



PLAN HAMILTON

OUR COMMUNITIES. OUR GROWTH.



Draft
09/18/2024

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WALDEN PLATEAU AREA PLAN

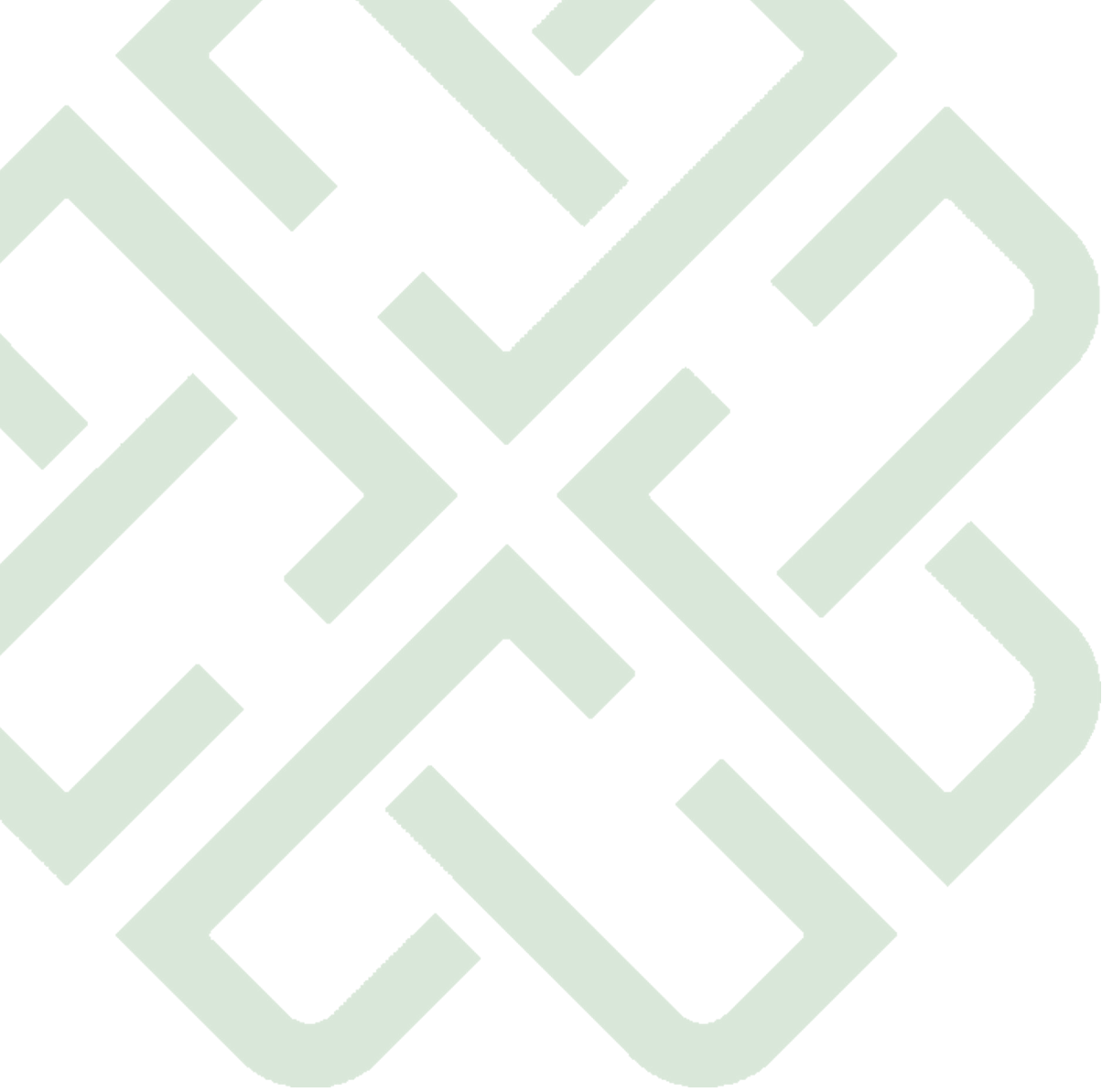
Fairmount
Falling Water
Montlake
Mountain Creek

Mowbray Mountain
Town of Signal Mountain*
Town of Walden*



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CHAPTER 1

Area SUMMARY

- 1.1 INTRODUCTION
- 1.2 WALDEN PLATEAU STUDY Area
- 1.3 HISTORY OF THE WALDEN PLATEAU
- 1.4 PAST PLANS



1.1 INTRODUCTION

Hamilton County is committed to responsible growth while maintaining the rich historical and cultural identity of each community. The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency (CHCRPA) teamed with RaganSmith to develop a comprehensive plan for the entire unincorporated county that received direct guidance from the Mayor's office, county commissioners and community members.

This plan for Walden Plateau (Area Plan 7) is part of the Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated Hamilton County. While the incorporated Areas are not regulated by this plan, they often share roadways, services, and are generally interconnected to the unincorporated Areas and therefore, suggestions are included throughout this Area plan for local jurisdictions to take into consideration in combination with the efforts of the RPA.

Area 7 is one of the five (5) unincorporated Area plans but one of thirteen Area plans in total which are responsible for regulating existing development and growth conditions. The introduction chapter to the five unincorporated plans identify the:

- Planning Framework
- 2016 Comprehensive Plan Goals
- What is An Area Plan
- Hamilton County Planning Areas
- Plan Process

MORE INFORMATION TO BE ADDED AT THE FINAL DRAFT



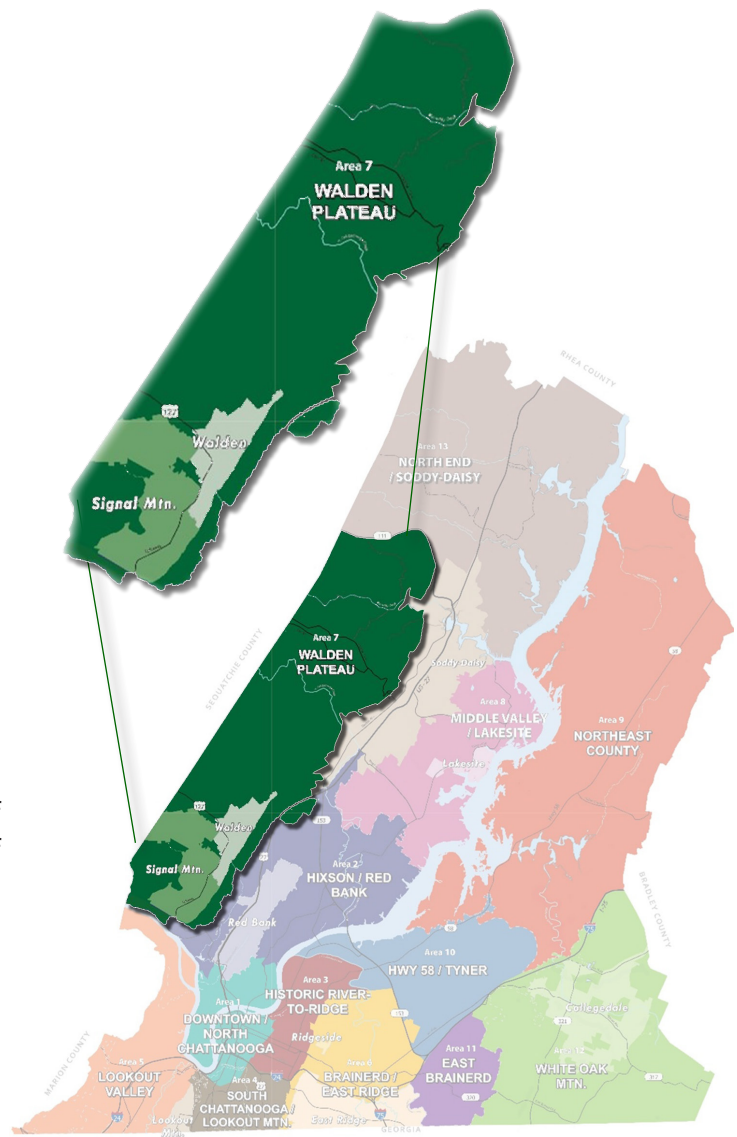
1.2 WALDEN PLATEAU STUDY Area (Area 7)

The entirety of Walden’s Ridge is just over 70 miles long and marks the eastern edge of the Cumberland Plateau. The ridge is also an escarpment, and its dramatic and sudden change of elevation is highly visible from the Tennessee River valley near Chattanooga. The southern end of Walden’s Ridge is known as Signal Mountain due to its use by Cherokee and Creek native American tribes, and later Civil War troops, to signal messages between it and Lookout Mountain to the south.

Several communities emerged on Walden’s Ridge, from Fairmount to Summertown. The Town of Signal Mountain was incorporated in 1919 and grew around the Signal Mountain Inn—a resort established in 1913. The Area’s only other town, Walden, grew out of the Summertown community and was incorporated in 1975. The rest of Walden’s Ridge remains unincorporated.

The southern portion of the Walden’s Ridge Plateau Area Plan (Area 7) is the focus of this plan and sits almost entirely atop Signal Mountain / Cumberland Plateau with Sequatchie County to the west and Soddy-Daisy to the east and TN SR 111 bordering to the north. The Plateau is bisected by the newly named North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Park, preventing vehicular travel in the north south direction. **The towns of Walden and Signal Mountain are incorporated and therefore, not governed by this plan.** However, the only concentration of infrastructure, schools, emergency services, and commercial businesses are in these communities. These community hubs are the logical centers for growth over time as infrastructure allows and are important to the surrounding community. Limited points of access up and down the mountain, access to hospitals and acute care, limited utility capacity, potential for flooding of stormwater infrastructure, and limited availability of suitable soils and depth for on-site septic systems are all growth limiting factors for Area 7. A rural residential development pattern with generous setbacks from roads and greenspaces is desired by residents and most consistent with infrastructure limitations.

This Area Plan is intended to guide the sustainable growth of the community and inform decisions on future development and supporting infrastructure. An emphasis on “placemaking” is paramount to this plan because Walden’s Ridge is a unique and beautiful place in Hamilton County and development sensitive to its environment will aid in preserving its unique sense of place. Walden Plateau in particular is focused on preserving its rural character and maintaining its unique identity while also improving the characteristics that make it special such as their trail systems, large-lot single-family homes, and rural character.



Walden Plateau Area 7 as a part of Hamilton County study Area



Walden Plateau (Area 7) Map

- Signal Mountain City Limits
- Walden City Limits
- Buildings
- Parcels
- Rail
- Roads
- Water Bodies
- Streams and Creeks
- Parks, Recreation, Open Space
- Cumberland Trail

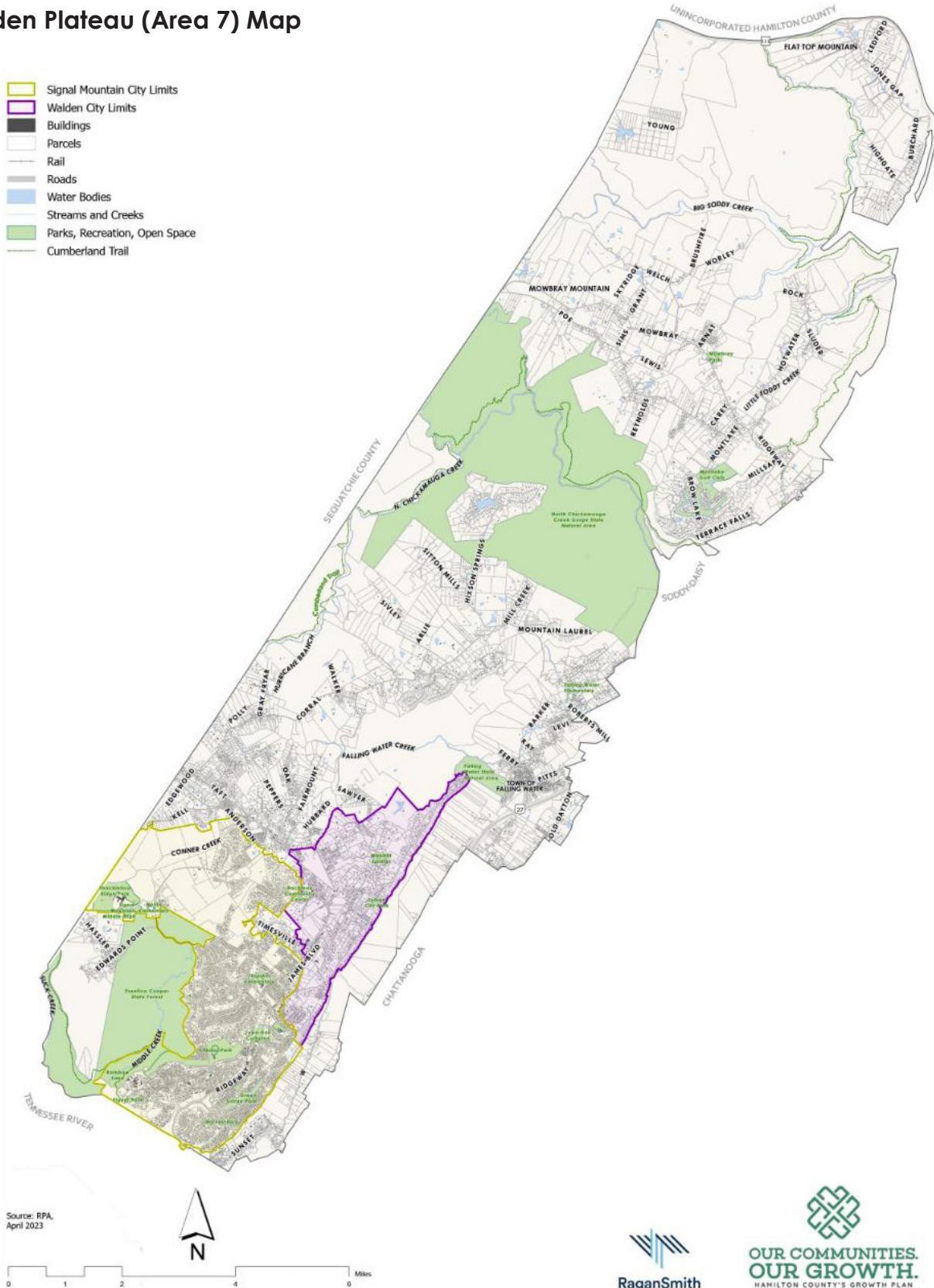


Figure 1.3 - Walden Plateau (Area 7) Map



1.3 HISTORY OF THE WALDEN PLATEAU

The Walden Plateau, boasts a rich history intertwined with the cultural and natural heritage of the region with a prominent geographical feature. Located on the Cumberland Plateau, it offers stunning vistas, rugged terrain, and a unique ecosystem. Historically, this plateau has been a haven for indigenous peoples, early settlers, and pioneers who traversed its landscape, seeking refuge and resources. The Area is also noted for its role in the development of local industries, such as coal mining and timber, which have shaped the economic and social fabric of the region. The Walden Plateau is also bisected from north to south travel by the North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Natural Area. Area 7 is also home to two of the smaller municipalities in Hamilton County including the Towns of Signal Mountain and Walden. The brief history discussed in this plan is focused on how the unique access to the plateau shaped the development pattern seen today.

THE TURNPIKE (US-127)

Early development on the Walden Plateau can be attributed to two different Tennessee legislations. The first in 1840 was approved but not fully constructed leading to a second legislation in 1848 that authorized a second turnpike over the same route (US-127 / Anderson Pike) from Sequatchie Valley over Walden Plateau into the north bank of the City of Chattanooga. Four years later, the road was operational and by 1854 the ownership rights of land adjacent to the turnpike were sold to James Conner, Hamilton County Sheriff who built a toll house and home at the intersection of Fairmount Road and Anderson Pike (pictured to the right).



The Toll House
Source: xxxxxx

THE W ROAD

From Chattanooga, there a few ways to access Walden's Ridge, US-127 (Signal Mountain Road) as mentioned above or another, narrower road known as the "W Road". Before the forced removal of the Cherokee from the Chattanooga Area, Native Americans created a general path up the ridge for hunting. Even after white settlers began to colonize this Area, few roads existed and conditions were unfavorable for travelers. This road which was previously known as Rogers Gap Road and had a V shape at the top with a steeper slope than what exists today. A July 19, 1892 *Chattanooga Times* article announced that "A new road up Walden's Ridge has been surveyed, the county stockade has been built, and it is thought work will commence on it within a fortnight". This road was created in order to provide quicker access than the main highway down into the valley and allowed for the rural lifestyle to remain in spite of the development occurring around the main highway.



The W Road Before Cars (1907)
Source: Chattanooga History



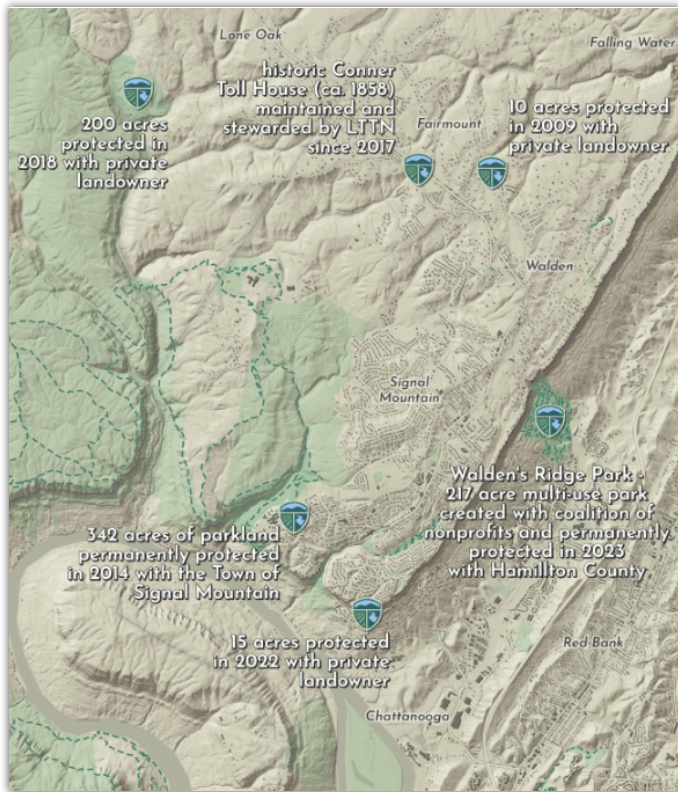
INCORPORATION OF WALDEN & SIGNAL MOUNTAIN



Town of Walden

Source: Town of Walden, TN

Incorporated in 1919, the town of Signal Mountain, Tennessee offers panoramic view of the Tennessee Valley below. This picturesque community was named after the Signal Point from which Native Americans once signaled warnings. It was also used by Union troops during the Civil War as a relay station and observation Area, and was the only location in Chattanooga where the Union had high ground prior to the siege of the city in 1863. Nearby, the Town of Walden was incorporated in 1975, adding its own unique charm to the plateau. Named after the influential Walden family, this quaint town blends historic roots with modern-day serenity, where forests and rolling landscapes create a retreat from the bustle of city life. This Town first saw white settlers when disease spread through the city of Chattanooga and people sought higher elevations. Both towns, while distinct in their histories, share a commitment to preserving the natural beauty and close-knit community spirit that define the Cumberland Plateau region. These unique towns shape while incorporated largely influence the unincorporated Areas of the Walden Plateau.



Conservation Areas on Signal Mountain

Source: TN Land Trust

CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC LAND

The Walden Plateau has nearly 2,000 acres of protected land in conservation. The Land Trust for Tennessee (LTTN) has protected over 800 acres including public parks, private properties protected in coordination with their landowners, to properties owned and maintained by the Land Trust for Tennessee (Rainbow Lake, Walden's Ridge Park, Conner Toll House). Each of the projects is under the obligation of perpetual stewardship by the LTTN. The LTTN is also serving on the Cumberland Trail task force to assist in completing the 300-mile long trail that passes through this Area. Additionally, the North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Park was officially named a state Park in September of 2024 bisects the plateau preventing north south vehicular travel taking up over 1,000 additional acres of land Area on the Ridge.



1.4 PAST PLANS

WALDEN'S RIDGE PLATEAU AREA PLAN (1997)

Led by the RPA, the Walden's Ridge Plateau Area Plan represented a collaborative effort among local elected officials of Hamilton County, the Town of Signal Mountain, and the Town of Walden to address growth and other related issues that faced the plateau. The plan was aimed at guiding the location of new development by identifying the most appropriate locations for residential and commercial developments and addresses the impact on the natural landscape with sections for Development Policy, Development Standards, Services/Capital Improvements Policy, and Capital Expenditures. The plan addressed 3 main concerns:

1. Orderly and Cohesive Development Pattern

"Recent growth trends are producing development trends that are contrary to the overall vision for the Area. These trends include strip commercial development, inconsistent quality of development (lack of landscaping, integrity of design, etc.), and sporadic apartment development."

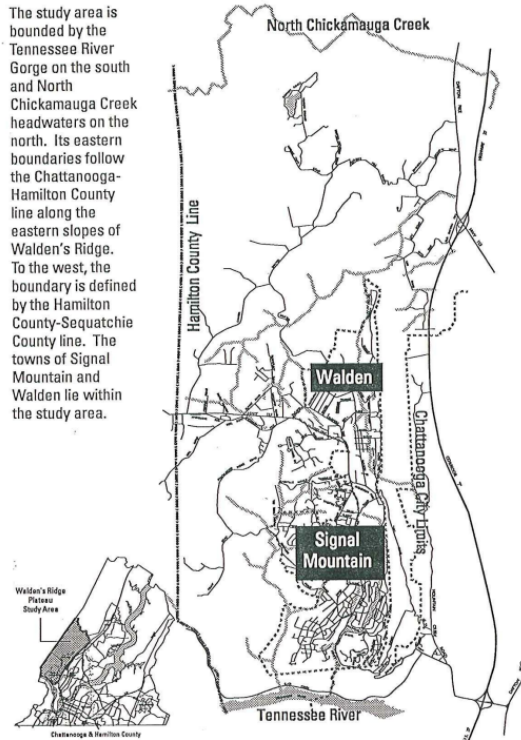
2. Natural Landscapes/Open Spaces

"Single-family subdivisions are being developed in a manner that is insensitive to natural landscape features, leaving little to no remaining open space for the enjoyment of residents."

3. Services

"Without planned improvements to services such as road improvements, fire services, and commercial facilities, growth can cause an overall reduction in the accessibility and quality of these resources."

The study area is bounded by the Tennessee River Gorge on the south and North Chickamauga Creek headwaters on the north. Its eastern boundaries follow the Chattanooga-Hamilton County line along the eastern slopes of Walden's Ridge. To the west, the boundary is defined by the Hamilton County-Sequatchie County line. The towns of Signal Mountain and Walden lie within the study area.



Original Walden Plateau Study Area

Source: xxxxxx

Area 7 PLANNING EFFORTS (2021-2022)

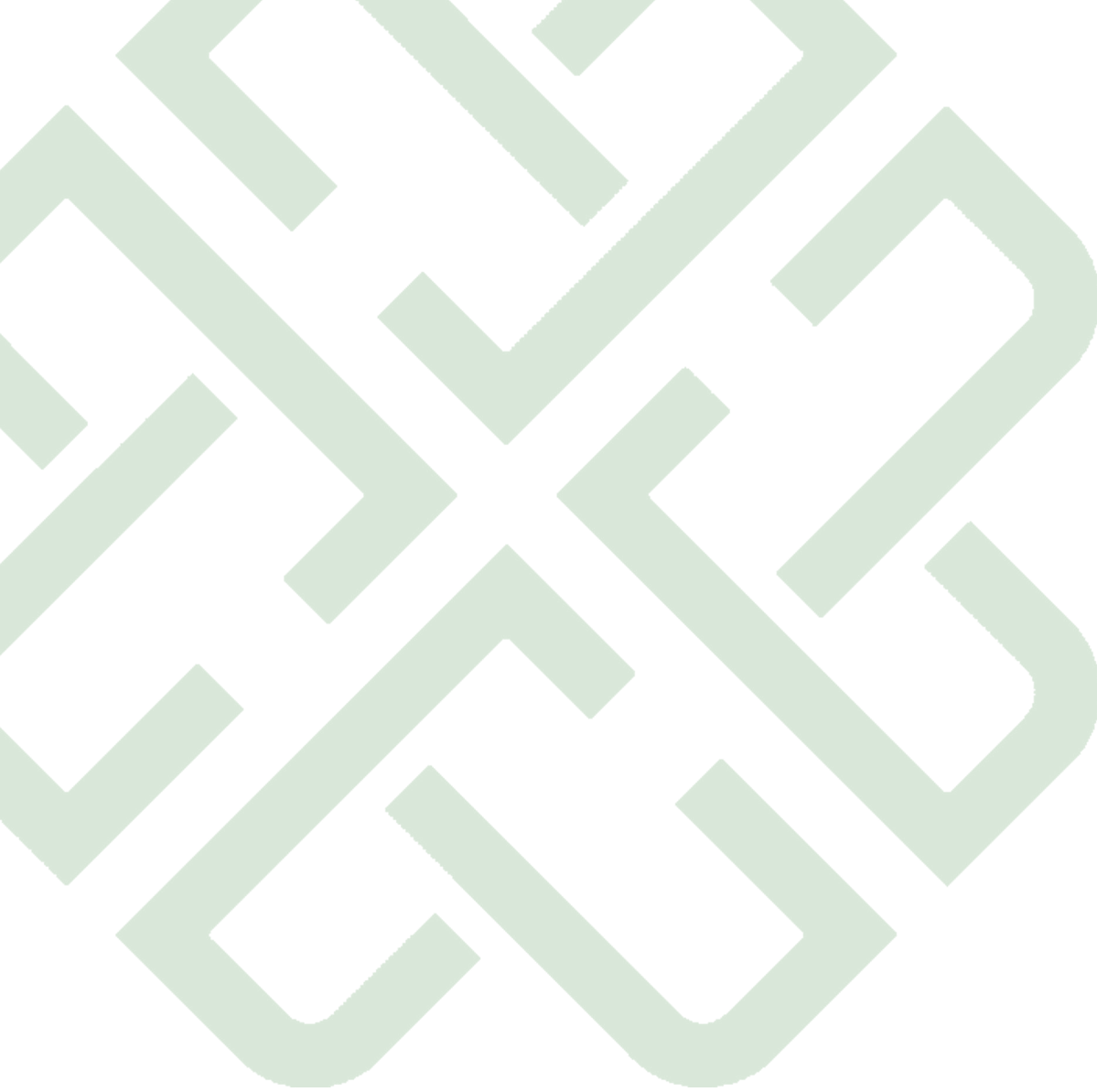
The Area 7 Plan began as an independent effort spearheaded by the RPA's consultant, Common Ground Design, with a focus on addressing the unique needs and characteristics of the Walden Plateau region. Initially, the intent was to craft a tailored plan for this Area, however, planning for the entire unincorporated portions of Hamilton County gained momentum. Integrating the Area 7 Plan into the larger Countywide Unincorporated Plan Hamilton effort became part of the cohesive and strategic approach.

The consultant's work, combined with extensive community involvement, generated a wealth of information specific to the Walden Plateau. Rather than letting these insights remain isolated, they were embedded into the broader framework of Plan Hamilton. This approach ensures that the unique identity and challenges of the Walden Plateau are fully addressed, creating a well-rounded and inclusive plan.



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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

- 2.1 COMMUNITY SUMMARY
- 2.2 COMMUNITY PROFILE
- 2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS & ECONOMICS
- 2.4 COMMUNITY THEMES
- 2.5 PLAN ANALYSIS



2.1 COMMUNITY SUMMARY

Area 7 sits almost entirely atop Signal Mountain on the Walden / Cumberland Plateau bordering Marion and Sequatchie Counties to the west and Soddy Daisy to the east. While the towns of Walden and Signal Mountain are not governed by this plan, the only concentration of infrastructure, schools, emergency services, and commercial businesses are in these communities. These community hubs are the logical centers for growth over time as infrastructure allows. Limited points of access up and down the mountain, North Chickamauga Park bisecting the plateau, access to hospitals and acute care, limited utility capacity, potential for flooding of stormwater infrastructure, and limited availability of suitable soils and depth for on-site septic systems are all factors that limit growth for Area 7. A rural residential development pattern with generous setbacks from roads and green spaces is desired by residents and most consistent with infrastructure limitations.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Community emphasis on the environment and mountain lifestyle.
- High quality of life with an abundance of active and passive recreational opportunities.
- High performing schools with well supported extracurricular activities make this community a popular Area to live.
- Strong sense of community with emphasis on religious and philanthropic organizations, families, and social interaction.



REGIONAL FACILITIES AND ASSETS

Parks:

The Area features large park holdings including those with historical significance such as Signal Point, managed by the National Park Service, as well as the McCoy House/Althaus Park. Other parks include:

- Cumberland Trail State Park
- Falling Water State Park
- North Chickamauga Gorge State Park
- Prentice Cooper State Park
- Shackleford Ridge Park
- Walden's Ridge State Park



Walden's Ridge Park
Source: Travel Southeast TN



PRIMARY CONSTRAINTS

Topography:

- Mountain terrain results in limited points of access. Due to topography, roads from the plateau to the valley are steep and curvy.
- Terrain results in limited road network capabilities and creates greater service distance for first responders during extreme weather events and fire emergencies.
- The shallow rocky soil structure common in this Area is not suitable for septic systems.
- Soil Conditions result in rapid run-off with low infiltration and high potential for flooding after severe storms.
- Steep slopes from the plateau to the valley floor.
- North Chickamauga Creek bisects the plateau preventing north/south vehicle connectivity.



The W Road
Source: Chattanooga Times Free Press

Land Availability:

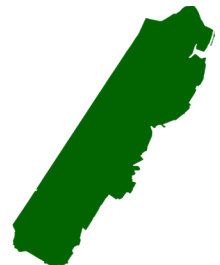
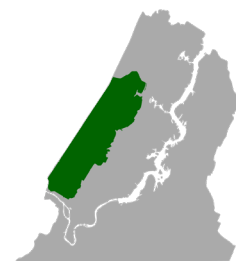
- Many of the largest tracts of land are in public domain/conservation.

Utility Capacity:

- Limited availability and capacity for centralized sewage infrastructure.



North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Park
Source: TN State Parks



2.2 COMMUNITY PROFILE



69%

of residents are influenced by access to Parks, Greenways, and Open Space when choosing Walden Plateau to live.



96%

Have Some College experience and above

41%

Master's Degree

39%

Bachelor's Degree



53%

Believe that large-lot single-family homes should be encouraged in Area 7.



81%

Believe that preservation of farmland, rural character, wooded & riparian Areas should be priorities.



52%

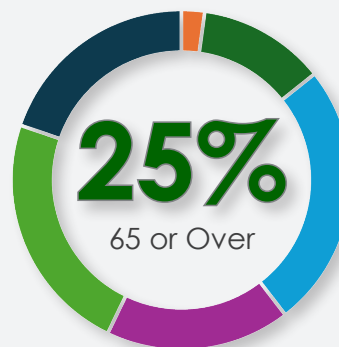
Lived in Hamilton County for 20+ Years

26%

Lived in Hamilton County for 5-19 Years

22%

Lived in Hamilton County for 0-4 Years



■ <15 Years
 ■ 15-24 Years
 ■ 25-34 Years
 ■ 35-44 Years
 ■ 45-54 Years
 ■ 55-64 Years
 ■ 65 or Over



2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS & ECONOMIC TRENDS

DEMOGRAPHICS OVERVIEW

Hamilton County Census data reveals a balanced distribution across age groups, with a notable presence of young families (30-34 Years), working professionals (25-29 Years), and retirees (60-69 Years). The County upholds a high level of educational attainment and a skilled workforce, reflecting the Area’s commitment to quality education and lifelong learning. In comparison to the state of Tennessee as a whole, Hamilton County has a higher median income, advanced education background, higher employment rate, lower poverty rates, and lower commute times. These factors continue to contribute to growth in Hamilton County in both the incorporated and unincorporated Areas.

GROWTH TRENDS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Walden Plateau has experienced steady population growth and economic development over the past decade, driven by strategic investments in infrastructure, education, and residential development. Future prospects remain positive, with planned developments emphasizing smart growth principles that enhance connectivity, sustainability, and quality of life for residents. By prioritizing the preservation of the region’s distinctive character and promoting responsible development, ongoing efforts aim to attract new businesses and support entrepreneurial ventures that align with the community’s vision, further diversifying the economic base and creating new growth opportunities. To anticipate these needs, the CHCRPA engaged RCLCO to complete a detailed market analysis to assess market opportunities for housing needs over the next 20 years.

HAMILTON COUNTY CENSUS DATA

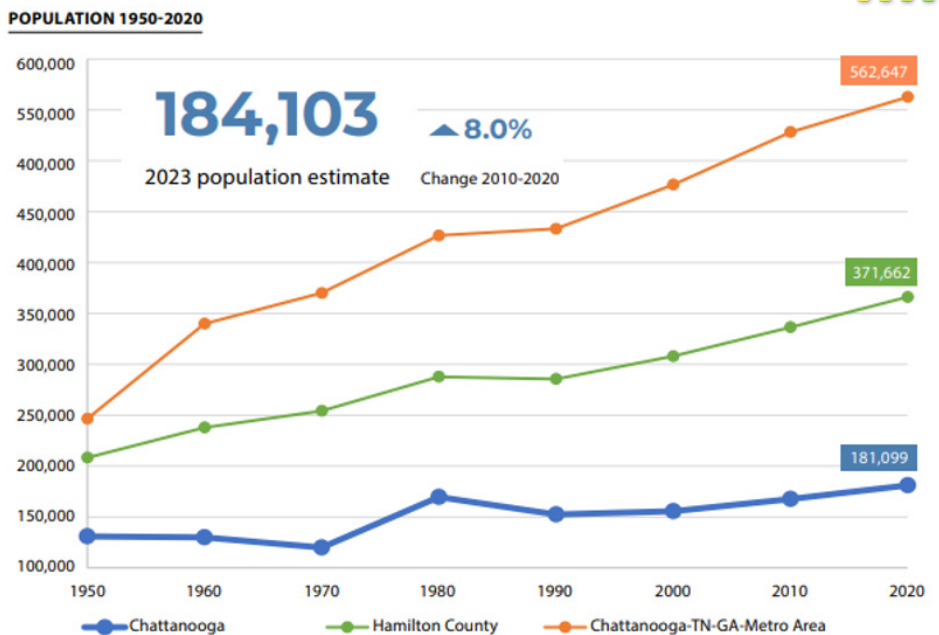


39
Median Age

63%
Employment Rate

\$76,219
Median Household Income

38.4%
Bachelor’s Degree +



ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

The economy of Walden Plateau is supported by a mix of traditional industries and emerging sectors. Key economic drivers include agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing. Tourism thrives on the region’s natural beauty, historical sites, and recreational opportunities, attracting visitors year-round and supporting numerous local businesses. Efforts to maintain the Area’s unique character are integral to economic strategies, ensuring that growth aligns with the community’s values and environmental stewardship. The southern-most portion of Area 7 have among the most affluent suburban communities in Tennessee, including Signal Mountain, where the average household income has approached \$200,000. Signal Mountain and Walden Plateau are fairly well-developed with the central portion of Area 7 is seeing extensive new housing development, enhancing market opportunities for commercial businesses in the central portion of the Area. Utilizing the findings in the RCLCO market analysis, a forward-looking demand was project across residential and non-residential product types so that we can understand how these patterns will impact growth in unincorporated Hamilton County.

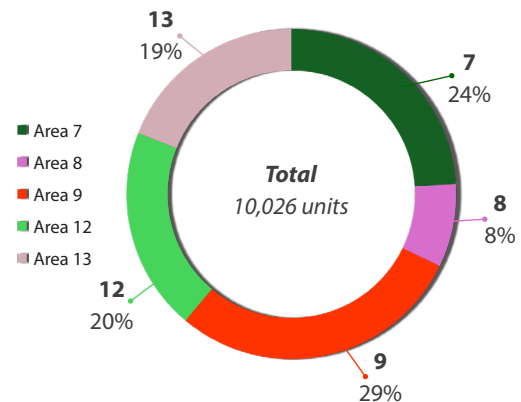
The following growth is anticipated in Area 7 over the next 20 years which is predominantly focused on residential growth and supporting commercial services. This Area is projected to have approximately 24% of the detached single-family growth in the unincorporated County. .

- 2,408 single-family detached
- 142 attached single-family
- 728 build to rent units
- 219 traditional rentals
- 62,200 SF of retail

Drivers of future single-family residential growth:

- High quality of schools with capacity for growth
- High median income and quality of services
- Desirable natural setting and recreational opportunities
- Low crime
- Moderate summer temperatures

Single- Family (Detached) Projections by Area



Economic Landscape Comparison

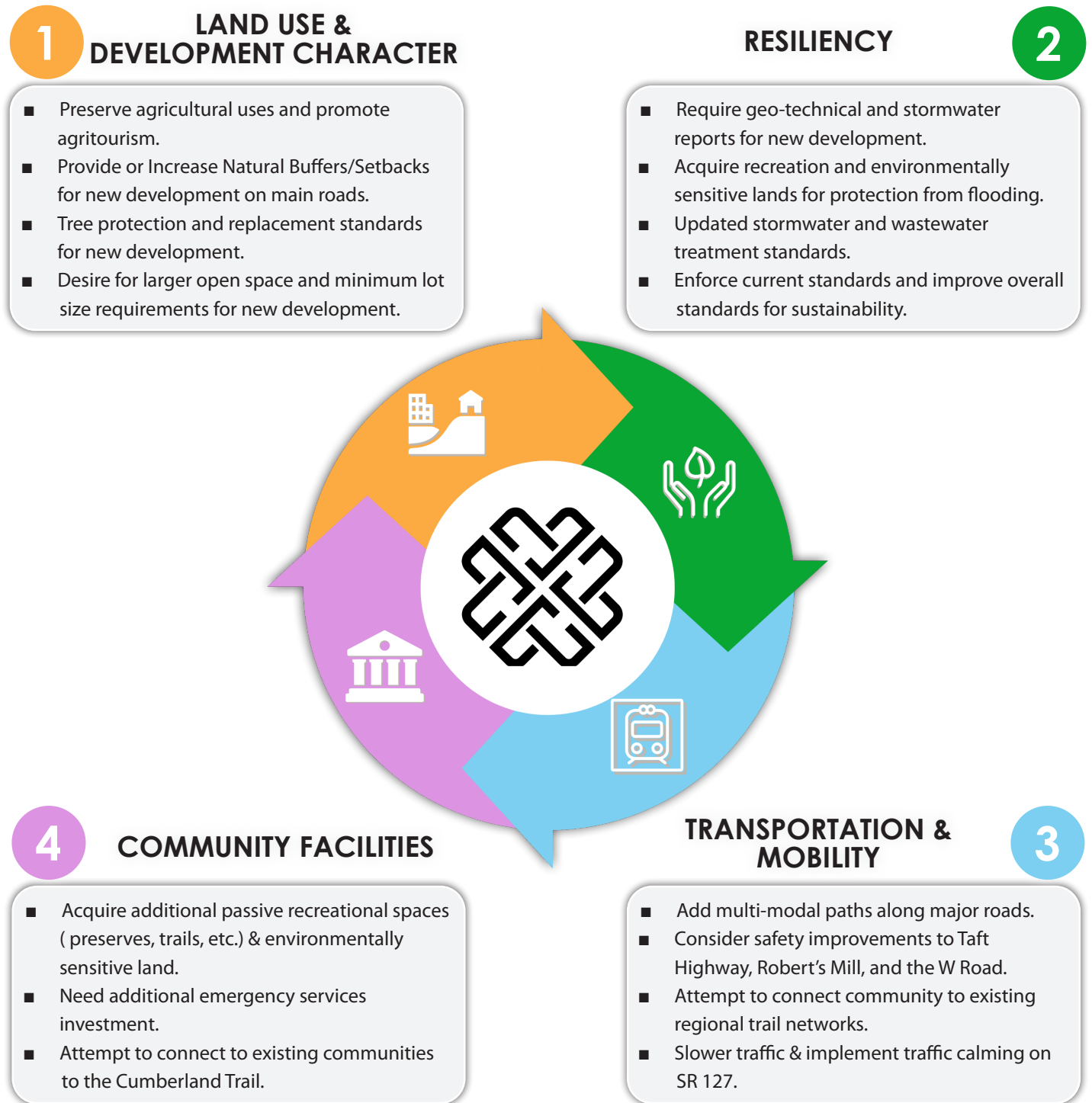
	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Area 12	Area 13	Totals
Single-Family (detached)	2,408 units	818 units	2,900 units	2,000 units	1,900 units	10,026 units
Single-Family (attached)	142 units	110 units	200 units	270 units	- units	722 units
Build to Rent	728 units	164 units	600 units	660 units	- units	2,152 units
Rental Units	219 units	270 units	200 units	2,300 units	830 units	3,819 units
Retail	62,200 SF	21,700 SF	240,000 SF	500,000 SF	240,000 SF	1,063,900 SF
Industrial	- SF	- SF	- SF	430,000 SF	4,000,000 SF	4,430,000 SF
Office	- SF	- SF	- SF	81,000 SF	- SF	81,000 SF

Picture/Table X: Insert here



2.4 COMMUNITY THEMES

In general, the community feedback phase was focused on identifying metrics for success based on critical outcomes. The desired outcomes have been organized into a framework of Community Themes or Drivers to provide structure to the plan analysis, recommendations, and implementation solutions. Identifying these themes and utilizing them as a framework for organizing each Area plan will provide community leaders with a set of filters for future strategic, policy, and project based decisions. The following graphic identifies the 4 Community Themes and the public consensus that framed the analysis, goals, and policies within Area 7.



2.5 PLAN ANALYSIS

The Plan Analysis section provides a detailed examination of the current conditions, opportunities, and challenges within each Area, offering insights that will guide strategic decision-making and inform the implementation of targeted initiatives. Grounded in the four Community Themes - Land Use and Development Character, Resiliency, Transportation and Mobility, and Community Facilities, this analysis establishes a comprehensive framework that evaluates each Area's unique characteristics. This section includes the following categories:

2.5.1 Land Use and Development Character

Zoning:

Examination of land use patterns, existing zoning district designations to ensure that development harmonizes with the Area's unique geological features.

Land Use:

Examination of existing land use patterns and street patterns in combination with existing zoning.

Building Permits:

Evaluates the current state and number of permits being issued within the Area and its impact on the surrounding community.

Development on Walden Plateau:

Overall analysis of how development in general is impacting or influencing the community and how it's changed its character.

2.5.2 Resiliency

Natural Resources:

Evaluation of natural assets including parks, recreation, open spaces, slopes, waterways, aiming to balance preservation with development.

Infrastructure:

Evaluation of the existing adequacy of public utilities, including sanitary sewer, and water.

2.5.3 Transportation & Mobility

Transportation:

This section evaluates the existing transportation infrastructure, including roadways, pedestrian and cycling paths, and freight routes. It also considers future development needs and the potential impacts of anticipated growth.

2.5.4 Community Facilities

Schools and Major Institutions:

Examination of the role of these institutions in fostering learning and innovation while assessing their current state and future needs in the context of regional growth and development.

City, County, State/Land or Property:

Examination of ownership patterns and its impact on land management and development potential.

Emergency Services:

Examination of emergency response capabilities, encompassing fire, police, medical, and evacuation plans.



2.5.1 CURRENT LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

The Land Use and Development Character analysis examines zoning regulations, land use, permitting history, and development patterns and how these factors influence both conservation efforts and the scope for future growth. The plateau's steep terrain, forested Areas, and ecological sensitivity create distinct land management challenges that have shaped current land use decisions. The analysis provides a detailed assessment of how the plateau's physical characteristics impact development, offering insights into the strategies needed to balance environmental preservation with strategic growth.

ZONING

Most properties in the unincorporated Areas are zoned A-1 (refer to Figure 2.1), which permits agricultural uses and single-family residential development with a maximum density of two dwelling units per acre. This zoning classification preserves the rural character and open spaces that define much of the region, ensuring that agricultural activities and low-density housing remain predominant. The second most common zoning is R-1, which permits single-family residential development at a base density of two dwelling units per acre for traditional septic systems.

North of Walden's town limits, in an Area known as Fairmount and a few other sporadic locations, properties are zoned R-2 and R-2A. This designation permits single-family and two-family dwellings, including manufactured homes. The R-2A zoning accommodates a variety of housing needs and promotes a more diverse community structure, providing options for different family sizes and economic levels.

Commercial activity is primarily concentrated in Areas with C-2 zoning, which is limited to portions of Taft Highway, Fairmount Road, and Sawyer Road. The C-2 commercial zoning supports a wide variety of commercial and non-residential uses, contributing to the economic vitality of the region. These Areas are not just hubs for businesses but also permit single-family dwellings, including manufactured homes.



LAND USE

Area 7 is primarily categorized as residential, with 35.24% (refer to Figure 2.2) of the land used for some type of residential purpose. Land devoted to commercial or industrial uses is under 3%, and institutional uses (such as schools or religious facilities) are under 1%, indicating very little non-residential activity in comparison. Of the 52,074 acres in the Area, approximately 36% is vacant which may be undeveloped property, wooded land, empty lots or otherwise unimproved tracts of land with an additional 8,844.06 acres categorized as natural resource use, including agriculture.

The primary land use in the unincorporated Areas of Walden's Ridge is single-family residential which exists in a variety of contexts, from large farms to conventional subdivisions, the latter becoming the predominant pattern of development. Commercial uses are primarily concentrated along Taft Highway in several clusters near intersections with Hollister Road and Corral Road, however, there are some sporadic non-residential uses between these clusters such as Montlake and Jones Gap, ensuring that commercial activity supports rather than dominates the landscape. These commercial nodes provide essential services to residents while maintaining the overall rural and residential character of the region.

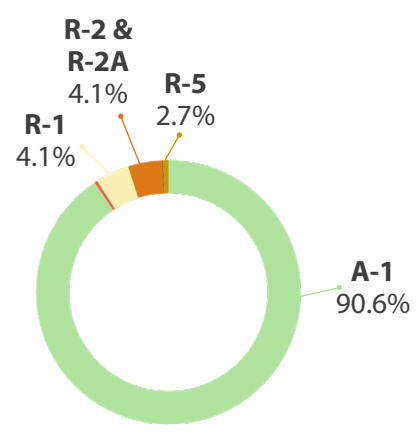
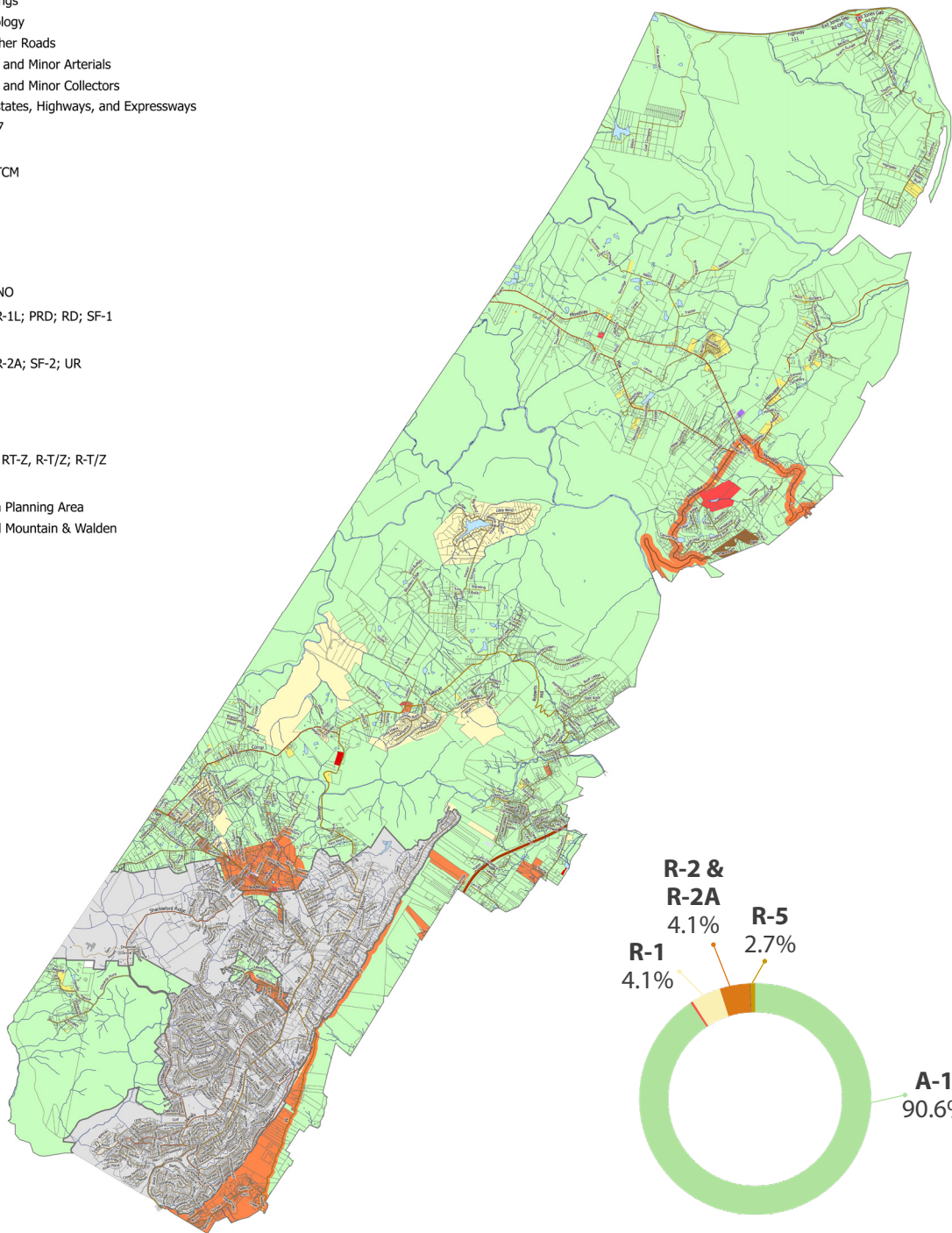
This land use pattern highlights the plateau communities' commitment to preserving its rural pattern while accommodating gradual growth and development. By maintaining a clear distinction between residential, commercial, and natural resource Areas, Walden's Ridge balances the needs of its residents with the desire to protect its unique environmental and cultural assets.



Existing Zoning Map

LEGEND

- Parcels
- Buildings
- Hydrology
- All Other Roads
- Major and Minor Arterials
- Major and Minor Collectors
- Interstates, Highways, and Expressways
- Zoning: Area 7
- A-1
- C-1, TCM
- C-2
- C-3
- M-1
- M-2
- O-1, NO
- R-1; R-1L; PRD; RD; SF-1
- LDRD
- R-2; R-2A; SF-2; UR
- R-3
- R-4
- R-5
- RT-1; RT-Z, R-T/Z; R-T/Z
- RZ-1
- Not in Planning Area
- Signal Mountain & Walden



- A-1
- C-1
- C-2
- C-3
- LDRD
- M-1
- M-2
- O-1
- R-1
- R-2 & R-2A
- R-3
- R-4
- R-5
- RT-1
- RZ-1

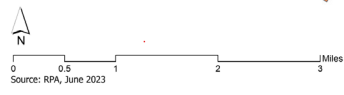
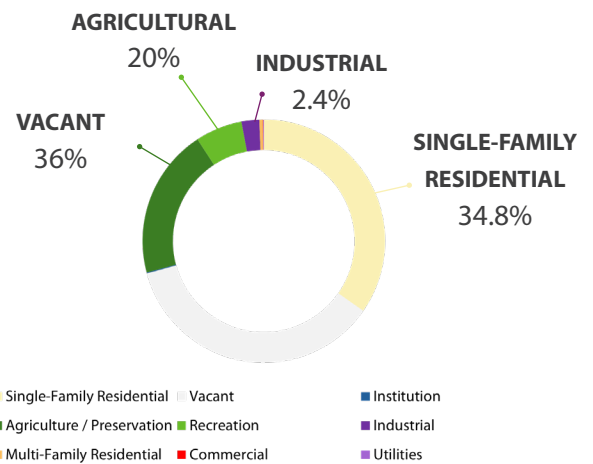
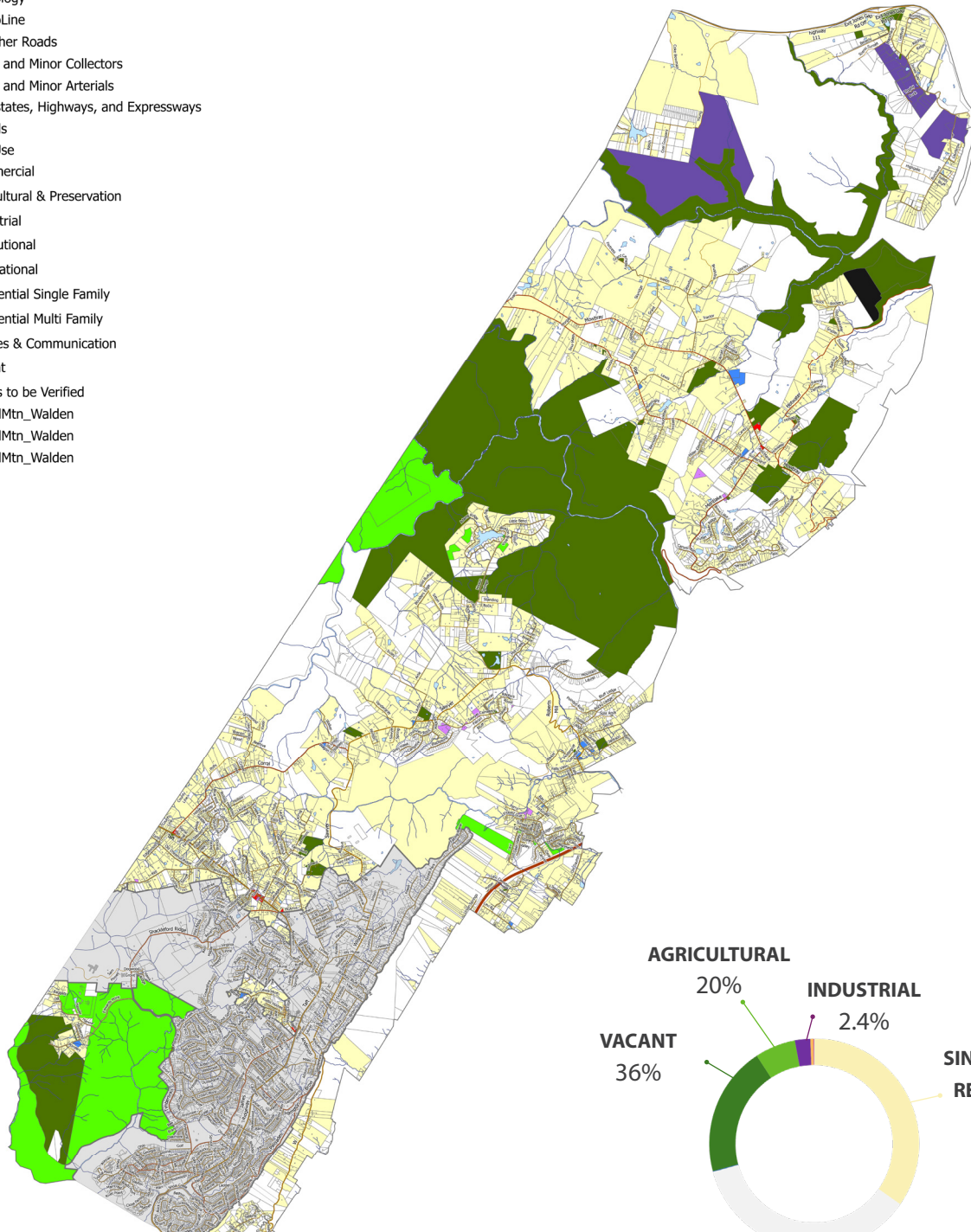


Figure 2.1: Existing Zoning Map (2023)



Existing Land Use Map

- Buildings
- Hydrology
- HydroLine
- All Other Roads
- Major and Minor Collectors
- Major and Minor Arterials
- Interstates, Highways, and Expressways
- Parcels
- Area 7 Land Use**
- Commercial
- Agricultural & Preservation
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Recreational
- Residential Single Family
- Residential Multi Family
- Utilities & Communication
- Vacant
- Needs to be Verified
- SignalMtn_Walden
- SignalMtn_Walden
- SignalMtn_Walden



Source: RPA, June 2023

Figure 2.2: Existing Land Use Map (2023)



BUILDING PERMITS & DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Over the past decade, Walden’s Plateau has witnessed fluctuations influenced by economic conditions, population growth, and shifting residential and commercial demands. As urbanization extends its reach, the plateau has experienced increased activity in both new construction and renovation projects. Analyzing these trends offers valuable insights into the growth patterns, regulatory impacts, and future development prospects, highlighting the dynamic nature of Walden’s Plateau’s built environment.

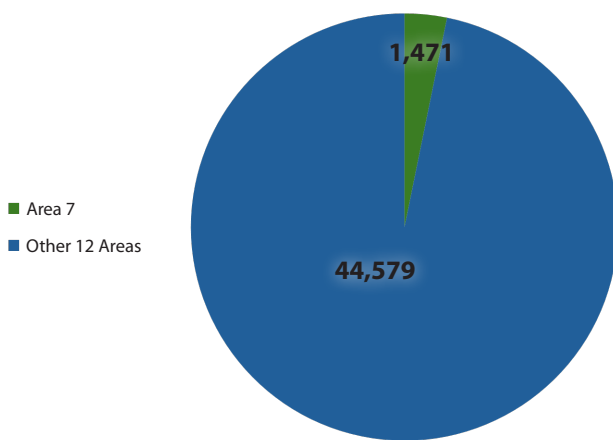
Figure 2.3 reveals that the majority of permits issued have been for single-family homes, which aligns with the existing and desired character of the community. The preference for single-family homes is anticipated to continue, as detailed in Chapter 2.3 of this plan. Following single-family residential permits, commercial development represents the second-highest category for permit issuance. The analysis of building permit trends also highlights how economic and demographic shifts have shaped development on Walden’s Plateau. Periods of economic growth have spurred construction booms, while downturns have prompted a focus on renovations and adaptive reuse of existing structures.

Development on Walden Plateau is significantly shaped by its rural character and the community’s preference for maintaining a close-knit atmosphere. The Area’s appeal lies in its natural beauty, expansive landscapes, and slower pace of life, attracting residents who prioritize tranquility and a strong sense of community. Consequently, development projects are strategically designed to preserve these rural qualities. The emphasis on low-density housing, ample green spaces, and community-centered amenities reflects a deliberate effort to sustain the Area’s unique charm. Local regulations and community input are instrumental in this process, ensuring that new developments align with the community’s values. This strategic approach underscores a careful balance between fostering growth and preserving the plateau’s distinctive rural identity.

The following map identifies buildings permits that were approved over the last 10 years for a variety of uses from low-density residential to utilities and commercial solar facilities. However, the category with the most permits by 59.8% was the Single-Family residential category with the other permits falling under the “other” category at 40.2%.

Looking ahead, the insights gained from building permit trends provide a roadmap for future development. The data suggests that while the plateau will continue to favor single-family homes, there will be a growing emphasis on integrating appropriate commercial and recreational spaces. This holistic approach will support sustainable growth, foster community cohesion, and ensure that Walden’s Plateau remains a vibrant and dynamic place to live, work, and play, while maintaining its existing character.

**Hamilton County Building Permits
(2013-2023)**
46,050 Permits - All 13 Areas



Hamilton County Building Permits (2013-2023)
Source: RPA



Building Permits Map (2013-2023)

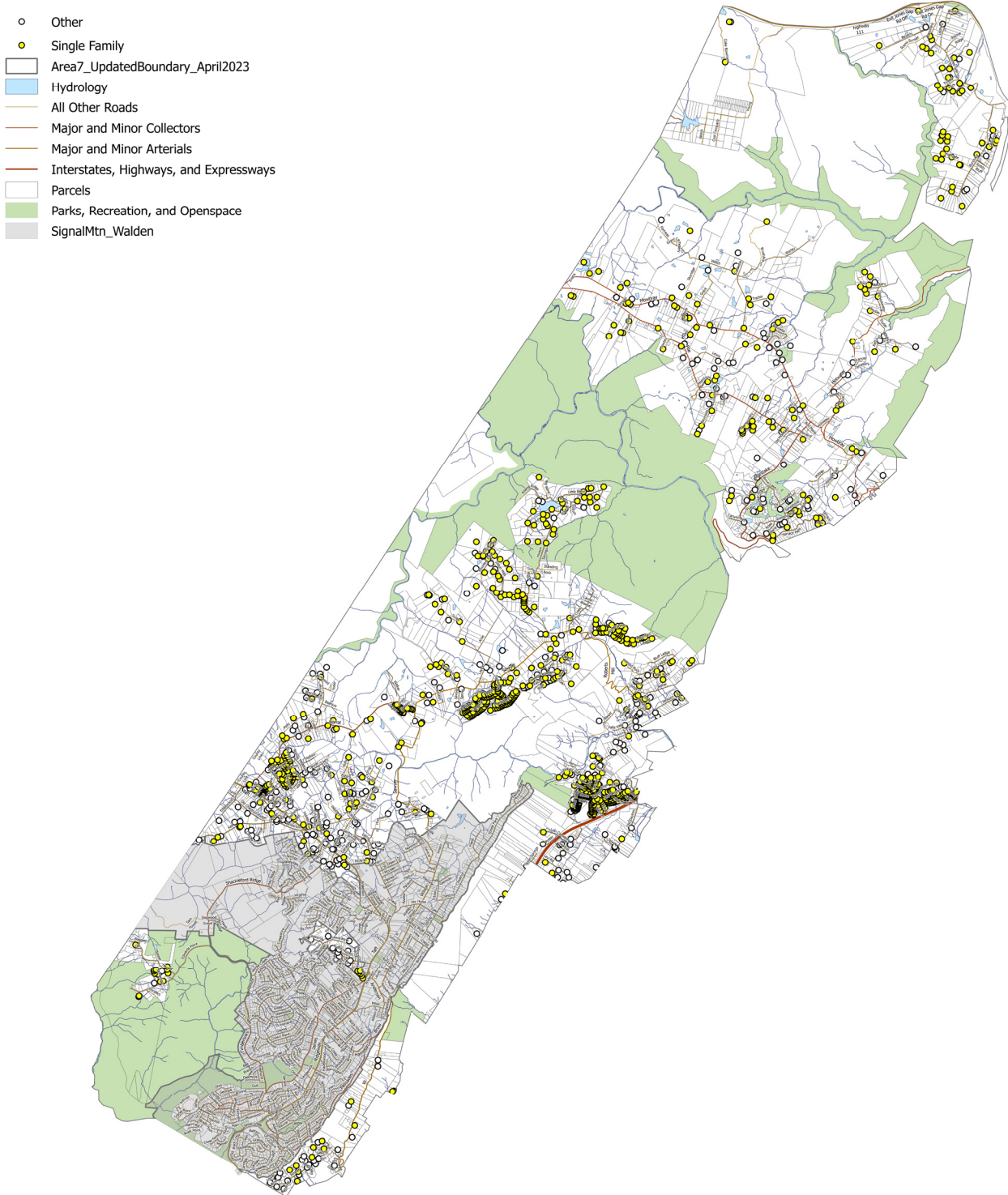


Figure 2.3: Building Permits Map (2013-2023)



2.5.2 RESILIENCY

The Resiliency Community Theme for the Walden Plateau reveals a strategic intersection underscoring the importance of harmonizing built environments with the natural landscape. A key focus is on developing resilient infrastructure while preserving and enhancing the Area's rich natural resources. The analysis highlights water management systems, renewable energy solutions, conservation efforts, and sustainable land use practices. These elements are crucial in maintaining a balance between development and environmental stewardship, ensuring that the community not only thrives but also respects and protects the Walden Plateau's natural heritage.

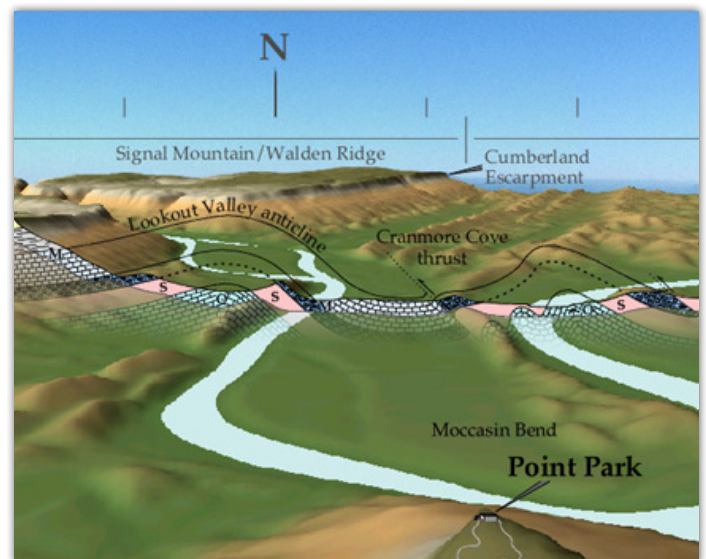
NATURAL RESOURCES

The Walden Plateau is rich in natural resources, featuring diverse water sources, parks, and landscapes. These resources support local ecosystems and offer opportunities for recreation and sustainable development. Proper management of these natural assets is crucial for maintaining the region's beauty and ecological health. The map (Figure 2.4) indicates points within the study Area that feature natural resources deemed sensitive in terms of water function, steep slopes or habitat as identified in the adopted 2016 Comprehensive Plan for Hamilton County. In the Walden Plateau Area, ___% of the land is 25% or greater slope and ___ % is in the 100-year Floodplain. Waterways are shown to indicate the Floodway and 100 year and 500-year floodplains along with Impaired Waterways (303D) which indicate water quality status based on monitoring of sediment, pollution (metals, pesticides/fertilizer run-off, etc.) and erosion or changes in flow/volumes. Development in the floodway is prohibited.

The escarpment of the Walden's Ridge creates a unique system of slopes, waterways, and infrastructure considerations for Hamilton County.



North Chickamauga Creek
Source: xxxxxxxxx



Geologic Cross Section
Source: East TN Geological Society



PARKS, RECREATION & GREENWAYS

The Walden Plateau is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, boasting an extensive network of parks, recreation Areas, and greenways. These spaces offer residents and visitors a variety of activities, from hiking and biking to picnicking and wildlife observation. The parks and greenways are designed to highlight the natural beauty of the plateau, providing accessible and well-maintained Areas for recreation and relaxation.

Beyond recreation and relaxation, the Walden Plateau’s green spaces play a vital role in environmental preservation. They serve as critical habitats for local wildlife, maintain the health of our ecosystems, and foster a sense of environmental stewardship within the community. By protecting these natural landscapes, we ensure that the unique beauty and biodiversity of the plateau are preserved for future generations to enjoy.



Falling Water State Natural Area
Source: Wauhatchie Woodlands



Prentice Cooper State Forest
Source: xxxxxxxx

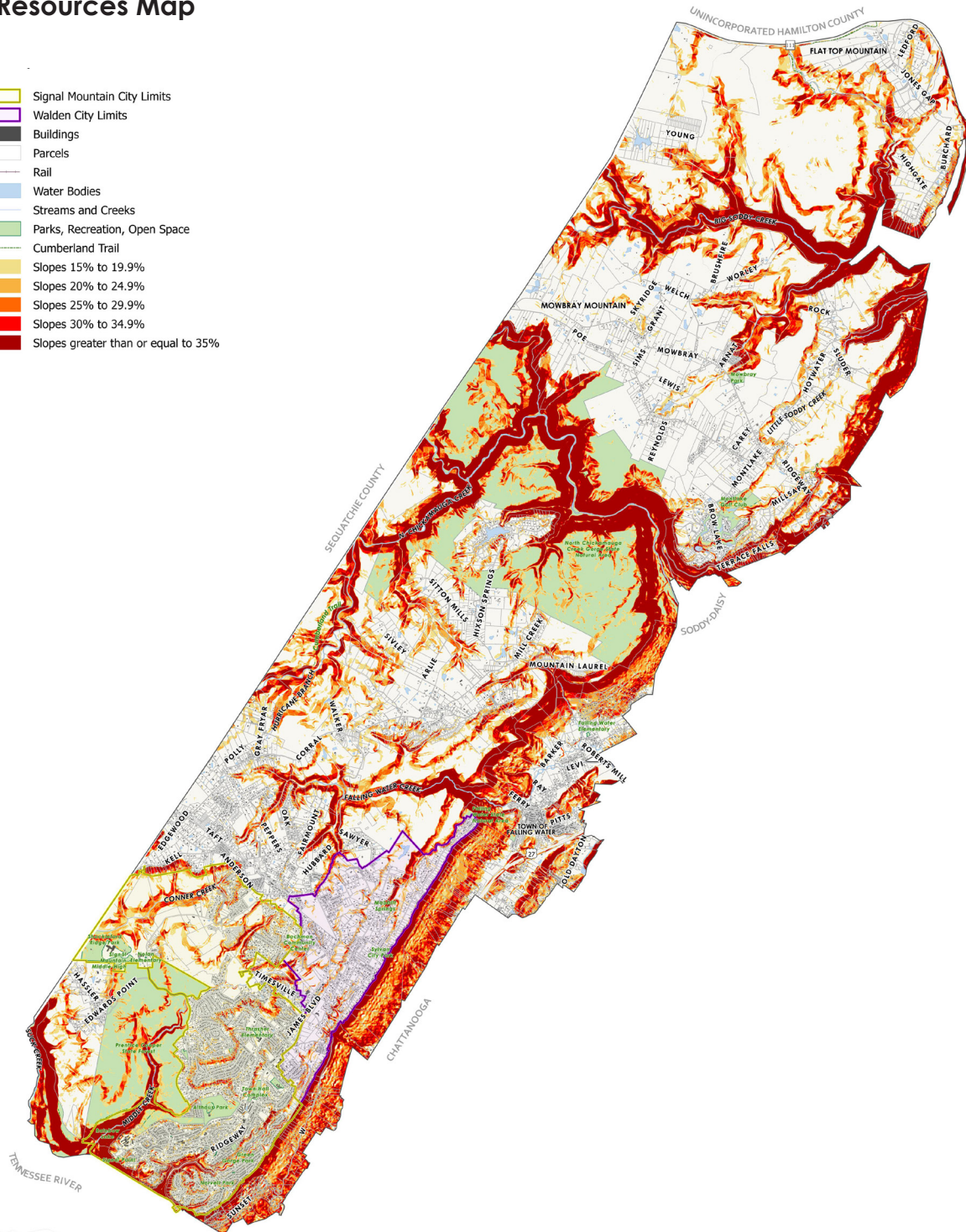
PUBLIC PARKS, RECREATION AND GREENWAYS		
Falling Water Community Park	Church Community Park	1.24 ac
Falling Water State Natural Area	Natural Area	N/A
Mowbray Park	Municipal Recreation Area	16.13 ac
North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Park	State Park	N/A
Prentice Cooper State Forest	State Recreation Area	1,862.67 ac
Rainbow Lake	Municipal Community Park	177.76 ac
Shackleford Ridge County Park		
Walden's Ridge Park		

PRIVATE PARKS, RECREATION AND GREENWAYS		
Montlake Golf Course	Daily Fee Golf Course	142.21 ac
Signal Mountain Golf & Country Club	Membership Required Golf Course	137.93 ac



Natural Resources Map

- Signal Mountain City Limits
- Walden City Limits
- Buildings
- Parcels
- Rail
- Water Bodies
- Streams and Creeks
- Parks, Recreation, Open Space
- Cumberland Trail
- Slopes 15% to 19.9%
- Slopes 20% to 24.9%
- Slopes 25% to 29.9%
- Slopes 30% to 34.9%
- Slopes greater than or equal to 35%



Source: RPA, April 2023





RaganSmith



Chattanooga-Hamilton County
Regional Planning Agency
RPA

ADVANCING GREAT PLACES

Figure 2.4: Natural Resources Map



INFRASTRUCTURE

Current capacity of the sewers is managed by the Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority (WWTA) with flows routed to the County's only treatment facility on Moccasin Bend many miles away. The WWTA must also consider both connection as well as capacity issues for any new development being considered Areas of the county. Currently all sewage in Hamilton County eventually flows to Moccasin Bend for treatment. A new treatment facility is planned to be in place within the next 8 years.

Types of Lines

Sewer systems are made up of different types of lines and other facilities including:

- Force Main: Can NOT tap into
- Force Low: able to tap into
- Gravity Main: able to tap into
- Pump Stations: for moving sewage over ridges or higher elevations

Treatment Plants – Currently all sewage in Hamilton County eventually flows to Moccasin Bend for treatment. A new treatment facility is planned to be in place within the next 8 years.

- Steep slopes, rock or soil types in an Area may rule out sewers or make them prohibitively expensive. Sewer facilities and expanded lines are best justified in locations where high density housing is planned and in close proximity to existing lines.
- Other system technologies may be used in the more rural Areas. Independent systems are available that include smaller scaled treatment facilities and, in some cases, pump stations. An independent system may be better suited for conservation-based subdivisions where a clustering of units requires smaller lots.
- Generally, the minimum lot size required for sep

tics systems is 25,000 square feet. Residential development in rural Areas without sewer service must therefore be built with these larger lots.

Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems

Traditional septic systems treat and dispose of wastewater on site. Traditional sewer systems convey wastewater via pipes to a central treatment plant for treatment and disposal. Both systems could be considered centralized as treatment and disposal occurs together. A decentralized wastewater treatment system is like a combination of traditional septic and sewer. In a decentralized system, buildings or groups of buildings have a septic tank on-site as an initial treatment. Wastewater is then piped to a central location for additional treatment and disposal.

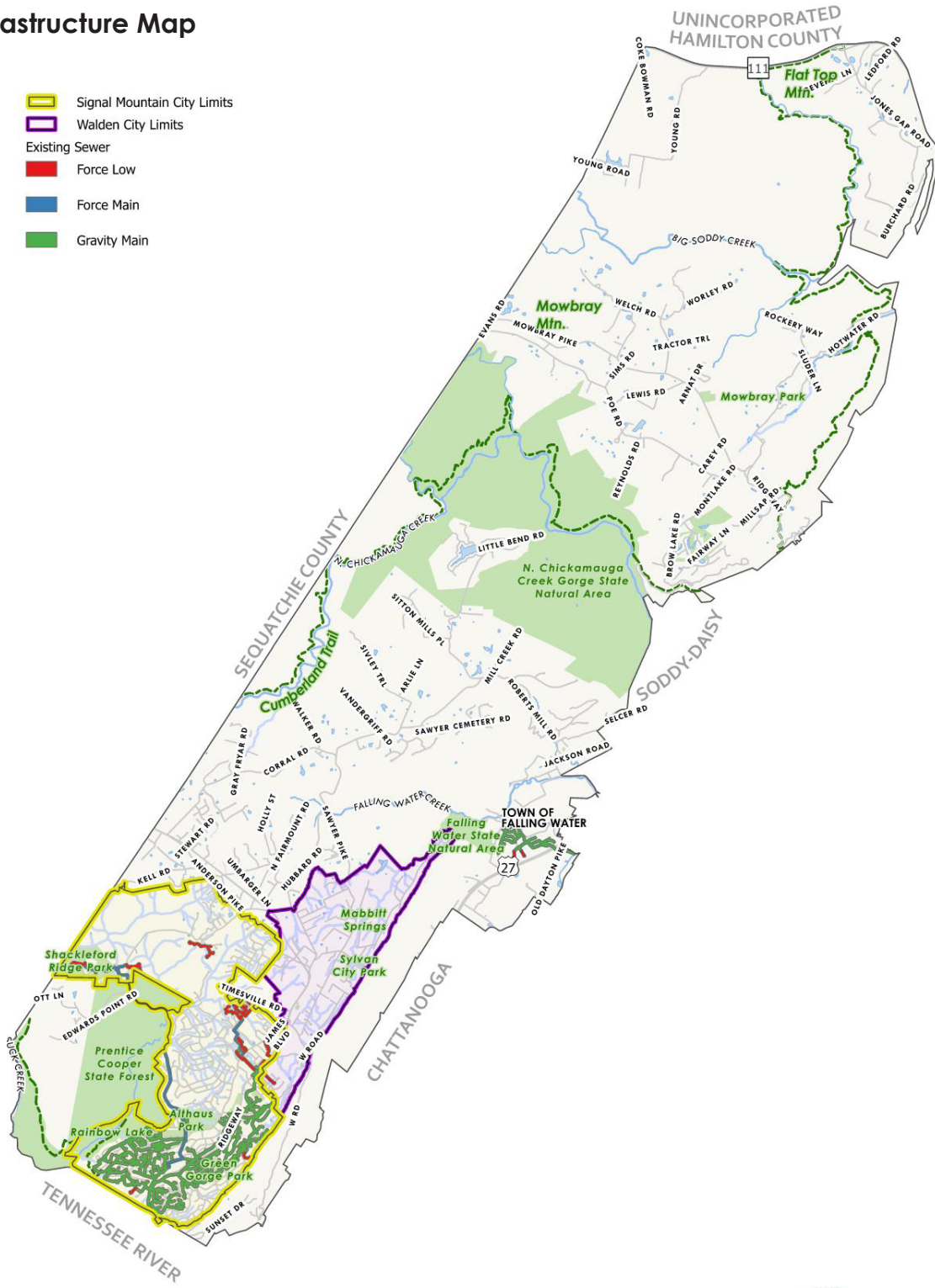
Advancements in decentralized system technology bring several benefits. One key advantage is off-site disposal, which provides flexibility in housing types and helps preserve valuable open spaces. Additionally, centralizing the final stages of treatment and disposal reduces the risk of individual system failures, positively impacting the environment. When engineered properly, decentralized systems can significantly influence sustainable development.

Stormwater

Stormwater runoff related to development can impact adjacent properties and even farther Areas off the mountain. The removal of mature vegetation that typically accommodates new development can exacerbate the potential problems.



Sewer Infrastructure Map



Source: RPA, June 2023

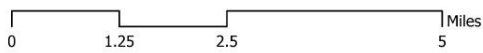


Figure 2.5: Sewer Infrastructure Map



2.5.3 MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

While the single-occupancy vehicle remains the predominant mode of transportation and will continue to be so in the foreseeable future, it is crucial not to overlook multi-modal transportation options. This analysis will focus on the network of pathways that underpin the Area's mobility and accessibility. The Area's road network forms the backbone of its transportation system, connecting neighborhoods, commercial centers, and outlying regions. The existing network of sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and trails is assessed for connectivity, safety, and accessibility. These modes are equally important in these Areas as they are in urban settings, serving purposes such as recreation, exercise, and social interaction.

Walden's Ridge currently has four primary access points: Highway 127 (Taft Highway/Signal Mountain Boulevard), the W Road, and Roberts Mill Road, and Hwy 111. Despite discussions about creating a new access road connecting to Suck Creek Road, these three thoroughfares are likely to remain the main access routes in the foreseeable future. Therefore, improving these key roads and developing systems to ensure multiple means of access when one or more of these roads are impassable should be a priority.

Neighborhood connectivity is vital for several reasons. Connected developments allow for traffic dispersion, enabling streets to be designed narrower, which naturally calms traffic. Additionally, connectivity ensures that emergency services such as police, fire, and ambulance can quickly and easily reach residents in case of emergencies.

The transportation analysis provides a detailed and dynamic overview of the current and future state of the Area's transportation network. By addressing the diverse needs of all users—drivers, transit riders, pedestrians, cyclists, and freight operators—the Area plans aim to create a balanced, efficient, and forward-thinking transportation system that supports the region's growth and enhances the quality of life for its residents.

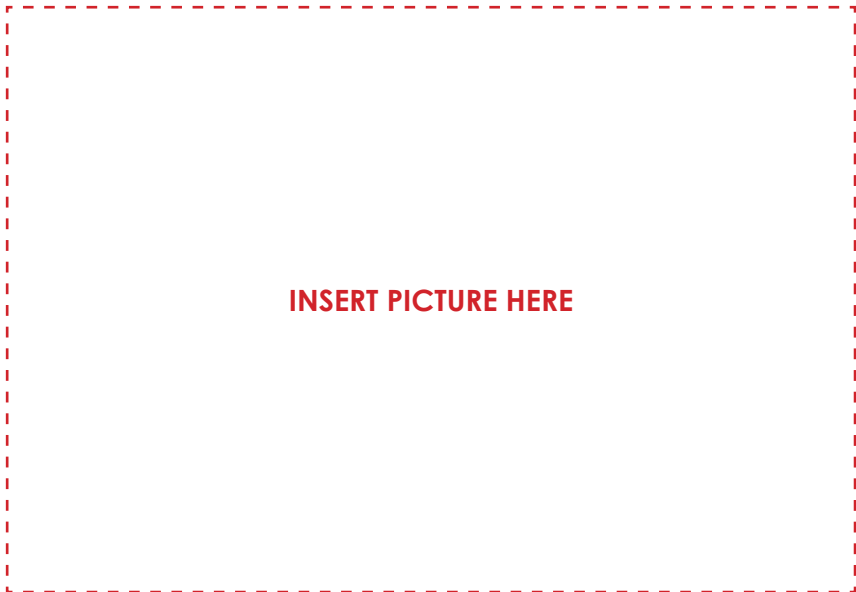


Photo Name
Source: xxxxxx



Crash Data Map

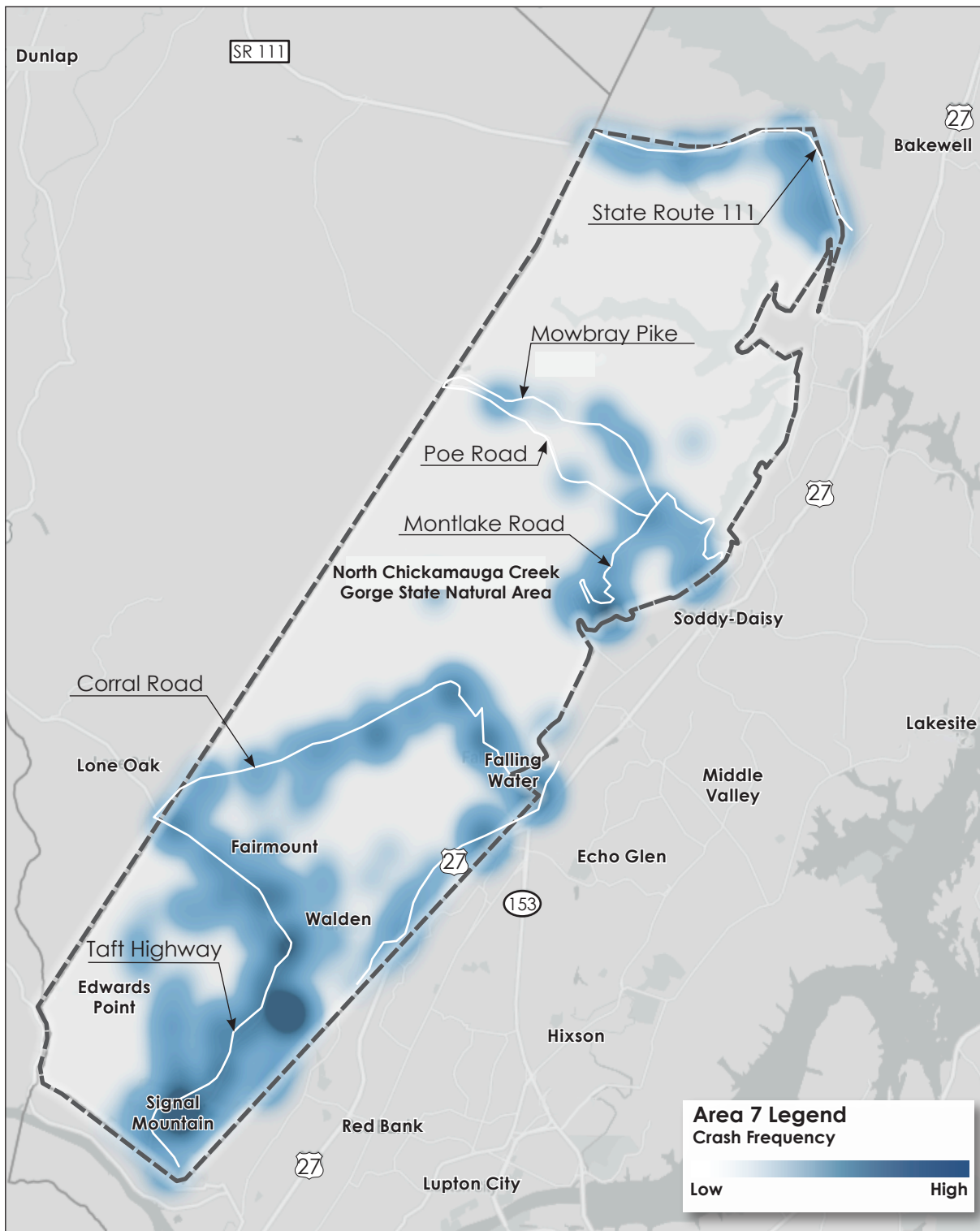


Figure 2.6: Area 7 Crash Data Map (08/24/2020-08/24/2023)



CURRENT PROPOSED PROJECTS LIST - 2050 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE HAMILTON COUNTY - CHATTANOOGA - NGA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (TPO)

Projects are ranked by the TPO and slotted into prioritization tiers (refer to Figure 2.7). Tier 1 projects are prioritized for funding between now and 2030, Tier 2 – by 2040, Tier 3 – by 2050. All projects on the list will require funding from multiple sources including local matching funds. Inclusion in the tiered list indicates that TPO members have identified a priority need but does not guarantee project funding.

Tier and Name	Description
3 - Roberts Mill Road Improvements	This Roadway Maintenance project located at Roberts Mill Rd. from Dayton Blvd. To Hixson Camp Road / Sawyer Road will consist of Maintenance and Safety Enhancements and Improvements. Project lies within Area 7 and Area 8.

Area 7 IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Name	Description
Roberts Mill Road - Fatal Crash	There was a fatal crash at this site on Roberts Mill Road
Roberts Mill Road Improvements	There was a fatal crash at this site on Roberts Mill Road
Dayton Pike at Roberts Mill Road	Based on TDOT HSAM Vol 3 Design Criterion's Future Traffic Signal Warranted volumes, this intersection is anticipated to warrant a signal by 2050
Taft Highway at Corral Road	Based on TDOT HSAM Vol 3 Design Criterion's Future Traffic Signal Warranted volumes, this intersection is anticipated to warrant a signal by 2050
US 127 - High Crash Rates	This segment of US 127 has had 46 crashes in the last 4 years.
W Road - High Crash Rates	Identified as a roadway of concern based on crash severity.



Planned Transportation Projects Map



Figure 2.7: Area 7 TPO Planned Transportation Projects Map



2.5.4 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Walden Plateau offers a comprehensive array of community facilities designed to enhance the quality of life for its residents. These facilities include educational institutions, healthcare centers, libraries, and recreational amenities, and emergency services. Each facility is integrated into the community to ensure accessibility and to meet the diverse needs of the population and support sustainable growth. While some of these facilities are within the incorporated limits of Walden and Signal Mountain they are included due to the use of the residents of the unincorporated residents of Hamilton County.

SCHOOLS AND MAJOR INSTITUTIONS

It is imperative that Hamilton County Schools (HCS) be part of the conversation when it comes to growth on Walden's Ridge. While Signal Mt. Middle/High Schools are under capacity, Nolan and Thrasher Elementary Schools are over or near capacity and Nolan has no room to expand. The highest priority right now in Walden's Ridge is to renovate and add capacity to Thrasher. According to the Hamilton County Schools Facilities Master Plan, the plan is to add capacity for 400 additional students at Thrasher, but this is a phase 2 project and the time frame is unclear. Regardless, it is encouraged that RPA work with HCS to keep them informed of proposed and pending developments so that HCS can plan accordingly. Also, development options that introduce a mix of housing types—rather than exclusively single-family, which generally results in more school-age children—may help to ease the burden on school population.

New schools tend to attract new growth in the form of residential development. As the Area continues to grow, schools may approach, or exceed, capacity due to increasing student enrollment. It will be important to continuously review school capacity and update needs accordingly.

Hamilton County Opportunity 2030 Strategic Plan

Hamilton County Schools introduced a 7 Year Strategic Plan "Opportunity 2030" to engage stakeholders and align strategies to directly respond to the needs of the students, staff, and the community.

Their mission is:

To equip students with the knowledge, skills, and supports to thrive in life.

Their vision is:

By 2030, Hamilton County Schools will be a leader in developing our diverse graduates to be connected, competitive, and life ready.

The 2030 plan has made 5 commitments:

1. Every Student Learns
2. Every Student Belongs
3. Every School Equipped
4. Every Employee Valued
5. Every Community Served



Schools Map

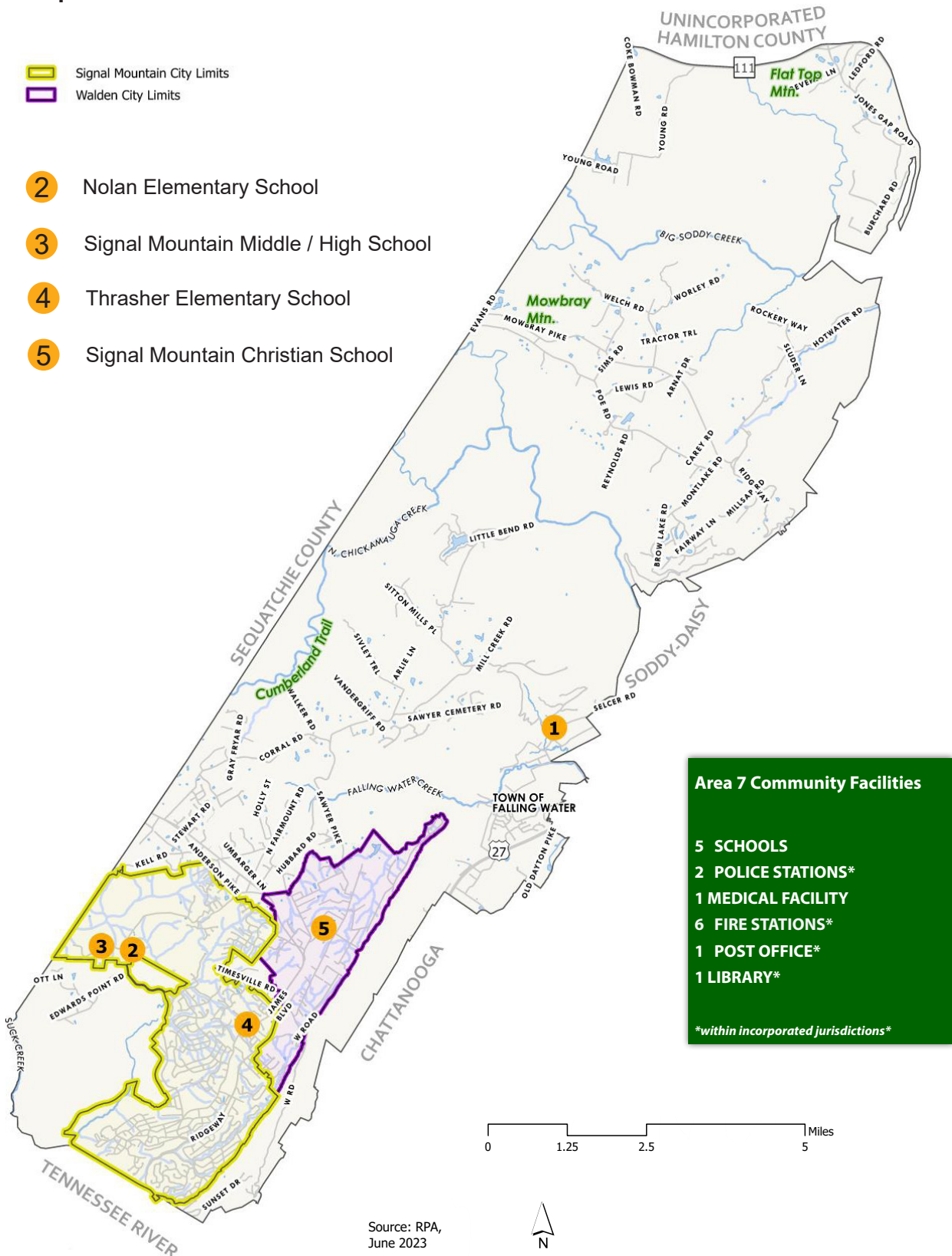


Figure 2.8: Schools Map (2023)

Source: RPA, June 2023



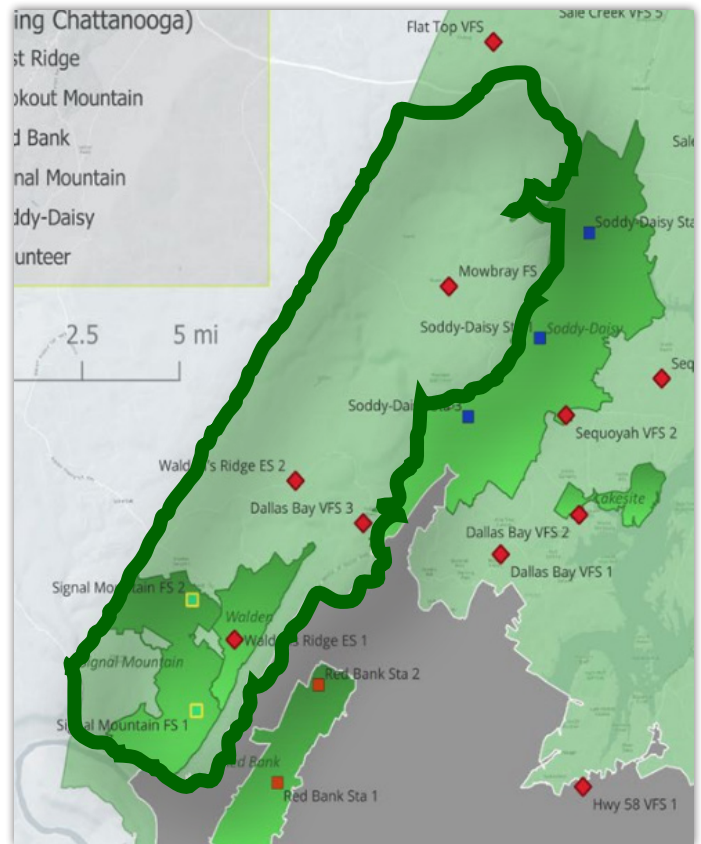
PARKS & GOVERNMENT OWNED LAND

There are a number of open spaces, parks, and state forests on the Walden Plateau. In addition to preserving sensitive environmental assets, these Areas are a recreational assets that draw hikers, bikers, horse riders, and campers from all over. As noted in chapter 4, the Cumberland Trail, eventually a 300 mile long state trail, traverses the North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Park and will ultimately connect to Signal Point. Publicly used parks in Area 7 when combined total approximately 2,057.80 acres. Privately used parks in Area 7 when combined total approximately 280.14 acres.



EMERGENCY SERVICES

As identified in chapter 1, Walden’s Ridge Emergency Services (WRES) has one station (Station 2) in the unincorporated Area of this plan and it is located on Sawyer Road near its intersection with Tuckahoe. The newest WRES station is located in the Town of Walden and there are also stations in the Town of Signal Mountain. Hamilton County Emergency Services (HCEMS) has one station (Medic 8) located on Taft Highway in the heart of the Town of Signal Mountain. WRES is a volunteer fire department, but there is anticipation that it will eventually transition to a full-time fire department. An addition to Station 2 in the unincorporated Area is in the planning stages. As growth on the mountain continues, there is some benefit to considering a relocating Medic 8 to a more central location to improve response times. WRES has confirmed that while they cannot transport patients, their apparatus has the same medical equipment as HCEMS and there are many locations where Lifeforce can land. This should provide peace of mind to residents in the unincorporated Areas. Nevertheless, as growth continues, it will be important to review emergency service and response and improve accordingly.



Fire Station Locations
Source: 2024 Fire and Rescue Services Evaluation Report (Tri-Star)



2.5.5 PLAN ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Walden Plateau is committed to preserving its character, enhancing resilience, improving transportation options, and providing robust community facilities. Strategic investments and targeted actions in these Areas are crucial for supporting the community's growth and ensuring its long-term well-being.

The analysis of Walden Plateau offers a comprehensive view of its development and community needs. The Area is characterized by a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, reflecting a commitment to balancing development with the preservation of its natural landscape. Walden Plateau emphasizes low-density residential zones and green spaces, while increasingly adopting mixed-use developments that enhance local amenities and maintain its scenic beauty.

The community demonstrates notable resilience through proactive measures for managing natural hazards and employing sustainable land management practices. There remains potential, however, to further bolster resilience by adopting additional climate adaptation strategies and integrating sustainability practices across various sectors. The significant proportion of vacant land presents opportunities for thoughtful and strategic development that can enhance the community without compromising its character.

Transportation and mobility within Walden Plateau are supported by a well-maintained network of roads and pedestrian pathways. Ongoing improvements aim to enhance connectivity and reduce traffic congestion through expanded public transit options and multi-modal transportation systems. The analysis identifies a need for better bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to support active transportation and integrate transportation planning with land use strategies.

The Area's community facilities, including parks, recreational centers, and community hubs, effectively support residents' needs and contribute to a high quality of life. While current facilities are well-utilized,

there is a growing demand for additional spaces and upgraded amenities to serve the expanding population. Future planning should focus on enhancing and expanding these facilities to accommodate a diverse and growing community.

By understanding these patterns, we can better navigate the complexities of growth and development, ensuring that the Area's unique character and appeal are preserved for future generations. The dynamic nature of Walden's Plateau's built environment promises a future of continued vitality and resilience.



PLAN ANALYSIS MAP

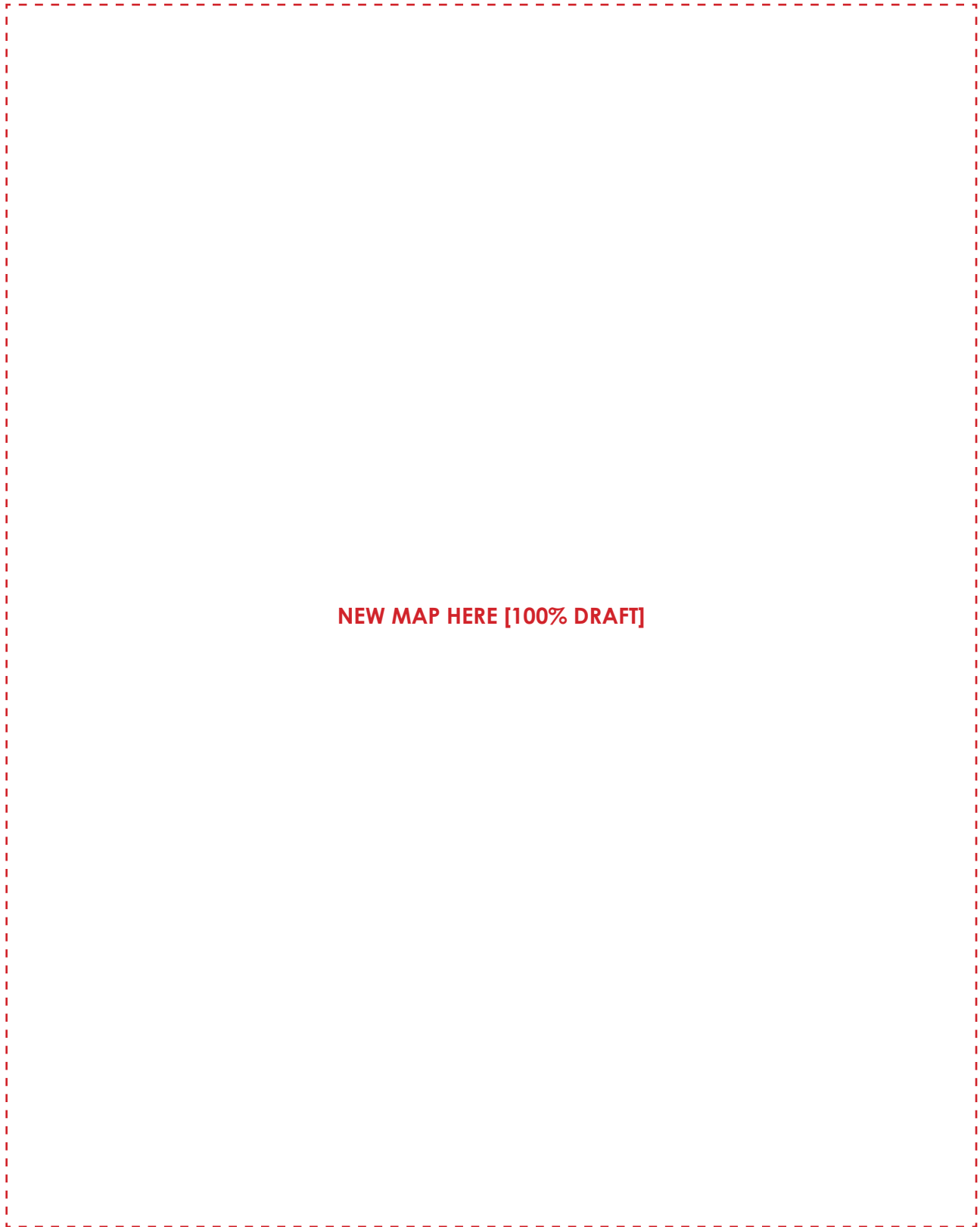


Figure 2.9: Plan Analysis Map (Land Use, Resiliency, Mobility, Community Facilities)



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CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY VISION & GOALS

- INTRODUCTION
- 3.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK
- 3.2 GOALS
- 3.3 VISION STATEMENT



Shaping a vision for the future of the Walden Plateau involves exploring its potential and engaging with residents and business owners to understand their aspirations for the next decade. What qualities do people value? What elements make this Area unique or special? To identify these community values, two surveys were distributed during the planning process. During public meetings, participants were invited to identify issues and prioritize potential solutions. While some concerns were specific to particular sub-Areas, many were relevant to the entire region. Advisory Committee members played a key role in drafting the original vision statement for the future of the Walden Plateau in 1997.

The initial feedback produced four key themes which ultimately outlined the analysis portion of this plan. Those key themes helped shaped the remainder of this plan and are identified in Chapter 2 of this plan.



Based on survey responses, input from community meetings, feedback from the Advisory Committee, and professional guidance from staff and technical advisors, we have drafted goals, a vision statement, and recommendations to reflect the shared values of the Walden Plateau community to establish a direction for the future.

A community's **GOALS** form the foundation of its identity and guide its actions and decisions. They identify the driving forces of the community, by adhering to these core goals, the community fosters a sense of unity and purpose, enabling all members to work together towards a common vision of a prosperous and harmonious future.

A **VISION STATEMENT** outlines the collective aspirations and core values of the community. It serves as a guide, highlighting the community's desired future and setting a clear direction for growth and development. Crafted through collaborative input, the vision statement emphasizes key principles such as preservation, recreation, infrastructure, housing, and overall quality of life.



Public Meeting
Source: RPA



3.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community feedback is crucial in creating an Area plan because it ensures that the voices of those who live, work, and play there are heard and valued. The residents have an intimate understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities within their community, providing insights that outside experts might overlook. Engaging the community fosters a sense of ownership and collaboration, making the planning process more inclusive and transparent. By incorporating diverse perspectives from both incorporated and unincorporated residents, we can create a more comprehensive and effective plan that reflects the true needs and aspirations of the people it serves. Ultimately, community feedback ensures that the final plan promotes sustainable development, enhances quality of life, and preserves the distinctive character of the Walden Plateau.

Public input is vital to the success of any planning process and in the Area planning process for Hamilton County. Understanding the perspectives of those who live and work in a community every day provides invaluable insights to experts developing concepts and recommendations. We offered several opportunities for the public to share their thoughts and feedback in various formats. Our goal was to understand the shared vision of Walden’s Ridge.

Area 7 is unique from other Area Plans because it was initially undergoing an individual planning effort prior to the Plan Hamilton which is outlined in Chapter 1. While the information gathered during that process is influencing some of the recommendations, the following page identifies community meetings included in the Plan Hamilton effort only.

COMMUNITY TIMELINE

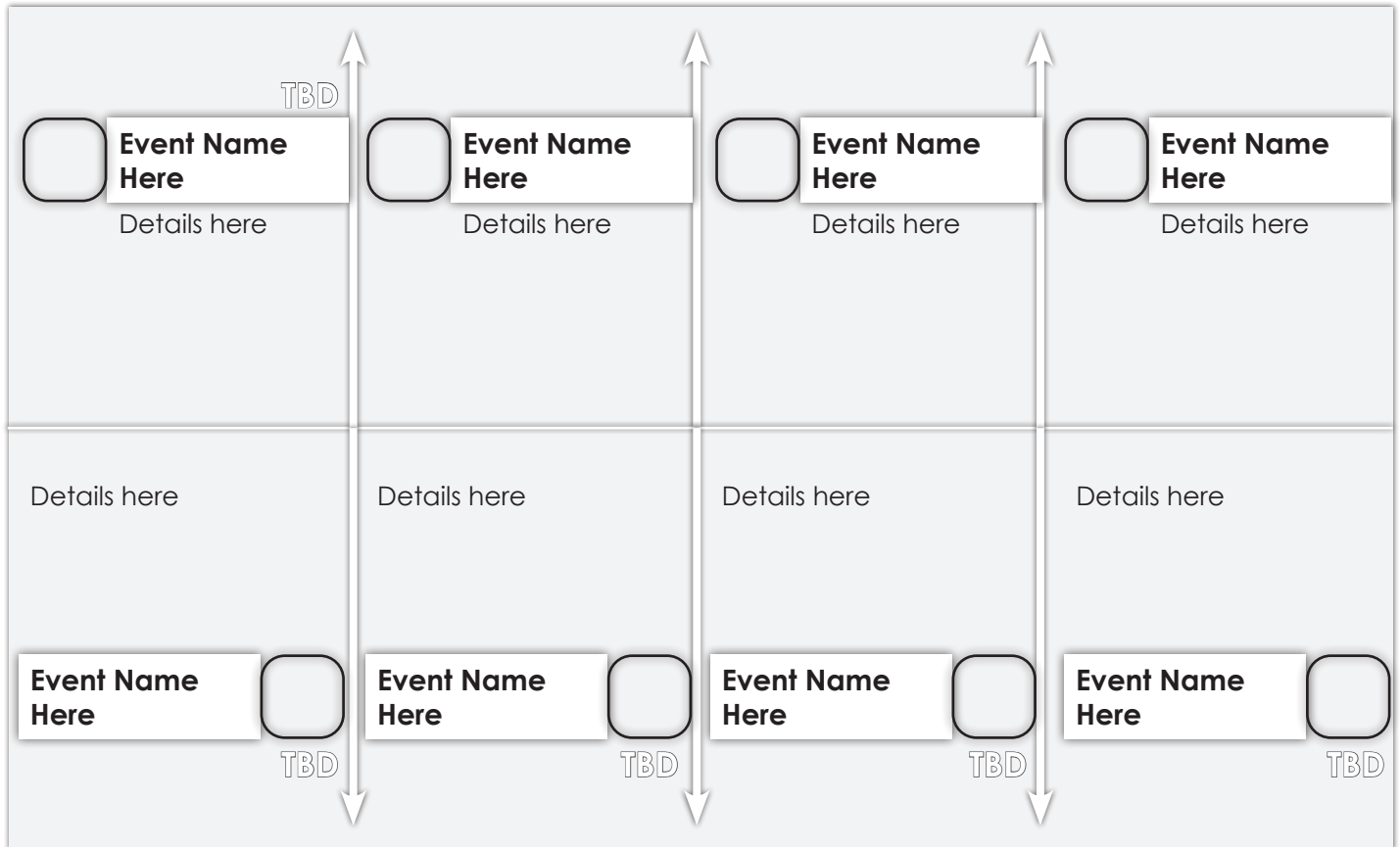


Figure 3.1 Timeline of Community Outreach



The following outlines the public meetings held to provide a platform for the community to express concerns, share priorities, and offer feedback on the proposed strategies within the Area Plan. Through an analysis of the themes and perspectives that emerged, this section highlights the key issues raised by participants. Input from these meetings plays a crucial role in shaping the recommendations, ensuring the Area Plan aligns with the community’s needs and values.

KICK-OFF

In October 2023, a kick-off meeting took place at the Bachman Community Center. The goal of the first meeting was to introduce to the purpose of Area planning as well as the process as a whole and gather initial feedback from the community. A summary of the input received at the kick-off meeting is included in Appendix _.

PUBLIC MEETING #2

In November 2023, the second public meeting was held at Walden Ride Emergency Services. The goal of this meeting was to not only update the community on the process but to understand the community vision so that was the forefront of the Area planning process before the documents were created. The insights and ideas gathered from all these meetings are summarized in Appendix _.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

In addition to in-person engagement, we conducted a comprehensive public opinion survey from August 2023 through October 2023. This survey covered a wide range of topics, including recent and current development, future development, environmental issues, and mobility. The valuable insights gained from the survey are included in Appendix _.

ONLINE INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS

Two countywide informational meetings were held online by the RPA in January of 2024 to discuss 4 topics with the public including: Traffic & Transportation, Commercial Centers & Corridors, Housing, and Parks & Greenways.



Area 7 Plan Meeting (October 2023)
Source: RPA



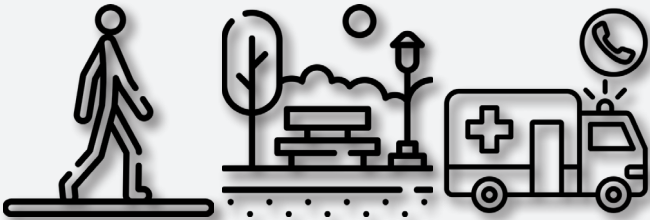
Area 7 Plan Meeting (October 2023)
Source: RPA



TOP ISSUES FOR AREA 7 BASED ON COMMUNITY INPUT:

3 types of civic uses and services most needed in the Walden Plateau:

1. Trails, Greenways & Sidewalks
2. Parks & Open Space
3. Emergency Services



3 types of Commercial uses and services most needed in Area 7:

1. Food & Beverage
2. Grocery
3. Leisure / Entertainment



What type of Commercial Development the community would support:

69%

Neighborhood Commercial

47%

Mixed-use Commercial Center



WHAT DID WE HEAR?

“Create more open space”

“Preserve rural community and lifestyle”

“Connect to North Chickamauga Creek and Cumberland Trail”

“Consider traffic issues created by new development”

“Want development standards to protect trees, slopes, etc.”

“More conservation easements”

“Use existing commercial space before building new”

“Architectural design and setbacks, limit visual impact on ridgeways (escarpment)”

“Single-Family development”



3.2 Area PLAN GOALS

These seven general Area plan goals apply to all five unincorporated Areas and create a blueprint for balanced and sustainable growth in Hamilton County, enhancing its unique character and natural beauty. These goals are based on the four Community Themes established in Chapter 2 including Land Use and Development Character, Resiliency, Transportation and Mobility, and Community Facilities.

By focusing on strategic growth management, we aim to harmonize new development with existing community values and landscapes, fostering economic vitality while preserving the charm of our neighborhoods. Our commitment to conserving natural resources ensures

they are protected and enhanced for future generations, promoting sustainable practices. Providing diverse and affordable housing options is essential for an inclusive and thriving community. Ensuring housing meets the needs of all residents supports a diverse population and fosters socioeconomic stability.

By addressing these interconnected goals, Hamilton County is committed to creating a resilient, vibrant, and sustainable future that enhances the quality of life for all residents. Each goal is paired with specific policy recommendations and strategies to ensure successful implementation and long-term benefits for our community.



3.3 VISION STATEMENT

As we look toward the future of the unincorporated Areas of Hamilton County, we aim to craft a vision statement that captures our shared aspirations and values. This statement isn't just a list of goals; it's a reflection of our dedication to honoring our rich heritage while embracing sustainable growth. We are committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents through thoughtful development, preserving our natural re-

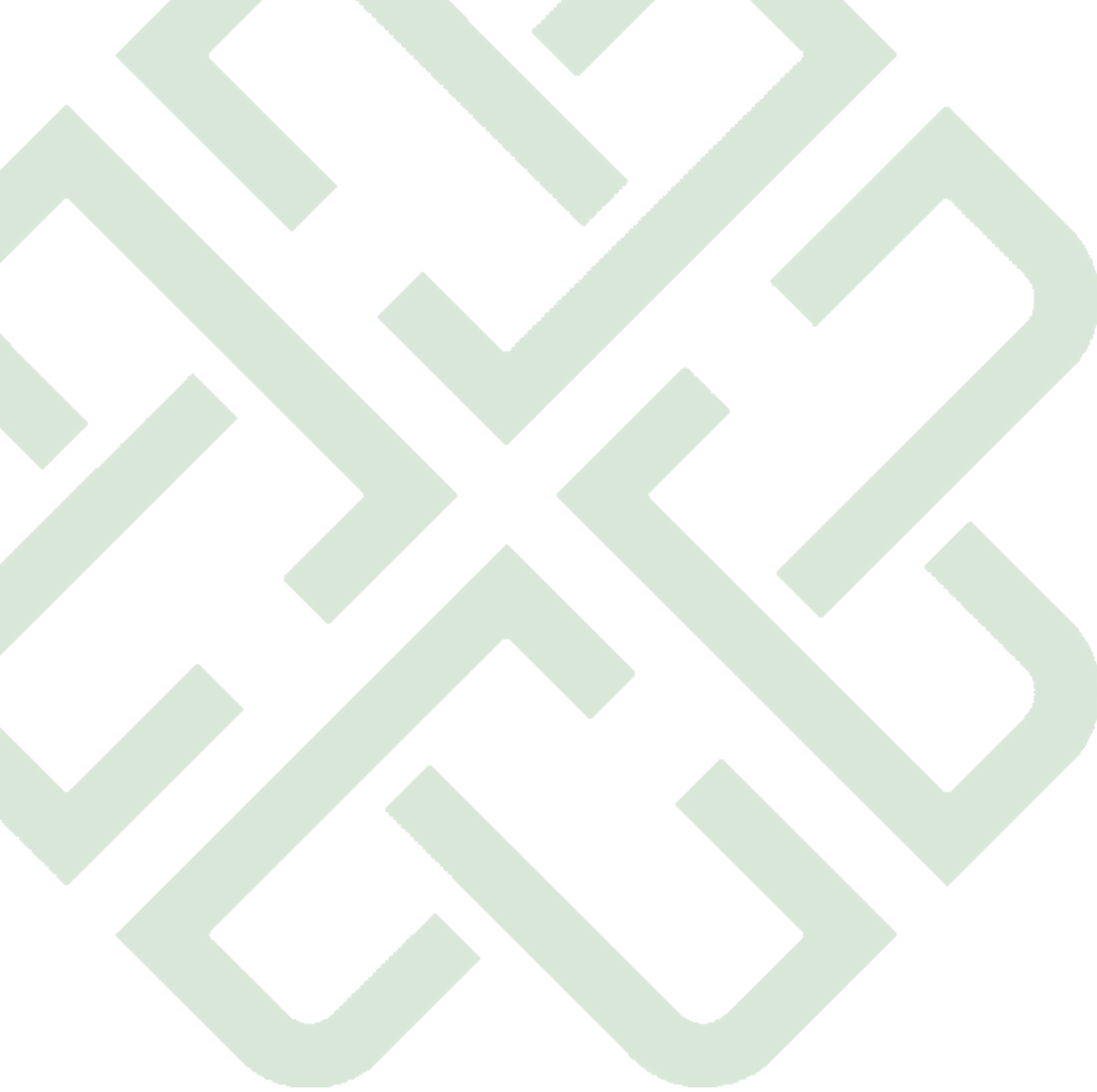
sources, and fostering economic opportunities. By engaging in collaborative and transparent planning, we will build resilient, connected, and thriving neighborhoods where everyone can live, work, and prosper together for generations. This vision statement will serve as our guide, illuminating the path toward a vibrant and inclusive future for Hamilton County's unincorporated Areas.

To create vibrant and SUSTAINABLE communities that honor our heritage while embracing growth. We aim to ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE by promoting THOUGHTFUL DEVELOPMENT, preserving NATURAL RESOURCES, and fostering ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. Through collaborative and transparent planning, we will build RESILIENT, CONNECTED, and THRIVING NEIGHBORHOODS where everyone can live, work, and prosper together for generations.



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CHAPTER 4

PLANS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- INTRODUCTION
- 4.1 PLAN OVERVIEW
- 4.2 PLACE TYPES
- 4.3 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



4.1 PLAN OVERVIEW

The CHRPA draws on a wide range of resources to determine the most suitable land uses within Hamilton County. While standard practices such as zoning and future land use often guide these decisions, it's crucial to recognize that the rich history of our neighborhoods and the specific desires and needs of the community extend beyond these conventional frameworks.

This chapter outlines the three key steps in the planning process used as part of the comprehensive planning effort. The primary aim of these steps is to prioritize community character, ensuring that each Area's unique identity and needs are at the forefront of decision-making. By leveraging distinct planning models, the RPA has developed Place Types that cater to the specific conditions of each of the thirteen Areas

within Hamilton County. The process begins with a thorough understanding of each Area's unique characteristics and needs. These Place Types serve as a foundation for developing customized conditions and recommendations. The final step involves formulating specific Policy Recommendations, which provide best practices for implementing the earlier planning stages.

The RPA's approach is uniquely multi-layered, incorporating best management practices tailored to the needs of each individual site. This method ensures that land use decisions are not only guided by standard practices but also by a deep understanding of local contexts, resulting in a planning process that is responsive to the diverse needs of Hamilton County's communities.

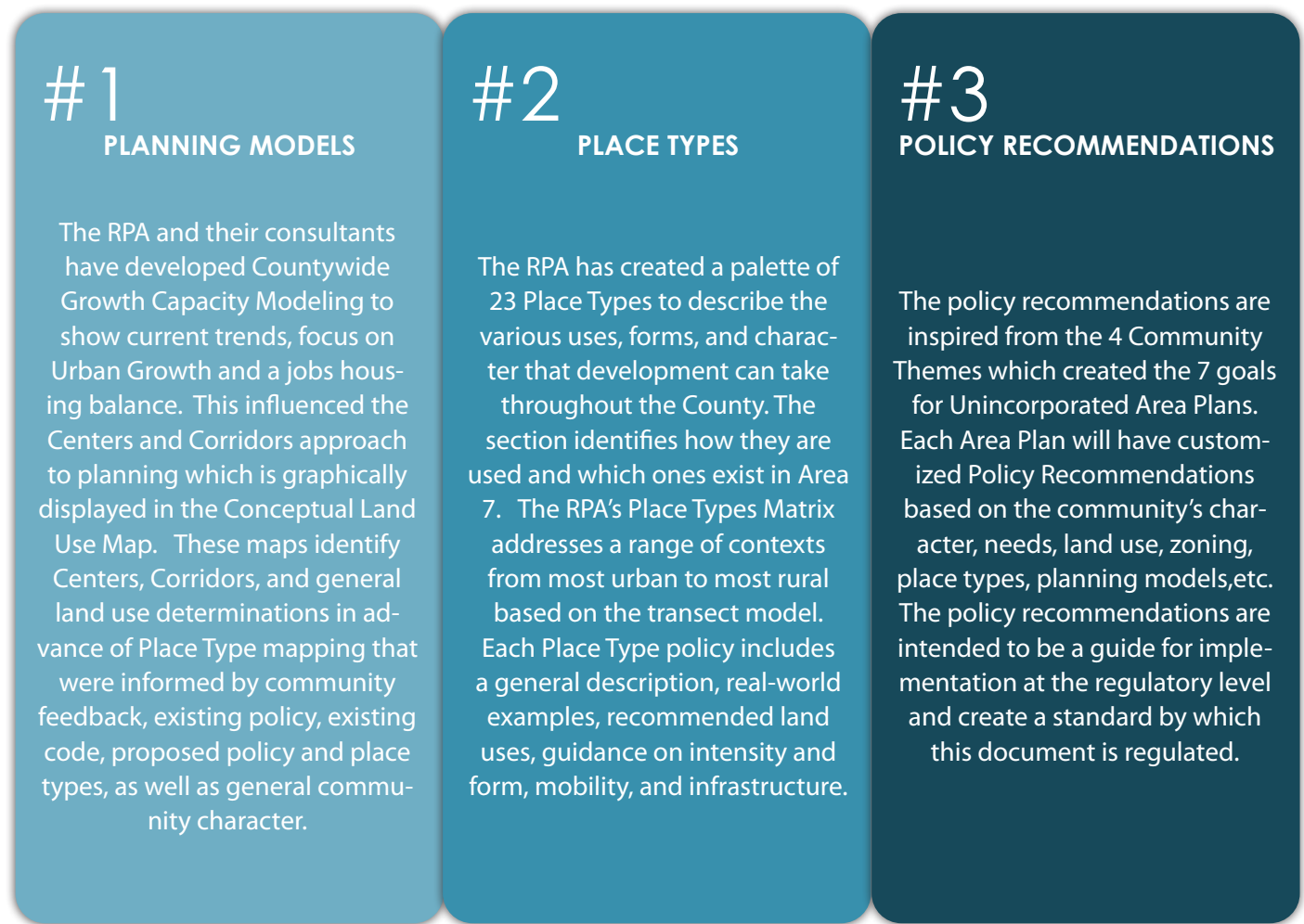


Figure 4.1 Plan Types



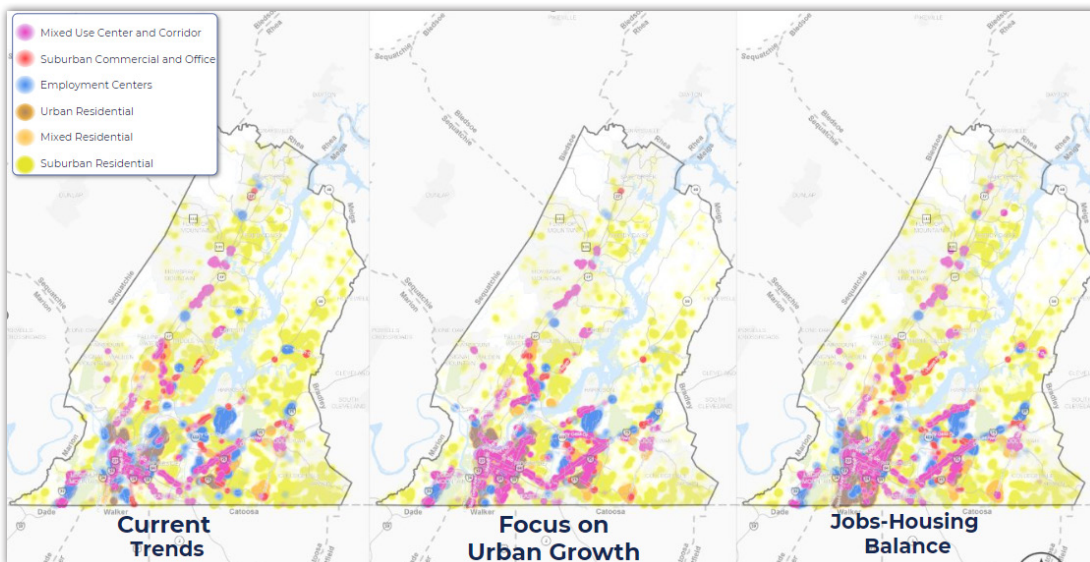
4.1.1 PLANNING MODELS AND PRACTICES

COUNTY-WIDE GROWTH CAPACITY MODELING

Hamilton County and RPA leadership have made concerted efforts to create a separate process and framework for the Comprehensive Plan governing Hamilton County and the plan that will govern land and neighborhoods within the City of Chattanooga’s municipal boundaries. The unique characteristics of urban versus rural landscapes, buildings, economic drivers, transportation needs, housing preferences, and even cultures result in residents with different concerns and visions for their future. In recognition of this, county leadership hired a different consultant team, under separate contracts, with their own staff managers to complete Area by Area plans for unincorporated Hamilton County. Consistent methods of analysis and a common framework for describing and organizing future growth into recognized land use categories will have been applied to both the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County portions of the comprehensive plan, however the recommendations for Tfuture land uses to serve the community, strategic policy, implementation solutions and metrics for success will be distinct.

Planning Consultants from the City and County came together for only one shared analysis task: to model the Areas that had capacity for growth and to project the preferred locations for future growth based

on infrastructure capacity, existing and predicted employment hubs, and market dynamics. This analysis resulted in three scenarios that were further examined for potential infrastructure implications, quality of life implications, and consistency with the growth preferences in each segment of the community. Overall growth projection data was derived from the RCLCO market analysis completed for the RPA in June of 2023, Census.Gov data, household, Moody’s Analytics, the Greater Chattanooga Board of Realtors and others. This resulted in a corroborated growth estimates of 46,000 new households, and 40,000 to 50,000 new jobs in the combined Chattanooga / Hamilton County Region between now and 2040. A land use model was created to study three sets of growth parameters. One that would manage new growth according to existing policies resulting in trends similar to the dispersed pattern observed in new permit data over the last decade, the Current Trends scenario. Another set of parameters was established to study a growth pattern governed by strict policies to funnel growth within the Chattanooga municipal limits, Focus On Urban Growth. A third, Jobs-Housing Balance, established more geographic balance to where growth will occur focusing the most growth in Chattanooga proper but also reflecting growth in adjacent incorporated communities and unincorporated growth centers projected to have capacity based on planned infrastructure and synergies with existing uses.



CENTERS AND CORRIDOR APPROACH

The Centers and Corridors Approach is a land development strategy that the RPA has developed to address growth and redevelopment throughout Chattanooga and Hamilton County and which will influence this plan's recommendations. It has three essential concepts:

- Walkable, clustered Centers where retail uses are concentrated.
- Transit-supportive Corridors comprised of a mix of uses, including multi-family housing
- Medium and higher density housing near Centers and Corridors to support their economic vitality and local transit viability.

This approach addresses the plan's 7 Goals and the community's preferences:

1. Complete Communities

A mix of housing types in close proximity to centers and corridors gives residents convenient access to daily needs, employment, recreation, and transportation options.

2. Connected Communities

Connected communities enable walking, biking, and transit options, all of which depend on a mix of uses in close proximity. Concentrating businesses in Centers and at key locations along Corridors makes trip consolidation and alternate transportation modes more feasible, helping to reduce congestion.

3. Healthy Communities

Communities, where active transportation options and public greenways and parks are available, tend to be healthier: Proximity to these amenities allows people to recreate and get around by providing the built environment to do so.

4. Safe Communities

Corridors with sidewalks, street trees, and bike lanes promote safe and efficient movement for all users including motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Managing the spacing and frequency of driveway access points, and turn pockets, can add predictability to traffic patterns and reduce accidents.

5. Unique and Attractive Communities

Place Types emphasize form and design over use which can help preserve and foster authentic local uses and character. Due to changes in the bricks-and-mortar retail market, Corridors throughout our community have a growing number of vacant businesses, providing opportunities for new multi-family housing and community services. Locating multi-family housing along these Corridors preserves the character of the existing single-family neighborhoods without the encroachment of higher density housing, as requested by Area 7 residents. It also provides new opportunities for other community needs like a town square, library or health services, or senior housing.

6. Economically Vibrant Communities

Given finite government resources, the Centers and Corridors approach helps prioritize focus infrastructure investments. Walkable, compact Centers have positive economic impacts for the County. Centers require a certain number of households within a given proximity (depending on their size) in order to sustain businesses. Businesses also tend to be more successful in Centers where retail, services, and housing co-located. Also, compact development yields more tax revenue with fewer service demands per acre than dispersed development.



4.1.2 CONCEPTUAL LAND USE MAP

The conceptual land use map utilizes simple icons identify Areas that could see growth and those that should remain

less developed. They inform the place type mapping. These maps identify potential Areas for mixed-use Centers and Corridors, Resort/Recreation, Special Districts and Residential. The purpose of these maps is to provide guidance to residents, development interests, utility providers, planners, and county leadership to help anticipate future land use. Including Areas that should be primarily preserved in their current form or with incremental growth and Areas where new growth should be accommodated to support economic opportunity and a balance of services across the County. The conceptual land use maps also identify Areas with challenging topographic or hydrologic constraints, existing agricultural use, important regional facilities, and recreational assets. While parcel size and density was considered this map is generalized to highlight projected trends and opportunities and to provide guidance on

Centers & Corridors

Centers and Corridors are planned considering a variety of factors including infrastructure capacity, transportation factors, proximity to schools and emergency services, environmental conditions, recreational access, housing opportunities, and access to commercial services. Centers allow integration of commercial and community services proximate to existing neighborhoods reducing trips and the frequency of investment in regional infrastructure. Center and Corridor designations have been applied in rural Areas to promote setbacks to preserve rural landscapes and development forms. Also to consolidate points of access to primary roadways, limit congestion, and protect rural lifestyles. In suburban settings, corridors are utilized to identify Areas for redevelopment as well as primary transportation corridors that may need more active management to address continued development pressure. When, as a community, we want to incorporate space for a school, a corner restaurant or coffee shop, a convenience store, a professional office or even a care facility for elderly family members; residential place types do not apply. Therefore centers are applied at a variety of scales to complete our community.

Resort/Recreation

Resort Recreation Centers are introduced in this plan as a specialty district place type. Hamilton County has a wealth of recreational assets including highly programmed parks, blended park-preserves such as Enterprise Nature Park, and passive use natural Areas and preserves.

These special use Areas are revered by all types of recreation enthusiasts: league sports athletes, paddlers, fitness walkers, bird watchers, runners, cyclists, nature photographers, and neighborhood walkers. The economic potential of these assets and the groups who patronize them has not been as readily recognized. Community and stakeholder input has identified locations where commerce can be sustainably integrated with recreation to provide jobs, tax base, and income while enhancing and preserving the places we cherish.

Specialty Districts

Specialty Districts are used to designate the places that form the fabric of our community. They may not be where we live or shop but they house many of the other essential resources we require to thrive in modern society. These include the campuses where our children attend school, the land and facilities that produce our food, power our utility grids, clean our water, house our medical and emergency response facilities, build our communities, and manufacture the products we utilize every day. In many cases, this means they are also our places of employment.

Residential

Residential place types are the places (outside of centers and corridors) that make up the neighborhoods we call home. They can be urban or rural, vertical and dense, or secluded retreats and are the building blocks of most traditional neighborhoods and modern suburbs.



Conceptual Land Use Map

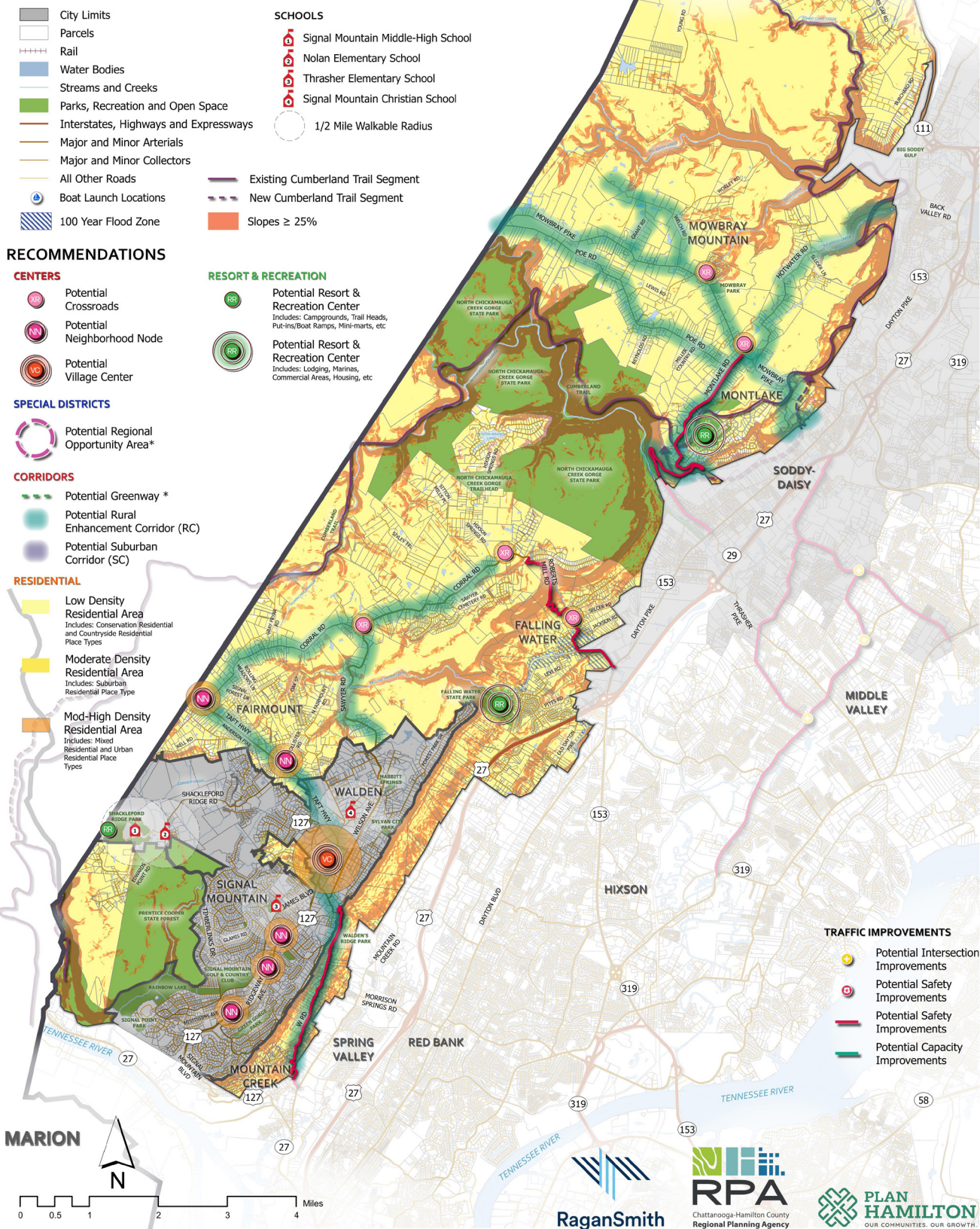


Figure 4.3: Conceptual Land Use Map



4.1.3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The growth opportunities for Area 7 should be tempered by constraints related to natural features, terrain, and infrastructure. In general, the growth should be primarily rural residential in nature and consistent with the base zoned density. It should provide buffers from primary roads with open space around natural features and to provide neighborhood walking paths and recreation. Service and Commercial development to serve adjacent neighborhoods should be located in Centers and Corridors:

Centers:

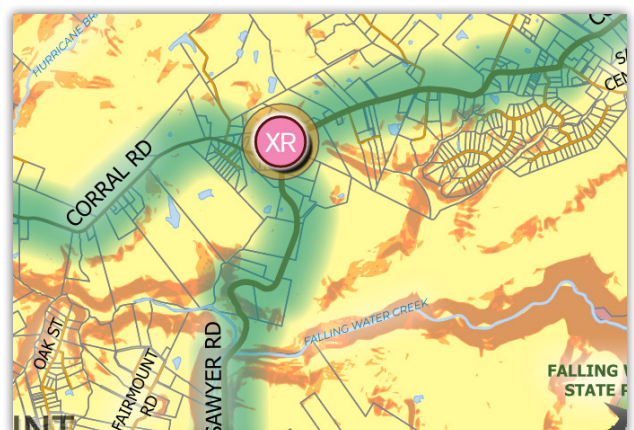
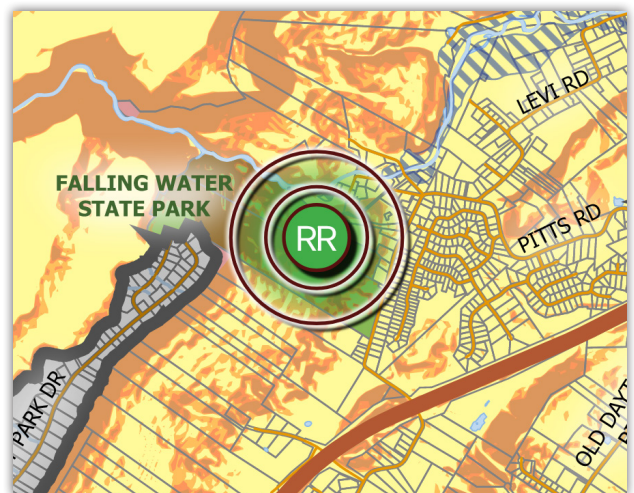
New centers should be of a scale to primarily serve existing local residents and co-located with existing commercial or community services. Small clusters of commercial use should be connected with one another and be required to provide safe pedestrian crossings where they include development on both sides of a road. A mix housing at higher densities than the surrounding Areas may be appropriate in centers and crossroads and should include internal walking paths with connections to adjacent commercial uses.

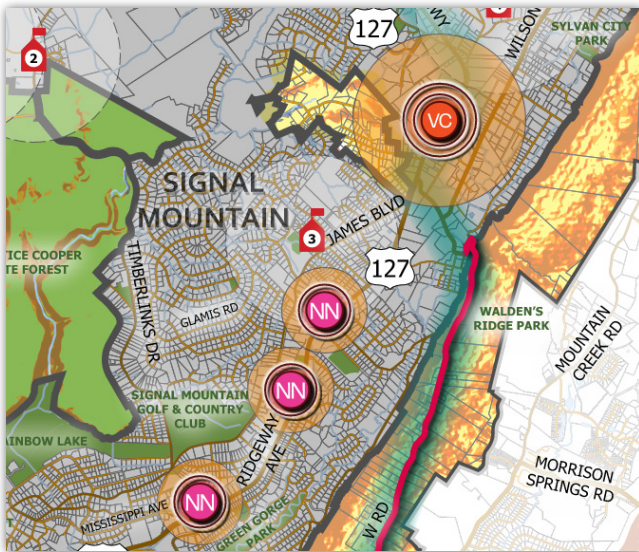
Recreation and Resort Centers:

The opportunity for Recreation and Resort Centers could occur at a variety of scales from small campgrounds with recreational amenities to small lodges or cabin developments with restaurants, outfitters, and services for destination visitors. The potential for recreation-based development is supported by the wealth of high value natural assets and parks in Area 7 including Prentice Cooper State Park, the Rainbow Lake trail complex, Signal Point Military Park, Shackelford Ridge Park, Mabbitt Springs, Falling Water State Park, North Chickamauga Gorge State Park, and the potential for the Cumberland Trail to link these assets as a cohesive system. These centers are a form of development that could generate new tax base and financial returns for landowners with lower cumulative impacts on roads, schools, utilities, and environmental assets than suburban residential growth.

Corridors:

Rural Corridors are identified through much of Area 7 and should be utilized to establish criteria for rural development that protects the public right of way, maintains good traffic flows, and preserves the rural character of these Areas. Rural Corridor criteria should create reasonable setbacks for lots and minimize access points to primary roads by promoting internal connections between parcels and carefully planning and aligning development access points.



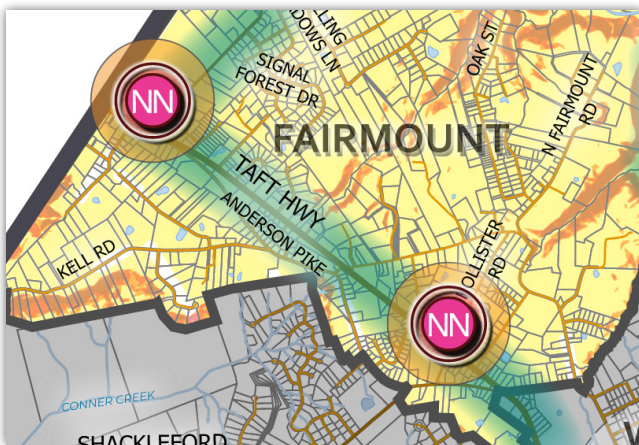


South

Centers: The previously completed plan for the southern portion of Area 7 near Signal Mountain / Town of Walden provided for a potential new Town Center near the Taft Highway Ace Hardware and the intersection of Taft Highway and Fairmount Pike. Smaller Crossroads Centers were identified on Taft Highway near the Signal Plaza development (Pruett's Market) and in the vicinity of Althaus Park and Signal Mountain Town Hall. This plan makes no changes to those previously recommended locations.

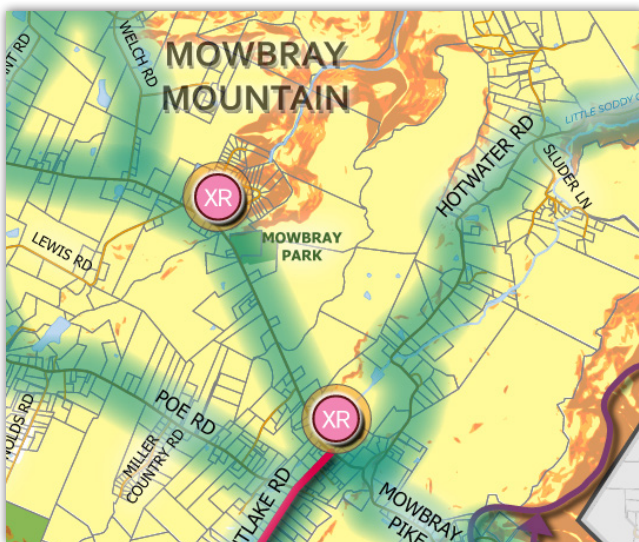
Middle

Centers: Potential Crossroads or Neighborhood Nodes for limited convenience retail, commercial or community services, and housing variety are identified near the intersections of Corral and Hollister Roads with Taft Highway (SR127) and at Corral Road / Sawyer Road. Based on existing uses similar opportunities present at Corral Road / Hixson Springs / Roberts Mill Road.



North

Centers: A potential small Resort Recreation Center is proposed off Mowbray Pike. This center could provide lodging, services, trailhead capacity, and complimentary recreational programming to the newly designated state park at North Chickamauga Gorge, additional state owned recreation land around the Cumberland Trail, and a growing segment of climbing, paddling, and outdoor recreation-centered businesses in the vicinity. Crossroads Centers are proposed along Mowbray Pike / Montlake Road with the Mountain General Store as an existing anchor and another further up the mountain near the intersections with Lewis Road and Welch Road centered around Grant's Station and C-Store. A Crossroads at SR 111 and Jones Gap Road anchored by the Eagle Travel Center could expand to a Neighborhood Node in the future to provide housing options and additional services to the north end of Area 7 and the Area 13 neighborhoods along Back Valley Road. Neighborhood commercial services, landscaping, and outdoor products, and sale of agricultural products would all be appropriate. The market for a larger center at this location may take many years to develop.



4.2 PLACE TYPES

Place Types are carefully designated to guide future development and align with the community's vision and adopted plans. These designations indicate whether an Area is slated for significant change, gradual transformation, or preservation with minimal alterations. Key considerations include existing zoning, proximity to centers, schools, and parks, as well as the presence of natural resources, necessary infrastructure, and public services. Once Area Plans are adopted, these Place Type designations become essential tools for the Regional Planning Agency (RPA) in making informed zoning recommendations. The recommendations for zoning changes are made based on how well the proposed zone aligns with the intended characteristics of the Place Type.

Place Types illustrate a desired character to guide development across a range of community types, from the most urban to suburban, to the most rural places. This distinction is prominently noted in the names of most Place Types, such as Suburban Residential, Urban Residential, and Countryside Residential. Some key elements that contribute to Hamilton County's sense of place include important vistas, the river and its setting within the forested ridges, our diversity of trees, and our

historic buildings. This sense of place can occur at multiple levels - across an entire city, within individual neighborhoods, or in a specific block. The transect graphic below identifies seven general levels of the natural environment to the built environment. The Place Types were partially based on this transect model to ensure that all aspects of Hamilton County's character were considered.

To promote good placemaking, the RPA uses Place Types to influence the form and character of development. This is done alongside the Centers and Corridors approach, as described in Chapter 4.1, to guide different types of development to the most suitable locations. This is based on factors such as Land Use and Development Character, Resiliency, Mobility and Transportation, and Community Facilities.

By designating Place Types, we are not just planning for the present but also safeguarding the unique essence of Hamilton County for future generations. Whether it's the urban vibrancy, suburban charm, or rural tranquility, each Place Type plays a crucial role in maintaining the region's distinct identity and ensuring thoughtful, cohesive development.



Transect Zones from Natural (left) to Special District (right).

Source: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company



4.2.1 HOW ARE THEY USED?

Place Types reflect whether the community vision and adopted plan identifies an Area for significant change, gradual transformation, or preservation with little change. Other factors, such as the surrounding or existing zoning, proximity to Centers, schools or parks, the location of natural resources, necessary infrastructure, and public services are considered. Once Area Plans are adopted, the Place Type designations within those Plans are used by the RPA to inform zoning decisions. A recommendation for a zoning change is based on whether the requested zone will result in the Place Type characteristics described in this chapter.

“Place Types do not necessarily describe what exists today, but rather the desired vision of what a place is to become.”

- Chattanooga - Hamilton County

Regional Planning Agency (CHSPA)

PREDOMINANT USES, LIMITED USES, AND DENSITY

Place Types intentionally promote a mix of uses as a means of providing residents with more housing choices and more access to daily needs and jobs. Each Place Type listed in this subchapter provides examples of potential uses, along with other elements that generally define its character and are divided into:

1. Predominant Uses – The most prevalent, most frequently
2. Limited Uses – Less common, but can still be compatible with the predominant use if limited to certain locations, limited in size, buffered from adjacent uses, etc.

While limited uses are less prevalent in a Place Type, they can provide additional services and housing options, while maintaining compatibility with the predominant use. However, a proliferation of limited uses will change the character of an Area, and the original intent of the Place Type can be lost. Often, rezoning requests are for these limited uses, or for higher residential densities. When requests for such zoning changes are reviewed, decisions are based on the following:

- Is it located within ¼-mile of transit?
- Is it located within ¼-mile of a public school or park?
- Is it located on a primary road or an “A” street? **
- Is it located on a corner?
- Is it adjacent to a Center?
- Is infrastructure adequate?
- Does it support the goals and recommendations of the adopted plan?

Each of the following place types includes:

- A two or three letter abbreviation, and the color, used to identify each on the Place Types map.
- A general description of the typical, or ideal, situation.
- A list of characteristics that are generally needed to support the intended development form of the Place Type.
- Examples of the predominant uses.
- Examples of the limited uses.
- Illustrative photos, presented as examples only.



4.2.2 CATEGORIES

The following is a list of all 23 place types separated into the four categories. While this is the full palette of place types in all 13 Areas of Hamilton County, all 23 will not appear in each Area and therefore, the following section will identify only the place types that appear within Area 7.

RESIDENTIAL

From single-unit residences to townhomes and apartments, residential Place Types illustrate the desired housing types for an Area, whether rural, suburban or urban.

- *Countryside Residential (CR)*
- *Suburban Residential (SR)*
- *Urban Residential (UR)*
- *Mixed Residential (MR)*

CENTERS & CORRIDORS

These Place Types include both commercial and residential uses that are either clustered to create a center of activity (Centers), or a linear arrangement of higher intensity uses along a major street (Corridors). Both are walkable and most have the densities and concentration of uses needed to support transit.

- *Crossroads (XR)*
- *Neighborhood Node (NN)*
- *Neighborhood Center (NC)*
- *Village Center (VC)*
- *Town Center (TC)*
- *Downtown Core (DC)*
- *Rural Corridor (RC)*
- *Suburban Corridor (SC)*
- *Mixed-use Corridor (MC)*
- *Transit Corridor (TRC)*

SPECIALTY DISTRICTS

These Place Types typically have unique requirements for access, buffering from adjacent uses, or the protection of sensitive natural resources.

- *Preserve (PR)*
- *Agricultural (AG)*
- *Resort & Recreation (RR)*
- *Industrial (IN)*
- *Maker District (MD)*
- *Campus (CA)*
- *Regional Facility (RF)*

OVERLAYS

Overlays identify Areas where additional consideration is needed to address unique assets such as floodplains, steep slopes, or historic properties.

- *Natural Resources (NR)*
- *Urban Residential Single-Family (UR-SF)*



4.2.3 PLACE TYPES IN AREA 7

The following is a listing of the place types that occur in Area 7.

XR Crossroads

Generally four acres or less, Crossroads are smaller than Village Centers or Town Centers and are most often located in rural Areas. They may serve as gateways to adjacent neighborhoods. Smaller footprint buildings frame a single intersection of two arterial or collector streets, or extend a short distance from the intersection. This small cluster of businesses meets some of the daily needs of the immediate residents with stores, restaurants and other neighborhood-serving commercial uses. Over time when the infrastructure needed to support more intense development is in place, Crossroads may grow into the larger Village Center.

Predominant Uses

Retail, restaurants, garden centers, personal services, offices, gas stations, small markets

Limited Uses

Auto repair, landscape businesses, yard equipment sales/rentals, small artisanal industry (such as glass blowing or woodworking shops)



NN Neighborhood Node

Located in urban or suburban Areas, and generally a total of only two acres or less, Neighborhood Nodes are much smaller than Village or Town Centers. Smaller footprint buildings frame a single intersection or extend a short distance from the intersection. This small cluster of businesses provides goods and services, such as laundromats, restaurants, small grocers, and other neighborhood-serving commercial uses, to the immediate surrounding community. Residential uses over retail or office are common.

Predominant Uses

Small retail and restaurants, convenience stores, personal services, offices, farmers’ markets

Limited Uses

Small artisanal industry (such as studios, bakeries, glass blowers or woodworking shops, breweries, or other low impact production), multi-family, short-term vacation rental



When a Neighborhood Node is located along a Mixed-use Corridor or Transit Corridor, the building size in the Neighborhood Node should be consistent with its surrounding corridor type (typically larger than described above), but the uses at that location should include ground-floor commercial or services.

VC Village Center

Larger than Neighborhood Nodes, but smaller than Town Centers, the Village Center (generally 2–10 acres) is a pedestrian-oriented cluster of medium footprint buildings, with a mixture of commercial and residential uses. Multi-story buildings with residential uses over retail or offices are common. Due to their intensity, Village Centers are typically located along transit routes, but primarily serve local residents. Walking, biking and transit are prioritized over auto use in Village Centers, with shared parking lots providing a park-once environment. Pedestrian entrances front directly onto the sidewalks, with window displays at the ground floor to provide interest for pedestrians. Village Centers are often organized around a central public square or park. Village Centers may, over time, grow into Town Centers.

Predominant Uses

Civic institutions, public square or park, retail, restaurants, offices, grocery stores, personal services, lodging, upper floor apartments

Limited Uses

Small artisanal industry (such as studios, bakeries, breweries, or woodworking, or other low impact production), multifamily, single-family attached (townhomes), short-term vacation rentals



CR Countryside Residential

Countryside Residential Place Types have a very rural character and consist primarily of single-family homes on large lots. Countryside Residential may include open fields, woodlands, and streams or lakes, as well as accessory buildings, such as barns and greenhouses. Residences in this Place Type are typically on septic systems. Residences are generally further from key destinations than in other residential Place Types therefore, a personal vehicle is needed to reach daily needs. Fixed-route transit is not feasible, and sidewalks are not likely, due to the low density of these Areas.

Predominant Uses

Single-unit detached, noncommercial farming activities, accessory buildings (barns, greenhouses, etc.) accessory dwelling units (ADUs), manufactured homes

Limited Uses

Single-unit attached, event facilities, golf courses, campgrounds, mobile home parks short-term vacation rentals, preexisting neighborhood commercial



SR Suburban Residential

The Suburban Residential Place Type has a predominantly low intensity, single-family detached, residential development pattern, especially within the same block. Some moderate density residential development, such as small lot houses or attached townhomes, may exist, but are located on a major street or near a transit route or school. When next to lower density residential development, this moderate intensity infill development maintains the existing rhythm and feel of the street. Factors that play into this rhythm and feel include lot width, setbacks, building massing, and height. Open spaces are typically private (back yards), but greenways may provide connectivity. Residences in this Place Type are generally further from key destinations than those in other Place Types therefore, a personal vehicle is needed to reach daily needs.

Predominant Uses

Single-unit detached, accessory dwelling units (ADUs)

Limited Uses

Townhomes (up to 4 units per building), short term vacation rental, multi-unit housing (2-4 units per building), mobile home parks, golf courses



RC Rural Corridor

Primarily located in rural parts of the county, and are characterized by lots of open fields and woodlands. Development along Rural Corridors is sparse with farms or single unit homes on large estate lots. A few scattered subdivisions with smaller lots may have entries along these corridors, but the homes are separated from the corridor by distance (50 - 100 feet), and by dense vegetated buffers, in order to preserve the rural character of the corridor. Rural Corridors do not have the more dense, connecting street networks. They are typically two-lane roads. Rural Corridors may however, also take the form of a major thoroughfare, such as a state designated scenic parkway, with mountainside or lakefront views. A few commercial uses, often located at a Crossroads intersection, or as a stand-alone business, may be found along Rural Corridors, but no long stretches of commercial businesses.

Predominant Uses

[insert]

Limited Uses

[insert]



PR Preserve

Preserves are large expanses of forest, floodplains and other natural resources, as well as public parks and recreation Areas that have been set aside as places where general development is not allowed. They may also include privately-owned land that is permanently protected by conservation easements and remains in a largely undeveloped state. Some may be used for passive recreation, while others are largely off limits to human use due to sensitive natural resources or their remote location. Development within the Preserve is minimized, and is limited to cultural, educational or recreational uses.

Predominant Uses

Undisturbed open space, visitors' centers, nature centers, public parks, passive recreation, trails, cemeteries

Limited Uses

Historic structures, active recreation fields, accessory structures, (such as private concessions, equipment storage), or outdoor firing ranges



RR

Resort and Recreation

The Resort and Recreation Place Type supports outdoor activities such as camping, boating, golfing, bouldering, mountain biking, as well as corporate nature retreats, and eco-tourism activities. These places are focused on enjoying nature, exceptional views, or historic landmarks. However, unlike Preserves, which are primarily government-owned properties with very limited development, such as a state or county park, the Resort and Recreation Place Type can include multiple private businesses with more development, such as marinas, hotels, restaurants and even housing. Properties may range in size from a 20-acre campground to 100+ acre resorts with a marina, lodge, restaurant, and individual house lots.

Predominant Uses

Campgrounds/RV parks, hotels, cabins, restaurants, marinas, camp stores, multi-unit housing, agriculture-related businesses (e.g. boarding stables, riding academies), farming activities

Limited Uses

Single-unit housing (detached and attached), golf courses, reception facilities



NR

Natural Resources Overlay

The Natural Resources Overlay is not a Place Type in and of itself. It is an Overlay on top of the underlying Place Type that identifies Areas considered sensitive due to the presence of steep slopes, floodplains or wetlands. Sites within this overlay are not protected by law from development. The purpose, therefore, is to identify these sensitive Areas so that they are given consideration for protection, or incorporated as amenities within new developments. Some sites are already developed and the overlay designation does not mean development cannot expand in these Areas; it merely identifies the location of floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes.

Predominant Uses

Uses are defined by the underlying Place Type.



4.2.4 PLACE TYPES MAP

LEGEND

ROADS

- Major & Minor Collectors
- Major & Minor Arterials
- Interstates, Hwys & Expwys
- All Other Roads

Natural Resource Area

- 100 Year Flood
- Slope ≥ 25%
- Parks/Rec/OS

Centers

- Neighborhood Node
- Resort Recreation - A
- Resort Recreation - B
- Village Center
- Crossroads

Place Type Parcels

- Preserved
- Countryside Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Crossroads
- Neighborhood Node
- Density Radius: <.25MI - .5MI
- Rural Corridor Buffer/Overlay- 200'
- Signal Mountain & Walden

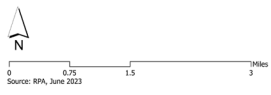


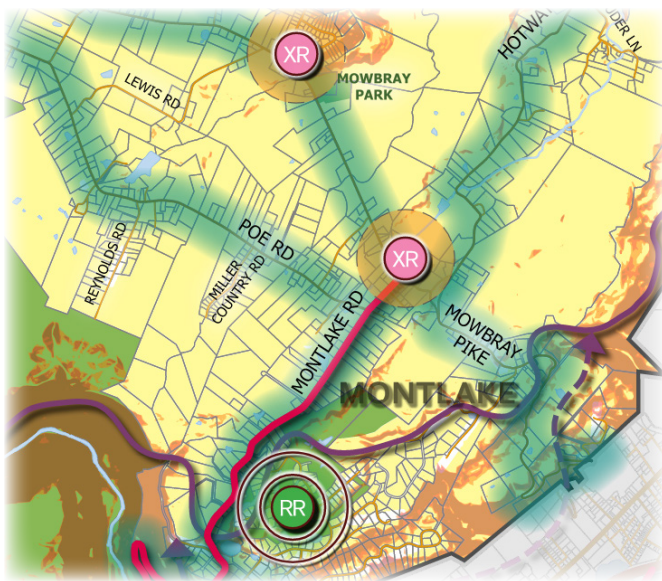
Figure 4.4: Place Types Map



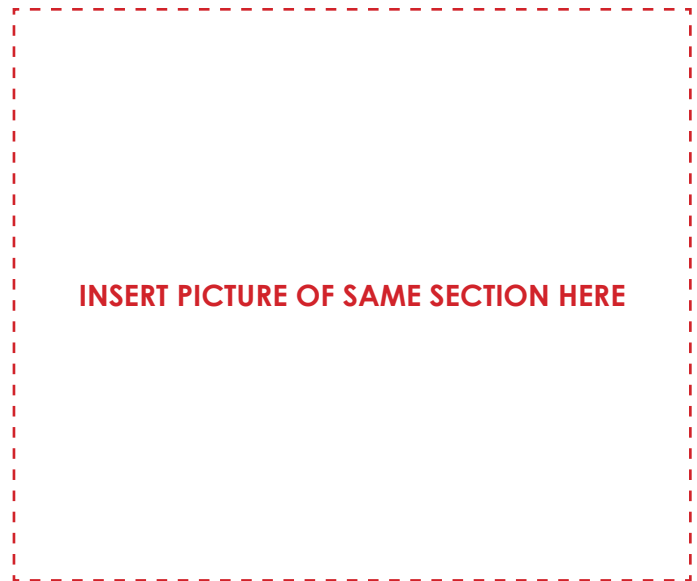
4.2.5 CENTERS & CORRIDORS VIGNETTES

Description on the specific Vignettes

- ▶ Type of Vignette
- ▶



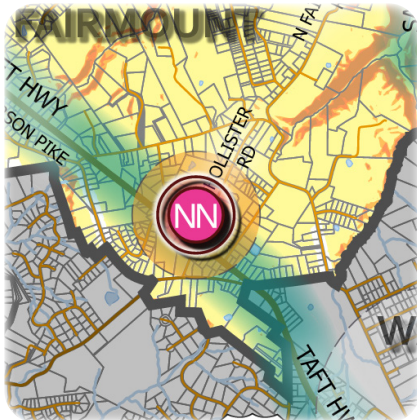
Village Center Conceptual Land Use Section
Source: xxxxx



Village Center Conceptual Place Types Section
Source: xxxxx

NEIGHBORHOOD NODE VIGNETTE (EXAMPLE)

Smaller centers, such as the cluster of business near the intersection of Taft Highway and Hollister Road, are hubs of activity and can benefit from clear guidance should they redevelop or revitalize in the future. It is helpful to think of crossroads centers as akin to the country store that is often found at the intersection of key roads in rural communities. While the country store has slowly disappeared the need for goods and services in rural Areas has not. Historic crossroads have transformed into small nodes containing convenience stores and dollar stores. The goods and services they provide are useful; however, the form and character of these new crossroads detracts from the rural character of the communities they inhabit. The fact that they are auto-oriented is understandable and acceptable; however, these centers often miss the opportunity to leverage their location for other uses, including housing that might not be suited to other locations along a corridor. There is an opportunity to reinvent the crossroads center for the 21st century with cues from their historical predecessors.



[INSERT RECOMMENDATION GRAPHIC HERE]

Figure 4.5: Recommendation Graphic



4.3 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY THEMES (CHAPTER 2)



GOALS (CHAPTER 3)



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS (CHAPTER 4)



The goals and policy recommendations outlined in Area plans represent a comprehensive framework designed to guide sustainable development and enhance community well-being. These initiatives are crafted to ensure that future growth respects and enhances the county's and Area 7 distinct community character while preserving its abundant natural resources.

Emphasizing the importance of balanced growth, the plans prioritize the development of accessible parks and recreation Areas that promote active lifestyles and environmental stewardship. Infrastructure improvements are a cornerstone, aimed at improving the connectivity of transportation networks, enhancing water and wastewater management systems, and integrating sustainable solutions. Additionally, the plans emphasize the need for diverse and affordable housing options to support a growing and inclusive population.

By aligning these goals with thoughtful policy recommendations, Hamilton County seeks to foster a resilient and cohesive community. This approach not only prepares the county for future challenges but also enhances its livability and ensures that development is carried out in a manner that respects and preserves its unique character and natural beauty.

The following section identifies the 7 goals which are consistent amongst all five unincorporated Areas. Following each goal is a policy recommendation to implement that goal and a further description or associated graphic to represent the policy recommendation.



4.3.1 GOAL 1 & POLICIES

GOAL 1 BALANCE GROWTH, ECONOMY & COMMUNITY CHARACTER

1.7.1 Adopt the Walden’s Ridge Place Types Map as the RPA’s official land use policy and use it to inform municipal decisions on development proposals.

1.7.2 Develop Conservation Development standards to implement this option for large parcels zoned A1 and R1. Emphasize larger lots and setbacks at base density and clustering of smaller lots if density is increased.

1.7.3 Adopt a separation distance of 100 ft. minimum between major streets identified as Rural Corridors and lots within residential subdivisions with requirements to preserve mature tree canopy or plant an effective, natural buffer for new development.

1.7.4 Review the land use policy in the Walden’s Ridge Area Plan every five years and adjust it as needed to reflect changes in community preference, market conditions, school capacity, infrastructure, or other factors that could affect the quality of life.

INSERT PICTURE/GRAPHIC/CALLOUT HERE



Picture X: Insert Here



4.3.2 GOAL 2 & POLICIES

GOAL 2 PROTECT & ENHANCE NATURAL RESOURCES

- 2.7.1 Update current standards for stormwater management, steep slopes, and tree preservation/ replacement consistent with current high performing community's best management practices.
- 2.7.2 Update stormwater management regulations and provide a manual of best management practices at community-wide, development, and lot scale.
- 2.7.3 Revise zoning and subdivision regs to prohibit development on slopes over 25% and provide development criteria verified with engineered plans for 15% up to 25% slopes.
- 2.7.4 Adopt a tree preservation and replacement ordinance for wooded Areas. Require specimen trees to be surveyed and protected during all construction phases. Consider a requirement to replace specimen trees that could not be located outside the footprint of critical infrastructure or were unintentionally damaged during construction.
- 2.7.5 Develop Conservation Sub-Division Development criteria that incentivize this option for large parcels zoned for agricultural or residential.
- 2.7.5 Work with National, State, and local conservation organizations to develop a program for purchase and protection of environmentally sensitive lands, prime agricultural parcels, and recreational assets. Provide for public use and access where appropriate.



4.3.3 GOAL 3 & POLICIES

GOAL 3 PRESERVE & ENHANCE OUTDOOR RECREATION

3.7.1 Work with Federal, State and local preservation organizations to initiate mechanism whereby land with high natural resource and recreation value can be purchased, preserved, and managed for public benefit.

3.7.2 Work with TDEC, Hamilton County Parks, and others to fully develop the Cumberland Trail route through Hamilton County. Work at the neighborhood scale to connect gaps between existing segment, identify and develop viable trailheads, create wayfinding signage, and establish programming/ use guidelines for this asset.

3.7.3 Promote public-private partnerships and public sector collaboration to enhance facilities and management of natural resource / recreation assets including: North Chickamauga Creek Gorge SP, Falling Water Falls Natural Area, Prentice Cooper State Forest, the Cumberland Trail, Signal Point Park, Rainbow Falls preserve. Evaluate the potential for these resources to provide long term economic benefits, jobs, and tax base by allowing for resort and recreation-based development on adjacent lands.

3.7.4 Work with State Parks, Town of Soddy-Daisy, and private land interests to capitalize on the recent state investment in North Chickamauga Creek Gorge SP and find synergies to help promote and manage this Area as a destination for paddlers, climbers, anglers, and hikers. Work with private landowners to support cohesively planned resort and recreational development that provides jobs, tax base, and heightens awareness of Hamilton Co as a destination.

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4.3.4 GOAL 4 & POLICIES

GOAL 4 PROMOTE CONNECTIVITY & MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION

- 4.7.1 Evaluate the potential to require connectivity easements between projects under development and larger undeveloped parcels. Generate a development dashboards report on adjacent subdivision proposals weekly.
- 4.7.2 Initiate a study for Highway 127, Robert's Mill Rd., and the W Rd. to identify improvements for safety and emergency/natural disaster access strategies.
- 4.7.3 Consider joint development between Hamilton Co., Signal Mountain, and Walden of a Greenways & Trails Masterplan to identify desired multi-use pathway connectivity between existing trail systems, parks, schools, and other community assets. Trailhead parking, facilities, and signage should also be addressed. This can set the stage to develop funding, ROW acquisition, and potential participation from individual developers in strategic locations.
- 4.7.4 Work with the County Engineers Office, the Roads Committee, the TPO, the RPA, and TDOT to implement the recommended studies and transportation improvements in Appendix X.
- 4.7.5 Begin implementation of the existing Signal Mountain Bike and Pedestrian Plan.
- 4.7.6 Review the transportation and mobility plans in the Area 7 / Walden's Ridge Area Plan every five years and adjust as needed to reflect changes in community preference, development patterns, market conditions, infrastructure, and other factors.



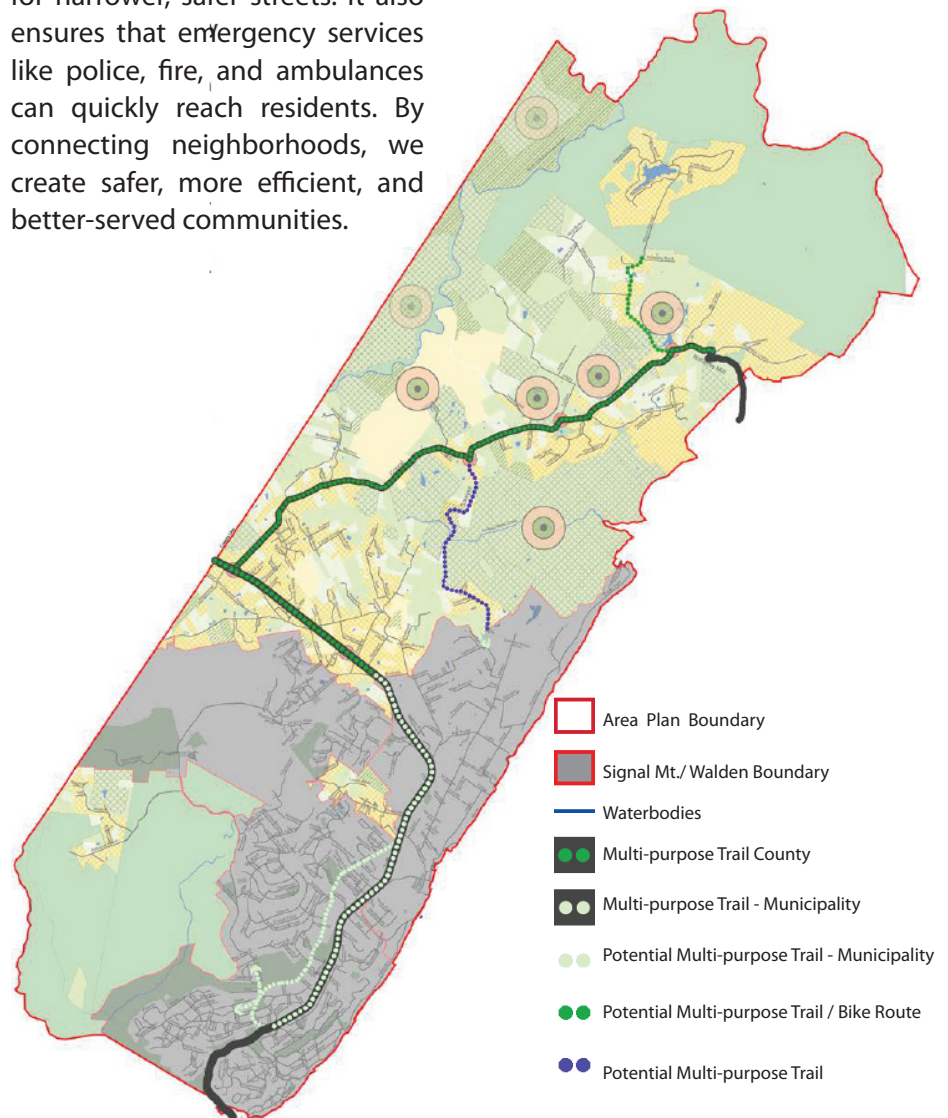
Improve access and connectivity on Walden's Ridge while accommodating multiple modes of transportation.

The integration of multi-modal options is essential for creating a dynamic and accessible community. This plan ensures that all residents can travel safely and efficiently, whether by car, bike, or on foot. By providing well-designed roads for vehicles, dedicated bike lanes, and extensive pedestrian pathways, Walden Plateau aims to enhance mobility, reduce traffic congestion, and promote sustainable living. These transportation options not only improve the quality of life by encouraging active lifestyles and reducing environmental impact, but also support local economic development by making it easier for people to reach businesses and services throughout the Area.

Walden's Ridge has three points of access from the valleys below, Highway 127 (Taft Highway/Signal Mt. Blvd.), The W Road, and Roberts Mill Road. Despite ideas to create a new access road to the mountain that would connect to Suck Creek Road, these three existing thoroughfares will likely be the only access to the mountain in the foreseeable future. The focus, therefore, should be on improving these key roads and developing systems to ensure that multiple

means of access are possible when one or more of these key roads are impassable.

Connectivity between neighborhoods is crucial for several key reasons. It helps disperse traffic, reducing congestion and allowing for narrower, safer streets. It also ensures that emergency services like police, fire, and ambulances can quickly reach residents. By connecting neighborhoods, we create safer, more efficient, and better-served communities.



4.3.5 GOAL 5 & POLICIES

**GOAL 5
PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE**

5.7.1 Recognize the severe limitations of access to centralized sewer capacity through WWTAs and development of traditional septic tank-leach field systems based on depth to rock and suitable soils. Zoned densities and development criteria for major subdivisions should reflect these constraints.

5.7.2 Engage WWTAs and TDEC in a comprehensive review of existing soil mapping, depth to rock, and groundwater table, and other environmental factors to predict site suitability for use of the spectrum of available decentralized sewage disposal systems. Utilize these tools to establish criteria for major subdivisions proposing to utilize decentralized sewage disposal systems. Consider pairing with clustering or minimum protected open space requirements as prerequisite.

5.7.3 Create to strengthen County water quality management ordinances and includes best management practices. Provide adequate staffing for review and ongoing inspection of engineered designs for ECP, Site Stabilization, and permanent storm water infrastructure. Add incentives for LID solutions. Consider the possibility of publicly funded centralized stormwater collection in highly sensitive Areas.

5.7.4 Work with local full time and volunteer fire and EMS districts to address coverage gaps, equipment needs, cross training, and funding as recommended by the Rural Hamilton County Fire and Rescue Services Evaluation Report – March 2024, see Appendix G.

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4.3.6 GOAL 6 & POLICIES

GOAL 6

PROVIDE SUITABLE COMMERCIAL & MIXED-USE CENTERS

6.7.1 Evaluate ability to address infrastructure gaps and provide municipal support for the primary center place types indicated on the Conceptual Land Use Map.

6.7.2 Support development of a Crossroads over time encompassing existing and future uses at Anderson Pike and SR 127 with connectivity between commercial, public, park, and institutional assets. Evaluate the potential to address gaps in infrastructure design and capacity to support this center. Allow this center to also provide additional diversity of housing for young families or older residents looking for lifestyle appropriate housing options.

6.7.3 Evaluate the potential for the growth the existing Crossroads at Hollister Road and SR 127 to evolve into a Neighborhood Node incorporating small pockets of multifamily housing interspersed with existing and future commercial use and community functions.

6.7.4 Explore the ability to serve the proposed Resort Recreation Center off Montlake Road near North Chickamauga Gorge SP to provide potential lodging, food, and commercial amenity support to the diverse range of recreational assets found in this Area.

6.7.5 Allow these proposed centers to focus infrastructure investments, development impacts, and economic activity in Areas best suited for this growth. Planning for growth in these Areas will also help to preserve the natural setting and quiet mountain lifestyle that Area residents have expressed a clear desire to maintain.

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4.3.7 GOAL 7 & POLICIES

GOAL 7 PROVIDE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS

7.7.1 Create a new Agricultural zoning district that lowers the base density to 0.5 dwelling units per acre and permits agritourism uses with appropriate standards. [Recommendation from prior plan development phase]

7.7.2 Create a new Residential zoning district that lowers the base density for single-family residential development to 1 dwelling unit per acre maximum. [Recommendation from prior plan development phase]

7.7.3 Utilize identified centers from Crossroads (XR) to Village Centers (VC) to accommodate a range of housing types potentially including small lot single-family, townhomes, 4 & 8 plexes, cottage courts, and HPR's to provide housing for young families and the service professionals who operate local emergency services, schools, clinics, groceries, and restaurants.

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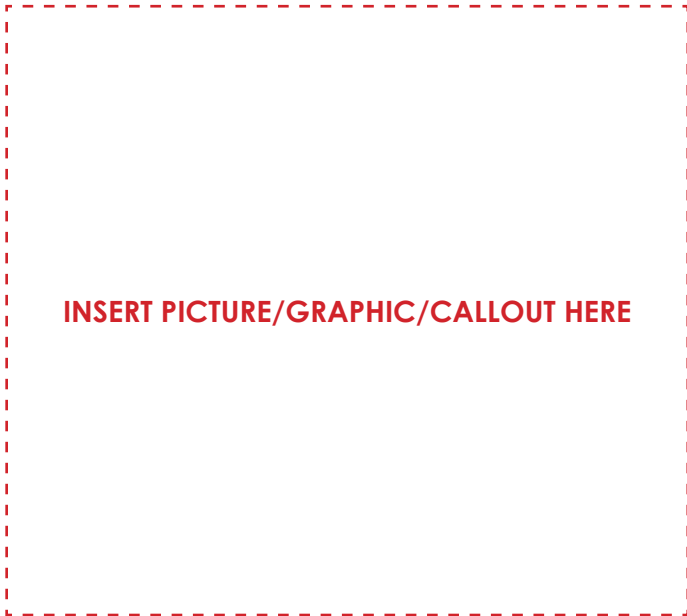


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RURAL HYBRID DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

Scenario 3 attempts to find a middle ground between the desire for rural conservation and current zoning entitlements. It also seeks to introduce a pattern of development that goes farther than conventional subdivisions in respecting the natural features and the character of the unincorporated Areas. For Areas that are currently zoned for agricultural uses, the Agricultural Place Type is applied, which promotes agricultural uses, agritourism, and single-family residential development on 2 acre minimum lots. For Areas that are currently zoned for residential uses, the Countryside Residential Place Type is applied allowing single-family residential development with a recommended maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per acre. Alternatively, the scenario includes a Conservation Development option for larger parcels (40+ acres) regardless of zoning to permit a variety of housing types with a gross density between 2 and 4 dwelling units per acre if there is a significant amount of open space set aside permanently (50%+) and a decentralized wastewater treatment system is installed. Similar to Scenario 1, the Crossroads Place Type has been applied to existing and proposed nodes of commercial. A detailed description of Place Types follows this section.

Scenario 3 is the preferred scenario and was tweaked based on public input. Just like Scenario 2, this approach requires the creation of new zoning districts to implement the planning policy. It also requires the creation of design standards to guide the implementation of the Conservation Development option and the Crossroads Place Type. While the recommended base density for residential development is less than current entitlements (+/- 4,500 potential new lots), the increased density and variety in housing type of the Conservation Development option (+/- 20,000 potential new lots) is less than current entitlements and can be an incentive in exchange for higher quality, more sensitive development. This scenario creates the opportunity for less intense development overall or more intense development that is clustered and designed in a manner that preserves natural features and minimizes visual impact.

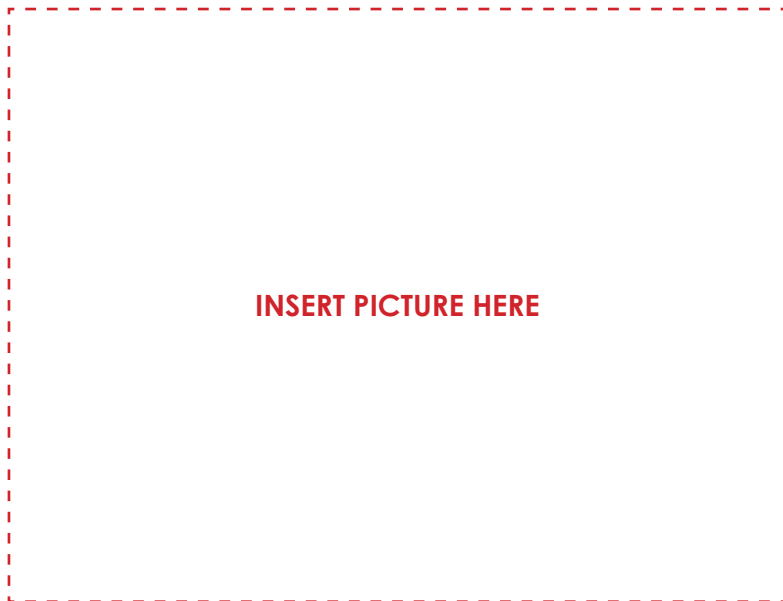


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ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLANS

LARGE-LOT SUBDIVISION



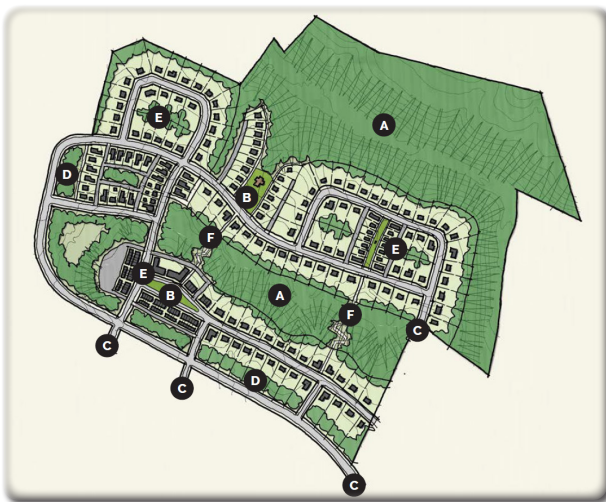
- A** Fewer dead-end streets, unless forced by topography, allows for greater connectivity
- B** When dead-end streets are necessary, include open space in the turnaround
- C** Natural or planted buffer between main roads and proposed development
- D** Limit tree clearing and require replacement trees when clearing occurs
- E** Natural features such as steep slopes are preserved

CONVENTIONAL SUBDIVISION

Conventional subdivision design is often characterized as suburban sprawl where large tracts of land are clear cut, mass graded, and developed with the same or similar lot sizes on dead end streets. These developments are often disconnected pods that feed into a few major corridors. While conventional subdivisions are one of the least efficient forms of development, the design of these neighborhoods can be better.




































CONSERVATION RESIDENTIAL

























- A** Natural features such as steep slopes are preserved
- B** Formal greens, courtyards, and pocket parks fronted by buildings
- C** Connected streets that also connect to surrounding development
- D** Natural or planted buffer between main roads and proposed development
- E** Mixture of housing types to meet a variety of housing needs
- F** Internal sidewalks and trails that connect to a public sidewalk and trail network







4.3.8 GOALS, POLICIES & COMMUNITY THEMES MATRIX

 Directly influenced by the Community Themes  Supports or reinforces the Community Themes					
1. BALANCE GROWTH, ECONOMY & COMMUNITY CHARACTER					
1.7.1	Adopt the Walden’s Ridge Place Types Map as the RPA’s official land use policy and use it to inform municipal decisions on development proposals.				
1.7.2	Develop Conservation Development standards to implement this option for large parcels zoned for agricultural or residential.				
1.7.3	Adopt a separation distance of 100 ft. minimum between major streets identified as Rural Corridors and lots within residential subdivisions with requirements to preserve mature tree canopy or plant an effective, natural buffer for new development.				
1.7.4	Review the land use policy in the Walden’s Ridge Area Plan every five years and adjust it as needed to reflect changes in community preference, market conditions, school capacity, infrastructure, or other factors that could affect the quality of life.				
2. PROTECT & ENHANCE NATURAL RESOURCES					
2.7.1	Update current standards for stormwater management, steep slopes, and tree preservation/ replacement consistent with current high performing community’s best management practices.				
2.7.2	Update stormwater management regulations and provide a manual of best management practices at community-wide, development, and lot scale.				
2.7.3	Revise zoning and subdivision regs to prohibit development on slopes over 25% and provide development criteria verified with engineered plans for 15% up to 25% slopes.				
2.7.4	Adopt a tree preservation and replacement ordinance for wooded Areas. Require specimen trees to be surveyed and protected during all construction phases. Consider a requirement to replace specimen trees that could not be located outside the footprint of critical infrastructure or were unintentionally damaged during construction.				
2.7.5	Develop Conservation Subdivision development criteria that incentivize this option for large parcels zoned for agricultural or residential.				
2.7.6	Work with National, State, and local conservation organizations to develop a program whereby environmentally sensitive lands and prime agricultural parcels can be purchased or otherwise incentivized to remain in their natural state and where appropriate provide for public use.				
3. PRESERVE & ENHANCE OUTDOOR RECREATION					
3.7.1	Work with Federal, State and local preservation organizations to initiate mechanism whereby land with high natural resource and recreation value can be purchased, preserved, and managed for public benefit.				
3.7.2	Work with TDEC, Hamilton County Parks, and others to fully develop the Cumberland Trail route through Hamilton County. Work at the neighborhood scale to connect gaps between existing segment, identify and develop viable trailheads, create wayfinding signage, and establish programming/use guidelines for this asset.				
3.7.3	Promote public-private partnerships and public sector collaboration to enhance facilities and management of natural resource / recreation assets including: North Chickamauga Creek Gorge SP, Falling Water Falls Natural Area, Prentice Cooper State Forest, the Cumberland Trail, Signal Point Park, Rainbow Falls preserve. Evaluate the potential for these resources to provide long term economic benefits, jobs, and tax base by allowing for resort and recreation-based development on adjacent lands.				
3.7.4	Work with State Parks, Town of Soddy Daisy, and private land interests to capitalize on the recent state investment in North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Park and find synergies to help promote and manage this Area as a destination for paddlers, climbers, anglers, and hikers. Work with private landowners to support cohesively planned resort and recreational development that provides jobs, tax base, and heightens awareness of Hamilton Co as a destination.				



<p> Directly influenced by the Community Themes</p> <p> Supports or reinforces the Community Themes</p>				
<p>4. PROMOTE CONNECTIVITY AND MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION</p>				
<p>4.7.1 Evaluate the potential to require connectivity easements between projects under development and larger undeveloped parcels. Generate a development dashboards report on adjacent subdivision proposals weekly.</p>				
<p>4.7.2 Initiate a study for Highway 127, Robert’s Mill Rd., and the W Rd. to identify improvements for safety and emergency/natural disaster access strategies.</p>				
<p>4.7.3 Consider joint development between Hamilton Co., Signal Mountain, and Walden of a Greenways & Trails Masterplan to identify desired multiuse pathway connectivity between existing trail systems, parks, schools, and other community assets. Trailhead parking, facilities, and signage should also be addressed. This can set the stage to develop funding, ROW acquisition, and potential participation from individual developers in strategic locations.</p>				
<p>4.7.4 Work with the County Engineers Office, the Roads Committee, the TPO, the RPA, and TDOT to implement the recommended studies and transportation improvements in Appendix X.</p>				
<p>4.7.5 Begin implementation of the existing Bike and Pedestrian Plan.</p>				
<p>4.7.6 Review the transportation and mobility plans in the Area 7 / Walden’s Ridge Area Plan every five years and adjust as needed to reflect changes in community preference, development patterns, market conditions, infrastructure, and other factors.</p>				
<p>5. PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE</p>				
<p>5.7.1 Recognize the severe limitations of access to centralized sewer capacity through WWTA and development of traditional septic tank-leach field systems based on depth to rock and suitable soils. Zoned densities and development criteria for major subdivisions should reflect these constraints.</p>				
<p>5.7.2 Engage WWTA and TDEC in a comprehensive review of existing soil mapping, depth to rock, and groundwater table, and other environmental factors to predict site suitability for use of the spectrum of available de-centralized sewage disposal systems. Utilize these tools to establish criteria for major subdivisions proposing to utilize decentralized sewage disposal systems. Consider pairing with clustering or minimum protected open space requirements.</p>				
<p>5.7.3 Create a county wide stormwater management ordinance that includes best management practices. Include engineered design and development requirements for major subdivisions. Consider the possibility of publicly funded centralized stormwater collection in highly sensitive Areas. Provide best management implementation strategies for individual lot owners on a voluntary or incentivized basis.</p>				
<p>5.7.4 Work with local full time and volunteer fire and ems districts to address coverage gaps, equipment needs, cross training, and funding as recommended by the Rural Hamilton County Fire and Rescue Services Evaluation Report – March 2024, see Appendix G.</p>				



<p>● Directly influenced by the Community Themes</p> <p>● Supports or reinforces the Community Themes</p>				
<p>6. PROVIDE SUITABLE COMMERCIAL & MIXED-USE CENTERS</p>				
<p>6.7.1 Evaluate ability to address infrastructure gaps and provide municipal support for the primary center place types indicated on the Conceptual Land Use Map.</p>	●			
<p>6.7.2 Support development of a Crossroads Center over time encompassing existing and future uses at Anderson Pike and SR 127 with connectivity between commercial, public, park, and institutional assets. Evaluate the potential to address gaps in infrastructure design and capacity to support this center. Allow this center to also provide additional diversity of housing for young families or older residents looking for lifestyle appropriate housing options.</p>	●	●	●	●
<p>6.7.3 Evaluate the potential for the growth the existing Neighborhood Node at Hollister Road and SR 127 to evolve into a Neighborhood Center incorporating small pockets of multifamily housing interspersed with existing and future commercial use and civic functions.</p>	●			●
<p>6.7.4 Explore the ability to serve the proposed Resort Recreation Center off Montlake Road near North Chickamauga Gorge SP to provide potential lodging, food, and commercial amenity support to the diverse range of recreational assets found in this Area.</p>	●	●		●
<p>6.7.5 Allow these proposed centers to focus infrastructure investments, development impacts, and economic activity in Areas best suited for this growth. Planning for growth in these Areas will also help to preserve the natural setting and quiet mountain lifestyle that Area residents have expressed a clear desire to maintain.</p>	●	●		
<p>7. PROVIDE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS</p>				
<p>7.7.1 “Create a new Agricultural zoning district that lowers the base density to 0.5 dwelling units per acre and permits agritourism uses with appropriate standards. [Recommendation from prior plan development phase]”</p>	●	●		
<p>7.7.2 “Create a new Residential zoning district that lowers the base density for single-family residential development to 1 dwelling unit per acre maximum. [Recommendation from prior plan development phase]”</p>	●	●		
<p>7.7.3 Utilize identified centers from Crossroads (XR) to Village Centers (VC) to accommodate a range of housing types potentially including small lot single family, townhomes, 4 & 8 plexes, cottage courts, and HPR’s to provide housing for young families and the service professionals who operate local emergency services, schools, clinics, groceries, and restaurants.</p>	●			





CHAPTER 5

NEXT STEPS & IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

5.1 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

5.2 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

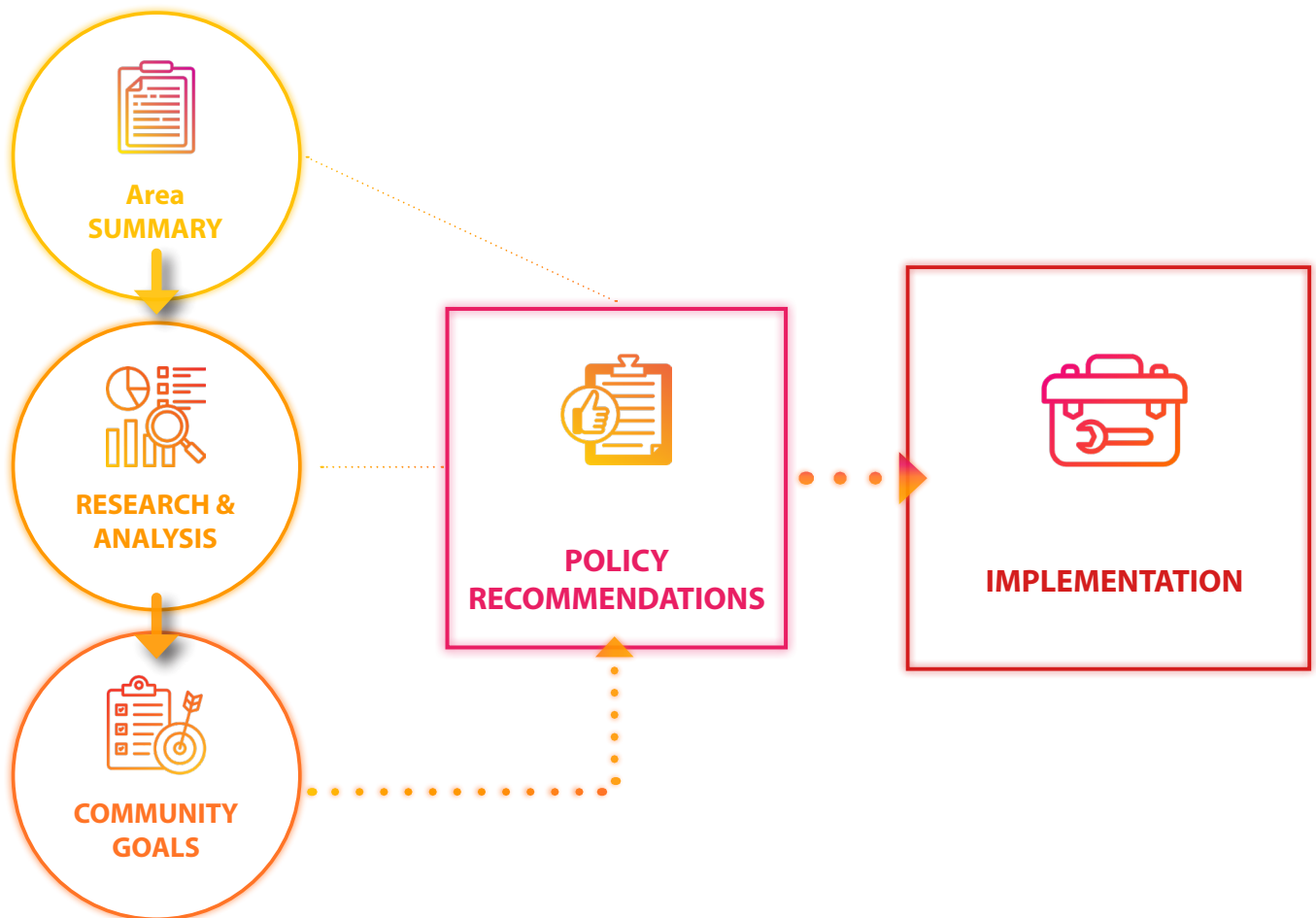
5.3 MEASURING PROGRESS & UPDATES



This chapter acts as the crucial link between the vision crafted for each community and the concrete actions needed to bring it to life. It transforms the broad goals and strategies outlined in the plans into specific, actionable steps, ensuring that community aspirations are achieved in a structured and sustainable way. Here, we lay out the essential initiatives, timelines, and responsibilities for executing the plans, emphasizing the importance of collaboration among local governments, stakeholders, and residents. These implementation strategies are designed to be adaptable, allowing for adjustments as community needs evolve and new opportunities arise.

Throughout the planning process, a dedicated effort was made to continuously integrate community feedback. In Chapter 2, four Community Themes emerged from this input, guiding the development of seven goals and a vision statement. This analysis, combined with the goals, informed the creation of policy recommendations, both in map and written form.

By outlining processes for monitoring progress, securing funding, and maintaining ongoing community engagement, this chapter offers a clear roadmap for turning plans into reality. It ensures that Hamilton County can grow in a way that honors its unique character, meets resident needs, and preserves the distinctive qualities of each Area.



5.1 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The implementation process for the Area plans is built on strong partnerships, strategic tools, and targeted funding, all aimed at bringing each community's vision to life. Collaboration between local governments, stakeholders, and residents is at the heart of this process, ensuring that efforts are aligned and resources are effectively utilized. Key projects are prioritized, with clear timelines and responsibilities, while a range of tools and funding mechanisms are deployed to support these initiatives. This comprehensive approach ensures that the plans are not only actionable but also adaptable, allowing for continued progress as community needs and opportunities evolve.

Implementing the Place Types map through Zoning

- Public investment: road network, utilities, concept master plans to be perfected by developer, structured parking, to place public sector anchors (schools, govt offices, community centers, etc.)
- Financial vehicles: BID, TIF
- Zoning: more allowed by right mixed use in existing commercial zones. Consider not even requiring a rezone to a mixed use zone. What is that accomplishing.
- Use of development agreements to memorialize public and private commitments
- Transit planning and investment
- Provide retrofitting case studies

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CALLOUT/LOGO HERE

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CALLOUT/LOGO HERE



PARTNERSHIPS

Strong, strategic partnerships between local governments, community organizations, developers, and residents are essential to achieving the shared vision for future growth and development. By working together, these partners can pool resources, expertise, and energy to tackle challenges and create opportunities that benefit the entire community. This section emphasizes the importance of building lasting relationships that support long-term sustainability, ensure the alignment of efforts, and foster a sense of shared responsibility in shaping the region's future.



FUNDING & FINANCE



5.2 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The implementation matrix serves as a detailed guide for translating goals and policies into action. It identifies specific initiatives, assigns responsibilities, and establishes timelines, ensuring that each community's goals are systematically pursued. This matrix is designed to provide a clear and organized framework for stakeholders, guiding collaborative efforts and enabling the effective tracking of progress. By outlining these actionable steps, the matrix helps to ensure that the aspirations of Area 7 are realized in a manner that is both sustainable and reflective of the community's unique character.

The Implementation Matrix is separated into five categories including the policy recommendation, category, timeline, funding sources, and monitoring. Following the policy recommendations which were provided in detail in Chapter 4 is the categories which are defined below:

Regulatory:

Outlines the necessary zoning changes, ordinances, and other legal frameworks required to support the goals and strategies of the policy recommendations, ensuring that development aligns with the community's vision and standards.

Funding:

Identifies the financial resources, grants, and investment strategies necessary to support and execute the key projects and initiatives outlined in the policy recommendations.

Planning:

The ongoing studies, strategic planning efforts, and coordination activities required to refine and advance the long-term goals and objectives.

Partnerships:

The collaborative efforts between local governments, utility providers, community organizations, private sector partners, and residents, which are essential for successfully implementing the Area plans' strategies and achieving shared goals.



AREA 7 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX					
Updated (8/28/2024)					
POLICY NO.	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES	MONITORING
GOAL 1: BALANCE GROWTH, ECONOMY & COMMUNITY CHARACTER					
17.1	Adopt the Walden’s Ridge Place Types Map as the RPA’s official land use policy and use it to inform municipal decisions on development proposals	Regulatory	0-5 years		
17.2	Develop Conservation Development standards to implement this option for large parcels zoned for agricultural or residential.	Regulatory & Planning	0-5 years		
17.3	Adopt a separation distance of 100 ft. minimum between major streets identified as Rural Corridors and lots within residential subdivisions with requirements to preserve mature tree canopy or plant an effective, natural buffer for new development.	Regulatory	0-5 years		
17.4	Review the land use policy in the Walden’s Ridge Area Plan every five years and adjust it as needed to reflect changes in community preference, market conditions, school capacity, infrastructure, or other factors that could affect the quality of life.	Regulatory	0-5 years		
GOAL 2: PROTECT AND ENHANCE NATURAL RESOURCES					
27.1	Update current standards for stormwater management, steep slopes, and tree preservation/ replacement consistent with current high performing community’s best management practices.	Regulatory			
27.2	Update stormwater management regulations and provide a manual of best management practices at community-wide, development, and lot scale.	Regulatory			
27.3	Revise zoning and subdivision regs to prohibit development on slopes over 25% and provide development criteria verified with engineered plans for 15% up to 25% slopes.	Regulatory			



5.3 MEASURING PROGRESS AND UPDATES

What happens next?

CALL TO ACTION

PLAN SUMMARY HERE, 1 PAGE TO FINALIZE PLAN BEFORE APPENDIX





APPENDIX

- A. TRANSPORTATION
- B. DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS
- C. SUBDIVISION OPPORTUNITIES MAP
- D. DEVELOPMENT SECTORS (HAMILTON COUNTY)
- E. SURVEY RESULTS
- F. PLACE TYPE PORTFOLIO (RPA)
- G. EMERGENCY SERVICES REPORT

