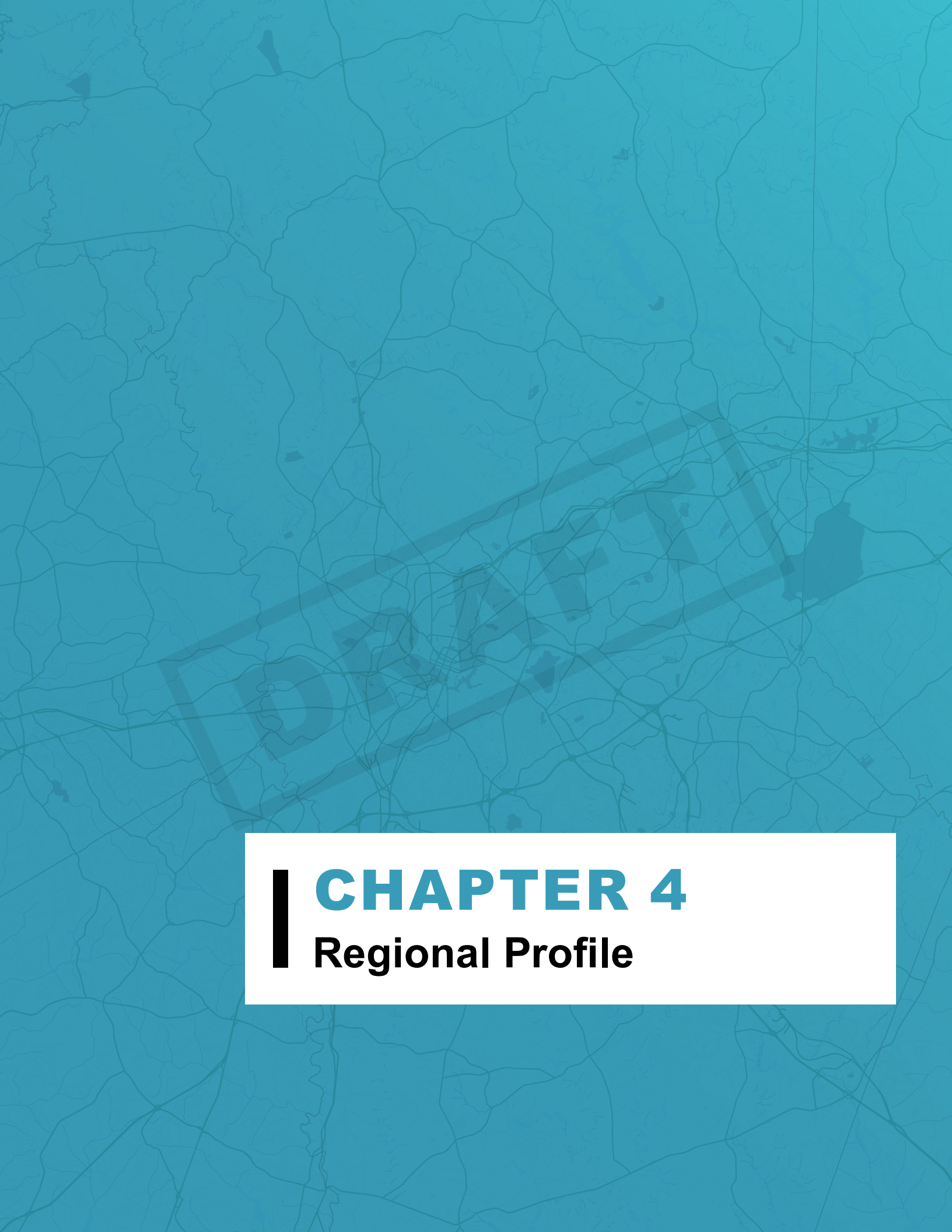


Greenville-Pickens Area
Transportation Study

HORIZON 2050 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

OCTOBER 2026





CHAPTER 4

Regional Profile

CHAPTER 4: REGIONAL PROFILE

The GPATS region encompasses a diverse mix of urban, suburban, and rural environments, including the municipalities of Greenville, Greer, Mauldin, Simpsonville, Easley, Travelers Rest, Pickens, Liberty, and Fountain Inn. These communities collectively form a regional system of activity centers, employment hubs, and residential areas that generate significant daily travel demand.

The City of Greenville functions as the primary urban core, serving as a regional hub for employment, commerce, healthcare, and tourism. Surrounding municipalities have smaller urban cores offering neighborhood scale employment, commerce, and health care and have experienced rapid suburban growth and increasing development intensity. Greer plays a critical role as a logistics and industrial hub, anchored by the Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport and the Inland Port, while the outlying communities (Mauldin, Simpsonville, and Fountain Inn) continue to absorb substantial residential and commercial growth.

The region's transportation network is anchored by I-85, a major freight and commuter corridor connecting the area to Atlanta, Charlotte, and the broader Southeast. Additional regional connectivity is provided by I-385 and a network of US and state highways that support intercity and intra-regional travel.

Land use patterns across the GPATS region reflect a typical metropolitan structure characterized by a dense urban core transitioning outward to suburban development and lower-density rural areas. These patterns significantly influence travel behavior, trip length, and modal choice, reinforcing a strong reliance on automobiles while also creating opportunities for multimodal investment in higher-density areas.

Population Trends

The GPATS region has a population of approximately 665,366 and has experienced sustained population growth over the past two decades, driven by strong economic conditions, employment opportunities, and quality of life factors. Municipal-level trends indicate particularly rapid growth in suburban communities such as Fountain Inn, Simpsonville, Greer, and Travelers Rest, where residential development has expanded in response to regional demand.

Easley and Travelers Rest have also experienced notable population increases tied to housing development, downtown revitalization, and proximity to major employment centers. Conversely, some smaller municipalities, such as Liberty, have experienced more stable or modest growth patterns.

Population growth has primarily occurred along major transportation corridors, particularly I-85, I-385, and US 123, reinforcing corridor-based development patterns and increasing pressure on the regional transportation system. The GPATS region grew by approximately **85,000 residents over the past decade**. This represents ~14–15% total growth, or about 1.3–1.5% annually. For more information, please reference the Existing Conditions Assessment.

YEAR	EST. POPULATION	CHANGE	% GROWTH
2013	~580,000	-	-
2018	~625,000	+45,000	+7.8%
2023	~665,366	+40,000	+6.5%
2013–2023	-	+85,000	+14.5%

Table 4 | Regional Growth Summary (ACS)

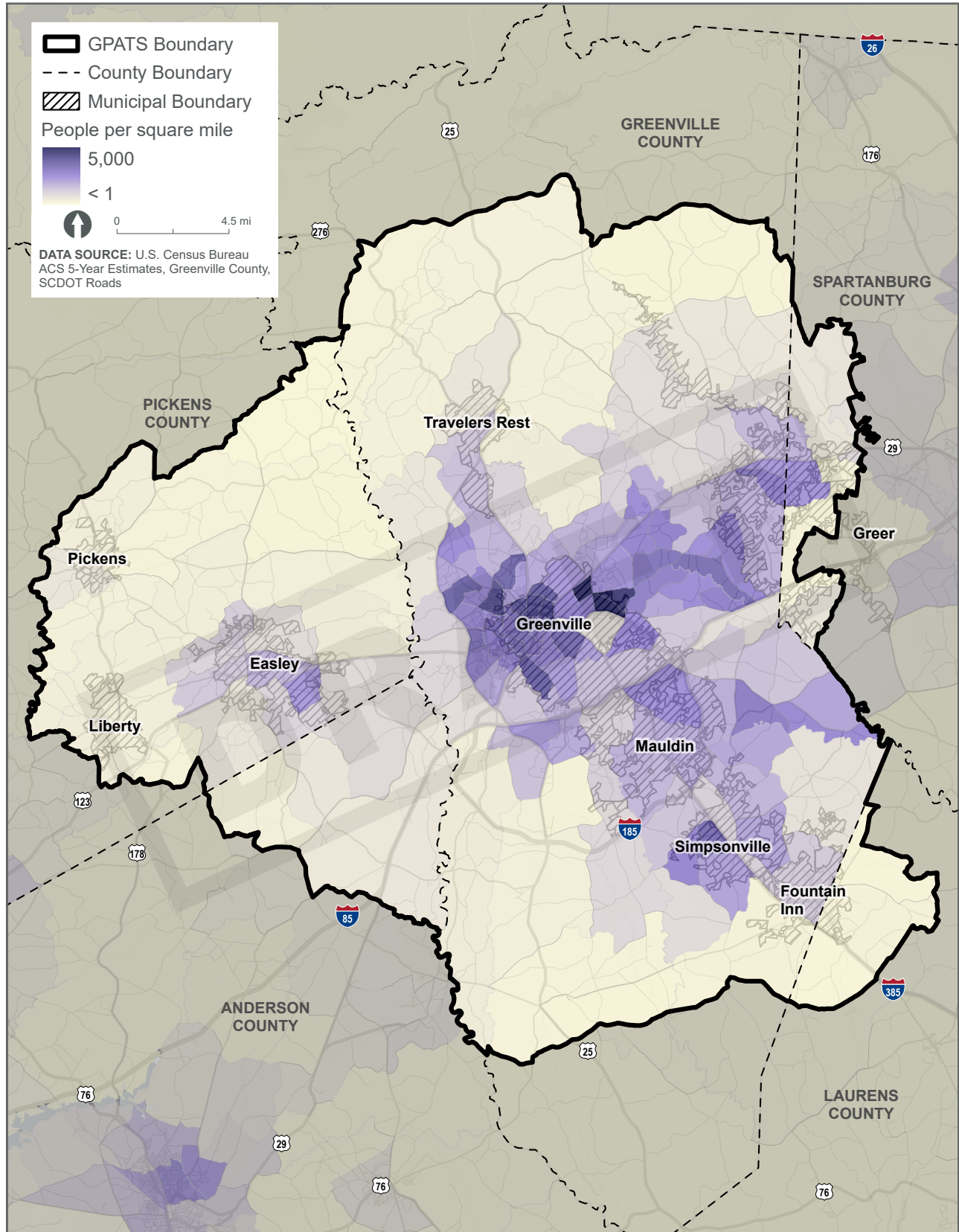


Figure 6 | Population Density (2024 ACS)

Age & Household Characteristics

The GPATS study area's population is relatively young and economically active, with strong representation across working-age cohorts. Millennials (27–44) and Generation Z (9–26) together make up nearly 47% of the population.

At the same time, the region has a growing older adult population, with approximately 18% of residents age 65 or older, contributing to an increasing demand for accessible infrastructure, healthcare access, and specialized transportation services.

The population is evenly split by gender (approximately 51.2% female and 48.8% male), reflecting balanced demographic conditions. For more information, please reference the Existing Conditions Assessment.

These characteristics have important implications for transportation planning, particularly in:

- Accommodating commuters and workforce travel
- Expanding age-friendly and accessible mobility options
- Supporting multimodal travel choices for different life stages

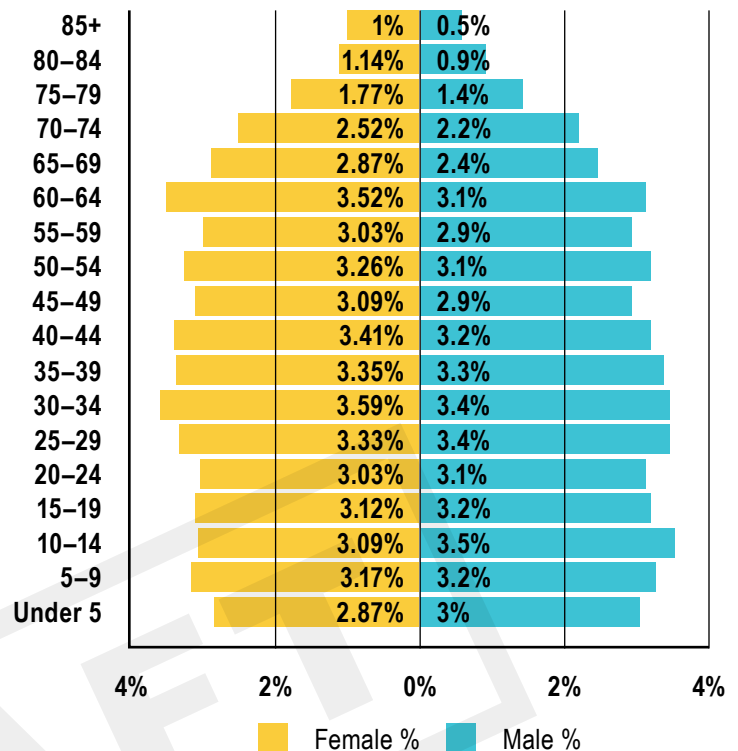


Figure 7 | GPATS Population by Age & Gender (2024 ACS)

GENERATION	AGES	%
Alpha	0–8	10.7%
Generation Z	9–26	22.5%
Millennials	27–44	24.3%
Generation X	45–60	19.4%
Baby Boomers	61–79	18.9%
Greatest Generation	80+	4.2%

Table 5 | Age Breakdown (2025 Esri)

Economic & Employment Context

The GPATS region serves as a major economic hub within the Upstate, supporting approximately 350,580 jobs across a diverse mix of industries. Key sectors include healthcare, manufacturing, retail, and professional services, reflecting both a strong service economy and a significant industrial base.

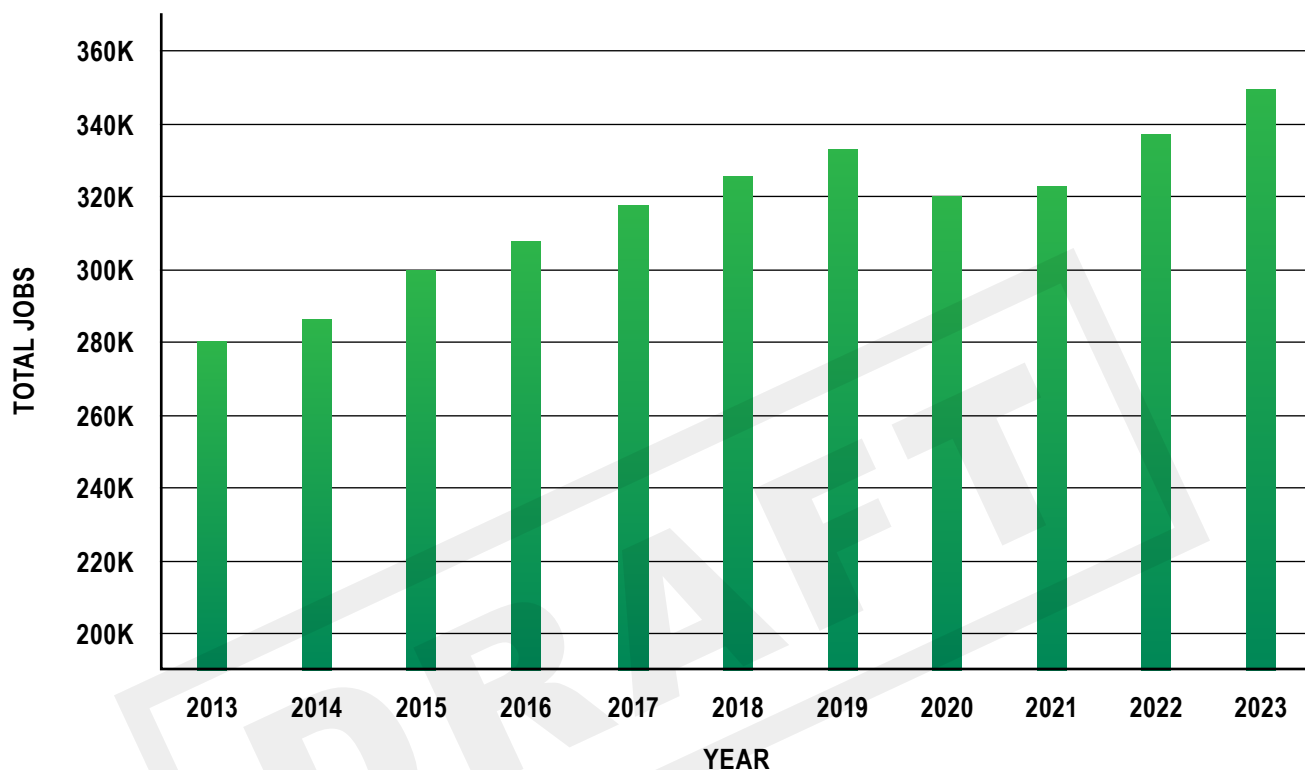


Figure 8 | Employment Growth (2024 ACS)

The region is a net employment center, with more jobs than resident workers and a daily inflow of approximately 51,500 commuters from surrounding areas. This pattern highlights the importance of regional connectivity and reinforces the need for efficient transportation corridors. Major employers such as BMW, Prisma Health, Michelin, and regional educational institutions anchor the local economy and generate substantial travel demand.

The combination of strong employment growth, significant inbound commuting, and high single-occupancy vehicle travel indicates that continued roadway expansion alone may not be sufficient to meet future mobility needs. Increasing opportunities for mode shift through transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, transportation demand management programs, and employer-supported commuting initiatives can help reduce congestion and improve system resiliency. Additionally, the growing share of white-collar and professional occupations may create opportunities for remote and hybrid work arrangements, providing another tool to manage travel demand and support long-term mobility goals.

For more information, please reference the Existing Conditions Assessment.

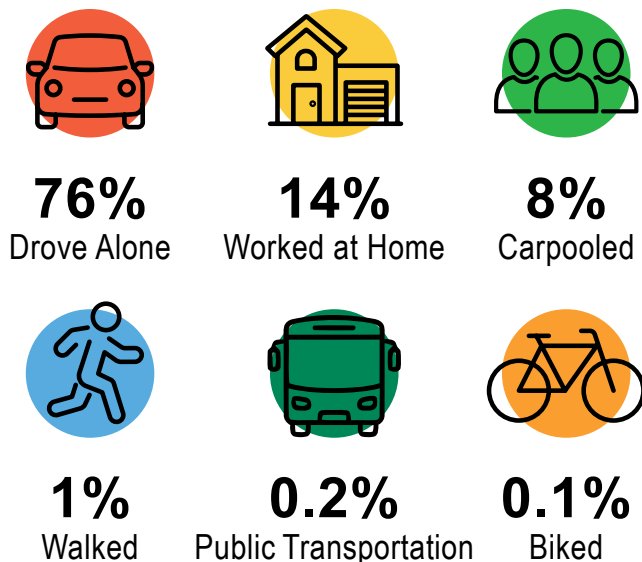


Figure 9 | Commute Trends (US Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002–2023))

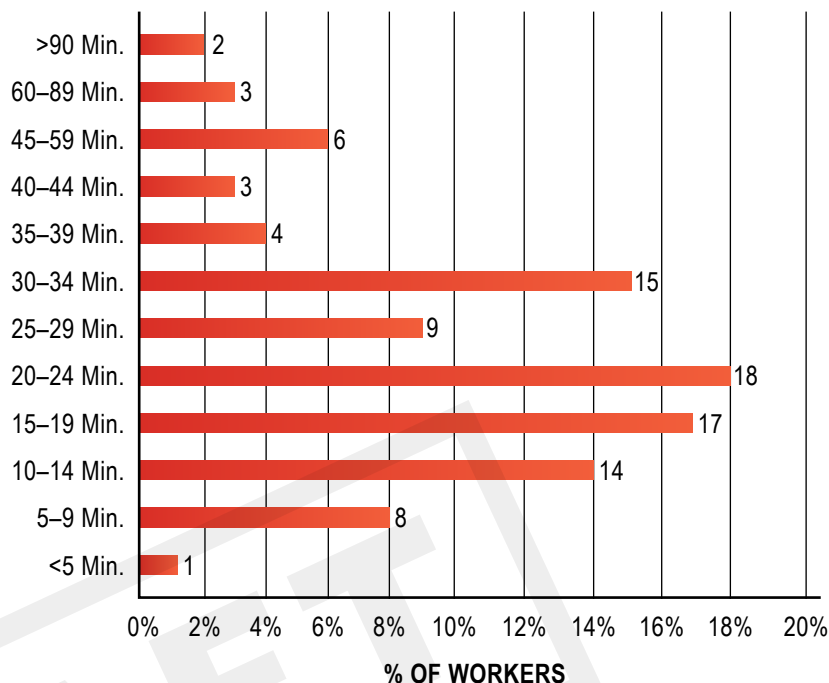
The GPATS Study Area’s median household income is approximately \$65,844, with about 12% of households living below the poverty line, underscoring the need for affordable and equitable transportation options. **Figure 10** shows a clear geographic variation in income levels throughout the region. Higher-income areas are concentrated around portions of Mauldin, Simpsonville, Greer, and southeastern Greenville County, where many census tracts are shaded dark blue or purple. In contrast, lower-income areas are more prevalent in parts of central Greenville, Easley, Pickens, and rural portions of the study area, where lighter colors are more common.

The income patterns revealed by the map can help understand socioeconomic differences across the region and support equitable transportation investment, accessibility planning, and community engagement efforts.

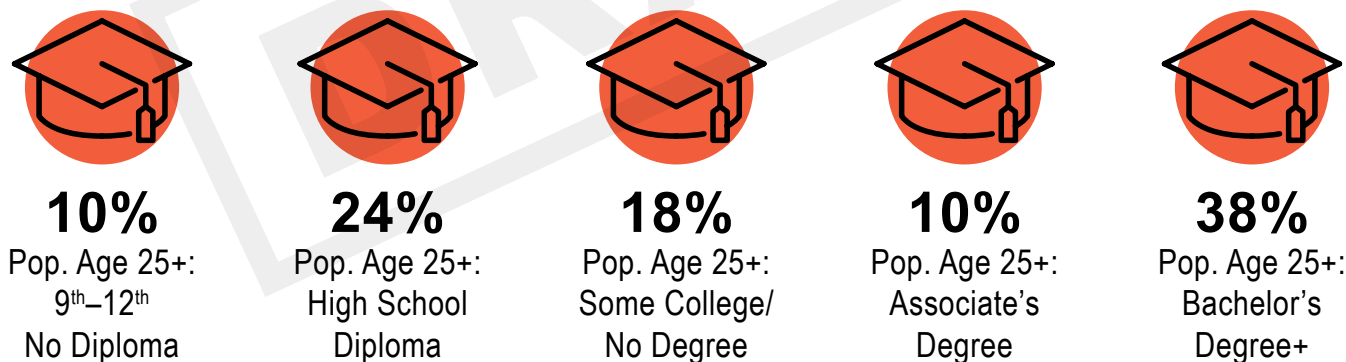
COMMUTING TRENDS (2024 ACS)



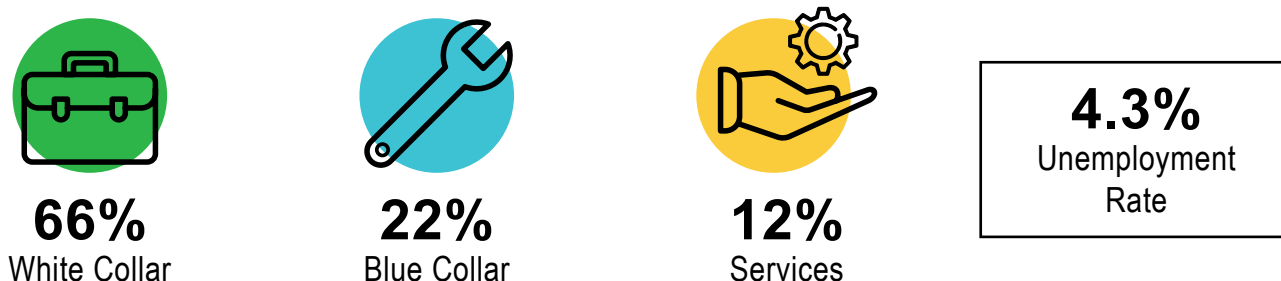
TRAVEL TIME TO WORK (2024 ACS)



EDUCATION (2024 ACS)



EMPLOYMENT (2025 ESRI)



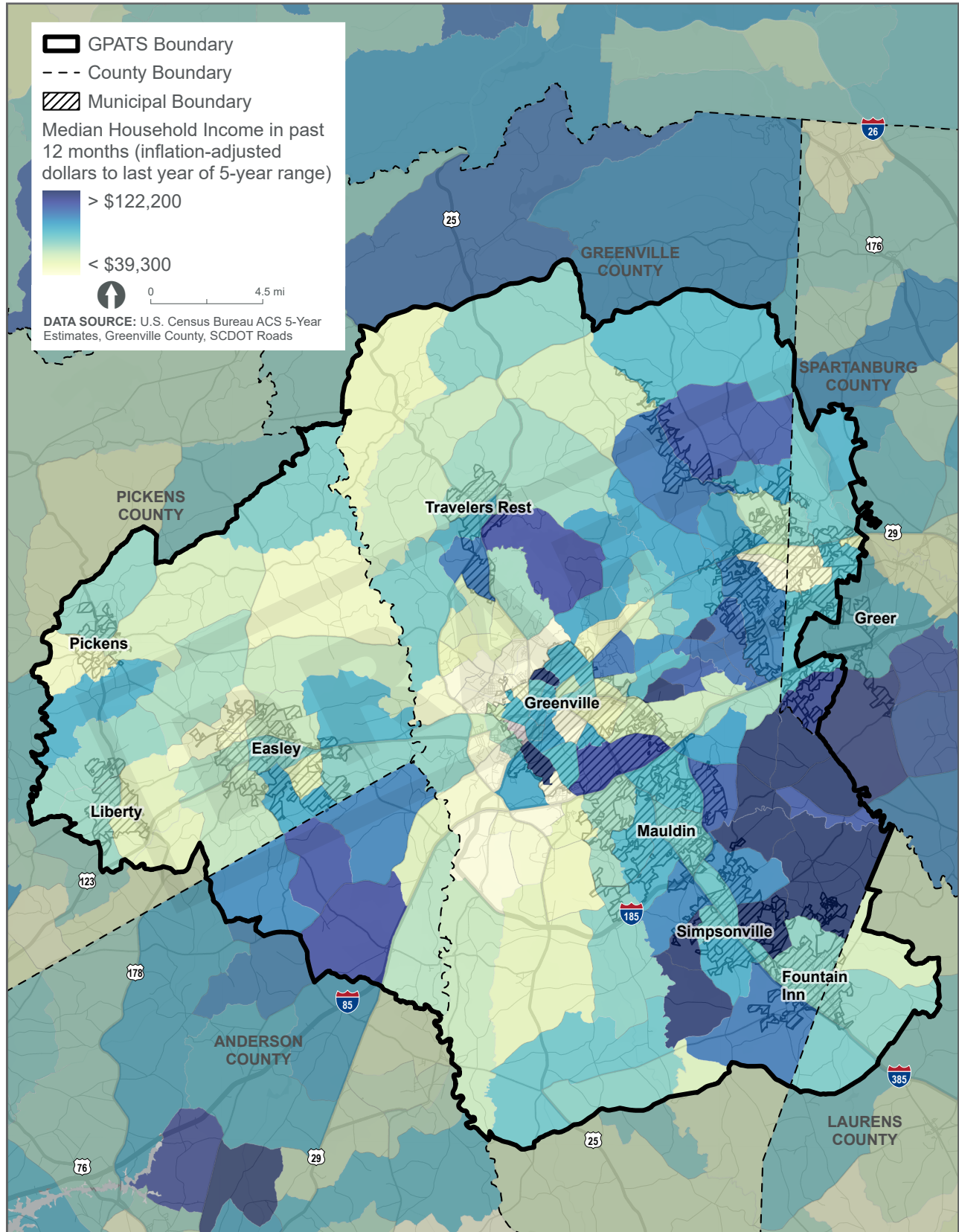


Figure 10 | Median Household Income



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