

# Brown's Mill Park: Policy Options

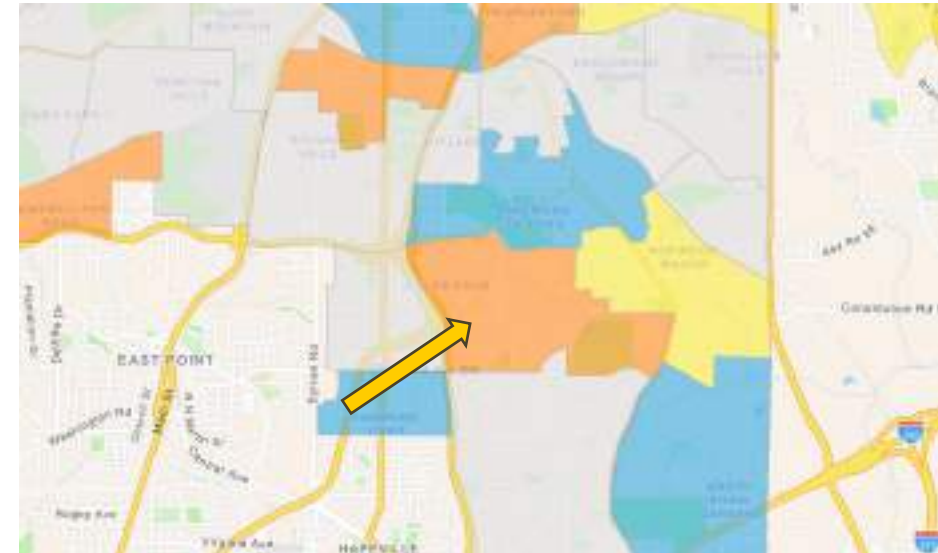
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# **Brown's Mill Park:**

## **Background Research**

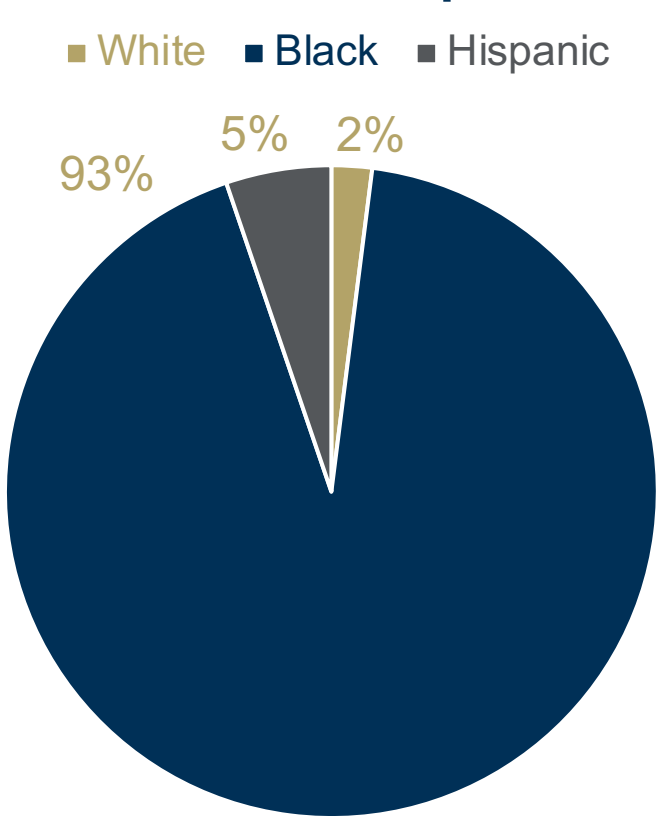
# Brown's Mill Park is a neighborhood in south Atlanta

- Located northeast of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta Airport
- Home to the Browns Mill Golf Course
- ~ 20-minute drive from Georgia Tech (~ 9 miles south)

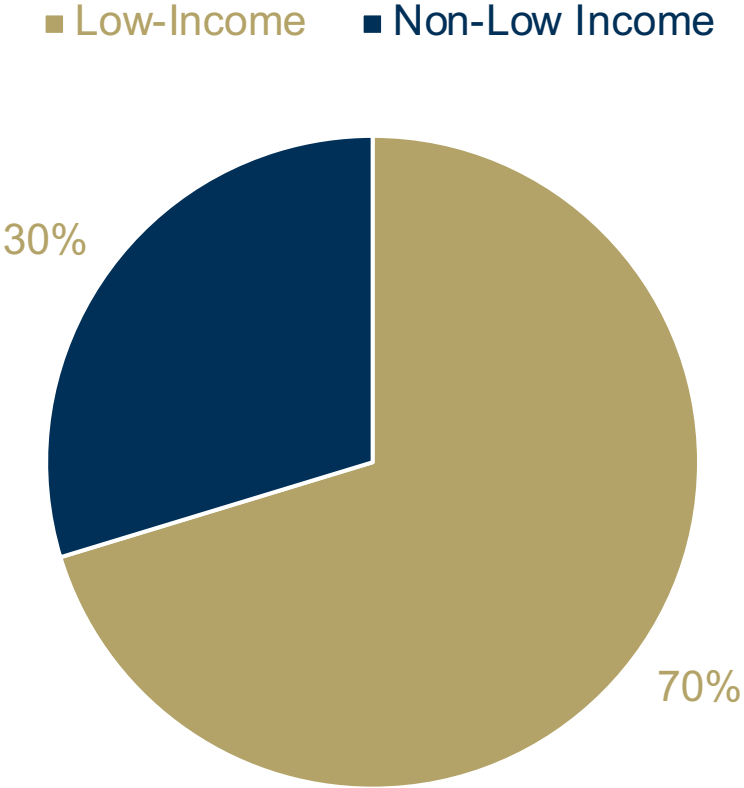


# Browns Mill Park reflects the high segregation levels and concentrations of poverty of Atlanta

2018 Racial Composition



2018 Income-Level Composition



# The neighborhood developed out of a dairy farm

- **Browns Mill Golf Course** built in **1969** on previous dairy farmland. Designed by **George Cobb**
- The dairy farmed belonged to **I.T. Davis** (founder of a Georgia co-op that became **Atlanta Dairies**)
- Sitting right outside Browns Mill Park, 2672 Browns Mill Road is a house built in **1920**, designed by **A. Ten Eyck Brown**
- Browns Mill Park was developed post-World War II, in the **1950s and 60s**, featuring modest brick ranch and wooden frame homes



Source: City of Atlanta golf



# Browns Mill Park has some beneficial community resources

- Browns Mill Golf Course serves as both a **recreational** and **economic** asset
- Urban Forrest Community Development helps to **beautify** the neighborhood and **combat local hunger**
- Public Transportation Options
- A Local Library



# Browns Mill Golf Course is an asset that offers recreational options for people in the community

- A public 18-hole golf course designed by George Cobbs which opened in the 1970s
- Contains three tees so visitors at all skill levels can enjoy the course
- Open seven days a week from Dusk to Dawn, and a minimum age of play is seven
- Currently it cost 19.25 dollars to reserve a time to play and there's different monthly passes available with various benefits



# Urban Forest Community is an asset that helps combat the neighborhood's food desert

- Established in Browns Mill which is an identified food forest on the cite that was previously a farm owned by Ruby and Millie Morgan.
- The goal of the community is to produce a variety of food opens open for public consumption
- There's currently a three-phase conceptual model in place that includes areas focused on local wildlife, medicinal food and mushrooms, recreational areas, and edible food.





# The neighborhood faces substantial deficits as well

- There's a lack of high rated public schools with rating of local **charters and academies in the 4-5 star range**
- Browns Mill Park also resides within a food desert.
- Lack Of Recreational Activities and Youth Centers
- Not a lot of commercial development

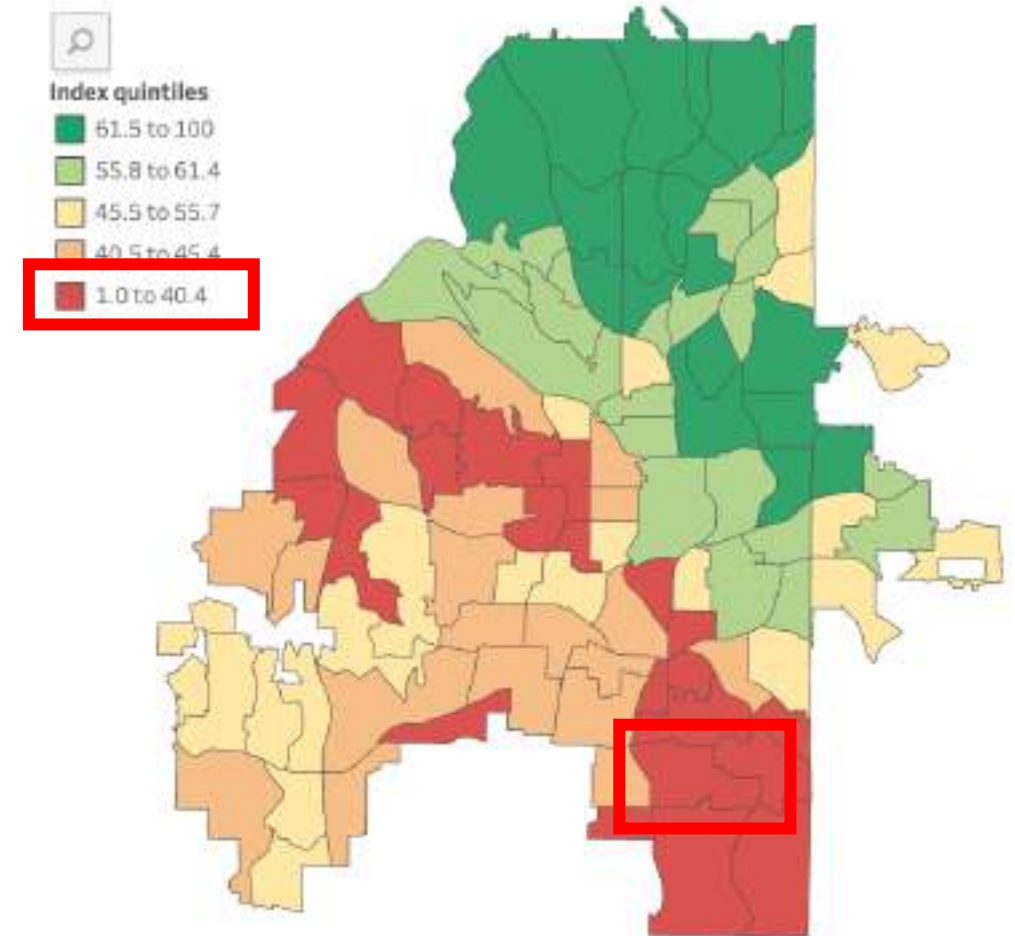


# Browns Mill Park's very low economic mobility score reflects overall neighborhood deficits

Browns Mill Park scores a **38.4/100** on the Atlanta Economic Mobility Index Score:

This statistic highlights the deficits of the area very well:

- **People-based** index: 36.8
- **Place-based** index: 41.3
- **Economic system** index: 39.0
- **Education system** index: 35.5



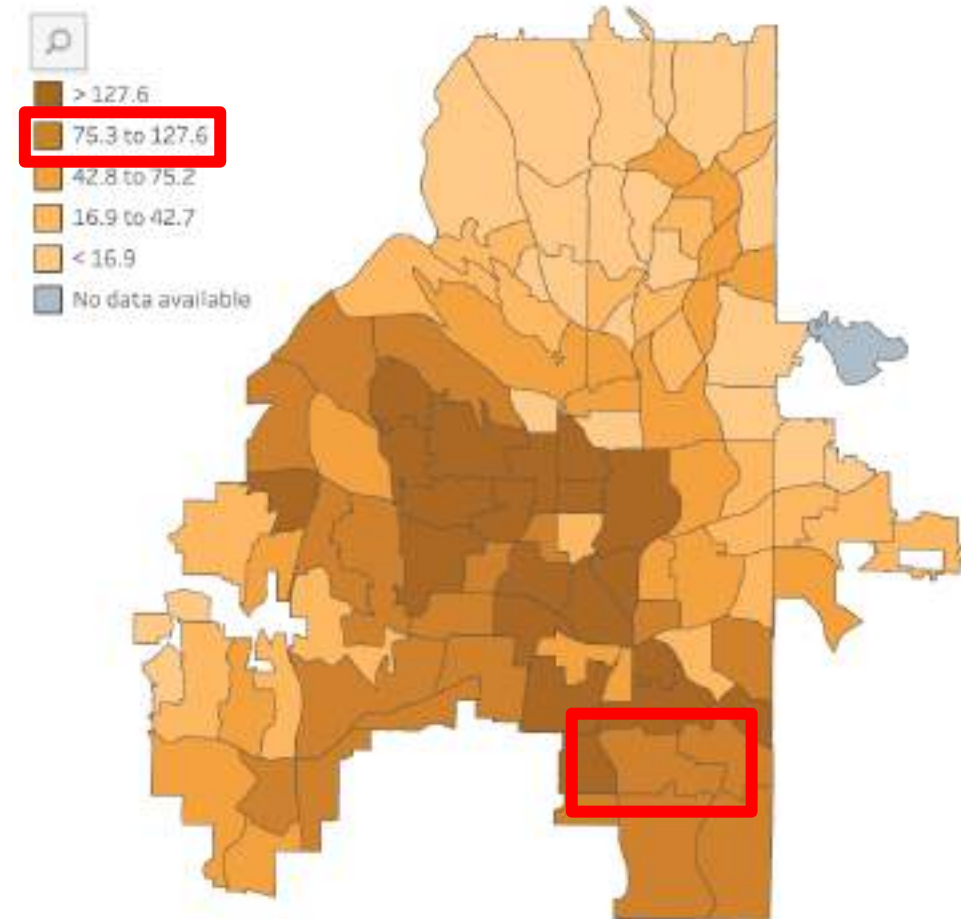
# Brown Mills Park experiences relatively high crime for Atlanta

There is a **91.5** crime rate\* in the neighborhood's area

Crime breaks down into 3 categories (last 3 years):

- Against Person (170, mainly assault)
- Against Property (276, diverse)
- Against Society (174, almost entirely **drug-related**)

This is **high for Atlanta**, but **far below other neighborhoods**, like Bankhead/Washington Park (**225**) or even Downtown (**150**).



# Crime does exist, and Cleveland Avenue is a high crime area



There is generally a **lot of crime** reported around **Cleveland Avenue**



Most of Browns Mill Park's crimes against society, almost entirely **drug charges**, are **along Cleveland Avenue**



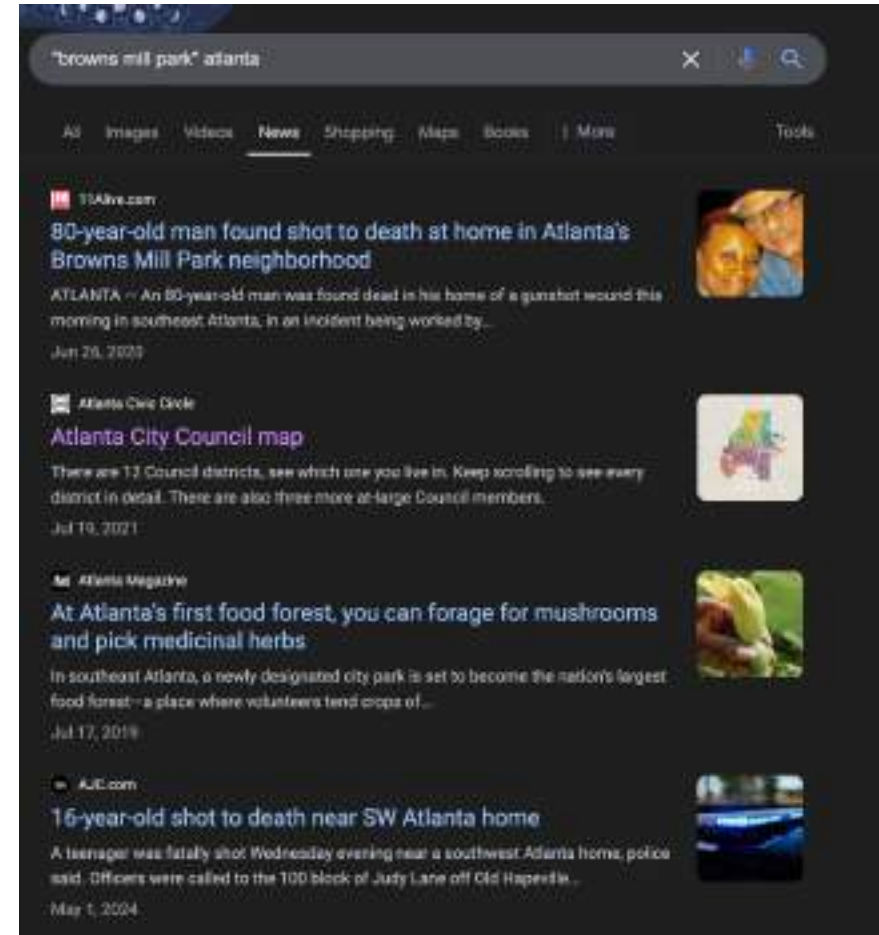
# Poor news coverage contributes to risk perception

There are **few news stories** about the neighborhood, and many are **crime-centered**.

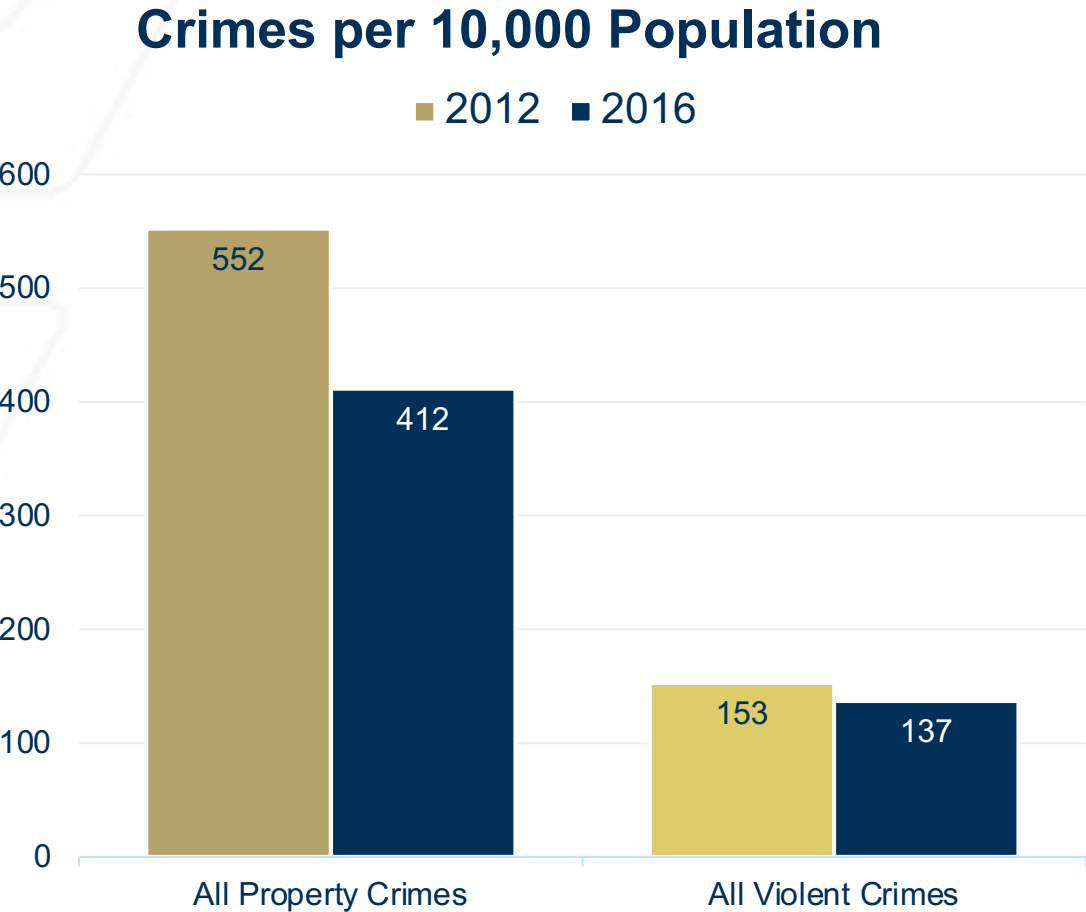
Searching “Browns Mill Park’ Atlanta” on the Google News tab, only **10 results appear**:

- 3/10 cover *crime*
- 4/10 cover the *food forest/food insecurity*
- 3/10 cover the *metro Atlanta area generally*

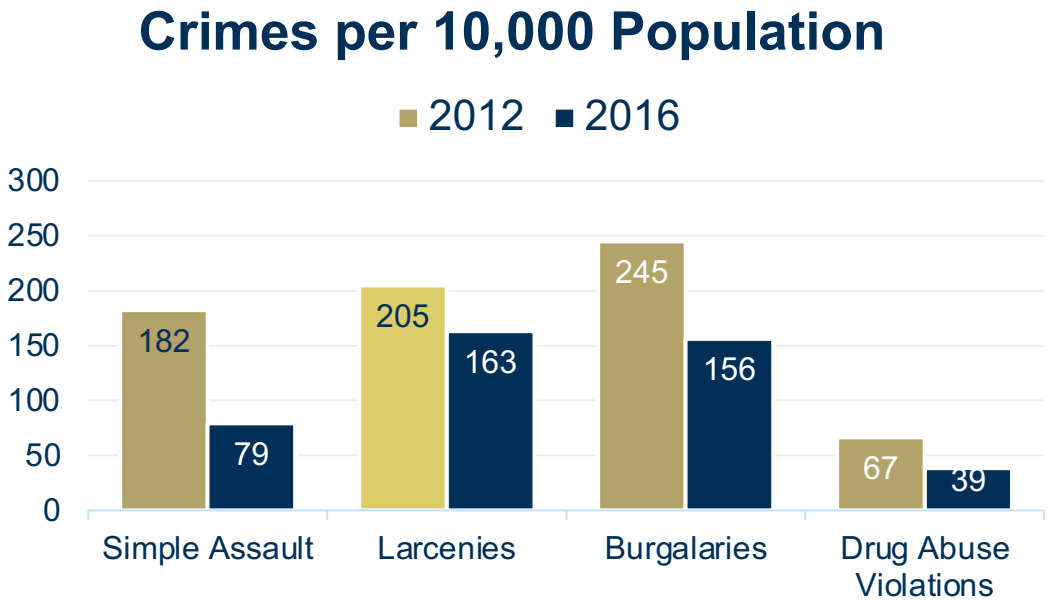
**Coverage presents the area as disadvantaged.**



# However, crime is falling dramatically in the area



Crimes that are typically **dangerous** or contribute to an area **being perceived as dangerous** have also **fallen dramatically**



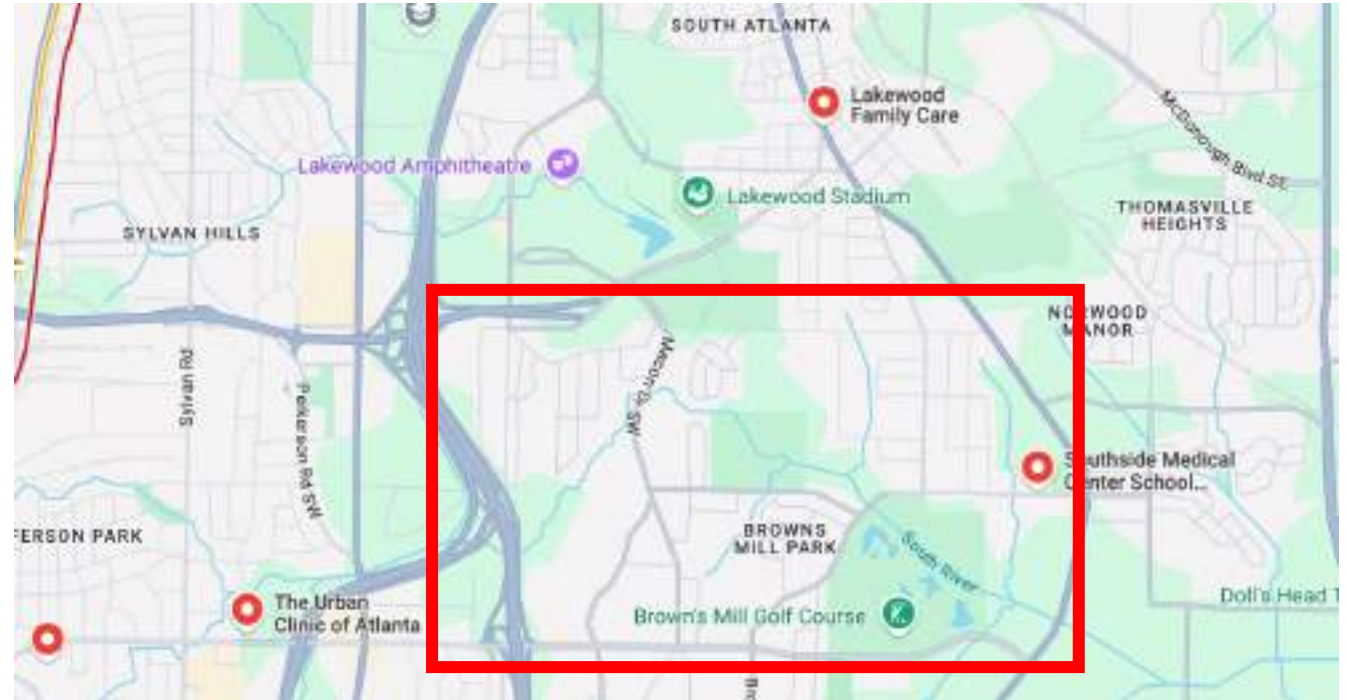
# Browns Mill Park's location provides some healthcare access

Via I-75, Browns Mill Park is **within 20 min of Grady** with average traffic

There are various clinics in the area, including the **Urban Clinic of Atlanta**, which provides **free service**

In terms of at-home treatment, there are also options:

- ~5 min drive/35 min walk to a Walgreens



# Despite high availability, there are still poor outcomes

There is very **low life expectancy** in the Browns Mill Park census tract, when compared to **Fulton County**, and **Georgia** as a whole.

In terms of health coverage:

- **27% of adult** residents lack coverage, ~**1207 people**
- **12% of under 18** residents lack coverage, ~**168 people**

**Concerningly: 45% of employed adults lack any healthcare coverage**

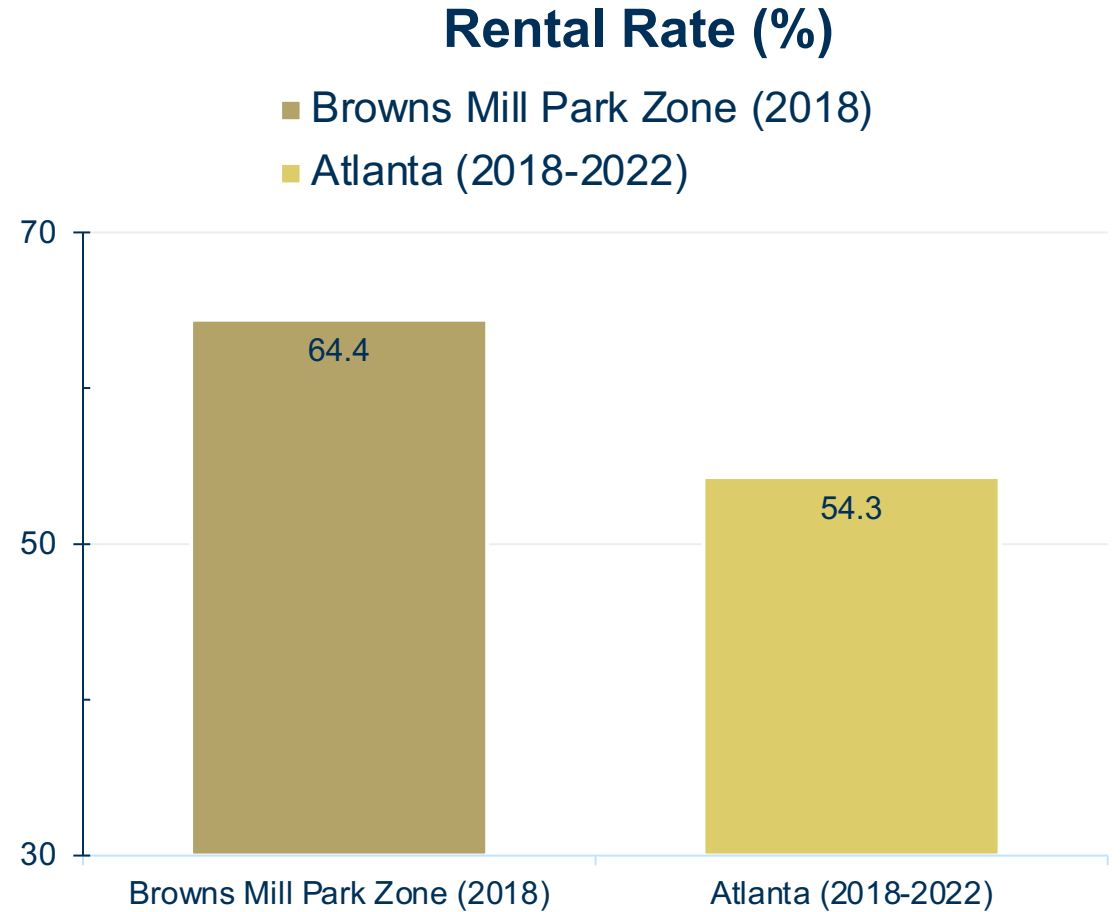




# Residents of Browns Mill Park face housing issues

As of 2018 there are **4,740** people living in the **Brown Mills Park Zone**

- **66% of residents are rent-burdened**
- **414 buildings are vacant**



# Housing trends have changed overtime at Browns Mill Park

- Currently, Browns Mill park is experiencing downward housing trends compared to last year (2023)
  - Home prices down 15% with a median of 240k
  - Houses are also selling slower when compared to last year (down 30% year to year)
  - Furthermore, typically homes have been on the market for more days, and are selling on average 3% below list price



# Browns Mill Park lacks proper walking and biking infrastructure

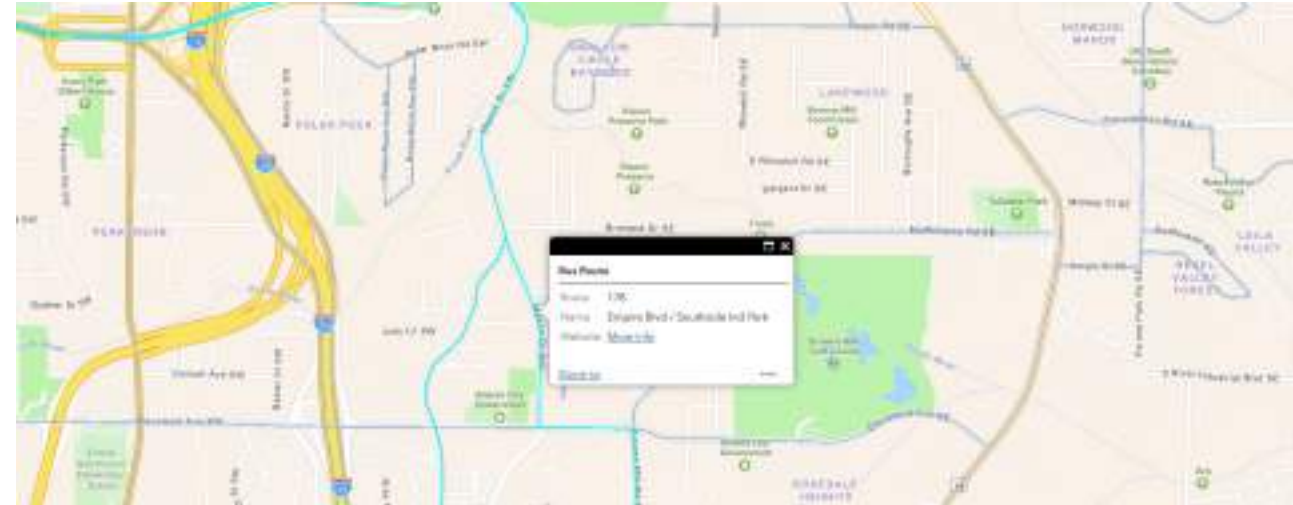
- Browns Mill Park received a walk score of just **25** according to WalkScore.
- In addition, they received a score of **42** for biking.
- Most of Browns Mill Park contains sidewalks, which are relatively **small**, ideally for one way traffic.
- Some areas lack sidewalks altogether, making walking **difficult and dangerous for pedestrians**
- Brown's Mill Park contains **shared lanes**, which can be dangerous for cyclist and frustrating for drivers





# Two routes in the neighborhood provide public transit

- Two **MARTA** bus routes run through Browns Mill Park
- Route 78 ( Cleveland Avenue) and Route 178 (Empire Blvd/Southside Ind Park)
- These two routes allow for residents to move around the **South Atlanta** area connecting to other routes
- The transit score according to WalkScore was **40**
- In 2022, **5%** of residents in Browns Mill Park made use of **public transportation** to get to work, which results in **72 residents**.





# I-75 is both a major transportation artery and block

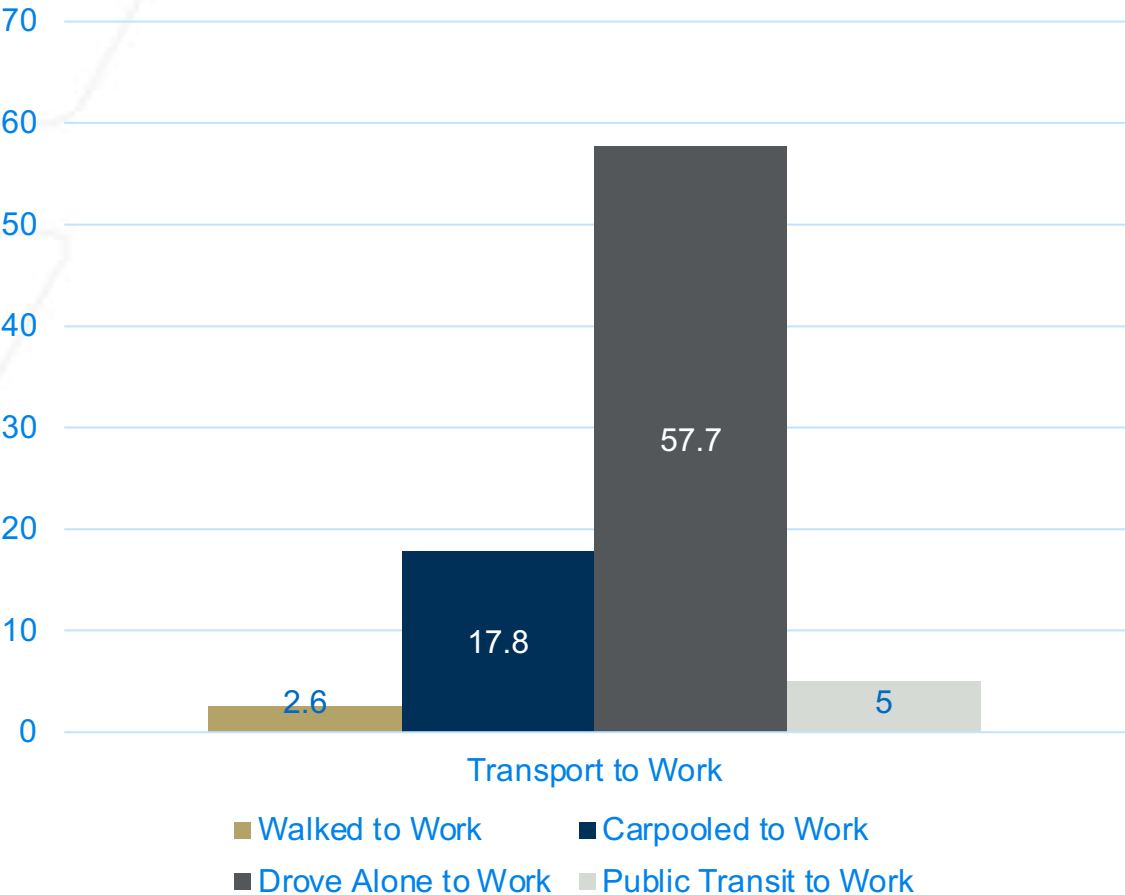
The highway **provides access** to Atlanta services of many kinds, such as the previously mentioned **healthcare facilities**

However, due to its size, **it blocks off a whole side** of the neighborhood, even **cutting through previously existing roads**

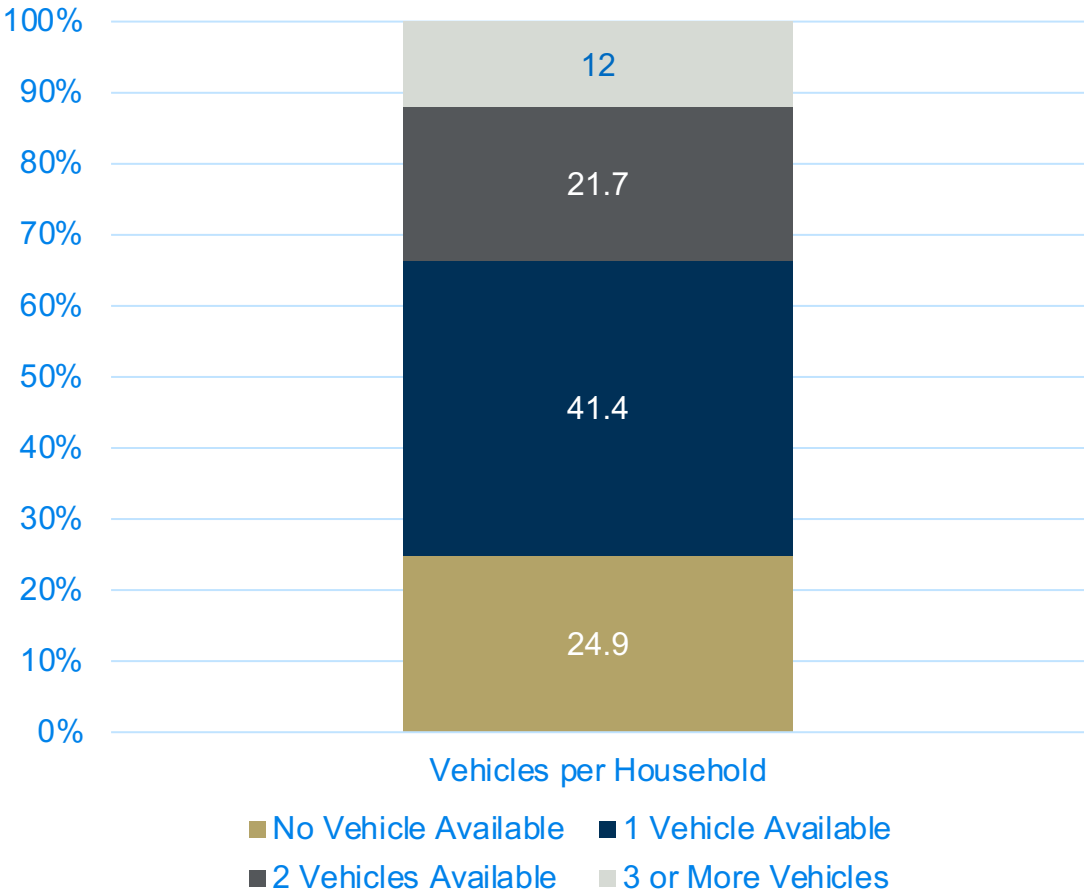


# Residents rely heavily on vehicles to get to work

Transport to Work (2022)



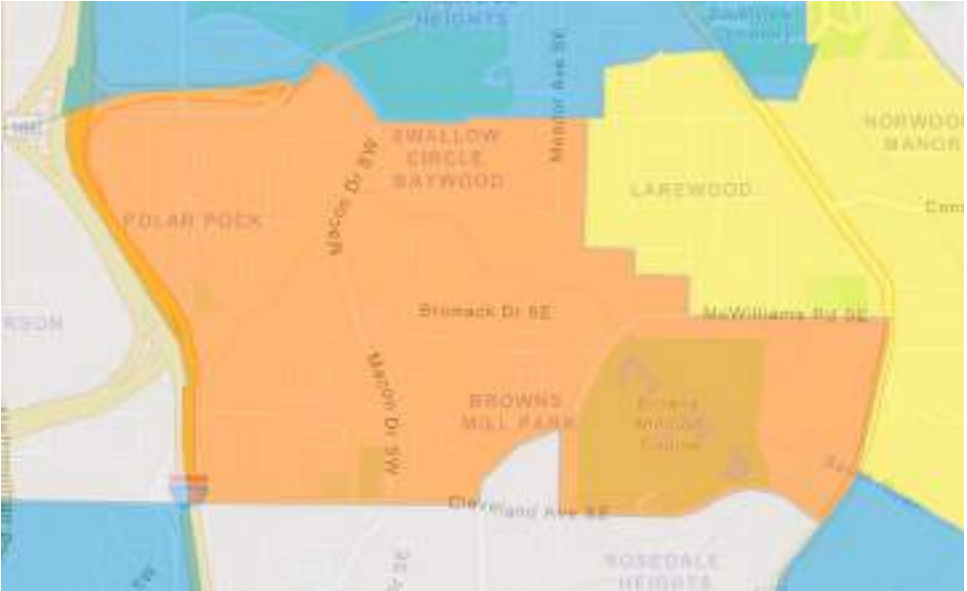
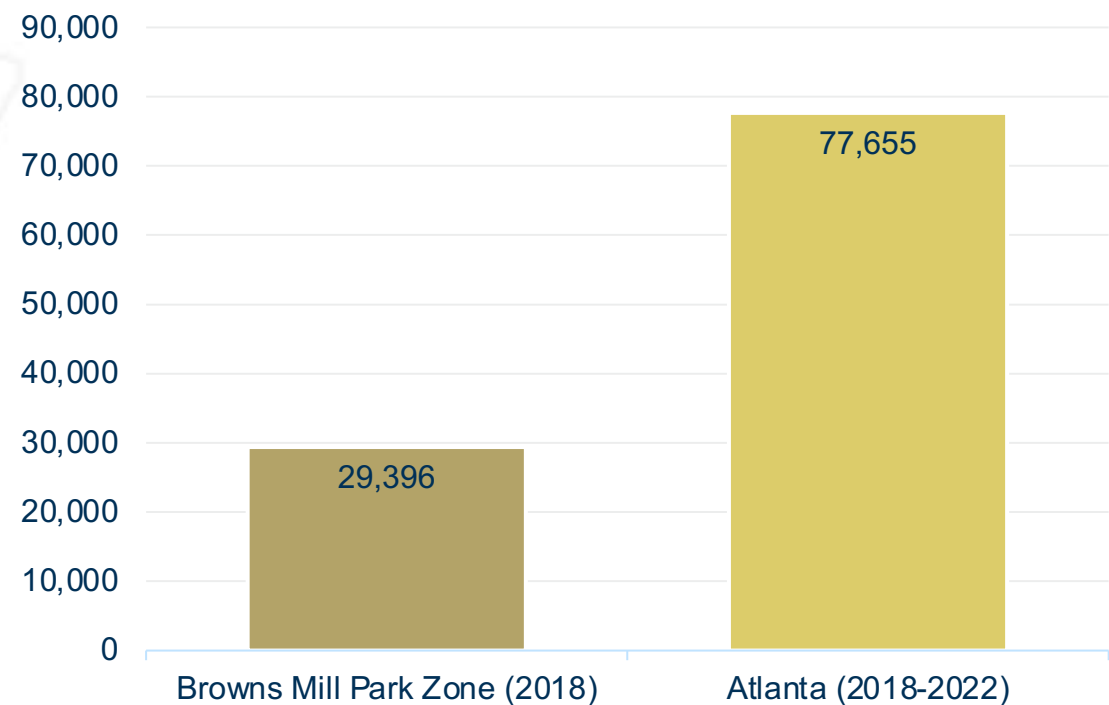
Vehicles per Household (2022)



# Brown's Mill Park residents face economic inequity

## Median Household Income (\$)

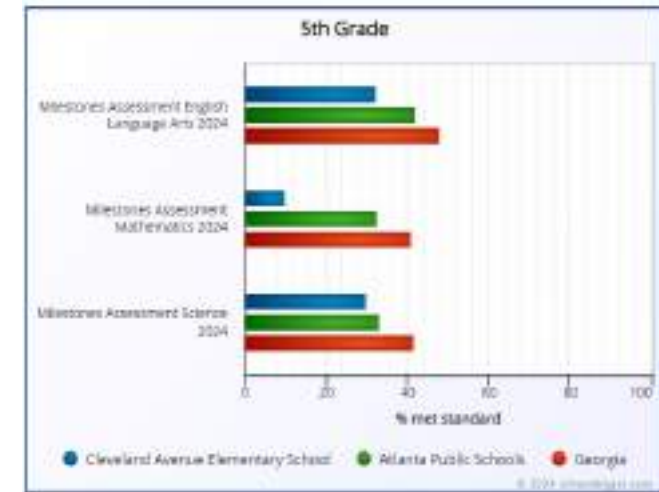
- Browns Mill Park Zone (2018)
- Atlanta (2018-2022)



The percentage of the area that is **Low-Income** has increased from **43.6%** in 2010 to **70.3%** in 2018

# Cleveland Avenue Elementary School is a statistically underperforming school

- Cleveland Avenue Elementary ranks below standard in multiple area
- Student demographic is almost completely minority children from low-income households (92% Black and 7% Hispanic and 100% on free or reduced lunch)
- These Students are consistently performing below city and state averages on standardized tests





# Browns Mill Park has multiple options for early child care development

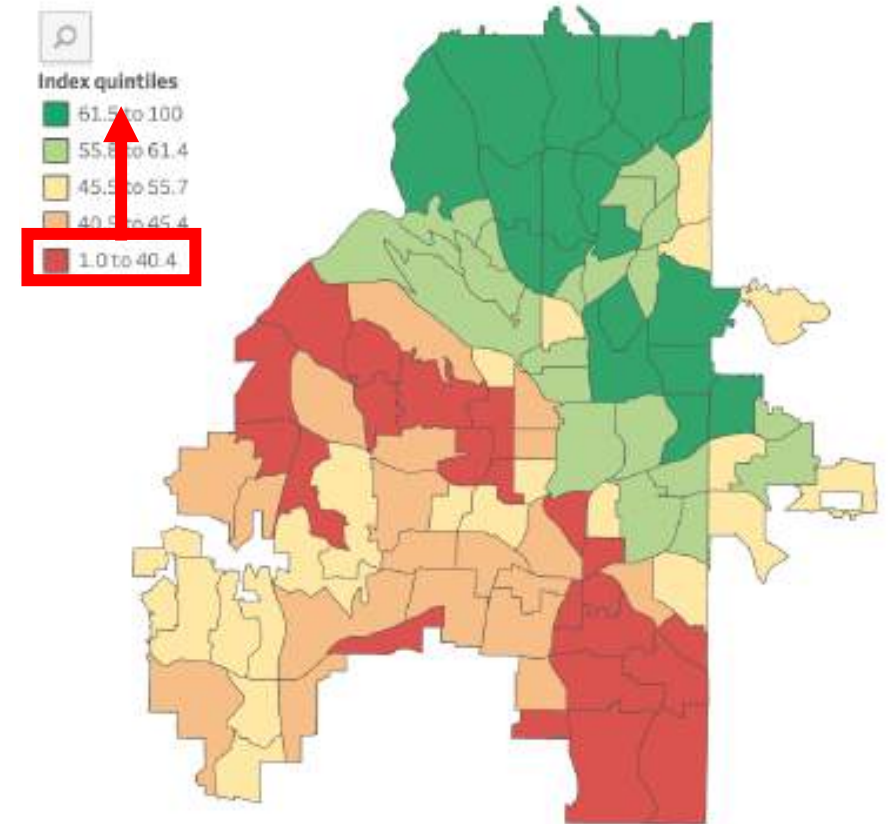
- Based on information provided by US Child Care Deserts.org Browns Mill Park is described to have **adequate** early learning access
- There are **three early learning centers** near Browns Mill Park
  - Ms. Niecy's Early Learning Center
  - Gift of Love Learning Center
  - Adventist-Marannatha Early Learning
- Ms. Niecy's is the **highest rated center** and offers a **multitude of programs** and classes for children 0-12



# Browns Mill Park has unique issues and opportunities

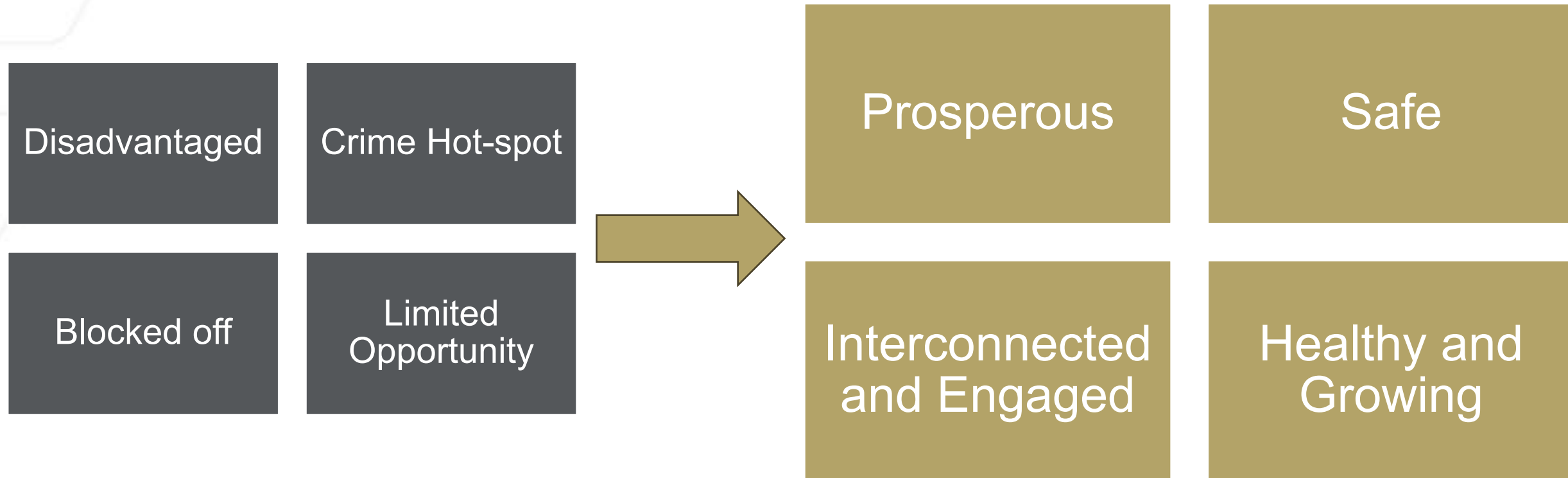
## Current Questions:

- How can dangerous areas be made into a safe neighborhood resource?
- How can a golf course be leveraged for community health?
- How can the Urban Forest foster positive press for the neighborhood?
- What can be done to increase homeownership and ease rent-burden?
- What can be done to increase school performance?



# **Browns Mill Park:** **Strategic Options**

# Browns Mill Park should redefine its community reputation





# Several barriers must be addressed in achieving this vision

Cleveland Avenue: Crime and the perception of crime

Obstacles to community engagement: Limited Options and Walkability

Poor health outcomes: Poor Healthcare, Food, and Wellness Activity Access

# Cleveland Avenue should be an asset that Browns Mill Park is centered around and benefitting from

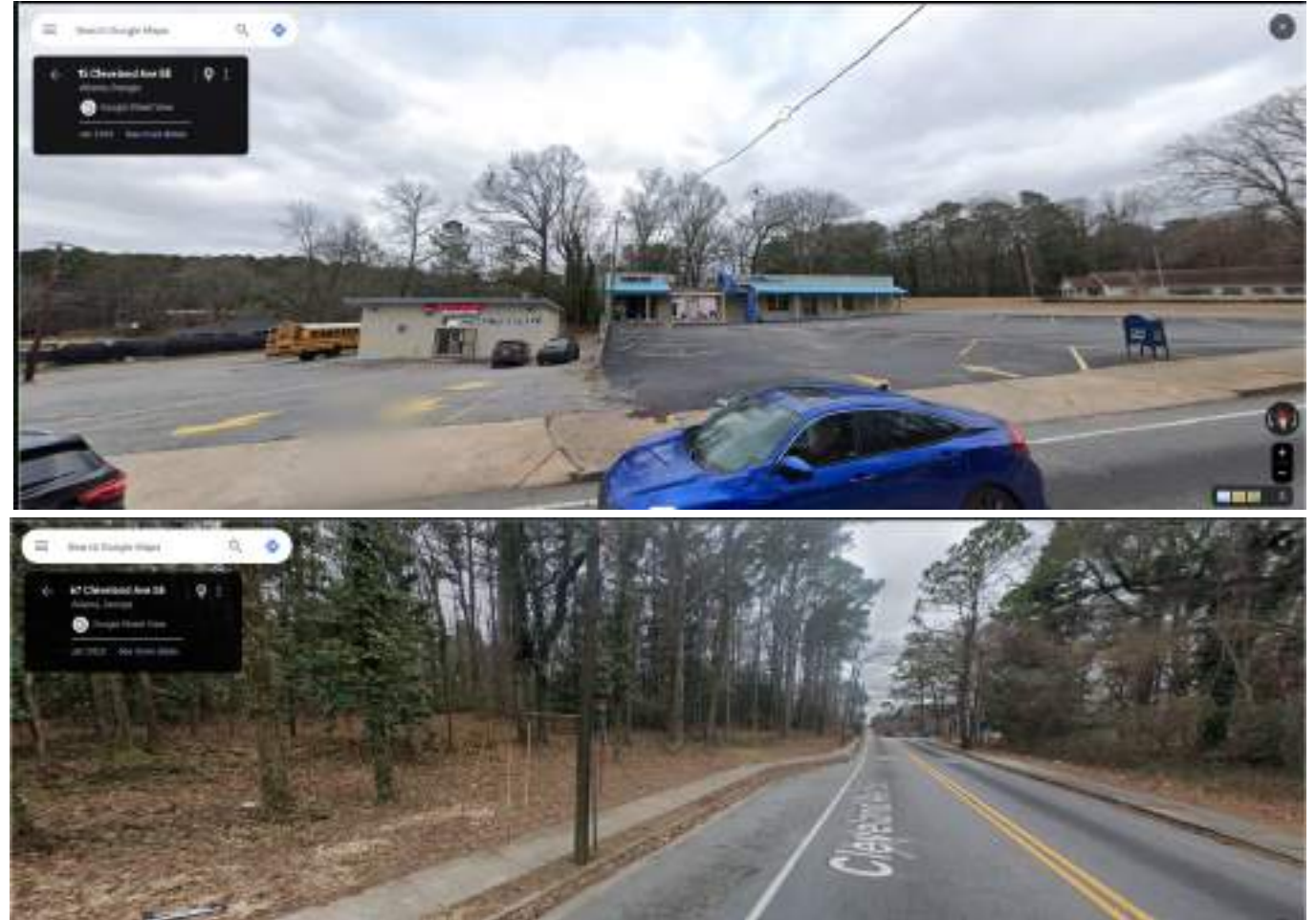


# Most of this part of Cleveland Avenue is underdeveloped

There are **very few businesses** along the road once you cross Hapeville into Browns Mill Park

- Most are **small**, with large parking lots and small individual businesses
- Some properties are **under-developed** or **blighted**

There are also wooded areas allowing for **new development and expansion**.



# Partnering with Main Street America could help reimagine Cleveland Avenue as the Browns Mill Park “Main Street”

## Vision: Make it a community pillar

- Increasing safety
- Increase commerce and opportunity

Cleveland Avenue: Crime and the perception of crime

Obstacles to community engagement: Options and Walkability

“**Main Street America** leads a **collaborative** movement with partners and grassroots leaders that advances shared prosperity, creates **resilient economies**, and improves quality of life through **place-based economic development** and community preservation in downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts across the country.”



# The Main Steet Approach could holistically revitalize Cleveland Avenue and Browns Mill Park

Strategic  
Collaboration



Community  
Engagement  
Coordination

Professional  
Expertise

Grant and  
Educational  
Resources

Government  
Relations  
Advocacy

# One of Main Street's pillars is neighborhood branding



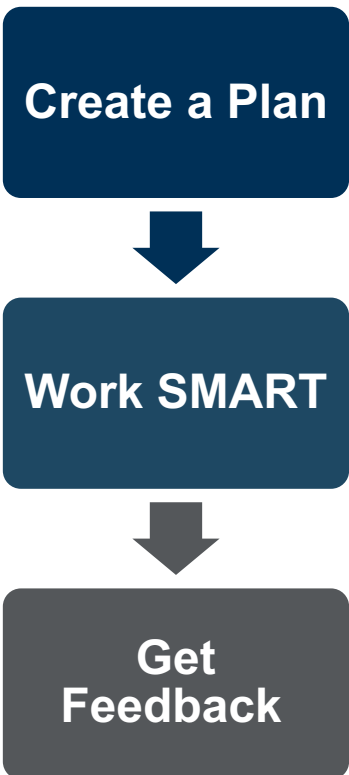
**Vision: Make Cleveland Avenue a community pillar**

- Increasing safety, commerce and opportunity

**“Promotion** positions the **downtown** or commercial district as the **center** of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a **positive image** that showcases a community’s **unique characteristics**”

# Main Street has many existing tools to support branding efforts

## Branding Process



## Communication Guides



## Marketing Template



# Main Streets are lively and accessible

A 'main street' style road has many benefits

- Promote **walking**
- Businesses are **closer** together
- **Human-scale** neighborhood

**Streetside parking** would still be available

- Provides more accessibility for the movement impaired
- Allows out-of-neighborhood visits to the community





# Main streets empower healthy lifestyles

## Better **walking** and **bike infrastructure**

- Biking is a good form of **exercise** and **recreation**
- Increases the **presence** of people on the street and the **liveliness** of an area
  - Instead of people simply getting into their car to drive every where

**This would also fit into a network of outdoor areas and activities**



# Main Streets can support higher densities

Brown's Mill lacks density especially on the main street corridor

- Has many deep lots that can be repurposed to support **multifamily units** and **ground level retail**
- This would help to increase density along Cleveland Ave and put eyes on the main street

Multipurpose zoning and high density could create new opportunities for businesses and housing, attracting people to the area

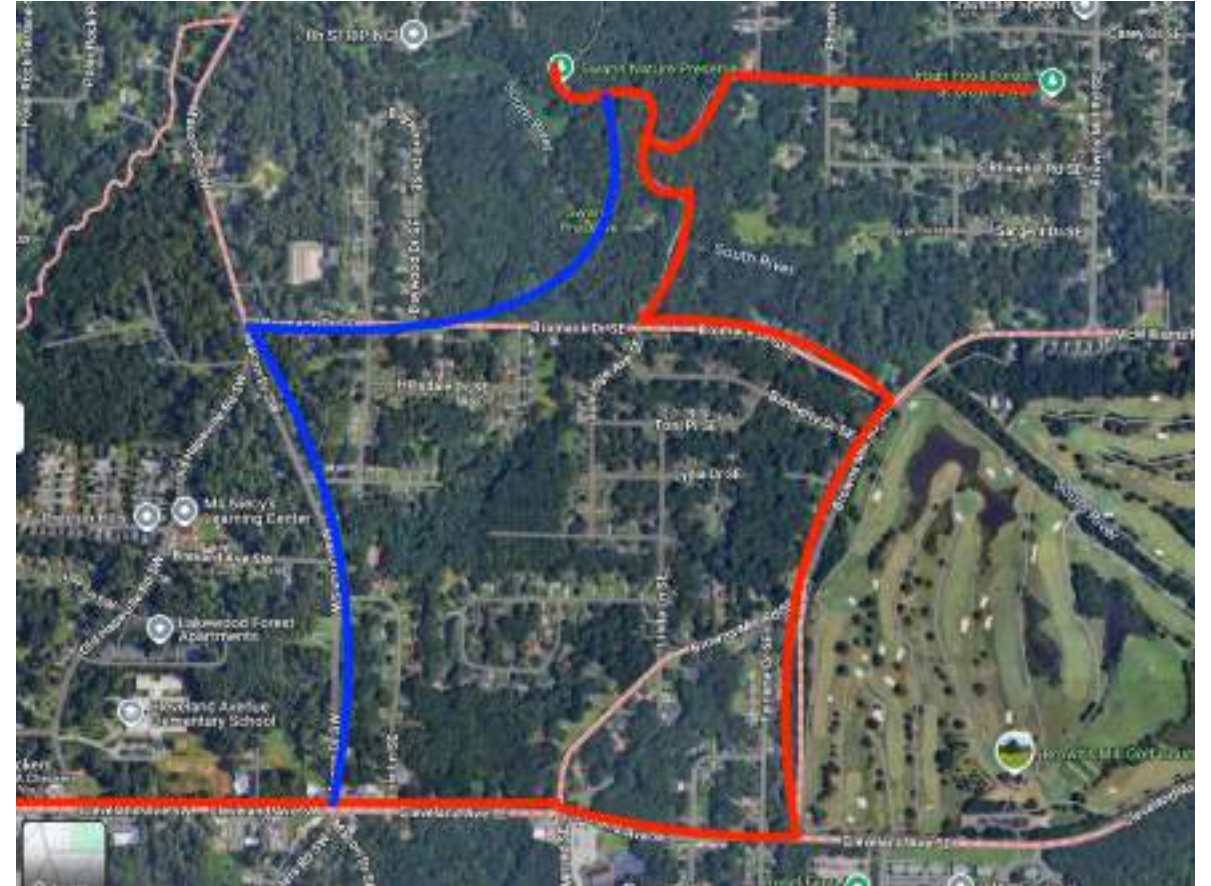




# Bike trails along Cleveland Avenue, Golf Course, and Swann Nature Preserve

Bike trails would better connect all of Browns Mill Park

- Promote engagement in outdoor activity like biking but also walking and hiking through the preserve
- Reduce the congestion of traffic and allow for better flow along Cleveland Avenue
- Provide alternative options for mobility and cleaner transportation



# Browns Mill Park should invite Carver Neighborhood Market to the local food desert

- Bringing the Carver Neighborhood market to Browns Mill Park will help give the residents better and **healthier food options** to buy
- Allows access to **fresh produce** and a designated grocery store, not a food mart
- Carver could help to address the issues of the food desert status as it will serve as the main location where residents can purchase food.
- In addition, its economic impact would help the neighborhood
- It would bring around **11-50 jobs** to the market





# Establishing a Neighborhood Clinic will be beneficial to the neighborhood's health

- Bringing a neighborhood clinic to Browns Mill Park would help to **increase the health outcomes** of residents
- Allowing for access to **close and quality healthcare services** would help residents receive and seek the care they need without having to travel miles outside of their residence
- Bringing a Piedmont Urgent Care or Piedmont Physicians could help to allow residents to visit a doctor and **reduce transport outside** of Browns Mill Park
- Currently Browns Mill Parks closest healthcare sits across the highway



# There are multiple attractors Browns Mill Park can leverage to foster community growth and student excellence

- Afterschool Programs are attractors we can implement to improve the environment at Cleveland Avenue
- Partnerships with Local non-profits can help build community and offer students a productive way to spent their time
- Bike trails connecting educational, residential, and recreational spaces can help build connectivity and a better sense of community



# Partnering with a local non-profit can increase academic achievement and built community bonds

- Atlanta Music Project is a local non-profit that offers after-school programs for elementary school aged kids.
- They offer chorus, orchestra and band ensembles for students while providing a scholarship on all music related items
- Learning to read music or play an instrument has been linked to numerous benefits like increases **social skills, memory, and pattern recognition**





# Expanding the Urban Food Forest will increase community engagement and public perception

- The Urban Food Forest is an attractor for **good press** in the neighborhood that we can **leverage**
- Partnering with the local school can build trust with the community and help students **conceptualize topics like biology and environmental science**
- Having the Urban Food Forest also host significant **recreational space like benches or picnic areas** can increase community engagement





# Promoting community use of Browns Mill Golf Course can be beneficial for the neighborhood and its inhabitants

- Making sure the golf course is integrated with the proposed bike trails will make **travel easier** and **incentivize community engagement**
- Establishing a **children's association** at the Golf Course can provide a healthy partnership with the local school
- Establishing a neighborhood pass that discounts prices for residents can further incentivize community engagement
- Playing golf is associated with multiple benefits that can help build skills like, **endurance, patience, self-control, and concentration**



# Addressing compounding problems requires compounding solutions

Cleveland Avenue: Crime and the perception of crime

Creating a safe, desirable, and prosperous main street

Obstacles to community engagement: Limited Options and Walkability

Implementing biking and walking trails connecting neighborhood assets

Poor health outcomes: Poor Healthcare, Food, and Wellness Activity Access

Increasing access to local healthcare, food and activities

# We hope to bring Browns Mill Park into a positive feedback loop

## Release -> Reorganization

- Reinvent harmful deficits into attractors
- Implement new attractors

## Re-organization -> Growth

- Increase economic spending
- Reverse the negative 'crime trap' feedback loop

Implementing new community-centric policies will create new positive feedback cycles in the neighborhood.

