

2024 State of the Trees in Chatham County

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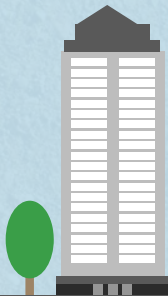
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Current initiatives

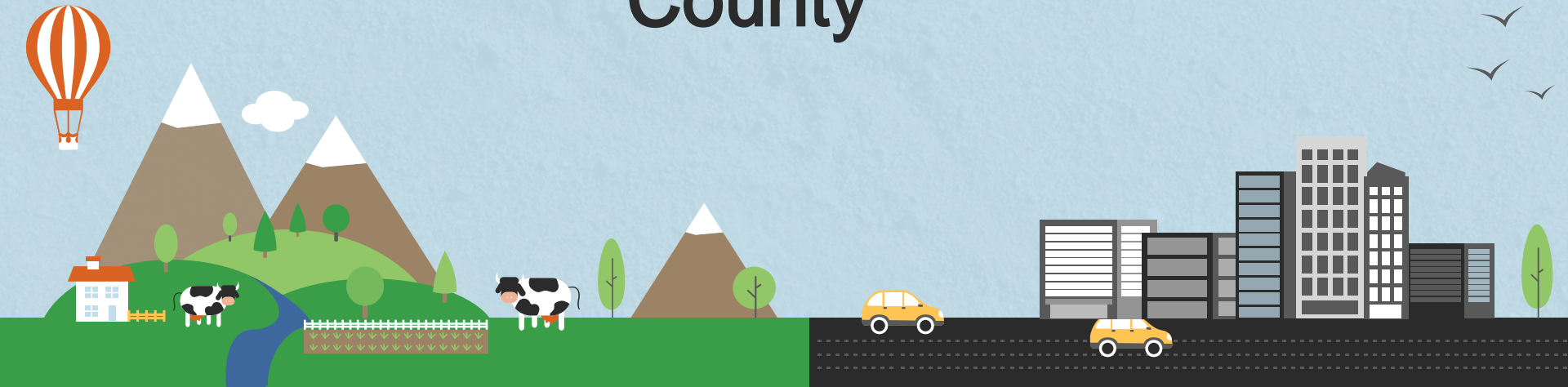
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Future goals



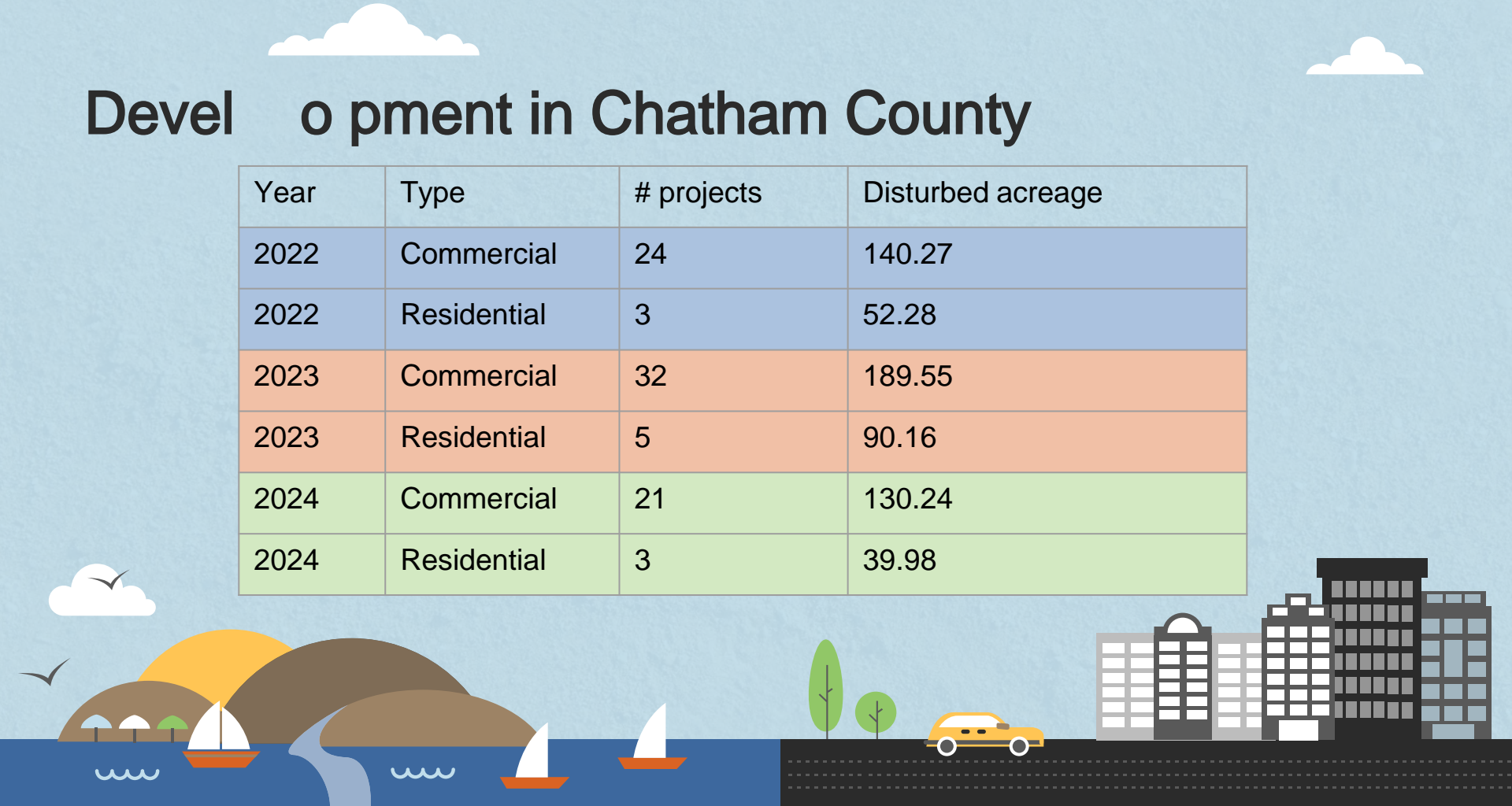
01

Current trends in Unincorporated Chatham County



Development in Chatham County

Year	Type	# projects	Disturbed acreage
2022	Commercial	24	140.27
2022	Residential	3	52.28
2023	Commercial	32	189.55
2023	Residential	5	90.16
2024	Commercial	21	130.24
2024	Residential	3	39.98



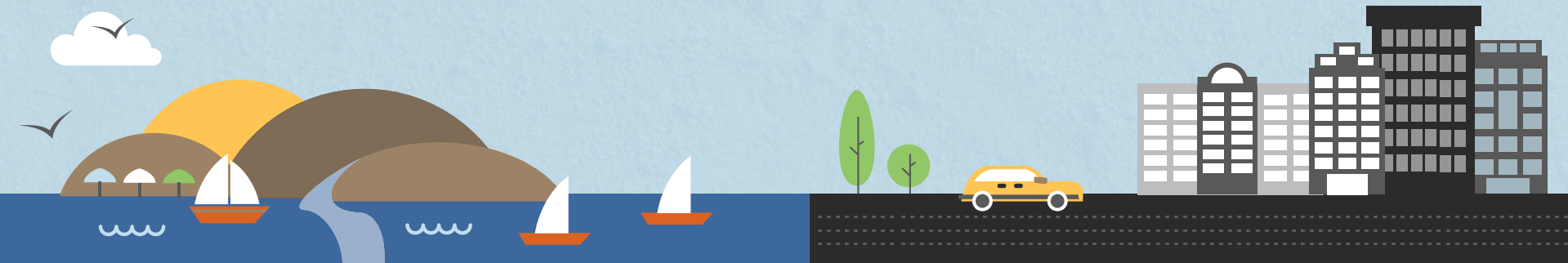


661.29 acres

of disturbed area from 2022 - 2024



~500 football fields





How is development regulated?

Chatham County Code, Chapter 24: Environmental Regulations

- Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance
- Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance
- Noise Control
- Transport of Nuclear Waste
- Lake Pollution
- Storm Water Management Ordinance
- Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance
- Technology Administration and Regulation



Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance



Single - Family Residential

- Single-family residential subdivisions



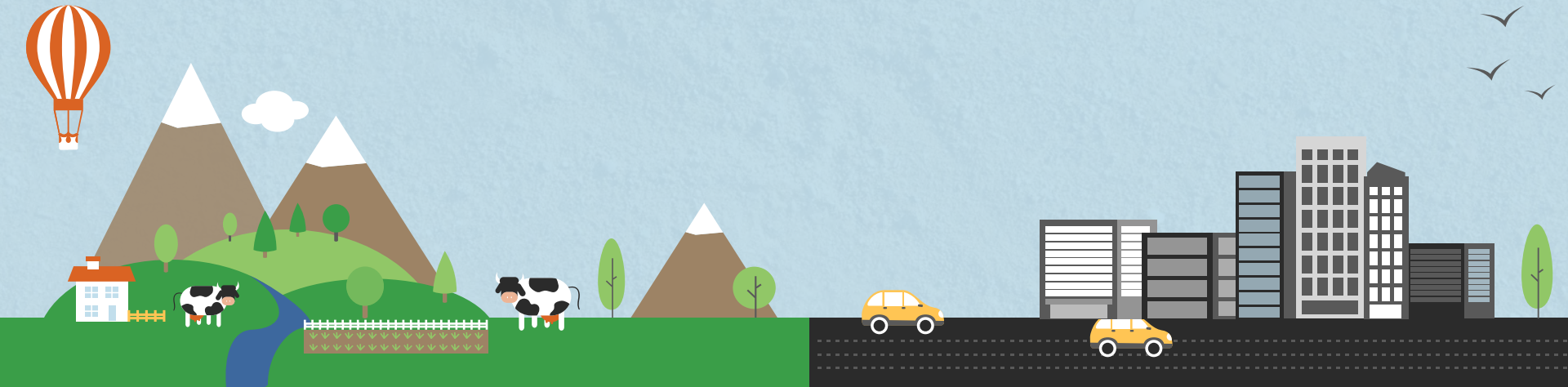
Commerical, Industrial, Multi Family Residential

- Warehouses
- Retail businesses
- Apartment complexes



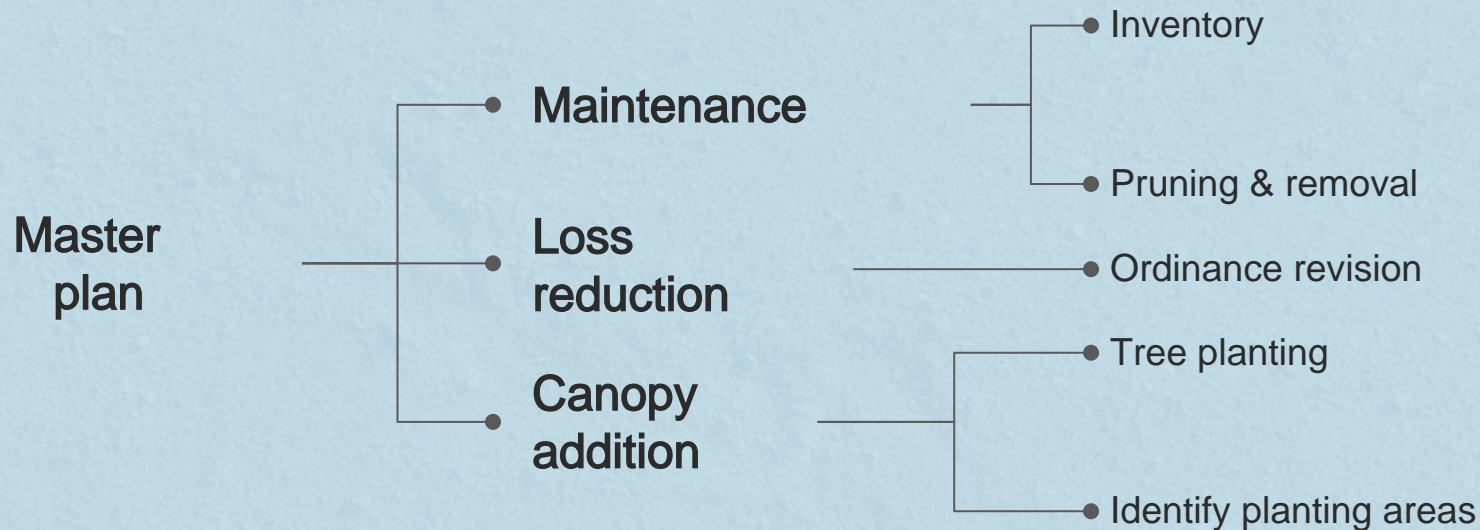
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Urban Forest Master Plan

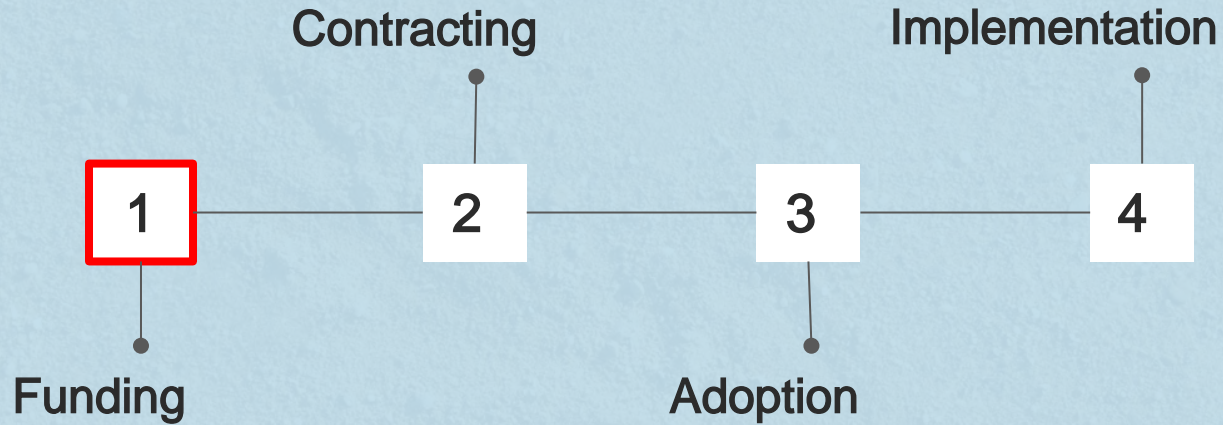




Associated projects

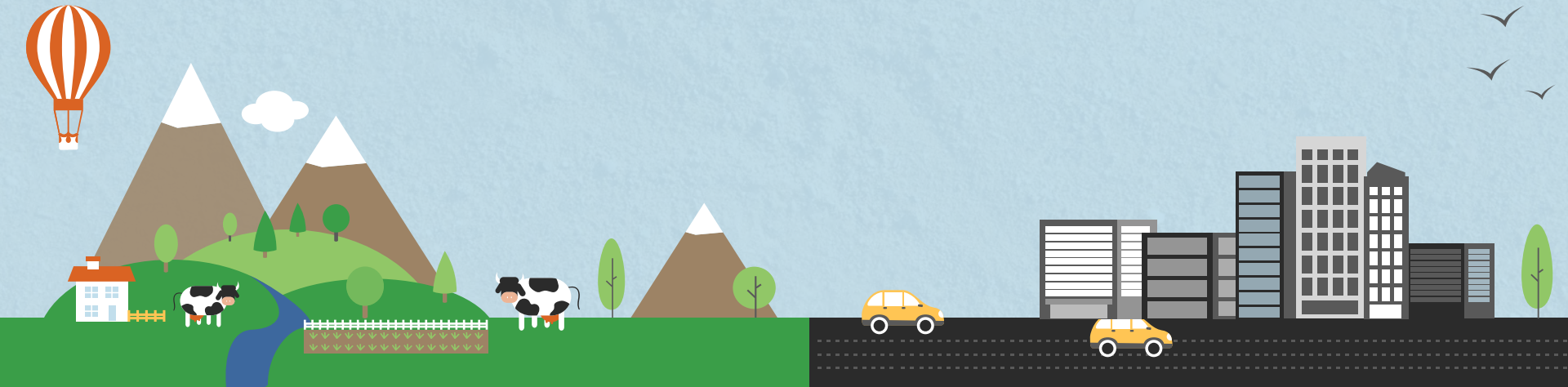


Master Planning Process



03

Current Initiatives





Chatham County Tree Commission

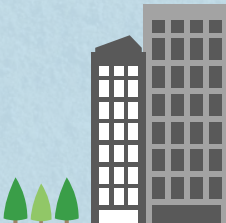
- “The Commission shall educate the public as to the economic and aesthetic benefits of trees to Chatham County and its citizens, both on publicly owned property and privately owned property.”
- “The Commission shall promote the conservation, planting, health, and growth of trees in Chatham County with the particular objective of establishing and protecting avenues of live oak trees.”





Chatham County Tree Commission

- Currently inactive
- In the process of soliciting nominations from organizations outlined in the Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance:
 - Savannah Tree Foundation
 - Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
 - Georgia Conservancy
 - Savannah Home Builders Association
 - American Society of Landscape Architects





Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance

The purpose of the Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance is to:

1. Lessen air pollution and carbon dioxide levels in the air, and promote clean air quality by increasing dust filtration;
2. Prevent soil erosion; prevent rivers, canals, ditches and other waterways from silting; prevent reductions in drainage holding capacity of land; improve surface drainage and minimize flooding;
3. Minimize increases in temperatures on lands with natural and planted tree cover;
4. Maintain moisture levels in the air of lands with natural tree cover;
5. Reduce noise, heat and glare, and ensure that these and other distractions of movement in one area do not adversely affect activity within other adjacent areas;
6. Emphasize the importance of trees and vegetation as both a visual and physical buffer;
7. Protect and enhance the aesthetic qualities of the community to ensure that tree removal does not reduce property values;
8. Minimize the cost of construction and maintenance of drainage systems necessitated by the increased flow and diversion of surface waters; and
9. Maintain, wherever possible, a minimum of fifty percent canopy cover across the unincorporated areas of Chatham County.





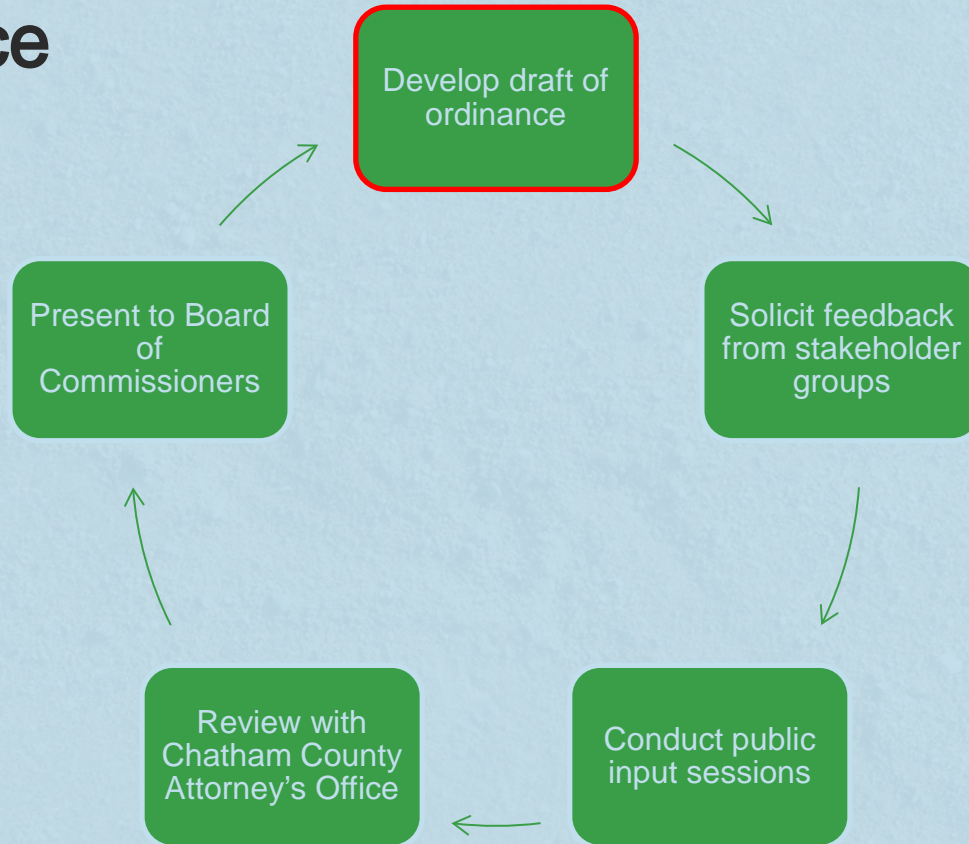
Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance

- Commonly known as the “Tree Ordinance”
- Beginning process of revision
- Examples of changes
 - Tree commission seats
 - Updated definitions
 - Buffer planting specifications



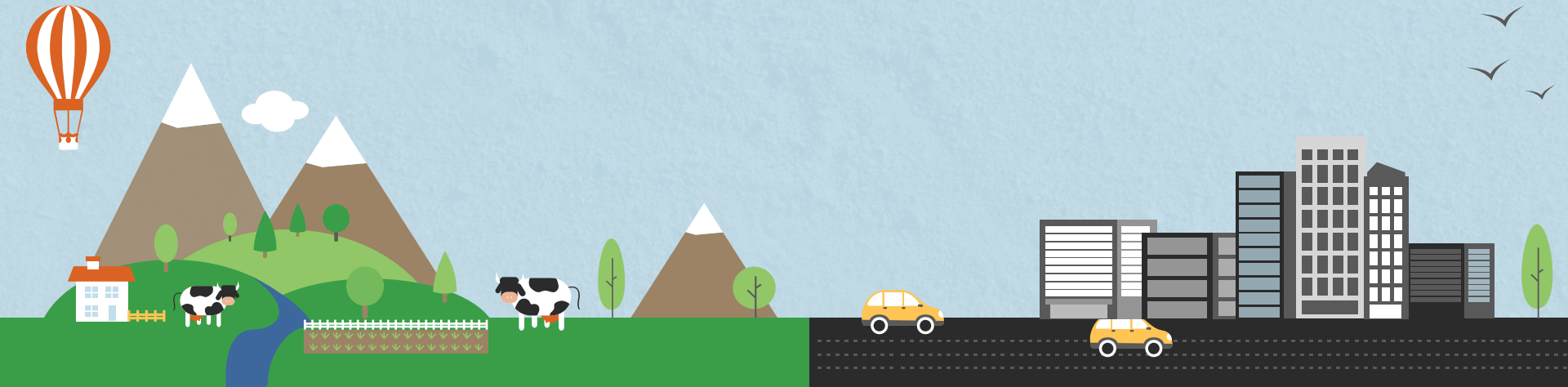


Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance



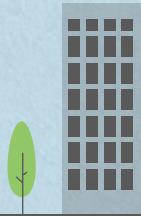
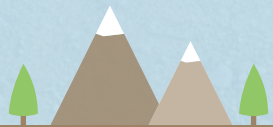
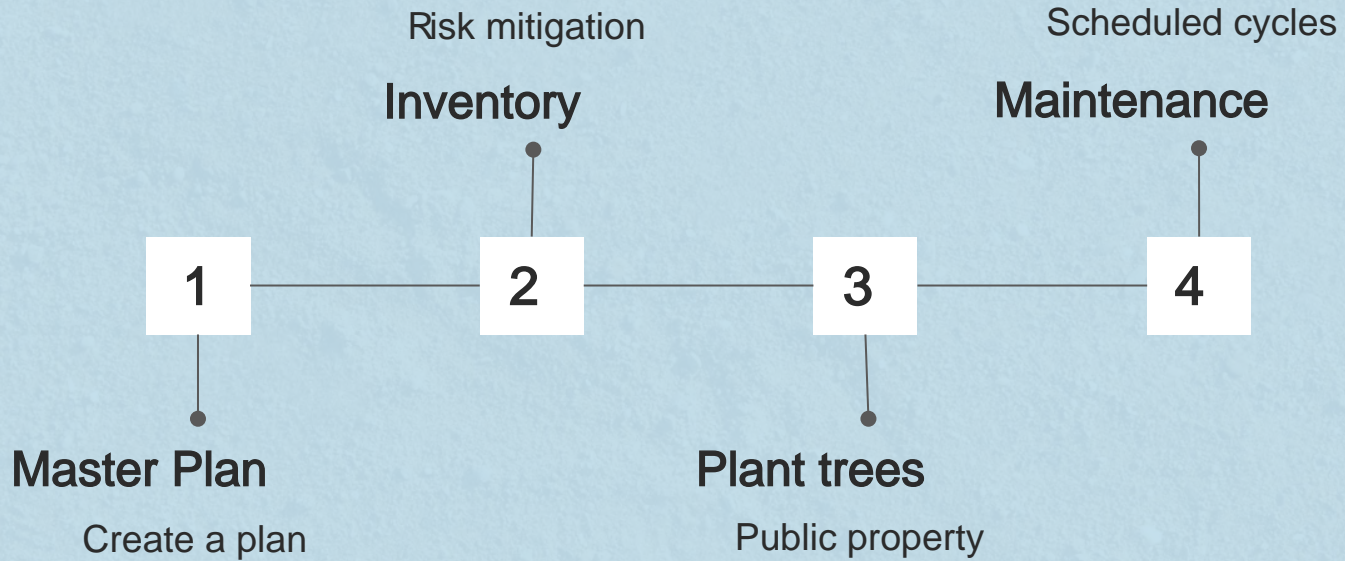
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Future Goals



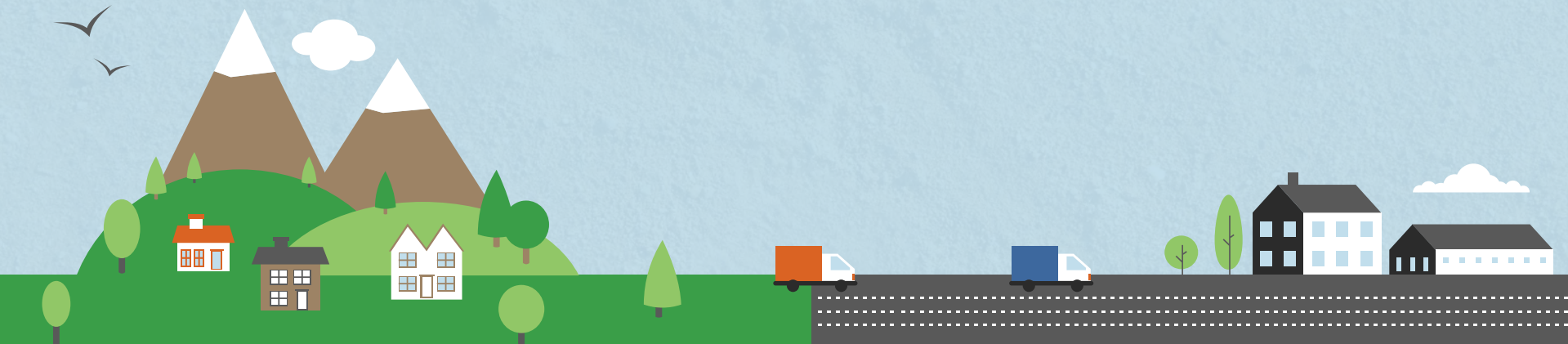


Roadmap





Why do we
need these
things?





**Development impacts
tree canopy...**

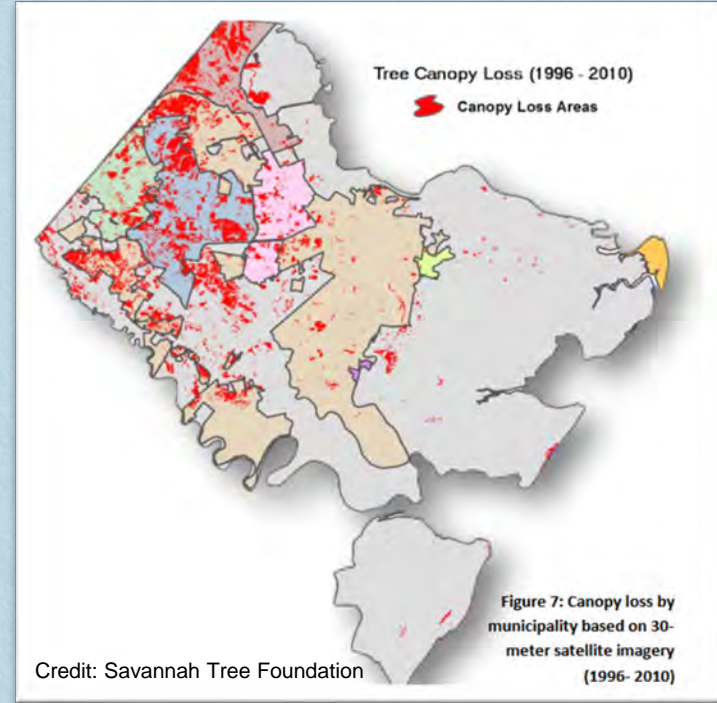


...and changes the
landscape




Tree canopy is being lost

We know this, but we need to *show* this.





**Technology improves
all aspects...**



**Understand every tree
in every detail.**

...and moves rapidly



In Summary

01

Current trends in Unincorporated Chatham County

- Canopy loss

02

Urban Forest Master Plan

- Roadmap for management

03

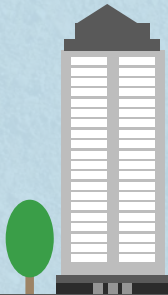
Current initiatives

- Ordinance revision & Tree Commission

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Future goals

- Proactive management





Thank you



Questions?
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