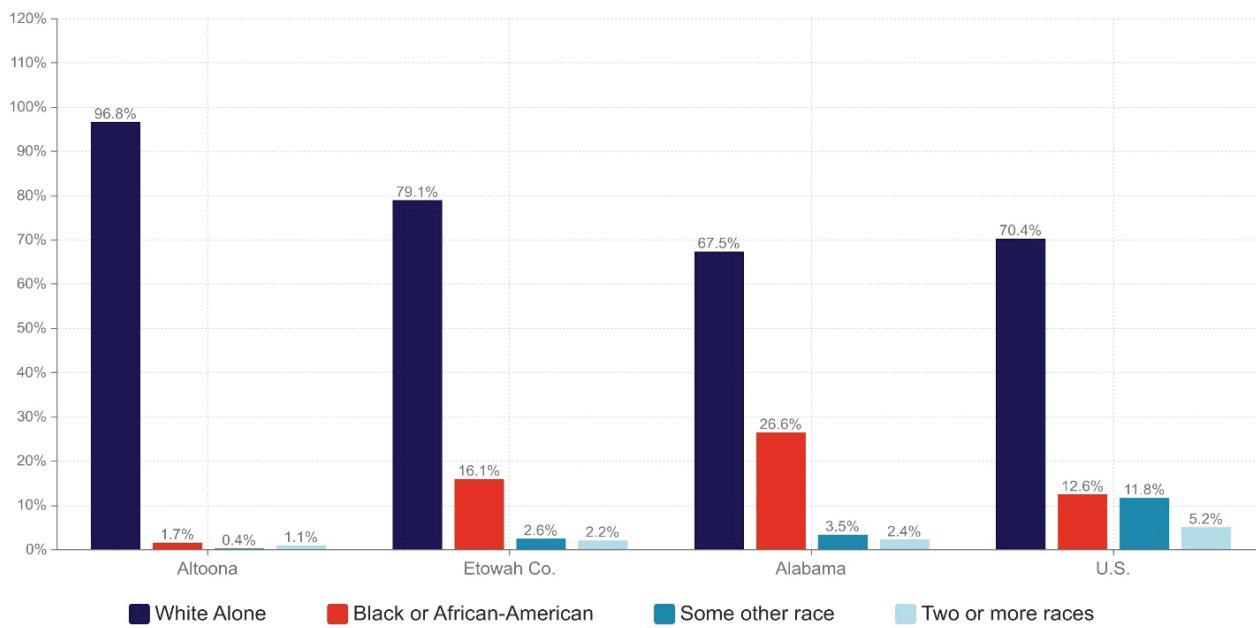
The nation, in turn, showed a considerably higher portion of other races compared to the town, county, and state, thus indicating more diversity. This information indicates higher race diversity in the state and nation, in terms of white and black populations, compared to the town and county, both of which held higher white population and lower black population. Figure P-7 illustrates race distribution for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. For more information see Table P-7 Race Distribution in Appendix A.

## Gender Distribution

In typical American communities, females tend to slightly outnumber males, due primarily to higher male mortality rates and longer female life expectancy. This is also true for the gender distribution in Altoona even with the significant growth of the Town's population from 2016 to 2020. Altoona's population in 2016 comprised of 46.7% male and 53.3% female, and in 2020 reported 49% male and 51% female. Etowah County and Alabama also reported minor change as the county reported 48.4% male and 51.6% female in 2016 and 51.8% male with 48.2% female in 2020. Alabama recorded 48.5% male and 51.5% female in 2016 and 48.3% male with 51.7% female in 2020 showing very minuscule change for the state. The U.S. showed a similar distribution with 49% male and

50% female in 2020. For more information consult Table P-8 Gender Distribution for Altoona, Etowah County, and Alabama between 2016 and 2020 and the U.S. in 2020 for comparative purposes in Appendix A.

**P-7: Race Distribution**  
Altoona, AL (2020)



## ***Summary of Population Information***

Population information for this chapter was obtained from the 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey to examine more recent population trends. Historic population trends for Altoona show that the town has experienced moderate growth from 1970-2000 after the population declined for several years between 1940 – 1960, with the most substantial growth in 1980; a minor decline occurred in 2010 (-5.2%) while Etowah County reported a slight 0.9% increase while Alabama increased by 7.5% and the U.S. by 9.7%.

In terms of change in age distribution between 2016 and 2020 the town's only decrease was in Middle Age/Working Adults (ages 45-64), which declined by (-6%). All other age groups grew in population, with the single largest gain in Toddler/Preschool (aged less than 5) at 200% and the second largest growth was young adult/beginning worker age at 167.8%. Following the population trend was growth of Senior/Retired with 65% increase, Young Adult/College Age grew by 60.4% and an increase of 23% for Youth/K-12 age group. Altoona had an overall age distribution change of 62.8% compared to the county (-0.6%) decrease, the state at 1.1% change, and the nation having a 2.5% change from 2016 to 2020. For marital status, the town reported a slightly larger portion of widowed persons than the county, state, and nation. In race distribution the town closely followed the county, state, and nation with white being the considerable majority, black a distant second, and other minorities representing a small fraction of the population. Gender distribution for the town had typical findings of having more females than males.

## ***Analytical Summary***

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter followed by a brief assessment of the information.

### ***Historical Population Trends***

Regarding historic population trends, Altoona has shown, for the most part, a stagnancy in population since 1980. From its first Census recording in 1910, 1071 persons were reported to live in the town with a decline in population between the 1940 – 1960 period. Altoona's most significant growth occurred between 1970 and 1980, with an 18.8% increase. The town had a conservative increase from 1980 to 2000 of approximately 5.9% and in 2010 faced a slight decline of 5.2% leading into 2020 where population climbed back upward approximately 1.6%.

Assessment: Between 1970 and 1980, the population grew for the first time since 1930. Then in the latter half of the 20th century to present day, the town population largely stagnated, with a minor fall in 2010 but mostly maintaining stability since the 1980's.

### ***Place of Birth***

Place of birth patterns show that the substantial majority of Altoona residents were born in Alabama (69.9%) or born in another Southern state (71.5%) indicating minor in-migration from other places around the country or from another country. The town showed some representation of residents born in other states outside southern with 16.7% migrating in from a Midwestern state and 11.8% from a Western state. Residents that were foreign born accounted for 0.2%.

Assessment: Altoona reported only minor in-migration from other places in the nation or from other countries. The largest portion of in-migration was in residents born in another southern state.

### ***Place of Residence***

According to Census data, Altoona residents have been reasonable stationary. Place of residence information shows that in 2016 the considerable majority of residents (87.4%) remained in their same home 1 year prior, however, in 2020 that figure rose to 94.3%, indicating that many residents remained in the same home. The majority of Altoona's population remained in the same home between 2016 and 2020 and did not move to another town or somewhere else in the county.

Assessment: Similar to place of birth, Altoona reported slight in-migration based on place of residence patterns, while the majority of residents remained in the same place of residence.

### ***Age Distribution***

Change in Age Distribution: In terms of change in age distribution between 2016 and 2020 the town's only decrease was in Middle Age/Working Adults (45 - 64), which declined by -6%. All other age groups grew in population, with the single largest gain in Toddler/Preschooler age at 200% and Young Adult/Beginning Worker age at 167.8%. For comparison, Etowah County showed differing changes with all age groups decreasing in population except for Senior/Retired, which reported an 8.9% increase and Toddler/Preschooler age with an increase of 4%. Like Etowah County, both Alabama and the U.S. showed the single largest gains in Senior/Retired with increases of 12% and 13%, respectively. Additionally, the state at -0.6% and County at -2.7% showed a similar decline in Middle Age/Working Adults in individuals, as the U.S. showed a very slight increase of only 0.2% in this age group.

Age Distribution: In 2020, age distribution showed somewhat differing representation of age groups compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Young Adults/Beginning Workers ranked the single largest age group in the town at (38.6%), while the next largest age group being Retired/Senior Adults showed lower representation at (18.1%). Together, these age groups composed over half of Altoona's population at (56.7%), showing that while the town has a fair mix of Middle Age/Working Adults at (17.6%)

and Youth/K-12 age at (14.6%) the population is aging but has a good mixture as certain age groups have grown. The town's Young Adult/College Age has a smaller portion but remains constant compared with the County (6.1%) and the State at (6.6%). The Toddler/Preschool age group (5%) reported a slightly smaller portion of the population, but grew 200% in Altoona, compared to the county at 5.8%, the state (6%), and nation (6%).

Median Age: Between 2016 and 2020 the median age for Altoona fell slightly from 43.5 to 40.3 due to the major increases in the younger population, while the median age of Etowah County increased slightly from 40.9 to 41.3. Alabama's median age grew less considerably from 38.6 to 39.2 and the U.S. increased slightly from 37.7 to 38.2 during this period.

Assessment: Altoona, between 2016 and 2020, grew in every age group apart from Middle Age/Working Adults (45-64), which declined by a moderate -6%. The town grew most significantly in ages less than 5 and 25 to 44, while the county, state, and nation all saw very little change in these age groups. Senior/Retired was the second largest age group for the town, only outranked by Young Adults/beginning Workers in 2020. This increase shows that the younger generations are growing and deciding to remain residents within the town.

## ***Marital Status***

In 2020 Altoona reported much lower portions of married residents compared to the County, Alabama, and the U.S. Approximately 48% of state and nation residents were married during this time, while the town at 36% and the county at 46.8% reported a somewhat lower portion of married residents. The town also showed a higher representation in widowed residents at 11.3% compared to the county at 8.7%, the state at 7%, and the nation at 6%.

Assessment: In 2020, the town reported a significantly higher portion of widowed persons than the county, state, and nation and a lower portion of married persons. This could be attributed to a slightly higher representation of seniors than the state and nation.

## ***Race Distribution***

Data from race distribution for Altoona, in 2020, shows the overwhelming majority (96.8%) of residents being white, while approximately 1.7% were black. Only 0.4% were of some other race and 1.1% two or more races. Etowah County reported similar findings with 78.7% white and 16% black. Both Alabama and the U.S. showed somewhat different race distribution from Altoona, with a smaller portion of the population being white and higher black representation. The state reported 65.5% of the population being white and the U.S. showed 70%, while black population recorded 25.8% and 12.6%, respectively.

Assessment: Altoona showed a somewhat differing race distribution in comparison to the county, state, and nation, having a majority percentage of 96.8% white population. Etowah County showed a much smaller distribution of the white population and a more significant black population, which is like the race distribution of Alabama and the U.S. This data signifies that Etowah County has a more racially diverse population and very little of that is representation from Altoona.

## ***Gender Distribution***

In typical American communities, females tend to slightly outnumber males, due primarily to higher male mortality rates and longer female life expectancy. Altoona did follow this pattern from 2016-2020. Altoona's population, in 2016, comprised 46.7% male and 53.3% female and showed significant change in 2020 with 49% male and 51% female. Alabama and the U.S. reported minor change as the state reported 48.5% male and 51.5% female in 2016 and 48.3% male and 51.7% female in 2020 while the U.S. recorded 49% male and 50% female in 2020.

Assessment: Altoona reported a higher female than male population from 2016-2020, as is typical in American communities.

# CHAPTER 3: ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

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The natural landscape and its features play an important role in the development and planned growth of any community. Features such as floodplains, wetlands, threatened or endangered species habitats, steep slopes, and sensitive and rocky soils can be a hindrance to development. Other features such as lakes, streams, rivers, mountains, mineral resources, caves, and forests can act as economic catalysts in the form of resource harvesting, recreational opportunities, and/or eco-tourism. Good planning should recognize these benefits natural amenities provide, utilize them to their full extent, and minimize ecological damage in the process. Misguided and unmitigated development on sensitive lands often results in ecological and economic disasters in the form of landslides, sinkholes, and increased flooding. Through prior identification of these hazards and proper guidance of development, many disasters can be avoided, and community enhancements realized. Sensitive lands could be preserved for parks and open space, adding amenities and character to the community. It is in Altoona's best interest to guide and direct what kinds of developments are most suitable for any given area and how much building is feasible. With modern engineering and construction equipment, building in areas once thought impossible is now possible, however, this often is costly and not always the best and most effective option. The natural environment will always be a pivotal factor in development decisions. This chapter examines environmental features, such as soil characteristics, steep slopes, floodplains, water resources, wetlands, wildlife habitats, and threatened and endangered species, in order to identify areas sensitive to development and to give general guidance on assessing their development feasibility.

## *Overview of Natural Resources and Constraints*

The Town of Altoona is in the west central portion of Etowah County, with some portions in eastern Blount County. The town is located in the southern range of the Appalachian Mountains. This mountain range is the eastern equivalent of the Rocky Mountains and is among Earth's oldest mountains. Most of this area is characterized by slopes and outcropping rock and is part of the Cumberland Plateau physiographic region.

Notice on the Environmental constraints map, Map # 2, the extensiveness of steep slopes throughout the town. The sloping and mountainous area provides Altoona with beautiful natural surroundings, and along with its coal mining history is an important part of the character of the town.

According to soil inventory data, Altoona showed substantial environmental constraints throughout the town, the most prevalent of which were steep slopes, followed closely by septic restrictive areas. The most significant environmental constraint for the town was steep slope areas, accounting for approximately 1,026 acres and 35% of the total land area coverage. These areas consist of rough, dry soils and are located throughout the town and most extensively in the south-central areas. The town's most developed areas are surrounded by steep slope patches. Substantial development in steep slope areas should take necessary precautions to prevent erosion and water run-off which could cause structural instabilities.

Septic restrictive areas (areas requiring sewer) ranked second to steep slopes in town area coverage accounting for approximately 963 acres and 32% of the total land area. These areas consist of soil unfit for septic system percolation and drainage and extend extensively throughout the town.

Flood prone areas comprise approximately 499 acres and 17% of the land area in the town limits. These areas are typically adjacent to or overlapping floodplains following streams and riverbanks. In general, land deemed as floodplains tend to flood more rapidly and excessively than flood prone areas due to the nature of the soils, low elevations, and proximity to water bodies. Data pertaining to floodplain areas have been obtained in accordance with FEMA floodplain FIRM (Federal Insurance Rate Maps)

maps and flood prone areas as identified by the USDA's National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) maps. Altoona's flood prone areas and floodplains have formed mostly in northern and eastern areas and in patterns which follow streams. One-hundred-year floodplains constituted approximately 55 acres and 2% of the total land within the town, while Altoona had no representation of five-hundred-year floodplains.

Freshwater pond and freshwater forested/shrub together covered approximately 56 acres and 1.9% of land within the town limits. Wetlands have numerous definitions; however, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service define wetlands as, "lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water." This definition implies a wetland is wet for some time, but not necessarily permanently wet. Freshwater forested/shrub wetland (Map Code: PFO, PSS) is described as forested swamp or wetland shrub bog or wetland. These wetlands are generally denser in plant life than emergent and provide woody vegetation 6 meters tall or taller. Table EF-1 shows environmental features/constraints and distribution for Altoona in 2024.

**Table EF-1. Environmental Features: Altoona, 2024**

Environmental Feature/Constraint	Acreage	Percent Distribution
Steep Slope Areas	1,026.20	34.5%
Septic Restrictive	962.80	32.4%
Flood Prone Areas	498.53	16.8%
Water	14.97	0.5%
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	32.66	1.1%
Freshwater Pond	22.94	0.8%
100-year Floodplains	55.60	1.9%
Total Town Acreage	2,973.65	100.0%

Source: EARPDC database, 2024.

## *Soil Characteristics*

Proper knowledge and understanding of soil characteristics is useful in determining environmental constraints and land suitability for specified development intensity. Soil types and classifications are extremely numerous, and any given community could discover a myriad of samples to categorize. Therefore, the scope of this soil characteristics study is to examine only the most commonly associated soil types, distinguishing environmental constraints such as steep slopes, flood prone, septic restrictive (areas requiring sewer), and floodplains and wetlands. Altoona's most prevalent soil type for the entire town is a soil classified as Palmedale soils, 2 to 60% slopes—which comprises hillslopes composed of gravelly mine soils or earthy fill derived from sandstone and shale. Large swatches of the town are considered a mountain soil classified as Townley association—hillslopes derived from clayey residuum weathered from shale. Chewacla silt loam is another sizeable sample, and is a loamy soil derived from sedimentary rock that typically forms as floodplains. The Environmental Constraints Map (Map #2) identifies and locates the town's environmental constraints based on these and other soil classifications to guide and direct land use and development decisions accordingly. Soil information was made available through the Soil Survey of Etowah County, Alabama, 1978, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (USDA) online Web Soil Survey.

## *Steep Slopes*

Steep slopes are an environmental constraint worthy of attention. Many slopes have weak or lose soils unfit for development. Modern engineering practices may be able to overcome these obstacles, but not without major costs, significant time, and careful planning. Development along steep slopes also accelerates storm-water runoff, as paved ground is less capable of absorbing rain and other water-based elements. Although criterion for slope development varies, the following general thresholds are used in

planning and engineering to determine acceptable and non-acceptable developments:

- ▶ 3 percent: Generally accepted limit for railroads
- ▶ 8 percent: Generally accepted limit for highways, although grades of 6 percent or less are desirable for highways intended to accommodate heavy truck traffic.
- ▶ 10 percent: Generally accepted limit for driveways
- ▶ 15 percent: Point at which engineering costs for most developments become significant and extensive anchoring, soil stabilization, and stormwater management measures must be applied.
- ▶ 25 percent: Generally accepted limit for all development activity.

Altoona has considerable steep slope coverage, as previously discussed, affecting over a third of the town, approximately 1,026 acres and 35% land coverage within the town limits. Steep slopes run throughout the town limits, with the most prevalent steep slopes in the southern areas. Most of this area should be preserved for parks and recreation, with low density residential development where feasible.

## ***Floodplains***

Floodplains are areas highly susceptible to flood conditions occurring during extreme rainfall and should thus be reserved for minimal development. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service a floodplain is defined as, “the nearly level plain that borders a stream and is subject to inundation under flood stage conditions unless protected artificially.” Buildings built in floodplains should be placed on significantly tall foundations or built to redirect water flow into more suitable areas of the floodplain. Generally, development in floodplains should be avoided to allow them to absorb water and recharge groundwater resources. If properly maintained and preserved, floodplains can be a valuable resource. Floodplains are rich in nutrients continually cycled through rivers, streams, and lakes, which makes the land primarily suitable for farming and pastureland. The floodplain, secure in its natural state, serves to protect our drinking water, conserve the beauty of our natural resources, and sustain our local ecosystems.

Floodplains are divided into zones determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). According to FEMA, flood hazard areas recognized on the Flood Insurance Rate Map are Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA). SFHA is defined as the area that will be engulfed by a flood event having a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The 1% annual chance of flooding is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. SFHAs are labeled as Zone A, Zone AO, Zone AH, Zones A1-A30, Zone AE, Zone A99, Zone AR, Zone AR/AE, Zone AR/A1-A30, Zone AR/A, Zone V, Zone VE, and Zones V1-V30. Moderate flood hazard areas are categorized as Zone B or Zone X (shaded) and are the areas between the limits of the base flood and the 0.2% annual chance (or 500-year) flood. The areas of minimal flood hazard, which are outside the SFHA and higher than the elevation of the 0.2% annual chance flood, are labeled Zone C or Zone X (unshaded).

Altoona's 100-year floodplains are located primarily along Mining Pond Branch, Whippoorwill Creek, and their tributaries, running through central portions of the town, and along the Locust Fork River, a major tributary of the Black Warrior River, in eastern Altoona. Floodplain acreage constitutes approximately 55 acres of 100-year (2% of the total land area). Flood prone areas cover approximately 499 acres in the town, which is 16.8% of the total town acreage. Floodplains and flood prone areas are shown on the Environmental Constraints Map (Map # 2) and may overlap with each other at particular locales.

## ***Water Resources***

Water resources serve a variety of positive functions for the community. A clean and beautiful aquatic environment not only benefits residents environmentally, but also economically. Eco-tourism adds to local revenue and attracts businesses. Developing

in a manner that best utilizes this highly valued resource is in the best interest of any community. Overall, quality water resources enhance quality of life. Altoona's primary water resource is the Locust Fork River, in the town's far eastern areas. Other water resources in and surrounding the town include Mining Pond Branch in west Altoona, and Whippoorwill Creek in central portions of the town. Smaller waterways include Kinchelow Creek, Hale Creek, and the Mining Pond. Altoona waterways are tributaries to the Black Warrior River.

The Alabama Environmental Management Act authorizes the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) to establish and enforce water quality standards, regulations, and penalties to maintain state and federal water quality provisions. From this authorization, the ADEM Administrative Code prohibits the physical, chemical, or biological contamination of state waters through source and non-point source pollution. Point source pollution is defined as pollution originating from a definable source such as a ditch, pipe, concentrated animal feed lot, or container. Non-point source pollution does not originate from a defined source but can be attributed to agricultural and construction related runoff, and runoff from lawns and gardens.

## ***Wetlands***

Since the passage of the Clean Waters Act (CWA) in 1977, wetland preservation has gained national attention. More than 100 million acres of wetlands in the continental U.S. and Alaska have been preserved. Wetlands function as a vital aquatic system contributing to habitat diversity, flood control, and recharging and cleaning of polluted water. They also provide green space for communities, which drives up neighboring property values. For the purpose of this plan, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service defines wetlands as “lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water.”

Wetlands are protected nationally under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which requires permits for the discharging and dredging of defined “wetlands.” Section 404 is jointly administered by the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Corps administers permits, while the EPA sustains the right to veto any permit issued. Developers should always contact the nearest Corps officials before disturbing considered wetland areas.

Altoona determined wetland areas, such as freshwater pond comprising 22.94 acres (0.8%) and freshwater forested/shrub accounting for 32.66 acres (1.1%) are located mainly in far eastern Altoona and in some northern areas, typically near or overlapping floodplains. For more detail see Map # 2: Environmental Constraints.

## ***Wildlife Habitats***

Every year millions of people across the U.S. spend time and monetary resources viewing wildlife and enjoying the great outdoors. Nature serves as an escape and refuge from the busy and congested urban environment. Altoona should consider identifying lands sensitive to environmental degradation and work with the Georgia-Alabama Land Trust to adequately reserve and manage land for wildlife preservation. The Georgia-Alabama Land Trust is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) conservation organization dedicated to protecting land for present and future generations by helping private landowners protect land through conservation easements and manage their land through Land Protection and Land Stewardship Programs. Conservation easements allow landowners to set aside or protect areas from encroaching development, protecting valuable farms and forestland, ecologically significant areas, water sources, and natural view-sheds. As of 2022, the Georgia-Alabama Land Trust has safeguarded more than 400,000 acres of open space throughout Alabama and Georgia, making the Land Trust the leader in land protection in the southeastern U.S.

Opportunity exists for wildlife habitat preservation in Altoona. As a planning consideration, Altoona should promote and encourage land and wildlife preservation to enhance the town's natural beauty and wildlife viability. Wildlife preservation could be promoted through designation of conservation easements in floodplains, steep slopes, and other areas where development is already substantially limited. Although easements reduce property values and decrease its market value, resource conservation, even on private land, is considered a charitable donation by the IRS and qualifies landowners to take an income tax deduction for as much as the full value of the donation, limited to 50% of the donors adjusted gross income, over the course of 15 years. The

conservation value of a particular property depends on the character of the property and the needs of the landowner. An example of such value may include any one or more of the following (according to the Georgia-Alabama Land Trust):

- ▶ Maintain and improve water quality
- ▶ Perpetuate and foster the growth of healthy forest
- ▶ Maintain and improve wildlife habitat and migration corridors
- ▶ Protect scenic vistas visible from roads and other public areas
- ▶ Ensure that lands are managed so that they are always available for sustainable agriculture and forestry

## ***Threatened and Endangered Species***

National environmental policies protect this country's natural resources and amenities. The Endangered Species Act (ESA), passed by Congress in 1973, was established to protect species of plants and animals from extinction. Plants and animals listed as threatened or endangered species by the U.S. Department of Interior are to be protected on both public and private land. Endangered species are defined, according to the ESA, as: "any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range." Threatened species are defined as: "any species that are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future." Plant and animal species may be placed on the threatened and endangered species list if they meet one or more of the following scientific criterion: (1) current or threatened destruction of habitat, (2) overuse of species for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes (3) disease or predation, (4) ineffective regulatory mechanisms, and (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting the species' chances of survival. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is charged with the responsibility of enforcing ESA regulations. Although most forest and lake related activities would not affect endangered species, developers, loggers, and other landowners should review their plans with the USFWS or the Alabama Department of Natural Resources to verify ESA compliance.

Alabama is an ecologically diverse state with a significant amount of threatened and endangered species. Only the States of California at 291 and Hawaii (490) have more plants and animals than Alabama (148) placed on the threatened and endangered species list. According to the USFWS Alabama Ecological Services Field Station, the latest listing for threatened and endangered species in Etowah and Blount Counties have been listed as follows:

**Amphibians**—The Black Warrior Waterdog *Necturus alabamensis* is listed as endangered in the upper Black Warrior River drainage, including the Locust Fork in Blount and Etowah Counties. It is described as a large aquatic salamander, varying in color from reddish brown to nearly black, with a flattened body and head.

**Flowering Plants**—Flowering plants reported as endangered in Blount and Etowah Counties constituted the Tennessee Yellow-eyed grass *Xyris tennesseensis*, Morefield's Leather Flower *Clematis morefieldii*, and the Green Pitcher Plant *Sarracenia oreophila*, while threatened species included Mohr's Barbara's buttons *Marshallia mohrii* and Georgia Rockcress *Arabis georgiana*. In Etowah County, endangered plants included Harperella *Ptilimnium nodosum* and Alabama Leather Flower *Clematis socialis*, while threatened flower species comprised the White Fringeless Orchid *Platanthera integrilabia*. In Blount County, endangered plants included the American Hart's Tongue Fern *Asplenium scolopendrium* var. *americanum*.

**Clams**—Clams listed as endangered in Blount and Etowah Counties consists of the Southern Acornshell *Epioblasma othcaloogensis*, Upland Combshell *Epioblasma metastriata*, Ovate Clubshell mussel *Pleurobema perovatum*, Triangular Kidneyshell mussel *Ptychobranchus greenii*, Southern Clubshell mussel *Pleurobema decisum*, Southern Pigtoe *Pleurobema georgianum*, Alabama Moccasinshell *Medionidus acutioissimus*, Coosa Moccasinshell *Medionidus parvulus*, and the Georgia Pigtoe *Pleurobema strodeanum*. The Dark Pigtoe *Pleurobema furum* was listed as endangered in Blount County. The Fine-lined Pocketbook mussel *Lampsilis altilis*, Canoe Creek Clubshell *Pleurobema athearni*, and the Orangenacre Mucket *Hamiota perovalis* were listed as threatened in Blount and Etowah Counties.

Fish—The Vermillion Darter *Etheostoma chermocki* was listed as endangered in Blount County. Endangered species in Blount and Etowah Counties include the Cahaba Shiner *Notropis cahabae* and the Rush Darter *Etheostoma phytophilum*, while threatened species included the Trispot Darter *Etheostoma trisella*.

Mammals—Mammals listed as endangered in Blount and Etowah Counties included the Gray bat *Myotis grisescens*, while the Northern Long-Eared Bat *Myotis septentrionalis* was listed as threatened. The Indiana Bat *Myotis sodalis* was listed as endangered in Blount County.

Reptiles—Reptiles listed as threatened in Blount and Etowah Counties includes the Flattened Musk Turtle *Sternotherus depressus*

Snails—Snails reported as threatened in Etowah County include the Painted Rocksnail *Leptoxis taeniata*. Endangered snails in Etowah County includes the Interrupted Rocksnail *Leptoxis foremani*, and endangered snails in Blount County include the Plicate Rocksnail *Leptoxis plicata*.

Illustrated below in Figure EF-1 are a few of the threatened and endangered species in Blount and Etowah Counties.

As a part of policy to preserve the natural environment and inherent species diversity, the town should implement best management practices for forestry, maintained and updated by the Alabama Forestry Commission, taking the above-mentioned species into account. These management practices are not regulations, but rather general guidelines for development and construction which best manages environmental protection and impact mitigation. The Best Management Practices for Forestry guidelines include preservation and maintenance procedures for the following amenities and tactics: 1) Streamside Management Zones, 2) Stream Crossings, 3) Forest Roads, 4) Timber Harvesting, 5) Reforestation/Stand Management, 6) Forested Wetland Management, 7) and Revegetation/Stabilization.

**Figure EF-1. Threatened and Endangered Species in  
Blount and Etowah Counties**



**Mohr's Barbara Buttons**



**Northern Long-eared Bat**



**Southern Pigtoe**



**Gray bat**



**Trispot Darter**



**Flattened Musk Turtle**

## ***Analytical Summary***

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter.

### ***Steep Slopes***

Altoona has considerable steep slope coverage, as previously discussed, affecting over a third of the town, approximately 1,026 acres and 35% land coverage within the town limits. Steep slopes run throughout the town limits, with the most prevalent steep slopes in the southern areas. Most of this area should be preserved for parks and recreation, with low density residential development where feasible.

### ***Floodplains***

Altoona's 100-year floodplains are located primarily along Mining Pond Branch, Whippoorwill Creek, and their tributaries, running through central portions of the town, and along the Locust Fork River, a major tributary of the Black Warrior River, in eastern Altoona. Floodplain acreage constitutes approximately 55 acres of 100-year (2% of the total land area).

### ***Flood Prone Areas***

Flood prone areas cover approximately 499 acres in the town, which is 16.8% of the total town acreage. These areas are typically adjacent to or overlapping floodplains following streams and riverbanks.

#### **Septic-Restrictive Areas (Areas Requiring Sewer)**

Septic restrictive areas (areas requiring sewer) ranked second to steep slopes in town area coverage accounting for approximately 963 acres and 32% of the total land area. These areas consist of soil unfit for septic system percolation and drainage and extend extensively throughout the town.

### ***Water Resources***

Altoona's primary water resource is the Locust Fork River, located in the far eastern areas of the town. Other water resources in and surrounding the town include Mining Pond Branch in west Altoona, and Whippoorwill Creek in central portions of the town. Smaller waterways include Kinchelow Creek, Hale Creek, and the Mining Pond. Altoona waterways are tributaries to the Black Warrior River.

### ***Wetlands***

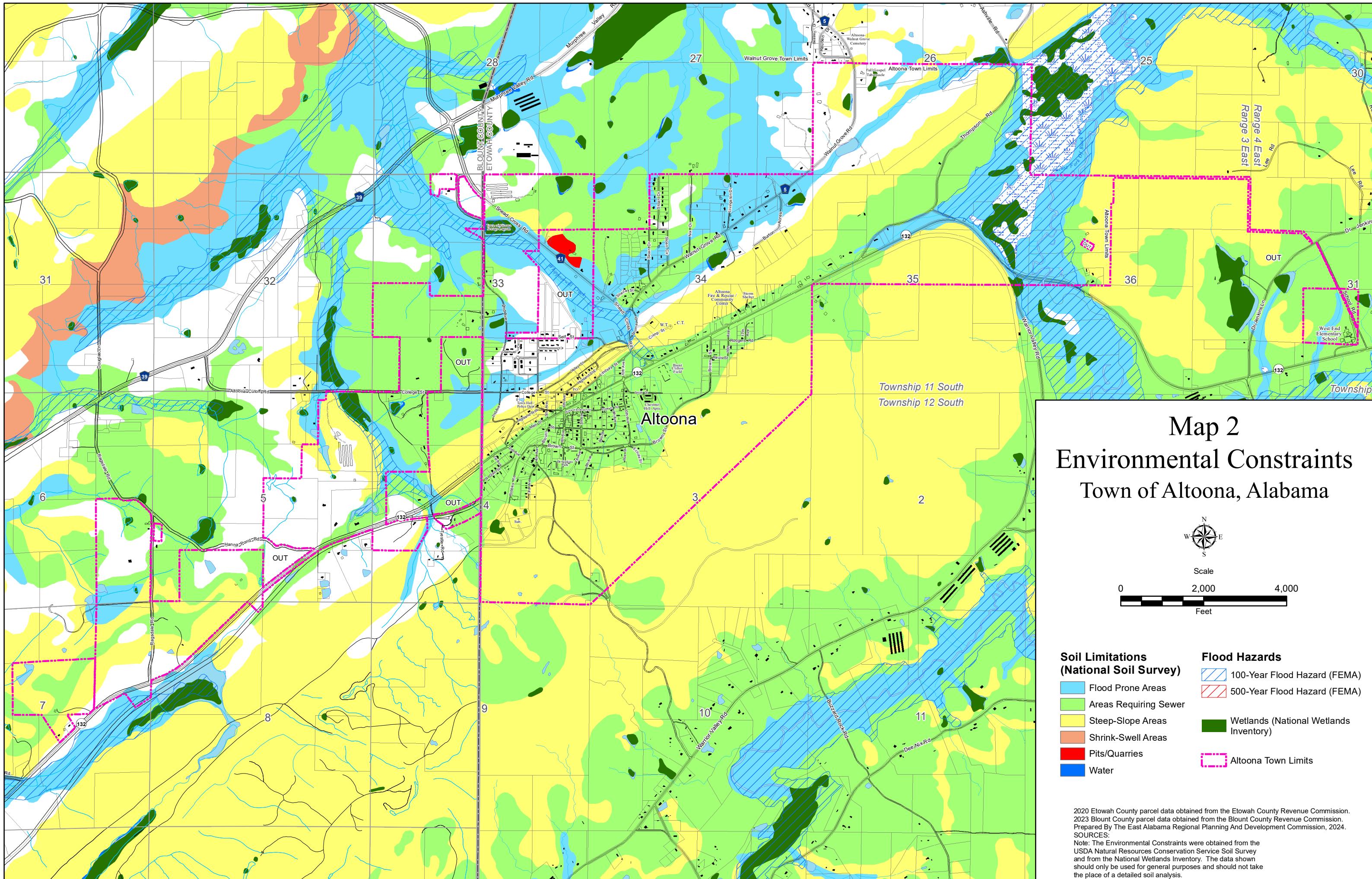
Altoona determined wetland areas, such as freshwater pond comprising 22.94 acres (0.8%) and freshwater forested/shrub accounting for 32.66 acres (1.1%) are located mainly in far eastern Altoona and in some northern areas, typically near or overlapping floodplains.

### ***Wildlife Habitats***

Opportunity exists for wildlife habitat preservation in Altoona. As a planning consideration, Altoona should promote and encourage land and wildlife preservation in order to enhance the town's natural beauty and wildlife viability. Wildlife preservation could be promoted through designation of conservation easements in floodplains, steep slopes, and other areas where development is already substantially limited.

## ***Threatened and Endangered Species***

There are 34 threatened and endangered species that call Blount and Etowah Counties home. As a planning consideration, in order to protect and maintain plant and animal species, Altoona could implement Best Management Practices for Forestry. The Best Management Practices for Forestry guidelines include preservation and maintenance procedures for the following amenities and tactics: 1) Streamside Management Zones, 2) Stream Crossings, 3) Forest Roads, 4) Timber Harvesting, 5) Reforestation/Stand Management, 6) Forested Wetland Management, 7) and Revegetation/Stabilization. These practices are regularly maintained and updated by the Alabama Forestry Commission.



# CHAPTER 4: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

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A comprehensive plan must explore existing land use and development trends in order to understand how the town has developed, why it developed as it did, and what development will most likely occur given the current trends. A proper understanding of land use and development patterns allows officials to make informed decisions affecting the orderly growth and development of their town.

The purpose of the land use chapter is to guide and direct development with the goal of sustaining orderly and coordinated development in accordance to changing needs, both presently and in the future. This chapter examines existing land use and proposes a future land use plan which gives recommendations for coordinating better land use within the town. The future land use plan and accompanying Future Land Use Map (Map#4) is a conceptual future plan to be used in guiding development decisions. It is not intended to be used as a zoning map or even to reflect similarities to districts on a zoning map, rather it is to be used as a conceptual vision for the community's future.

## ***Definitions***

The following land use categories are described below for use in the Altoona Comprehensive Plan.

### **Single-Family Residential**

Areas intended for a detached residential dwelling unit, other than a mobile home, designed for and occupied by one family only.

### **Multi-Family Residential**

Areas intended for detached residential units containing two or more dwelling units such as duplexes, townhomes, condominiums, dormitories, and apartments.

### **Commercial**

Areas intended for shopping centers, free-standing stores, service establishments, offices, and in some cases residential uses.

### **Industrial**

Areas intended for manufacturing and research and development facilities.

### **Public and Semi-Public**

Areas intended for public and semi-public uses including town governmental offices, public schools, churches and cemeteries.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Public areas intended for recreational use including athletic fields, playgrounds, and nature areas.

### **Agriculture**

Areas actively engaged in or suited for farm production under specified conditions.

### **Undeveloped/Forestry**

Includes private and vacated land upon which no development or active use is apparent. Included in this category is roadway, railroad, and utility rights-of-way and forested land, which may or may not be actively engaged in timber production.

## Existing Land Use

Existing land use data helps communities determine how a town will develop and what types of development it favors and does not favor. The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission maps and records data on land use in the town limits. Altoona has approximately 2,703 total land use acres, which does not include rights-of-way and bodies of water. Approximately 1,762 acres in the town are undeveloped leaving room for development as environmental constraints allow. For more detail on existing land use see Map# 3: Existing Land Use. Table LU-1 shows existing land use acreage for the Town of Altoona in 2023.

**Table LU-1. Existing Land Use Acreage: Town of Altoona, 2023**

Land Use Category	Acres in Town	% of Total Land Area	% of Developed Land Area
Agricultural	569.47	21.1%	60.5%
Commercial	21.21	0.8%	2.3%
Industrial	12.29	0.5%	1.3%
Single-Family Residential	273.35	10.1%	29.0%
Multi-Family Residential	16.39	0.6%	1.7%
Public	34.56	1.3%	3.7%
Parks & Recreation	13.87	0.5%	1.5%
Undeveloped/Vacant	1,761.65	65.2%	N/A
Total Land Use Area (minus water &ROW)	2,702.80	100.0%	N/A
Total Developed Land	941.15	34.8%	100.0%

Source: EARPDC database, 2023.

## Agriculture

Agriculture is, significantly, the largest and most dominant developed land use in the town with 569 acres (21% of the total town land use area and 60% of developed land within the town limits). Much of the agricultural land extends to the town's eastern and western areas, following various bodies of water.

## Commercial

Approximately 21 acres (0.8% of the total land use area and 2% of the total developed areas) in Altoona is dedicated to commercial development. Much of this land is located downtown and along State Route 132, running across central portions of the town. Downtown is comprised mostly of small business establishments around 6th Avenue. A goal for the town is to promote and expand existing businesses, in the downtown and throughout the town, and attract more commercial uses in the town, as environmental constraints, particularly floodplains, allow.

## Industrial

Altoona utilizes about 12 acres for industrial development (0.5% of the total land use area and 1% of the total developed). The town's limited industrial land is located near central Altoona, including Snead Wholesale. As a general goal the town should continue to promote and enhance industrial development in areas on the outskirts of the town.

## **Residential**

Residential land use in the form of single-family housing is spread throughout the town, with the highest concentrations in west-central Altoona near commercial and public facilities. Single-family residential constitutes a sizeable portion of the town, with approximately 273 acres (10% of the total land use area and 29% of the developed). Multi-family residential comprises a much smaller portion of land use with 16 acres in the town (0.6% of total land use area and 1.7% developed) and occupies pockets in the west-central portion of the town.

## **Parks and Recreation**

Ample Parks and Recreation lands can tremendously impact the health and quality of life of citizens. The Town of Altoona offers 14 acres for parks and recreation, accounting for 0.5% of total land use area and 1.5% of developed land area in the town. Parks and Recreation land uses are spread throughout central Altoona.

## **Public/Semi-Public**

Provision of public land use plays an important role in community services. Altoona's public/semi-public land accounts for 35 acres (1% total land use and 4% of the developed) is spread throughout the town with most of the land serving the town cemeteries, public service facilities, churches, and schools, among various other parcels located in the central/downtown area of the town.

## **Undeveloped**

The single most dominant land use in the town is undeveloped, consisting of 1,762 acres and 65% of total land use area. The majority of this land is located along steep slopes and flood prone areas surrounding developed portions of the town. Some of this land could be considered for parks and recreation expansion.

## **Land Use Plan**

As a community grows and expands, a plan for land use and development is critical for guiding the town in a manner that logically and efficiently meets town goals and objectives. The Town of Altoona desires to grow in a manner that effectively and efficiently utilizes land and community resources. The future land use plan and accompanying map (See Map# 4: Future Land Use) provides general guidance in this directive. This land use plan offers guidance and direction for land use planning based on land use types and gives some specific recommendations for improving land use in the town.

## **Planning for Land Use by Type**

The following highlights offer general guidance for each land use type regarding land use planning and development in the town:

**Low-Density and Medium-Density:** Single-family residential should be promoted as the major residential use throughout the town. The town should use potential infill in established neighborhoods, outside wetlands, floodplains, and septic restrictive areas, to protect development and increase housing values. Ideally, single-family should be developed near and have substantial access to major roadways to enhance traffic circulation and highway access. New single-family developments should be built to include sidewalks, at least along one side of the street to provide walkable and safe neighborhood transport for residents and visitors traveling on foot.

**High-Density:** Multi-family should be promoted and encouraged to locate in the downtown and central part of the town, where development is more intensive and the accompanying infrastructure—such as roads and water—can sustain higher population densities and higher traffic volumes. Multi-family developments could be promoted as potential infill near established or potential commercial areas to provide an increased customer base for local business in the town's central part.

**Commercial:** Compact commercial development and small business establishment should be promoted in the central and

downtown area with larger and more intensive commercial establishments on major highways such as State Route 132.

**Industrial:** Industrial development should be promoted and encouraged, through land use planning, to locate on the outskirts of the town where land is more abundant and larger tracts more available. Industrial areas should also be in locations with proximity to major highways to provide industries with convenient access to the type of transportation infrastructure needed to effectively and efficiently deliver large-scale goods and services.

**Public and Semi-public:** Adequate expansion land should be reserved for important community facilities such as schools and other town service buildings.

**Environmental Constraints:** Accommodations for environmental constraints must be considered in a land use plan. Steep slopes and flood prone areas should be reserved for parks and recreation and where feasible, low-density residential.

## ***Land Use Recommendations***

The following is a list of specific recommendations for improving land use and development in the Town of Altoona:

**Annexations:** Consider annexing into the town various spots of unincorporated land in the eastern and southern sections in particular. Incorporation of these areas will grow the town and provide more areas for needed residences and public and recreational facilities. Such areas should be brought in as single family residential or in compliance with current use.

Future annexations for the town should only be considered for areas where the town can extend proper service provisions such as water and garbage collection.

## ***General Recommendations***

Clarence Perry's "Neighborhood Unit" philosophy lends itself well to Altoona Future Land Use planning. Perry's ideas value community centers, walkability, and connectivity to neighborhoods throughout the town.

Neighborhoods are a fundamental building block of a town. When growth brings several neighborhoods bound tightly together, a town is established. There are five crucial ingredients to ideal neighborhood development.

### **Identifiable Center & Edge**

There should be a "heart" to each neighborhood: an important public space such as a park, square, landmark, etc. This provides a space for the community to come together. Edges may vary more and may take the shape of a mixed-use street, trail corridor, or other similar feature.

### **Limited in Size**

The neighborhood should be easily walkable, approximately 5 minutes from an edge to the center. This makes the neighborhood easily navigable, even without driving, which enables familiarity and the opportunity to get to know one's neighbors.

### **Mix of Land Uses, Building Types, Housing Types, & Prices**

Variety of this type allows citizens to satisfy many of their daily needs within their own neighborhoods. It welcomes a wider range of income levels and household types as well, blending generations, increasing inclusion, and avoiding potentially socially harmful poverty concentrations.

### **Integrated Network of Walkable Streets**

Physical activity, utilization of public facilities, and added value to real estate can be fostered by connected, beautiful, and walkable streets.

## **Reserved Sites for Civic Purposes**

Neighborhoods should prioritize public and semipublic places that bring the community together such as public buildings, places of worship, parks, and gathering places. Shared places like these can serve as a center or bring character and meaning to a community. Anchors like public buildings can bring a level of certainty to communities, as they tend to be more permanent than residences or commercial locations.

### **References:**

Dover, V. (2020, May 17). Every Neighborhood Should Have These Five Things. Dover, Kohl & Partners. <https://www.doverkohl.com/blog/2020/5/10/every-neighborhood-should-have-these-five-things>

Perry, C. (1929) The Neighborhood Unit. The Regional Plan of New York and its Environs.

## ***Analytical Summary***

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### ***Public/Semi-Public***

Provision of public land use plays an important role in community services. Altoona's public/semi-public land accounts for 35 acres (1% total land use and 4% of the developed) is spread throughout the town with most of the land serving the town cemeteries, public service facilities, churches, and schools, among various other parcels located in the central/downtown area of the town.

### ***Undeveloped***

The single most dominant land use in the town is undeveloped, consisting of 1,762 acres and 65% of total land use area. The majority of this land is located along steep slopes and flood prone areas surrounding developed portions of the town. Some of this land could be considered for parks and recreation expansion.

# Map 3 Existing Land Use The Town Of **ALTOONA** ALABAMA

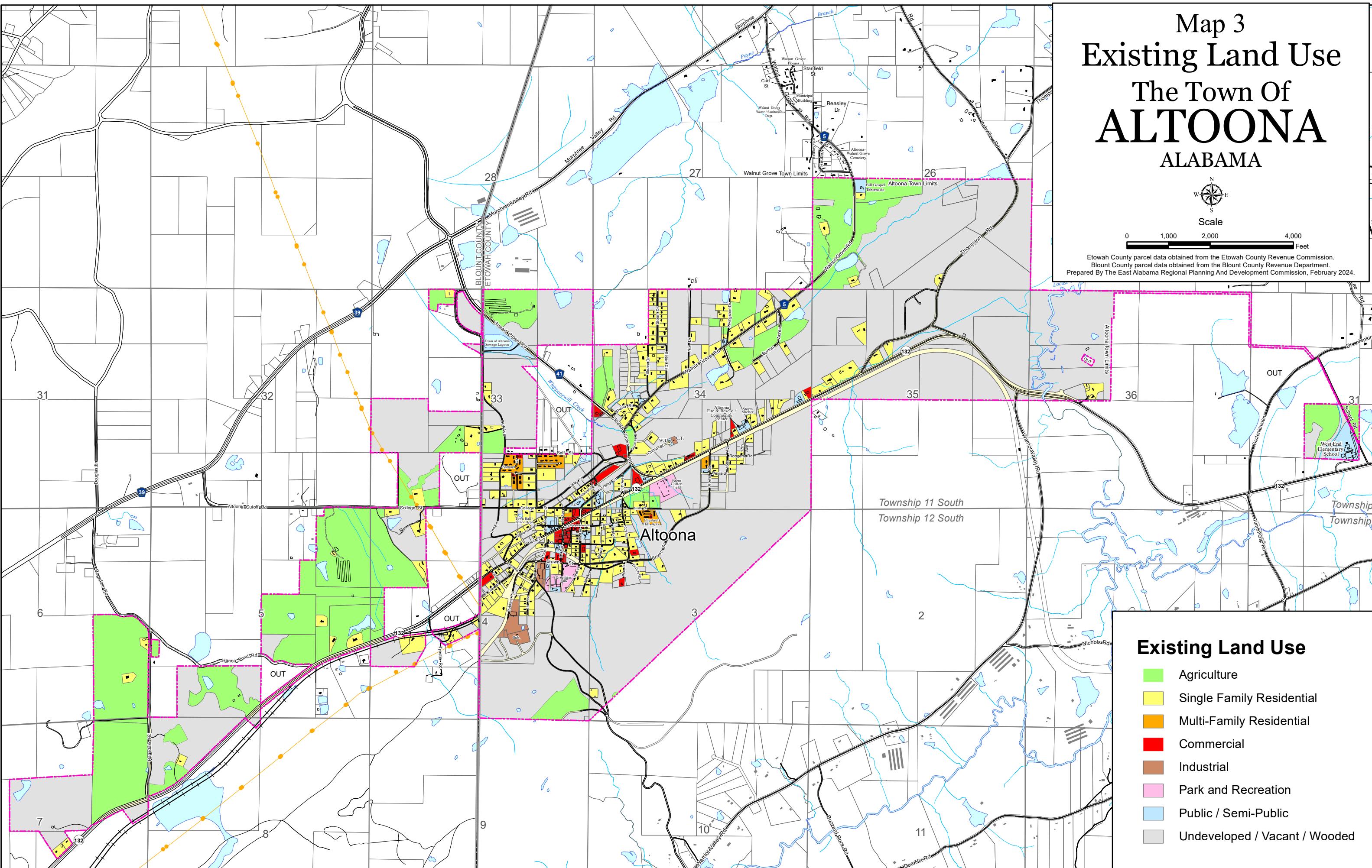


### Scale

2,000 4,000

Feet

Etowah County parcel data obtained from the Etowah County Revenue Commission.  
Blount County parcel data obtained from the Blount County Revenue Department.  
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, February 2024



# Map 4

## Future Land Use

### The Town Of ALTOONA ALABAMA



Scale

0 1,000

2,000

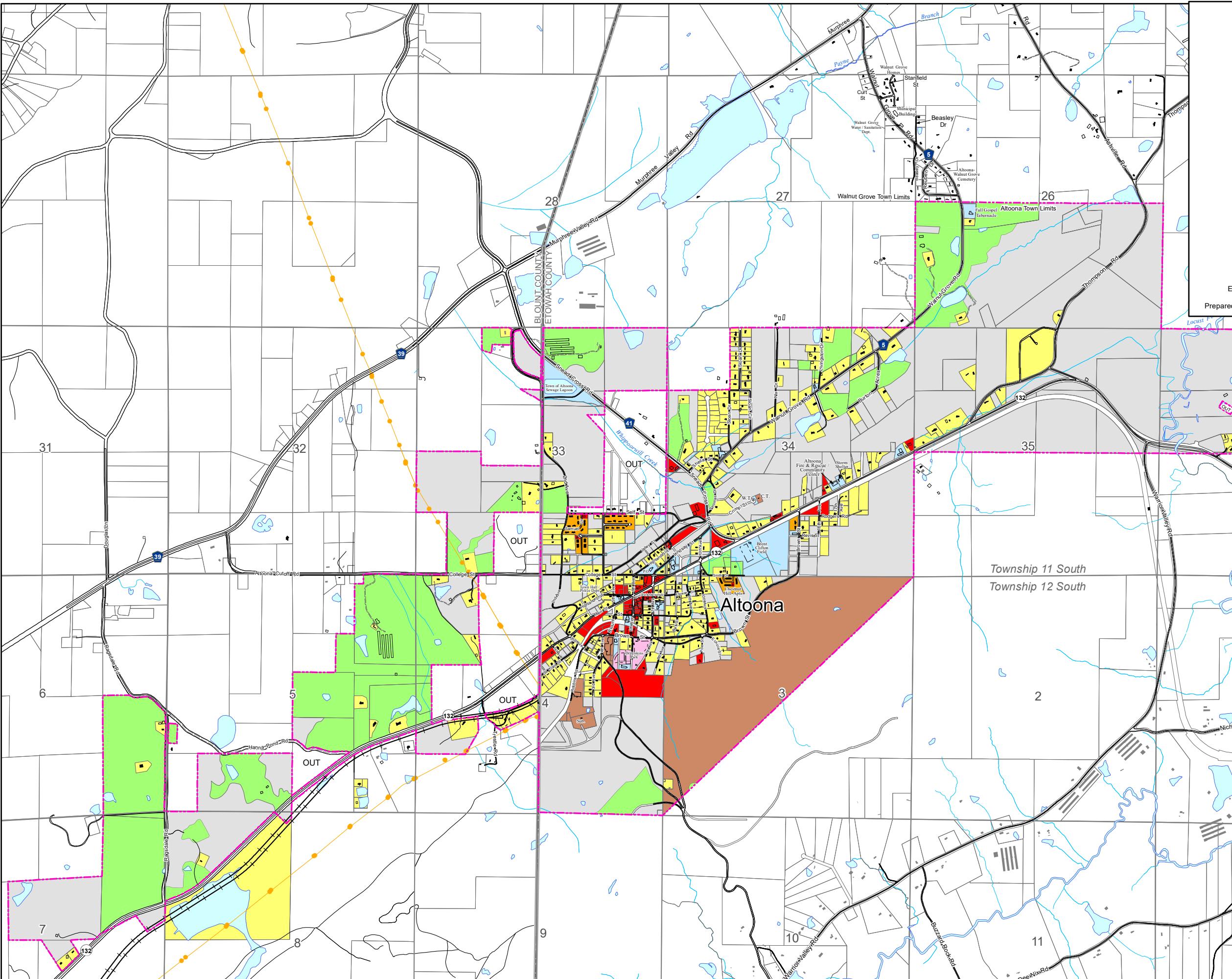
4,000

Feet

Etowah County parcel data obtained from the Etowah County Revenue Commission.  
Blount County parcel data obtained from the Blount County Revenue Department.  
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, February 2024.

#### Future Land Use

- Agriculture
- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park and Recreation
- Public / Semi-Public
- Undeveloped / Vacant / Wooded



# CHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION

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Transportation is an essential element and must be carefully planned and developed to best meet the needs of the community. As America continues to grow in population and more people rely on vehicular travel, transportation planning for the automobile will continue to be of major importance. Traffic flow and mobility influences the economic welfare and overall quality of life within a community. Routes with high traffic concentrations must be identified and properly planned to accommodate present conditions and anticipated future growth. Traffic patterns also direct locations for growth and development. Industries and businesses wishing to be made visible and accessible to the public and to their suppliers tend to locate along major traffic routes. A well-planned transportation system should save business and the general population time and money by allowing its users to deliver goods, services, and other resources as efficiently and safely as possible. Therefore, it is important to analyze a town's existing transportation infrastructure and outline efforts for improving its local transportation network.

This chapter provides information on existing traffic conditions and recommends actions to enhance the transportation infrastructure within the Town of Altoona. Traffic volumes along three major routes through the town, County Highway 41 (rural minor collector), Walnut Grove Road (rural minor collector), and Alabama State Route 132 (minor arterial) (Main Street) have been used to calculate maximum capacity and future growth projections to prioritize roadway improvement projects on these routes.

## ***Definitions***

When studying road transportation, it is useful to classify roads and streets according to their function. Road classifications can be used to identify road characteristics and whether these roads are eligible for federal funding. The highway functional classification system is organized into a hierarchical structure with interstates exhibiting the highest traffic volumes, followed by arterials—principal and minor, collectors—major and minor, and local roads. The following roadway definitions of the functional classification of roads and streets are described by the Alabama Highway Department of Transportation.

## ***Interstates***

Interstates are divided highways with full control of access and grade separation at all intersections. The controlled access inherent in interstates results in high-lane capacities, enabling these roadways to carry up to three times the amount of traffic per lane as arterials. Interstates move traffic at relatively high speeds. The Town of Altoona is located with somewhat distant access to an interstate freeway system. Interstate 59, connecting south to Birmingham and north to Chattanooga is accessible, with Exit 174 located 17.6 miles to the southeast and Exit 181 located 18 miles to the east of the town.

## ***Arterial Streets***

Arterial streets are designed to handle large volumes of traffic. Arterials serve primarily as feeders to the interstate system and act as major connectors between land-use concentrations. With a suggested lane width of twelve feet, this class of roadway may be separated by a median. A secondary purpose of an arterial is to provide some access to adjacent property. A curb lane for parking, loading, and unloading should not be permitted due to interference with traffic flow. There are two classifications of arterials: principal and minor. Principal arterial highways connect communities to freeways and expressways while minor arterial highways join with principal arterial highways and collectors. The major principal arterial highway traversing near Altoona is U.S. Route 278.

## ***Collector Streets***

Collector streets serve the purpose of collecting and distributing the traffic from the local streets to the arterials. With a suggested lane width of twelve feet, collectors are important for serving adjacent property and loading and unloading goods. Typically, collectors have lower volumes of traffic to accommodate shorter distance trips.

## **Local Streets**

Local streets, designed to provide access to abutting property, are usually no wider than twelve feet. Most residential streets and alleys are considered local streets.

## **Administrative Street Classification**

Streets are not classified by function only, but also by which entity owns and maintains them. Through an administrative street classification system, governments can identify which entity is responsible for a particular roadway and designate funding for projects accordingly. The Administrative Street classification categories are as follows:

### **Federal Highways**

Federal highways are owned and funded by the US Department of Transportation; the State Department of Transportation coordinates improvements on these roadways. US Route 278 and US Highway 11 are examples local to Altoona.

### **Other Federal Roads**

These roads are owned and maintained by other federal agencies, such as the US Department of the Interior. These roadways include national forest roads and national park service roads.

### **State Highways**

State Highways are owned and maintained by the State Department of Transportation both in unincorporated portions of a county and within municipal corporate boundaries. AL State Route 132 is the state route passing through Altoona.

### **County Roads**

County roads can be divided into two types: (1) roads owned and maintained by the county; and (2) roads owned by the county but maintained by the municipality with county agreement.

### **Municipal Streets**

Municipal streets consist of all other public roads inside town boundaries (excludes private roads). All public roads in Altoona not listed in the other classifications fall into this category.

### **Private Roads**

Private roads are not publicly funded but should be considered when planning future municipal street network expansions. This classification includes subdivision roads not dedicated to the town and substantially long, shared driveways.

### **Traffic Volumes and Capacity**

Traffic volumes are useful to determine traffic flow throughout a community, identify areas of high, medium, and low traffic volumes, and how traffic flow has been directed and changed over time. This data can be used to direct where road improvements, property access, and land developments should occur and the extent to which these occurrences should be administered. Traffic volume data was collected from strategically placed traffic counters, which are identified by their mile marker positions. Traffic volumes are measured from Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts at these positions. Annual Average Daily Traffic is simply an indicator of the number of vehicles traveling on a particular section of roadway on any particular day for a given year.

After AADT is determined, it is compared to practical capacity to check if present volumes can adequately serve the public or not.

Capacities are calculated by ALDOT using three data inputs: functional classification, number of lanes, and type of developments adjacent to the roadway.

In order to determine how many more vehicles a particular portion of roadway can adequately serve the formula V/C (V= Traffic Volume and C= Traffic Capacity) is calculated to produce a ratio. If the ratio is less than 1 then capacity is adequate for that road and improvements are not mandatory. However, if the ratio is 1 or more than 1 then capacity is surpassing or has surpassed the maximum number of vehicles the road is designed to properly serve. For example, a rural principal arterial in an undeveloped area may adequately serve up to 32,500 vehicles per day. Should the AADT be 25,000 then: V/C calculates as 0.76. Next:  $100 - 0.76 = 0.24\%$  capacity available.

Another method used to determine if present volumes are adequate or not is to compare traffic volumes along a road type with Level of Service (LOS). The Alabama Department of Transportation has provided definitions for LOS, which are as follows:

<b>Level of Service A</b>	<b>Free traffic flow</b>
<b>Level of Service B</b>	<b>Stable traffic flow</b>
<b>Level of Service C</b>	<b>Stable traffic flow</b>
<b>Level of Service D</b>	<b>High-density stable traffic flow</b>
<b>Level of Service E</b>	<b>Capacity level traffic flow</b>
<b>Level of Service F</b>	<b>Forced or breakdown traffic flow</b>

Ideal traffic flow is Service level A, but B and C permit adequate traffic flow as well. Service level D is high-density stable traffic flow. When traffic volumes reach level D, plans to accommodate higher traffic volumes should be considered. Plans to accommodate more traffic are mandatory should traffic volumes meet or exceed levels E and F.

Traffic conditions in Altoona indicate LOS A continuously on all routes throughout the town.

## **County Road 41**

County Road 41 is a roadway extending from US Route 278 to AL State Route 132, connecting two major roadways local to the town. This route is classified as a two-lane undivided rural minor collector. Table T-1 shows AADT volumes for CR 41 in the Town of Altoona and the periphery from 2016 to 2021, 2021 Level of Service, and traffic count stations (For locations of traffic counts see Map 5: Transportation Plan.

**Table T-1. Traffic Volumes, CR 41: Town of Altoona**

Station	Location of Traffic Count	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	# Change	% Change	LOS
963	North of AL 132	650	650	637	637	637	926	276	42.5%	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

According to the Alabama Department of Transportation approved roadway capacities, maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided rural minor collector highway is set at 16,600 AADT, indicating that traffic volumes in the past five years, between 650 and 926 AADT, could increase many times over before reaching maximum capacity. However, traffic volumes indicate considerable increase at 43%, but nothing to warrant needed improvements in the immediate future. Traffic congestion along CR 41 does not appear to be a major concern for the town and, therefore, substantial improvements do not need consideration for the near future.

## Walnut Grove Road

Walnut Grove Road extends from the town center to the Town of Walnut Grove, connecting Altoona to its closest neighboring town. This route is classified as a two-lane undivided rural minor collector. Table T-2 shows AADT volumes for Walnut Grove Road in the Town of Altoona and the periphery from 2016 to 2021, 2021 Level of Service, and traffic count stations (For locations of traffic counts see Map 5: Transportation Plan.

Table T-2. Traffic Volumes, Walnut Grove Road: Town of Altoona										
Station	Location of Traffic Count	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	# Change	% Change	LOS
1302	South of town limits	590	590	496	496	489	517	-73	-12.4%	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

According to the Alabama Department of Transportation approved roadway capacities, maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided rural minor collector highway is set at 16,600 AADT, indicating that traffic volumes in the past five years, between 517 and 590 AADT, could increase many times over before reaching maximum capacity. Traffic volumes have decreased slightly on this roadway, so substantial improvements are likely not to be needed soon.

## AL State Route 132 (Main Street)

Alabama State Route 132 runs from U.S. Hwy. 278, through Altoona, and ends in Oneonta where it connects with Alabama Highway 75. The route is classified as a 2-lane undivided rural minor arterial throughout its length. This highway serves as Altoona's main connection to other communities such as Oneonta to the southwest, and with the connection to US 278 providing a close connection to Attalla and Gadsden. Table T-3 shows AADT volumes for AL SR 132 in the Town of Altoona and the periphery from 2016 to 2021 as well as accompanying LOS for each station location.

Table T-3. Traffic Volumes, AL SR 132: Town of Altoona										
Station	Location of Traffic Count	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	# Change	% Change	LOS
7	Southwest of town limits	1100	1140	1147	-	881	910	-190	-17.3%	A
538	South of Hanna Pond Road	1080	1110	1106	1115	1020	1049	-31	-2.9%	A
510	East of 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	980	950	1087	1087	1087	1075	95	9.7%	A
511	East of Warrior Valley Road	1500	1550	1477	1477	1477	1418	-82	-5.5%	A
512	West of Harrisville	1320	1360	1265	1265	1265	1273	-47	-3.6%	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

According to ALDOT traffic counts for AL SR 132 in Altoona, traffic volumes declined somewhat through most of the route with the most significant decreases in the western part of the town. This section of the route reported a somewhat considerable decrease of 17%. Maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided rural minor arterial is 17,800 AADT, which means that with traffic counts in the town ranging from 910 AADT in the western portion to 1,418 AADT in the eastern part, traffic volumes could quintuple before capacities would be reached. Given the trend of decline in traffic volumes and the considerable volume increase needed to reach maximum capacity, AL SR 132 should not need significant improvements in Altoona soon. The route through the town also shows LOS A, free flow, further indicating that significant improvements in the near future should not be needed.

## Traffic Projections

Traffic projections are used to give an indication of future traffic counts given current conditions occurring at the same rate for the same span of time. It is important to remember that these projections are not used to predict future traffic volumes. They only provide an expectation of what could happen if current trends and conditions remain the same. An example of how traffic count projections are calculated for a 5-year period north of AL 132 along County Road 41 is shown below:

Calculate the difference between the traffic volumes in the past 5 years.

2016 AADT is 650 - 2021 AADT is 926.  $926-650 = 276$ .

Second, the difference is divided by the earliest AADT examined, which is 2016 data.

Difference is 276 / AADT 2016 is 650.  $276 / 650 = .425$  or 42.5%, which is the growth rate for the 5-year period.

Third, the growth rate is multiplied by the traffic volume of the most recent year.

Growth rate is 42.5% x 926 AADT 2021.  $.425 \times 926 = 393.2$ . This calculation produces the estimated change over the next 5-year period, which is 393.

Lastly, the estimated change and the most recent AADT are summed.

Estimated change 393 + 926 AADT 2021.  $393 + 926 = 1,319$ . This calculation gives us the projected traffic count on this section of road for 2026, which is 1,319.

Altoona traffic projections from 2016 to 2031 show only minor changes in traffic volumes. All traffic count locations show continued LOS A, free flow traffic, and the majority of count stations reported loss in traffic volumes, indicating no need for significant roadway improvements in the near future. County Road 41 showed a somewhat substantial rise in traffic volumes, thus projecting higher traffic volumes, suggesting more traffic congestion in the future. Table T-4 displays AADT along Altoona's major routes from 2016 to 2021 and projects traffic volumes and LOS for 2026 and 2031.

**Table T-4. Town of Altoona: Traffic Volume Projections, 2016-2031**

Roadway	Location of Traffic Count	2016	2021	2026	2031	LOS
<b>CR 41</b> <b>Walnut Grove Road</b>	North of AL 132	650	926	1319	1879	A
	South of town limits	590	517	453	397	A
<b>AL SR 132</b>	South of town limits	1100	910	753	623	A
	South of Hanna Pond Road	1080	1049	1019	990	A
	East of 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	980	1075	1179	1293	A
	East of Warrior Valley Road	1500	1418	1340	1266	A
	West of Harrisville	1320	1273	1228	1185	A

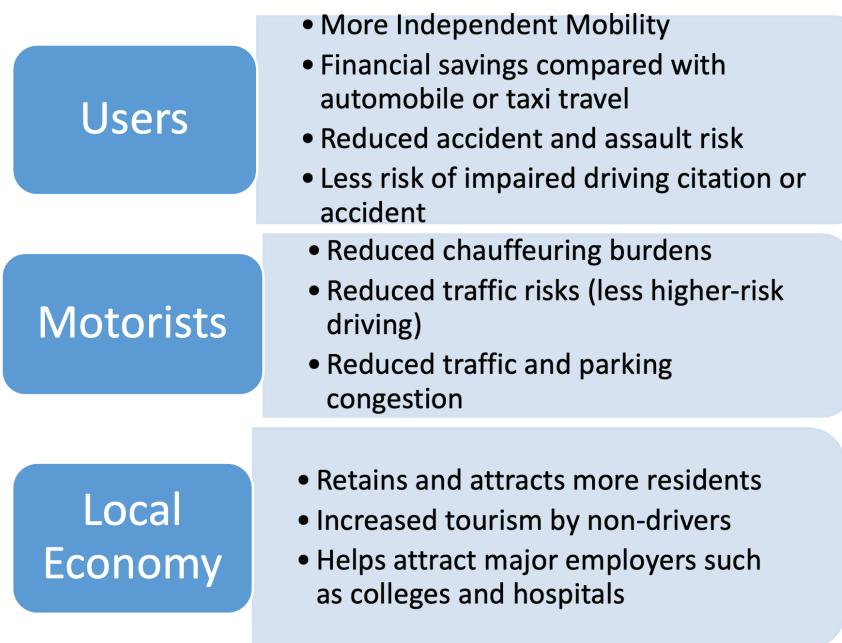
Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

## Rural Transportation Trends

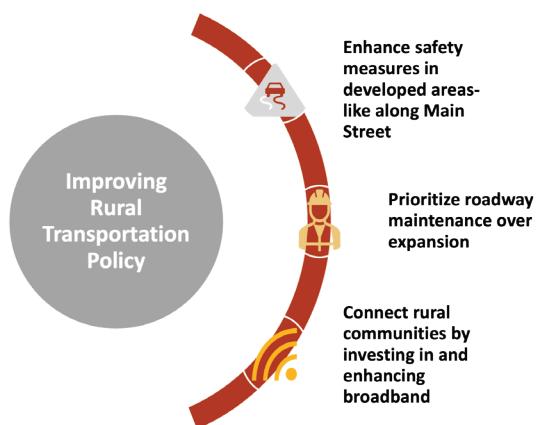
Mobility needs differ across communities, and local transportation issues in rural and small communities take a different approach than their urban counterparts. A June 2019 report from Todd Litman at the Victoria Transport Policy Initiative found eight primary trends and their corresponding impact on rural transportation demands. The graph below explores these trends and impacts on rural communities.

Trend	Explanation	Impact on Multi-Modal Demand
<i>Isolation</i>	Rural non-drivers experience social and economic isolation, particularly as rural services consolidate	Rural non-drivers need independent mobility options to participate in social and economic opportunities, and avoid imposing chauffeuring burdens
<i>Population aging &amp; disability</i>	Many rural areas are experiencing population aging and high disability rates	Many residents want to age in place, which requires mobility options for older and disabled people
<i>High transportation costs</i>	Many rural households spend more than they can afford on motor vehicles	Many rural residents want affordable mobility options, including public transit services suitable for commuting, shopping and socializing
<i>Poverty</i>	Many rural areas have high poverty rates	Many rural residents want improved walking, cycling and public transit options
<i>Changing travel preferences</i>	Many residents, particularly youths, want alternatives to driving	
<i>High traffic fatality rates</i>	Rural areas have high traffic death rates, and many traffic safety programs depend on some travelers' ability to reduce their driving	Improving travel options, particularly for youths, people with disabilities, and law-abiding drinkers can help increase traffic safety
<i>Poor public fitness &amp; health</i>	Many rural residents are sedentary and overweight, and suffer associated health problems including diabetes and heart diseases	Improving and encouraging active modes (walking and cycling) is an effective strategy for improving public fitness and health
<i>Economic opportunity &amp; development</i>	Many rural areas want to improve education and employment opportunities, and support local industries	Improving travel options increases economic opportunity and development by providing access to schools and jobs, and by supporting industries such as tourism and retirement services

Source: SUMC MLC, Rural and Small-Town Transportation Planning; Todd Litman,



Source: Todd Litman, Public Transportation's Impact on Rural and Small Towns: A Vital Mobility Link



Source: Bellis & Laska, Rural Communities Need Better Transportation Policy

## ***Rural Multimodal Planning***

Public transportation is one option discussed above; public transportation can help rural communities become more efficient and equitable. Although public transit only serves a minor portion of total rural inhabitants, many of those trips are crucial. Failing to serve the needs of those needing access to basic healthcare, shopping, education, and employment can be costly. Benefits of rural public transit are discussed below.

As a growing and thriving community, Altoona needs to plan for effective and efficient transportation. The primary form of transportation throughout the Town of Altoona is personal vehicular with most traffic generation along the main route, Alabama State Route 132.

Although, as shown in traffic volume information, there is little need for street widening improvements in the immediate future, Altoona should create and implement a plan to improve and enhance local roadways which are not owned and maintained through state or federal jurisdiction, namely local and collector streets.

## ***Paving/Repaving Projects***

As a part of Altoona's transportation plan, the town should consider maintaining existing roadways through properly planned paving and re-paving projects. To properly maintain existing roadway infrastructure, paving/repaving projects in the town should be considered.

## ***Analytical Summary***

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter and sets forth broad recommendations.

### ***Traffic Volumes and Capacity***

#### ***County Road 41***

Traffic Capacity and Assessment: According to the Alabama Department of Transportation approved roadway capacities, maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided rural minor collector highway is set at 16,600 AADT, indicating that traffic volumes in the past five years, between 650 and 926 AADT, could increase many times over before reaching maximum capacity.

Recommendations: No improvements needed in the near future.

#### ***Walnut Grove Road***

Traffic Capacity and Assessment: According to the Alabama Department of Transportation approved roadway capacities, maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided rural minor collector highway is set at 16,600 AADT, indicating that traffic volumes in the past five years, between 517 and 590 AADT, could increase many times over before reaching maximum capacity.

Recommendations: No improvements needed in the near future.

#### ***AL State Route 132***

Traffic Capacity and Assessment: %. Maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided rural minor arterial is 17,800 AADT, which means that with traffic counts in the town ranging from 910 AADT in the western portion to 1,418 AADT in the eastern part, traffic volumes could quintuple before capacities would be reached.

Recommendations: No improvements needed in the near future.

# Map 5

## Transportation Network

### The Town Of

# ALTOONA

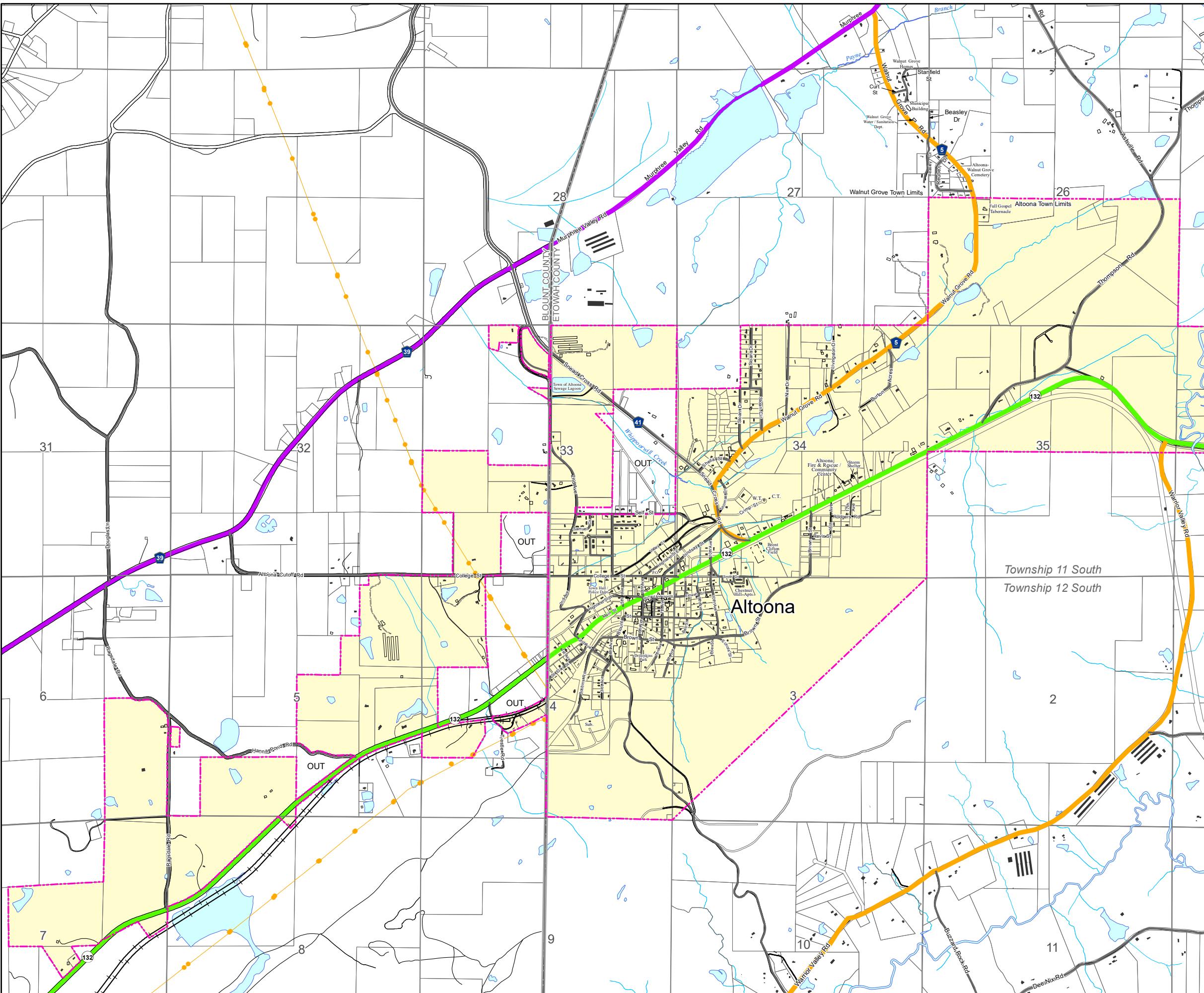
### ALABAMA



Scale

0 1,000 2,000 4,000  
Feet

Etowah County parcel data obtained from the Etowah County Revenue Commission.  
Blount County parcel data obtained from the Blount County Revenue Department.  
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, February 2024.



# CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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Community facilities are crucial to the planning effort, affecting growth and development throughout the town. Accessibility to community facilities and the extent to which they serve the community has a direct influence on land use patterns and development trends within the town. Properties with direct access to utilities such as municipal water, sewer, and gas can develop at reduced costs and safely support greater developments than properties in more remote and unserviceable areas. Also, a town creates additional opportunities for growth and development by upgrading and extending their services to other areas of the town. Community facilities must have plans for conducting continued maintenance while ensuring quality service, meeting the needs of a diverse and changing population. Nine community facilities have been identified and discussed in this chapter. These include town administration, law enforcement, fire and rescue, housing authority, parks and recreation, street department, maintenance department, gas utilities, and water and sewer utilities. For more information, please see Map #6: Community Facilities.

The purpose of this chapter is to inventory existing community facilities and services, assess their capacity to serve existing and future needs, and suggest improvements and expansions for meeting these needs. To determine current community facility goals and needs, surveys were distributed to facility and department leaders and collected by the Altoona Town Administration. This chapter reviews these findings in context and as a needs summation in the analytical summary at the end of the chapter.

## ***Town Administration***

Town administration for the Town of Altoona oversees the daily tasks and functions needed to operate and maintain town-owned public facilities and services throughout the community. Altoona Town Hall was built in 1971 and expanded in 2015. Offices located in Altoona Town Hall include the following:

- ▶ Emergency Dispatch (Police, Fire, EMS)
- ▶ Police Department (Chief and Interrogation Room)
- ▶ Water and Sewer Department
- ▶ Town Administrator
- ▶ Billing Clerk
- ▶ Town Clerk
- ▶ Town Magistrate/Human Resources
- ▶ Mayor

Town Hall is used for a variety of town functions such as Town Council meetings and public hearings as well as special meetings as the need arises. Municipal Court sessions are held in the Council Chambers. Each month the Planning Board conducts regular meetings and holds public hearings when applicable. A-Med training takes place here as well. Recreation Board meetings and Water and Sewer Board Meetings are also held at the Town Hall. The Town Hall facility is currently adequate for the town's needs.

## ***Town Council***

Altoona's town government consists of five council members and the Mayor. Elected officials serve 4-year terms, elected at the same time and running consecutively. Council meetings are conducted in Town Hall at 5:00 PM the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

## Planning Commission

Altoona's Planning and Zoning Board's was established to serve the community by promoting and guiding development in accordance with town policy and plans. Commission representation consists of nine (9) members, seven (7) of which are appointed by the mayor and approved by Town Council, one (1) Town Council member, and the Mayor or the Mayor's designee. Terms are served in staggered duration. In addition, the Planning Commission may elect members currently serving within the Commission as Chairman (to serve for 1 year), Chairman Pro-tempore (1 year), and Secretary (to serve at the pleasure of the Commission).

## Town Administration Needs

Altoona Town Administration proposed needs include the following:

- ▶ Funds
- ▶ Computer upgrades. Administration computers and servers are at least a decade old.
- ▶ Upgrades to some software. Time clock, and some aspects of the payroll software, as well as some billing software are outdated.

## Public Safety

### Law Enforcement

Altoona's Police Department was founded in 1918 and has the mission to provide excellent service and protection through leadership, professionalism, and a partnership with the community. The police department is currently located at 2844 Main Street, and detainees are housed at the Etowah County Jail. Department staff currently consists of 3 full-time officers, 1 part-time officer, and the Police Chief. The current ratio of residents to officers is approximately 1 officer per 325 residents. The national average for cities of fewer than 10,000 residents is 3.5 officers per 1,000 residents, which places Altoona at slightly below average. In the department's opinion, at least one more full-time officer and part-time officer would be adequate to serve the need.

Emergency calls are dispatched and managed through a central dispatch system under the control of Etowah County's 911 system, as well as an in-house dispatch for the local emergency line. Altoona's police jurisdiction extends 1.0 mile outside the corporate limits. At present there are no plans to expand the police jurisdiction.

Minor thefts, harassment, and trespassing are the most prevalent crimes in Altoona. Frequent patrolling is needed in areas where these crimes seem to be ongoing. The department feels successful in these efforts, but more personnel are needed to help increase police presence in the town.

#### **The Altoona Police Department currently owns and maintains the following vehicles:**

5-2016 Ford Tauruses

The department would like to upgrade the fleet as funding becomes available with newer vehicles that are equipped with updated computers and radio; firearms are adequate and were recently updated.

The department is currently uninvolved in any community programs, but is exploring the possibility of community relations programs such as "coffee with a cop", in which the officers can meet and have discussions with the public. They are also considering the "explorer program" for the youth, which has been successful at numerous other departments.

- Needs for the police department include:
- Reliable patrol vehicles to get to and from calls for service., fully equipped with all the tools needed to serve the public.
- Computers, in-car radios, and fully functional equipment in vehicles
- More officers
- Updated and new equipment needs are needed first in order to have the equipment for any new officers hired.

## **Fire and Rescue**

The Altoona Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1971. During this time, the Fire Department was composed of citizens of Altoona whose primary goal was to serve the citizens of Altoona and other areas around town for “fire-related calls”. Today, the Altoona Volunteer Fire Department responds to many types of emergencies. In addition to fire calls, the department responds to rescue and medical calls, hazardous materials calls, weather events, and landing zone standbys for air transport. The department also has automatic aid and mutual aid agreements with several departments for whenever help is needed. The department’s goal is to respond to every call in a professional manner with the best possible outcome on each call.

The department is currently considered a combination department, due to consisting of a Chief and volunteers. The department currently consists of 2 part-time, and 14 volunteer firefighters. Two members are paramedics. This is a basic life support department and can only provide services to that level. Currently, there are two firefighters with paramedic training almost complete, and one in EMT basic training. There is also one EMT-intermediate, two EMT-basics, and six trained to the level of “emergency medical responder” in the department. The department currently has enough personnel to adequately serve the community in most situations. For structure fires, the department is dependent on mutual aid departments to assist due to lack of volunteer work availability. At least two more full-time firefighters would help the situation by providing one firefighter each to cover the afternoon and night shifts.

The majority of emergency calls are handled and dispatched through the Etowah County 911 Communications District, including a CAD system that dispatches Active911 activations through department cell phones. A smaller number of calls are dispatched through Amed Dispatch, the service operated by the town, or Blount County 911 Center. Fire department jurisdiction encompasses approximately 5.5 square miles for primary coverage of the town, but the department assists other departments along the town limits, adding an additional 35-40 square miles.

Services provided include medical and rescue, severe weather calls, hazardous materials incidents, and public safety and education. Public safety and education includes the following: a smoke detector program, which includes obtaining and installing the detectors, “Remember When” program for elderly citizens, and a “Control the Bleed” course for the faculty of the elementary and high school and the daycares. This course is also offered to other departments and civic organizations.

### **Current vehicles used by Altoona Volunteer Fire Department include:**

1-1991 E-One 1250gpm pumper

1-1997 E-One 1500gpm Quint

1-1998 Ford F-350 BLS Rescue/Service Truck

1-1989 Ford F-350 Brush Truck with a 200gpm Pump

1-2003 Dodge Ram 2500 BLS Pickup Truck

**Current equipment used by the Altoona Volunteer Fire Department:**

1-AmKus IS280 DC Spreader

1-AmKus IC516 Cutter

1-Sava Air Bag System

2-Portable DC DeWalt Light Stands

1-DeWalt DC Chainsaw and K-9 Saw

2-Flir K2 Thermal Imaging Cameras

1-SuperVac DC Positive Pressure Fan

1-HURST Hydraulic Spreader and Cutter with a Gasoline Quantum Pump

1-LifePak 15 Monitor/Defibrillator

1-Stryker Lukas Device

1-MAKO 4500psi Compressor with a 2 Bottle Cascade Unit

At this time, when finances become available the department is replacing its AC and Hydraulic powered equipment to DC. The department has also been applying through FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants, for the past 3 years for a 2000-gallon Pumper/Tanker. Efforts have been unsuccessful so far. Applications are in progress for Community Development Block Grants for two new light towers as well, which will replace the two light towers owned currently.

The fire department should work with the town to create fire protection and prevention efficiency and effectiveness, which is based on criteria and classified into a rating system, developed by the International Standards Organization's (ISO) Public Protection Classification Program (PPCP). This rating system ranks approximately 44,000 fire department jurisdictions across the country on a scale of 1 to 10. A rating of 1 signifies exemplary fire protection while a 10 indicates that the department does not meet minimum ISO standards and stronger measures must be taken. The ISO defines any property within 1,000 feet of a hydrant as "town" and any property further than 1,000 feet from a hydrant as "rural". Thus a dual rating is assigned with the first rating being the town rating (area with hydrants) and the second the rural rating (area without hydrants). ISO criteria are based on three major evaluated categories which include:

- Fire alarms—communications center, telephone service, emergency listings in phone book, and dispatch circuits,
- Fire department—type and extent of fire personnel training, number of people in training, emergency response time, maintenance and testing of fire-fighting equipment,
- Water supply—available water supply exceeding daily consumption, components of water supply system such as pumps, storage, and filtration, water flow rate, fire hydrant condition, maintenance, and distribution.
- These ISO measures, through the PPCP, give communities an objective approach in evaluating fire suppression services by establishing country-wide standards that help its departments plan and budget for facilities, equipment, training, water infrastructure, and emergency communication. In addition to mitigating fire damage and loss of lives, an improved ISO rating

benefits the community through reduced insurance premiums to homeowners and businesses, saving of taxpayer dollars, and in enhancing an overall prestige component to the community and its fire department. Altoona's Fire Department ISO rating was 4. The classification is a direct result of the information gathered and is dependent on the resource levels devoted to fire protection at the time of the survey. The roles of the fire department, dispatching, and water distribution are the main factors in obtaining this rating. In the future, the department will strive to construct another station in the southern part of town, along with additional paid and volunteer firefighters. In the department's professional opinion, the ISO rating could be improved by implementing more training on topics that ISO requires, which is currently being put into place. Funding and motivation is key to acquiring this, and recruitment and retention of new, younger members with the desire to serve is also a must. The department also seeks additional methods of obtaining funding for new equipment and increasing involvement in fire safety education and prevention.

**The Altoona Volunteer Fire Department identified three items needed to provide better services to the community. These include the following:**

- New fire apparatus
- Additional fire station closer to the Etowah and Blount County line
- Additional trained members willing to respond to calls
- The department actively applies for grants to replace equipment and the fire apparatus. The department is also working on a recruitment and retention program to gain more members willing to serve the community.

## **Parks and Recreation**

The Altoona Parks and Recreation Department was established in 1918 with the goal to provide parks and recreational facilities for the citizens of and visitors to Altoona. The parks and facilities are maintained by the public works employees.

**The Town of Altoona provides the following facilities and services to the community:**

- Altoona Recreation Center
- Altoona Community Center
- Event space plays an important role in the community's offering to the public. These spaces are utilized by girl scouts, local youth leagues, family reunions, birthday parties, and similar gatherings. There are currently no town-sponsored recreational activities or leagues.

**Planned future expansions to the town's parks and recreational facilities include:**

- Expansion of the orchard and community garden in the park behind town hall
- Completion of the recreation center renovation project
- Refurbishment and upgrade of H.D. Jenkins Park
- These expansions and refurbishments are grant-funded and due to be completed in the next seven years.

**Altoona owns and maintains 3 town recreational facilities, listed as follows:**

Brent Clifton Field —comprises 12 acres, located on Main Street, offering a football field, concession stand/equipment room, press box, home and visitors' bleachers, scoreboard, and small playground.

H.D. Jenkins Park—sited on 5.61 acres, located on 6th Avenue, providing playground equipment, pavilions, a softball field, a scoreboard, a concession stand/equipment room, bleachers, field lights, lit walking trail, tennis courts, basketball court, small softball field, and recreation building.

Town Hall Veterans Park—consists of approximately 1 acre, located along West Highland Street, offering a gazebo, concrete walkway and pad, and pavilion.

**The Altoona Parks and Recreation Department identified three improvements needed to provide better recreational services to the community. These are listed as follows:**

- Funding
- Grants
- Expansion and upgrade of playground equipment and overhaul of H.D. Jenkins Park

## ***Housing Authority***

The Altoona Housing Authority was established in August 1951 to provide drug free, decent, safe, and sanitary housing for eligible families and to provide opportunities and promote self-sufficiency and economic independence for residents.

**Altoona Housing Authority offers four housing projects:**

- Brown Street- constructed in 1965, comprising 4 units, last renovated in 2014.
- Self Street- constructed in 1958, consisting of 10 units, last renovated in 2019.
- Akridge Drive- constructed in 1965, offering 18 units, last renovated in 2023.
- Samuel Circle- constructed in 1980, providing 20 units, last renovated in 2020.

There is currently a waiting list for public housing placement; the waiting list is open, and applicants' qualifications are determined by family type and family composition. Each wait list varies with applicants based on the qualifications. Approximately 25% of the current applicants are single mothers. Several updates to housing authority housing projects are planned for the next five years, including: landscaping, replacement of porch columns and rails, apartment interior remodels, light fixture replacement, door replacement, HVAC replacement, water heater replacement, and other similar renovation projects.

**The Altoona Housing Authority identified two items needed to provide better services to the community. These include the following:**

- Relationship between the housing authority personnel and police- The Housing Authority is open to building a relationship with the police to provide a safe environment.
- Community outreach programs to promote in the town- The Housing Authority is open to promote community outreach by displaying any program events in their offices.

## ***Street Department***

The Town of Altoona Street Department was established in 1918 with the mission to provide safe and clean streets and rights-of-way for residents and commuters. The Street Department conducts all street cleaning and maintenance. Solid waste disposal for the town is provided by Waste Management. In addition, the town provides two roll-off dumpsters twice a year, for a one-week

period, for residents.

#### **Types of services the Street Department provides to the town include the following:**

- Street Maintenance
- Street Sign Installation and Maintenance
- Town Rights-Of-Way Maintenance
- Patching Potholes
- Repairing and Cleaning Culverts
- Ditch Cleaning
- Debris Clearing from Roadways

#### **The Altoona Street Department identified three items needed to better serve the community, which are listed as follows:**

- Increased summer manpower, potentially through the hiring of temporary summer workers.
- Repave streets.
- Clean and repair washed out ditches.

### ***Altoona Maintenance Department***

The Altoona Maintenance Department was established in 1918 to provide upkeep and maintenance on the town's facilities and structures. Altoona's Public Works employees provide the maintenance services, which include all maintenance, property clearing, general construction, and related tasks for the town.

#### **The Altoona Maintenance Department identified three items needed to better serve the community, which are listed as follows:**

- New equipment
- Increase in employees, especially in the summer months
- Pole barn or shed to house some of the larger pieces of equipment out of the elements

### ***Utilities***

The Altoona Water and Sewer Board was first incorporated on May 16, 1958, as the Altoona Water Board. The purpose of the board was to provide water services and fire protection to the residents of Altoona. The board was reincorporated on June 23, 2015, as the Water Works and Sewer Board of the Town of Altoona. This reincorporation was to acknowledge the expanded role of sewer services. The Board provides water and sewer services to the community.

### ***Water Utilities***

Altoona water utilities provide water services to about 9 commercial establishments and 350 residential customers, including customers outside the town limits but in the general service area. By policy, the system does not expand to customers outside the municipal limits; however, to facilitate past expansions, previous boards have allowed non-residents to have water services. Water sources serving the town include one well located near the intersection of County Highway 41, and Murphrees Valley Road.

While the well does not have a specific name, it could be considered the “Ellisons Crossroads” well. This well holds a capacity of approximately 300,000 gallons per day, which is adequate in meeting demand.

The town’s water system has been determined to provide adequate service in sustaining needs. Water line size of 6 inches is, in general, the minimum required line diameter for general use and fire protection in areas zoned for agriculture and single-family residential, while water lines 8 inches lines, or larger, are usually required in multi-family and commercial areas. Twelve inches diameter is generally the minimum size required for light industrial and 16 inches for heavy industry. Water piping for the town broadly consists of approximately 89,963 linear feet, ranging in size from 2-inch to 10-inch diameter lines, spread out in wide array throughout the town as needed. There is a planned expansion to the newly constructed Lantana Haven Subdivision on Thompson Road. Table CF-3 displays water line size and distribution for Altoona in 2024. Water line size and locations are shown on Map #7: Water Utilities.

**Table CF-3. Altoona: Water Line Size and Distribution 2024**

Water Line Size (Inches Diameter)	System-wide (linear dist. In feet)	Town-wide (linear dist. In feet)
2-inch	10,226	10,226
3-inch	5,983	4,899
4-inch	2,476	1,791
6-inch	65,951	56,449
8-inch	20,044	15,552
10-inch	1,045	1,045
Total	105,725	89,963

Source: EARPDC database, 2024.

**The town’s water treatment plant uses a chlorine system to prepare potable water for customers. Average daily use for the water system is around 210,000 gallons per day with an average monthly residential water bill of \$35.94 currently. The current water rates are as follows:**

- ▶ \$23.96 up to 2,500 gallons
- ▶ \$5.82 per each additional 1,000 gallons up to 5,000 gallons
- ▶ \$5.51 per each additional 1,000 gallons up to 10,000 gallons
- ▶ \$5.23 per each additional 1,000 gallons up to 20,000 gallons
- ▶ \$4.70 per each additional 1,000 gallons up to 50,000 gallons
- ▶ \$4.07 per each additional 1,000 gallons over 50,000 gallons

The rate was last increased in 2021. Storage capacity is 300,000 gallons, which provides adequate storage for the public. In terms of fire protection, the town has installed 82 fire hydrants throughout the community, covering each of the town’s housing units, thus giving adequate protection to residents.

The sewer system consists of 35,727 linear feet system-wide, and 34,033 feet town-wide. For more information, please see Map #8: Sewer Utilities.

**The Altoona Water and Sewer Board identified three items needed to provide better water services to the community, which are listed as follows:**

- System-wide update: replace leaky pipes, valves, etc.
- Automated reading and billing: Currently a water board employee and two town employees manually read the meters. While

this process only takes two days, it could be viewed as a waste of resources. In December 2022, the water board voted to start the process to convert to cellular meters.

- Second well or booster pump: If the water system is to expand it limits, an additional well or booster pump will be warranted. This would be a long-term goal.

## Gas Utilities

Altoona's gas system comprises approximately 107,259 linear feet systemwide, and 73,065 linear feet townwide, of sewer lines sized 0.25 inches to 6 inches diameter, extending throughout the system. As a general rule, gas line size needed for specific uses is determined by the distance from the nearest meter to the appliance use, since gas pressure diminishes over distance. Most residential uses require lines ½ inches diameter in typical service lines while commercial may require 1-inch lines. Heavy industry may require 6-inch lines depending on line distribution and the use involved. This information suggests adequate gas line service for both light residential uses and larger industrial throughout the town. Table CF-5 shows gas line size and distribution in Altoona in 2024. For gas line size and location see Map#9: Gas Utilities.

**Table CF-5. Altoona: Gas Line Size and Distribution 2024**

Gas Line Size (Inches Diameter)	System-wide Linear Distance (Feet)	Town-wide Linear Distance (Feet)
0.25 inch	1,037	0
0.75 inch	1,832	1,750
1 inch	1,835	1,535
2 inch	52,016	43,169
4 inch	28,237	13,407
6 inch	22,303	13,204
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,259</b>	<b>73,065</b>

Source: EARPDC database, 2024.

## ***Analytical Summary***

This analytical summary outlines the top needs determined by each community facility department/organization in the Town of Altoona in 2023. Results were based on the 2023 Community Facilities Survey distributed and collected by the Altoona Town Administration.

### ***Town Administration***

#### **Funds**

Computer upgrades. Administration computers and servers are at least a decade old.

Upgrades to some software. Time clock, and some aspects of the payroll software, as well as some billing software are outdated.

### ***Law Enforcement***

Reliable patrol vehicles to get to and from calls for service., fully equipped with all the tools needed to serve the public.

Computers, in-car radios, and fully functional equipment in vehicles

More officers

### ***Fire and Rescue***

New fire apparatus

Additional fire station closer to the Etowah and Blount County line

Additional trained members willing to respond to calls

The department actively applies for grants to replace equipment and the fire apparatus. The department is also working on a recruitment and retention program to gain more members willing to serve the community.

### ***Parks and Recreation***

Funding

Grants

Expansion and upgrade of playground equipment and overhaul of H.D. Jenkins Park

### ***Housing Authority***

Relationship between the housing authority personnel and police- The Housing Authority is open to building a relationship with the police to provide a safe environment.

Community outreach programs to promote in the town- The Housing Authority is open to promote community outreach by displaying any program events in their offices.

### ***Street Department***

Increased summer manpower, potentially through the hiring of temporary summer workers.

Repave streets.

Clean and repair washed out ditches.

### ***Maintenance Department***

New equipment

Increase in employees, especially in the summer months

Pole barn or shed to house some of the larger pieces of equipment out of the elements

## ***Utilities***

### ***Water Utilities***

System-wide update: replace leaky pipes, valves, etc.

Automated reading and billing: Currently a water board employee and two town employees manually read the meters. While this process only takes two days, it could be viewed as a waste of resources. In December 2022, the water board voted to start the process to convert to cellular meters.

Second well or booster pump: If the water system is to expand its limits, an additional well or booster pump will be warranted. This would be a long-term goal.

# Map 6

## Community Facilities

### The Town Of

# ALTOONA

### ALABAMA



Scale

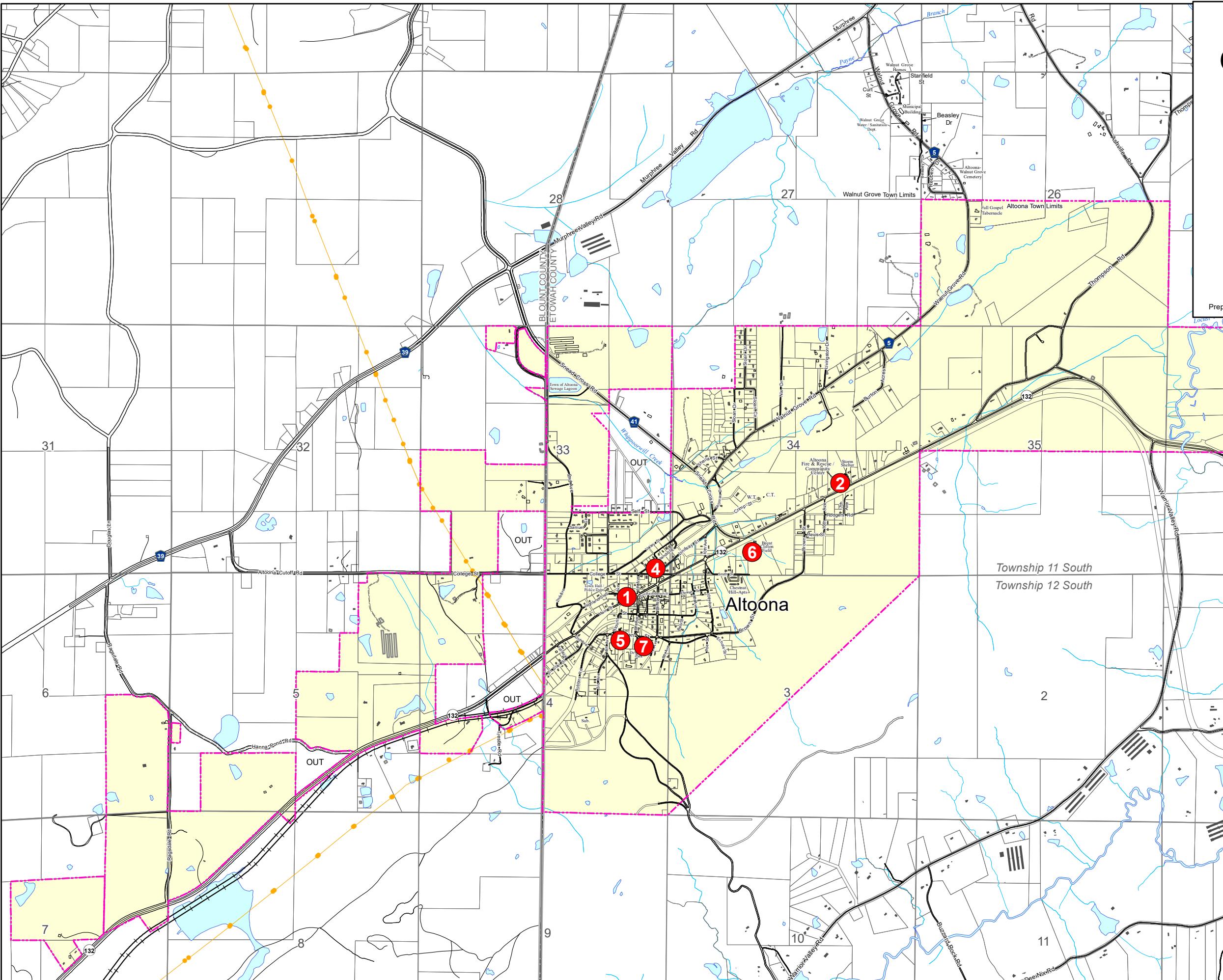
0 1,000

2,000

4,000

Feet

Etowah County parcel data obtained from the Etowah County Revenue Commission.  
Blount County parcel data obtained from the Blount County Revenue Department.  
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, February 2024.



### Community Facilities

- 1 Town Hall / Police Department
- 2 Altoona Fire & Rescue / Community Center
- 3 West End Elementary School
- 4 Post Office
- 5 Street Department
- 6 Brent Clifton Field
- 7 Dr. Jenkins Park

# Map 7

## Water System

### The Town Of ALTOONA ALABAMA



Scale

0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet

Etowah County parcel data obtained from the Etowah County Revenue Commission.  
Blount County parcel data obtained from the Blount County Revenue Department.  
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, February 2024.

#### Water System

##### Water Line (Diameter)

10"

2"

3"

4"

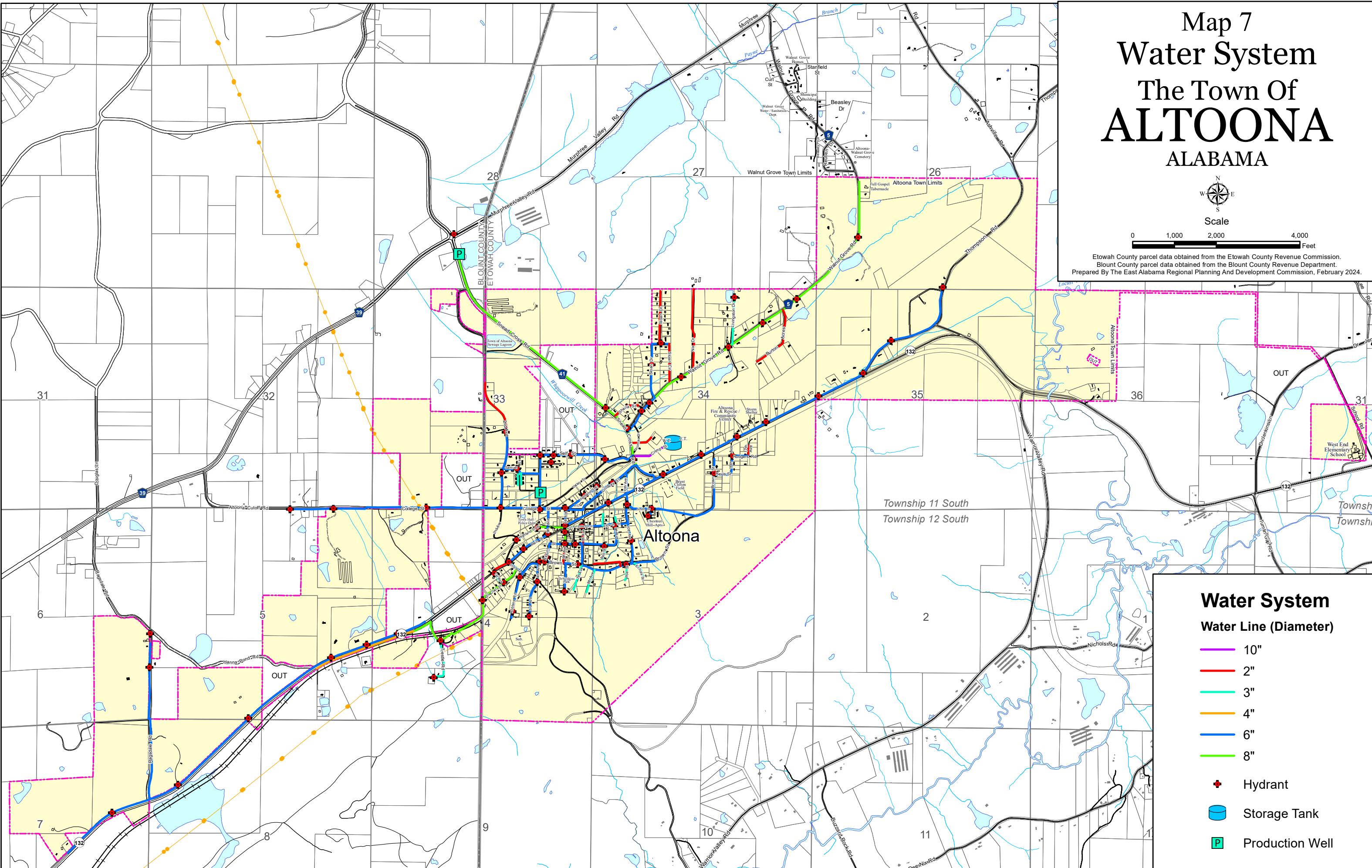
6"

8"

Hydrant

Storage Tank

Production Well





Map 9  
Gas System  
The Town Of  
**ALTOONA**  
ALABAMA



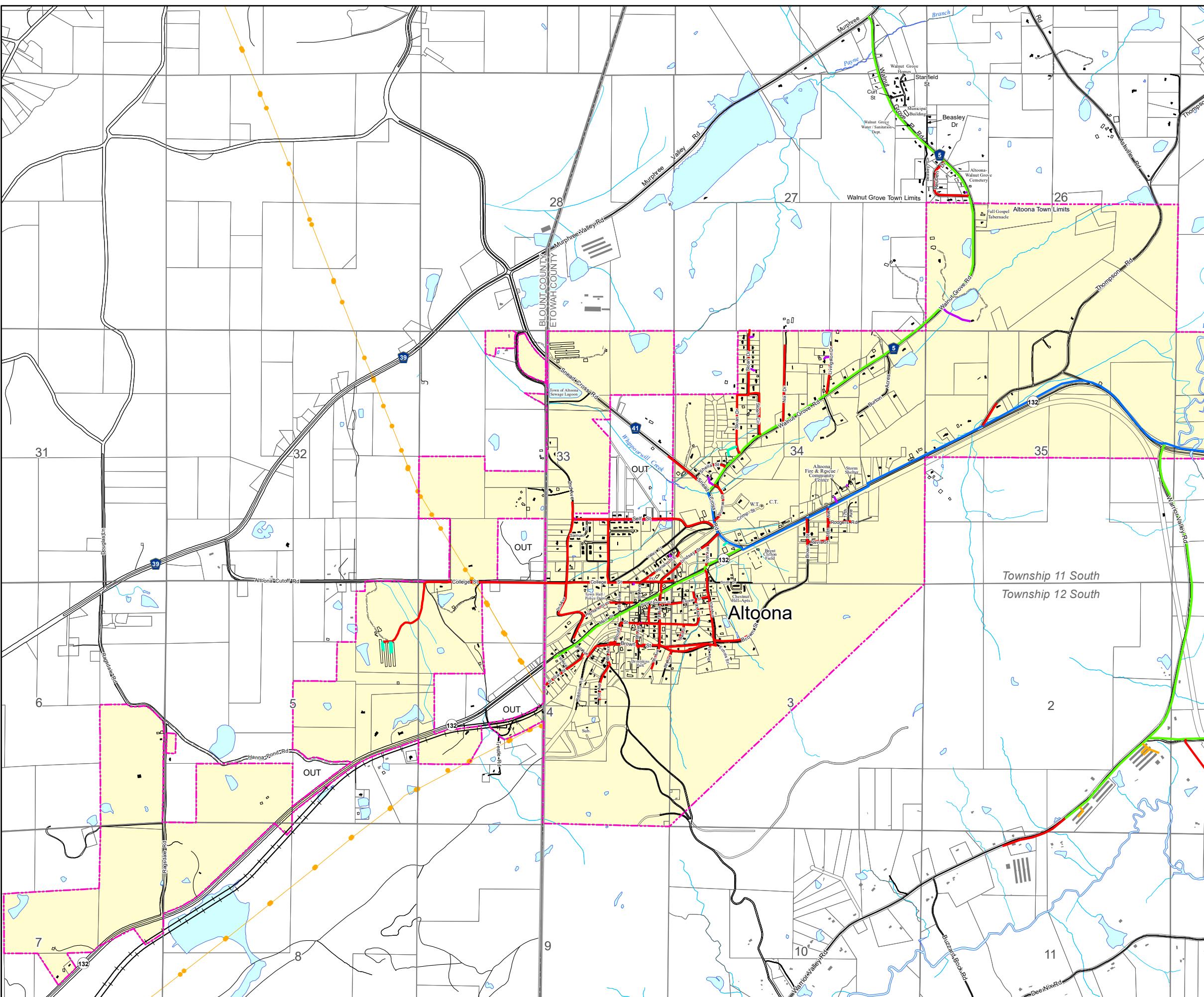
Scale

0 1,000 2,000 4,000  
Feet

Etowah County parcel data obtained from the Etowah County Revenue Commission.  
Blount County parcel data obtained from the Blount County Revenue Department.  
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, February 2024.

**Gas System**  
**Gas Line (Diameter)**

- 6"
- 4"
- 2"
- 1"
- 0.75"
- 0.25"



# CHAPTER 7: HOUSING

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Housing is one of the most fundamental topics in relation to community needs. For a community to grow and prosper there must be a diverse and satisfactory amount of quality housing available. A housing examination is useful in determining housing types, existing housing conditions, availability, and affordability to identify and meet housing needs. As a community grows and develops the need for quality, safe, and affordable housing increases, along with the need for a variety of housing type options to meet the demands of residents in different stages of life and with changing preferences.

Some common benefits and impacts of properly planned housing improvements and development include the following:

**Economic Impact**—Economic developers and workforce employers seek communities from which to draw their labor force. Employment from new home construction and improved housing creates economic ripples throughout the community. According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), in their analysis of the broad impact of new construction, the building of 1,000 average single-family homes generates approximately:

2,970 full-time jobs

\$162 million in wages

\$118 million in business income, and

\$111 million in taxes and revenue for state, local, and federal governments.

**Community Health**—Home is where we spend most of our lives. For most Americans, the home represents a place of safety, security, and shelter where families come together to live. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Commission to Build a Healthier America, September 2008 article on housing and health, most Americans spend about 90% of their time indoors, and an estimated two-thirds of that time is spent in the home. Potential health risks in association with poor housing conditions need to be properly assessed and addressed in neighborhoods of concern.

**Reductions in Foreclosure**—According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, households who pay more than 30% of their annual income on housing costs are considered cost burdened and might have substantial difficulty affording basic necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. HUD estimates approximately 12 million renter and homeowner households paying more than 50% of their annual income on housing costs. In order to alleviate housing burdens HUD provides grants to states and local governments to fund building, buying, and rehabilitating housing for rent or ownership and also provides direct rental assistance to low-income families who qualify. Reducing foreclosures by providing affordable housing and housing assistance, in a community will, in effect:

Stabilize neighborhood housing value,

Enhance tax collections,

Increase utility revenues,

Mitigate health and security hazards in association with empty structures,

Lessen court and legal expenses in connection with demolition, and

Provide for more attractive and enduring housing developments

Environmental Conservation—Quality housing with increased energy efficiencies preserves the environment by driving down demand for energy from power plants and other power facilities, thus lessening the amount of waste byproduct generated from power production. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the total energy production in the US, about 39% is used to generate electricity while the U.S. Energy Information Administration estimated 16% of electrical consumption used in the residential sector, as of December 2020.

The Town of Altoona recognizes the benefits of quality, safe, and affordable housing, as well as housing needs, and has taken action to address concerns. This chapter examines the town's housing inventory in characteristics such as units by type, tenure and occupancy status, vacancy status, and household size. The chapter also examines housing conditions with housing stock age and physical conditions. An analysis of housing value and affordability along with an analytical summary rounds out the study.

Housing information was collected and examined using the 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) for more recent data analysis. American Community Survey data was examined for tenure and occupancy, vacancy status, household size, housing value, and rental costs, while housing unit type, housing stock age, owner-occupied affordability, and renter-occupied affordability only used ACS information. The town's physical housing conditions were obtained from a special EARPDC observational survey conducted in 2023.

## ***Housing Inventory***

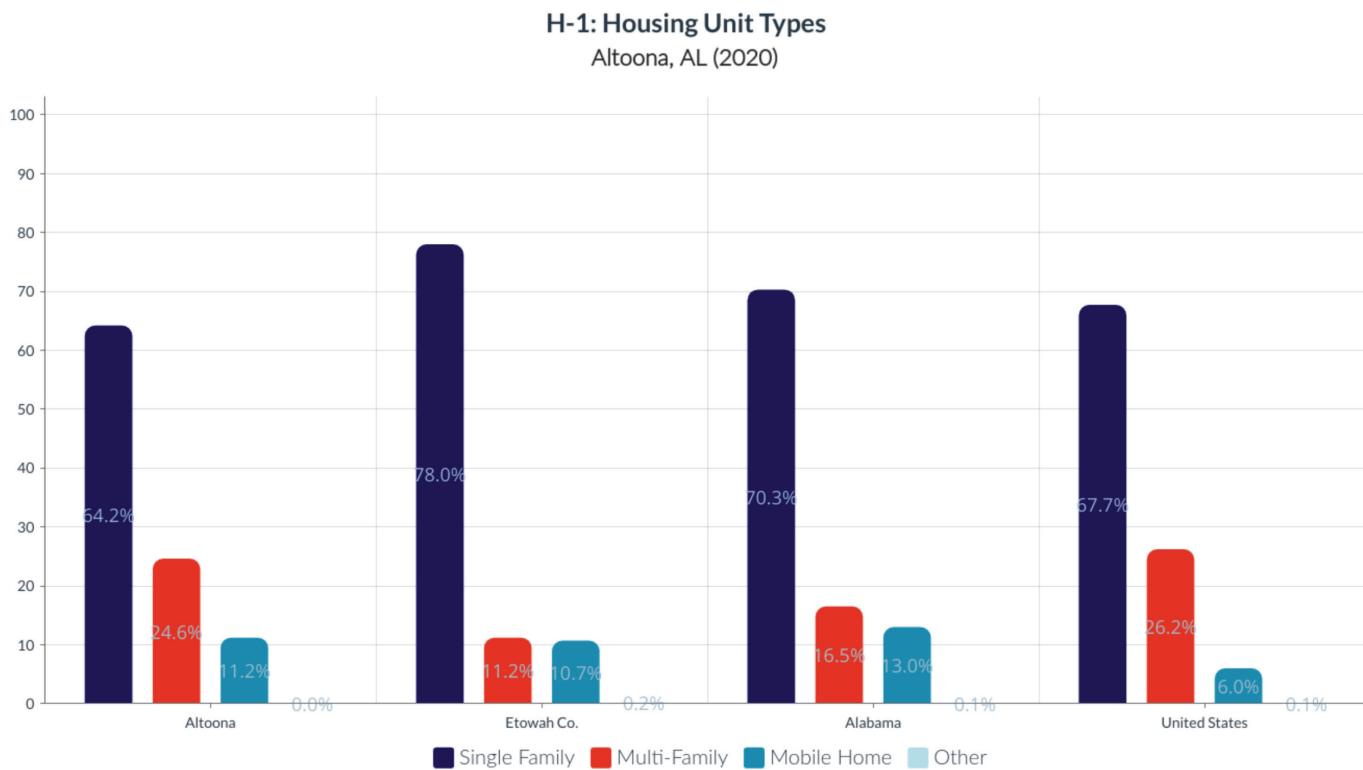
### ***Units by Type***

Housing comes in many forms and styles, each aiming to satisfy a wide range of people with changing demands and needs. A community that champions a variety of housing types has an advantage in that it provides many housing options to choose from, thus attracting more people. An examination of unit types reveals the most common and least common housing options available, expressing trends in housing development. Altoona housing consists of the following types: 1) Single-family—one unit attached or detached structures housing one family, primarily a house 2) Multi-family—contains two or more units within one structure with one family per unit; these include apartments, town homes, and duplexes, 3) Mobile home—a transportable structure which is two hundred fifty-six or more square feet, when installed, to be used as a dwelling with or without a foundation, 4) Other—any living accommodations occupied as a housing unit that does not fit the previous types, such as houseboats, railroad cars, campers, and vans.

Altoona showed somewhat similar trends in housing unit types compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020 the town increased significantly in single-family homes by 38% while the county increased only by 1%, the state by 3%, and nation by 4%. During this time both Altoona and Etowah County decreased in mobile homes by -5% and -7%, respectively, while Alabama reported less than 1% growth and the U.S. saw a -1% decrease in this housing unit type. On the other hand, multi-family units increased by 5% in the town and declined in the county by -2%, while the state and nation grew by 4%. This information indicates both a slight town and county trend away from mobile housing units and an increase single-family housing, specifically for Altoona, while the state and nation reported an increase in all unit types, except mobile homes for the nation, though the highest increases were in “other” unit types.

The overwhelming majority of housing units in Altoona, in 2020, was single-family, accounting for 64.2% of all units, which was somewhat lower than Etowah County, showing 77.9%, Alabama 70.4%, and the U.S. at 67.7%. Also in 2020, the town reported a higher portion of multi-family units at 24.6%, compared to the county at 11.2% and state 16.5%. However, the nation showed slightly more multi-family units at 26.2%, respectively. This information indicates that Altoona held a higher-than-average representation in multi-family housing compared to Etowah County and Alabama, while still falling slightly lower than the U.S. average. Altoona decreased in mobile home development similarly to Etowah County, and the U.S., with the only increase being less than 1% in Alabama. Altoona, although decreasing, still holds a similar portion of mobile homes at 11.2% compared to the

county (10.7%). The town showed lower portions of mobile homes in comparison to the state (13%), but higher than the nation at 6%. Figure H-1 illustrates housing unit types for Altona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020 in accordance with 2016-2020 American Community Survey. The figure shows the town with a moderately smaller portion of single-family units compared to the county and state and larger representation in multi-family housing. For more information consult Table H-1: Housing Unit Types for the 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 ACS in Appendix C.



## Tenure and Occupancy Status

Housing occupancy and ownership patterns change due to the housing market and population growth or decline. A study of housing ownership patterns is useful in analyzing housing needs and guiding policies toward better housing development. The Census Bureau recognizes tenure as to referring to the distinction between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units while occupancy is defined as a housing unit classified as occupied if it is the usual place of residence of the person or group of people living in it at the time of enumeration—that is when the Census counts were made. A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of enumeration unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by people who have a usual residence elsewhere are also classified as vacant.

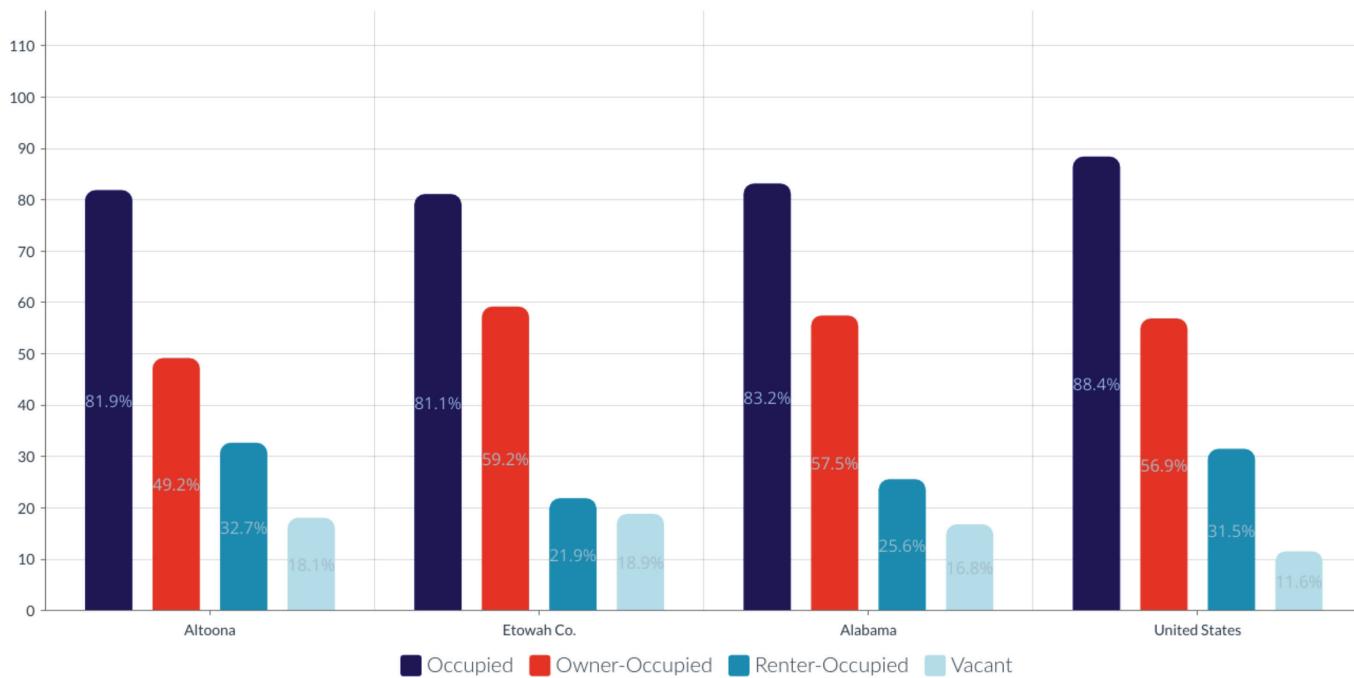
Tenure and occupancy for Altona showed moderately differing trends compared to Etowah County, Alabama and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020 the town increased in occupied units by 32.1% while the county decreased slightly by -1.9%, the state increased by 2%, and the nation by 4% in occupancy. Vacancies for Altona, during this time, decreased by a considerable -8%, while Etowah County showed an increase of 13.3%. Alabama grew less significantly in vacancies from 2016-2020, seeing an increase of 6.6%, while the nation saw a -2% decrease. This information indicates less occupancy in Altona and more vacancies in the county and state, as compared to the nation. Also, at this time the town increased in renter-occupied housing by 13.7%, while the county and state declined by -8.7% and -0.2%, respectively, and the nation (2%) grew slightly in this tenure. The most significant change for the town was in owner-occupied housing with an increase of 47.9% with very little increase in the county, state and nation at 0.9%, 3.1% and 5.2%, respectively. However, this indicates that Altona is following a similar trend away from

renter occupied housing and a move toward owner occupied housing.

Altoona showed somewhat similar portions in tenure compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In 2020, owner-occupied housing comprised approximately 49% for the town and 59% of the county's housing stock, while the state reported 58%, and the nation 57%. Although Altoona had a major increase in owner-occupied housing from 2016 to 2020, the town still has the lowest portion of this housing type at 49% compared to the county (59%), state (58%), and the nation at 57%. Renter-occupied housing in the town, at 33%, is a higher representation than the county (22%) and the state (26%), while only slightly higher than the nation at 32%. This information indicates that, in 2020, renter-occupancy is still a popular tenure option in the town, but less so for the county, state and nation. Figure H-2 displays tenure and occupancy for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice the slightly smaller portion of vacant housing in the town, compared to the county. For more information see Table H-2: Tenure and Occupancy (American Community Survey).

**H-2: Tenure and Occupancy**

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Vacancy Status

Vacancy status is useful in determining how vacant housing has been utilized. A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of enumeration, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by people who have a usual residence elsewhere are also classified as vacant. Occupants classified as having a “usual residence elsewhere” are counted at the address of their usual place of residence. Therefore, vacancies can be occupied houses for rent, sale, or for seasonal or recreational use only.

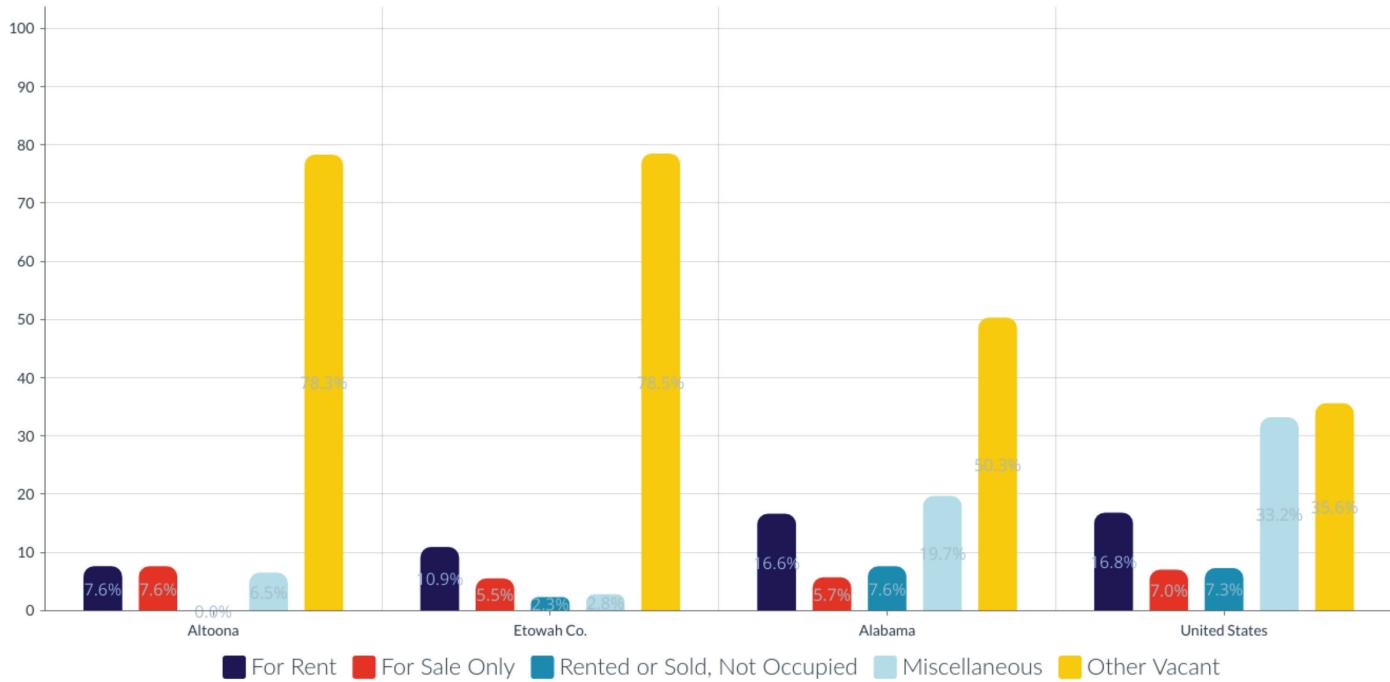
Five basic categories were selected to identify how vacant housing was being used, these included: 1) for sale only units, 2) for rent only units, 3) rented or sold, but not occupied, 4) miscellaneous—this includes units used for seasonal, recreational, occasional use, or migrant workers, 5) other—which entails other non-specified uses.

In terms of vacancy status, Altoona exhibited a combination of similarities and differences in trends compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. From 2016 to 2020, the town decreased, overall, in vacancies by -8%, which was considerably different

than the county increase of (13.3%), state (6.6%), and more like the national decrease of -2%. Due to the vacancy decrease, the town had no change in homes for sale and remained stagnant, while the county grew by 24%, the state declined by -30.7% and the nation fell by -19%. Altoona also decreased in vacant homes used for miscellaneous purposes by -64.7%, as Etowah County fell -55.6% in this vacancy status, Alabama also declined -6.3%, and the U.S. showed a minor 1% decrease. Furthermore, the town climbed in vacant homes used for renting only by 16.7%, which was less than the county which grew by 20.3%, but more than the state, which grew by 3%. The nation fell in this category by a moderate -5%. This information indicates a trend of more growth in town and county homes available for rent only than in the state and nation during this time.

Altoona displayed somewhat similar patterns in vacancy status compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In 2020, the town's most prevalent vacancy status was other vacant at 78%, which was comparable to the county at 79%, but higher than the state (50%), and nation at 36%. However, Altoona and Etowah County, during this time, held a lower portion of for rent only vacancies at 8% and 11%, respectively, in contrast to Alabama and the U.S. at 17%. The town also recorded a somewhat smaller representation in miscellaneous vacancies at 7%, in comparison to the state (20%) and nation (33%), and a slightly larger portion compared to the county at 3%. This information indicates proportionately more town homes available for other vacant uses and less vacancies used for miscellaneous and for sale only purposes compared to the state and nation. This could be attributed to fairly stationary residents, with less residents looking to sell their home, or to use it for seasonal, part-time, or recreational uses. Figure H-3 displays vacancy status for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. The figure illustrates the towns nonexistent portion of vacancies of rented or sold, unoccupied housing and larger portion of other vacant uses in contrast to the county, state, and nation. For more information see Table H-3: Vacancy Status (American Community Survey 2016-2020).

**H-3: Housing Vacancy Status**  
Altoona, Alabama (2020)



## Household Size

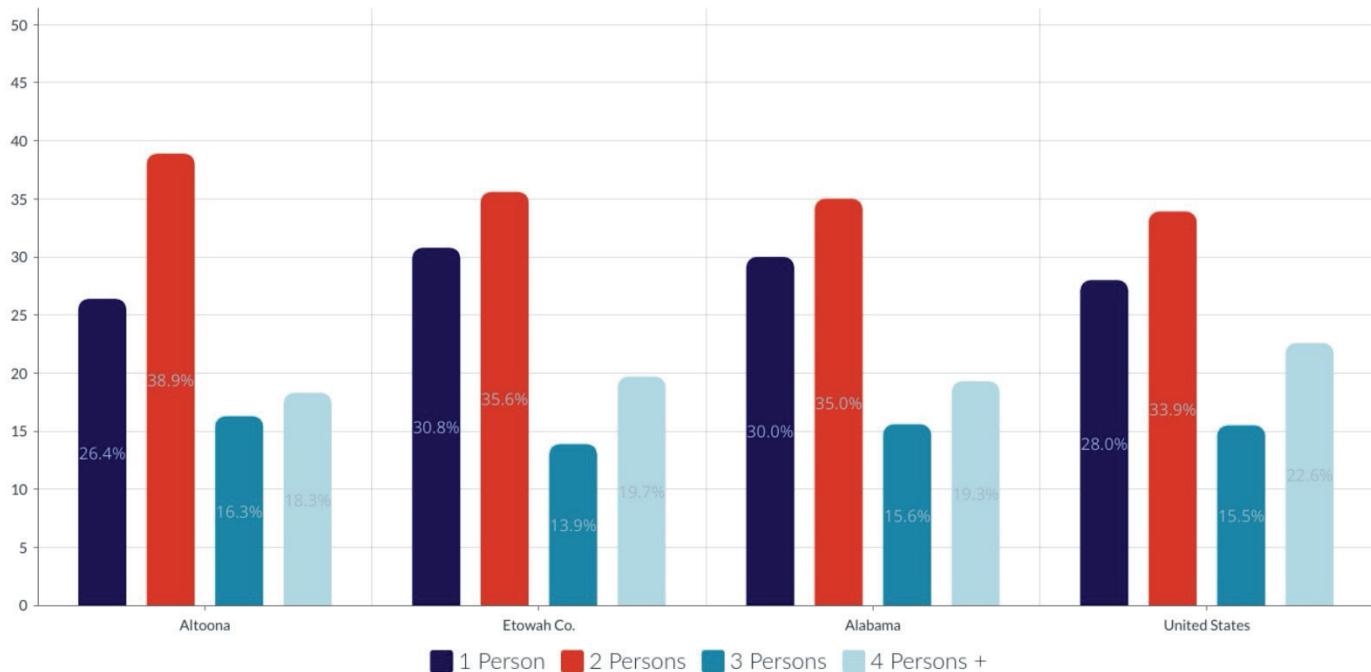
Household size is a useful measure in determining how housing is being utilized and in meeting household needs. Generally, a community with fewer individuals per household could best use housing by building smaller or more compact housing than one with larger households and vice versa. For a household size study, four household sizes were examined, including 1 person

households, 2 person households, 3 person households, and households occupied by 4 or more persons. To analyze more recent information on household size only the 2016-2020 American Community Survey information is examined in this report.

Altoona reported somewhat similar trends in household size compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020, the town increased in 1-person households by 6.8%, while similarly the county increased in 1-person households by 8.4% and state and nation by 5%. The town increased significantly in 2-person households by 72.6% and the state and nation grew slightly in comparison by 1.8% and 4.6% while the county decreased by -5.9%. Similar to the county (-15%) and state (-2.2%) decrease of 3-person households, Altoona decreased by -20.9% while the only growth was minimal at 2.8% for the nation. In terms of growth in household size, Altoona increased significantly in 4-person or more households by 136.5%, and while the county, state, and nation also grew, it was less significant in comparison at 1.8%, 1.6%, and 2.4%, respectively. This information indicates that Altoona increased significantly in households for 2-persons and 4-persons or more, while slightly increasing in 1-person households and decreasing only in households of 3-persons. Such a trend for growth could be attributed to the town holding very little unoccupied homes for rent or for sale, as previously discussed.

Town growth trends in household size are comparable to those of the county, state, and nation, as representation in household size showed similar results. In 2020, Altoona's single most prevalent household size was 2-person, accounting for 39% of all households, which was like Alabama's at 35%, Etowah County at 36%, and the U.S. at 34%. Altoona reported approximately 16% of households with 3 persons, which aligns with both Alabama and the U.S., and Etowah County indicated slightly less at 14%. This information indicates that the town, during this time, held a slightly larger portion of households of larger size compared to the county, and equally comparable to the trends of the state and nation. However, the nation surpassed the town, county, and state in households with 4 or more persons, indicating larger households at the national level. Figure H-4 illustrates household size for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice from the chart the slightly lower representation of 1-person households and slightly greater representation of 2-person households for the town than the county, state, and nation. For more information from the American Community Survey see Table H-4 Household Size (ACS 2016 & 2020).

**H-4: Household Size**  
Altoona, Alabama (2020)



## Housing Conditions

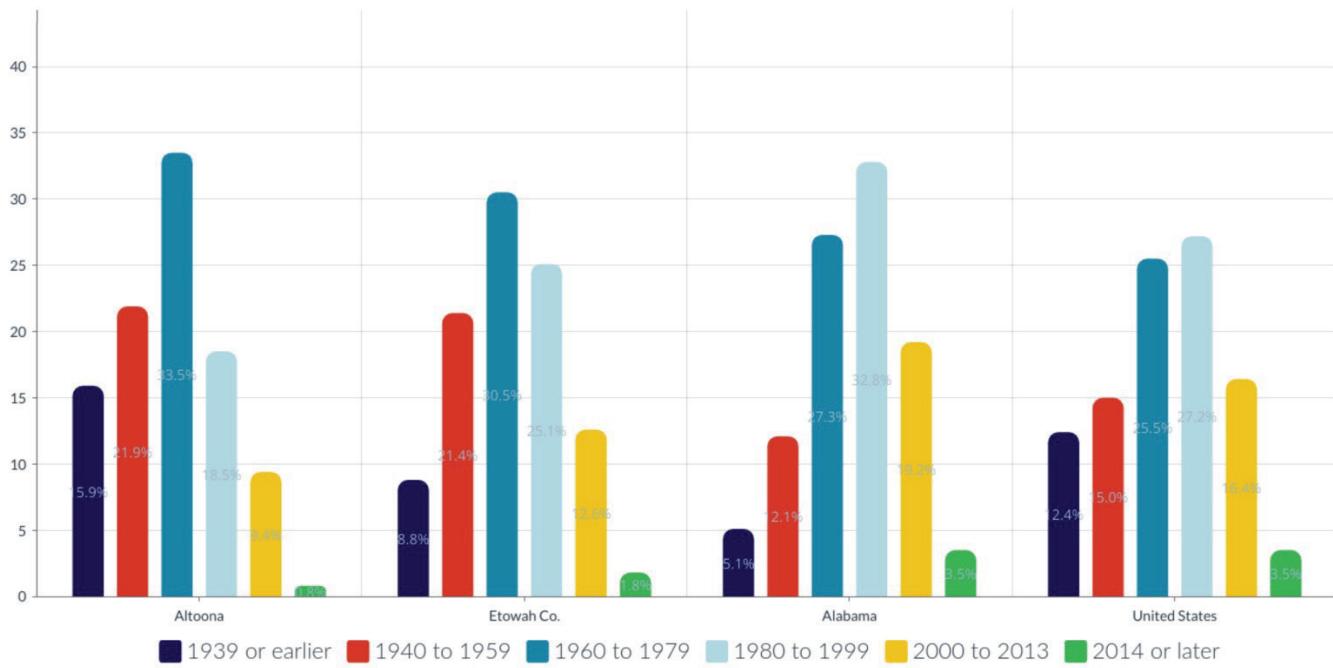
### Housing Stock Age

Housing stock age is a good indicator of current housing conditions and needs. A thorough examination of housing age can be used to assess probable housing conditions and needs for improvements within the community. In general, older homes, defined as homes aged 40 years or older, show signs of wear and more improvements and/or more significant improvements might be needed to provide adequate living conditions for occupants. Therefore, homes predating 1980 should require significant attention and homes built prior to 1960 special attention. New homes have been identified as homes built post-1999. Information for housing stock age was obtained from the 2016-2020 American Community Survey.

Altoona is a relatively older town, having been incorporated 116 years ago, however the town holds a somewhat larger portion of homes constructed between the years of 1960-1979 which is similar compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. According to the 2016-2020 American Community Survey, Altoona had a median year structure built of 1969 to reflect this, while Etowah County and Alabama showed 1973 and 1984, respectively. In terms of housing stock age, the American Community Survey showed that approximately 71.3% of homes in the town were built prior to 1980, whereas the county recorded 60.7% and state 44.5%, and the nation 52.9% which are all moderately less compared to the town. Furthermore, approximately 37.8% of Altoona's homes were built prior to 1960, while the county recorded slightly less at 30.2% and the nation at 27.4% while the state recorded significantly less at 17.2%. The town reported approximately 10.2% of homes built post-1999 while the county exhibited a slightly larger portion of newer homes at 14.4% and the state and nation were significantly higher recording approximately 22.7% for the state and 20% for the nation. Figure H-5 illustrates housing stock age for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020.

Notice on the chart the substantially larger portion of town homes built between 1960 and 1979 compared to the county, state, and nation. Also notice the smaller portion of town homes built post-1980 compared to the county, state, and nation. Since older homes tend to require more work updating and general maintenance, the town could, as a planning consideration, conduct a housing assessment and explore means of housing improvement and preservation. Such planning would seek to provide quality housing in older neighborhoods and other areas throughout the community where housing improvements might be needed. For more information see Table H-5: Housing Stock Age in Appendix C.

**H-5: Housing Stock Age**  
Altoona, Alabama (2016-2020)



## Physical Housing Conditions

Quality physical housing conditions play an important role in serving the general population and in attracting new people to the community. This section of the plan examines physical housing conditions based on outside physical aesthetic appearance and apparent structural stability. In 2023, EARPDC cartography staff conducted a survey of the town to inventory housing improvement needs (See Map 10: Housing Conditions) based on four pre-determined criteria: 1) excellent condition, 2) good condition, 3) substandard, and 4) dilapidated. These criteria are described as follows:

Excellent conditions- overall quality and workmanship is above average. The units exhibit highly maintained features.

Good conditions—units need no work, all painted areas are painted, roof is straight with no sags, good shingles or other roof material, gutters attached and in good functional shape, all siding or brick is intact and properly maintained. Windows have screens or storm windows. No rotten doors and windows in place, shingles in good condition. No rotten or missing shutters. All doors are in good shape. Foundations are full and not cracked or sagging.

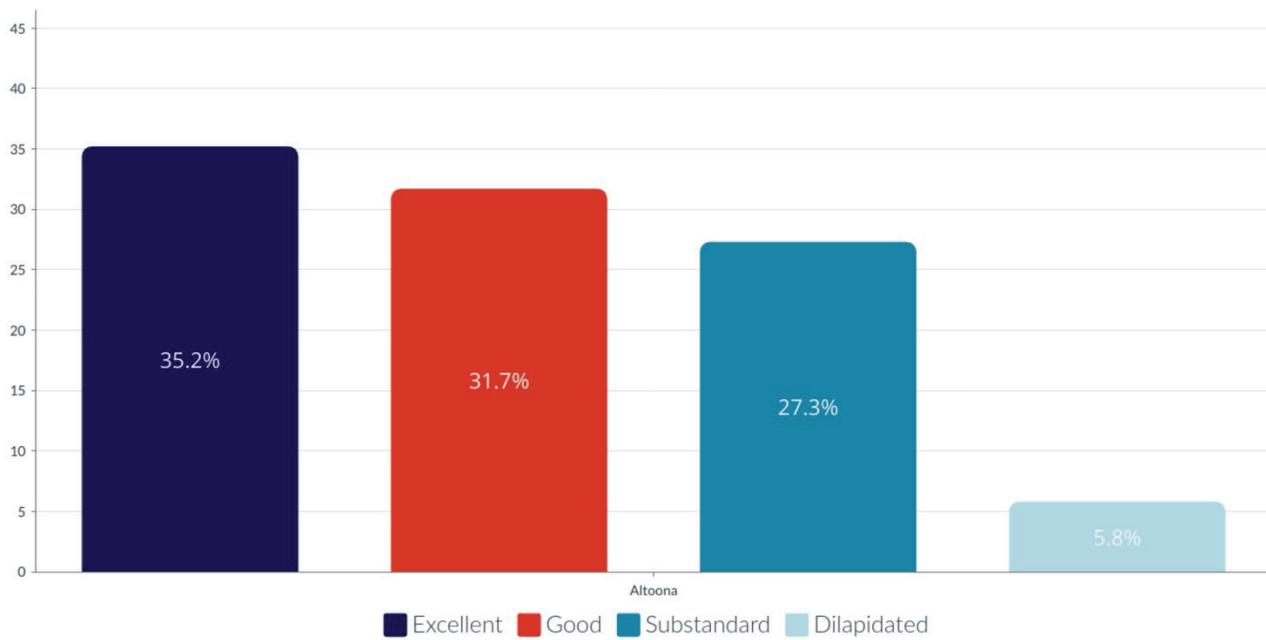
Substandard conditions—units may show one or many improvements needed. Roofs are sagging and/or curled with missing shingles, rotten or missing trim or siding, cracks in brick or foundation, piles of trash, unkempt yards, cluttered appearance. These units are wide ranging from almost sound condition to nearly dilapidated.

Dilapidated—units are neglected and could be vacant, abandoned, or burned and not repaired. These units exhibit many obvious defects and could be deemed “unlivable” and not habitable.

Disclaimer: The results of the housing conditions survey have been based solely on a general “visibility” survey conducted by EARPDC cartography staff for use in this Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the information and findings of this survey cannot be considered an accurate assessment of town housing conditions. Additional assessment of homes, conducted by a professionally trained and certified building inspector, would be necessary to determine conformance to codes. Rather, this information is meant to be used as a “foundational” first step in identifying individual homes, neighborhoods, and other areas of the town which may require further and more detailed assessment as to housing condition improvements and needs.

According to the EARPDC housing conditions survey, conducted in 2023, Altoona had 344 home units surveyed, of which 240 (70%) were single-family and 71 (21%) were manufactured units. The survey showed that single family homes consist of approximately 38% were in excellent condition, 32% in good condition, 26% in substandard condition, and 5% dilapidated. Manufactured units reported the most need for improvements with 45% units in substandard condition and 11% dilapidated. Figure H-6 displays housing conditions in Altoona based on the 2023 EARPDC survey. As a planning consideration, the town should examine a more detailed assessment of housing conditions and make improvement plans accordingly. For more information see Table H-6: Physical Housing Conditions in Appendix C and Map #10: Housing Conditions at the end of this chapter.

**H-6: Physical Housing Conditions**  
Altoona, Alabama (2023)



## ***Housing Value***

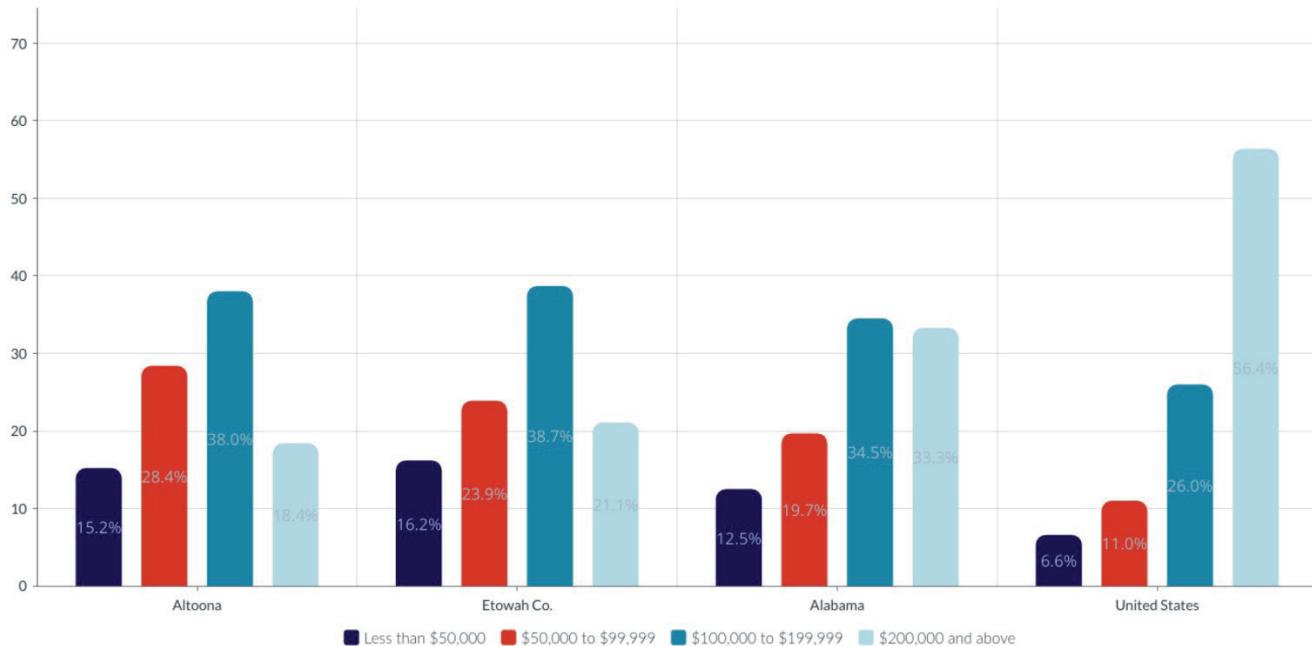
Housing value is a critical element of a comprehensive housing study. Every community desires housing with high resale value and growing equity. The information provided focuses chiefly on housing value for owner-occupied housing, being the primary form of housing in the community. Altoona recognizes the need to promote and encourage quality housing development and has been active in preparing for such growth.

Altoona showed somewhat similar trends in housing value compared to Etowah County and Alabama, and differed slightly from the U.S. From 2016 to 2020, the town decreased in homes valued less than \$50 K slightly by -7.3%, in comparison the county had a significantly larger decline of -24%, as did the state (-17.2%), and nation (-21.2%). Also, during this time, the town grew by a significant 137.5% in homes valued at \$100 K-\$199,999 K which is significantly higher in comparison to the county at 15.2%, state at 2.7%, and nation which declined -9.6% in this housing value category. In addition, Altoona had the most growth in houses valued at \$200 K and above during this time, with an increase of approximately 411% in comparison to the moderate increases of the county at 25%, state at 27.6% and nation with 28.4%. This information indicates that, in terms of housing value, the town decreased slightly in homes with lesser value and increased significantly in homes of higher value. Meanwhile, the county, state, and nation also decreased in homes of lesser value, and increased in homes of higher value.

Aligning with decline in homes valued less than \$50 K, Altoona showed a large representation in this value category at 15%, which was slightly less than Etowah County and Alabama, accounting for 16% of their housing stock; however, the U.S. reported somewhat substantially less at 7%. In 2020, Altoona exhibited modest representation of higher valued homes with approximately 56% being valued at \$100 K or above, which was a slightly lower portion than Etowah County at 60%, although moderately lower representation in comparison to Alabama at 68% and the U.S. at 82%. This information indicates that the decline in lower valued homes has led to the town following the same trends as the county in the portion of high value homes but falls short in comparison to the state and nation. Figure H-7 exhibits housing value for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. See from the chart that the town's substantial portion of homes valued at \$100 K - \$199,999 K. For more information see Table H-7: Housing Value of Owner-occupied units (2012-2016 & 2016-2020 American Community Survey).

## H-7: Housing Value (Owner-Occupied)

Altoona, Alabama (2020)



Median housing value (MHV) was also examined. Between 2016 and 2020 Altoona's MHV grew from \$82,200 to \$118,200 which was slightly less than Etowah County's growth, with an increase from \$101,900 to \$124,400. Altoona's MHV was considerably lower than Alabama which climbed from \$128,500 to \$149,600 and substantially lower than the U.S. which grew from \$184,700 to \$229,800 during this time. Such an increase in housing value in the U.S. could be attributed to recovery in the housing market at the national scale since 2009.

## Housing Affordability

Altoona recognizes the need to establish and maintain housing, which is affordable and suitable to its residents. According to the Alabama Housing Finance Authority, the generally accepted affordability standard for housing cost is no more than 30 percent of household income. The town's housing substantially satisfies this requirement. Housing affordability is examined through changes in contract rent, gross rent, and housing value. Contract rent is, as described in the 2020 Census, "The monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included". Gross rent is also defined in the 2020 Census as, "The amount of the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.)".

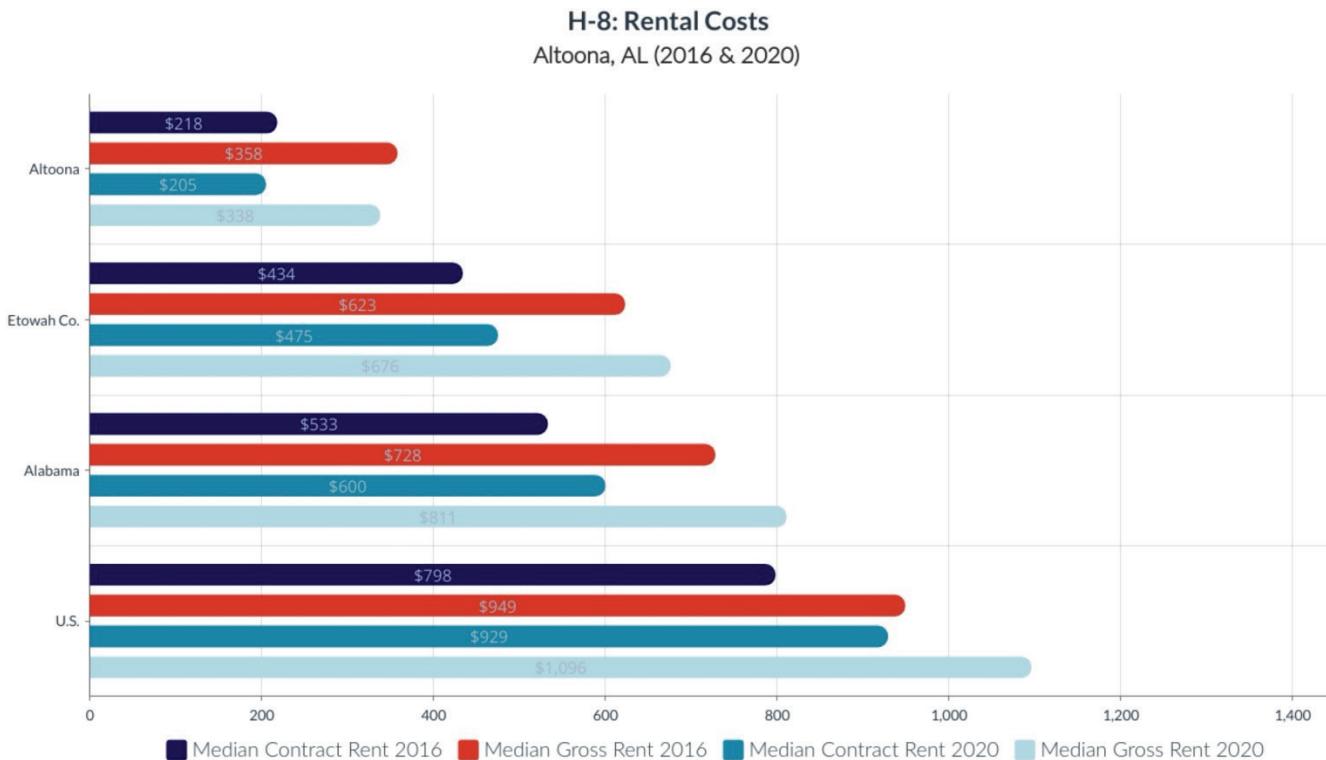
Housing affordability is also determined through owner-occupied and renter-occupied monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income, which this section on affordability also examines.

## Rental Costs

In determining affordability for renters in a community, an examination of rental costs plays an important role. Rental cost information for this section was collected and analyzed through American Community Survey figures for median contract rent and median gross rent. The information gathered shows that Altoona displayed significantly lower rental costs in comparison to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S.

In terms of contract rent, between 2016 and 2020, the town decreased in median contract rent slightly from \$218 to \$205, while the

county grew from \$434 to \$475. The state increased in median contract rent from \$533 to \$600 and the nation grew from \$798 to \$929. For gross rent, between 2016 and 2020, the town decreased slightly from \$358 to \$338, while the county increased from \$623 to \$676. The state increased from \$728 to \$811 and the nation from \$949 to \$1,096. This information indicates that town rental costs, overall, were significantly lower and decreased in comparison to those in the county, state, and nation. Figure H-8 illustrates median contract rent and median gross rent for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2016 and 2020. Notice in the chart rental costs for the town following the opposite trends in comparison to the county, state and nation showing substantially higher costs in 2016 and 2020. Such low rental costs for the town compared to the county could be attributed to the lower portion of rental availability, which tends to be the situation in rural communities, as opposed to state and nation households having higher rental costs and more availability in more densely populated urban areas. For more information see Table H-8 Rental Costs in Appendix C.



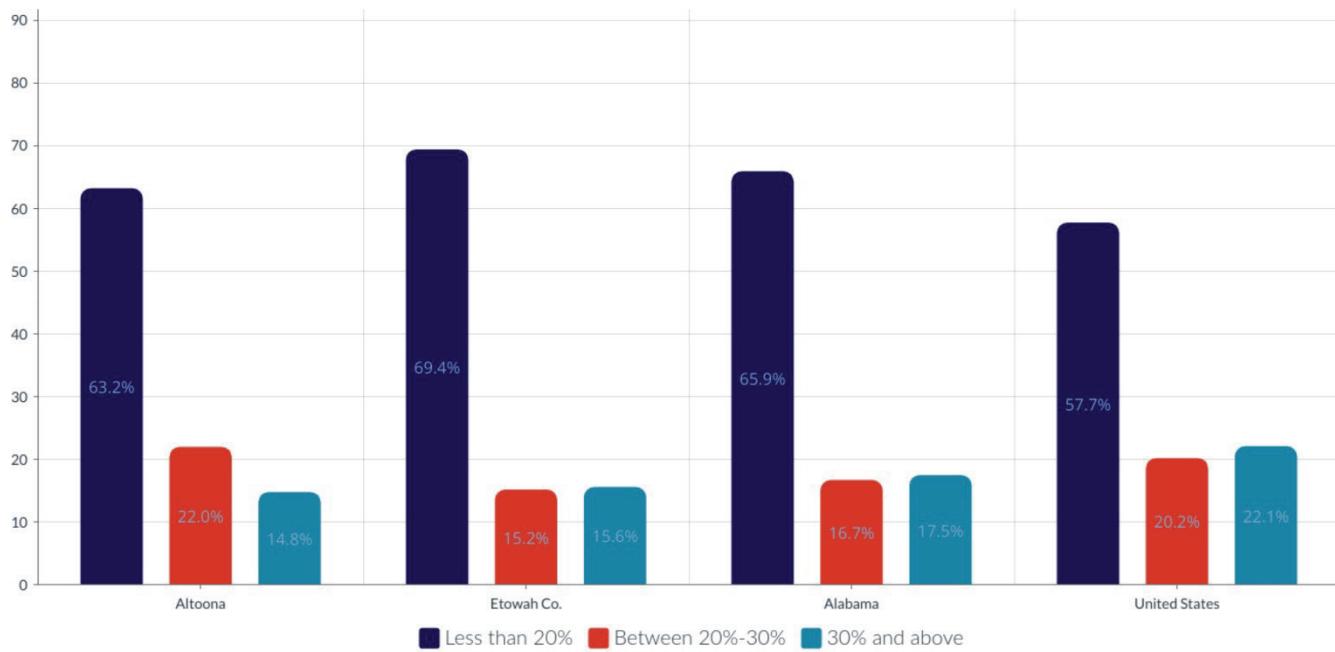
## Affordability of Owner-occupied Housing

Affordability of owner-occupied housing is vitally important in maintaining housing occupancy and population growth within the community. The relative affordability of owner-occupied housing was determined by examining selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income. As a common goal, communities should strive to make housing more affordable to their residents without sacrificing structural quality, working facilities, and aesthetic appeal.

Altoona's housing affordability of owner-occupied homes aligns with trends in comparison to those of Etowah County, Alabama and the U.S. In 2020, approximately 85% of town households spent less than 30% of their household income on housing costs as the county reported slightly less affordability at 84%. The state reported 83% and the nation 78% in this category. Furthermore, the town ranked slightly lower in the higher affordability categories with approximately 63% of households spending less than 20% of their household income on housing costs while the county reported 69%, the state 66%, although ranked higher than the nation at 58%. This information indicates that in 2020 Altoona's owner-occupied housing was somewhat more affordable than the county and state, and substantially more affordable than the nation. Figure H-9 illustrates monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice in the chart the higher affordability in the

town, particularly in the category between 20%-30%, compared to the county, state, and nation. For more information see Table H-9: Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income in Appendix C.

**H-9: Housing Affordability- Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income**  
Altoona, Alabama (2020)



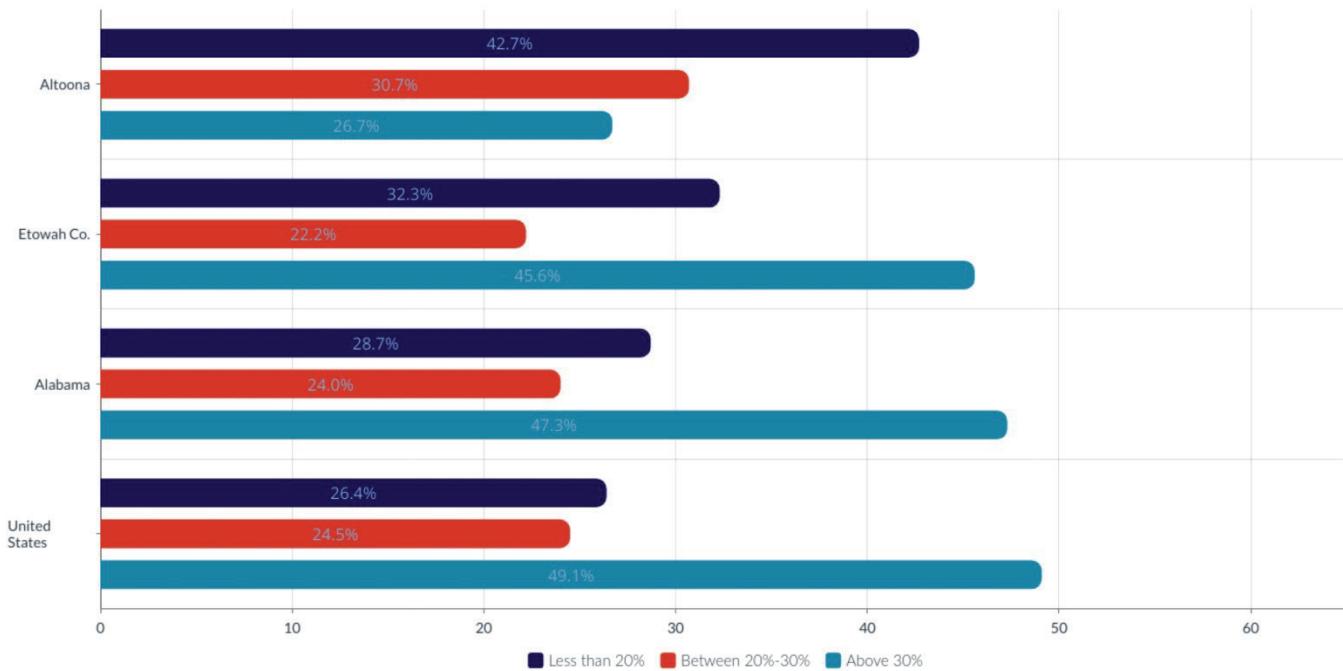
## *Affordability of Renter-occupied Housing*

Renting has often been an attractive alternative to owning a home. Home ownership is generally more expensive, and houses often require greater maintenance than apartments, town homes, or condominiums. Although home ownership, nationally, is much more popular and highly regarded, renter-occupied housing is needed to meet the needs of a diverse population, requiring a variety of housing choices.

Unlike owner-occupied affordability, Altoona showed significantly less renter-occupied housing affordability in comparison to Etowah County, Alabama and the U.S. In 2020, the town recorded approximately 74% of renter-occupied households spending less than 30% of their household income on housing costs, while the county reported 54%, the state 53%, and the nation 51%. Furthermore, in 2020, approximately 27% of renter-occupied households in the town spent 30% or more of their household income on housing costs, which ranked significantly less in comparison to the county at 46%, the state 47%, and the nation 49%. Figure H-10 examines gross rent as a percentage of household income for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice from the chart the considerably lower portion of renter-occupied households in the town spending more than 30% of their household income on housing costs compared to the county. For more information see Table H-10: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in Appendix C.

### H-10: Housing Affordability- Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

Altoona, Alabama (2020)



## **Analytical Summary**

The analytical summary provides a statistical review of the information discussed in each chapter and analyzes the data through a general assessment.

### **Units by Type**

The overwhelming majority of housing units in Altoona, in 2020, was single-family, accounting for 64.2% of all units, which was lower than Etowah County, showing 77.9%, Alabama 70.4%, and the U.S. at 67.7%. However, in 2020, the town reported a much higher portion of multi-family units at 24.6%, compared to the county at 11.2% and state at 16.5%. However, the nation showed slightly more multi-family units showing 26.2%. This information indicates that Altoona held higher than average representation in multi-family housing compared to Etowah County and Alabama. In addition, Altoona decreased in mobile home development by 5% between 2016 and 2020 in comparison to the relatively similar decrease of Etowah County at 7%, while the U.S. decreased 1% and Alabama increased by less than 1%. In 2020, the town still held a slightly higher portion of mobile homes at 11.2% compared to the county at 10.7%. The town showed lower portions of mobile homes in comparison to the state at 13%, but higher than the nation at 6%.

Assessment: Altoona exhibited a high portion of single-family homes, although still below average in comparison, and high representation of multi-family homes compared to Etowah County and Alabama, and only slightly lower than the U.S. The town also reported lower portions of mobile homes than the state however slightly higher than the county.

### **Tenure and Occupancy**

Altoona showed somewhat similar portions in tenure compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In 2020, owner-occupied housing comprised approximately 49% for the town which was lower than the average of the county at 59%, state at 58%, and nation at 57%. Renter-occupied housing in the town was higher in comparison at 33%, with the county recording 22%, the state at 26%, and slightly higher than the nation at 32%.

Assessment: Altoona showed comparable occupancy status with Etowah County but reported lower representation in owner-occupied housing compared to the state and nation.

### **Vacancy Status**

Altoona displayed somewhat similar patterns in vacancy status compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In 2020, the town's most prevalent vacancy status was other vacant at 78%, which was comparable to the county at 79%, but higher than the state at 50%, and nation at 36%. However, Altoona and Etowah County, during this time, held a lower portion of for rent only vacancies at 8% and 11%, respectively, in contrast to Alabama and the U.S. at 17%. The town also recorded a somewhat higher representation in miscellaneous vacancies at 7%, in comparison to the county at 3%, but lower than the state at 20% and nation at 33%. This information indicates proportionately more town homes available for other vacant uses and less vacancies used for miscellaneous and for sale only purposes compared to the state, and nation. This could be attributed to fairly stationary residents, with less residents looking to sell their home, or to use it for seasonal, part-time, or recreational uses.

Assessment: Altoona reported considerably more vacant homes for other uses, less for rent, and slightly more for sale only compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S.

### **Household Size**

In 2020, Altoona's single most prevalent household size was 2-person, accounting for 39% of all households, which was similar to Alabama's (35%), Etowah County at 36%, and the U.S. at 34%. Altoona reported approximately 16% of households with 3 persons, being the same as Alabama and the U.S., and Etowah County held slightly less at 14%.

Assessment: Altoona recorded a slightly higher number of households of 2 and 3-person size during this time compared to the county, state, and nation.

## ***Housing Stock Age***

In terms of housing stock age, the American Community Survey showed that approximately 71.3% of homes in the town were built prior to 1980, which is moderately higher in comparison, as the county recorded 60.7%, state 44%, and nation at 53%. Furthermore, approximately 37.8% of Altoona's homes were built prior to 1960, while the county recorded slightly less at 30.2% and the nation at 27.4% while the state recorded significantly less at 17.2%. The town reported approximately 10.2% of homes built post-1999 while the county exhibited a slightly larger portion of newer homes at 14.4% and the state and nation were significantly higher recording approximately 22.7% for the state and 20% for the nation.

Assessment: In 2020, Altoona held a somewhat higher portion of older homes compared to the county, state, and nation.

## ***Physical Conditions***

According the EARPDC housing conditions survey, conducted in 2023, Altoona had 344 home units surveyed, of which 240 (70%) were single-family and 71 (21%) were manufactured units. The survey showed that single family homes consist of approximately 38% were in excellent condition, 32% in good condition, 26% in substandard condition, and 5% dilapidated. Manufactured units reported the most need for improvements with 45% units in substandard condition and 11% dilapidated.

Assessment: Survey results from the EARPDC housing conditions survey showed a small portion of Altoona's housing units in a various state of deterioration with manufactured homes displaying the greatest need for improvements.

## ***Housing Value***

Aligning with the decline in homes valued less than \$50 K, Altoona showed a large representation in this value category at 15%, which was slightly less than Etowah County and Alabama, accounting for 16% of their housing stock; however, the U.S. reported somewhat substantially less at 7%. In 2020, Altoona exhibited significant representation of higher valued homes with approximately 56% being valued at \$100 K or above, which was a slightly lower portion than Etowah County at 60%, although moderately lower representation in comparison to Alabama at 68% and the U.S. at 82%. This information indicates that the decline in lower valued homes has led to the town has following the same trends as the county in the portion of high value homes but falls short in comparison to the state and nation.

Assessment: Altoona showed moderately lower housing value compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and significantly lower value than the U.S.

## ***Housing Affordability***

In terms of contract rent, between 2016 and 2020, the town decreased in median contract rent slightly from \$218 to \$205, while the county grew from \$434 to \$475. The state increased in median contract rent from \$533 to \$600 and the nation grew from \$798 to \$929. For gross rent, between 2016 and 2020, the town decreased slightly from \$358 to \$338, while the county increased from \$623 to \$676. The state increased from \$728 to \$811 and the nation from \$949 to \$1096.

Assessment: Altoona reported significantly lower costs of contract rent and gross rent compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and considerably lower rental costs than the U.S.

## ***Affordability of Owner-occupied Housing***

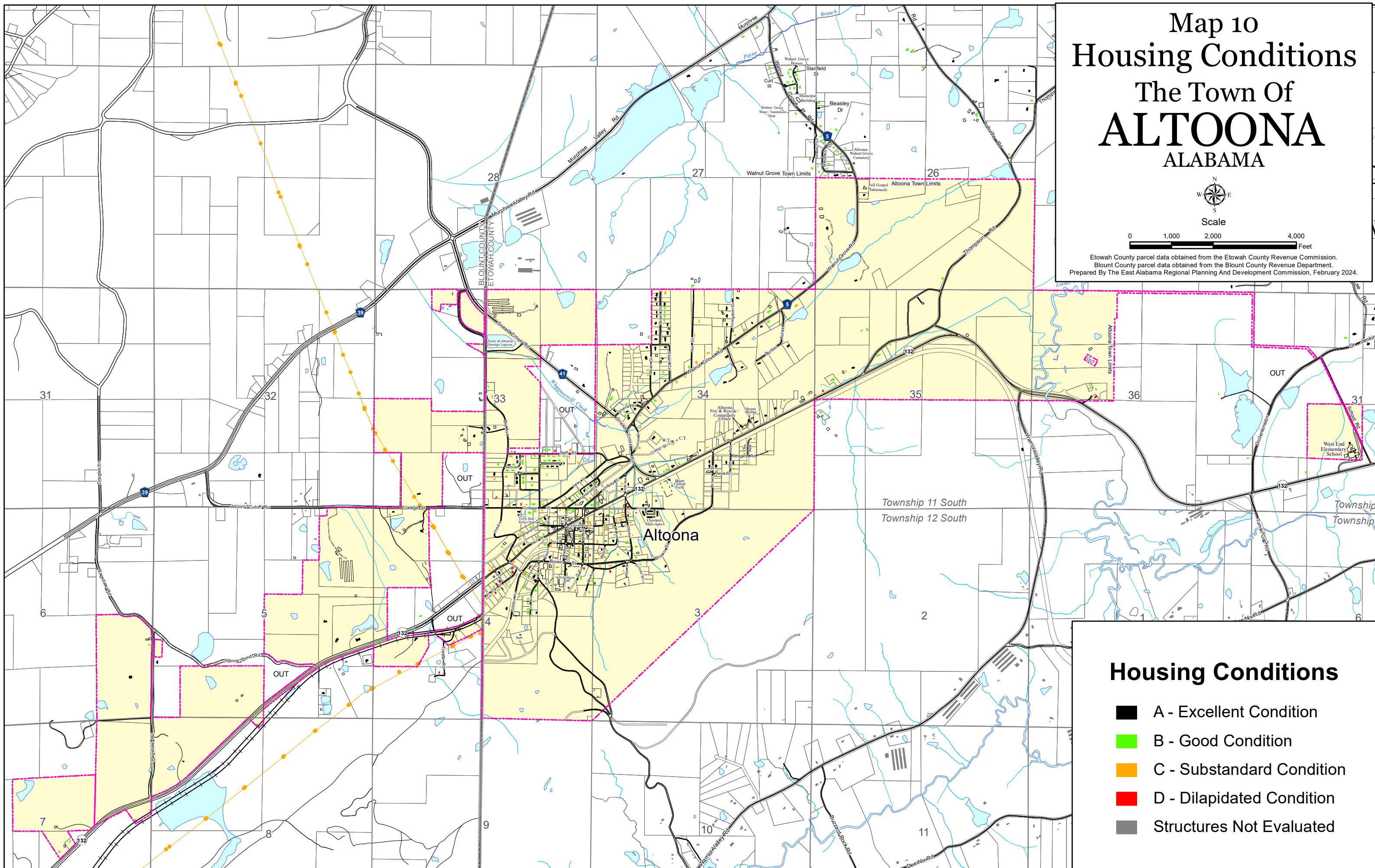
In 2020, approximately 85% of town households spent less than 30% of their household income on housing costs as the county reported slightly less affordability at 84%. The state reported 83% and the nation 78% in this category. Furthermore, the town ranked slightly lower in the higher affordability categories with approximately 63% of households spending less than 20% of their household income on housing costs while the county reported 69%, the state 66%, although ranked higher than the nation at 58%.

Assessment: Altoona showed slightly more owner-occupied affordability compared to Etowah County and Alabama, and substantially higher owner-occupied affordability compared to the U.S. in 2020.

## ***Affordability of Renter-occupied Housing***

In 2020, the town recorded approximately 74% of renter-occupied households spending less than 30% of their household income on housing costs, while the county reported 54%, the state 53%, and the nation 51%. Furthermore, in 2020, approximately 27% of renter-occupied households in the town spent 30% or more of their household income on housing costs, which ranked significantly less in comparison to the county at 46%, the state 47%, and the nation 49%.

Assessment: Altoona showed substantially higher renter-occupied affordability to Etowah County, Alabama and the U.S. in 2020.



# Map 10 Housing Conditions The Town Of **ALTOONA** ALABAMA



### Scale

2,000 4,000

om the Etowah County Revenue Commission.  
om the Blount County Revenue Department.

# Housing Conditions

- A - Excellent Condition
- B - Good Condition
- C - Substandard Condition
- D - Dilapidated Condition
- Structures Not Evaluated

# CHAPTER 8: ECONOMY

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The economy directly affects a community's growth and prosperity. The state of the local economy, i.e., how well it creates and maintains employment opportunities, handles production, and distributes goods and services, greatly influences population, housing, transportation, and land use. Therefore, a clear understanding of the local economy is vital for community growth and development and a sustainable comprehensive planning effort. The Town of Altoona desires to grow and prosper in economic development, drawing in new small businesses while maintaining and expanding present business establishments.

This chapter of the comprehensive plan examines the following economy related characteristics: educational attainment, income, commuting patterns, labor force participation and unemployment, occupational status, industrial composition, and poverty. These town characteristics shall be compared to those of the county, state, and nation to establish a foundation for comparison. Economic information for this chapter has been obtained entirely from the 2016-2020 American Community Survey, which has been used to provide economic trend information and analysis. The previous chapter on population introduces and discusses the American Community Survey—that is how and when data is collected and its uses for the plan. An analytical summary of economic information is included at the end of this chapter.

## *Education*

Education is a vital factor for initiating community growth and economic development. A high-quality education system prepares and empowers individuals within the community to be productive, successful leaders in their respective fields of training and expertise. This, in turn, qualifies individuals for greater earning potential, allowing more money to be reinvested into the community, and building the local economy.

## *Educational Attainment*

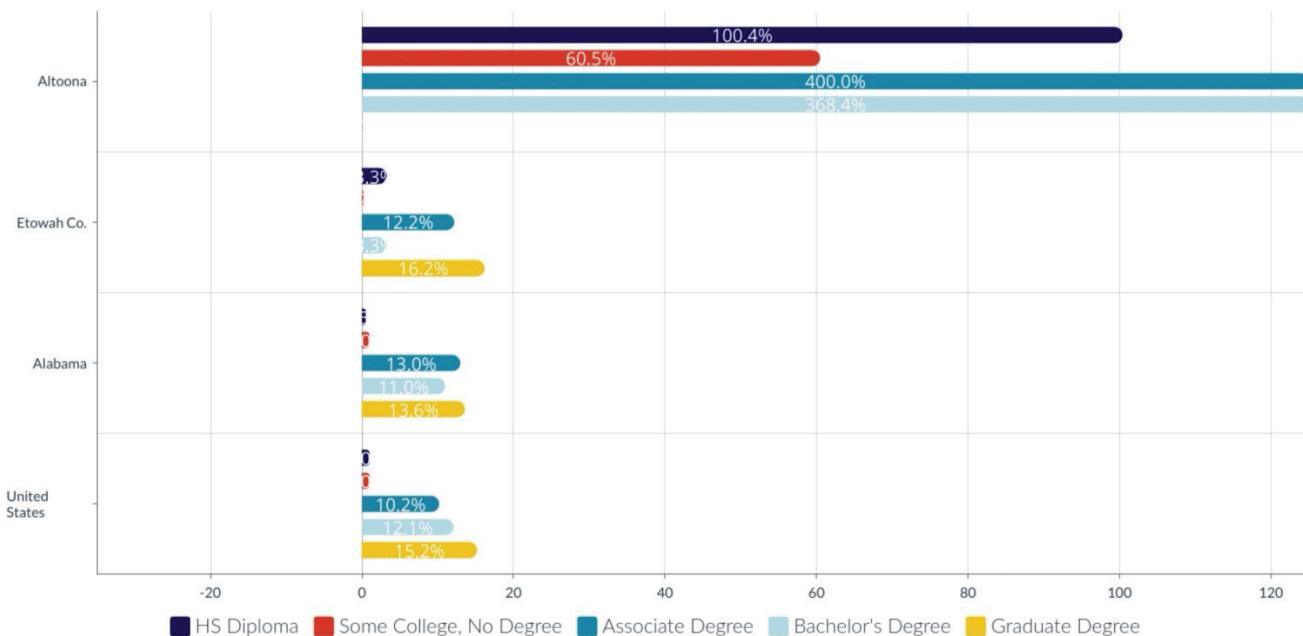
Altoona showed a much higher increase in educational attainment compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020 the town increased in recipients of associate by a total change in associate degrees of 400%, compared to that of the county 12.2%, state 13%, and nation 10.2%. The increase of bachelor's degrees is also very significant at 368.4% while the county reported 3.3%, the state 11%, and the nation 12.1%. However, the Town did not change at all in the number of recipients of Graduate or Professional degrees at 0% while the county reported 16.2%, the state 13.6%, and the nation at 15.2%.

While Altoona showed significant growth in recipients of higher attainment degrees, the town reported a significant decrease in residents with lower attainment such as those categorized in 9th to 12th grade, with no diploma or less than 9th grade, with a combined decrease of -83.4%. This was a considerably higher decrease as compared to the county in these categories by -38.8%, the state by -26.1%, and the nation -16.3%.

Figure E-1 illustrates educational attainment for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice in the chart that the town showed significantly higher attainment growth than the county, state, and nation. For more information see Table E-1: Educational Attainment in Appendix A.

### E-1: Percent Change in Education Attainment

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



Trends from this information indicate a major decrease in persons having received lower educational attainment, such as recipients of a high school diploma only or less than a 9th grade education, and an increase in recipients of higher attainment such as an associate degree and bachelor's degree. As a planning consideration, local businesses should work with schools and regional colleges to assure that when students graduate, they have employment opportunities in the community and can be placed in jobs immediately after graduation.

## Income

Monetary income is a primary factor in determining a community's wealth and prosperity. Higher incomes promote a higher standard of living and more return investment into the community, while lower incomes suggest lower standards and less investment. Therefore, a comprehensive economic study requires a thorough understanding of community income.

## Household Income

Household income (HHI) is the most basic and generalized variable in measuring income. A household is considered a dwelling unit in which one or more individuals live. Therefore, the household income is the accumulation of all income generated within a specified household. Median household income (MHI), which is characterized as the exact middle (median) point of household incomes collected, has been examined as the primary focal point.

Altoona, with household income, ranked moderately compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020, the town increased in households earning between \$15 K and \$34,999 K by a moderate 20.7% while the county dropped in this category by -11.8%, the state declined by -8%, and the nation by -12%. Altoona also increased significantly in households earning less than \$15 K by 22.9%, as Etowah County (-12.8%) and Alabama and the U.S. (-15%) all declined in this group. Households earning between \$75 – 149,999 K showed a considerable increase of 212.9% in Altoona, while Etowah County had a much lower increase of 18.3%, Alabama 17%, and the U.S. 14.8%. The town also reported a slight increase in households earning more than \$150,000 at 19%, while this was very little compared to the increase of the county 46.6%, the state 46%, and the nation 43.8%. This information indicates that Altoona showed growth in lower income categories compared to the county, state, and nation, while

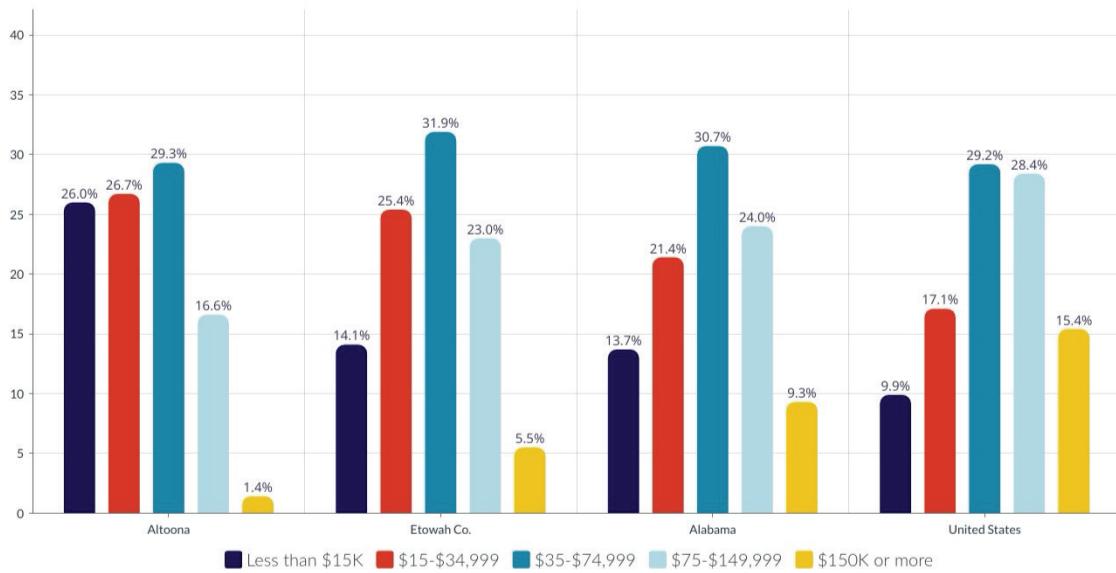
showing more considerable growth in higher income categories.

In 2020, the town showed more than half of households at 52.7% earning less than \$35 K per year, while the county reported 39.5%. Meanwhile, the state showed 35.1% earning less than \$35 K in 2020, as the nation reported 27%. Altoona in 2020 reported low portions of higher earning households, such as \$150,000 or more, at 1% compared to Etowah County (5%) and Alabama (9%), and the U.S. at 15%. Figure E-2 displays household income for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice from the chart that the town held a higher portion of lower income households compared to the county, state, and nation.

Furthermore, median household income reflects Altoona households with significantly lower income compared to Etowah County, but drastically lower than Alabama and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020 Altoona median household income increased 11.5% from \$28,627 to \$31,961 which was lower than Etowah County, which grew 11% from \$40,478 to \$44,934. Meanwhile, Alabama increased in median household income 13% from \$44,758 to \$50,536 and the U.S. reported a 17.5% climb from \$53,322 to \$64,994. For more detail see Table E-2: Household Income Distribution in Appendix B.

As a planning consideration and as a means of increasing income, Altoona should strive to attract businesses by marketing its room for growth to such companies and institutions, which would, in turn, bring in high-paying jobs and grow the local economy. Additionally, the town holds significant potential for new firms with its location with convenient access to major roadways and railroads and reasonable proximity to major cities and metro areas such as Gadsden, Birmingham, and Huntsville.

**E-2: Household Income**  
Altoona, AL (2020)



## Commuting Patterns

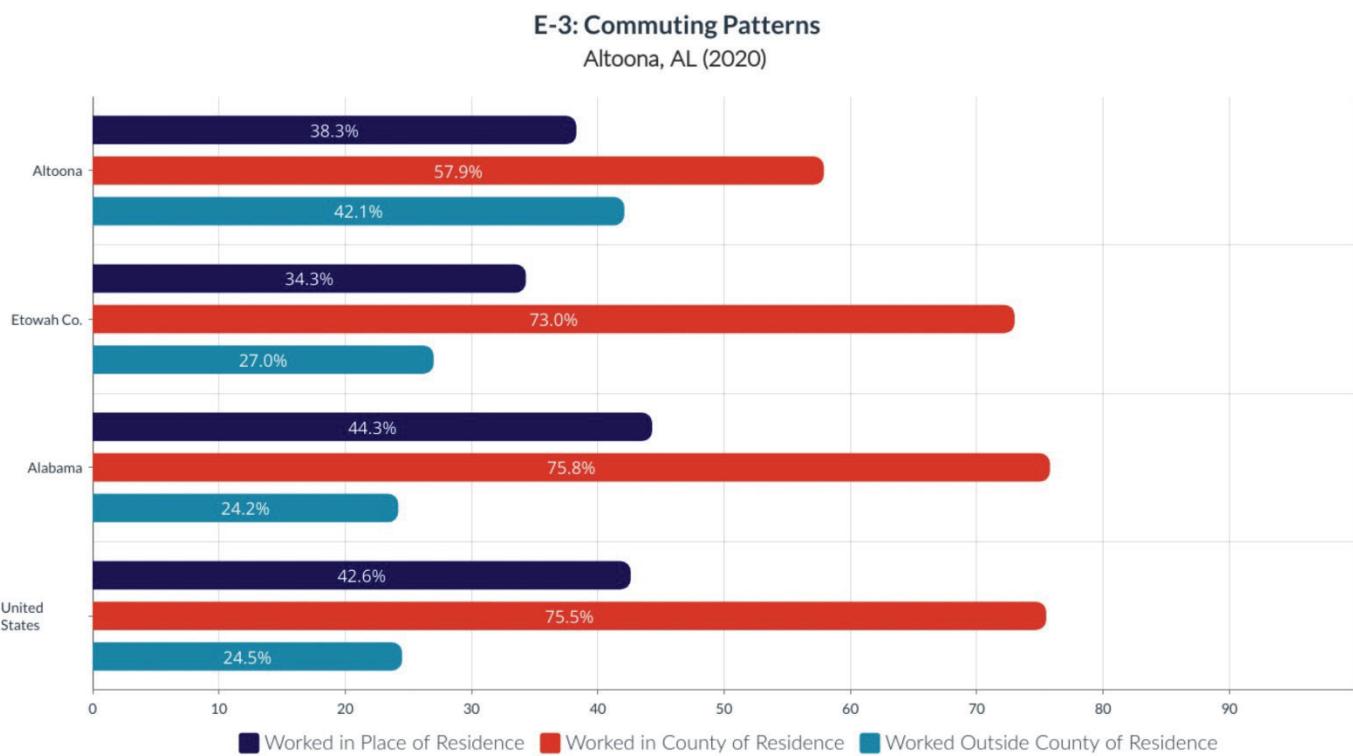
Commuting patterns can be used to gauge how far away people in a community live from their place of work and how much time was spent in transition to and from home and the workplace. These patterns are useful in recognizing places for job development and retention and alleviating long commuting time and travel distances in the town and its surrounding municipalities, thus advancing the local economy. This section of the economy chapter will examine such commuting information as place of work, commuting travel time, and means of transportation to give a complete picture of commuting within the Town of Altoona and provide suggestions for improving travel to and from work.

## Place of Work

Place of work was the major component in understanding commuting patterns with the two variables examined being those

residents (workers 16 and older) who live in their place of residence (town) and work in their respective town along with those who live in the town, but commute outside the town to work, whether their work is in the same county or outside the county.

In terms of commuting patterns, Altoona rated slightly better in comparison to Etowah County, and slightly worse than Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020 Altoona increased in commuters living and working in the town, going from 9.8% to 38%, and in addition, in 2020, the town showed a slightly higher portion of commuters working in their place of residence compared to the county at 34% and a significantly smaller portion compared to the state (44%) and nation at 43%. However, Altoona showed a much lower portion (58%) of commuters who live and work in the town or in Etowah County in contrast to those who live in somewhere else in the county and work and live in their respective community or somewhere else in the same county at 73%. Both Alabama and the U.S. at 76% reported similar county commuting trends in comparison to Etowah in 2020. This information indicates that proportionately more commuters in Altoona seek employment opportunities out-of-county (42%) compared to those in Etowah County at 27%, Alabama at 24%, and the U.S. at 25%, meaning that the town has not been adequately providing jobs for resident workers. Figure E-3 displays commuting patterns in the form of work in place of residence for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice from the chart the town holding a slightly lower portion of commuters working inside their county of residence, and a high portion of commuters working outside their county of residence, compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. For more information see Table E-5 Commuting Patterns in Appendix B.



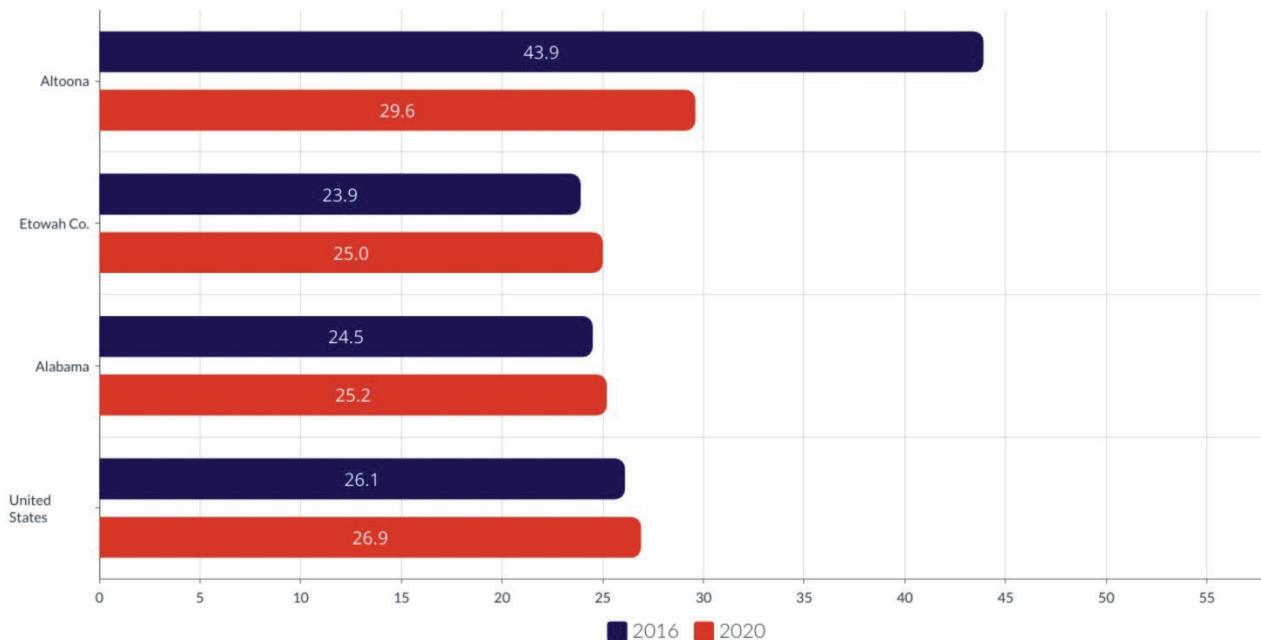
## Travel Time to Work

Travel time to work is an important factor in determining commuting patterns. The amount of time a typical driver spends on the road gives some indication of access to employment opportunities from any given community. In alignment with place of work information Altoona commuters reported significantly higher commute times in 2016, though decreasing significantly in 2020, compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Mean travel time to work information for Altoona, between 2016 and 2020, records average travel time decreasing significantly from 43.9 minutes to 29.6 minutes while Etowah County increased from 23.9 minutes to 25 minutes, and Alabama climbed slightly from 24.5 to 25.2. The U.S. reported a minor increase from 26.1 minutes to 26.9 for comparison. This information further indicates slightly longer distances traveled for town and county commuters than for

the average commuter in the state and nation. Figure E-4 displays commuting means in the form of mean travel time to work in minutes for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2016 and 2020. Notice from the chart the high commute times for Altoona in comparison to the county, state, and nation. As a planning consideration, Altoona should continue to promote and encourage new small businesses to locate in the community, and expand existing, to spur economic development and provide commuters with more opportunities to live and work in the town, thus strengthening the local economy.

**E-4: Commuting Means: Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)**

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



## **Labor Force Participation and Unemployment**

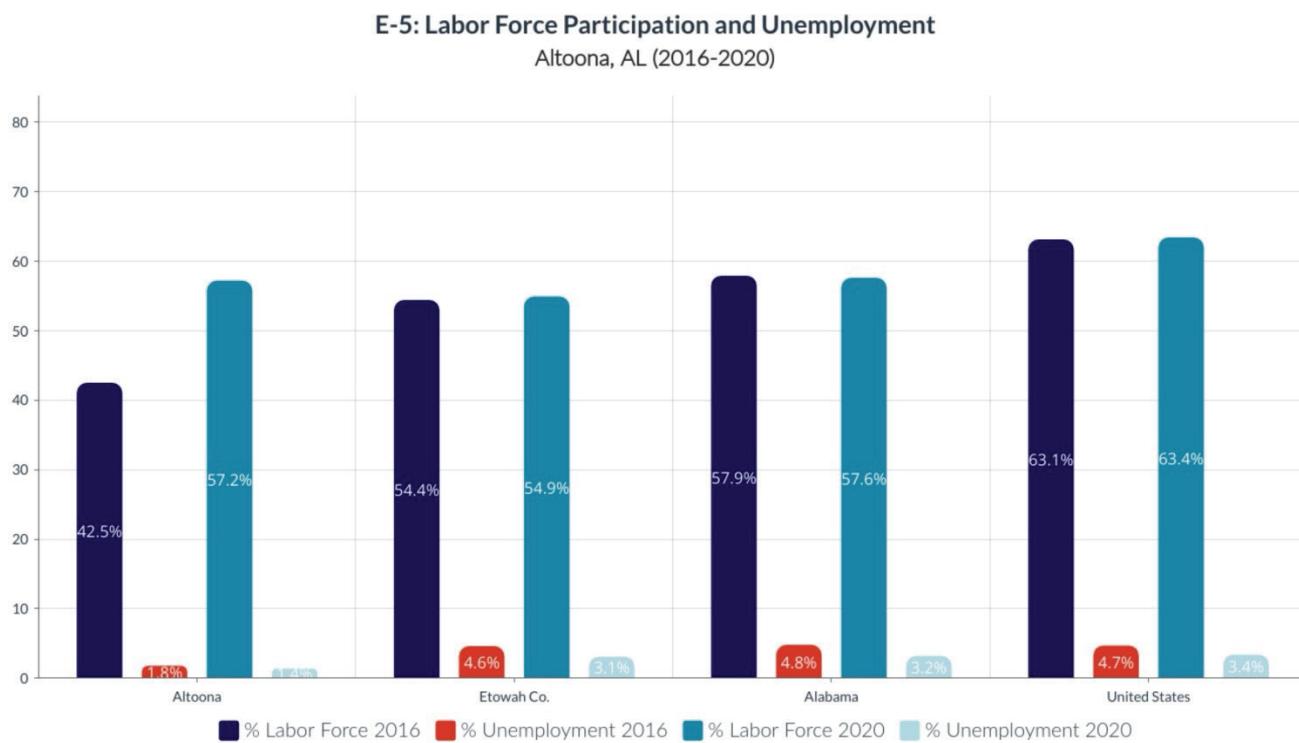
Labor force participation is based on how many individuals ages 16 and over are a part of the labor force, and if they are employed or unemployed as civilian or armed forces. Businesses desiring to relocate or expand search for communities with a strong labor force in which to draw qualified employment. To do this they must estimate approximately how many candidates are available to fill positions required to perform necessary company operations. Therefore, a proper understanding of a community's labor force is critical to a comprehensive planning effort.

While labor force participation examines the total number of people aged 16 and older available in the workforce, unemployment focuses on those eligible yet not employed in the civilian workforce. For this study's purposes, unemployment trends are not based on the unemployment rate, since armed forces are not accounted for, but the portion of persons ready for civilian labor force work. This information is useful in understanding the town's employment patterns in relation to county, state, and national trends and in establishing priorities for employment in the community.

## **Labor Force Participation**

Concerning Altoona's labor force, the town ranked comparably to Etowah County, and poorly compared to Alabama and the U.S. in 2016, with drastic improvement in 2020. The town's labor force increased by 14%, while the county and state decreased by -1%, and the nation grew by 1%. Also, between 2016 and 2020 the portion of the town's population, age 16 and older, in the labor force increased from 43% to 57% while the county grew slightly from 54% to 55%, the state declined from 58% to 57%, as the nation grew from 63% to 64%. This information indicates that the town remained competitive and on par with labor force participation in the county and state but fell short in comparison to the nation. Figure E-5 illustrates labor force participation and unemployment

for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2016 and 2020. Notice in the chart that the town increased the most substantially in labor force participation.

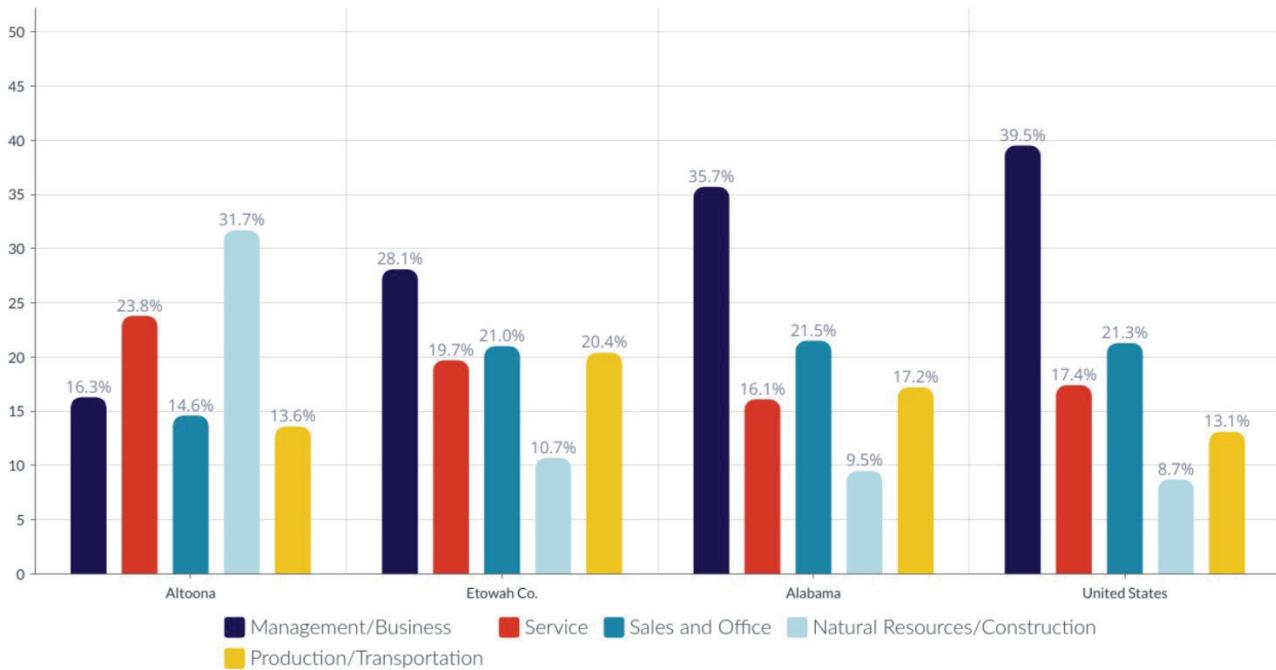


## Unemployment

Altoona ranked lower in unemployment in comparison to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. From 2016 to 2020 the town decreased in unemployment by -22.2%, while the county dropped more considerably by -32.6%, the state by -33.3%, and the nation by -27.7%. During this time Altoona decreased in the portion of unemployed people in the civilian labor force from 2% to 1%, as Etowah County fell from 5% to 3%, and Alabama and the U.S. from 5% to 3%. This information indicates that the town, at this time, held a similar portion of unemployed persons in the labor force to the county, and a slightly smaller portion compared to the state, and nation. For more information see Table E-6 Labor Force Participation in Appendix B.

## E-6: Occupational Status

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Occupational Status

Every economically viable community has a variety of occupations through which services are performed and money is circulated. A study of occupational status shows what kind of labor is being utilized in a community. This information is useful for determining where job opportunities exist and where job growth is most or least likely to occur. Occupation describes the kind of work a person does on the job. For people working two or more occupations during the reference week data was collected the occupation in which the employee worked the greatest number of hours was accounted as the person's occupation.

In order to categorize occupations, occupational status has been divided into 5 categories, which include: 1) Management / Business Related—which constitutes business and financial operators and specialists, architects, engineers, legal occupations, computer specialists, social services, and technical healthcare occupations, 2) Services—consisting of healthcare support, firefighting and law enforcement, ground and building maintenance, hotel and food accommodation, arts, entertainment, education, recreation, and personal care services, 3) Sales / Office—sales and related, and administrative, 4) Natural Resources / Construction—which includes fishing, farming, and forestry operations, construction trade workers, extraction workers, and supervisors, 5) Production / Transportation—production occupations, transportation and moving occupations, aircraft and traffic control operations, motor vehicle operators, rail, water, and other transportation related occupations.

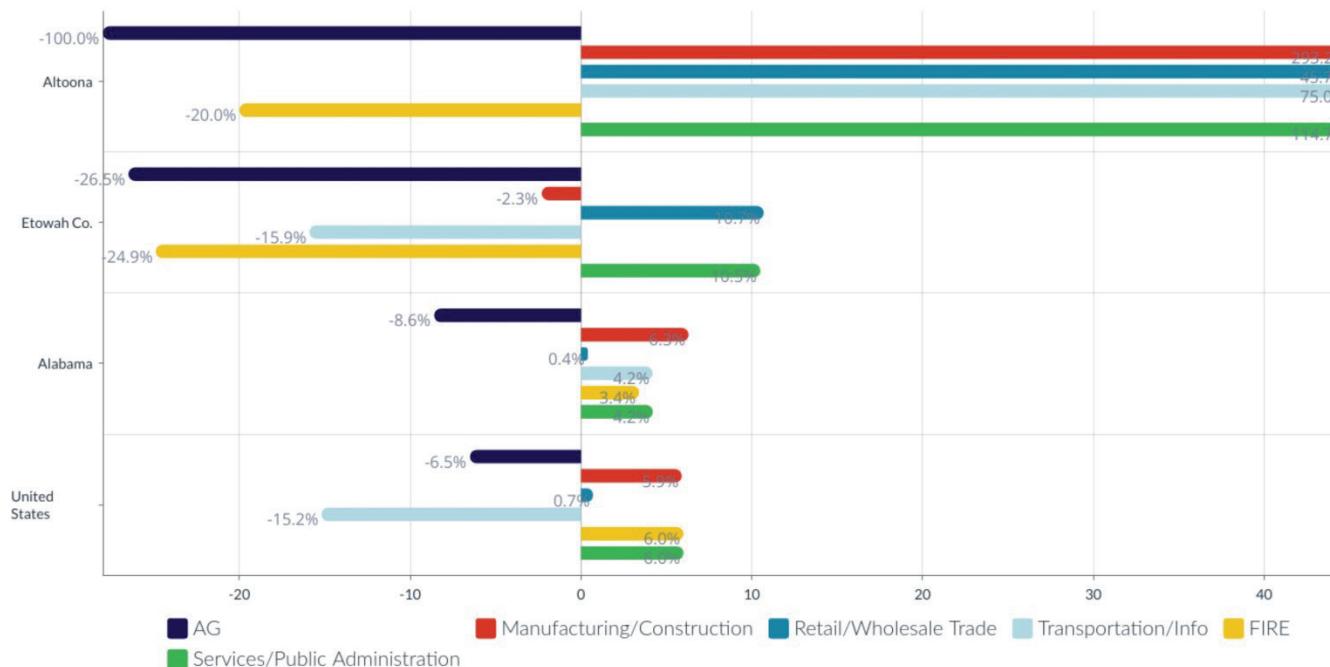
Altoona showed differing trends in occupational status compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020, the town's largest increase in occupations was in Natural Resources/Construction which grew by 1618.2% while the county saw a change of 15%. The state increased in this occupation by 1% and the nation 3%. The town, at this time, also reported very little change in Sales and Office-related professions at 2.4% as did the county at 3.3%, the state at -7%, and the nation at -6%. This information indicates a slight transition into Natural Resources/Construction and less so toward Sales and Office-related jobs.

In 2020, Altoona also reported somewhat differing occupation status from Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In a reflection of its trend, the town exceeded the county, state, and nation in the portion of Natural Resources/Construction-related jobs with

a considerable 31.7% compared to Etowah County (10.7%), Alabama (9.5%), and the U.S. (8.7%). Altoona also ranked highest in Services at 23.8% compared to the county at 19.7%, the state at 16.1%, and the nation at 17.4%.

This information indicates a proportionately larger portion of blue-collar jobs at the town and county level than in the state and nation, which subsequently hold a larger portion of white collar. Figure E-6 displays occupational status for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice from the chart the town and county's larger portion of Natural Resources/Construction related professions and the larger representation of Management and Business in the state and nation. For more information see Table E-7 Occupational Status in Appendix B.

**E-7: % Change in Industrial Composition**  
Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



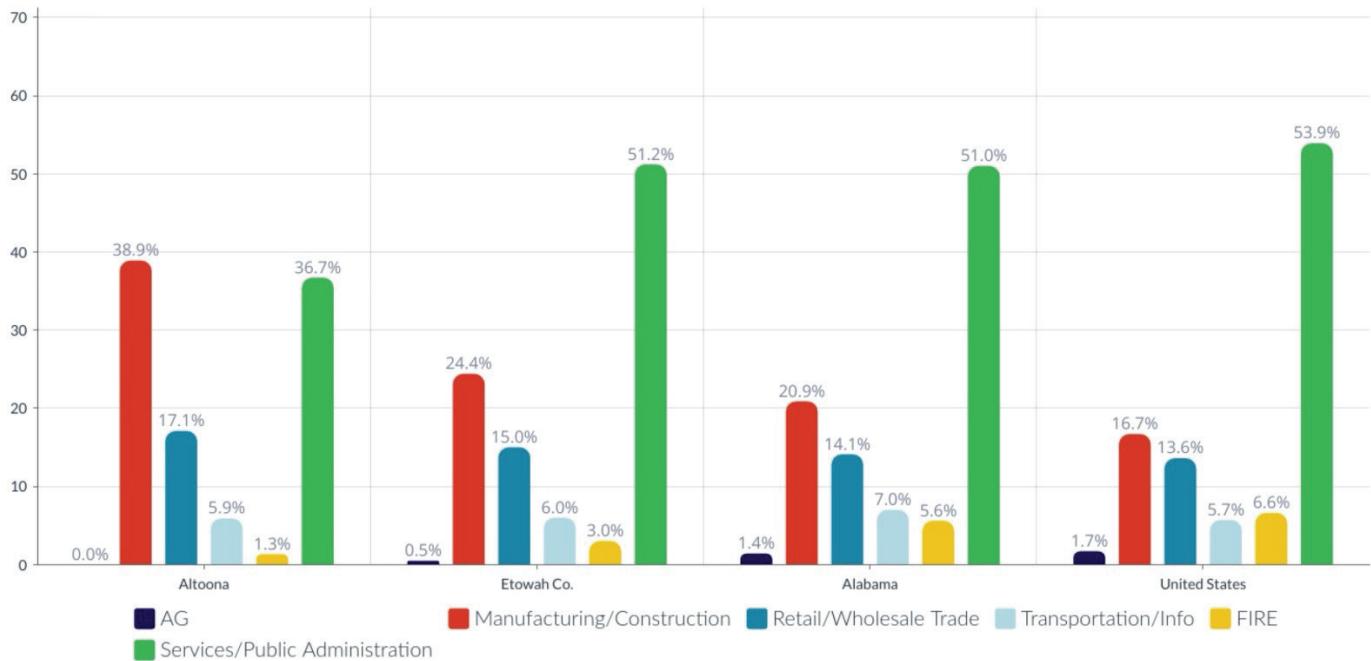
## Industrial Composition

Any economically prosperous community will have a diverse and changing economic base, offering a variety of job opportunities and services to its population. As markets change and demand for specified goods and services increase or decrease, industrial sectors will vary in size and in their influence on the overall industrial composition and economic welfare of the community; therefore, a proper examination of industrial composition and trends is necessary to plan for economic development and opportunities. This section of the economy chapter focuses on industrial composition and changes by industry employment.

For categorization purposes, industries have been separated into 6 industrial sectors, which include: 1) Agriculture—consisting of such industries as agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining, 2) Manufacturing/Construction, 3) Retail and Wholesale Trade, 4) Transportation/Information—including warehousing, utilities, and communications 5) FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real-Estate), 6) Services/Public Administration—which entails professional, scientific, administrative, waste management, arts, education, healthcare and social assistance, food accommodation, and other services.

## E-8: Industrial Composition

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Change in Industry

Altoona, according to the American Community Survey, recorded significant changes in industry. From 2016 to 2020, the town declined in two industrial sectors with the largest growth in Manufacturing / Construction at 293%, Retail / Wholesale Trade at 45.7%, Transportation / Information at 75%, and Services/Public Administration at 115%. Comparatively, the county changed in these sectors by -2.3%, 11%, 16% and 10.5%. For the state and U.S., the changes in these sectors were not as significant, whereas Manufacturing / Construction increased 6% for both, Retail / Wholesale Trade changed minimally at less than 1% for both the state and nation. Services / Public Administration increased 4% for the state and 6% for the nation.

FIRE showed moderate loss in the town and county, dropping employment by -20% and -25%, respectively, while the state and nation grew in this category by 3%, and 6%, respectively. Overall, during this time, Altoona accounted for a 124.9% increase in industry while both Etowah County and Alabama at 4% and the U.S. at 5% showed considerably less. The major decrease for Altoona was in Agriculture by -100%, and while Etowah County, Alabama, and U.S. all decreased as well by -27%, -9% and -7% it was not as drastic. Figure E-7 displays percent change in industry for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. between 2016 and 2020. Notice in the chart that the town gained more industry than it lost, with its most significant gain in Manufacturing / Construction.

## Industrial Composition

In terms of industrial composition, Altoona showed somewhat opposite trends in comparison to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In 2020, the town's single largest industrial sector was in Manufacturing / Construction accounting for a large portion (39%) of the town's economy while the county only reports 24% in this sector as it has decreased -2.3% between 2016 and 2020. The state and nation also show lower representation in the sector of Manufacturing / Construction at 21% and 17% in comparison to Altoona; they did increase, although not nearly as significantly as the town. The second largest industrial sector in the town is Services / Public Administration which makes up another large portion (37%) of the economy, while this is the largest industry in Etowah County, accounting for more than half (51.2%) of the county's economy. The state and nation showed slightly higher

representation in Services/Public Administration than the town at 51% and 54%, with similar representation to the county.

As previously discussed, this information indicates the town and county holding less white collar and more blue-collar jobs than the state and nation. Figure E-8 illustrates industrial composition for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2020. Notice from the chart the somewhat significantly larger portion of Manufacturing/Construction related industries compared to the state and nation. Also notice the smaller portion of FIRE related jobs in the town, compared to the county, state, and nation. For more information see Table E-8 Industrial Composition in Appendix B.

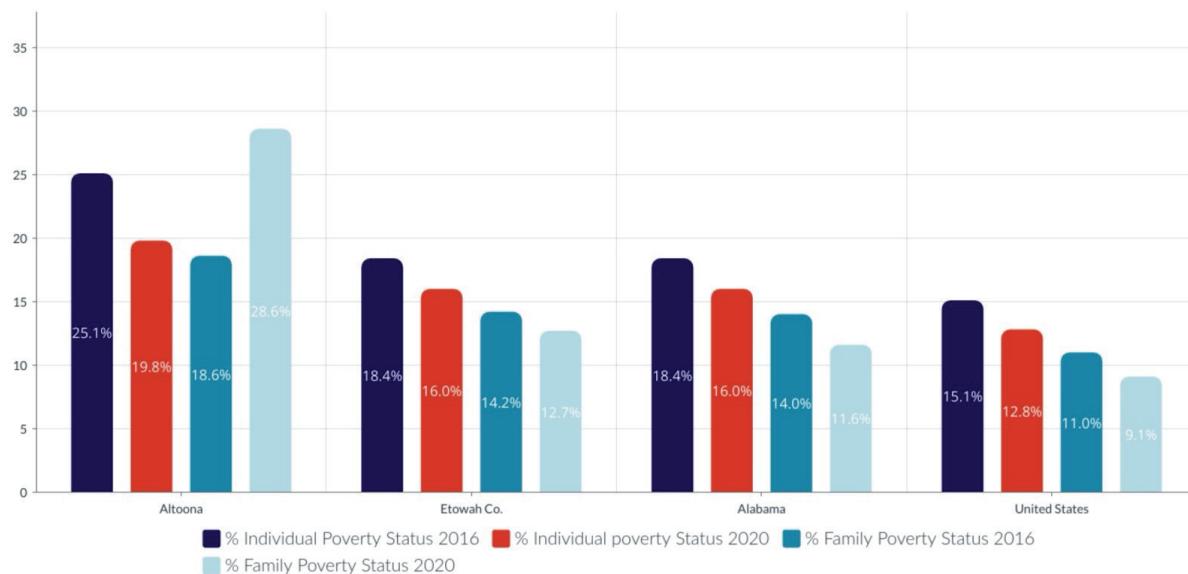
## Poverty Status

Poverty status shows the economic welfare of a community and can be used to assess a community's need for public assistance. According to the U.S. Census glossary, poverty is measured in accordance with monetary income, excluding capital gains or losses, taxes, non-cash benefits, and whether a person lives in a family or non-family household, compared to the selected poverty threshold, which varies based on family size and composition. People who cannot be included in poverty studies include: unrelated individuals under 15, and people in institutional group quarters, college dormitories, military barracks, and living conditions without conventional housing and who are not in shelters. According to the Census Bureau, the 2022 poverty threshold for a single person was annual earnings of \$13,590, for two persons—\$18,310, three persons—\$23,030, and 4 persons—\$27,750.

In terms of poverty, Altoona rated significantly higher on average compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020, the town decreased in individual poverty from 25% of the total population to 20%, while the county dropped from 18% to 16%, the state dropped from 18% to 16%, and the nation from 15% to 13%.

The town showed the only increase in family poverty, during this time, growing from 19% to 29%, as the county dropped from 14% to 13%, the state from 14% to 12%, and the nation from 11% to 9%. Another significant trend in the town, in 2020, was the poverty status of individuals 18 and older reporting 48%, while the county recorded 25%, the state 25%, and nation 21%. This information indicates that the town held overall higher poverty rates than the county, state, and nation for both individuals and families. Figure E-9 displays poverty status for both individuals and families for Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in 2016 and 2020. Notice from the chart the town's higher portion of individuals and families in poverty compared to the county, state, and nation. For more information see Table E-9. Poverty Status in Appendix B.

**E-9: Poverty Status**  
Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



## ***Analytical Summary***

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter and gives a broad assessment of the information provided.

### ***Education—Educational Attainment***

Altoona showed a much higher increase in educational attainment compared to Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. Between 2016 and 2020 the town increased in recipients of associate by a total change in associate degrees of 400%, compared to that of the county 12.2%, state 13%, and nation 10.2%. The increase of bachelor's degrees is also very significant at 368.4% while the county reported 3.3%, the state 11%, and the nation 12.1%. However, the Town did not change at all in the number of recipients of Graduate or Professional degrees at 0% while the county reported 16.2%, the state 13.6%, and the nation at 15.2%.

Assessment: Altoona reported higher educational attainment between 2016 and 2020 than Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. in all levels except Graduate or Professional attainment, in which Altoona did not have a change.

### ***Income—Household Income***

Between 2016 and 2020, the town increased in households earning between \$15 K and \$34,999 K by a moderate 20.7% while the county dropped in this category by -11.8%, the state declined by -8%, and the nation by -12%. Altoona also increased significantly in households earning less than \$15 K by 22.9%, as Etowah County (-12.8%) and Alabama and the U.S. (-15%) all declined in this group. Households earning between \$75 – 149,999 K showed a considerable increase of 212.9% in Altoona, while Etowah County had a much lower increase of 18.3%, Alabama 17%, and the U.S. 14.8%. The town also reported a slight increase in households earning more than \$150,000 at 19%, while this was very little compared to the increase of the county 46.6%, the state 46%, and the nation 43.8%.

### ***Median Household Income:***

Between 2016 and 2020 Altoona median household income increased 11.5% from \$28,672 to \$31,961, which was lower than Etowah County, which grew from \$40,478 to \$44,934. Meanwhile, Alabama increased in median household income from \$44,758 to \$50,536 and the U.S. reported a climb from \$53,322 to \$64,994.

Assessment: Household income, for Altoona, overall rated much lower than Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S.

### ***Commuting Patterns***

Place of Work:

Between 2016 and 2020 Altoona increased in commuters living and working in the town, going from 9.8% to 38%, and in addition, in 2020, the town showed a slightly higher portion of commuters working in their place of residence compared to the county at 34% and a significantly smaller portion compared to the state (44%) and nation at 43%. However, Altoona showed a much lower portion (58%) of commuters who live and work in the town or in Etowah County in contrast to those who live in somewhere else in the county and work and live in their respective community or somewhere else in the same county at 73%. Both Alabama and the U.S. at 76% reported similar county commuting trends in comparison to Etowah in 2020. This information indicates that proportionately more commuters in Altoona seek employment opportunities out-of-county (42%) compared to those in Etowah County at 27%, Alabama at 24%, and the U.S. at 25%, meaning that the town has not been adequately providing jobs for resident workers.

### ***Travel Time to Work:***

Mean travel time to work information for Altoona, between 2016 and 2020, records average travel time decreasing significantly

from 43.9 minutes to 29.6 minutes while Etowah County increased from 23.9 minutes to 25 minutes, and Alabama climbed slightly from 24.5 to 25.2. The U.S. reported a minor increase from 26.1 minutes to 26.9 for comparison.

**Assessment:** Altoona has drastically more residents working outside of their county of residence (42.1%) compared to the county (27%), state (24%), and (25%) nation. Altoona has a slightly dissimilar portion of commuters working inside their place of residence (38%) while the state (44%), and nation at 42% showed more commuters working inside their respective places of residence. Comparably Altoona has the highest mean commuting time to work of 29.6 minutes.

## ***Labor Force Participation and Unemployment***

**Labor Force Participation:** The town's labor force increased by 14%, while the county and state decreased by -1%, and the nation grew by 1%. Also, between 2016 and 2020 the portion of the town's population, age 16 and older, in the labor force increased from 43% to 57% while the county grew slightly from 54% to 55%, the state declined from 58% to 57%, as the nation grew from 63% to 64%.

**Unemployment:** From 2016 to 2020 the town decreased in unemployment by -22.2%, while the county dropped more considerably by -32.6%, the state by -33%, and the nation by -28%. During this time Altoona decreased in the portion of unemployed people in the civilian labor force from 2% to 1%, as Etowah County, Alabama and the U.S. fell from 5% to 3%.

**Assessment:** Altoona labor force participation grew significantly, and unemployment ranked well compared with Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S.

## ***Occupational Status***

Between 2016 and 2020, the town's largest increase in occupations was in Natural Resources/Construction which grew by 1618.2% while the county saw a change of 15%. The state increased in this occupation by 1% and the nation 3%. The town, at this time, also reported very little change in Sales and Office-related professions at 2.4% as did the county at 3.3%, the state at -7%, and the nation at -6%. This information indicates a slight transition into Natural Resources/Construction and less so toward Sales and Office-related jobs.

In 2020, Altoona also reported somewhat differing occupation status from Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S. In a reflection of its trend, the town exceeded the county, state, and nation in the portion of Natural Resources/Construction-related jobs with a considerable 31.7% compared to Etowah County (10.7%), Alabama (9.5%), and the U.S. (8.7%). Altoona also ranked highest in Services at 23.8% compared to the county at 19.7%, the state at 16.1%, and the nation at 17.4%.

**Assessment:** Altoona reported significantly higher portions of Natural Resources/Construction and Service occupations compared to Etowah County, Alabama and the U.S. indicating more blue-collar occupations than white collar.

## ***Industrial Composition***

### ***Change in Industry (2016-2020):***

From 2016 to 2020, the town declined in two industrial sectors with the largest growth in Manufacturing / Construction at 293%, Retail / Wholesale Trade at 45.7%, Transportation / Information at 75%, and Services/Public Administration at 115%. Comparatively, the county changed in these sectors by -2.3%, 11%, 16% and 10.5%. For the state and U.S., the changes in these sectors were not as significant, whereas Manufacturing / Construction increased 6% for both, Retail / Wholesale Trade changed minimally at less than 1% for both the state and nation. Services / Public Administration increased 4% for the state and 6% for the nation.

FIRE showed moderate loss in the town and county, dropping employment by -20% and -25%, respectively, while the state and nation grew in this category by 3%, and 6%, respectively. Overall, during this time, Altoona accounted for a 124.9% increase in industry while both Etowah County and Alabama at 4% and the U.S. at 5% showed considerably less. The major decrease for Altoona was in Agriculture by -100%, and while Etowah County, Alabama, and U.S. all decreased as well by -27%, -9% and -7% it was not as drastic.

**Industrial Composition 2020:** In 2020, the town's single largest industrial sector was in Manufacturing / Construction accounting for a large portion (39%) of the town's economy while the county only reports 24% in this sector as it has decreased -2.3% between 2016 and 2020. The state and nation also show lower representation in the sector of Manufacturing / Construction at 21% and 17% in comparison to Altoona; they did increase, although not nearly as significantly as the town. The second largest industrial sector in the town is Services / Public Administration which makes up another large portion (37%) of the economy, while this is the largest industry in Etowah County, accounting for more than half (51.2%) of the county's economy. The state and nation showed slightly higher representation in Services/Public Administration than the town at 51% and 54%, with similar representation to the county.

**Assessment:** Altoona showed higher portions of manufacturing related professions and less in Agriculture and FIRE. This indicates more blue-collar jobs and less white collar in the town and county than the state and nation.

## ***Poverty Status***

**Individual Poverty:** Between 2016 and 2020, the town decreased in individual poverty from 25% of the total population to 20%, while the county and state dropped from 18% to 16%, and the nation from 15% to 13%.

**Family Poverty:** The town showed the only increase in family poverty, during this time, growing from 19% to 29%, as the county dropped from 14% to 13%, the state from 14% to 12%, and the nation from 11% to 9%.

**Assessment:** Altoona reported higher poverty levels, in individuals and families, than in Etowah County, Alabama, and the U.S.

# CHAPTER 9: STRATEGIC PLANNING

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Strategic Planning has many broad definitions and applications and may be used at discretion in a wide variety of organizational fields and practices to formulate the goals, objectives, strategies, and projects needed in achieving a desired result or state. The term “strategic” according to Webster’s Dictionary is, “skill in managing or planning” and the related term “stratify” means “to form in layers or strata”. Together these definitions emphasize a skilled planning and management process conducted through a series of steps, or layers, which build upon each other.

## *Origin and History of Strategic Planning*

The term “strategic” is derived from the Greek word “Strategos” which literally means “General of the army” or the art of the general. In traditional Greek society, on an annual basis, each of the ten ancient Greek tribes elected a Strategos to serve as its leader in war council and in combat. The Strategos would give “strategic” advice to the political ruler about managing battles to win wars rather than “tactical” advice about managing troops. Most of the leaders the Greeks elected eventually rose to positions of substantial power such as politicians or generals of the tribes. In time, the Strategos’ job would also include civil magisterial duties largely due to their status as elected officials.

Strategy, in relation to war, is also seen throughout history and around the world. For example, a famous treatise called the “Art of War” authored by Sun Tzu, a legendary Chinese General, around the second century B.C. is considered by many strategists as one of the great masterpieces of strategy. In “Art of War” the goal is to win. Winning is good and losing is bad. Strategies for war were used in the Mediterranean during the time of the Roman Empire when the great Carthaginian General Hannibal, during the First Punic War (264 to 241 B.C.) led an invasion to defeat and capture the City of Rome. Hannibal’s goal was to defeat Rome while his strategy to do this was to bring hidden strengths against the weakness of his enemy at the point of attack. The hidden strength Hannibal initiated and executed was to cross the Alps (mountains to the north of Rome) when his enemy did not believe he could and attack by surprise from that direction. In forming strategy, the general is responsible for multiple units that must work together to win the battle and the war. The way the general adds value to the battle is by providing high level orchestration and vision, that is, he can see what the field commanders cannot see. Great generals think about the whole and they work together to create all the necessary pieces, even sacrificing some pieces, when necessary, to assure that the overall goal is achieved. From its military roots, strategic planning has always been aimed at the “big picture” such as “winning the war” with the focus on results or outcomes rather than on products or outputs. For strategic planning the focus should remain on outcomes and secondly a method or strategy to achieve the envisioned outcomes. In more recent endeavors, strategic planning has been associated much more with businesses in competition with each other rather than with countries at war and the resulting effects being business gain or loss rather than saving or losing human lives. In the early 1920s, Harvard Business School developed the Harvard Policy Model which defined “strategy” as a pattern of purposes and policies defining the company and its business. From this model and definition, a business firm weaves purposes and policies in a pattern that unites company resources, management, market information, and social obligations. However, by the late 1950s this focus shifted away from organizational policy and structure toward risk management, industry growth, and market share, which was called the “portfolio model”. In the late 1950s and early 1960s strategic planning commenced in the public sector when the U.S. Department of Defense began seeking better and more useful means to plan for long-term needs and at the same time achieve cost savings. The result was the advent of the Planning-Programming-Budgeting-System (PPBS) which used strategic planning to improve federal government operations by establishing long-range planning goals and objectives regarding projected budgets and appropriations. Many states (as well as local governments) followed suit with this new strategic planning approach as a means to create a long-term plan to guide town improvements and growth and development in a manner consistent with a clearly defined mission and accompanying goals, objectives, and strategies. Since the late 1950s various states have been involved in state-wide strategic planning. In 1997 the

Council of State Governments examined models of state-wide strategic planning efforts in Utah, Oregon, Minnesota, Florida, Texas, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Michigan and found that each state's strategic planning process contained unique characteristics. For example, Oregon created a model called "Oregon Benchmarks" in 1989 through a process involving hundreds of citizens and policy makers to develop a multi-year strategic plan along with an Oregon Progress Board to maintain, revise, and oversee implementation of the plan well into the future. As another example, Minnesota produced a significant 30-year state-wide strategic plan in 1991 titled "Minnesota Milestones" involving input from thousands of citizens and also monitored, in this instance, by the Minnesota Planning Division. The plan contains a vision for the state along with goals and milestones to measure progress. The plan is based on realistic ideas such as: 1) What gets measured tends to get done, 2) If you don't measure results, you can't tell success from failure, 3) If you can't recognize success, you can't reward it, and 4) If you can't recognize failure you can't learn from it.

Today strategic planning is conducted for many organizations, agencies, companies, and levels of government. However, in order for a plan to truly be "strategic" the original meaning and focus must not be missed, that is the sight must remain on the "big picture" to attain an outcome (win the war) and not on "tactics" (managing troops), those pieces involved in getting there.

Strategic Planning—"an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy." Wikipedia.

Strategic Planning—"a systematic process of envisioning a desired future, and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives and a sequence of steps to achieve them." BusinessDictionary.com

Strategic Planning—"is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment." Balanced Scorecard Institute.

One common thread in the definitions is that strategic planning is a process, sequence of steps, or activity used to meet a common goal or vision. The strategic planning strategy may be useful to an organization or agency in order to "connect the dots" for achieving an end result where the lines themselves are unclear, as Henry Mintzberg, an internationally renowned academic and author on business and management states about strategy formation. Mintzberg explains that strategic planning, "dot connecting" is an inherently creative activity, which cannot be systematized. In other words, strategic planning can assist in coordinating planning efforts and measure progress on strategic goals, but it must occur "around" the strategy formation process rather than within it, as systemization dictates. Systemization is a rigid and unyielding framework which must be based entirely in the system operated in. The strategic planning process must provide a framework in which to work, but it also must be flexible enough to adequately respond to and accommodate changes of ideas or functionality which may often occur. This "around" type of strategic planning shall be further described and exemplified later in this chapter.

## ***Strategic Planning Process***

The purpose of this chapter is to provide guidance and direction through the strategic planning process. The Comprehensive Plan then uses this strategic planning to formulate the goals, objectives, strategies, and projects needed to achieve a community vision of the town's desired future, which are described and discussed in the subsequent chapters. The strategic planning process is organized into a series of five steps which constitute the following:

- Inventory and Analysis—gathering Census data and building a Town Profile on population, economic, and housing information, conducting community surveys, mapping, and receiving public views and opinions on assets and issues affecting community growth and development.

- Visioning Process—Establishment of a community approved “Vision Statement”. The vision statement is conceptually an ideal future state for a community.
- Goals and Objectives—Establishment of goals, objectives, strategies, and projects which agree with, support, and advance the community vision and mission. Goals and objectives should be prioritized at this stage as well.
- Implementation—Establishment of implementation tables which list specific projects and strategies along with their respective timeframes for completion. The implementation portion also identifies implementing agencies, potential partners and funding sources, and discusses past efforts in working toward project and strategy completion. Project prioritization should also be conducted at this stage.
- Evaluation—Establishment of action plan/evaluation tables listing projects and strategies along with their respective completion status. Evaluation should be conducted during the planning process and updated periodically after the plan is complete.

Along with the stages involved, the strategic planning process acknowledges the need to inquire of necessary information to determine what is being searched for and to focus efforts. Therefore, specific questions have been posed at each stage, tailored to gather the information and ideas needed at every point and in the subsequent stages of the process, thus keeping with “skilled planning” and building upon or “stratifying” upon previous work. The following lists the stages of the strategic planning process and questions posed at each stage.

1. Inventory and Analysis—Where Are We Now?
2. Visioning Process—Where Do We Want to Be?
3. Goals and Objectives—How Will We Get There?
4. Implementation—How Will We Get There? (Same as Goals and Objectives)
5. Evaluation—How Will We Measure Progress?

Figure SPP-1 displays the strategic planning process stages along with inquiries at each stage and the tasks involved at each stage. Notice how these stages build upon each other in a “stratifying” fashion. This chapter on strategic planning shall provide a review of the information already collected and analyzed in the Inventory and Analysis (Chapters on Population, Economy, Housing, Community Facilities, Transportation, and Land Use) section of the plan, with a discussion of the most significant findings in the community, and then proceed with establishing Vision and Mission Statements for the community. This shall answer the questions: Where Are We Now? And Where Do We Want to Be? The remaining questions and stages shall be discussed in the following Chapters (Goals and Objectives, Implementation, and Evaluation).



Strategic planning may function reasonably well in the previously described method; however, Mintzberg explains that strategic planning cannot be systematized and that it must occur “around” the strategy formation process rather than within it. Thus, planning may occur at various stages at once to provide more flexibility for ideas and functionality throughout. For example, a community may have established community projects and strategies for implementation before its goals and objectives and vision and mission statements are created. This may be allowed; however, the goals, objectives, strategies, and projects must agree with

and serve to advance the vision and mission statements established altogether at the end. Ideally, the strategic planning process should be conducted sequentially along the stages given, however, the final product of the strategic plan is what counts, not necessarily the process itself.

## ***Inventory and Analysis***

The purpose of the inventory and analysis stage is to collect and analyze data and community input to establish a foundation upon which the plan shall make informed decisions for goals, objectives, strategies, and projects, and form benchmarks upon which community progress is measured. Products produced in this beginning phase include the following:

### ***SWOT Analysis***

Significant Findings from the U.S. Census and ACS

Altoona 2022-2023 Community Facilities Survey

Town of Altoona Community Survey

Summary of Community Survey Results (Available in Appendices)

### ***SWOT Analysis***

The Altoona SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis was conducted at both a Planning Commission meeting and public hearing in September-October of 2022. Altoona Town Council, the Planning Commission, and residents were in attendance to offer their views and opinions of the town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Figure SP-2 shows the results of the SWOT analysis from these meetings.

Significant strengths and opportunities identified include parks and recreation. Recreation and community facilities are a major strength in Altoona and are also an area the town can continue to build on. Quality schools were also rated as a significant strength, and as an opportunity for the future. Participants in the SWOT analysis overall expressed a major strength being the small-town atmosphere and quiet community living that Altoona offers. In addition, downtown revitalization was cited as an important opportunity moving forward; downtown revitalization efforts could spark opportunities to bring more people to the downtown area and increase business investment.

Weaknesses and threats to Altoona were also discussed. Participants in the SWOT felt a considerable weakness and threat was the limited revenue available to the town. A threat cited was the town's remote geographic location, especially as related to job commutes. Other weaknesses to the community were perceived as infrastructure, internet connectivity, and housing.

 <b>Town of Altoona</b> <b>Comprehensive Plan</b> <b>SWOT Analysis</b> <small>DL 9/19/22</small> 			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
small town good school system infrastructure - downtown water grant quiet community, good place for children location public safety ambulance station low competition Dollar general Low living cost all basic offices banks Rec center two soft ball fields football field community center Altoona day - arts, crafts, downtown main street events Halloween Christmas parade park (cave springs) History(museum) farming/livestock	small town - limited revenue Infrastructure needs to be updated sewer Internet local dine in restaurants full grocery store more urgent care parks maintain the tennis courts attract people not affordable opportunities for low income group available housing cellular - radio services (limited connectivity)	Business growth Internet infrastructure subdivision housing expand park and Rec grocery store restaurant in town Light manufacturing industry Elementary school (closer proximity) Downtown revitalization Town website adaptive reuse for historic buildings bed & breakfast event venue	Lack of revenue Geographic location no local opportunities for young kids long commute for jobs

# CHAPTER 10: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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## ***Mission Statement***

For any community to thrive and prosper, there needs to be a vision for the future. The mission statement describes what the town is doing to attain its established vision and why it is doing that. Altoona's mission statement reads as follows:

“The Town of Altoona seeks to revitalize and promote growth in our community to improve quality of life of our citizens, revitalize infrastructure, and provide new and sustainable economic development, while preserving our small-town values, historic nature of the town, sense of community, and safe, secure environment.”

To achieve this mission, Altoona needs to establish appropriate goals and objectives, a means of attaining those goals and objectives, and a methodology to evaluate progress. This chapter identifies goals, objectives, strategies, and projects for planning and guiding town improvements, growth, and expansion. Since the town possesses limited resources for improvements, not every goal, objective, strategy, and project in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan may be accomplished, rather the overall purpose of this chapter is to list and describe practical and achievable planning guidance and principals for properly maintaining town resources and preparing the community for future growth and development. The following implementation chapter lists and describes specific projects and strategies which the town plans to pursue and accomplish within given timeframes for completion along with a discussion of implementing agencies and potential partners and funding sources for further assistance.

## ***Goal-Setting Process***

In August of 2022, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) and the Altoona Planning Commission began work on the Altoona Comprehensive Plan with a kickoff meeting including the Town Council and Planning Commission. The first public hearing was conducted in November 2022 in which the planning process was introduced, and the public SWOT was performed. From this analysis, the EARPDC and the planning commission formed a basis in which to identify community needs and in determining goals and objectives. EARPDC and the planning commission then met on a monthly to bi-monthly basis as needed to establish and prioritize goals and objectives, determine projects for implementation, and to subsequently generate a future land use plan and map to guide land use and development.

### Definitions

#### Goals

Goals in this chapter were identified to promote community vision, through broad-based perspectives. The definition of a “goal” in accordance with businessdictionary.com is, “an observable and measurable end result having one or more objectives to be achieved with a more or less fixed timeframe.”

#### Objectives

Objectives define, in more specified terms, how goals are to be accomplished. The definition of objectives as described by businessdictionary.com is, “A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a time frame and with available resources.” Generally, objectives are basic tools that underlie all planning and strategic activities and serve as a basis for creating policy and evaluating performance. While goals are often broad-based in nature, objectives are more specific and easier to measure. Goals usually have long-term and possibly continuous timeframes, while objectives function as a series of smaller, shorter-term steps needed along the way toward goal completion and continuation. For example, a common goal in planning might be to enhance economic development throughout the community, while an objective for this goal may be to redevelop the

downtown. Although downtown redevelopment by itself will not enhance economic development throughout the community, it does serve in making progress toward the goal of enhancing economic development on a community-wide scale. Goals express broad actions directed at the community level, while objectives express more specific actions, addressing how to attain the goal and directed at specific places, organizations, or other entities within the town. In other words, goals answer the question of what is going to be done, while objectives answer who is going to do it and how. Objectives may also address where the goal shall be accomplished, if applicable, and when the goal shall begin and be completed as to a particular timeframe.

## ***Projects/Strategies***

These actions are specifically defined, applicable, practical, and measurable steps to be performed or activated throughout the implementation process. Such projects/strategies are to be understood as viable actions working for goal attainment and thus are substantially more specified than goals and objectives. Projects are defined as actual and tangible “on-the-ground” activities, such as conducting a road repaving project, planting trees in the downtown, installing new water lines, or building/expanding town hall while strategies are specific and measurable tasks, such as hiring a new position on town staff, conducting a survey, purchasing equipment, or creating a downtown revitalization plan. Projects and strategies have been listed in this chapter to identify the goals and objectives they support and serve as candidates for consideration but prioritized as actual planned actions for completion and evaluated accordingly in the Chapter 11: Implementation and Evaluation.

## ***Rationale***

The rationale or importance for any given goals, objectives, strategies, and projects is explained under the subheading entitled as such. Rationale can be justified through significant findings in statistical analysis, community surveys, or as an established community priority.

## ***Additional Recommendations***

Additional recommendations are advocated as useful and complementary implementation tools which may enhance projects and strategies.

### **Notation**

Additional notes which describe and/or explain current work and progress in relation to a specific strategy or project.

The goals and objectives listed below, in no order of priority, as well as their respective strategies and projects have been established by the Town of Altoona. However, due to limited human and financial resources, the town acknowledges that not all the goals, objectives, projects, and strategies listed in this section may be realized and implemented but could if circumstance permits. Therefore, the next chapter on implementation will draw, from this chapter, the projects, and strategies that the town submits to plan for and implement accordingly.

## ***Land Use***

To promote planning, Altoona must utilize the appropriate town departments and local groups to identify existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas with substantial maintenance needs and make plans to provide the appropriate maintenance. The Town must also utilize the appropriate departments and groups to determine growth policies, recognize associated opportunities, and direct new development on a course beneficial to the town as a whole.

### **Goal 1: Promote and Enhance Planning by Utilizing Town Departments and Local**

Groups to Identify and Meet Land Use Needs and Establish Policies and Plans to

Benefit the Community.

Objective 1: Promote and Enhance Residential Land Use and Development.

Projects/Strategies: Designate land for residential development on the Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan and plan town growth accordingly

Goal 2: Promote and Enhance Commercial Land Use and Development

Objective 1: Designate land for residential development on the Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan and plan town growth accordingly

Goal 3: Enhance the Sense of Place throughout Altoona

Objective 1: Provide streetscape improvements and pedestrian amenities.

Objective 2: Reimagine a public space to better reflect Altoona's values and sense of community (Town Center, etc.)

Goal 4: Consider Land Development and Preservation Techniques that Address Local Needs

Objective 1: Protecting and enjoying community character.

Objective 2: Protect rural and natural resources unique to Altoona.

## ***Transportation***

In order to promote and enhance transportation, Altoona needs to provide basic maintenance of existing streets and highways. The Town should plan for and prioritize road maintenance projects throughout the town in accordance to needs and available funding.

Goal 1: Promote and Enhance Transportation throughout the Town by Properly Maintaining Existing Roadways

Objective 1: Improve streets and roadway conditions through paving and/or repaving projects

Goal 2: Promote and Enhance Transportation throughout the Town by Means of Improving Traffic Flow and Safety

Objective 1: Identify safety concerns and issues from the general public

Goal 3: Promote and Enhance Transportation by Means of Creating and Improving Alternative Forms of Transportation, such as Walking and/or Bicycling

Objective 1: Improve and/or install sidewalks where needed.

Objective 2: Create better bicycle and pedestrian access

Objective 3: Provide more cleanup and infrastructure maintenance

## **Community Facilities, Parks and Recreation**

The Town of Altoona strives to provide quality community facilities and services for residents and visitors to the town. In order to promote and enhance important community facilities and services, the Town needs to determine and meet priority maintenance for existing facilities and service needs and identify future priority facilities and services needed for growth and expansion.

### Goal 1: Enhance the Quality of Life

Objective 1: Establish plans and improvements for town infrastructure

Objective 2: Expand and maintain parks and recreation facilities

### Goal 2: Enhance Recreation and Entertainment Offerings

Objective 1: Provide social and recreational programs for all age groups of the town's population

Objective 2: Utilize parks and recreation facilities for community events

Objective 3: Establish an event venue as a location for the town to come together

Goal 3: Promote and Enhance Community Facilities and Services in a Manner which Maintains Existing Facilities and Services and Prepares the Town for Future Growth and Expansion While Preserving and Protecting the Small-town Character of the Community

Objective 1: Improve and enhance town administration and public safety

Projects/Strategies: Provide more parks throughout the town along with funding and volunteers to offer development and maintenance

Objective 2: Improve and enhance parks and recreation

Objective 3: Improve and enhance Senior Citizen facilities and programs

Objective 4: Improve and enhance healthcare services while increasing availability

Objective 5: Identify underutilized buildings and facilities within the town that could be used for recreational and social programming

## **Housing**

Housing is a vitally important element in every community in meeting residents' needs. A well-planned community will have a variety and substantial mix of housing choices available such as single-family, multi-family, and manufactured homes, maintained in good condition, as well as quality affordable housing. The Town shall also make plans and policies to preserve housing values and increase its housing stock in appropriate residential areas.

Goal 1: Maintain and Strengthen the Town's Existing Housing Stock and Provide Attractive, Safe, Stable, and Affordable Housing throughout the Community.

Objective 1: Address blighted structures to encourage new housing development

Goal 2: Promote and Encourage New Housing Development in Strategic Areas Well Suited for Residential Growth

Objective 1: Create more housing choices in order to meet the needs of a diverse and changing population

Projects/Strategies: Encourage creation of new, onsite, affordable housing as a part of zoning

Objective 2: Identify and inventory residential areas with proper zoning and infrastructure support for low, medium, and high-density housing development

Goal 3: Plan for Adequate and Varied Options in Housing to Meet the Needs of Current and Future Residents

Objective 1: Locate high density housing, such as apartments, senior housing complexes, and townhouses, in multi-use nodes with proximity to goods and services

Objective 2: Promote the development of affordable housing by designating areas in the town for smaller lots

Objective 3: Establish incentives to create new housing

## ***Economic Development***

The Town of Altoona desires economic growth and prosperity, strengthening existing businesses while attracting new business to the community. The Town strives to grow economically and promote and enhance economic development in the downtown area as well as along the main route through town.

Goal 1: Maintain and Strengthen Existing Business throughout the Community

Objective 1: Town to Maintain and Strengthen Existing Business by Providing and Maintaining an Attractive, Healthy, and Thriving Business Environment While Remaining Responsive and Adaptive

Objective 2: Town to prepare for quality, accessible, and sustainable business management along the highway corridor

Goal 2: Promote and Encourage Expansion of Existing Business in the Community and Provide a Means for Proper and Efficient Business Growth and Development

Objective 1: Support businesses by developing land use policies

Goal 3: Attract and Recruit New Business to the Community and Provide Proper and Efficient Methods to Accommodate and Expand New Enterprises.

Objective 1: Develop plans and policies to make new business location and start-ups convenient and affordable

Projects/Strategies: Provide incentives (i.e. tax reductions and reduced start up fees)

Objective 2: Promote Altoona as an ideal market for new business

Goal 4: Enhance Tourism in and around the Town

Objective 1: Develop the available natural and historic resources

Objective 2: Make the town more beautiful (illumination)

# CHAPTER 11: IMPLEMENTATION & EVALUATION

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The previous chapter, goals, objectives, strategies, and projects have been presented and described for planning guidance and consideration in forming public policy and plans for the next 10 years. Goals, objectives, strategies, and projects originate from good planning principles and practices, however, attributable to the community's limited resources and time constraints, not every single goal and objective, along with their respective projects and strategies will be implemented and realized. Therefore, implementation, as this chapter presents, strives to identify and select projects and strategies from the goals and objectives which are important to the town and which the town plans to effectively implement. The tables in this chapter list the projects and strategies that the town plans to implement along with timeframes within which the town plans to conduct and complete each project/strategy. These timeframes are as follows: Immediate, Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term, and Future Consideration. The tables also show the years each timeframe encompasses. Some projects/strategies may incorporate multiple timeframes through which they will be conducted and finalized.

This chapter's purpose is to identify some optional strategies and resources at the disposal of local governments to implement the general recommendations of this plan. The proposed implementation schedules are intended to serve as a general organizational strategy for plan implementation. Although specific timeframes are identified for each recommended action, actual implementation may occur under different time frames and under varying methodologies, as may be dictated by financial constraints or competing needs and priorities. This chapter also provides action plans/evaluation tables to help town administration track project progress toward completion yearly.

Successful implementation spans the work of many people and often requires the cooperative action of multiple entities, some of which may have varying degrees of commitment to and responsibility for the success of the planning effort. Other common obstacles to successful plan implementation include funding constraints, insufficient access to needed technical support and resources, and conflicting interpretations of problems and needs. All these impediments, to some degree, are relevant to comprehensive planning implementation.

This comprehensive plan acknowledges that the Town of Altoona has limited resources and competing planning priorities. However, town administration has sufficient technical expertise and capacity to react quickly to the complex issues affecting the town. This plan also recognizes that the town must depend upon the cooperation of other independent boards and agencies to implement those aspects of the plan that the town cannot directly control. Altoona must respond to a wide range of changing needs, all of which must be considered when determining priorities for local action. It is difficult to foresee the critical issues that will arise tomorrow, but the comprehensive plan is useful in guiding and directing policy toward a more sustainable community. The town must retain the ability to establish its own priorities in any given year to satisfy its own needs. As a result, full implementation of this plan will not happen quickly and may take longer to achieve than initially expected.

## ***Town Administration***

The Town of Altoona has a part-time Mayor and full-time support staff to handle the town's daily administrative needs. The administrative staff can utilize the comprehensive plan as a general guide for coordinating expansion of the town's public facilities and services to address future growth needs. However, it must be recognized that due to the town's small size and lack of large, stable sources of revenue, the administrative staff's capacity to fully monitor and implement the plan is somewhat constrained. Support and assistance from every level of town government will be needed to ensure that the policies and programs recommended by the plan are implemented. The town can also seek assistance from support agencies-such as, the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, and USDA Rural Development for technical assistance in implementing the goals and objectives of the plan.

## ***Codes and Ordinances***

Basic local development codes include zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and building codes. These codes and regulations help local governments manage growth and development and are important local tools to support plan implementation efforts. Local governments can and do adopt other special ordinances to address specific community needs, but such ordinances may require special legislation to implement. This section discusses in detail those development codes that municipalities are authorized to adopt and implement under existing state law.

### ***Zoning***

Zoning ordinances are adopted by local governments to control the location, intensity, and character of land uses in the community. They also help communities prevent conflicts between neighboring property owners resulting from land development activities, and they help protect the public from any excessive environmental impacts that may result from private development activities. Local governments derive their zoning powers from the state through the Code of Alabama (Title 11, Chapter 52, Article 4). The primary purpose of local zoning ordinances is to promote public health, safety, and general welfare by fostering coordinated land development in accordance with the comprehensive plan. Adopting a zoning ordinance is an effective means of implementing land use and development recommendations contained in the comprehensive plan. Generally speaking, zoning ordinances adopted by local governments must be prepared in accordance with a comprehensive plan, as required under Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 72 of the Code of Alabama, 1975.

### ***Subdivision Regulations***

While zoning ordinances control the nature and intensity of land uses, subdivision regulations govern how land is divided in preparation for development. Subdivision regulations contain standards for subdivision design, lot layout, and the placement and construction of public facilities within subdivisions. Although most subdivisions in small communities are residential in nature, the regulations should be developed to also address commercial or industrial subdivisions.

Municipal governments in Alabama are authorized to adopt and enforce subdivision regulations under Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 31 of the Code of Alabama, 1975. The Code further authorizes cities to enforce their local subdivision regulations within a planning jurisdiction in the surrounding unincorporated areas, up to five miles beyond the town limits. In the East Alabama region, many municipalities exercising their extraterritorial subdivision powers do so only within their police jurisdiction boundaries, which may be either 1.5 or 3 miles from the town limits.

### ***Building Codes***

Local building codes establish basic minimum construction standards for buildings, including homes and commercial and industrial buildings. The purpose of a building code is to ensure quality development and protect public safety. By adopting building codes, local governments can require developers and contractors to secure building permits before undertaking construction activities. Applicants for building permits also can be required to provide evidence that they have received County Health Department approval for on-site septic systems, thereby providing an effective mechanism to ensure compliance with local health regulations. Cities and counties in Alabama are authorized, under Title 41, Chapter 9, Section 166 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, to adopt minimum building standards adopted by the Alabama Building Commission.

### ***Partnerships, Financing, and other Resources***

Financial constraints and planning assistance can be some of the greatest obstacles to plan implementation in smaller communities. Many communities must wait for funding to become available in its entirety before a plan or project can be implemented and have no expertise or guidance in planning. Altoona must actively continue its efforts to secure outside financial support and assistance for plan implementation to meet its goals and objectives to prepare for growth and development and to

promote its community vision for the future. Several financial assistance and partnership sources exist to help small communities in terms of planning and development. The most significant sources are listed as follows:

- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA): The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs was created in 1983 by the Alabama Legislature as an arm of the Governor's Office, created to streamline and professionalize the management of a few federally funded programs administered by the state. Consolidating many agencies into a single department reduced administrative costs and ensured more effective and efficient implementation and enforcement of federal requirements for monitoring, reporting, and auditing. ADECA is composed of seven divisions and various support sections constituting—1) Communications and Information, 2) Community and Economic Development, 3) Energy, 4) Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety, 5) Office of Water Resources, 6) Surplus Property, and 7) Support Sections. One of the most widely used ADECA divisions, by communities, is Community and Economic Development. The Community and Economic Development Division provides the following program areas:
  - Community Development Programs—probably the most well-known program is the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) which provides funding to improve communities in various areas through the following funds:
  - Competitive Fund—which provides funding for projects such as water and sewer line rehabilitation and extension, housing rehabilitation, neighborhood and downtown revitalization, street, and drainage improvements.
  - Community Enhancement Fund—which provides funding assistance for fire protection, senior citizen centers, community centers, Boys & Girls clubs, and recreational facilities.
  - Planning Fund—provides funding to eligible communities to conduct planning activities to promote orderly growth, regional development, and revitalization efforts.
  - Economic Development Fund—provides funding to all eligible communities for projects that support the creation and retention of jobs.
  - Note: Communities seeking funding assistance through the CDBG Program should demonstrate 51% low to moderate income (LMI) in the community for planning grants and 51% LMI for project areas pertaining to proposed projects.
  - Community Service Block Grants—assists low-income Alabama residents in gaining employment, education, and many other skills.
  - Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)—seeks to fund projects and programs to create new jobs, spur economic development, build roads and infrastructure, advance education, and promote wellness in central and north Alabama
  - Community Stabilization Program—established to provide funding assistance with the purpose of stabilizing communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandonment.
  - Disaster Recovery—funds which may be allocated after federally declared disasters and used for activities such as replacement or repair of infrastructure and housing damage resulting from the declared disaster.
  - Alabama Enterprise Zones—provides tax incentives to corporations, partnerships, and proprietorships that locate or expand within designated Enterprise Zones.
  - Recreational Trails Program (RTP)—provides funding assistance to federal agencies, states, local governments and nonprofit organizations for the development and improvement of recreational trails.
  - Alabama Advantage—provides information for people looking to relocate or retire in Alabama.
  - Emergency Shelter Grant Program—grant funding is used to upgrade existing homeless facilities and domestic abuse shelters.

- Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)—administers grants funding walking and exercise trails, playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, soccer fields, baseball and softball diamonds, and other outdoor areas that improve communities.
- Connecting ALABAMA: Connecting ALABAMA is a multi-year initiative promoting the availability and adoption of broadband Internet access throughout the state. The initiative seeks to identify and leverage all available funding sources for both demand and supply side programs. Demand-side initiatives are designed to advance healthcare, education, agriculture, and other economic development opportunities and may require non-traditional funding, while supply-side initiatives for infrastructure development and service delivery in rural areas may require non-commercial sources of funding such as government and foundation grants. The Connecting ALABAMA website at: [www.connectingalabama.gov](http://www.connectingalabama.gov) contains a link to the Federal Funding Manual which serves as a guide to federal programs useful to communities seeking federal funds to deploy, use, or benefit from telecommunications networks and technologies. Other grant opportunities for the advancement and financing of telecommunication infrastructure and technology include:
  - USDA's Rural Utilities Service—which provides programs to finance rural America's telecommunications infrastructure.
  - The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program (DLT)—which utilizes loans and grants and loan/grant combinations to meet educational and health care needs in rural areas throughout the country.
  - The Community Connect Grant Program—offers financial assistance to eligible applicants to install and expand broadband in unserved areas with the goals of enhancing public safety services and fostering economic growth.
  - Alabama Power Company Economic and Community Development: Alabama Power provides reliable electricity supply, at competitive prices, to approximately 1.4 million homes, businesses, and industries in the southern two-thirds of Alabama. The Alabama Power Company, through their department of Economic and Community Development provides services for economic development in the following areas 1) Building and Site Evaluation, 2) Labor Force Analysis, 3) Electrical Services, 4) Transportation/Logistics Analysis, and 5) Alabama Tax and Incentive Analysis. The department also offers services in community development through the following programs: 1) Advantage Site Program, 2) Industrial Site Development Program (ISDP), 3) Speculative Building Program, and 4) ACE (Alabama Communities of Excellence) Program, which uses strategic community planning in forming goals and plans for the community's future.
  - The Economic Development Administration (EDA): EDA, established under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, was formed to help communities generate jobs, retain existing jobs, and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in economically distressed areas of the United States. In continuing its mission, EDA operates on the principle that distressed communities must be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development strategies. The communities in the East Alabama Region are recognized by EDA as part of an Economic Development District, which enables them to receive EDA grant funding for infrastructure improvements, which support projects used to create new local jobs. Investment programs provided by EDA include the following: Public Works and Economic Development Program, Economic Adjustment Assistance Program, Research and National Technical Assistance, Local Technical Assistance, Planning Program, University Center Economic Development Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms Program.
  - The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC): EARPDC offers revolving loan funds to provide gap financing for local businesses. The Commission provides matching funds to member governments that use the commission's services for planning projects, such as the preparation of comprehensive plans, strategic plans, land use plans, housing studies, zoning ordinances, and subdivision regulations as well as mapping services. The Commission also offers grant writing and administration services to member governments to secure funding for a wide variety of community projects and for community planning.
  - The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT): which constructs new highways, offers special Transportation Enhancement Grants through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, and runs a Safety Management Program.

- The Alabama Historical Commission (AHC): which provides special grants to restore local historic buildings and structures and assists in surveying historic properties and preparing applications for inclusion in the National Historic Register.
- The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM): which helps finance public water extensions through a special low-interest loan fund and finances special water and sewer demonstration projects.
- The Small Business Administration (SBA): which provides technical assistance to entrepreneurs in rural areas through the local Small Business Development Centers.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA): which offers a range of grant and loan programs to help finance housing improvement projects, economic development initiatives, infrastructure improvement projects, and jail expansions and construction.
- The local Community Action Agencies, which conduct a wide range of programs to assist low- and moderate-income households throughout the rural areas, in such areas as heating assistance, Head Start, and weatherization programs.
- The local Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) and Industrial Development Authorities (IDA), which sponsor and finance economic development efforts and initiatives within their jurisdictions.
- Alabama Power, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA): and the Rural Electric Cooperatives (REC), which finance and provide technical assistance for a wide range of local economic development initiatives.
- Rural Alabama Initiative (RAI): is a grant program, funded by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and administered through the Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI). ECDI has the mission to improve the quality of life of Alabama citizens by promoting continuing eco-nomic and community development policy and practice through communication, education, research, and community assistance. Through RAI the Institute provides a mechanism for rural communities to attain monetary assistance for community development goals. The main goal of RAI is to assist communities that seek economic prosperity and a better quality of life.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): offers grant and technical assistance to small communities through a variety of environmental preservation, protection, and education programs, fellowships, and research associateships. Grant programs administered under EPA include: The Brownfields Grant Program, Environmental Education Grants Program, Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program, Environmental Justice Grants Program, Environmental Justice through Pollution Prevention Program, National Center for Environmental Research, Pollution Prevention Incentives for States, Water Grants, and Watershed Funding.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): provides grants and technical assistance to small communities through a variety of emergency management, prevention, and education programs. Grant programs administered under FEMA include: The Buffer Zone Protection Program, Emergency Management Performance Grant, Homeland Security Grant Program, Intercity Bus Security Grant Program, Operation Stonegarden, Port Security Grant Program, Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program, Transit Security Grant Program, Trucking Security Grant Program, Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Non-profit Security Grant Program.
- Alabama Clean Water Partnership (ACWP): Alabama has more rivers, lakes, and groundwater than any other place in the country and is the richest state in the U.S. in terms of water. Approximately 10% of all water in the U.S. flows within the state's borders. The Alabama Clean Water Partnership is a statewide 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization comprised of a diverse and inclusive coalition of public-private interest groups and individuals working together to improve, protect, and preserve water resources and aquatic ecosystems in the state. The main purpose of the ACWP is to "make connections" in linking individuals, companies, organizations, and governing bodies in order to educate the public about the importance of clean water and to assist in projects to protect and preserve Alabama's water resources and aquatic ecosystems. This purpose is accomplished

through efforts to improve communication and information sharing and appropriate coordination and collaboration. The ACWP, on their website, inquires “Do you know of a stream that needs help?” this link brings up an ACWP Stream Nomination Form through which an applicant may submit a stream for consideration. Each nomination is added to a priority list that will assist in directing attention and resources to Alabama watersheds. The ACWP also provides the services of one statewide coordinator and facilitators for each of the ten river basins in the state. Each facilitator coordinates basin meetings and projects in their respective basins while the coordinator supports the facilitators and transfers information between the basins.

- The U.S. Census Bureau: The Census provides substantial statistical information to communities, counties, states, and the nation at large. The most significant and widely used data tools provided by the Census Bureau is the Decennial Census—which provides 100% count information and is updated every 10 years—and the American Community Survey which provides estimate information and is updated every year for all municipalities with a one year survey period for each municipality with population over 65 K in population, a 3 year period for municipalities with between 20 K and 65 K and a 5 year period for all cities in the nation. Another significant tool offered by the Census is the Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition. The Builder is an interactive tool which allows small business owners a way to easily navigate and use key demographic and economic data to help guide research into opening a new business or expanding existing. Key features of the Census Business Builder include:
  - Easy to use menus to select the owner’s type of business and potential business location
  - An interactive map that allows selection of the area to explore for business opportunities, including comparisons to neighboring areas.
  - •Dynamically generated business county and city-level reports (including trend charts) that can be easily incorporated into a business plan and used for further research.
- Alabama League of Municipalities (ALM): assists municipalities in Alabama in funding local projects and purchases. This organization has established the AM Fund, administered by the Alabama Municipal Funding Corporation, to provide low-cost, tax-exempt financing to Alabama communities. Municipalities borrow from the AM Fund at a low tax-exempt interest rate to fund almost any municipal project and equipment purchase. Goals determined thorough the administration of AM Fund incorporate the following:
  - Share issuance costs that reduce individual borrower’s costs
  - Participate in bond issues of sufficient size to enable the borrowers to achieve attractive interest rates
  - Minimize staff time by using straightforward loan documentation

Altoona should continue to explore project-financing opportunities with all of these entities when undertaking projects to implement this comprehensive plan. The town should also consider developing public-private partnerships. Of course, outside financing usually will not cover all the costs associated with a project. The town must be prepared to provide local matching funds, where needed to leverage outside grants, to cost share with private partnerships, and to undertake projects that cannot be funded by outside sources.

## ***Implementation Schedule***

As previously mentioned, due to limited resources and time constraints, not all the goals, objectives, strategies, and projects outlined in this plan will be realized. Therefore, the town must effectively identify and prioritize the most important, impactful, and feasible projects and strategies in Chapter 10: Goals and Objectives, and then incorporate such projects and strategies into an implementation plan. One way to form an implementation plan is to create an implementation schedule. The implementation schedule lists strategies and projects to be undertaken as Immediate (1-2 years), Short-term (3-5 years), Mid-term (6-9 years),

Long-term (10 to 20 years), and Future Consideration (over 20 years). The schedule formulates a specified timeframe within which each project and strategy should be undertaken, establish which local entity is responsible for carrying out the activity, and identify potential partners and funding resources (PP & FS) in implementing respective strategies and projects. Although these projects are primarily assigned to Altoona, the town should consult and work with outside entities to secure funding and guidance with planning and implementation efforts. Implementation schedules have been created for land use, transportation, housing, economic development, and community facility related projects and strategies listed as follows:

#	Action	Page #	Priority	Time Frame	Potential Partners
Land Use					
Goal 1: Promote and Enhance Planning by Utilizing Town Departments and Local Groups to Identify and Meet Land Use Needs and Establish Policies and Plans to Benefit the Community.					
1	Promote and Enhance Residential Land Use and Development.	116	Medium	Long-term	Planning Commission, City Council
1a	Designate land for residential development on the Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan and plan town growth accordingly	117	Medium	Long-term	Planning Commission
Goal 2: Promote and Enhance Commercial Land Use and Development					
1	Designate land for commercial development on the Future Land Use Plan Map in the Comprehensive Plan and plan town growth accordingly.	117	High	Short-term	Planning Commission
Goal 3: Enhance the sense of place throughout Altoona					
1	Provide streetscape improvements and pedestrian amenities.	117	Medium	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council, County Commission, ALDOT
2	Reimagine a public space to better reflect Altoona's values and sense of community (Town Center, etc.)	117	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council, Recreation Board
Goal 4: Consider land development and preservation techniques that address local needs.					
1	Protecting and enjoying community character.	117	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council

2	Protect rural and natural resources unique to Altoona.	117	Medium	Long-term	Planning Commission, City Council, ADEM
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### Transportation

Goal 1: Promote and Enhance Transportation throughout the Town by Properly Maintaining Existing Roadways.

1	Improve Streets and Roadway Conditions through Paving and/or Repaving Projects.	117	Medium	Mid-term	Planning Commission, City Council, County Road Department, ALDOT, County Commission, ADECA
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Goal 2: Promote and enhance transportation throughout the town by means of improving traffic flow and safety

1	Identify safety concerns and issues from the general public	117	High	Immediate	City Council, ALDOT, Police Department, Fire Department
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Goal 3: Promote and Enhance Transportation by Means of Creating and Improving Alternative Forms of Transportation, such as Walking and/or Bicycling

1	Improve and/or Install Side-walks Where Needed.	117	Medium	Mid-term	Planning Commission, City Council, Street Department, ALDOT
1a	Create better bicycle and pedestrian access	117	Medium	Mid-term	Planning Commission, City Council, ALDOT
1b	Provide more cleanup and infrastructure maintenance	118	High	Mid-term	Street Department, City Council

### Community Facilities | Parks and Recreation

Goal 1: Enhance the quality of life.

1	Establish plans and improvements for town infrastructure	118	High	Immediate	Planning Commission, City Council, ALDOT, USDA, EARP-DC
2	Expand and maintain parks and recreations facilities	118	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council, LWCF, Recreation Board

Goal 2: Enhance recreation and entertainment offerings

1	Provide social and recreational programs for all age groups of the town's population.	118	Medium	Mid-term	City Council, Recreation Board, Parks and Recreation Department
2	Utilize parks and recreation facilities for community events	118	Medium	Mid-term	City Council, Recreation Board, Parks and Recreation Department
3	Establish an event venue as a location for the town to come together	118	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Recreation Board, Parks and Recreation Department

**Goal 3: Promote and Enhance Community Facilities and Services in a Manner which Maintains Existing Facilities and Services and Prepares the Town for Future Growth and Expansion While Preserving and Protecting the Small-town Character of the Community**

1	Improve and Enhance town administration and public safety	118	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council, Police Department, Fire Department
1a	Provide more parks throughout the town along with funding and volunteers to offer development and maintenance.	118	Medium	Long-term	City Council, Parks and Recreation Department, Recreation Board, LWCF
2	Improve and Enhance Parks and Recreation.	118	High	Immediate	City Council, Parks & Recreation, Recreation Board
3	Improve and Enhance Senior Citizen Facilities and Programs.	118	High	Mid-term	City Council, Planning Commission, Senior Center, EARP-DC
4	Improve and Enhance Health-care Services while increasing availability	118	Low	Long-term	City Council, Fire Department
5	Identify underutilized buildings and facilities within the town that could be used for recreational and social programming	118	Low	Mid-term	City Council, Planning Commission, Recreation Board

**Housing**

**Goal 1: Maintain and Strengthen the Town's Existing Housing Stock and Provide Attractive, Safe, Stable, and Affordable Housing throughout the Community.**

1	Address blighted structures to encourage new housing development	118	Medium	Mid-term	Planning Commission, City Council, ADECA
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Goal 2: Promote and Encourage New Housing Development in Strategic Areas Well Suited for Residential Growth.					
1	Create More Housing Choices in Order to Meet the Needs of a Diverse and Changing Population.	118	Low	Long-term	Planning Commission, City Council, County Commission, USDA
1a	Encourage creation of new, onsite, affordable housing as a part of zoning	118	Low	Long-term	Planning Commission, City Council
2	Identify and Inventory Residential Areas with Proper Zoning and Infrastructure Support for Low, Medium, and High-Density Housing Development	118	Medium	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council
Goal 3: Plan for adequate and varied options in housing to meet the needs of current and future residents					
1	Locate high-density housing, such as apartments, senior housing complexes, and townhouses, in multi-use nodes with proximity to goods and services	119	Low	Long-term	Planning Commission, City Council
2	Promote the development of affordable housing by designating areas in the town for smaller lots	119	Low	Long-term	Planning Commission
3	Establish incentives to create new housing	119	Medium	Long-term	City Council
Economic Development					
Goal 1: Maintain and Strengthen Existing Business throughout the Community.					

1	Town to Maintain and Strengthen Existing Business by Providing and Maintaining an Attractive, Healthy, and Thriving Business Environment While Remaining Responsive and Adaptive	119	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council
2	Town to Prepare for Quality, Accessible, and Sustainable Business Management along the Highway Corridor	119	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council, Street Department, ALDOT, County Commission
Goal 2: Promote and Encourage Expansion of Existing Business in the Community and Provide a Means for Proper and Efficient Business Growth and Development.					
1	Support businesses by developing land use policies	119	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council
Goal 3: Attract and Recruit New Business to the Community and Provide Proper and Efficient Methods to Accommodate and Expand New Enterprises.					
1	Develop Plans and Policies to Make New Business Location and Start-ups Convenient, Affordable.	119	High	Short-term	Chamber of Commerce, Planning Commission, City Council
1a	Provide incentives (i.e. tax reductions and reduced start up fees)	119	High	Short-term	City Council
2	Promote Altoona as an ideal market for new business	119	High	Short-term	City Council, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce
Goal 4: Enhance then tourism in and around the town.					
1	Develop the available natural and historic resources.	119	Medium	Mid-term	Planning Commission, City Council, Street Department
2	Make the town more beautiful (Illumination).	119	High	Short-term	Planning Commission, City Council, Street Department

## ***Plan Adoption and Amendment***

According to Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, the municipal planning commission is authorized to prepare and adopt a local comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan can be adopted by resolution in whole or in successive chapters or elements, as provided in Title 11, Chapter 52, section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975. However, prior to adoption or disapproval of the plan by the planning commission, the planning commission or the town council must publish notice of and conduct a public hearing to solicit comments on the proposed plan from concerned citizens. State law does not specify the format to be used for notification or conduct of the required public hearing. However, common sense dictates that the hearing should be notified and conducted in accordance with the standard procedures used by the planning commission or town council, as may be applicable.

Once the plan has been adopted in accordance with state law, the planning commission is empowered to assume additional administrative authorities. These authorities are specified in Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 11 of the Code of Alabama, 1975. According to this statute, no street, square, public building or structure, park or other public way, ground or open space, or public utility can be constructed or authorized in the community without approval by the planning commission. The planning commission must review the proposed community facility improvement for consistency with the adopted comprehensive plan. If the planning commission determines that the proposed improvement is not consistent with the plan, it may disapprove the improvement. Such a vote can be overturned by a two-thirds majority vote of all town council members.

As this provision of Alabama law illustrates, the comprehensive plan is an important document. It serves as a legal support for local zoning authority, and it governs the expansion of public facilities and infrastructure in the community. Therefore, it is important to remember that the adoption of a comprehensive plan document is not the end of the planning process. It is merely the beginning of an ongoing dedicated planning effort. The local government must be committed to a plan monitoring, review, and implementation effort if the plan is to achieve its stated objectives. In addition, the plan should be reviewed and revised periodically in response to growth and changing conditions in the community. While Alabama law does not prescribe a revision schedule for local government comprehensive plans, communities should update the plan at least once every ten years to incorporate more recent data from the latest U.S. Census. New census data is needed to determine growth and population trends used by the plan. More frequent updates should be conducted if the community experiences rapid growth or change, or if the community proposes to undertake a significant public investment to stimulate future growth or change.

# Appendices

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## Altoona Population

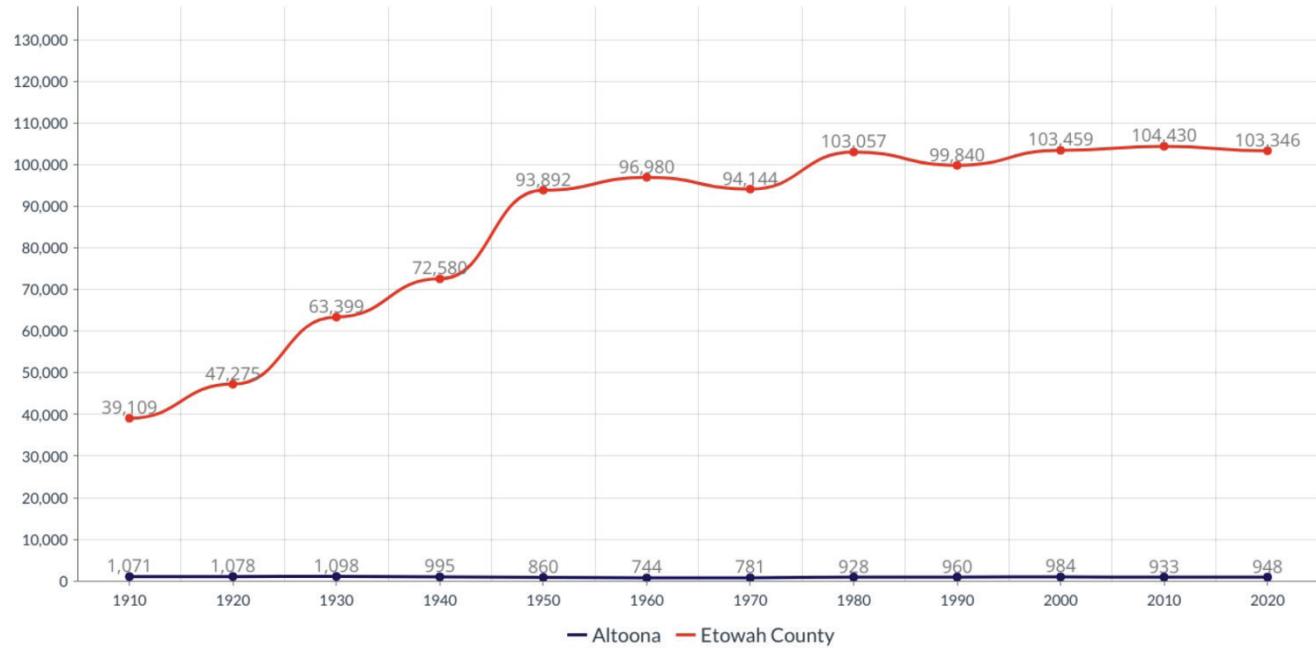
### Historic Population Trends

**Table P-1. Historic Population Trends: Altoona, AL 1910-2020**

Year	Altoona	% Change	Etowah Co.	% Change	Alabama	% Change	U.S.	% Change
1910	1071	N/A	39,109	N/A	2,138,093	N/A	92,228,531	N/A
1920	1078	0.7%	47,275	20.9%	2,348,174	9.8%	106,021,568	15.0%
1930	1098	1.9%	63,399	34.1%	2,646,248	12.7%	123,202,660	16.2%
1940	995	-9.4%	72,580	14.5%	2,832,961	7.1%	132,165,129	7.3%
1950	860	-13.6%	93,892	29.4%	3,061,743	8.1%	151,325,798	14.5%
1960	744	-13.5%	96,980	3.3%	3,266,740	6.7%	179,323,175	18.5%
1970	781	5.0%	94,144	-2.9%	3,444,165	5.4%	203,211,926	13.3%
1980	928	18.8%	103,057	9.5%	3,893,888	13.1%	226,545,805	11.5%
1990	960	3.4%	99,840	-3.1%	4,040,587	3.8%	248,709,873	9.8%
2000	984	2.5%	103,459	3.6%	4,447,100	10.1%	281,421,906	13.2%
2010	933	-5.2%	104,430	0.9%	4,779,745	7.5%	308,745,538	9.7%
2020	948	1.6%	103,346	-1.0%	5,039,877	5.4%	331,449,281	7.4%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, SF 1

**P-1: Historic Population, Altoona, AL  
Etowah County**



### Place of Birth

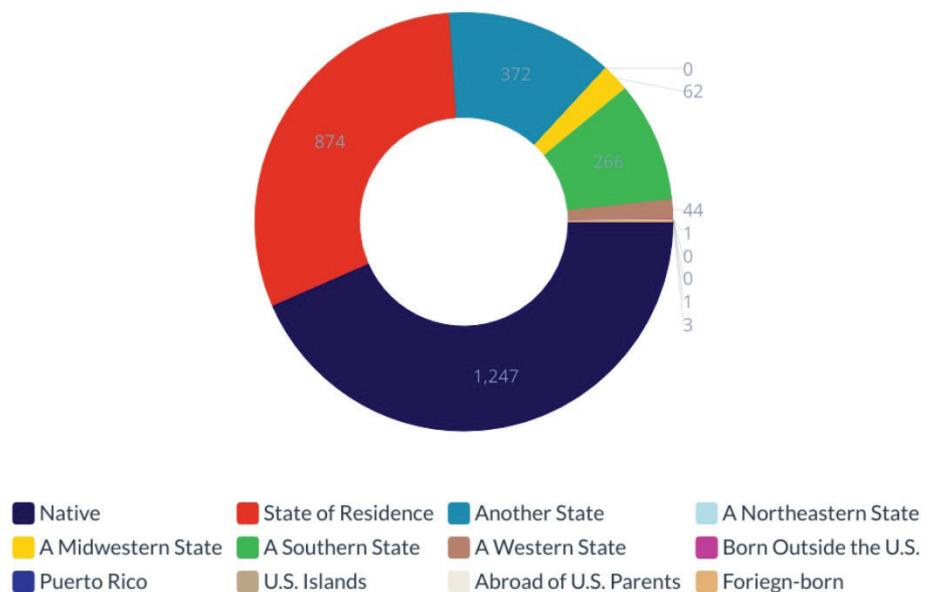
**Table P-2. Place of Birth: Town of Altoona, 2020 ACS**

Born in	2020	% of Total
Native	1,247	99.8%
State of Residence	874	69.9%
Another State	372	29.8%
A Northeastern State	0	0.0%
A Midwestern State	62	16.7%
A Southern State	266	71.5%
A Western State	44	11.8%
Born outside U.S.	1	0.1%
Puerto Rico	0	0%
U.S. Islands	0	0%
Abroad of U.S. Parents	1	0.1%
Foreign-born	3	0.2%
Total	1,250	100.0%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

#### P-2: Place of Birth

Altoona, AL (2020)



#### Place of Residence

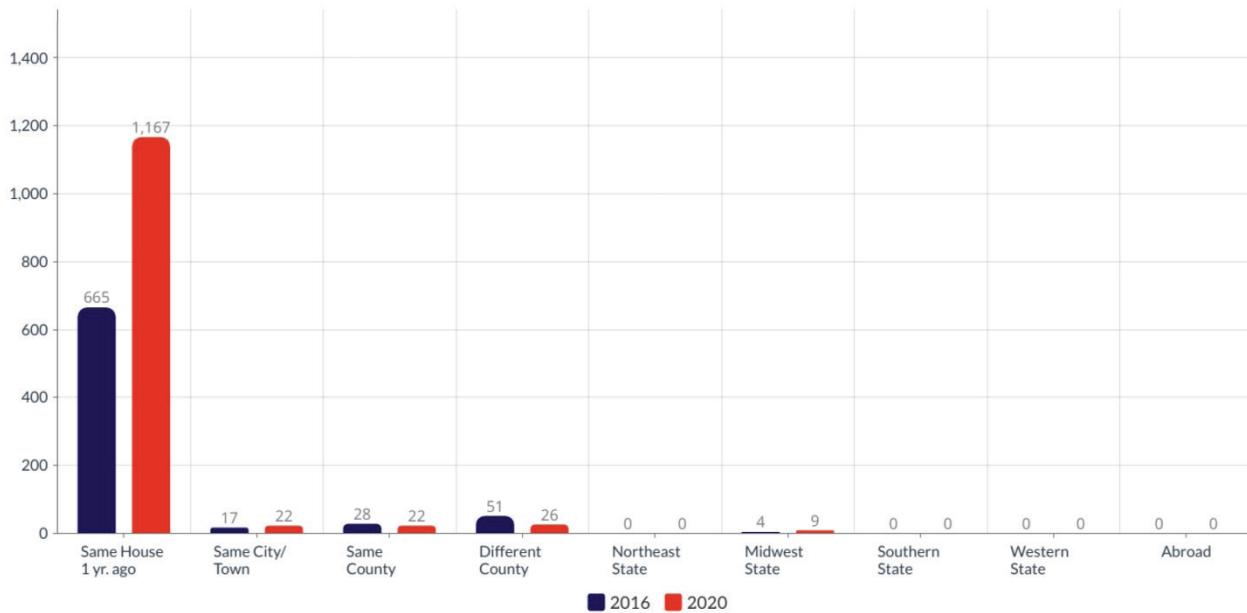
Table P-3. Place of Residence: Town of Altoona, AL

Resided in	2016	% of Total	2020	% of Total	#Change	%Change
Same house 1 year ago	665	87.4%	1,167	94.3%	502	75.5%
Different house in U.S. 1 year ago	96	12.6%	70	5.7%	-26	-27.1%
Same city or town:	17	17.7%	22	31.4%	5	29.4%
Same county	17	100.0%	22	100.0%	5	29.4%

Different county (same state)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Elsewhere:	79	82.3%	48	68.6%	-31	-39.2%
Same county	28	35.4%	22	45.8%	-6	-21.4%
Different county:	51	64.6%	26	54.2%	-25	-49.0%
Same state	47	92.2%	17	65.4%	-30	-63.8%
Different state:	4	7.8%	9	34.6%	5	125.0%
Northeast	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Midwest	4	100.0%	9	0.0%	5	0.0%
South	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
West	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	100.0%
Abroad 1 year ago	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Puerto Rico	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
U.S. Island Areas	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Foreign country	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	761	100.0%	1,237	100.0%	476	62.5%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

P-3: Place of Residence  
Altoona, AL



## Age Distribution

**Table P-4. Age Distribution: Altoona, Etowah County, Alabama, U.S.**

Age Group	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	% Change
Less than 5	21	63	200.0%	5,750	5,982	4.0%	290,470	293,932	1.2%	19,750,606	19,650,192	-0.5%
% of Total	2.7%	5.0%		5.6%	5.8%		6.0%	6.0%		6.2%	6.0%	
5 to 19	148	182	23.0%	19,347	18,313	-5.3%	944,027	931,288	-1.3%	62,437,400	62,261,904	-0.3%
% of Total	19.3%	14.6%		18.7%	17.8%		19.5%	19.0%		19.6%	19.1%	
20 to 24	48	77	60.4%	6,570	6,238	-5.1%	343,723	323,960	-5.7%	22,617,630	21,820,378	-3.5%
% of Total	6.3%	6.2%		6.4%	6.1%		7.1%	6.6%		7.1%	6.7%	
25 to 44	180	482	167.8%	25,302	24,979	-1.3%	1,229,656	1,237,123	0.6%	83,780,797	86,831,842	3.6%
% of Total	23.4%	38.6%		24.5%	24.3%		25.4%	25.3%		26.3%	26.6%	
45 to 64	234	220	-6.0%	28,447	27,671	-2.7%	1,287,750	1,279,449	-0.6%	83,462,238	83,642,175	0.2%
% of Total	30.5%	17.6%		27.5%	26.9%		26.6%	26.1%		26.2%	25.6%	
65+	137	226	65.0%	17,947	19,538	8.9%	740,698	827,434	11.7%	46,190,933	52,362,817	13.4%
% of Total	17.8%	18.1%		17.4%	19.0%		15.3%	16.9%		14.5%	16.0%	
Total	768	1,250	62.8%	103,363	102,721	-0.6%	4,841,164	4,893,186	1.1%	318,558,162	326,569,308	2.5%
Median Age	43.5	40.3	-7.4%	40.9	41.3	1.0%	38.6	39.2	1.6%	37.7	38.2	1.3%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

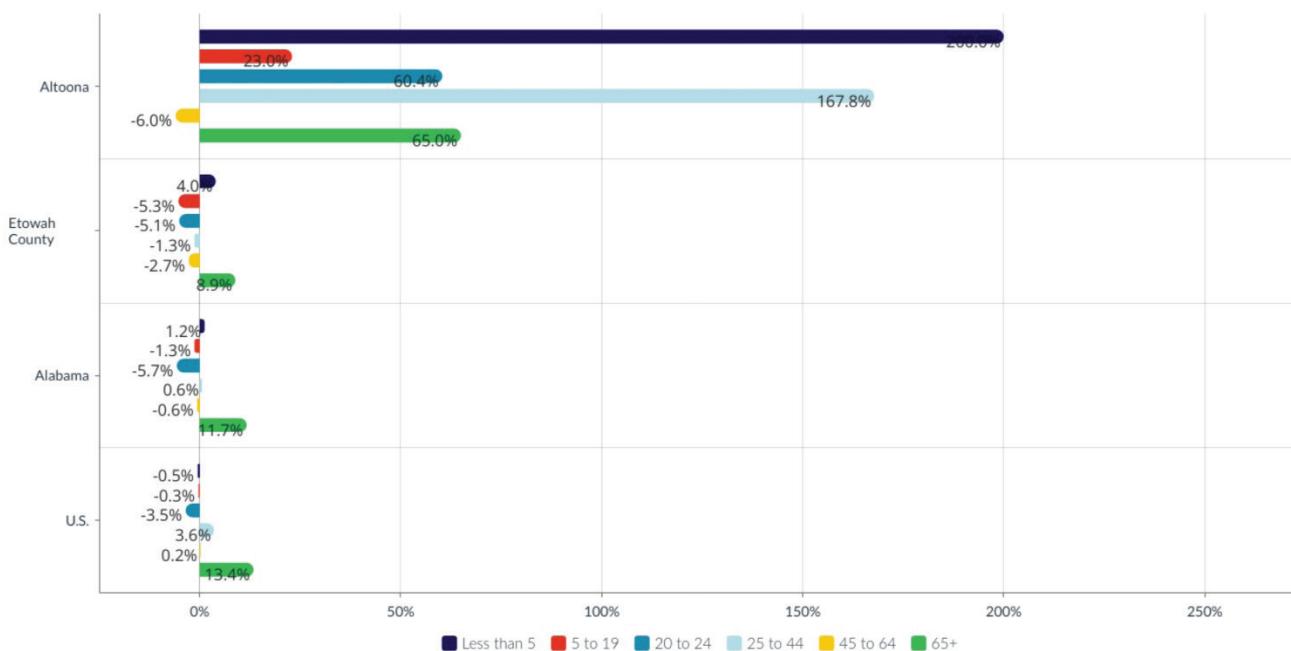
**Table P-5. Age Distribution: Altoona, AL (2016-2020 ACS)**

Age Status	Altoona	Etowah Co.	Alabama	U.S.
Under 5	5.0%	5.8%	6.0%	6.0%
5 to 19	14.6%	17.8%	19.0%	19.1%
20 to 24	6.2%	6.1%	6.6%	6.7%
25 to 44	38.6%	24.3%	25.3%	26.5%
45 to 64	17.6%	26.9%	26.2%	25.6%
65 +	18.1%	19.0%	16.9%	16.1%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

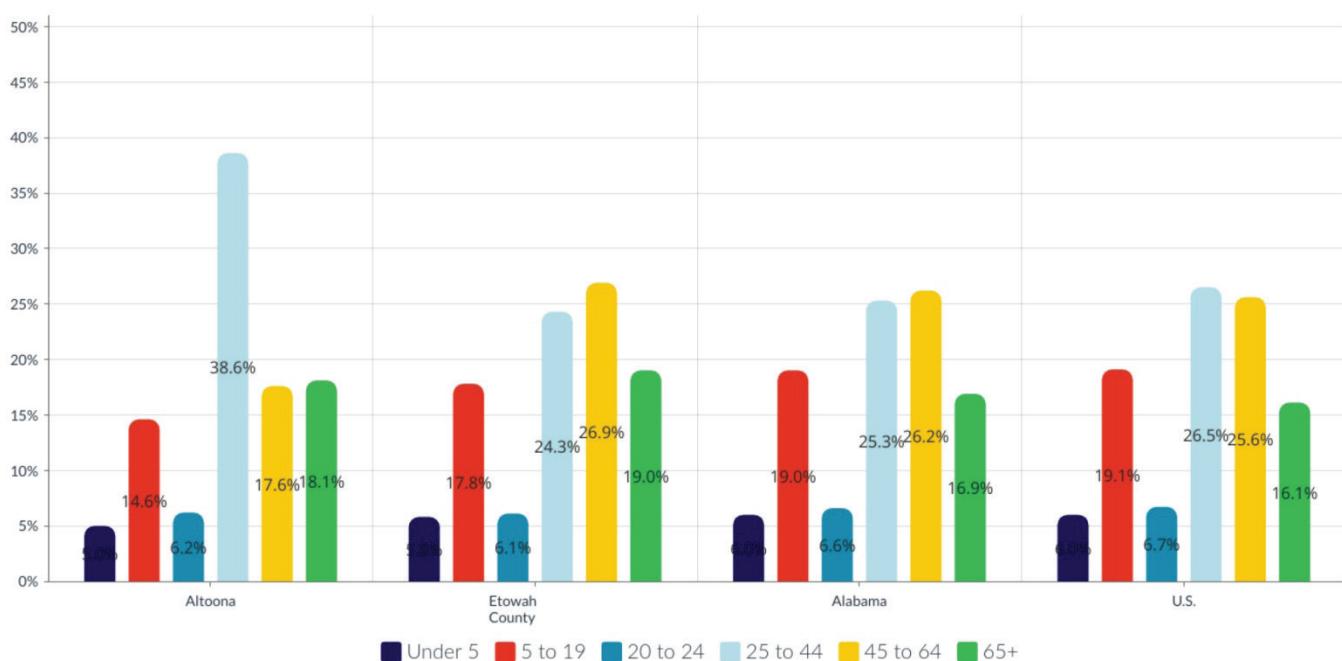
#### P-4: Percent Change of Age Distribution

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



#### P-5: Age Distribution

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



## Marital Status

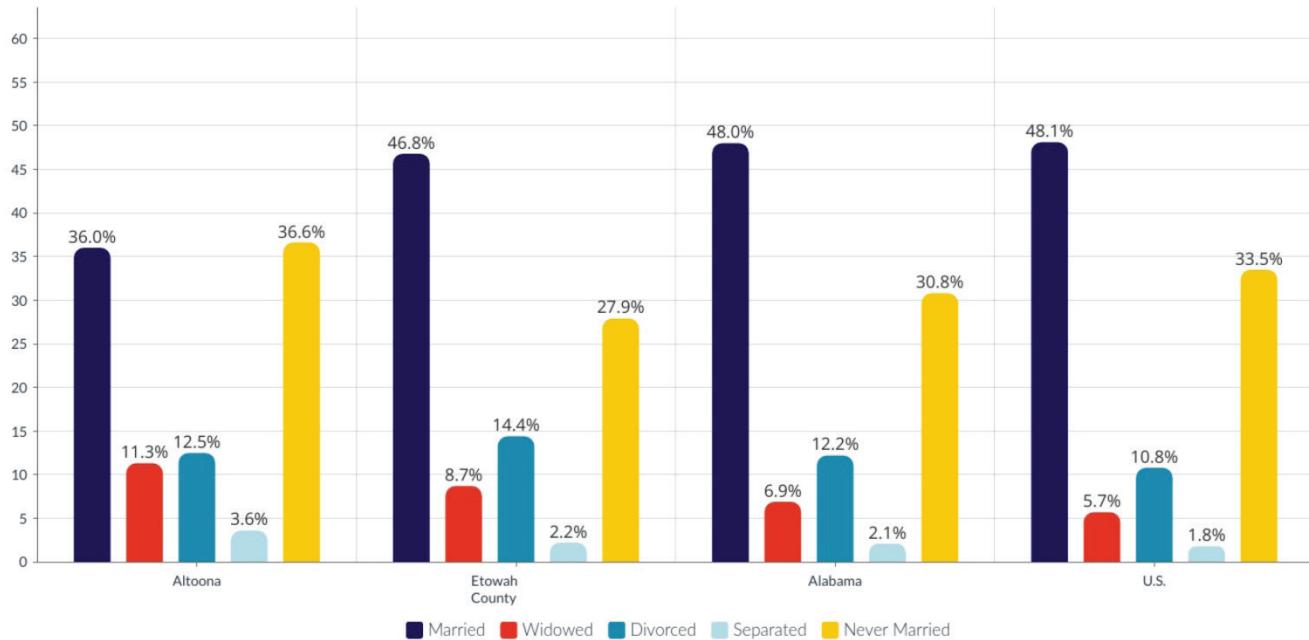
**Table P-6. Marital Status (pop. 15 and over): Altoona, AL**

Marital Status	Altoona		Etowah County		Alabama		U.S.	
	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020
Married (except separated)	46.8%	36.0%	49.1%	46.8%	47.9%	48.0%	48.1%	48.1%
Widowed	10.7%	11.3%	8.1%	8.7%	7.1%	6.9%	5.9%	5.7%
Divorced	15.7%	12.5%	14.0%	14.4%	12.5%	12.2%	11.0%	10.8%
Separated	4.6%	3.6%	2.3%	2.2%	2.4%	2.1%	2.1%	1.8%
Never Married	22.3%	36.6%	26.5%	27.9%	30.1%	30.8%	33.0%	33.5%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**P-6: Marital Status**

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Race Distribution

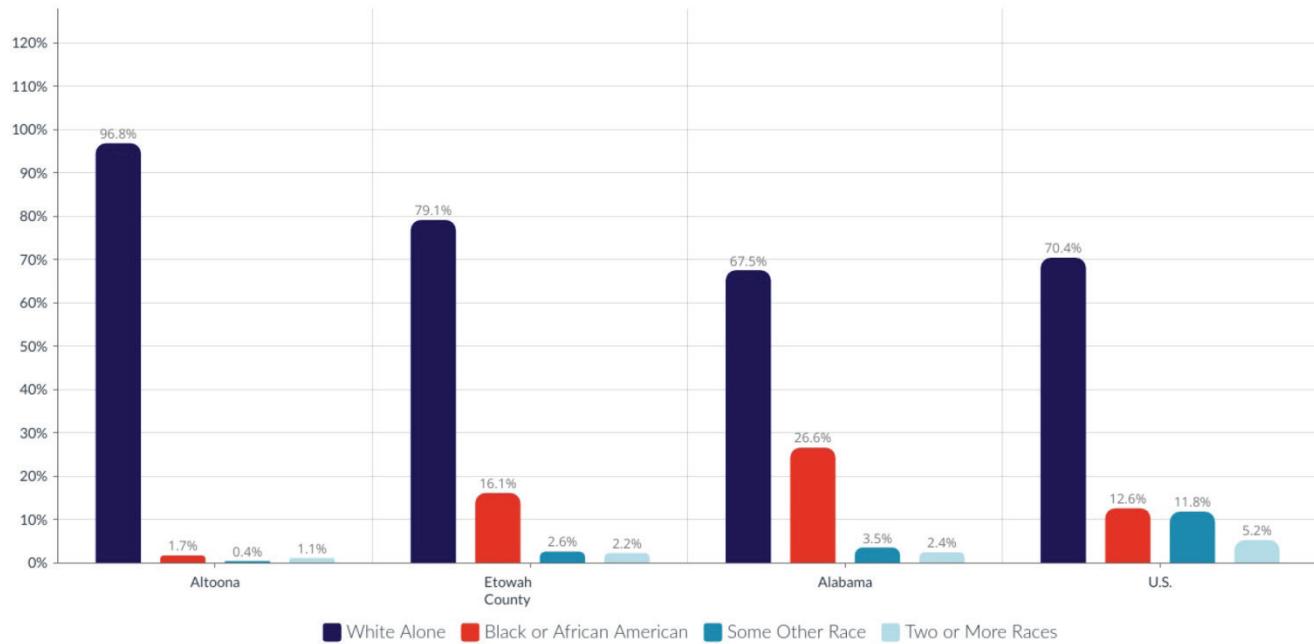
**Table P-7. Race Distribution: Altoona, AL 2016-2020 ACS**

Race	Altoona	Etowah Co.	Alabama	U.S.
White Alone	1,210	81,298	3,302,834	229,960,813
% of Total	96.8%	79.1%	67.5%	70.4%
Black or African-American	21	16,519	1,301,319	41,227,384
% of Total	1.7%	16.1%	26.6%	12.6%
Some other race	5	2,640	169,711	38,505,569
% of Total	0.4%	2.6%	3.5%	11.8%
Two or more races	14	2,264	119,322	16,875,542
% of Total	1.1%	2.2%	2.4%	5.2%
Totals	1,250	102,721	4,893,186	326,569,308

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

### P-7: Race Distribution

Altoona, AL (2020)



### Gender Distribution

**Table P-8. Gender Distribution: Altoona, AL**

Gender	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.
	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	
Male	359	612	70.5%	50,007	53,190	6.4%	2,346,193	2,365,734	0.8%	160,818,530
% of Total	46.7%	49.0%		48.4%	51.8%		48.5%	48.3%		49.2%
Female	409	638	56.0%	53,356	49,531	-7.2%	2,494,971	2,527,452	1.3%	165,750,778
% of Total	53.3%	51.0%		51.6%	48.2%		51.5%	51.7%		50.8%
Total	768	1,250	62.8%	103,363	102,721	-0.6%	4,841,164	4,893,186	1.1%	326,569,308

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

## Altoona Economy

### Educational Attainment

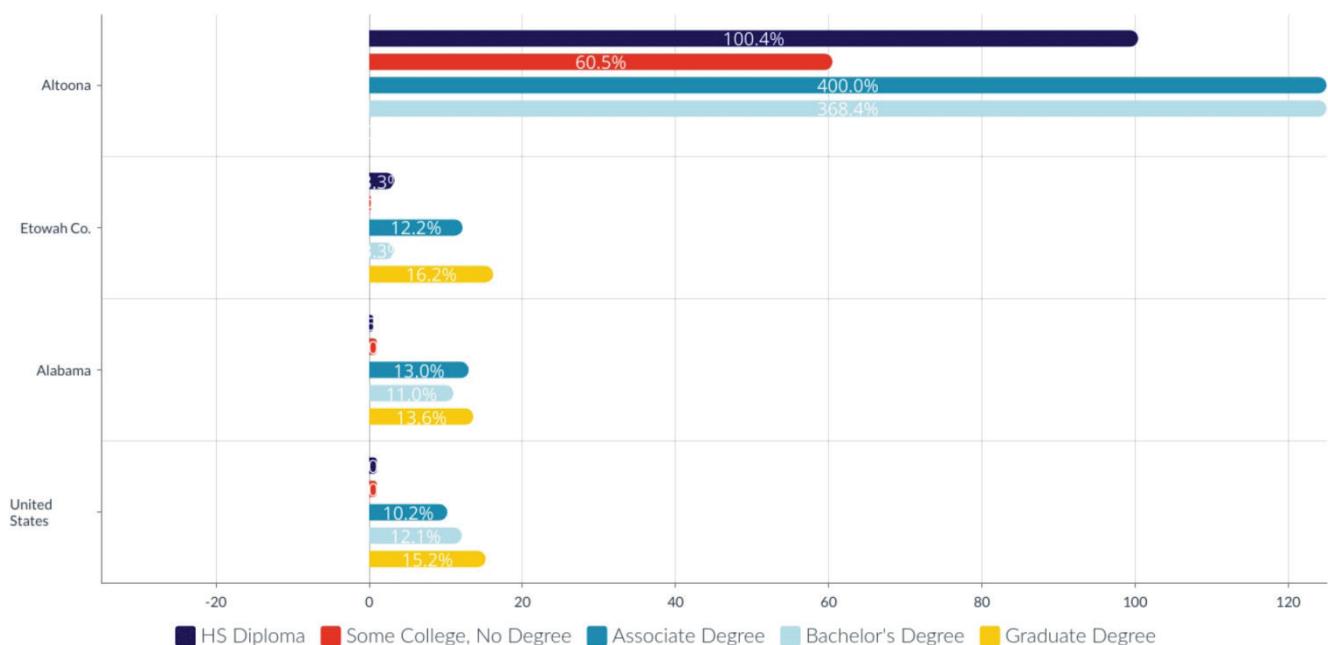
**Table E-1. Educational Attainment: Altoona, AL**

Educational Level	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change
Less Than 9th Grade	53	32	-39.6%	4,310	2,988	-30.7%	162,018	133,650	-17.5%	11,913,913	10,923,030	-8.3%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	9.6%	3.4%		6.0%	4.1%		5.0%	4.0%		5.6%	4.9%	
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	96	54	-43.8%	8,272	7,603	-8.1%	334,018	305,297	-8.6%	15,904,467	14,639,650	-8.0%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	17.4%	5.8%		11.5%	10.5%		10.2%	9.1%		7.4%	6.6%	
High School Graduate	229	459	100.4%	23,334	24,104	3.3%	1,009,593	1,014,342	0.5%	58,820,411	59,421,419	1.0%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	41.6%	49.5%		32.5%	33.4%		31.0%	30.3%		27.5%	26.7%	
Some College, No Degree	119	191	60.5%	17,981	18,013	0.2%	714,201	721,609	1.04%	44,772,845	45,242,162	1.0%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	21.6%	20.6%		25.1%	25.0%		21.9%	21.6%		21.0%	20.3%	
Associate Degree	17	85	400.0%	5,975	6,705	12.2%	258,502	292,064	13.0%	17,469,724	19,254,254	10.2%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	3.1%	9.2%		8.3%	9.3%		7.9%	8.7%		8.2%	8.6%	
Bachelors Degree	19	89	368.4%	7,513	7,764	3.3%	492,382	546,674	11.0%	40,189,920	45,034,610	12.1%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	3.4%	9.6%		10.5%	10.8%		15.1%	16.3%		18.8%	20.2%	
Graduate or Professional	18	18	0.0%	4,311	5,011	16.2%	290,694	330,370	13.6%	24,577,867	28,321,709	15.2%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	3.3%	1.9%		6.0%	6.9%		8.9%	9.9%		11.5%	12.7%	
Number of Persons 25 Years and Over	551	928	68.4%	71,696	72,188	0.7%	3,261,408	3,344,006	2.5%	213,649,147	222,836,834	4.3%
% of Persons 25 Years and Over	71.7%	74.2%	3.5%	69.4%	70.3%	1.3%	67.4%	68.3%	-99.0%	67.1%	68.2%	1.6%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

### E-1: Percent Change in Education Attainment

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



## Household Income

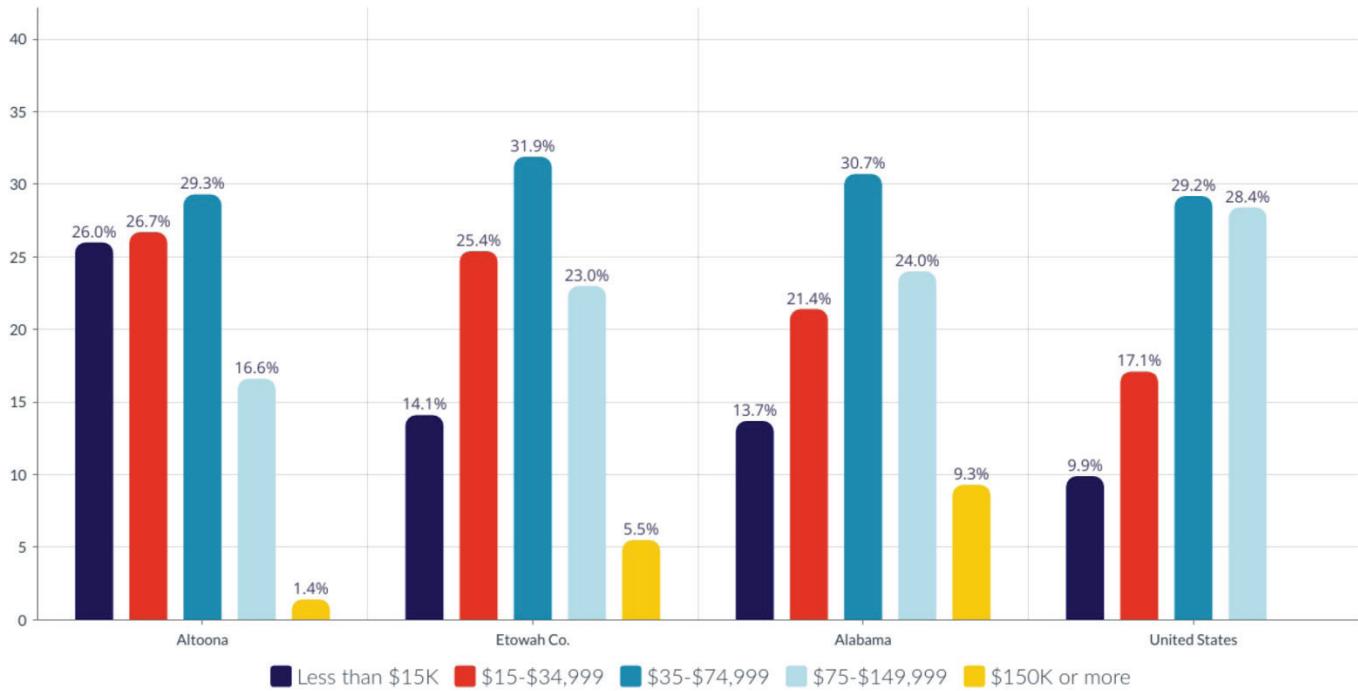
**Table E-2. Household Income Distribution: Altoona, AL**

Income Level	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change
Less than \$15 K	88	108	22.9%	6,284	5,477	-12.8%	305,425	259,050	-15%	14,243,665	12,165,848	-14.6%
% of Total	27.9%	26.0%		15.9%	14.1%		16.5%	13.7%		12.1%	9.9%	
\$15 - \$34,999 K	92	111	20.7%	11,145	9,835	-11.8%	440,553	403,784	-8%	23,778,680	20,929,184	-12.0%
% of Total	29.2%	26.7%		28.2%	25.4%		23.8%	21.4%		20.2%	17.1%	
\$35 - \$74,999 K	108	122	12.9%	13,082	12,376	-5.4%	581,233	579,349	-0.3%	36,492,033	35,725,161	-2.1%
% of Total	34.3%	29.3%		33.1%	31.9%		31.4%	30.7%		31.0%	29.2%	
\$75 - 149,999 K	22	69	212.9%	7,549	8,933	18.3%	401,680	470,881	17%	30,253,073	34,742,181	14.8%
% of Total	7.0%	16.6%		19.1%	23.0%		21.7%	24.9%		25.7%	28.4%	
\$150,000 or more	5	6	19.0%	1,462	2,144	46.6%	120,319	175,440	46%	13,066,502	18,791,845	43.8%
% of Total	1.6%	1.4%		3.7%	5.5%		6.5%	9.3%		11.1%	15.4%	
Total Households	315	416	32.1%	39,522	38,765	-1.9%	1,851,061	1,888,504	2%	117,716,237	122,354,219	3.9%
Median HH Income	\$28,672	\$31,961	11.5%	\$40,478	\$44,934	11.0%	\$44,758	\$50,536	13%	\$55,322	\$64,994	17.5%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

### E-2: Household Income

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Commuting Means

**Table E-3. Commuting Means (pop. 16 years and over): Altoona, AL 2016**

Commuting Means	Altoona		Etowah County		Alabama		U.S.	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Vehicle (drove alone)	239	90.2%	34,618	85.4%	1,727,392	85.7%	111,448,640	76.4%
Vehicle (carpooled)	24	9.1%	3,542	8.7%	176,555	8.8%	13,588,601	9.3%
Public Transportation (excluding taxi cab)	0	0.0%	106	0.3%	7,841	0.4%	7,476,312	5.1%
Walked	0	0.0%	255	0.6%	23,010	1.1%	4,030,730	2.8%
Other means (including taxi cab)	0	0.0%	251	0.6%	15,269	0.8%	1,308,867	0.9%
Worked at Home	2	0.8%	1,774	4.4%	58,991	2.9%	6,661,892	4.6%
Total	265	100.0%	40,546	100.0%	2,014,965	99.7%	145,861,221	99.1%
Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)	43.9	x	23.9	x	24.5	x	26.1	x

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey

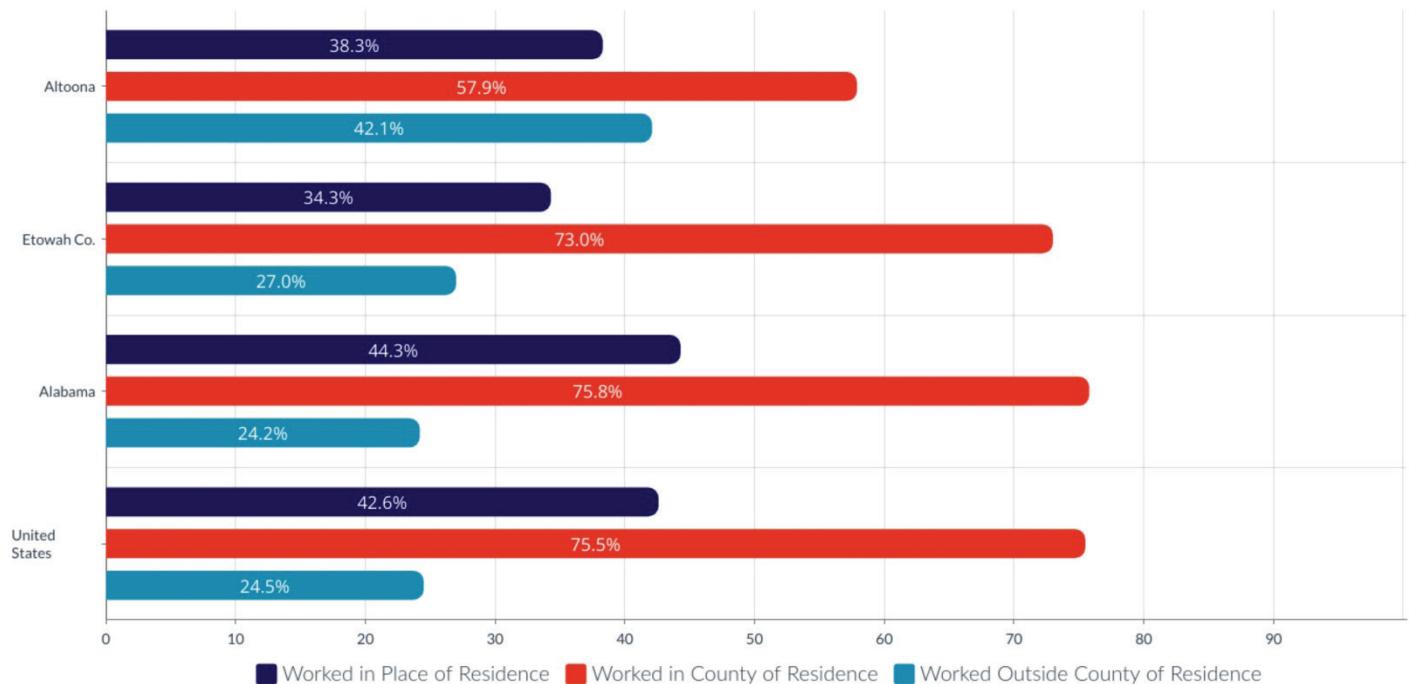
**Table E-4. Commuting Means (pop. 16 years and over): Altoona, AL 2020**

Commuting Means	Altoona		Etowah County		Alabama		U.S.	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Vehicle (drove alone)	551	95.2%	37,095	88.0%	1,778,257	84.9%	115,127,720	74.9%
Vehicle (carpooled)	22	3.8%	3,193	7.6%	174,781	8.3%	13,605,122	8.9%
Public Transportation (excluding taxi cab)	0	0.0%	23	0.1%	6,960	0.3%	7,044,886	4.6%
Walked	0	0.0%	317	0.8%	23,265	1.1%	3,854,692	2.5%
Other means (including taxi cab)	0	0.0%	222	0.5%	14,338	0.7%	1,461,318	1.0%
Worked at Home	6	1.0%	1,297	3.1%	92,836	4.4%	11,153,095	7.3%
Total	579	100.0%	42,147	100.0%	2,095,195	99.8%	153,665,654	99.1%
Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)	29.6	x	25.0	x	25.2	x	26.9	x

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

### E-3: Commuting Patterns

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Place of Work

Table E-5. Commuting Patterns: Commuting (pop. 16 and over) Altoona, AL

Commuting Patterns	Altoona		Etowah County		Alabama		U.S.	
	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020
Worked in Place of Res.	26	222	11,991	12,254	593,932	623,685	45,903,215	49,768,145
% of Total	9.8%	38.3%	33.7%	34.3%	44.3%	44.3%	42.0%	42.6%
Worked outside Place of Res.	239	357	23,627	23,483	745,620	784,133	63,390,029	67,121,235
% of Total	90.2%	61.7%	66.3%	65.7%	55.7%	55.7%	58.0%	57.4%
Total	265	579	35,618	35,737	1,339,552	1,407,818	109,293,244	116,889,380
Worked in County of Res.	82	332	29,674	30,407	1,462,868	1,518,221	105,598,812	111,899,766
% of Total	31.3%	57.9%	74.0%	73.0%	76.1%	75.8%	75.2%	75.5%
Worked outside County of Res.	180	241	10,430	11,254	458,919	483,682	34,793,487	36,234,663
% of Total	68.7%	42.1%	26.0%	27.0%	23.9%	24.2%	24.8%	24.5%
Total	262	573	40,104	41,661	1,921,787	2,001,903	140,390,299	148,134,429
Mean Travel Time to Work	43.9	29.6	23.9	25.0	24.5	25.2	26.1	26.9

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**ST-3. Summary Table: Housing Information, Altoona, AL (2016-2020 ACS)**

Geography	Altoona	Etowah Co.	Alabama	U.S.
% Occupied units	81.9%	81.1%	83.2%	88.4%
% Owner-occupied	49.2%	59.2%	57.5%	56.9%
% Renter-occupied	32.7%	21.9%	25.6%	31.5%
% Vacant units	18.1%	18.9%	16.8%	11.6%
Homeowner vacancy rate	7.6%	5.5%	5.7%	7.0%
Rental vacancy rate	7.6%	10.9%	16.6%	16.8%
% homes built prior 1980	71.3%	60.6%	44.5%	52.9%
% homes built post 2000	10.2%	14.3%	22.7%	19.8%
Median value (dollars)	\$118,200	\$124,400	\$149,600	\$229,800
Median monthly owner costs (dollars)	\$450	\$598	\$768	\$1,142
Median gross rent (dollars)	\$338	\$676	\$811	\$1,096
Affordability Owner-occ. Below 30%	85.2%	84.6%	82.6%	77.9%
Affordability Renter-occ. Below 30%	73.4%	54.5%	52.7%	50.9%

**Legend**

- █ Higher than 10% or \$10,000 means the town does not meet par
- █ Between 10% and -10% or +\$0-\$9,999 means the town meets par
- █ Lower than 10% or -\$10,000 means the town exceeds par

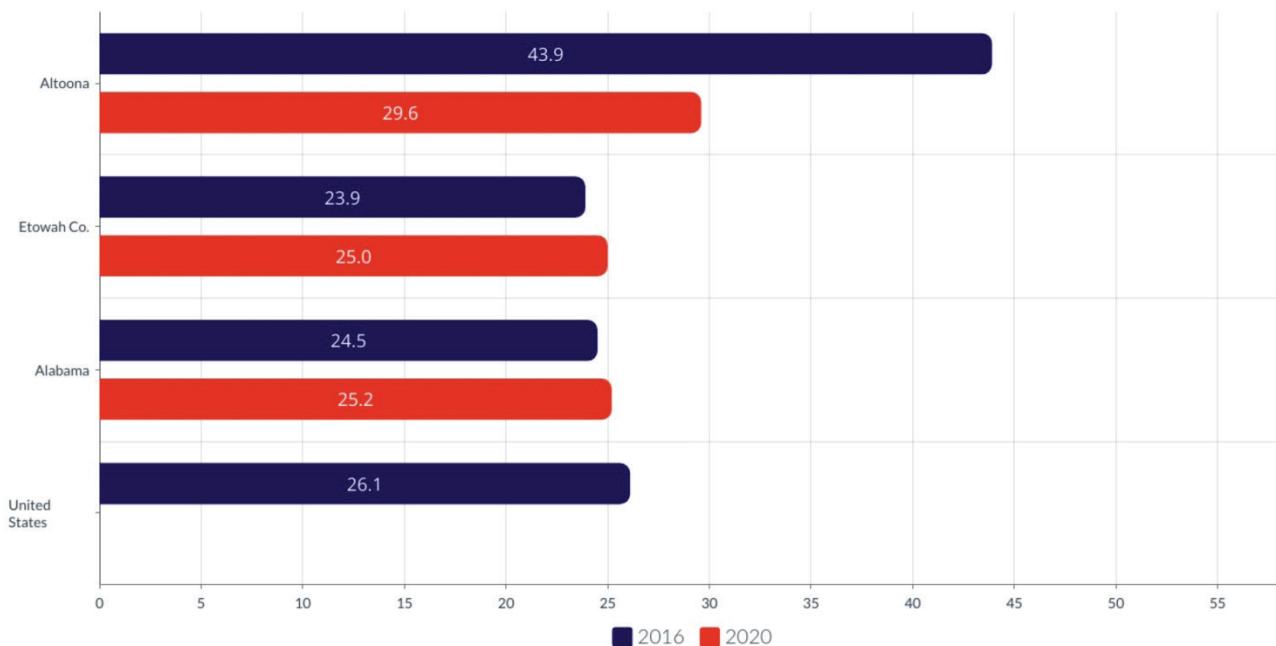
Note: Homes built prior to 1980 are marked in red because the city has considerably more older homes than the county, state, and nation, which means potentially more needs for improvements.

Note: Higher median gross rent marked in red indicate lower cost in the county--which means a higher cost of living in the town in comparison.

Note: median monthly owner costs and gross rent are based on the city being either plus or minus \$100 in comparison.

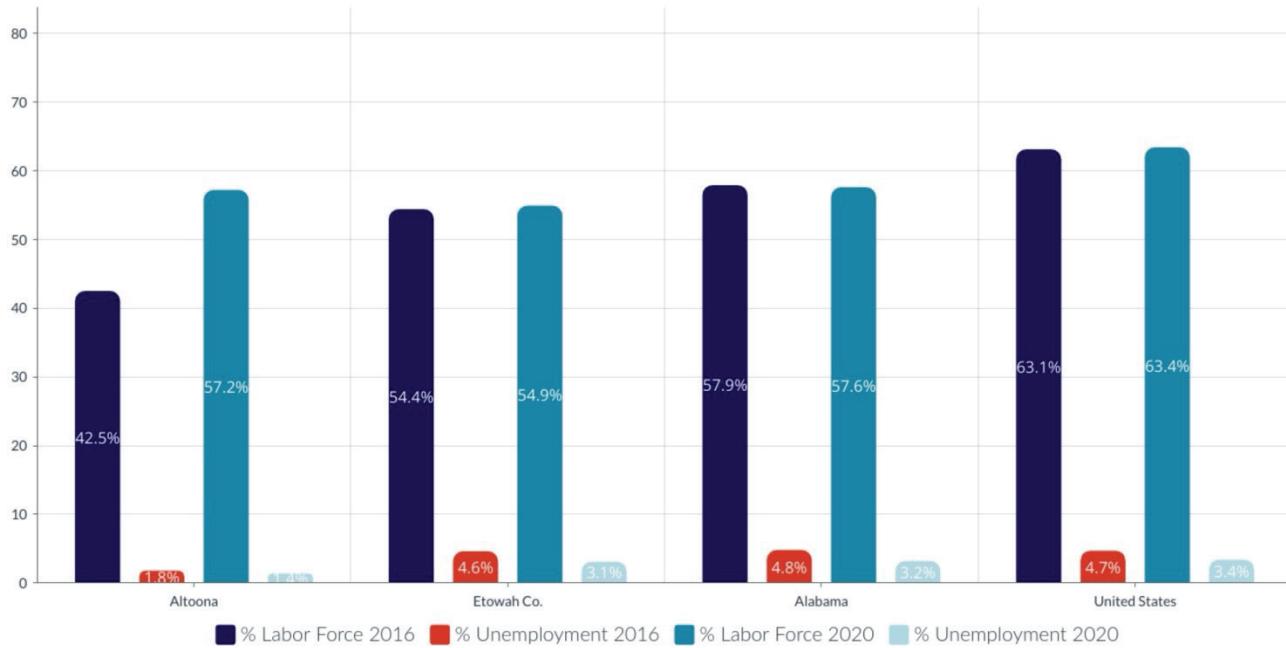
#### E-4: Commuting Means: Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



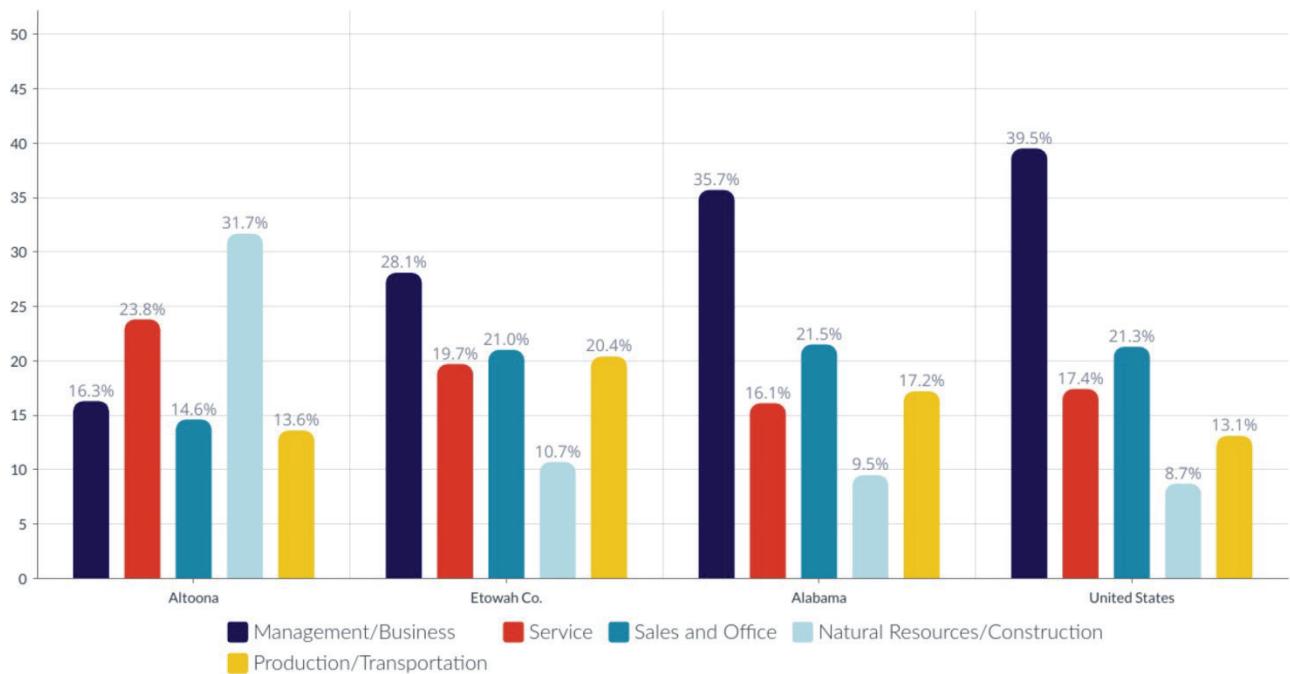
#### E-5: Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



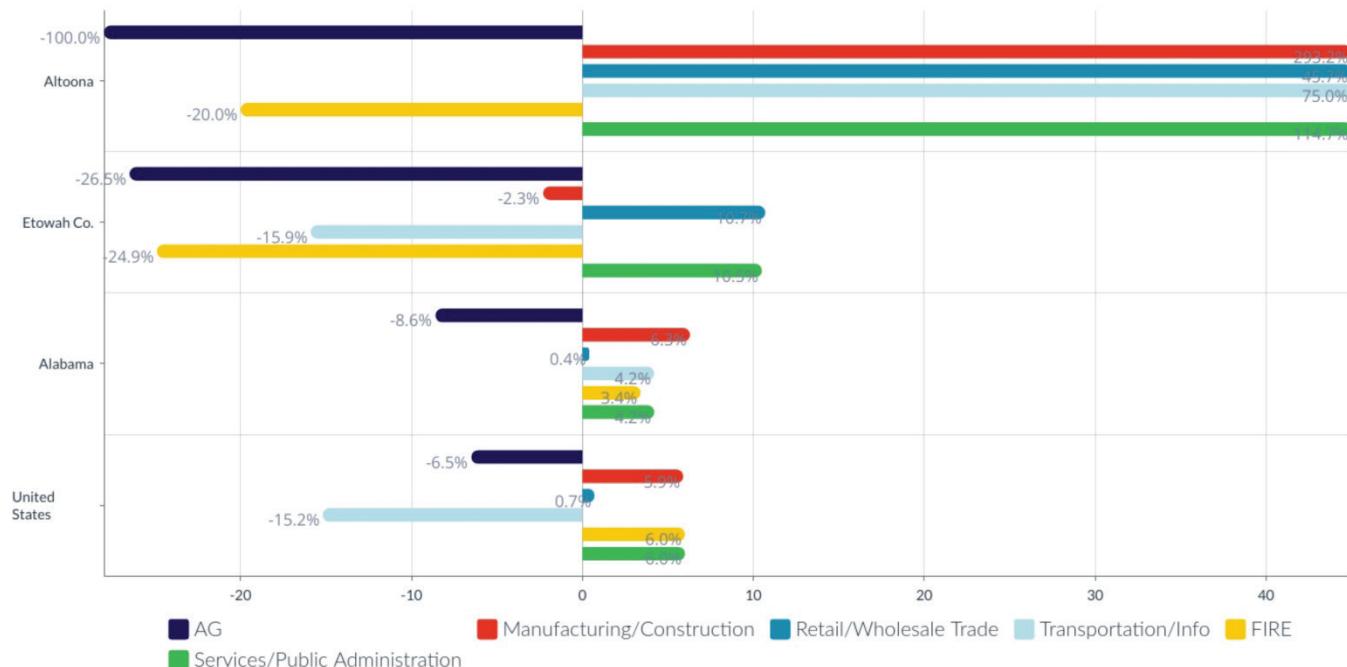
### E-6: Occupational Status

Altoona, AL (2020)



### E-7: % Change in Industrial Composition

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



## Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Table E-6. Labor Force Participation (Population 16 and over): Altoona, AL

Labor Classification	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change
Total Persons 16+	651	1,068	64.1%	83,436	83,116	-0.4%	3,864,302	3,926,842	1.6%	253,323,709	261,649,873	3.3%
In Labor Force	277	611	120.6%	45,399	45,623	0.5%	2,238,654	2,259,980	1.0%	160,818,740	165,902,838	3.2%
% in Labor Force	42.5%	57.2%	34.6%	54.4%	54.9%	0.9%	57.9%	57.6%	-0.5%	63.1%	63.4%	0.5%
Armed Forces	0	0	0.0%	22	20	-9.1%	12,150	14,651	20.6%	1,011,641	1,143,342	13.0%
% in Armed Forces	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0004%	0.0004%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%	33.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Civilian Labor Force	277	611	120.6%	45,377	45,603	0.5%	2,226,504	2,245,329	0.8%	159,807,099	164,759,496	3.1%
Employed	265	596	124.9%	41,540	43,002	3.5%	2,042,025	2,119,986	3.8%	148,001,326	155,888,980	5.3%
Unemployed	12	15	25.0%	3,837	2,601	-32.2%	184,479	125,343	-32.1%	11,805,773	8,870,516	-24.9%
% Unemployed	1.8%	1.4%	-22.2%	4.6%	3.1%	-32.6%	4.8%	3.2%	-33.3%	4.7%	3.4%	-27.7%
Not in Labor Force	374	457	22.2%	38,037	37,493	-1.4%	1,625,648	1,666,862	2.5%	92,504,969	95,747,035	3.5%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

## Occupational Status

Table E-7. Occupational Status: Altoona, AL

Occupational Status	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change
Management / Business	67	97	44.8%	11,876	12,104	1.9%	685,523	756,013	10.3%	54,751,318	61,526,906	12.4%
% of Total	25.3%	16.3%		28.6%	28.1%		33.6%	35.7%		37.0%	39.5%	
Service	41	142	246.3%	7,812	8,467	8.4%	339,793	341,826	0.60%	26,765,182	27,095,654	1.2%
% of Total	15.5%	23.8%		18.8%	19.7%		16.6%	16.1%		18.1%	17.4%	
Sales and Office	85	87	2.4%	8,750	9,035	3.3%	489,112	456,424	-6.7%	35,282,759	33,247,878	-5.8%
% of Total	32.1%	14.6%		21.1%	21.0%		24.0%	21.5%		23.8%	21.3%	
Nat. Resources / Construction	11	189	1618.2%	4,011	4,615	15.1%	199,303	201,224	1.0%	13,171,632	13,620,436	3.4%
% of Total	4.2%	31.7%		9.7%	10.7%		9.8%	9.5%		8.9%	8.7%	
Production / Transportation	61	81	32.8%	9,091	8,781	-3.4%	328,294	364,449	11.0%	18,030,435	20,398,106	13.1%
% of Total	23.0%	13.6%		21.9%	20.4%		16.1%	17.2%		12.2%	13.1%	
Total	265	596	124.9%	41,540	43,002	3.5%	2,042,025	2,119,986	3.8%	148,001,326	155,888,980	5.3%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

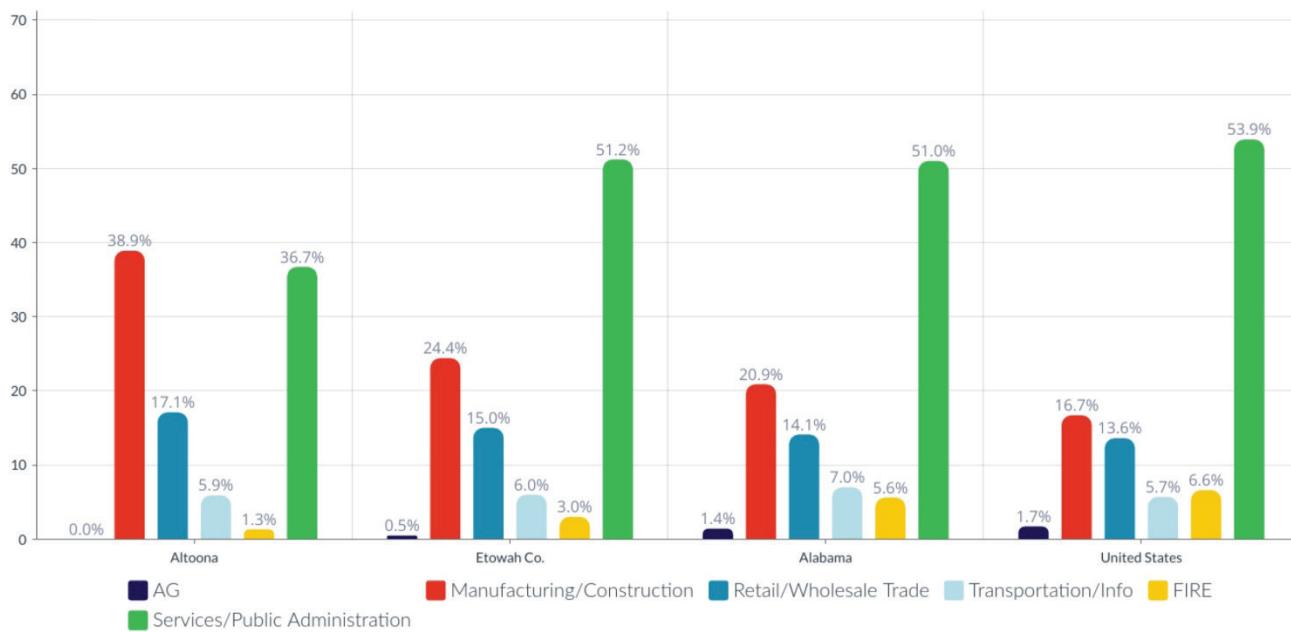
## Industrial Composition

Table E-8. Industrial Composition: Altoona, AL

Industry	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change
Agriculture	4	0	-100.0%	310	228	-26.5% 1.6%	32,734	29,921	-8.6% 1.9%	2,843,703	2,658,413	-6.5%
% of Total	1.5%	0.0%		0.7%	0.5%		1.4%			1.7%		
Manufacturing/ Construction	59	232	293.2%	10,724	10,472	-2.3% 20.5%	417,658	443,979	6.3% 16.6%	24,572,992	26,033,657	5.9%
% of Total	22.3%	38.9%		25.8%	24.4%		20.9%			16.7%		
Retail/Wholesale Trade	70	102	45.7%	5,807	6,430	10.7% 14.5%	296,990	298,065	0.4% 14.2%	21,021,273	21,166,856	0.7%
% of Total	26.4%	17.1%		14.0%	15.0%		14.1%			13.6%		
Transportation / Info.	20	35	75.0%	3,060	2,572	-15.9% 7.0%	142,635	148,630	4.2% 7.1%	10,543,121	8,943,605	-15.2%
% of Total	7.5%	5.9%		7.4%	6.0%		7.0%			5.7%		
FIRE	10	8	-20.0%	1,736	1,303	-24.9% 5.6%	114,110	118,006	3.4% 6.6%	9,731,609	10,319,201	6.0%
% of Total	3.8%	1.3%		4.2%	3.0%		5.6%			6.6%		
Services/Public Administration	102	219	114.7%	19,903	21,997	10.5% 50.8%	1,037,898	1,081,385	4.2% 53.6%	79,288,628	84,073,248	6.0%
% of Total	38.5%	36.7%		47.9%	51.2%		51.0%			53.9%		
Total	265	596	124.9%	41,540	43,002	3.5%	2,042,025	2,119,986	3.8%	148,001,326	155,888,980	5.3%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**E-8: Industrial Composition**  
Altoona, AL (2020)



## Poverty Status

**Table E-9. Poverty Status (Percent of Total): Altoona, AL**

Poverty Status	Altoona		Etowah County		Alabama		U.S.	
	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020
Individuals 18 years and older	37.6%	47.9%	27.5%	24.5%	27.9%	25.3%	23.5%	21.4%
Individuals 65 years and older	16.0%	32.6%	10.7%	9.7%	10.6%	10.2%	9.3%	9.3%
Related children under 18 years	35.1%	32.4%	23.4%	22.0%	22.7%	18.9%	17.4%	14.3%
Related children 5 to 17 years old	32.9%	16.7%	19.6%	17.5%	19.6%	16.5%	14.8%	12.3%
Unrelated individuals 15 years and older	48.8%	33.3%	30.5%	29.2%	31.6%	29.7%	26.6%	24.2%
Total Individuals below poverty level	25.1%	19.8%	18.4%	16.0%	18.4%	16.0%	15.1%	12.8%
Total families below poverty level	18.6%	28.6%	14.2%	12.7%	14.0%	11.6%	11.0%	9.1%

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**E-9: Poverty Status**

Altoona, AL (2016-2020)



# Altoona Housing

## Housing Unit Types

**Table H-1. Housing Unit Types: Altoona, AL (American Community Survey)**

Housing Types	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change
Single-family	236	326	38.1%	36,853	37,269	1.1%	1,551,665	1,596,801	2.9%	90,444,476	93,661,138	3.6%
% Of Total	56.9%	64.2%		77.6%	78.0%		70.2%	70.3%		67.5%	67.7%	
Multi-family	119	125	5.0%	5,454	5,348	-1.9%	360,121	374,270	3.9%	35,047,045	36,264,047	3.5%
% Of Total	28.7%	24.6%		11.5%	11.2%		16.3%	16.5%		26.1%	26.2%	
Mobile home	60	57	-5.0%	5,487	5,097	-7.1%	295,722	296,231	0.2%	8,454,133	8,374,539	-0.9%
% Of Total	14.5%	11.2%		11.6%	10.7%		13.4%	13.0%		6.3%	6.0%	
Other	0	0	N/A	70	91	30.0%	1,827	3,096	69.5%	109,245	133,027	21.8%
% Of Total	0.0%	0.0%		0.1%	0.2%		0.1%	0.1%		0.1%	0.1%	
Total Units	415	508	22.4%	47,504	47,805	0.6%	2,209,335	2,270,398	2.8%	134,054,899	138,432,751	3.3%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**Table H-1. Housing Unit Types: Altoona, AL 2020**

Housing Types	Altoona		Etowah Co.		Alabama		U.S.	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Single-family	326	64.2%	37,269	78.0%	1,596,801	70.3%	93,661,138	67.7%
Multi-family	125	24.6%	5,348	11.2%	374,270	16.5%	36,264,047	26.2%
Mobile home	57	11.2%	5,097	10.7%	296,231	13.0%	8,374,539	6.0%
Other	0	0.0%	91	0.2%	3,096	0.1%	133,027	0.1%
Total Units	508	100.0%	47,805	100.0%	2,270,398	100.0%	138,432,751	100.0%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

## H-1: Housing Unit Types

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Tenure and Occupancy

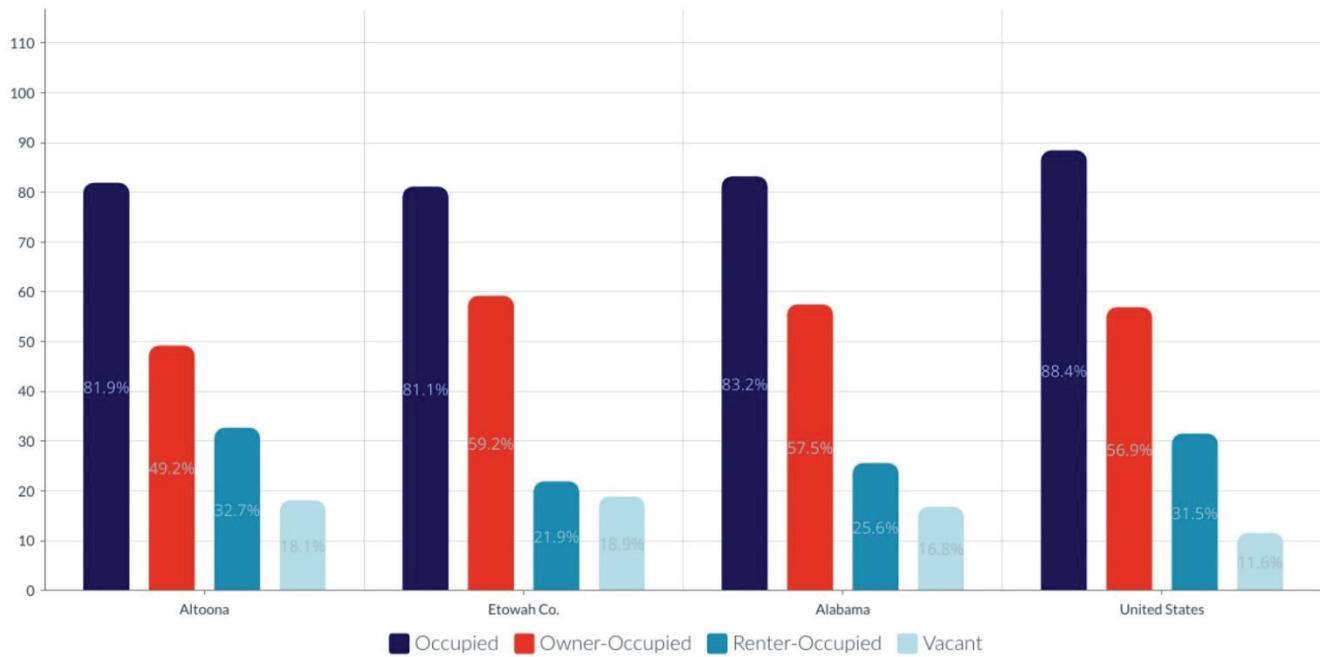
Table H-2. Tenure and Occupancy: Altoona, AL (2016-2020 American Community Survey)

Tenure & Occupancy	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change
Occupied	315	416	32.1%	39,522	38,765	-1.92%	1,851,061	1,888,504	2.0%	117,716,237	122,354,219	3.9%
% of Total	75.9%	81.9%		83.2%	81.1%		83.8%	83.2%		87.8%	88.4%	
Owner-occupied	169	250	47.9%	28,044	28,285	0.9%	1,267,824	1,306,505	3.1%	74,881,068	78,801,376	5.2%
% of Total	40.7%	49.2%		59.0%	59.2%		57.4%	57.5%		55.9%	56.9%	
Renter-occupied	146	166	13.7%	11,478	10,480	-8.7%	583,237	581,999	-0.2%	42,835,169	43,552,843	1.7%
% of Total	35.2%	32.7%		24.2%	21.9%		26.4%	25.6%		32.0%	31.5%	
Vacant	100	92	-8.0%	7,982	9,040	13.3%	358,274	381,894	6.6%	16,338,662	16,078,532	-1.6%
% of Total	24.1%	18.1%		16.8%	18.9%		16.2%	16.8%		12.2%	11.6%	
Total Units	415	508	22.4%	47,504	47,805	0.6%	2,209,335	2,270,398	2.8%	134,054,899	138,432,751	3.3%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

## H-2: Tenure and Occupancy

Altoona, AL (2020)



## Vacancy Status

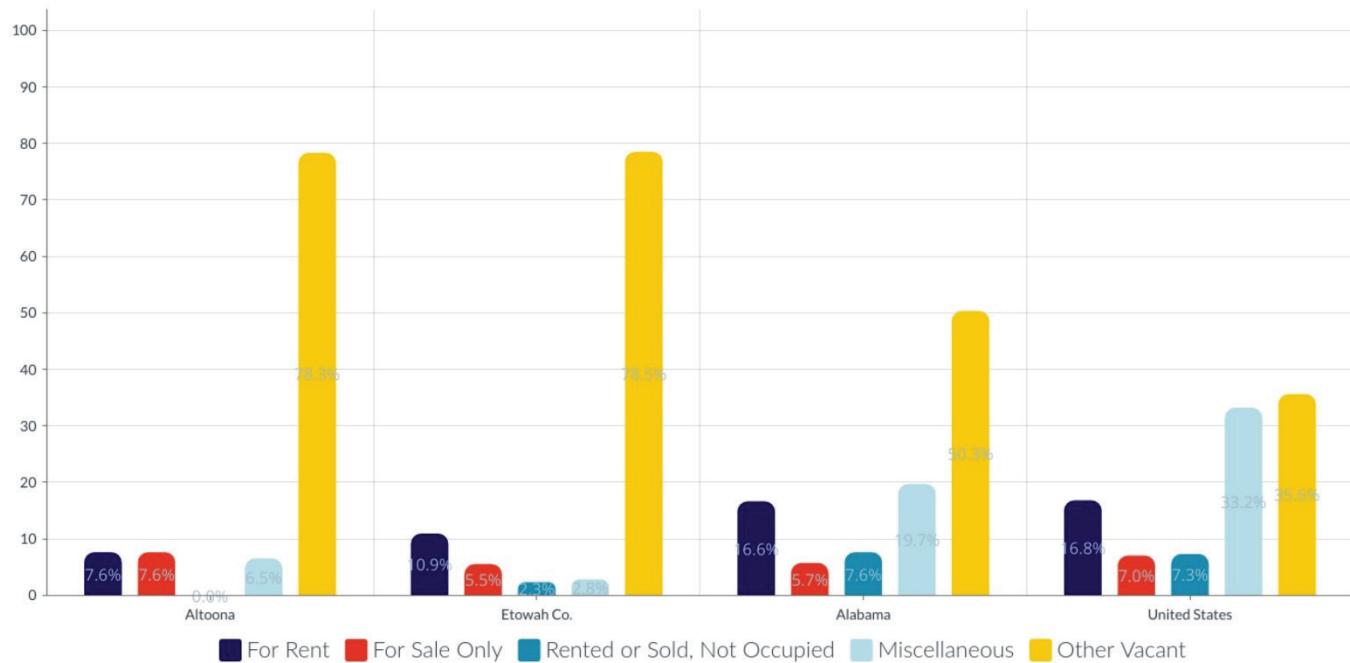
Table H-3. Housing Vacancy: Altoona, AL (American Community Survey 2016-2020)

Vacancy Status	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change
For rent, only	6	7	16.7%	818	984	20.3%	61,550	63,532	3.2%	2,855,844	2,704,553	-5.3%
% of Total	6.0%	7.6%		10.2%	10.9%		17.2%	16.6%		17.5%	16.8%	
For sale, only	0	7	—	400	496	24.0%	31,544	21,865	-30.7%	1,395,797	1,129,755	-19.1%
% of Total	0.0%	7.6%		5.0%	5.5%		8.8%	5.7%		8.5%	7.0%	
Rented or sold, not occupied	0	0	0.0%	206	211	2.4%	26,858	29,155	8.6%	1,253,648	1,178,130	-6.0%
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%		2.6%	2.3%		7.5%	7.6%		7.7%	7.3%	
Miscellaneous	17	6	-64.7%	574	255	-55.6%	80,482	75,372	-6.3%	5,403,483	5,339,153	-1.2%
% of Total	17.0%	6.5%		7.2%	2.8%		22.5%	19.7%		33.1%	33.2%	
Other Vacant	77	72	-6.5%	5,984	7,094	18.5%	157,840	191,970	21.6%	5,429,890	5,726,941	5.5%
% of Total	77.0%	78.3%		75.0%	78.5%		44.1%	50.3%		33.2%	35.6%	
Total Vacant	100	92	-8.0%	7,982	9,040	13.3%	358,274	381,894	6.6%	16,338,662	16,078,532	-1.6%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

### H-3: Housing Vacancy Status

Altoona, Alabama (2020)



**Table H-3. Housing Vacancy: Altoona, AL 2020**

Vacancy Status	Altoona		Etowah County		Alabama		U.S.	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
For rent	7	7.6%	984	10.9%	63,532	16.6%	2,704,553	16.8%
For sale only	7	7.6%	496	5.5%	21,865	5.7%	1,129,755	7.0%
Rented or sold, not occupied	0	0.0%	211	2.3%	29,155	7.6%	1,178,130	7.3%
Miscellaneous	6	6.5%	255	2.8%	75,372	19.7%	5,339,153	33.2%
Other vacant	72	78.3%	7,094	78.5%	191,970	50.3%	5,726,941	35.6%
Total	92	100.0%	9,040	100.0%	381,894	100.0%	16,078,532	100.0%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

## Household Size

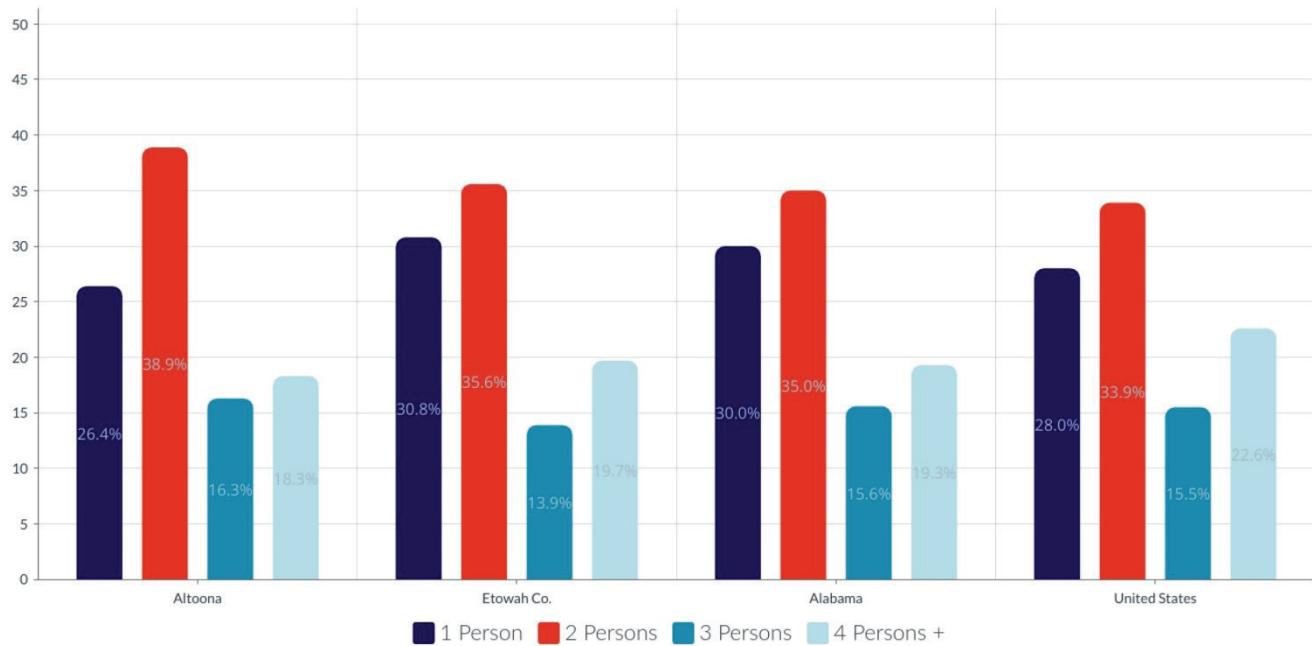
Table H-4. Household Size: Altoona, AL (2016-2020 American Community Survey)

Household Size	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change
1 Person	103	110	6.8%	11,027	11,950	8.4%	540,510	567,326	5.0%	32,607,398	34,254,532	5.1%
% of Total	32.7%	26.4%		27.9%	30.8%		29.2%	30.0%		27.7%	28.0%	
2 Persons	94	162	72.6%	14,663	13,792	-5.9%	649,722	661,238	1.8%	39,670,372	41,488,418	4.6%
% of Total	29.8%	38.9%		37.1%	35.6%		35.1%	35.0%		33.7%	33.9%	
3 Persons	86	68	-20.9%	6,324	5,377	-15.0%	301,723	295,001	-2.2%	18,481,449	18,998,206	2.8%
% of Total	27.3%	16.3%		16.0%	13.9%		16.3%	15.6%		15.7%	15.5%	
4 Persons or more	32	76	136.5%	7,509	7,646	1.8%	359,106	364,939	1.6%	26,957,018	27,613,063	2.4%
% of Total	10.2%	18.3%		19.0%	19.7%		19.4%	19.3%		22.9%	22.6%	
Total Households	315	416	32.1%	39,522	38,765	-1.9%	1,851,061	1,888,504	2.0%	117,716,237	122,354,219	3.9%
Average HH Size	2.28	2.89	N/A	2.58	2.62	N/A	2.55	2.53	N/A	2.64	2.6	N/A

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

H-4: Household Size

Altoona, Alabama (2020)



**Table H-4. Household Size: Altoona, AL 2020**

	Altoona	Etowah Co.	Alabama	U.S.
1 Person	26.4%	30.8%	30.0%	28.0%
2 Persons	38.9%	35.6%	35.0%	33.9%
3 Persons	16.3%	13.9%	15.6%	15.5%
4 Persons +	18.3%	19.7%	19.3%	22.6%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

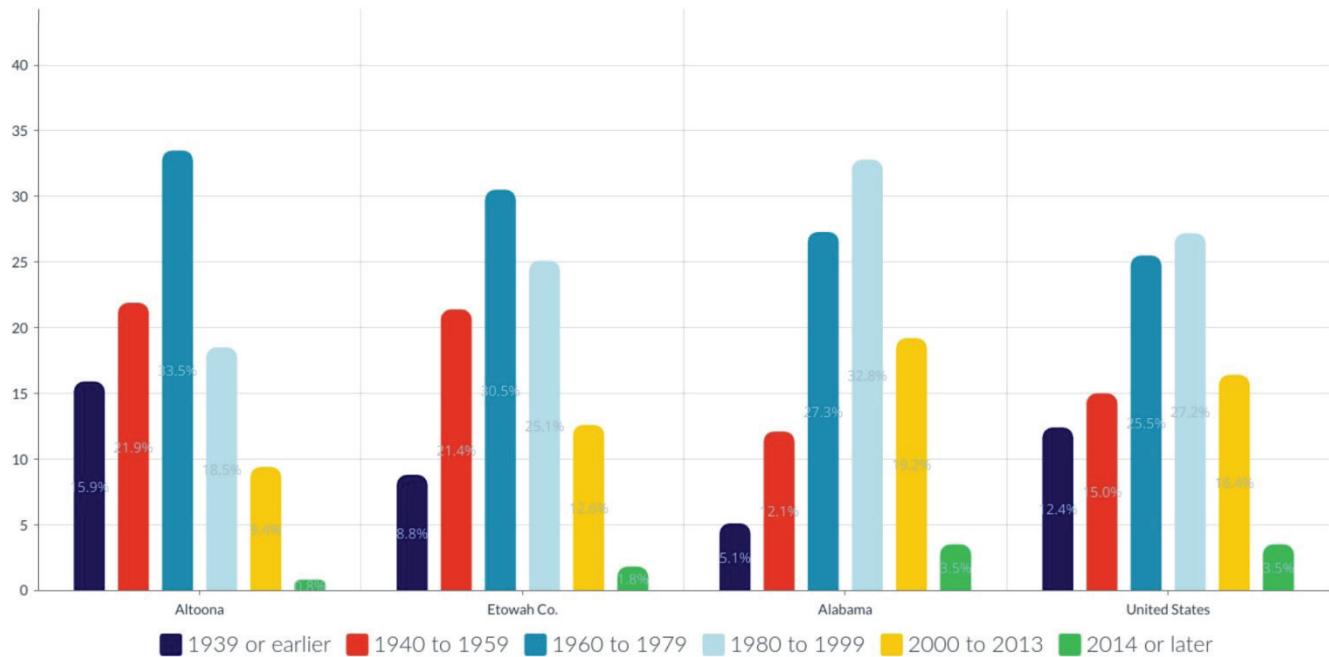
## Housing Stock Age

**Table H-5. Housing Stock Age: Altoona, AL 2020**

Housing Stock	Altoona		Etowah County		Alabama		U.S.	
	Number	%Change	Number	%Change	Number	%Change	Number	%Change
1939 or earlier	81	N/A	4,183	N/A	115,558	N/A	17,184,492	N/A
% of Total	15.9%		8.8%		5.1%		12.4%	
1940 to 1959	111	37.0%	10,215	144.2%	274,328	137.4%	20,745,914	20.7%
% of Total	21.9%		21.4%		12.1%		15.0%	
1960 to 1979	170	53.2%	14,565	42.6%	619,968	126.0%	35,317,337	70.2%
% of Total	33.5%		30.5%		27.3%		25.5%	
1980 to 1999	94	-44.7%	11,994	-17.7%	745,054	20.2%	37,714,151	6.8%
% of Total	18.5%		25.1%		32.8%		27.2%	
2000 to 2013	48	-48.9%	6,001	-50.0%	436,624	-41.4%	22,644,613	-40.0%
% of Total	9.4%		12.6%		19.2%		16.4%	
2014 or later	4	-91.7%	847	-85.9%	78,866	-81.9%	4,826,244	-78.7%
% of Total	0.8%		1.8%		3.5%		3.5%	
Total Units	508		47,805		2,270,398		138,432,751	
Median Year Structure Built	1969		1973		1984		1978	

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**H-5: Housing Stock Age**  
Altoona, Alabama (2016-2020)



## Physical Housing Conditions

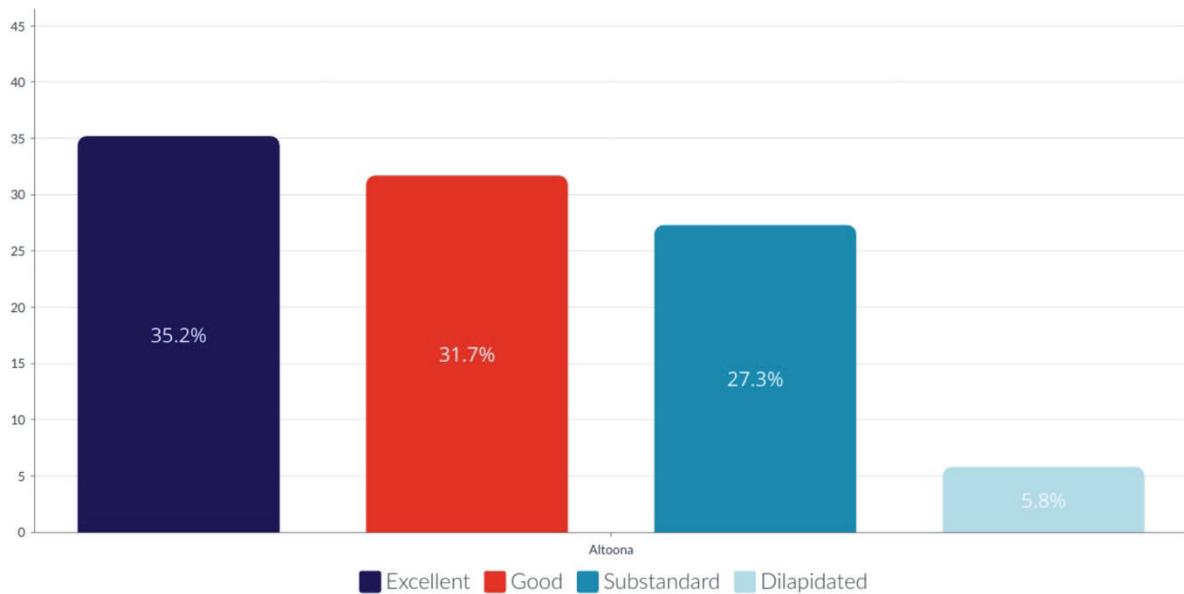
**Table H-6. Physical Housing Conditions: Altoona, AL 2023**

Housing Conditions	Single Family		Manufactured		Multi-family		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Excellent	90	38%	15	21%	16	48%	121	35%
Good	76	32%	16	23%	17	52%	109	32%
Substandard	62	26%	32	45%	0	0%	94	27%
Dilapidated	12	5%	8	11%	0	0%	20	6%
Total	240	100%	71	100%	33	100%	344	100%

Source: EARPDC Altoona housing inventory

#### H-6: Physical Housing Conditions

Altoona, Alabama (2023)



## Housing Value

Table H-7. Housing Value of Owner-occupied Units: Altoona, AL

Housing Value	Altoona			Etowah County			Alabama			U.S.		
	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change	2016	2020	%Change
Less Than \$50,000	41	38	-7.3%	6,043	4,594	-24.0%	197,121	163,271	-17.2%	6,562,913	5,172,474	-21.2%
% of Total	24.3%	15.2%		21.5%	16.2%		15.5%	12.5%		8.8%	6.6%	
\$50,000 to \$99,999	79	71	-10.1%	7,717	6,760	-12.4%	290,794	257,661	-11.4%	11,046,600	8,698,428	-21.3%
% of Total	46.7%	28.4%		27.5%	23.9%		22.9%	19.7%		14.8%	11.0%	
\$100,000 to \$199,999	40	95	137.5%	9,508	10,955	15.2%	439,304	450,990	2.7%	22,628,971	20,457,379	-9.6%
% of Total	23.7%	38.0%		33.9%	38.7%		34.7%	34.5%		30.2%	26.0%	
\$200,000 and above	9	46	411.1%	4,776	5,976	25.1%	340,605	434,583	27.6%	34,642,584	44,473,095	28.4%
% of Total	5.3%	18.4%		17.0%	21.1%		26.9%	33.3%		46.3%	56.4%	
Total Units	169	250	47.9%	28,044	28,285	0.9%	1,267,824	1,306,505	3.1%	74,881,068	78,801,376	5.2%
Median Value (dollars)	\$82,200	\$118,200	N/A	\$101,900	\$124,400	N/A	\$128,500	\$149,600	N/A	\$184,700	\$229,800	N/A

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

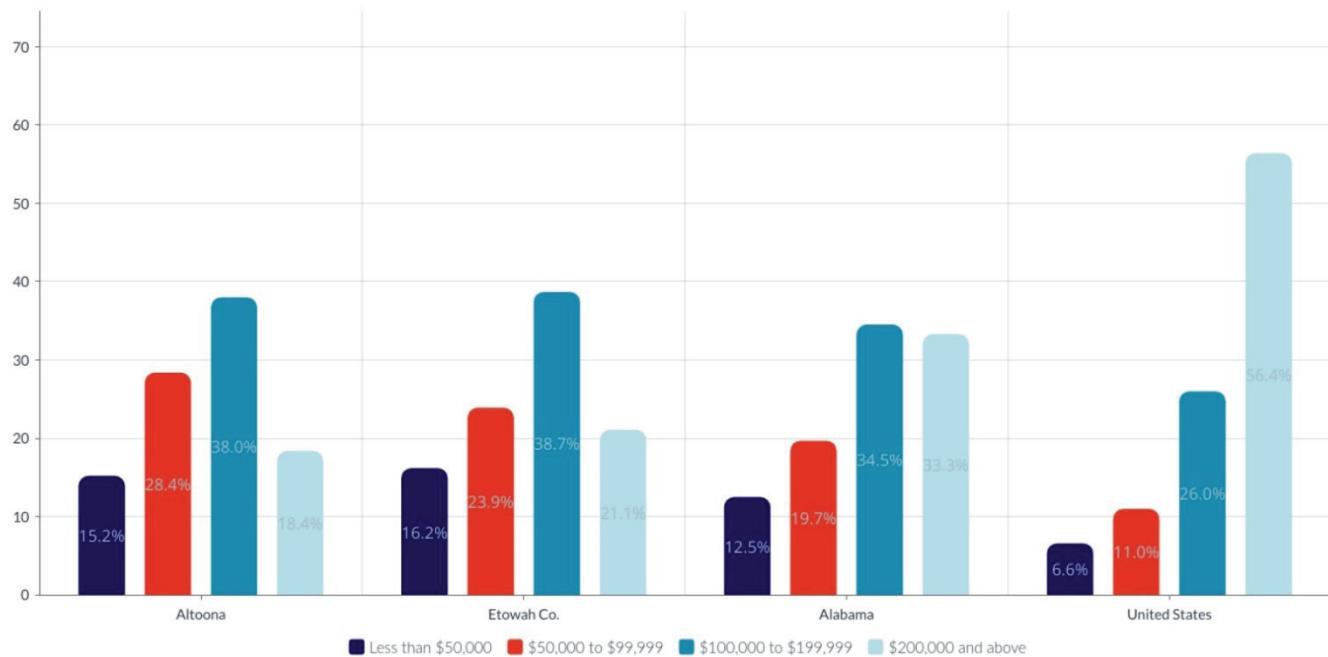


*Altoona*  
*Comprehensive Plan*

# Community Survey Results

### H-7: Housing Value (Owner-Occupied)

Altoona, Alabama (2020)



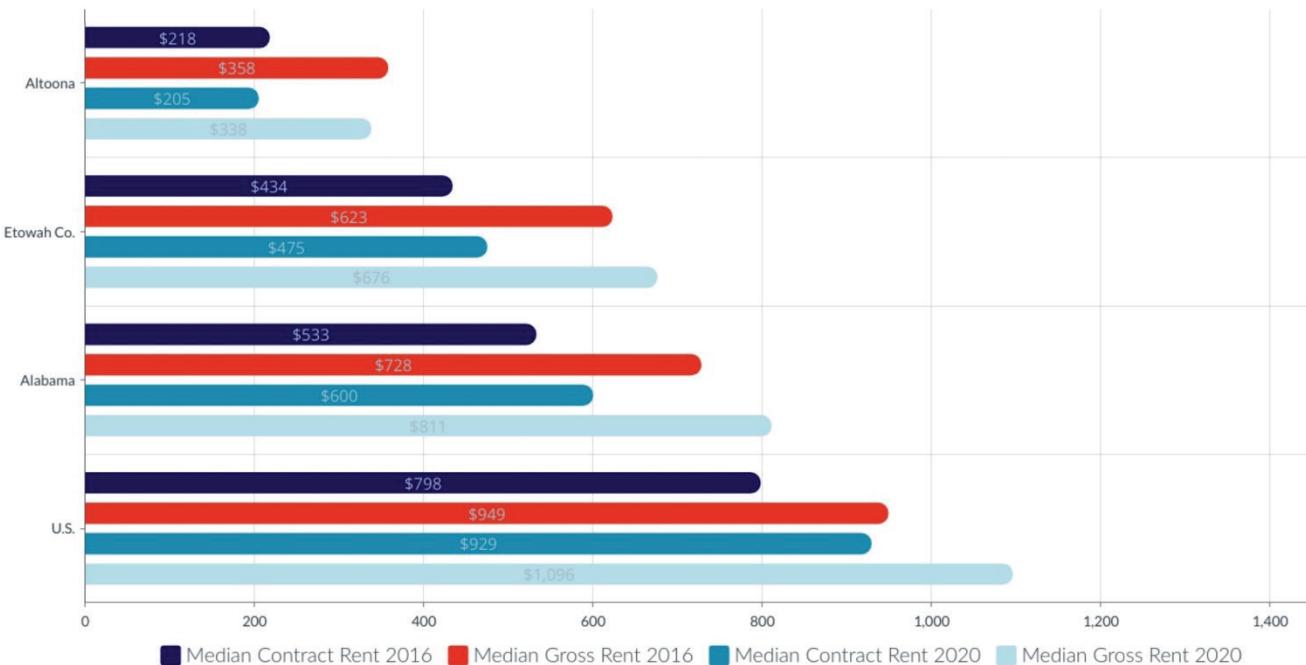
## Rental Costs

Table H-8. Rental Costs: Altoona, AL 2016 & 2020

Ownership Status	Altoona		Etowah Co.		Alabama		U.S.	
	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020	2016	2020
Median Contract Rent	\$218	\$205	\$434	\$475	\$533	\$600	\$798	\$929
Median Gross Rent	\$358	\$338	\$623	\$676	\$728	\$811	\$949	\$1,096

Source: 2012-2016 and 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**H-8: Rental Costs**  
Altoona, AL (2016 & 2020)



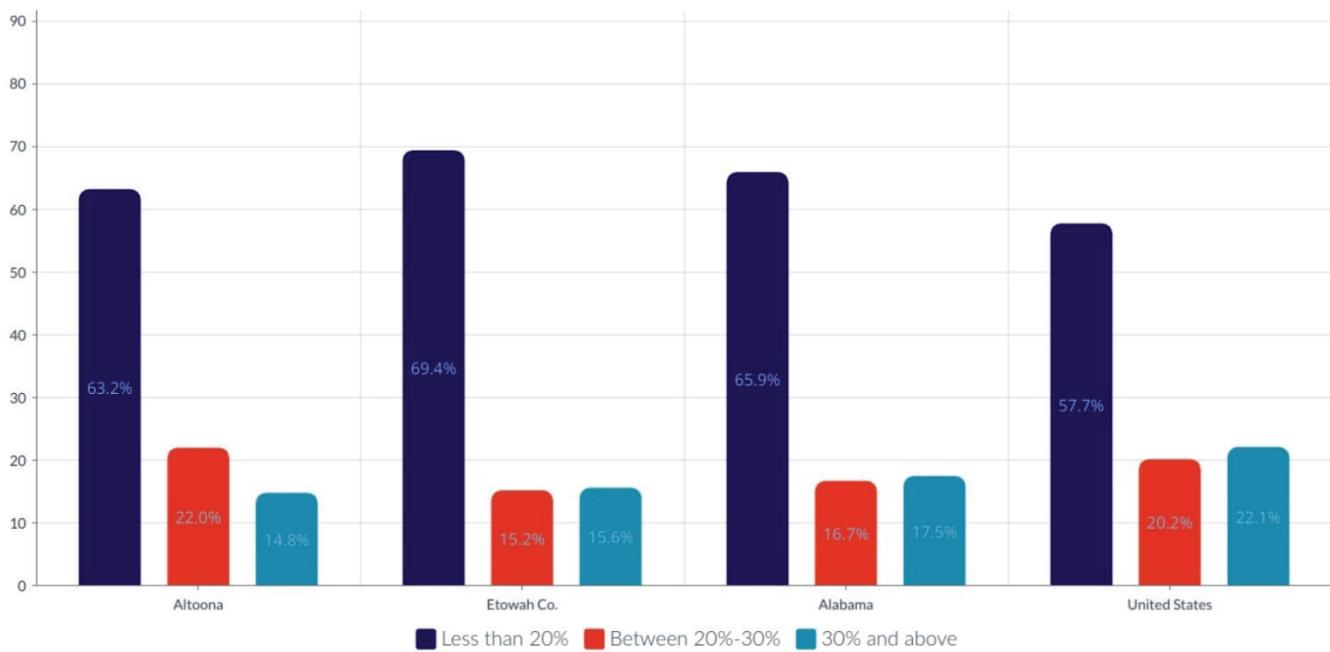
## Owner-occupied Housing Affordability

**Table H-9. Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income: Altoona, AL 2020**

Percent of Income	Altoona	Etowah Co.	Alabama	U.S.
Less than 20%	63.2%	69.4%	65.9%	57.7%
Between 20% - 30%	22.0%	15.2%	16.7%	20.2%
30% and above	14.8%	15.6%	17.5%	22.1%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

**H-9: Housing Affordability- Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income**  
 Altoona, Alabama (2020)



### *Renter-occupied Housing Affordability*

**Table H-10. Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income: Altoona, AL 2020**

Percent of Income	Altoona	Etowah Co.	Alabama	U.S.
Less than 20%	42.7%	32.3%	28.7%	26.4%
Between 20% - 29%	30.7%	22.2%	24.0%	24.5%
30% and Above	26.7%	45.6%	47.3%	49.1%

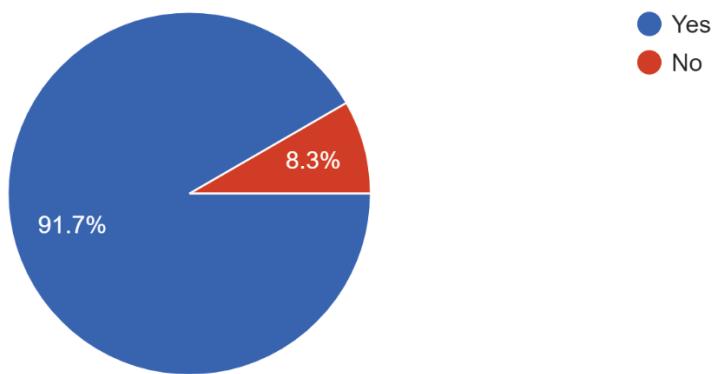
Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

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## *Graphs and Written Results*

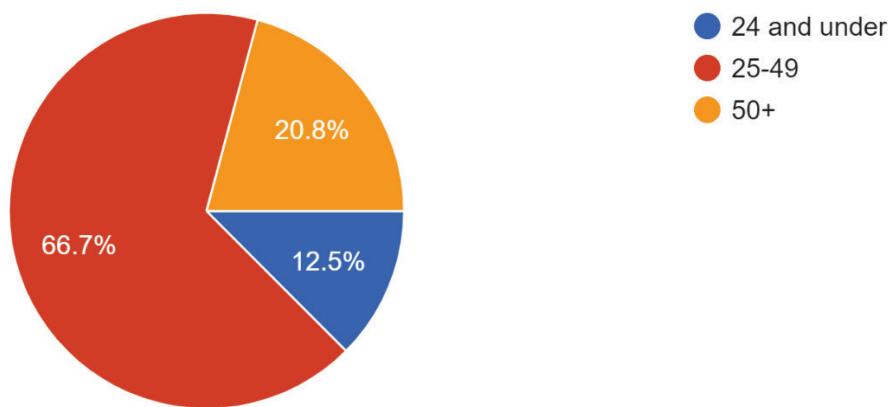
Are you a resident of the Town of Altoona? (reside within the town limits)

24 responses



## What is your age?

24 responses



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# *Town of Altoona Experiences & Opinions.*

*"I have lived in our town for about 9 years. We have an amazing little town with a lot of very good people here. They come together whenever others are going through difficult times. I personally have had amazing people pull together and help me during the worst points in my life between Second Baptist Church, West End Elementary, as well as friends and neighbors when life threw me a curve ball. Folks here care about one another. I learned the hard way it truly takes a village to come together in hard times and I'll forever be grateful to everyone that has been there throughout my journey. Yes, I agree there needs to be changes within the community I would LOVE to see downtown Altoona renovated. I would like to see the buildings such as where the laundry mat, the Fitness center, The garage just to name a few locations that really need improvement to make the town reopened and look more appealing and functional. With these changes I sincerely feel like more folks would take pride in our community while bringing in more revenue to continue to improve things. It takes all of us to work together to make changes, Even something as simple as keeping our yards clean, and help the elderly or disabled who aren't capable to do theirs. How awesome would it be to drive through town and see clean yards with flowers and gardens growing. On the weekends having some type of family oriented things to do in the center of town. I have heard so many of our children make comments about how they cant wait to move away, if our children move away from Altoona then where does that leave our towns future? I would hate to see our town wither away."*

*"Lived in Altoona all my life. It was a great place when we had the sewing plant and jobs. However, now everyone expects Altoona to fail and accepts the status quo. New small businesses would be the ideal, however no one will support local businesses bc they don't want others to succeed. A corporation owned business would fair better bc that is the mentality of over half the people of Altoona. Leadership doesn't want more people in town however, bc it would interfere with the mayor's local interests. Before any business could locate to Altoona, the sewer, water, and road systems would need to be completely redone and they need to hire competent workers who actually know how to work on water and sewer. The people who own property in Altoona, do not want to invest money in the property bc with the way things currently stand with infrastructure and leadership it would be a waste of money."*

*"The leadership of Altoona has been too concerned with keeping up out-dated values and traditions and have been stifling the growth of this community in favor of their own comfort level. The majority of residents agree that Altoona is on it's last legs, but so few are willing to accept that growth also means change. Altoona has waned to a point of basically being a retirement home for out-of-touch geriatrics and wasted potentials. Most of the younger generations have or plan to leave at the first opportunity, looking to save themselves from sinking with the ship."*

*"The water department is awful."*

*"It's okay. Nothing special. We do have a small town but it can be so much better. There are other small towns out in America that are so much better. Altoona is almost a ghost town."*

*"I'm very concerned about illegal drug use."*

*"I love Altoona, but drugs seem to be taking over."*

*"I would like to see the youth football field updated with lights and safer bleachers . It's a safety hazard. The opportunity to have night games could even open up the opportunity for multiple school games,*

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*jamboree and playoff games. It's such a shame that the facility is not in usable condition."*

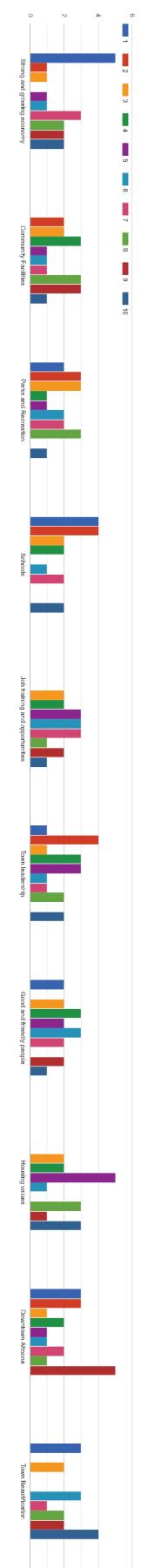
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*"I moved to Altoona in 2011, I never had an issue with anyone here until a few years ago where I was harassed by local officers namely just one and he after being hired back has targeted me yet again along with my neighbor and several other people. With that being said there's a lack of leadership between the mayor and it's town council in reaching out to their people. I hold no ill will against the mayor or anyone on the council this is my personal views, again we need more events which I have discussed with several people who have agreed that we could use more events. Also when the town is owned by 2 people and one refuses to do anything with his buildings per se one has black mold and that alone is hazardous to anyone using said laundromat, also the building next to it has a roof caved in and won't do anything with it. The town car wash only half works personally I think the county needs to seize them and redistribute them to people or businesses that would be interested in doing business there. Also the sewer system is outdated and is constantly in need of repair I personally have videos of raw sewage pouring onto the ground. I have also learned that if you don't have a name in this town and no money then you have no say so whatsoever, all in all Altoona alabama needs a new face and some job growth in my opinion."*

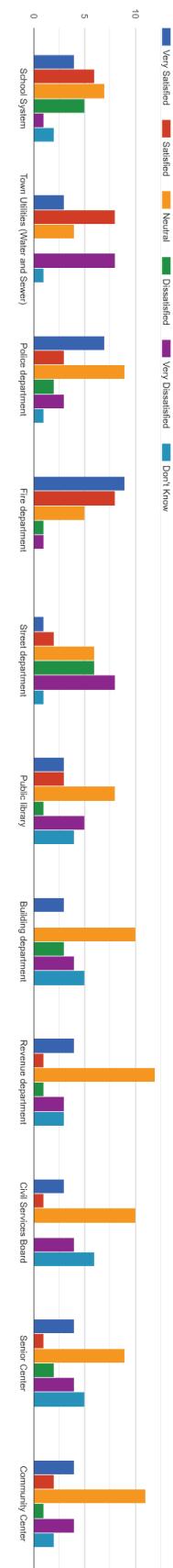
*"We need downtown revitalized. At least a grocery store and restaurant."*

*"I like living here and continue to do so."*

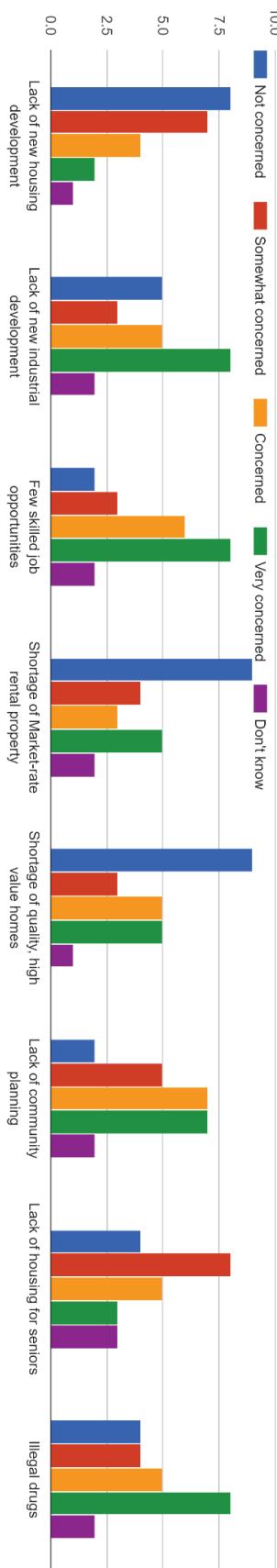
*"This town has a communications issue. It does a poor job of communicating and that problem is compounded if you're new to the area. It was a hunt to find the Facebook page, and not everyone uses Facebook anymore. There is no effort to put out communication to the town in \*any other way\* except for an occasional note on the bottoms of our water bill, usually a week late for whatever the half-cutoff text is proclaiming."*



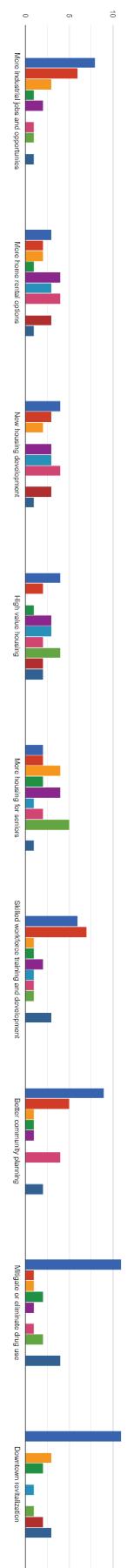
Please let us know how you feel about the following:



Are you concerned about the following items?

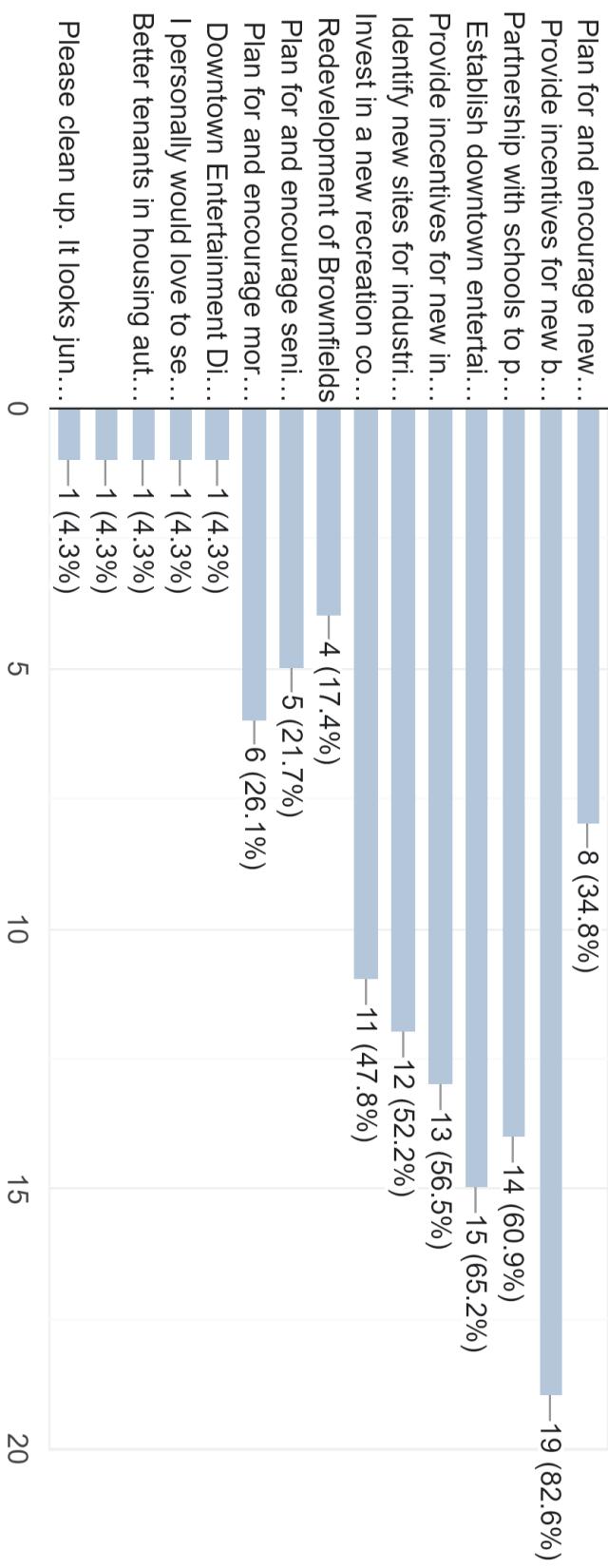


Please rank what you feel are the most important needs for the Town of Altoona, with 1 being the most important or urgent need and 10 being the least important or urgent need:



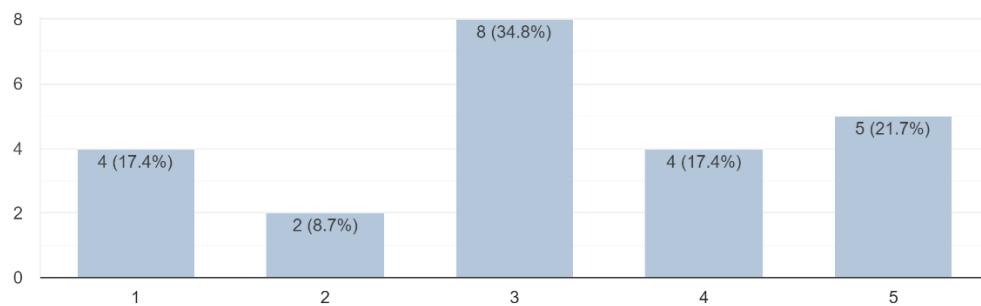
What opportunities do you think the Town should make a priority? (Check as many as you feel necessary.)

23 responses



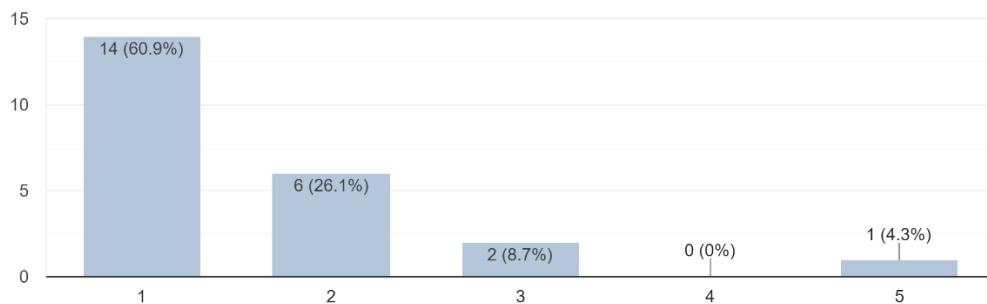
How satisfied are you with the Town's communication with residents?

23 responses



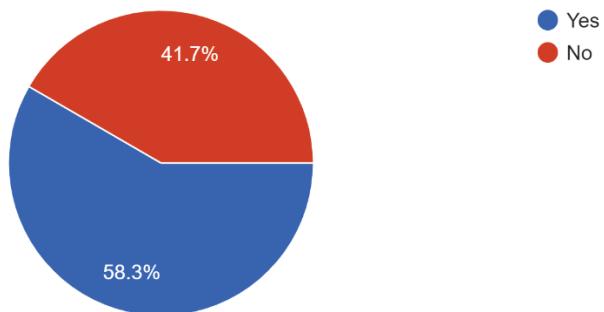
If things were to continue the same as usual in the Town of Altoona, how do you think the city would stand in 10 years?

23 responses



Have you contacted the Town of Altoona in the last year?

24 responses



## RESOLUTION 24-05-10

**A RESOLUTION BY THE ALTOONA PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING THE 2034 TOWN OF ALTOONA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF SAID PLAN, AND FORWARDING SAID PLAN TO THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR ITS CONSIDERATION AS AN ADVISORY POLICY DOCUMENT.**

**WHEREAS**, Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, authorizes the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Planning Commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality and, from time to time, to amend, extend or add to the plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Altoona, Alabama recognizes the vulnerability of its resources, property and operation to the potential impacts of future growth and development and, therefore, desires to exercise its planning powers in accordance with Alabama law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on May 2nd, 2024, to solicit final public comments on the 2034 Town of Altoona Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF ALTOONA, ALABAMA:**

SECTION 1. That the 2034 Town of Altoona Comprehensive Plan, and all maps contained therein, are hereby approved in accordance with the authority granted to the Planning Commission by Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended.

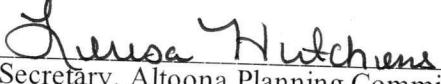
SECTION 2. That the aforementioned plan shall become effective upon the date of approval by the Planning Commission.

SECTION 3. That the aforementioned plan shall be forwarded to the Altoona Town Council for its consideration as an advisory policy document.

**ADOPTED**, this 10 day of May, 2024

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Altoona Planning Commission

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Altoona Planning Commission

## RESOLUTION 24-051D

**TOWN OF ALTOONA  
COUNTY OF ETOWAH COUNTY  
STATE OF ALABAMA**

### **A RESOLUTION BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ALTOONA, APPROVING THE 2034 TOWN OF ALTOONA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS AN ADVISORY POLICY DOCUMENT.**

**WHEREAS**, Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, authorizes the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Planning Commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality and, from time to time, to amend, extend or add to the plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Altoona, Alabama recognizes the vulnerability of its resources, property and operation to the potential impacts of future growth and development and, therefore, desires to exercise its planning powers in accordance with Alabama law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on May 2, 2024 to solicit final public comments on the 2034 Town of Altoona Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, and subsequently adopted a resolution adopting the aforementioned plan, providing an effective date thereof, and forwarding the plan to the Town Council for its consideration as an advisory policy document.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ALTOONA, ALABAMA** that the 2034 Town of Altoona Comprehensive Plan, and all maps contained therein, are hereby approved as an advisory document to guide the town in policy formulation and implementation.

**ADOPTED**, this 10 day of May 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk