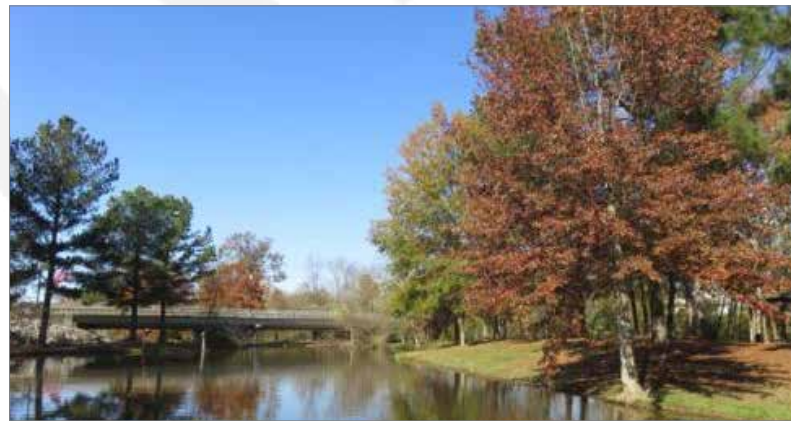




**PLAN
HAMILTON**
OUR COMMUNITIES. OUR GROWTH.



12 | WHITE OAK MOUNTAIN AREA PLAN

Apison
Collegedale
East Brainerd
Ooltewah
Summit



Adopted by the Chattanooga-Hamilton County
Regional Planning Commission, Sept. 8, 2025.

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CHAPTER 1

AREA SUMMARY

- 1.1 PLAN SUMMARY
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1.1 AREA PLANNING SUMMARY

The Hamilton County Area Plans represent a comprehensive approach to managing growth and change in our diverse communities, recognizing both the distinct identities of each Area and the interconnectedness of our County. With a focus on the specific challenges and opportunities within Hamilton County's unincorporated Areas, each plan addresses critical factors that shape community life—land use, infrastructure, environmental preservation, housing, and economic resilience. Throughout the planning process, we engaged with community members to create a vision that reflects local priorities and builds on the character and strengths of each Area.

From the rural expanse and scenic beauty of Sale Creek and Birchwood, to the residential communities of Georgetown and Apison, to the vibrant mountain villages and outdoor offerings of the Walden Plateau, or the waterfront community of Lakesite, all places where many families have multi-generation histories attached to the landscape, the plans recognize the local topographic, geologic, and infrastructure constraints found in these unique areas. This approach allows for tailored strategies that honor local heritage, rural qualities, and natural landscapes while accommodating sustainable growth.

The planning process began with in-depth research and analysis to understand the existing conditions, demographic trends, and economic drivers across Hamilton County. By examining land use, transportation networks, environmental features, and community facilities, we identified both opportunities and constraints in each area. This research also shed light on trends such as housing demands, population shifts, and economic patterns, allowing us to anticipate future needs and create a foundation for adaptable, forward-looking plans.

The visions articulated in these Plans emerged from collaborative dialogue with residents, local stakeholders, and County officials. Community workshops, surveys, and public meetings provided residents the opportunity to voice their aspirations, concerns, and ideas for the future

of their neighborhoods. The resulting visions emphasize maintaining rural character, supporting local businesses, enhancing outdoor recreation, and fostering a sense of place in each community. Across the County, residents expressed a desire to balance growth with preservation—ensuring that new developments are thoughtfully integrated and contribute positively to the character of their communities.

To bring these visions to life, the Area Plans detail policies and actions centered on Community Character and Land Use, Natural Resources, Economic Health and Community, and Funding Mechanisms. These categories, rooted in the community themes established in Chapter 2, have been refined to address the County's evolving needs and offer the most impactful steps forward.

The implementation strategies focus on practical, collaborative actions that turn these plans into reality. Partnerships with local and regional organizations, support for small businesses, and investments in community facilities are vital to advancing these initiatives. Monitoring and evaluation will be critical to ensure the plans stay flexible, allowing policies to adapt as new challenges and opportunities emerge. Each Area Plan is intended as a living document, responsive to ongoing community input and changing needs over time.

As we move from planning to action, the success of this Plan relies on commitment, collaboration, and community engagement. Hamilton County is dedicated to working closely with residents, businesses, and local leaders to implement these policies in a way that fosters a resilient and inclusive future. By advancing these Plans with a shared sense of purpose, we can create communities that are not only livable and economically vibrant but also reflective of the unique character and heritage that residents value. Through strategic growth, environmental stewardship, and respect for community identity, the Comprehensive Plan will encourage each Area to thrive for generations to come.



1.2 INTRODUCTION

As Hamilton County's population grows, thoughtful planning is crucial to managing the upcoming changes while efficiently using limited resources. The goal is to create resilient communities where neighborhoods, commercial centers, parks, and natural spaces flourish, striking a balance between development and conservation.

To guide this growth, we develop specific Plans that are later presented to local legislative bodies for adoption. These Plans become essential in shaping zoning, guiding private development, and influencing public infrastructure investments. They serve as a blueprint for determining where growth, redevelopment, and conservation should occur.

The Plans will equip Hamilton County leadership with the tools necessary to make strategic community investments in infrastructure, staff, and services, ensuring a livable community with sustained economic opportunities.

The [Introduction Chapter](#) serves as the background for the planning process and sets the tone for:

- » Planning Framework
- » Existing Planning Goals
- » What is An Area Plan?
- » Hamilton County Planning Areas
- » Policy Focus
- » Area Plan Process
- » Outline of the Area Plans

Community input is essential to shaping Hamilton County's long-term planning efforts, ensuring that residents and business owners help define the County's future. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan established a responsible land-use framework that prioritizes environmental preservation and community character. Complementing this, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) forecasts transportation needs and guides infrastructure investment.

Area Plans provide localized guidance on development, zoning, infrastructure, and conservation. These plans use tools like a Conceptual Land Use map that is illustrative and Place Types maps that define development patterns and set policies for future growth. They are shaped by prior planning, community feedback, and professional analysis. Key goals include creating vibrant, well-defined spaces and balancing growth while preserving each area's character and meeting future demands.

Although Area Plans do not regulate development or change zoning directly, they guide policy and decisions related to infrastructure, housing diversity, and commercial centers. They emphasize efficient investment in public services, transportation, and natural resource preservation, especially in rural areas. Constraints like limited sewer capacity, emergency services, and infrastructure demands shape policies to ensure sustainable growth while maintaining residents' quality of life.

The White Oak Mtn. / Area 12 Plan is organized in five chapters as follows:



1.3 WHITE OAK MOUNTAIN: AREA 12

White Oak Mountain, located near the communities of Collegedale, Apison, Summit, and Ooltewah, is a region known for its distinct natural features and rich history. Stretching across the eastern landscape of Hamilton County, White Oak Mountain Area is marked by its rolling hills. Area 12 consists of approximately 47 square miles. The mountain itself is a prominent feature in the region, with its elevation changes creating a striking backdrop that can be seen from various points throughout Hamilton County.

Several communities have developed in the vicinity of White Oak Mountain, each benefiting from the area's natural beauty and resources. Collegedale, known for its educational institutions, and Apison, with its rural charm, are among the key communities that have grown in harmony with the mountain's landscape. Summit and Ooltewah, with their blend of residential and commercial areas, also contribute to the region's character, providing essential services and infrastructure while maintaining close ties to the natural environment.

The White Oak Mountain area is characterized by its rural and natural qualities. The mountain's steep slopes and limited points of access pose challenges for development, but they also help to protect the area's scenic beauty and rural character. The emphasis in this region is on maintaining low-density residential patterns, with large-lot single-family homes with generous setbacks. The area's green spaces, parks, and trails are treasured by residents and play a crucial role in the community's identity.

This Area Plan is designed to guide the sustainable growth of the White Oak Mountain Area and inform decisions on future development and supporting infrastructure. Development that is sensitive to the environment and community vision will help preserve the area's unique sense of place. The community values the preservation of its rural character, the enhancement of its trail systems, and the maintenance of its natural features, ensuring that the area's distinctive identity is upheld for future generations.

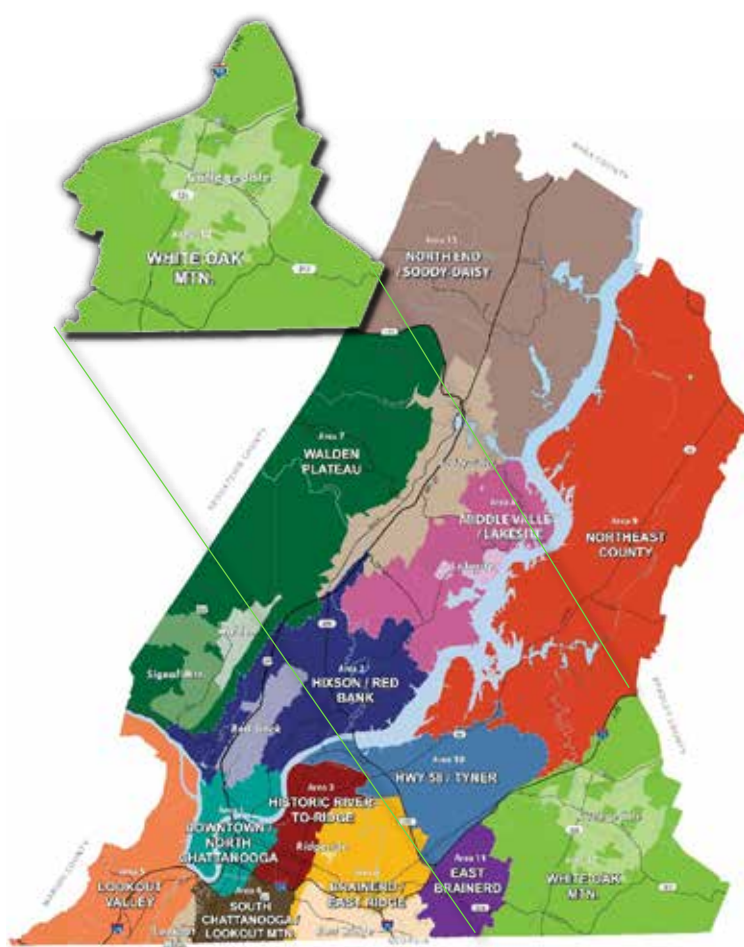


Figure 1.1: White Oak Mountain Area 12 as a part of Hamilton County Study Area



White Oak Mountain Map

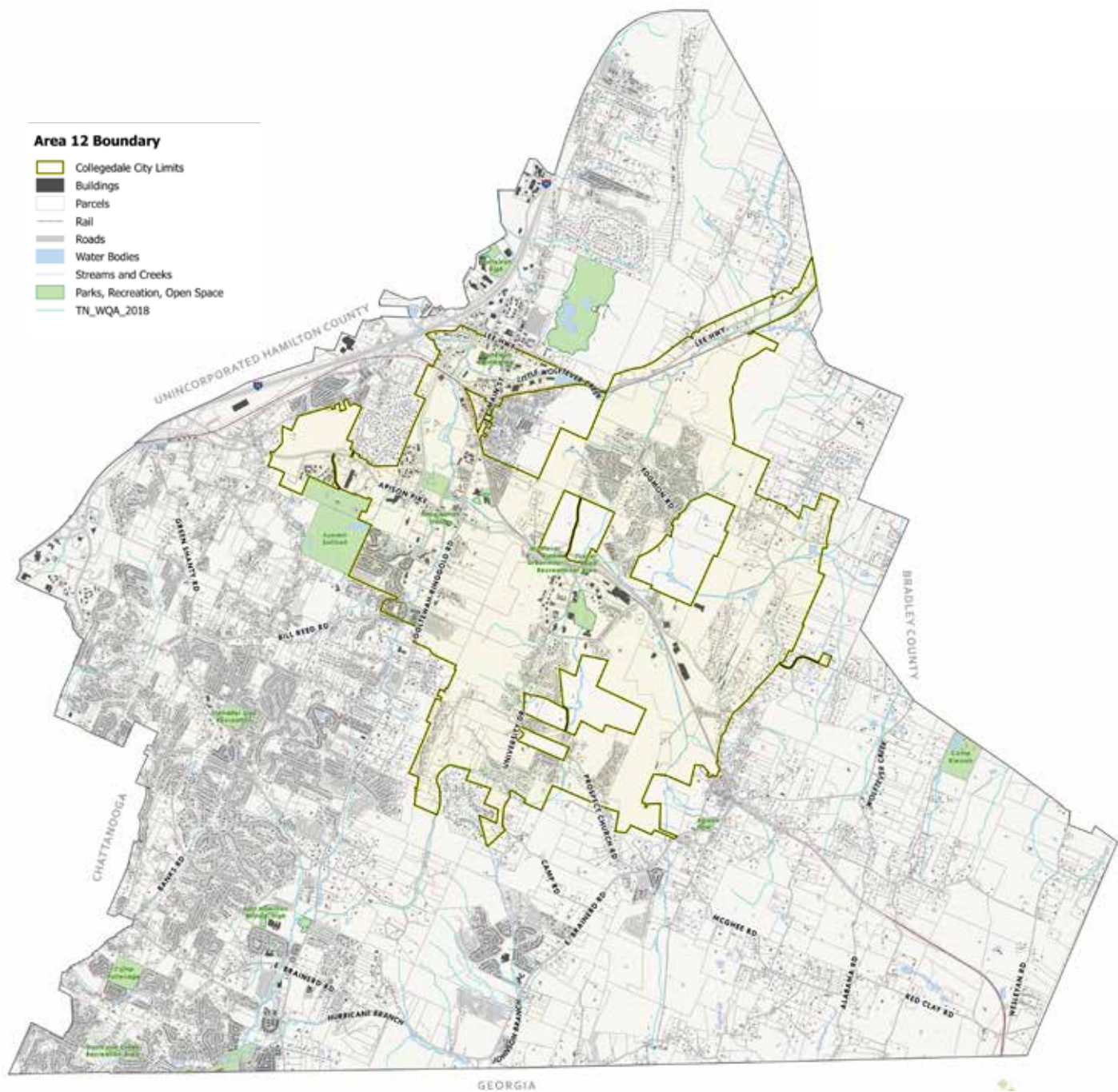


Figure 1.2: White Oak Mountain Area 12 Map



1.4 HISTORY OF WHITE OAK MOUNTAIN

The White Oak Mountain Area boasts a rich history intertwined with the cultural and natural heritage of the region. This area was part of James County (generally lands east of the Tennessee River) with Apison and Ooltewah serving as the primary towns. Established in 1871, James County was centered with Ooltewah serving as the County seat and existed until 1919 when reabsorbed into Hamilton County. A train depot was located in downtown Ooltewah near Main Street along with the James County Courthouse. Well served by rail, the area took part in the growing mining industry found throughout the region. This area featured bauxite mines, produced ore and limestone, and included farming, saw mills and small businesses. The brief history discussed in this plan is focused on how the unique topography, early beginnings, City of Collegedale and surrounding industry shaped the development pattern we see today.

WHITE OAK MOUNTAIN

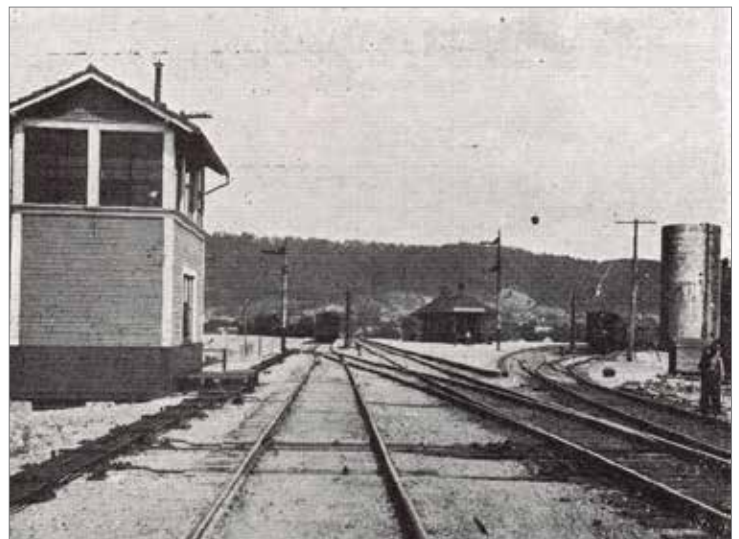
White Oak Mountain runs in a north/south direction through the middle of Area 12 through the unincorporated areas as well as the City of Collegedale. Collegedale itself has developed an extensive network of trails on White Oak Mountain and Bauxite Ridge, encouraging both residents and visitors to explore its beauty. The area is also home to a variety of wildlife, from deer and foxes to an array of bird species, making it a popular spot for wildlife observation. The elevation is similar to Missionary Ridge averaging approximately 1,368 feet above sea level.

RURAL & AGRICULTURAL BEGINNINGS

In the early twentieth century, the town of Apison worked to recruit people to this area known for its rich farm lands where forage crops, sweet potatoes and dairies thrived along with businesses and residences. As a connector to Bradley County, Lee Highway and Apison Pike served as thoroughfares to Cleveland, McDonald and the Red Clay area. White Oak Valley exists today as a reminder of the rural landscape once predominant during the twentieth century. With the advent of the Volunteer Army Ammunition Plant (VAAP) during World War II, the area experienced growth resulting in more housing for workers and many local churches being added to the Summit area. Once a place of farming and share cropping, Summit was established as an African-American community named for the high ridge tops.



White Oak Mountain
Source: Land Watch



The Ooltewah Cutoff
Source: Chattanooga.com





The Commons - Collegedale
Source: Collegedale Parks and Recreation



Trail of Tears in Area 12
Source: National Park Service (NPS)



Little Debbie Park
Source: Visit Chattanooga

THE CITY OF COLLEDGALE

The City of Collegedale was established as a municipality in 1968, its roots are deeply intertwined with the establishment of Southern Adventist University, a cornerstone that not only lent the town its name but also its purpose. What began as a modest settlement around a religious educational institution has grown into a city, where the values of its founders continue to resonate in its development. From its early days as a rural outpost to its evolution as part of James County, Collegedale is now a vibrant suburban community.

TRAIL OF TEARS

The Indian Removal Act passed by U.S. Congress in 1830 forced the relocation of Native American tribes. Thousands of Cherokee people passed through this region on their westward journey to the designated Indian Territory. This event significantly influenced the area's demographics and social fabric, with remnants of the historic route still evident in the region's trails and markers. According to the National Park Service, the Trail of Tears passes through Ooltewah, crossing Little Debbie Parkway and Apison Pike.

INDUSTRY & GROWTH

During the 1980's and 1990's, the area saw growth along the I-75 interstate with new development clustering along the exits and Lee Highway area. The Summit landfill was added to the Apison Pike area and was in operation for nearly twenty years. Now closed, the landfill site exists as a private softball complex and recreation area managed by the City of Chattanooga. Additionally, the East Brainerd area expanded towards Ooltewah-Ringgold Road with multiple subdivisions and the Westview Elementary school was added, changing the makeup of this once rural part of Hamilton County. The proximity to major employers such as Southern Adventist University, McKee Foods (Little Debbie), and Enterprise South continues to increase the residential growth of the White Oak Mountain area.



1.5 PAST PLAN

WHITE OAK MOUNTAIN AREA PLAN (2019)

Led by the RPA, the White Oak Mountain Area Plan was approved in February 2019 by the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. This plan represented a collaborative effort among local elected officials of Hamilton County, Chattanooga City Council, the City of Collegedale, business owners, and residents. The plan was created to guide growth by providing predictability, promoting coordination between new development and public services, and provides decision makers with the policy tools to promote development that enhances the area's unique features. The plan provides guidance by offering policy options for the built environment, transportation and natural resource systems. The plan is separated into four (4) chapter to guide the planning effort and has informed the outline of the new unincorporated Area Plans:

1. Introduction/Background:

Overview of the planning framework, Area Plans in general, the White Oak Mountain study area, and the overall public process.

2. Research & Analysis:

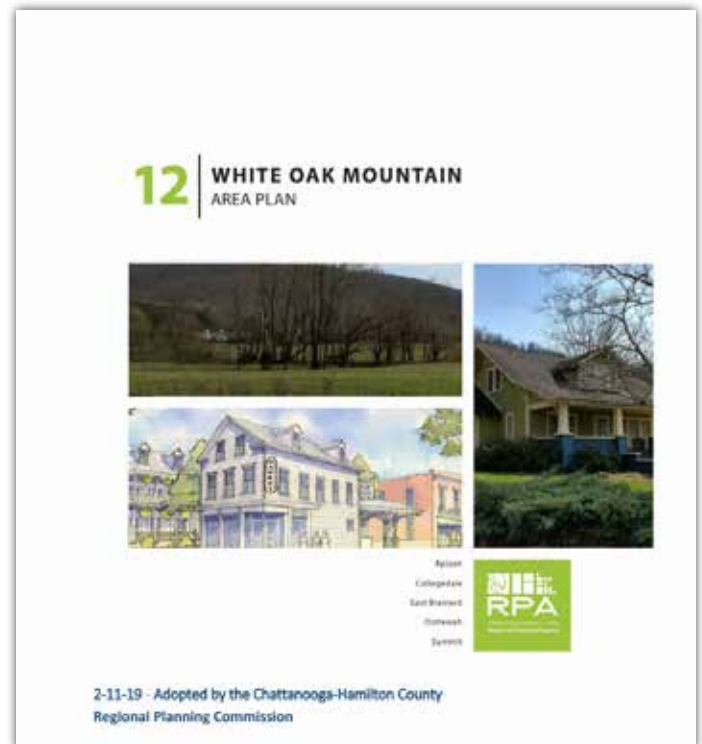
Background on the study area, study area profile, community priorities, overall plan analysis including the built environment, transportation, and natural resources.

3. Community Principles & Vision:

Identification of the area's specific principles and Vision Statement.

4. Goals & Policy Recommendations:

Overview of the goals and policy recommendations for the built environment, transportation, natural resources, Place Types, and centers.



The plan also identified 3 main community concerns and aspirations that framed the analysis and recommendations of the plan document:

Previous 2019 Area 12 Plan
Source: RPA

- » Balance growth with adequate infrastructure. Traffic congestion is a growing concern among residents. As new schools are built, more people are moving to this area. Participants were concerned about housing growth having adequate services.
- » Retain the “Rural Character” of the White Oak Mountain area. This was one of the top comments voiced during the public meetings and survey results. Maintaining existing character in areas where growth or change is occurring is a concern.
- » Improve the quality of commercial development. There is a desire for additional retail, restaurants, medical and other commercial uses as part of the community's growth, but with better quality, landscape buffers and design that reflects the area's scenic character.





CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

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

2.1 COMMUNITY SUMMARY

White Oak Mountain is linked to East Brainerd / Chattanooga via East Brainerd Road, Standifer Gap Road, and Apison Pike. These connections influence transportation, economic drivers, and development patterns. The western half of Area 12 has experienced explosive residential and commercial growth based on several inputs. Primary drivers include proximity to Interstate 75 employment anchors in Chattanooga, at Enterprise South, and in the City of Collegedale. Relatively newer schools and district facilities, such as the Wolftever Greenway have also spurred growth in this portion of the district. A primary objective is to focus new growth and add predictability to commercial and higher density residential growth along the I-75/Lee Highway/Apison Pike corridors. White Oak Mountain, Bauxite Ridge, and the Wolftever Creek drainage areas are natural features that influence development patterns.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- » The growing communities of Collegedale and Cleveland play a vital role in supporting the Area.
- » The community has expressed a desire to maintain a more rural development pattern.
- » Portions of this historically rural area transitioning to a moderate density suburban area.
- » Opportunities for recreation and trail/greenway connectivity between several community centers and assets.
- » Existing robust recreational trail network along the ridgeline.
- » The Area has close proximity to job centers, I-75, and the continued expansion at VW.

REGIONAL FACILITIES AND ASSETS

- » The Summit softball complex
- » White Oak Mountain
- » Bauxite Ridge Mountain Bike Trail
- » Cambridge Square
- » Hamilton Place Shopping Area
- » McKee Foods
- » Little Debbie Park
- » Southern Adventist University, and
- » Collegedale Airport*



Wolftever Creek Greenway
Source: Chattanooga.com



McKee Foods Headquarters, Collegedale
Source: TN Department of Economic Development



PRIMARY CONSTRAINTS

Settlement Patterns:

- » There is a long history of settlement in this area that allows for interpretation and story telling such as the James County Courthouse in Old Ooltewah, in Summit or for the Apison community that was once a thriving village centered around farming.
- » For areas east of White Oak Mountain / Bauxite Ridge/ Collegedale, the community has expressed an interest in a more rural development pattern.

Topography:

- » Natural features like the Wolftever Creek, Hurricane Creek, and White Oak Mountain / Bauxite Ridge dictate development patterns and where additional growth should occur.



Aerial of Area 12
Source: Google Earth

Roadways & Railways:

The pace of growth in Area 12 has created significant congestion on highly utilized segments of the road network and driven significant investment in sewer expansion. More investments in critical infrastructure will be required to mitigate existing growth before additional growth can be accommodated.

- » I-75 and rail corridors form additional physical constraints to road network connectivity and resulting development pattern.

- » Peak period congestion is an issue at several intersections in the Area 12 system. Access management strategies, intersections improvements, signal timing, and bike-pedestrian infrastructure improvements should be investigated at Ooltewah-Ringgold (SR 321)/ Apison Pike (SR 317), at the railroad crossings/ tunnels near historic Ooltewah, and at Lee Highway and Apison Pike.



Figure 2.1: White Oak Mountain Area Context



2.2 COMMUNITY PROFILE



64%

of residents are influenced by personal safety and security when choosing the White Oak Mountain Area to live.



42%

Bachelor's Degree

32%

Master's Degree +

19%

Some College

Source: ACS



58%

Believe that large-lot single family homes should be encouraged in Area 12.



79%

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



57%

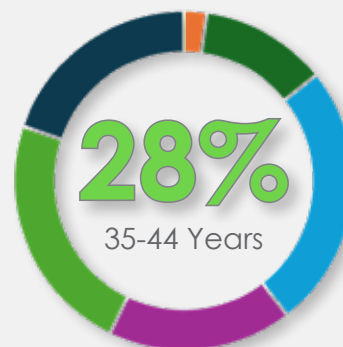
Lived in Hamilton County for 20+ Years

30%

Lived in Hamilton County for 5-19 Years

13%

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

23%

45-54 Years

21%

65 or Over

Source: ACS



2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS & ECONOMIC TRENDS

DEMOGRAPHICS OVERVIEW

Recent census data reveals a balanced distribution across age groups, with a mix of young families (30-34 Years), working professionals (25-29 Years), and retirees (60-69 Years). Emphasizing the preservation of its close-knit community, the region 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 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

White Oak Mountain has experienced steady population growth and economic development over the past decade, driven by strategic investments in commercial and industrial facilities, education, and residential development. Future prospects remain positive, with planned developments that enhance connectivity, sustainability, and making quality of life for residents a priority moving forward. 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 +

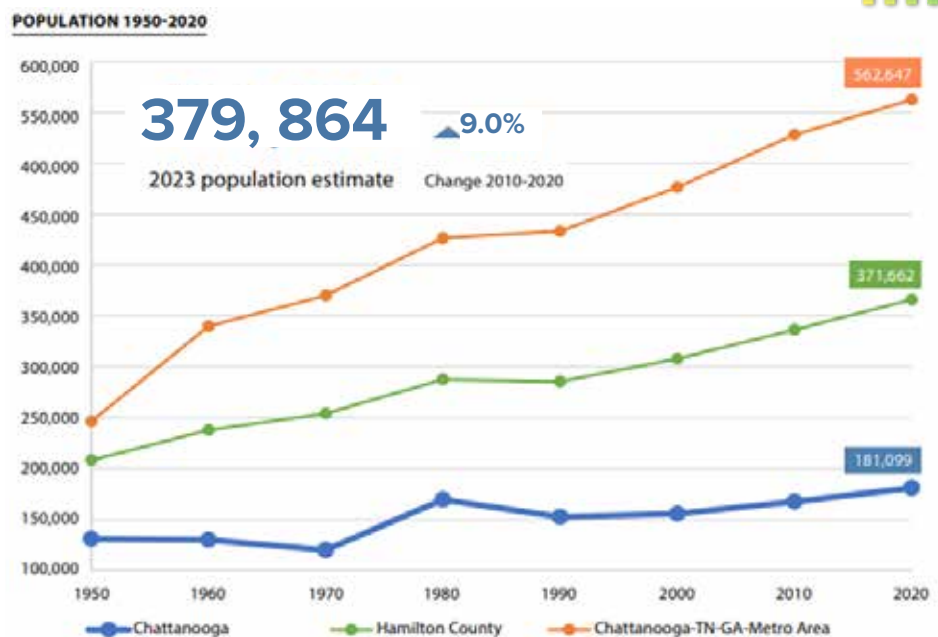


Figure 2.2: Hamilton County Census Data



ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

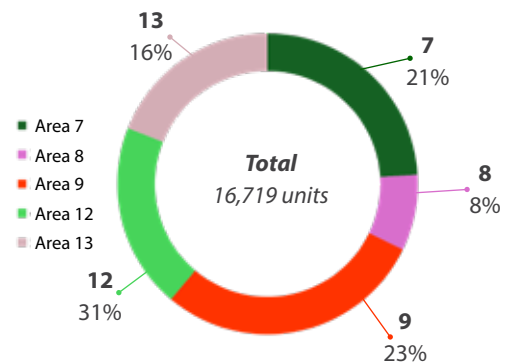
Area 12 is one of the more developed regions in Hamilton County outside Chattanooga. This development is concentrated largely in the western half, with the eastern side remaining relatively untouched due to the natural barrier of White Oak Mountain. The topography influences the distribution of infrastructure, which is predominantly found on the west side. The thriving suburban nodes of East Brainerd, Collegedale, and Ooltewah owe much of their success to their strategic proximity to downtown Chattanooga via I-75, Brainerd Road, and other key commuter routes. This area is further distinguished by notable institutions like Southern Adventist University and prominent businesses such as the McKee Foods plant. With access to I-75 and major commuter routes, downtown and industrial jobs, good schools, and amenities. Utilizing the findings in the RCLCO market analysis, a forward-looking demand was projected across residential and non-residential product types to understand how these patterns will impact growth in unincorporated Hamilton County.

The following growth is anticipated in White Oak Mountain over the next 20 years which is projected to have the largest amount of residential growth (31%) than any other unincorporated planning area.

Additional market findings include:

- » Proximity to the I-75 corridor, high quality schools with additional capacity, and existing infrastructure dictate Area 12 will remain an attractive location for future real estate development.
- » At an average of 5 units per acre an additional 2000 units could be accommodated on 400 acres of available land. The extension of a sewer trunk line out London Lane towards Bill Jones Road adds to the potential for single family residential growth.
- » Industrial growth areas have not been mapped and are potentially warranted on flat developable land near the highway.

Chart 1: Total Residential Projections



2.4 COMMUNITY THEMES

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:

2.4.1 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 in White Oak Mountain:

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

2.4.2 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.

2.4.3 Transportation & Mobility

Transportation:

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

2.4.4 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.

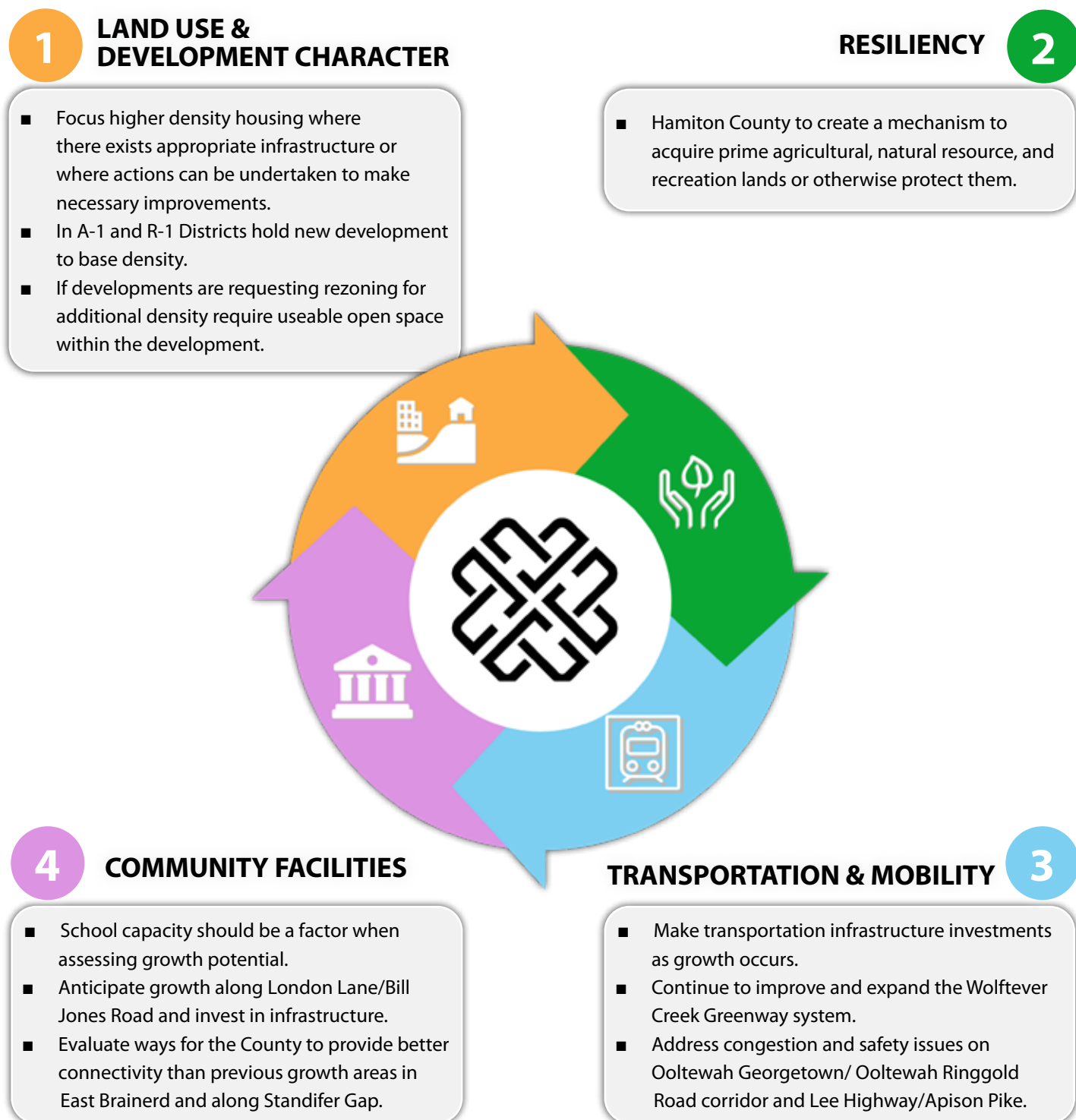
Emergency Services:

Examination of emergency response capabilities, encompassing fire, police, medical, and disaster response services.



2.5 PLAN ANALYSIS

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 the plan will provide community leaders with a set of filters for future strategic, policy, and project based decisions. The following graphic identifies the four Community Themes and the public consensus that framed the analysis, goals, and policies.



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 shape 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.

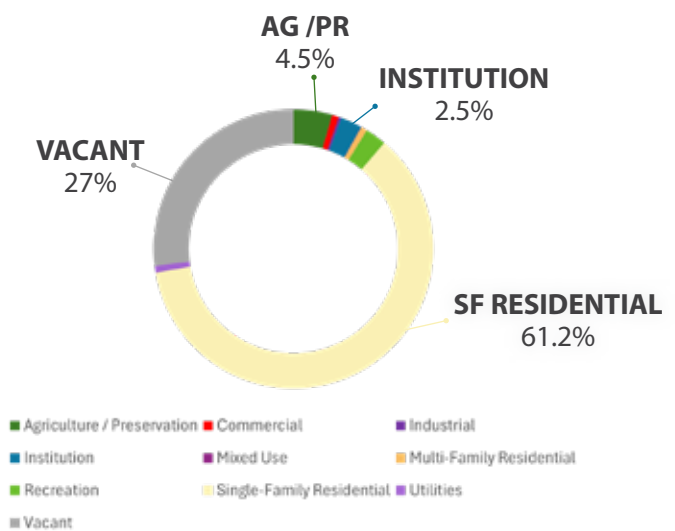
LAND USE

Area 12 is primarily categorized as residential with 61.2% of the land being used for single-family residential. Vacant land makes up approximately 27%. Agricultural Land is approximately 4.5% of the land area and institutional uses (such as schools or religious facilities) are 2.5%. The commercial and industrial land uses combined make up less than 3% of the land area with industrial at 1.8% and commercial at 1.1%, indicating very little non-residential activity in comparison. Although more commercial activity exists within the Collegedale city limits.

The primary land use in the unincorporated areas of White Oak Mountain is single-family residential, like much of the unincorporated areas of Hamilton County. This specific land use exists in a variety of contexts, from large farms to conventional subdivisions, the latter of which has become the predominant pattern of development in recent years. Commercial uses are primarily concentrated along Lee Highway and I-75. These commercial nodes provide essential services and amenities to the residents while maintaining the overall rural and residential character of the region. There are also some sporadic non-residential uses interspersed between these clusters, ensuring that commercial activity supports rather than dominates the landscape.

This land use pattern highlights the region's commitment to preserving its rural pattern while accommodating gradual growth and development. By maintaining a clear distinction between residential, commercial, and agricultural areas, White Oak Mountain seeks to balance the needs of its residents with the desire to protect its unique environmental and cultural assets.

Chart 3: Percentages of Existing Land Use



Typical businesses found in old Ooltewah along Main Street
Source: RPA



Existing Land Use Map

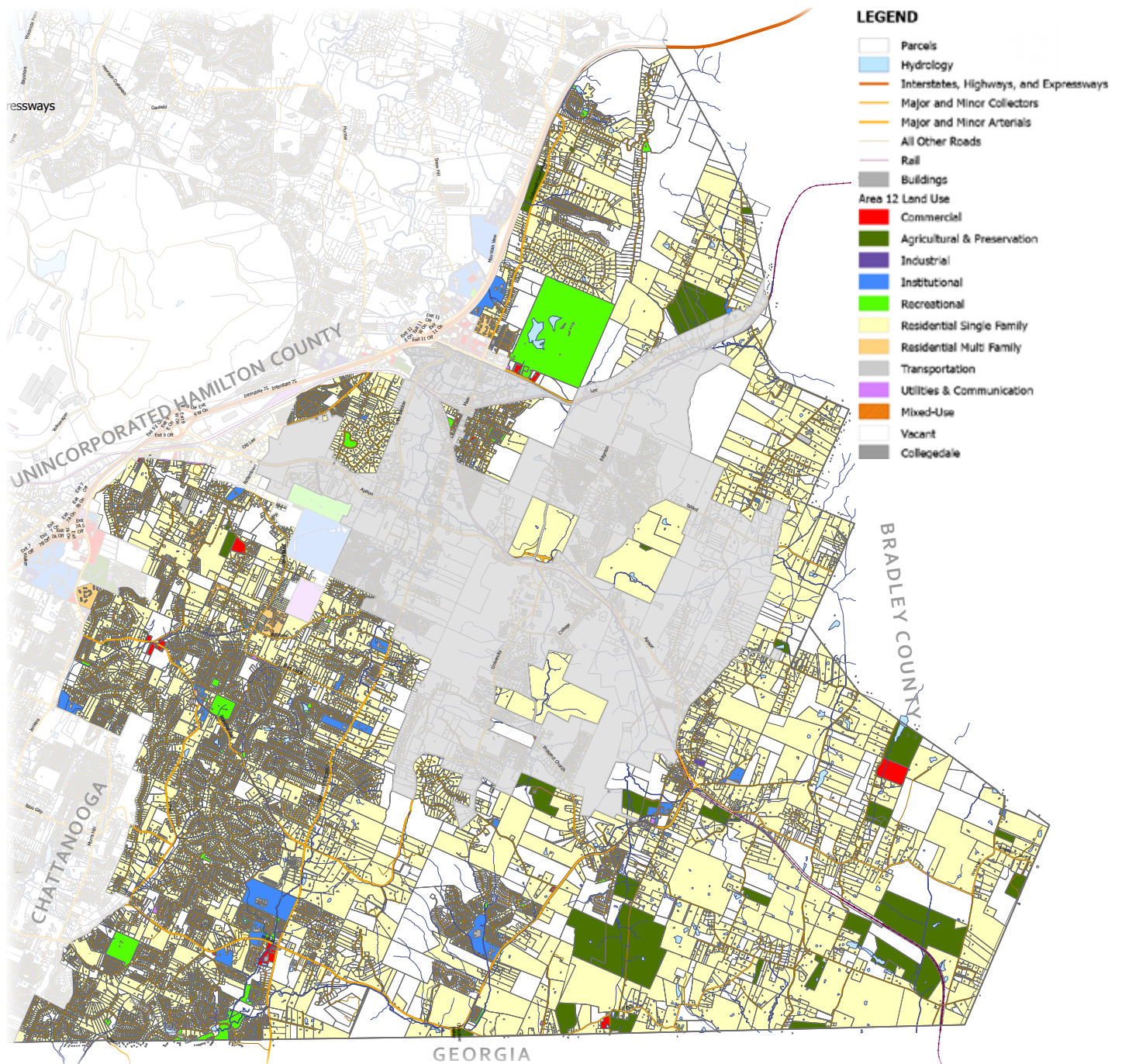


Figure 2.3: Existing Land Use Map (2023)



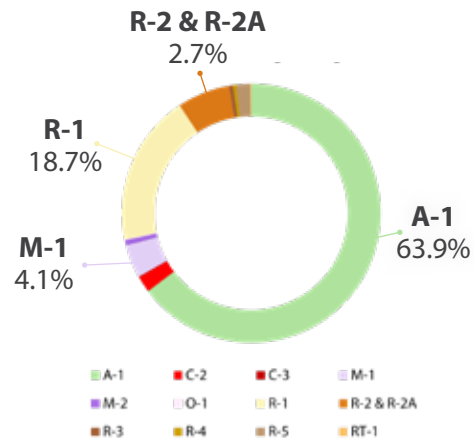
ZONING

Most properties in the unincorporated portion of Area 12 are zoned A-1 (63.9%), 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 that defines much of the region, ensuring that agricultural activities and low-density housing remain predominant, an important aspect of maintaining the community character. The second most common zoning is R-1 (18.7%), which permits single-family residential development at a base density of up to four dwelling (now proposed to be four) units per acre on public sewer systems. This flexibility allows for more efficient land use and supports the region's growth while maintaining environmental standards.

Following the A-1 and R-1 categories the most predominant categories are zoned R-2A (2.7%) which permits single-family and two-family dwellings, including manufactured homes. The other category is M-1 (4.1%) which allows a wide range of intensive manufacturing uses.

Commercial and industrial activity is primarily concentrated along the northwestern portion of Area 12 in areas east of I-75 near Lee Hwy and Apison Pike. There is also a variety of C-5, neighborhood Commercial parcels throughout Area 12 to serve the community.

Chart 2: Percentages of Existing Zoning



Cambridge Square
Source: RPA



Existing Zoning Map

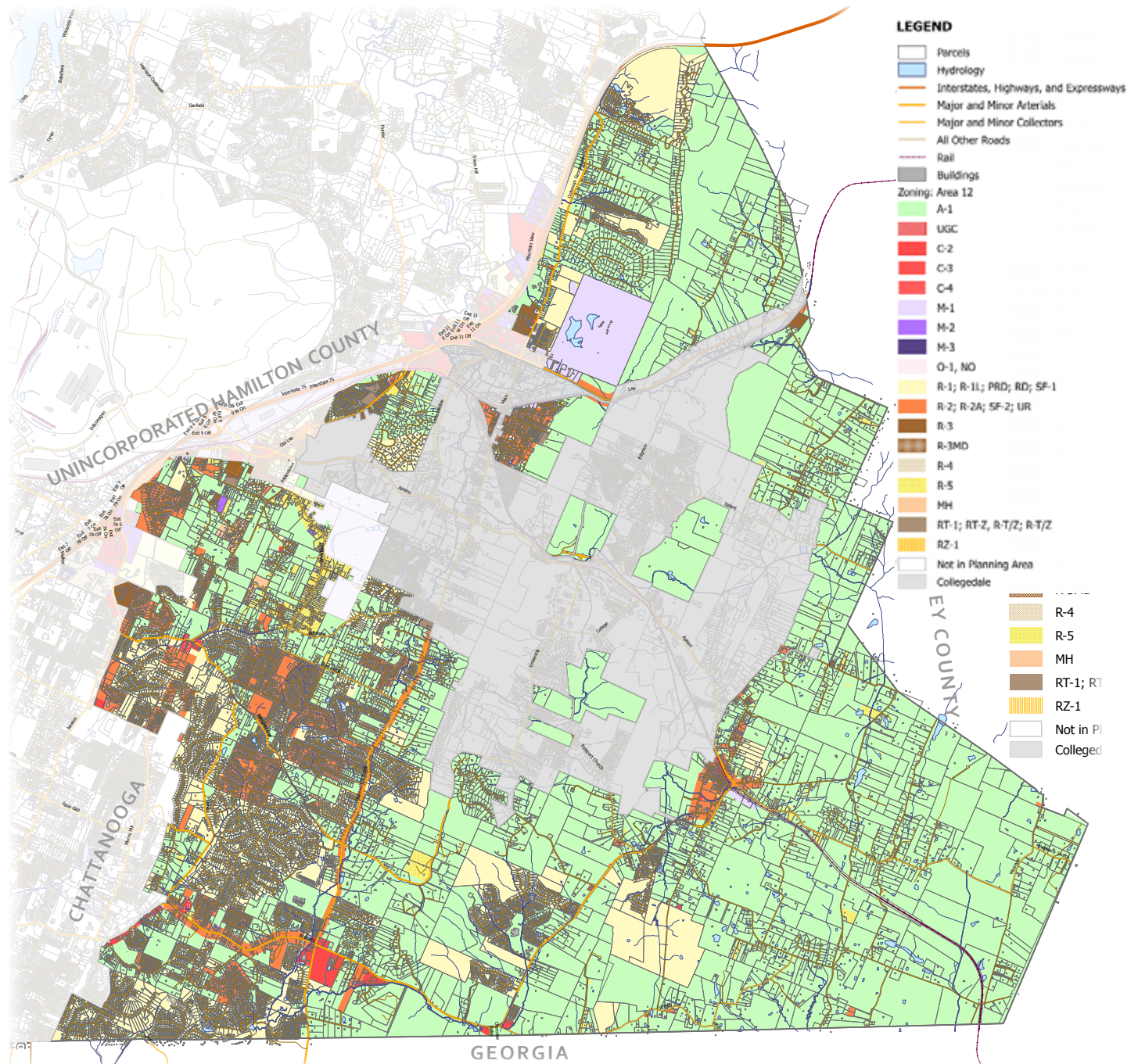


Figure 2.4: Existing Zoning Map (2023)



BUILDING PERMITS & DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Over the past decade, the White Oak Mountain Area has witnessed fluctuations influenced by economic conditions, population growth, and shifting residential and commercial demands. As residential needs expand, the area has experienced increased activity in both new construction and renovation projects. Analyzing these trends offers valuable insights into the region’s growth patterns, regulatory impacts, and future development prospects, highlighting the dynamic nature of White Oak Mountain’s built environment.

Figure 2.5 reveals that the majority of permits issued have been for single-family homes (or related), 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. This consistency ensures that the area’s charm and appeal are preserved even as it evolves.

Following single-family residential permits, the “Other” classification represents the second-highest category for permit issuance as defined in table 2. The total of commercial permits issued in the 10 year period consist of approximately 1.1% of the total permits issued in Area 12.

The analysis of building permit trends also highlights how economic and demographic shifts have shaped development. Population growth, driven by the area’s desirability and quality of life, has further fueled demand for housing and services, prompting a balanced approach to development that meets diverse needs.

Looking ahead, the insights gained from building permit trends provide a roadmap for future development. Development in Area 12 is significantly shaped by its topography, rural character and the community’s preference for maintaining residential character.

The map on the following page (figure 2.3) identifies buildings permits that were approved over the last 10 years for a variety of uses from low-density residential to utilities and businesses.

Chart 4: Permits by Area in Unincorporated vs. the City of Chattanooga and other municipalities

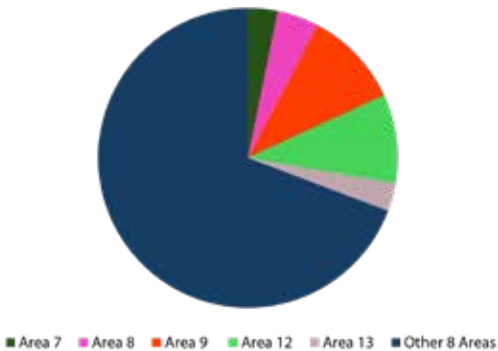
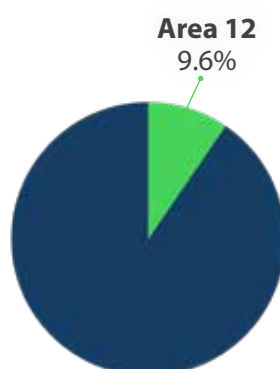


Table 3: Permit Classification Comparison

Permit Classification	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Area 12	Area 13
Commercial / Office	-	6	19	49	1
Commercial Solar	-	1	2	1	-
Hotel, Motel, Tourist Cabin	-	-	1	1	-
Industrial	-	1	-	3	1
Multi-Family/ Mixed Residential	-	10	-	29	3
Other Permits*	592	1,005	1,898	1,983	516
Public Works / Utilities	-	-	-	1	2
Single Family Residential	879	1,063	2,883	2,339	876
Total (Per Area)	1,471	2,086	4,803	4,406	1,399
Total (Unincorporated County)	14,165				

- The "Other" Permit Classification Category Includes: Demolition permits, Residential Additions & Alterations, Religious Institutions, Parking Garages, Hospitals, and Non-Residential Additions & Alterations.
- Permit Classifications shown are reflective of the anticipated growth pattern in Hamilton County and the categories selected in the Economic Analysis projections in the RCLCO study.

Chart 5: Area 12 Permits vs Hamilton County (All)

Building Permits Map

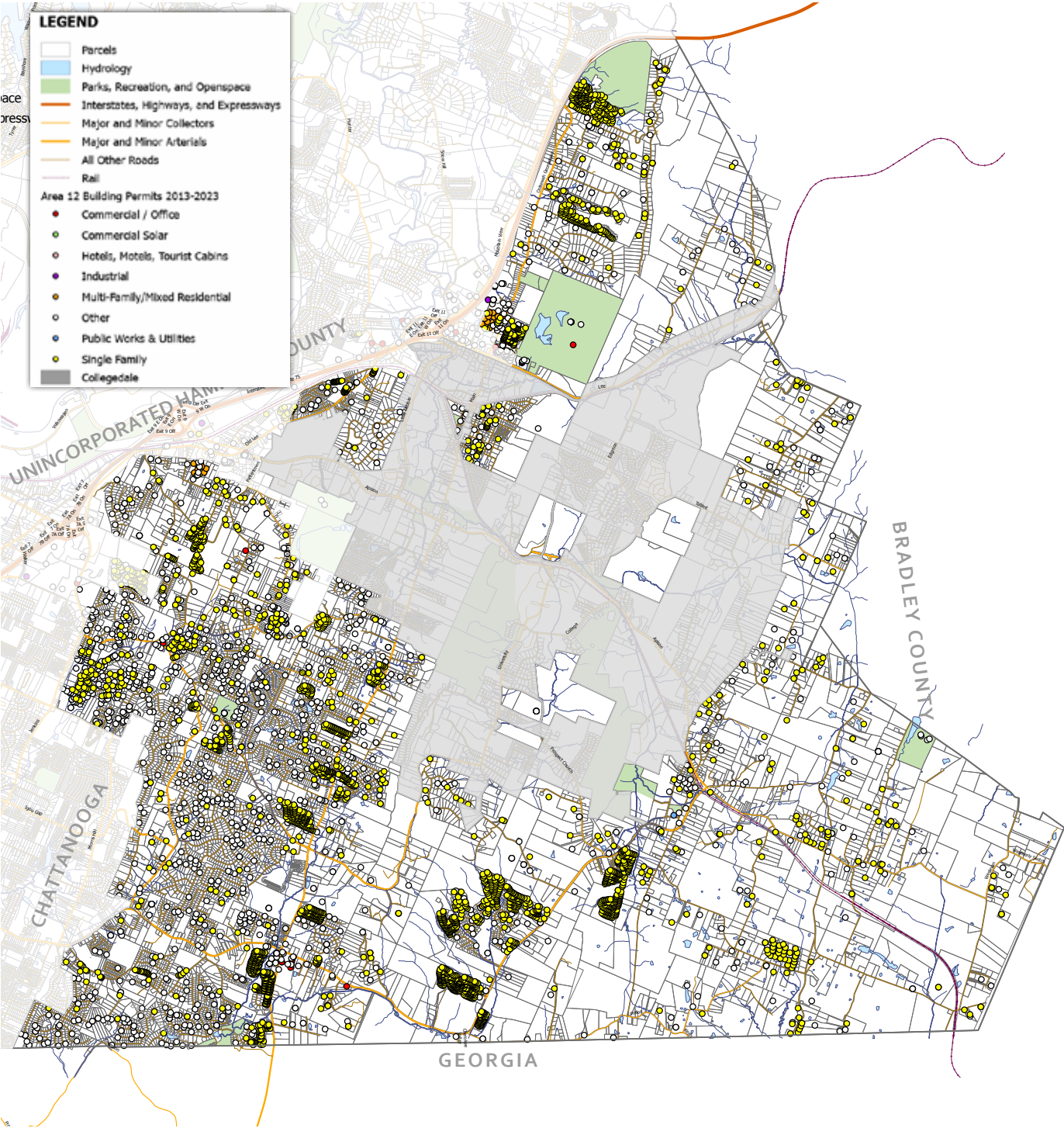


Figure 2.5: Building Permits Map (2013-2023)



2.5.2 RESILIENCY

The Resiliency Community Theme for White Oak Mountain 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 area's natural heritage.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The White Oak Mountain Area is rich in natural resources, featuring the Wolftever Creek, parks, and White Oak Mountain, Bauxite Ridge, and others. 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 2.6) 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 White Oak Mountain Area, 14.8% of the land area falls under the natural resources category as shown in Figure 2.4. 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, unless special permits are obtained.



Typical Land in Area 12
Source: RPA



Wolftever Creek
Source: Chattanooga.com

Natural Resources Map



Figure 2.6: Natural Resources Map



PARKS, RECREATION & GREENWAYS

White Oak Mountain, like much of Hamilton County, offers a wide array of recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts. The parks, greenways, and recreation areas here provide residents and visitors alike with activities ranging from hiking and biking to picnicking and observing local wildlife. These spaces not only highlight the stunning natural beauty of the region's mountains and valleys but also serve as accessible, well-maintained venues for the public's use. The City of Collegedale boasts an extensive network of hiking and mountain biking trails that weave through White Oak Mountain and Bauxite Ridge, creating a seamless connection between nature and community.

These green spaces serve a purpose beyond recreation. They are critical for environmental preservation, offering habitats for diverse wildlife and contributing to the overall health of the region's ecosystems. This preservation nurtures a sense of environmental stewardship, as the community becomes more connected to the land they enjoy. With a total of 386 acres of public recreation space and 233 acres of private recreation areas in the unincorporated portion of Area 12 alone, as noted in Tables 4 and 5 on page 31, these green spaces play a crucial role in safeguarding the environmental integrity of the region. A separate analysis was conducted to measure the total approximate acreage for all aspects of parks, recreation, and open space which is approximately 1,623 acres or 5.4% of the total land area.

Whether through careful planning or the community's balance between progress and preservation, these delicate ecosystems define Hamilton County's identity and secure a legacy of natural beauty for future generations.

Chart 6: Percentage of Parks, Recreation & Open Space in Area 12

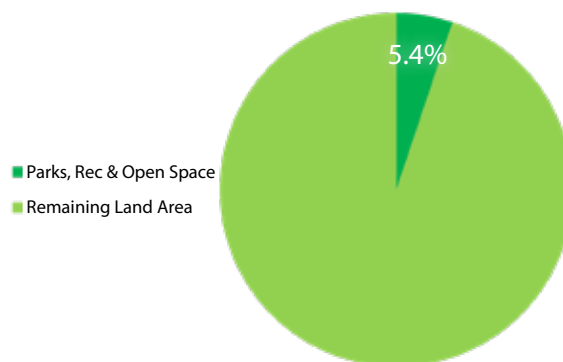
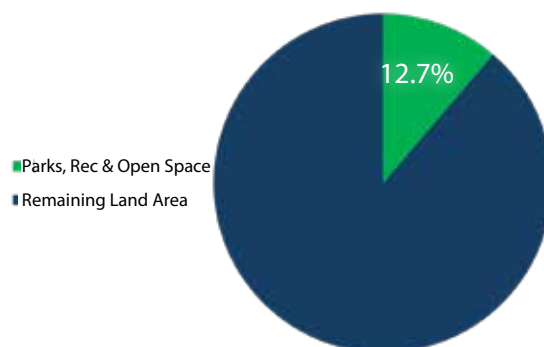


Chart 7: Percentage of Parks, Recreation & Open Space in all 5 Plan Hamilton Areas



Wolftever Creek Greenway Bridge
Source: Chattanooga.com



PARKS & GOVERNMENT OWNED PROPERTY

Given the predominantly residential nature of Area 12 and number of schools, there is a significant presence of public recreational facilities, within the incorporated limits of Collegedale. In addition to preserving sensitive environmental assets, these areas are a recreational asset that draws hikers, bikers, horse riders, and others. Unlike other areas of unincorporated Hamilton County, there are not significant lands under conservation, therefore, the focus of this section is on parks and the asset they provide to the residential aspects of the White Oak Mountain community. Publicly used parks in Area 12 when combined total approximately 386 acres.



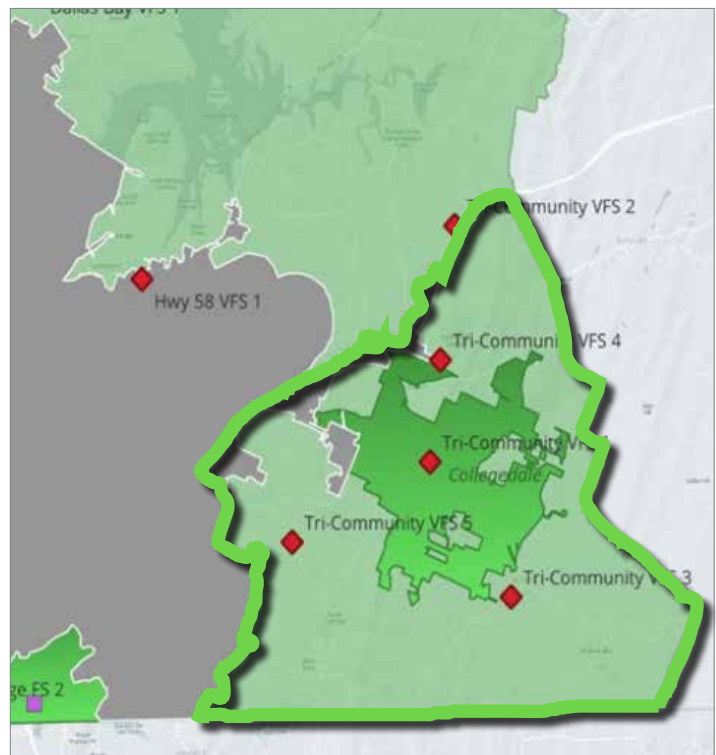
Standifer Gap Park

Source: Hamilton County Parks & Recreation

EMERGENCY SERVICES

In 2024, Tri Star conducted a [Fire and Emergency Response Evaluation](#) of the unincorporated areas to identify current levels of fire protection service, geographic coverage, response time, areas of need, etc. Within Area 12, there are five (5) volunteer fire departments (VFD) including Tri-Community VFD 1,3,5,5-3, and CH. Additionally Tri-Community VFD-4 is directly on the border between Areas 9 and 12 and serves both and is included in the population estimate below. The stations are evenly distributed throughout the area and the report did not identify any gaps in coverage. The report did however, identify that the Tri-Community VFD's serves the most populous area in Hamilton County with an estimated population of 47,732 and therefore, has the highest demand for emergency services within all of the unincorporated areas. As growth continues, it will be necessary to continue to evaluate emergency service and response and improve accordingly.

Hamilton County Emergency Management owns and constantly updates evacuation routes and plans for natural disasters.



Fire Stations in White Oak Mountain

Source: Tri-Star Public Solutions, Fire & Rescue Services Evaluation



Table 4: Public Parks, Recreation, and Greenways

Name	Type of Recreation Area	Size (Acres)
Apison Park	Field; Tennis Courts; Horseshoe Pits; Dog Park; Walking Track	6
Collegedale Dog Park	Playground; Walking Trail; Swimming Pool; Open Green Space	0.5
East Hamilton County Park	Walking and Hiking Trails; Outdoor Swimming Pool	23
East Hamilton Middle High School Athletic Complex	Off Leash Dog Park	18
Holly Hills Pool and Basketball Court	6 Baseball Fields; Pavilion; Pond	2
Hurricane Creek Recreation Area	Football Fields; Baseball Field; Softball Field; Basketball Gym	4
Imagination Station	Outdoor Swimming Pool; Outdoor Basketball Court; Clubhouse	3
Mountain Shadows Pool, Courts, and Playground	Swimming Pool, Tennis Courts; Basketball Court; Clubhouse	1
Nature Nook	Playground; Pavilion; Walking Trail	1
Ooltewah Elementary School Playground and Ball Fields	Swimming Pool; Tennis Courts; Basketball Court; Playground	4
Ooltewah High School Athletic Complex	Amphitheater; Walking Trail	23
Ooltewah Middle School Athletic Complex	Playground; 3 Ball Fields	4
Standifer Gap Recreation	Football Field; Track; Baseball Fields; Basketball Gym; Tennis Courts	26
Student Park	Ball Fields; Tennis Courts; Soccer Fields; Community Center	32
Summit Field	Model Airplane Field; Walking Track; Open Green Space	159
Summit of Softball Complex	8 Softball Fields; Walking Track; Picnic Areas	71
Tucker Road Recreational Area	Soccer Field; Playground; Pavilion; Walking Trail	3
Veteran's Memorial Park	8 Softball Fields; Walking Track; Picnic Areas	2
Westview Elementary School Playground	Playground; Outdoor Basketball Court; Pavilions	3
Wolftever Creek Greenway	Walking Trail	>1
Total		386

Table 5: Private Parks, Recreation, and Greenways

Name	Type of Recreation Area	Size (Acres)
The Honors Course	18-Hole Golf Course	196
Windstone Golf Club	18-Hole Golf Course; Tennis Courts; Outdoor Swimming Pool	37
Total		233





Natural resource areas are often designated as public parks or open space that may become tourist destinations.
Source: RPA

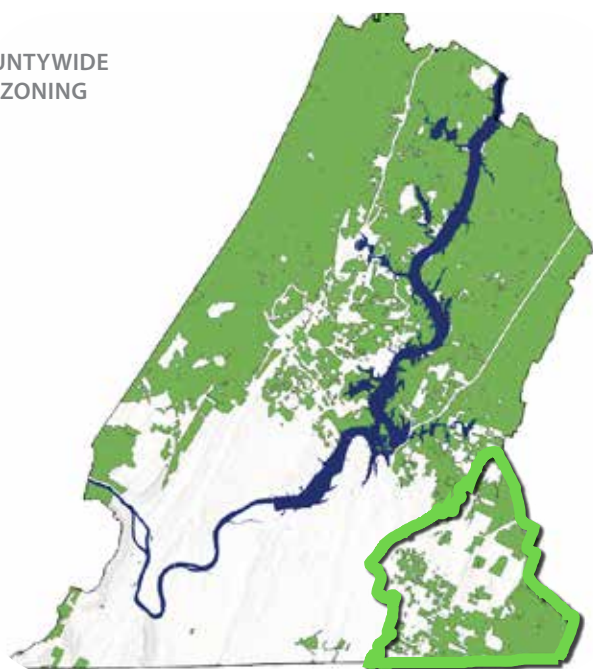


AGRICULTURE

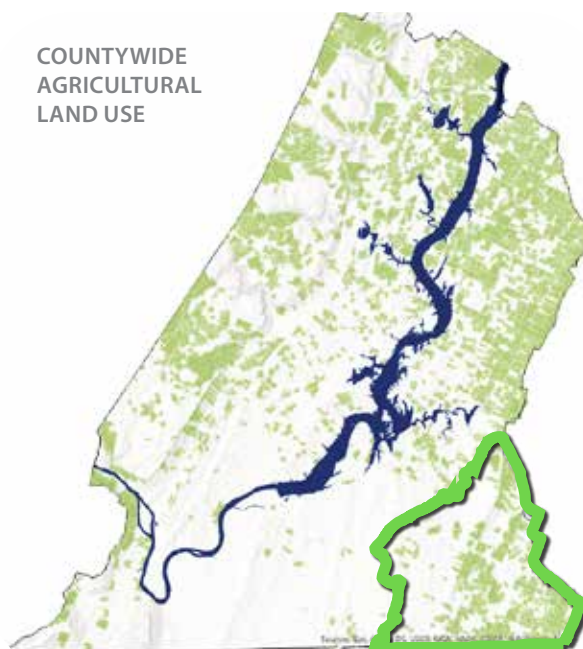
Hamilton County has a long history of agricultural activity in areas like Apison, Sale Creek, Flat Top Mountain, Georgetown and the Hwy 58/Birchwood area. A portion Area 12 consists of agricultural uses related to the production of crops, livestock, forestry uses and agricultural service businesses and may also include open fields, woodlands, and streams or lakes. Usually zoned as a A-1 district, they often include single-family homes on large lots as well as accessory buildings such as barns and greenhouses. Properties given the “Greenbelt” status (15 acres or more) usually feature a farm or single-family home with surrounding open space, pastures or forests retained and with tax benefits available. Development centered around farming is typically on septic systems. Agricultural uses in Hamilton County range from commercial businesses or large production facilities, such as a dairy or orchards, to horse stables, to roadside vegetable stands or feed & seed stores.

Not only do these agricultural uses add to the rural character of the area, but they also provide many benefits to the local community such as healthy food sources, educational programs, agritourism opportunities and improved environmental function for clean air and water quality - when significant vegetated areas are preserved and low impact farming practices (limited pesticide use or organic farming) are put in place. Programs that promote local agriculture and conserve open space and natural resources are readily available. Conservation practices may also include the use of clustered residential homes with farm amenities or scenic views and open space set aside. Another tool used to help preserve agricultural places and provide income includes special event facilities such as barns or pavilions, guesthouses or wedding chapels for instance.

COUNTYWIDE
A-1 ZONING



COUNTYWIDE
AGRICULTURAL
LAND USE



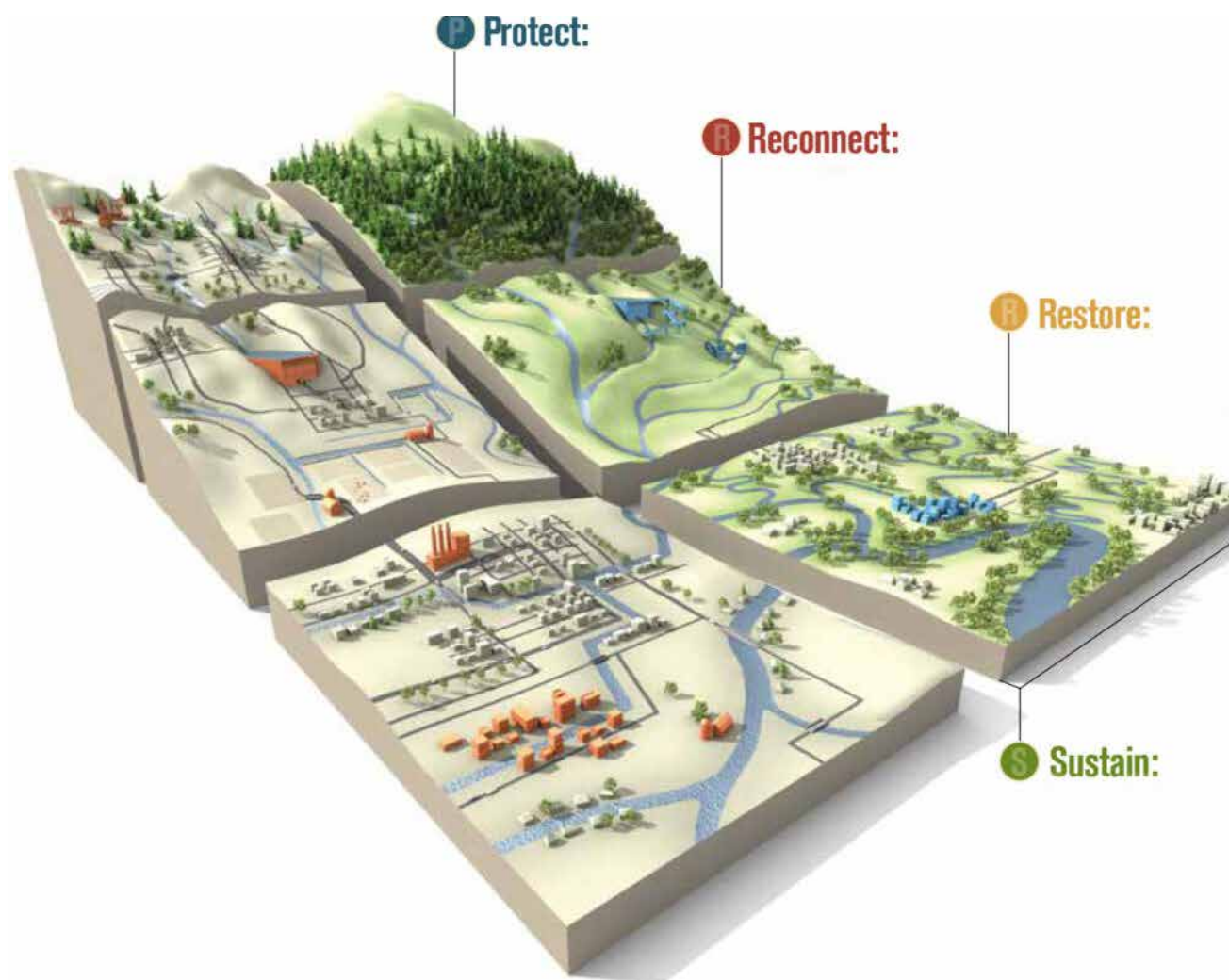
AREA 13

- 63.9%** A-1 Zoning
- 61.2%** Single-Family Parcels
- 9.6%** of Permits issued in the County
- 14.8%** of Area in Steep Slopes & Floodway
- 5.4%** Of Area in Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- 30%** of the County has Agricultural Land Use

HAMILTON COUNTY

- 56%** of the County in A-1 Zoning
- 30%** of the County has Agricultural Land Use





Water Quality BMP's (Best Management Practices) focus on the above goals of Protect, Reconnect, Restore and Sustain
Source: Stormwater runoff diagram tu.org and SETD Green Infrastructure Handbook



INFRASTRUCTURE

Wastewater

The Chattanooga Department of Wastewater and Hamilton County Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority (WWTA) are tasked with planning and administration of sewer services under state and federal laws. Chattanooga Department of Wastewater manages the Moccasin Bend Wastewater Treatment Plant which is the primary treatment facility for both the City of Chattanooga and unincorporated Hamilton County.

RPA staff has coordinated closely with the City of Chattanooga Wastewater Department staff during the development of the Comprehensive Plans to ensure adequate sewer capacity is available to accommodate the anticipated residential, commercial, and industrial development growth. This coordination is a technical evaluation with ongoing coordination of local agencies to ensure long term capacity.

WWTA staff has provided information to RPA that existing capacity and available financial support substantially limits new sewer availability in the unincorporated county in the short and mid-term. Chattanooga Department of Wastewater has provided guidance that adequate sewer capacity is available for anticipated development during the next 5 years.

RPA staff working with both WWTA and County staff to support new development and achieve the best outcomes possible regarding managing growth in the unincorporated area.

Septic Systems

Due to sewer capacity and availability, septic is the most common wastewater treatment option in Unincorporated Hamilton County. Generally, the minimum lot size required for septic systems is 25,000 square feet. Residential development in rural areas without sewer service must therefore be built with these larger lots.

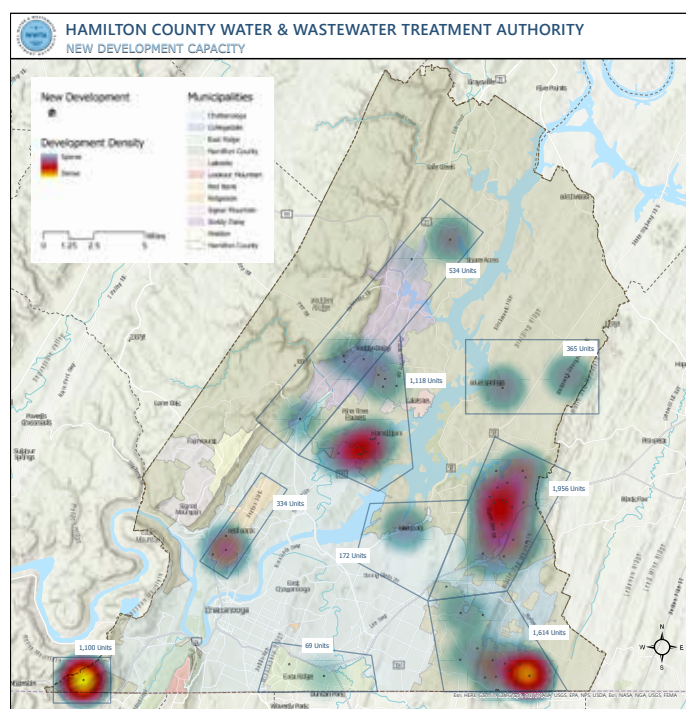
Information Highlight

Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems

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. Currently, Hamilton County only has a few examples of existing systems but anticipates them to become more common.

One key advantage in these systems 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. WWTA provides oversight on these systems.

Note: If approved, these systems allow development to be approved at a density/intensity as if it were on sewer.



New Development Capacity (June 2023)
Source: WWTA



Sewer Infrastructure Map

Types of Lines

Force Low: CAN tap (connect) into

Force Main: Can NOT tap (connect) into

Gravity Main: CAN tap (connect) into

Pump Stations: for moving sewage over ridges or higher elevations

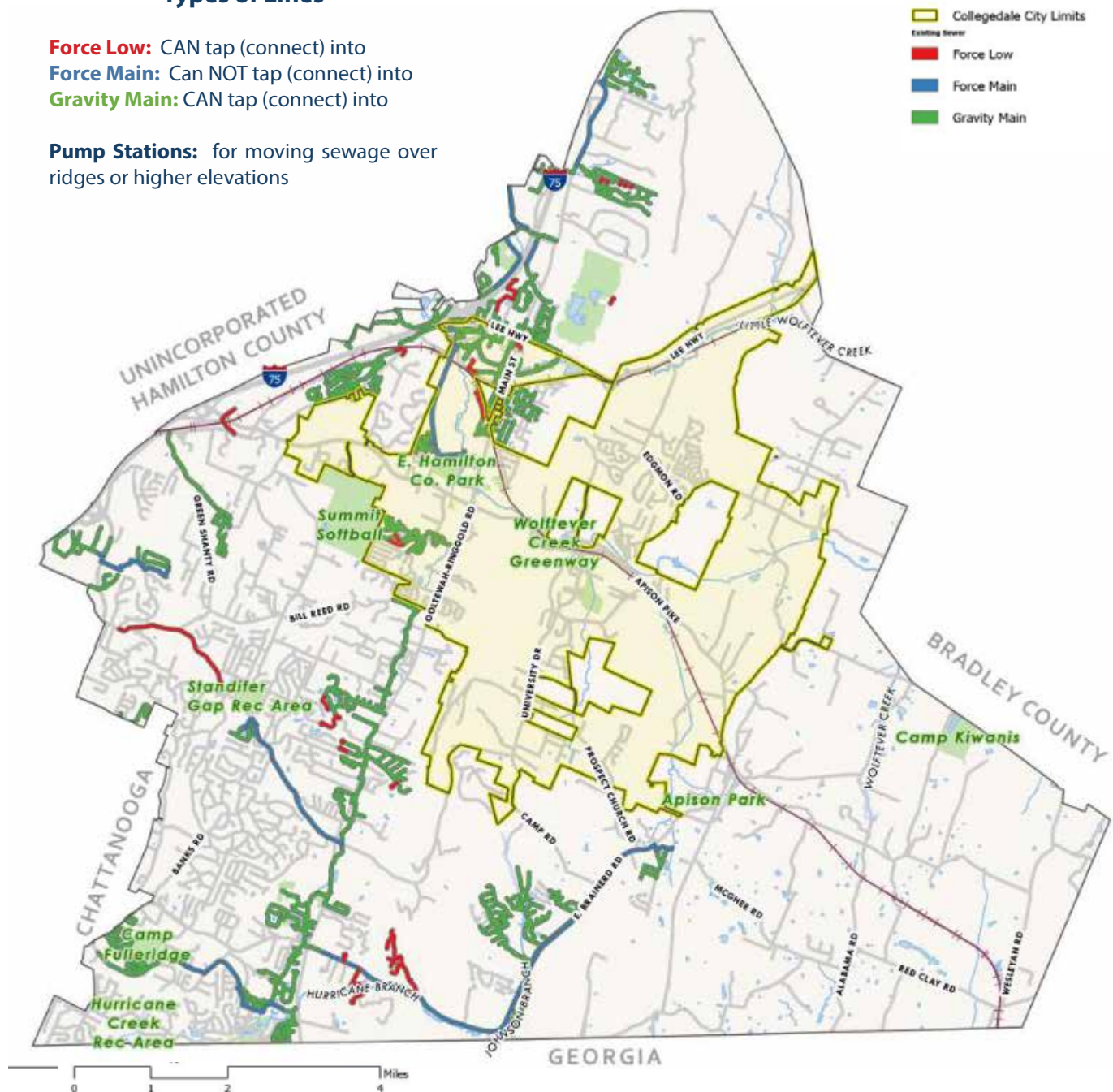


Figure 2.7: Sewer Infrastructure Map (2023)



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.

The street functional system categorizes roadways based on their purpose and role within the overall transportation network. This system distinguishes between different types of roads, such as local, collector, arterial, and expressways, each serving specific functions related to traffic movement and access.

The street network in Area 12 includes a few arterials that provide through connections, but there are limited minor connections between these arterials. Many subdivisions also include multiple culs de sac, but only provide one point of access to the greater street network. Since the automobile is currently the only practical mode of transportation for most trips in Area 12, this lack of connectivity on the local streets results in most traffic being funneled onto the arterials, which adds to congestion, especially during peak hours.

Although most of the area is not served by public transit, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Transportation Authority's (CARTA) Dial-a-Ride Route 6 serves the Rainbow Creek Apartments, the

Health Center at Standifer Place, and U.S. Express. The Dial-A-Ride bus service provides rides within the East Brainerd neighborhood and provides connections to Route 4 at Hamilton Place Mall. The Southeast Tennessee Human Resources Agency (SETHRA) offers on-demand



East Brainerd Road
Source: TDOT

shuttle service within some subdivisions. For pedestrian facilities, few sidewalks can be found along main roads, except along the newly completed portion of Apison Pike and Little Debbie Parkway. Similarly, few bike facilities exist in the area, but bike lanes were also added to Apison Pike as part of the widening project from Old Lee Highway to Ooltewah-Ringgold Road. Greenways can also be used for more than recreation, by providing alternative connections between residential areas, schools and commercial centers.

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, safer, and forward-thinking transportation system that supports the region's growth and enhances the quality of life for its residents and visitors alike.



FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) uses functional classification to “define the role each element in the roadway network plays in serving travel needs.” Roads are categorized by location (urban or rural), capacity, and alignment with future development plans. This classification system also differentiates between locally-owned, state-owned, and federally-owned roads, which can influence the funding sources and oversight agencies involved in roadway improvements. For example, improvements to state routes are generally proposed by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and the FHWA, with additional input from the Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This coordinated approach ensures that infrastructure upgrades align with both state and local priorities.

The functional classification categories at the local level in Area 12 are as follows:

- » Arterial
 - Principal Arterial
 - Minor Arterial
- » Collector
 - Major Collector
 - Minor Collector
- » Local Roads

Arterials

Arterials are classified based on their high level of mobility. Arterial routes are typically the longest and have higher capacity compared to the other roads in the transportation network. They have few access points and only connect to other Arterials within the network. Most travel that occurs on an Arterial is over long distances, such as inter-state travel. Arterial routes typically account for the highest traffic volumes within the transportation network, but less than 15% of the physical transportation network. For example, Interstates consist of 3% of the vehicle miles traveled and between 17% and 38% of the vehicle miles traveled in

a transportation network. Arterials are further classified as principal or minor arterials. Examples of Principal Arterials include interstates, freeways, and expressways. Minor arterials serve trips of shorter lengths than principal arterials connect smaller geographic areas to the transportation network.

Collectors

Collectors connect local roads to the arterial routes within a transportation network. They are shorter routes than arterials and have lower speed limits with more access points. Collector routes are typically used for intra-County travel rather than statewide travel like the Arterial routes. Collector routes make up approximately a third of the transportation network. Collector routes are further classified into major and minor collectors. Major collectors usually allow for higher levels of mobility within an area and minor collectors often have more access points. The distinction between major and minor collectors is often determined by speed limits, driveway spacing, and annual average traffic volumes.

Local Roads

Typically, local roads account for less than 25% of the vehicle miles traveled but make up between 62% and 74% of the transportation network. They are usually characterized as having a low number of lanes, low speed limits, and low traffic volumes. Local roads are classified after the arterials and collectors have been identified within the network.



Crash Data

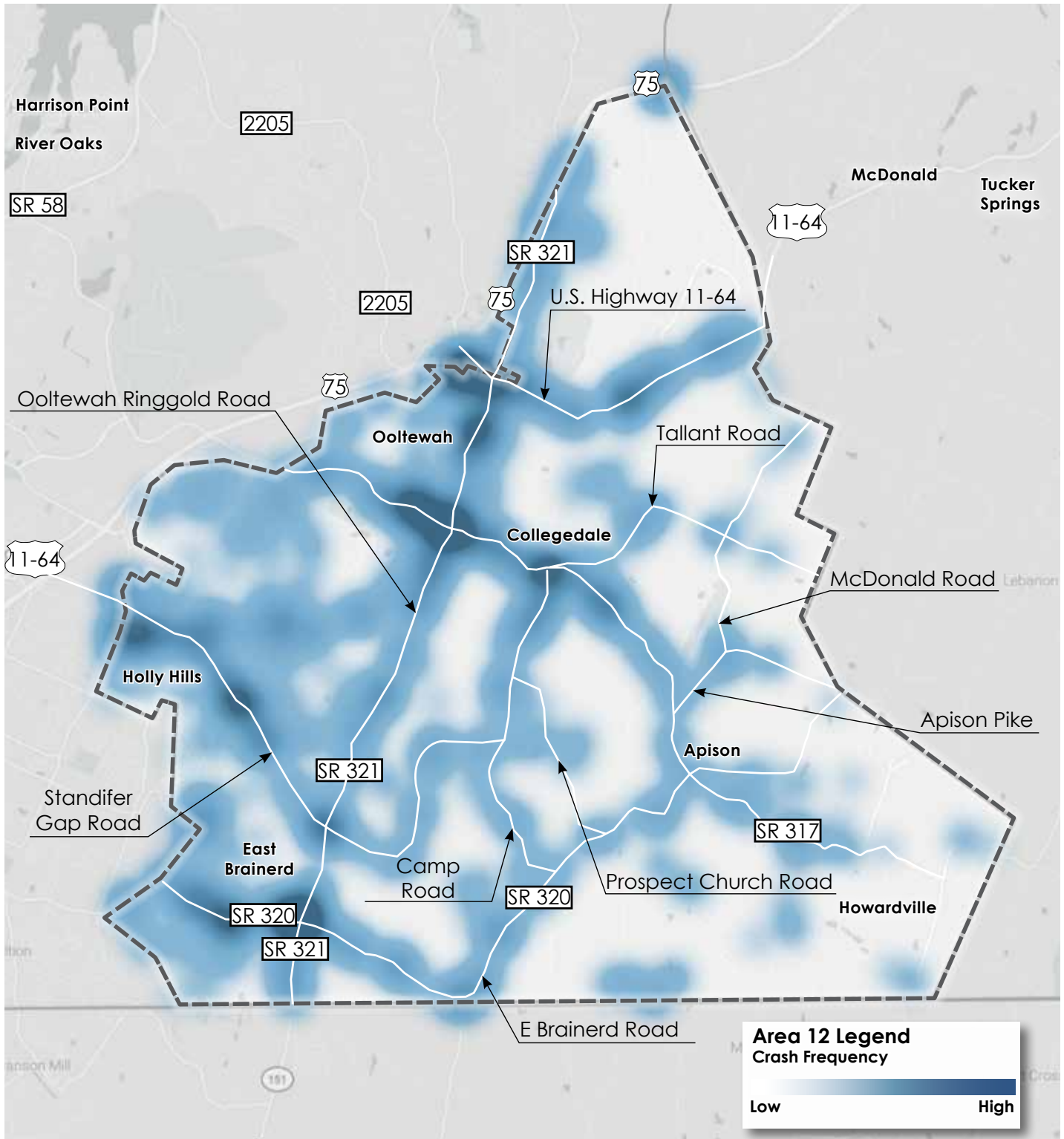


Figure 2.8: Area 12 Crash Data Map (08/24/2020-08/24/2023)



PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Roadway improvement considerations began with a thorough inventory and analysis of Hamilton County's existing roadway network. This initial assessment included a detailed review of traffic operations and crash patterns to identify potential safety enhancements. From this analysis, a list of roadway improvements was developed and organized by priority, focusing on areas that would benefit most from strategic upgrades.

To assess traffic operations, we used a combination of historical traffic count data collected annually, future traffic forecasts from the [RPA's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan](#), and general Level of Service (LOS) criteria. This approach allowed us to pinpoint current capacity constraints and anticipate areas likely to face similar issues as the County grows. Within Area 12, no roadways were identified as capacity-constrained under existing traffic conditions, and projected conditions did not suggest the need for capacity improvements.

The safety review analyzed three years of crash data across Hamilton County roadways to calculate crash rates on key segments. We then compared these rates to statewide averages to identify roads that might benefit from targeted safety studies or projects.

Table 6: Proposed Roadway Improvements (All Areas)

Priority Group	Roadway	Project Location	Area	Type of Improvement
Short-term	Hunter Road	at Lebron Sterchi Drive	9	Intersection
Short-term	Hunter Road	at curve near Crooked Creek Drive	9	Safety
Short-term	Hilltop Drive	between Hunter Road and Volkswagen Drive	9	Extension
Short-term	Hunter Road	from Hwy 58 to Lee Highway	9	Safety
Short-term	Standifer Gap Road	from Banks road to Camp Road	12	Safety
Short-term	Daisy Dallas Road	from Harrison Lane to Hixson Pike	8	Safety
Short-term	Middle Valley Road	from Hixson Pike to Daisy Dallas Road	8	Safety
Medium-term	Middle Valley Road	at Daisy Dallas Road	8	Intersection
Medium-term	Middle Valley Road	at Walnut Road	8	Intersection
Medium-term	Middle Valley Road	at Gann Road	8	Intersection
Medium-term	Hunter Road	at Garfield Road	9	Intersection
Medium-term	Roberts Mill Road	from Dayton Pike to Mountain Laurel Trail	7	Safety
Medium-term	Snow Hill Road	from Mountain View Drive to Mahan Gap Road	9	Safety
Medium-term	Snow Hill Road	from Mountain View Drive to Amos Road	9	Capacity
Medium-term	E Brainerd Road	at London Lane	12	Intersection
Long-term	Hunter Road	from Hwy 58 to Lee Highway	9	Capacity
Long-term	Standifer Gap Road	at Bill Reed Road	12	Intersection
Long-term	Armstrong Road	from Hixson Pike to Lee Pike	13	Safety
Long-term	Harrison Bay Road	from Hwy 58 to Birchwood Pike	9	Safety
Long-term	McCallie Ferry Road	from US 27 to Spradling Road	13	Safety
Long-term	Gann Road	from Middle Valley Road to Daisy Dallas Road	8	Safety
Long-term	Montlake Road	from Dayton Pike to Mowbray Pike	7	Safety
Long-term	W Road	from Mountain Creek Road to Anderson Pike	7	Safety



Proposed Transportation Projects

The State of Tennessee passed the “Improving, Manufacturing, Public Roads and Opportunities for a Vibrant Economy” (IMPROVE) Act in 2017. The IMPROVE Act designated additional funding for transportation projects within Area 12. The projects funded by TDOT or the TPO are shown in Figure 2.9.



Figure 2.9: Area 12 TPO Planned Transportation Projects Map



2.5.4 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Area 12 offers a comprehensive array of community facilities designed to enhance the quality of life for its residents and business owners. 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 Collegedale 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 be part of the conversation when it comes to growth. 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. Factors such as transportation, access, and space needed for buildings, parking, and recreation must be managed by the School System as new schools are planned.

Hamilton County Opportunity 2030 Strategic Plan

Hamilton County Schools introduced a seven Year Strategic Plan [“Opportunity 2030”](#) to engage stakeholders and align strategies to directly respond to the needs of the students, staff, and the community.

HCDE’s mission is:

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

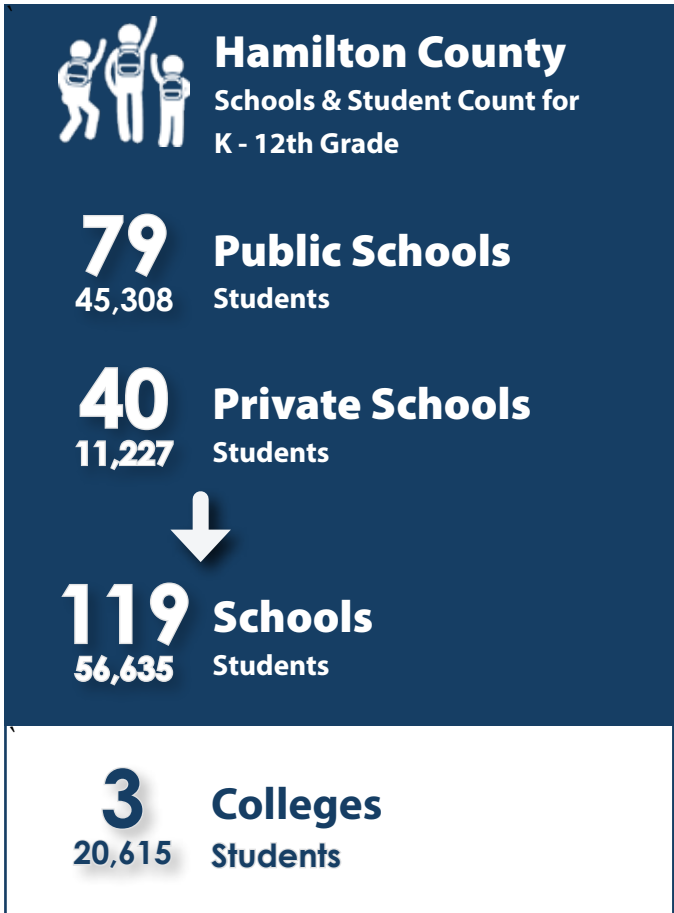
HCDE’s vision is:

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

The HCDE’s 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

Hamilton County is home to many private and public K-12th Grade institutions and colleges, the following is a Countywide total of all schools and students:



In 2024, the County established 250 million in bonds in anticipation of upcoming school needs.



Schools Map

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Apison Elementary School | 9 Wolftever Creek Elementary School |
| 2 Westview Middle School | 10 Ooltewah Middle School |
| 3 East Hamilton High School | 11 Ooltewah Adventist School |
| 4 Lester Coon Apison School of SDA | 12 Ooltewah High School |
| 5 Standifer Gap SDA School | |
| 6 Collegedale Academy High School | |
| 7 Collegedale Academy Elementary School | |
| 8 Collegedale Academy Middle School | |

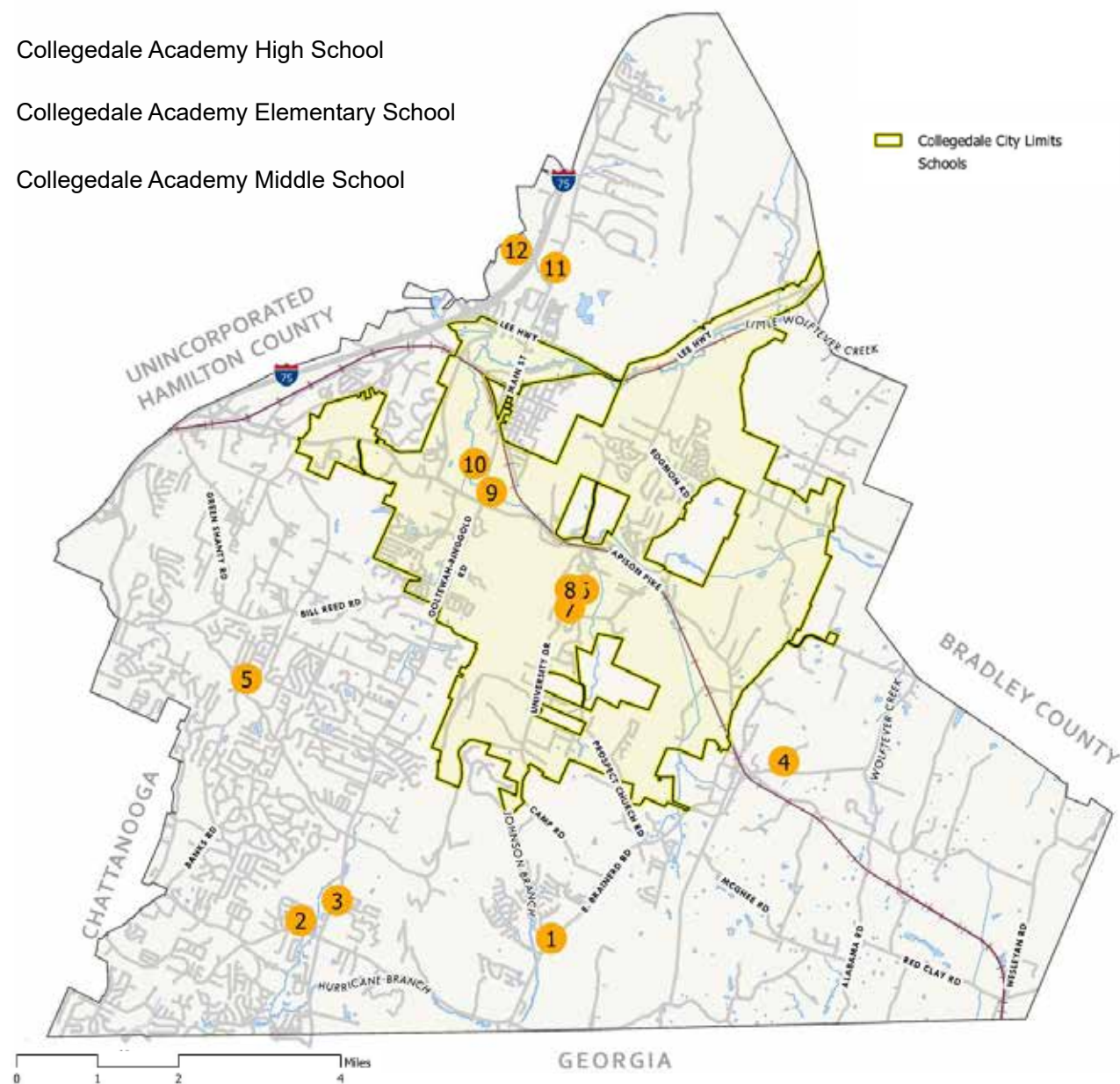


Figure 2.10: Schools Map (2023)





CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY VISION & GOALS

- 3.1 INTRODUCTION
- 3.2 COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- 3.3 GOALS
- 3.4 VISION STATEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Shaping a vision for the future of the White Oak Mountain Area 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 area.

The initial feedback produced four key [Community Themes](#) which ultimately, outlined in Chapter 2 of this plan. Those key themes informed the Community Vision, Goals, and Policy Recommendations of this Plan.

Survey responses, input from community meetings, feedback from the Advisory Committee, and professional guidance from staff and technical advisors, were used to draft goals, a vision statement, and recommendations to reflect the shared values of the Northeast County 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



3.2 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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, we can create a more comprehensive and effective plan that reflects the true needs and aspirations of the people it serves.

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.



Plan Hamilton Landing Page

Source: RPA Website, <https://planhamilton.org/>



Area 12 Website

Source: RPA Website, <https://planhamilton.org/white-oak-mountain/>



1600

Approximate # of people participating in person at various meetings.



505

people participated in the online survey.



34

Community, online, commission meetings, etc.



COMMUNITY MEETINGS

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 August 2023, a kick-off meeting took place at East Hamilton High School. The goal of the first meeting was to introduce 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 D](#).

PUBLIC MEETING #2

In November 2023, the second public meeting was held at Ooltewah High School. 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 the appendix of this plan and have directly influenced the goals and policies.

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 C](#).

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.

DRAFT PLAN MEETING

In September 2024, a draft Area Plan meeting was held at East Hamilton High School. The goal of this meeting was to present the 75% draft version of the Area 12 plan to the community and for the RPA to provide an update of the overall process, how the plan addresses community concerns, and how this plan will guide growth moving forward.



Area 12 Public Meeting
Source: RPA



Table 7: Community Outreach Timeline for Plan Hamilton

OUTREACH TECHNIQUE	DATE	LOCATION	AREA REACHED
Survey (Online)	08/25 - 10-07/2023	Online	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
1st Round Public Meetings	10/03/2023	Bachman Community Center	7
	09/07/2023	Chester Frost Park Pavilion	8
	08/24/2023	Ooltewah High School	9
	08/29/2023	East Hamilton High School	12
	08/21/2023	Sale Creek Fire and Rescue	13
2nd Round Public Meetings	11/28/2023	Walden's Ridge Emergency Services	7
	11/30/2023	Soddy Daisy High School	8
	11/16/2023	Ooltewah High School	9 & 12
	09/14/2023	Soddy Daisy High School	13
	12/05/2023	Soddy Daisy High School	13
Online Informational Meeting 1	01/18/2024	Virtual	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
Online Informational Meeting 2	01/25/2024	Virtual	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
Community Meetings	04/19/2023	Collegedale City Hall	12
	06/14/2023	East Hamilton High School	12
	06/15/2023	Veteran's Building, Sequoyah Road	8
	08/16/2023	Lakesite City Hall	8
	09/21/2023	Tri-Star Beverage	13
	9/30/2023	Soddy Lake Park (Booth)	13
	11/09-11/11/2023	Hamilton County Fair	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
	1/23/2024	Sale Creek Fire and Rescue	13
	05/16/2024	Tri-Star Beverage	13
	06/20/2024	East Hamilton High School	12
	06/25/2024	The Commons	12
	08/01/2024	Century Club Banquet Hall	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
	10/24/2024	Century Club	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
Draft Plan Review Meeting	09/19/2024	East Hamilton High School	12
	09/25/2024	Walden's Ridge Emergency Services	7
	09/26/2024	Hwy 58 Volunteer Fire Department	9
	10/01/2024	Sale Creek Middle/High School	13
	10/16/2024	Clear Creek Church of Christ	8
Public Hearings	3/28/2023	County Courthouse	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
	03/06/2023	County Commission	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
	12/09/2024	Planning Commission	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
	TBD	County Commission	7, 8, 9, 12, & 13
Mass Emails & Social Media	Additional outreach was conducted through regular email announcements and Facebook updates as well as media releases to local news outlets. The mailing list on average numbered over 2,000 contacts who had registered via the website or at meetings		



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS



Commercial uses and services most needed:

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



56%

experience some congestion with long delays during peak rush hours



The top 3 infrastructure investments needed:

1. Roads
2. Schools
3. Parks, Greenways & Open Space



Civic uses and services most needed:

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



Type of Commercial Development the community would support:

61%

Mixed-Use Commercial

57%

Neighborhood Commercial

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

"Green buffers with trees and sidewalks rather than just a fence by subdivisions and shopping areas"

"Prefer Area 12 to remain as a rural residential subdivision as much as possible."

"Better connectivity between projects"

"Concerned with pace and density of recent development along Ooltewah-Georgetown Road"

"Need to bolster stormwater assessment and improvement required at re-zoning and subdivision A levels."

"More trails like White Oak Mountain"



3.3 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.



3.4 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 resources, 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, CONSERVING 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.





CHAPTER 4

PLANS, POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 PLANNING OVERVIEW
- 4.2 PLACE TYPES
- 4.3 POLICIES

4.1 PLANNING OVERVIEW

The CHCRPA draws on a wide range of resources to determine the most suitable land uses within Hamilton County. While standard practices such as zoning 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. While these steps prioritize the preservation of each area's identity, it's important to note that they operate alongside public input and community programming integrated throughout the process. By leveraging distinct planning models,

the RPA has developed Place Types that cater to the specific conditions of each of the unincorporated 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 Policies, 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 Area. 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.

#1

PLANNING MODELS

The RPA and their consultants have developed Countywide Growth Capacity Modeling to show current trends. This influenced the Centers and Corridors approach to planning which is graphically displayed in the Conceptual Land Use Map. These maps identify Centers, Corridors, and general land use determinations in advance of Place Type mapping that were informed by community feedback, existing policy, existing code, proposed policy and Place Types, as well as general community character.

#2

PLACE TYPES

The RPA has created a palette of 23 Place Types to describe the various uses, forms, and character that development can take throughout the County, and its jurisdictions. The section identifies how they are used and which ones exist in Area 12. The RPA's Place Types Matrix addresses a range of contexts from most urban to most rural based on the transect model. Each Place Type policy includes a general description, real-world examples, recommended land uses, guidance on intensity and form, mobility, and infrastructure.

#3

POLICIES

The policy recommendations are inspired from the 4 Community Themes which created the 7 Goals for Unincorporated Area Plans. Each Area Plan will have customized Policy Recommendations based on the community's character, needs, land use, zoning, Place Types, planning models, etc. The policy recommendations are intended to be a guide for implementation at the regulatory level and create a standard by which this document is regulated.



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.
- » Corridors comprised of a mix of uses when in suburban areas or with deep setbacks to preserve rural character.
- » 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 transit Corridors makes these 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

The Centers and Corridors Approach promotes more eyes on the street, by locating buildings up to the sidewalk, animating the street edge with doors and windows, and more frequent pedestrian activity. Corridors with sidewalks, street trees, and bike lanes promote safe and efficient movement for all users of the street, including motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

5. Unique and Attractive Communities

Place Types emphasize form and character which helps preserve and foster distinctive and memorable places. Due to changes in commercial corridors throughout the County having vacancies, new opportunities are presented for multi-family housing providing redevelopment opportunities for more compact site planning, smaller tenant spaces suited to local businesses, and integrated attached single-family and multi-family. This can ; increase profits for businesses, reduce traffic and congestion related impacts, and help to preserve the character of existing single-family neighborhoods consistent with input from local residents.

6. Economically Vibrant Communities

Given finite government resources, the Centers and Corridors approach helps prioritize where City resources are invested. Walkable, compact Centers have significant 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 are all clustered in a compact, walkable environment. Also, compact development yields more tax revenue per acre than dispersed development, thus contributing to the overall wealth and economic vitality of the area.



4.1.2 CONCEPTUAL LAND USE MAP

The conceptual land use map is intended to identify the high-level areas for initial recommendations to inform the Place Type mapping. These maps identify more of the major 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 on what areas should be primarily preserved in their current form with incremental growth and where new growth should be planned for to support economic opportunity and a balance of services across the County. The conceptual land use maps also identify areas, existing agricultural use, locations of 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 where public and private sector investments are most warranted.

Centers & Corridors

Centers and Corridors are planned considering a variety of factors including utility infrastructure capacity, transportation factors, proximity to schools and emergency services, environmental conditions, recreational access, housing opportunities, and access to commercial services. Centers provide the opportunity to integrate commercial services into our neighborhoods in a predictable manner with accompanying infrastructure investments and site considerations.

Corridor designations have been applied in rural areas to indicate opportunities to preserve rural landscape, views, and development patterns, consolidate points of access to primary roadways, limit congestion, and to protect rural lifestyles. In suburban settings, corridors are utilized to demonstrate primary transportation corridors that will experience continued development pressure and warrant access management improvements.

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.



Center Example
Source: Continuum



Rural Corridor Example
Source: RPA



Residential Example
Source: DR Horton, Ooltewah



Residential Cont.

When a community wants to incorporate space for a school, a corner restaurant or coffee shop, a convenience store, an accountant's office or even a care facility for elderly family members; the residential Place Types may not accommodate these uses. This is the reason for the variety of scale and intensity of Centers which may be used to compliment residential areas to provide for daily needs services and a place for mixed residential units. This approach protects single-family residential areas and provides for a more complete 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 from highly programmed parks, to blended park-preserves such as Enterprise Nature Park, to traditional passive use natural areas and preserves. These special use areas have all found a place in the hearts of recreation enthusiasts as varied as league sports athletes, paddlers, fitness walkers, bird watchers, runners, cyclists, nature photographers, and neighborhood residents looking for a safe quiet walk. Not as readily recognized has been the economic potential of these assets and the user groups who love them. Working from community and stakeholder input locations have been identified where commerce can be sustainably integrated with recreation to provide jobs, tax base, and income while enhancing and preserving our community recreational resources.

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.



Mixed-residential Example
Source: RPA



Resort Recreation Example
Source: City of Rockwood, TN



Specialty District Example
Source: Volkswagen



Conceptual Land Use

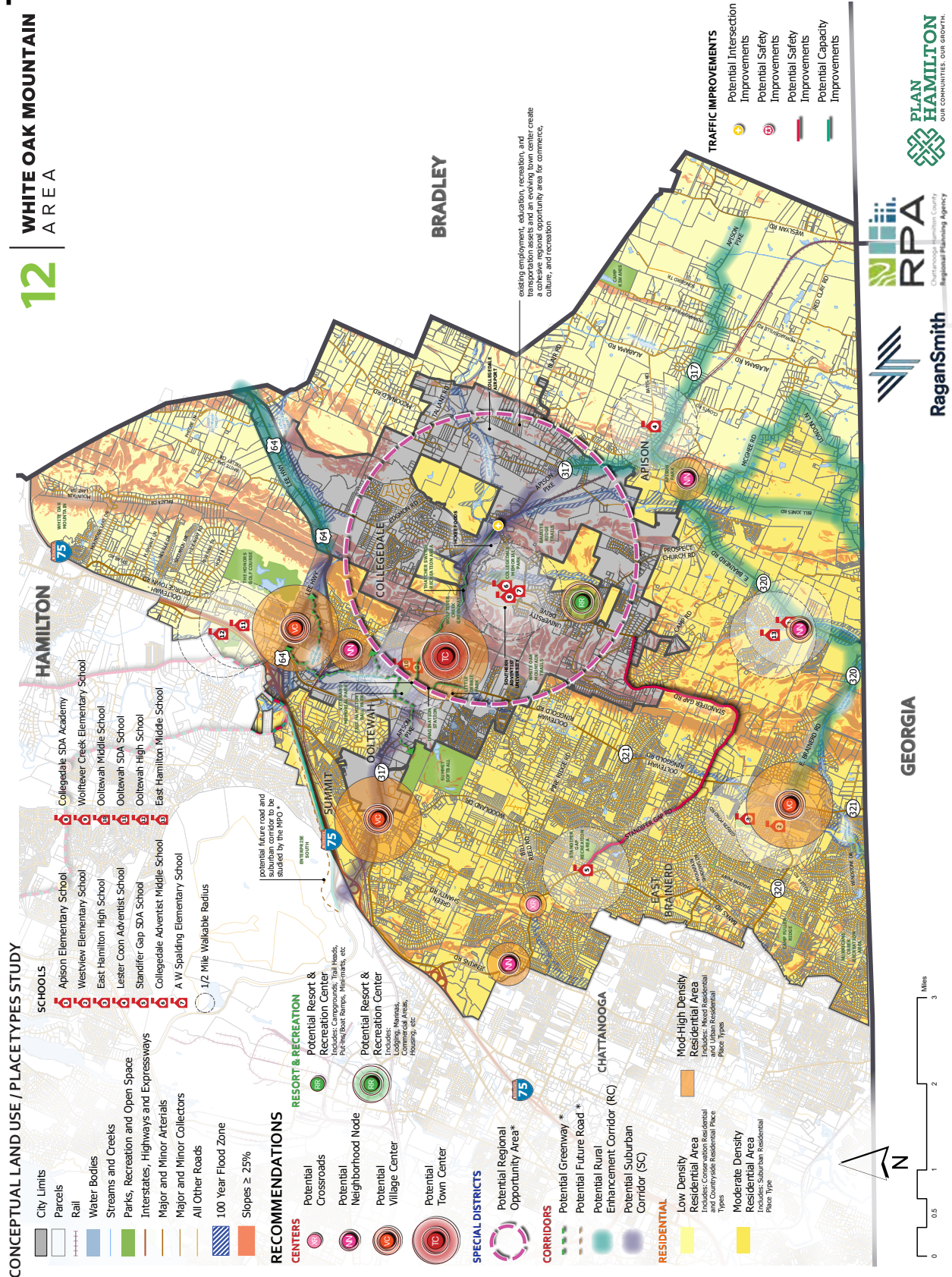


Figure 4.1: Conceptual Land Use Map

4.1.3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The growth opportunities for Area 12 are tempered by constraints related to natural features, terrain, and infrastructure, and community vision. In general, the growth should be primarily rural residential for areas east of White Oak Mountain.

Corridors:

Hamilton County and the municipalities of Collegedale and Chattanooga should explore expansion of the Wolftever Creek Greenway to connect neighborhoods and recreational assets across Area 12.

Centers:

Should serve local residents and visitors, and may locate with existing commercial or community services. Often these centers have served important functions for locals for many years.

Potential Village Center (VC) developments have been identified to include:

- » Near the intersection of Apison Pike and Old Lee Highway.
- » At East Brainerd Road and Ooltewah Ringgold Road.
- » In the area around the existing Cambridge Square development.



Source: Rural Design Guide FHWA



Village Center **Example**
Source: RPA



Smaller Neighborhood Nodes (NN) have been identified as hubs for neighborhood commercial services, potential government services, and in recognition of existing development patterns that features more suburban development patterns:

- » Old Apison near park, post office and churches
- » London Lane, south of Apison Pike on East Brainerd Road at Apison Park,
- » Old Ooltewah along Ooltewah-Ringgold Road / Main Street.

Cross Roads (XR) are proposed at the following intersection:

- » Standifer Gap & Bill Reed Road (existing)

Additional Opportunities:

A robust recreational trail network already exists along the ridgeline. These landforms also provide an opportunity for lower elevation bike/pedestrian connections that are more universally accessible to a wide range of users and connect key community assets.

East of White Oak Mountain / Bauxite Ridge/ Collegedale, the community has expressed a desire to maintain a more rural development pattern with lower residential densities, larger setbacks from primary roadways with vegetated buffers and continued agricultural activities.



Source: Dover-Kohl



Source: RPA



Source: RPA



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 decisions. 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.



Figure 4.2: Transect Zones from Natural (left) to Special District (right) Source: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, DPZ

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. The following Place Types represent the full palette of Place Types available throughout the County but not all Place Types are used in all areas.

The Area Plan recommendation and Place Types are not intended to limit development during the subdivision platting process for properties zoned R-1 Residential District or other residential zoning district or having a Special Exceptions Permit for a Planned Unit Development prior to plan adoption. Existing zoning density and conditions should not be overridden by Plan Hamilton for platting purposes in residential or commercial zones, but all setback and buffering language should apply to new preliminary plats (those not already accepted by RPA at the time of plan adoption). The subdivision of such land shall follow the Hamilton County Subdivision Regulations standard procedures.

Place Types layout out a vision for future land uses and they are intended to guide development choices, they are not zones. Once a plan and its associated Place Type map is adopted, then a request to study new zoning designations and assess what tools are needed to achieve the adopted vision may occur. A zoning study typically follows within 6 months to a year of plan adoption depending on the level of change desired or other influences.

- » Place Types are not zoning.
- » Place Types are recommended future development patterns.
- » Place Types are policy.
- » Place Types are used to inform zoning decisions.
- » Zoning is a regulation.
- » One or more zoning districts may be used to develop a Place Type.

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.

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

*Chattanooga - Hamilton County
Regional Planning Agency (RPA)*

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, and where Limited Uses are listed additional guidance has been provided regarding the appropriateness of integrating the use into the Place Type.

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 & PLACE TYPES IN AREA 12

There are 23 Place Types in total as provided and amended from time to time by the RPA [on their website here](#). The four categories with listing of Place Types are below. On the pages following in this section are the individual Place Types that appear in Hamilton County and as shown on the Place Type Map (Figure 4.6).

RESIDENTIAL

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

SPECIALTY DISTRICTS

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

CENTERS & CORRIDORS

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

OVERLAYS

- *Natural Resources (NR)*
- *Rural Corridor (RC)*

Table 8: Density

PLACE TYPE	MAXIMUM DENSITY	GENERAL INTENSITY
CR Countryside Residential	<i>See Place Type</i>	Low Density
SR Suburban Residential (Principal)	Maximum of 5 dwelling units/acre	Low to Medium Density
SR Suburban Residential (Limited)	Maximum of 5 dwelling units/acre	Medium Density
MD Maker District	Maximum of 12 dwelling units/acre	Medium to High Density
NN Neighborhood Node	Maximum of 12 dwelling units/acre	Medium to High Density
MR Mixed Residential (Principal)	Maximum of 12 dwelling units/acre	Medium to High Density
MR Mixed Residential (Limited)	Maximum of 18 dwelling units/acre	High Density
NC Neighborhood Center	Maximum of 8 dwelling units/acre	Medium to High Density
UR Urban Residential	Maximum of 15 dwelling units/acre	High Density
SC Suburban Corridor	Maximum of 18 dwelling units/acre	High Density
VC Village Center	Maximum of 12 dwelling units/acre	High Density
RR Resort & Recreation	N/A	Varies if Type A or B <i>See Place Type Description</i>



CENTERS

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.

Uses

Retail, restaurants, garden centers, personal services, offices, gas stations, small markets, auto repair, landscape businesses, and small industries/workshops (such as breweries, bakeries and 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.

Uses

Small retail and restaurants, convenience stores, personal services, offices, farmers' markets, small industries/workshops (such as breweries, bakeries and woodworking shops), live/work, short-term vacation rental, and two, three and four-unit dwellings



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.



NC**Neighborhood Center**

Usually found in suburban locations, Neighborhood Centers are shopping centers of 5–15 acres that provide goods and services primarily to the surrounding neighborhoods. They are not part of a continuous “strip” of commercial uses along a corridor, but rather are limited to a single quadrant of an intersection and surrounded by residential development. They usually have large, shared parking lots with a few outparcel buildings that face the street. Some include smaller commercial properties on the other corners of the intersection. Neighborhood Centers often have one large building that houses multiple stores, deeper building setbacks, an emphasis on vehicle access, and limited civic services. Neighborhood Centers may be redeveloped as Village or Town Centers with a more walkable and urban form, over time.

Uses

Grocery stores, retail and restaurants, offices, personal services, small workshop/industries (such as studios, work spaces, bakeries, breweries, woodworking shops or other low impact production) townhomes, and minor auto service/repair

**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.

Uses

Civic institutions, public square or park, retail, restaurants, offices, personal services, lodging, live/work, small industries/workshops (such as studios, bakeries, breweries, or woodworking, or other low impact production), townhomes, short-term vacation rentals and two, three and four-unit dwellings.



CORRIDORS

SC

Suburban Corridor

Suburban Corridors have a linear configuration because they are located along major commercial streets, however they differ from Mixed-use and Transit Corridors in that the development along them tends to be more spread out. They are not typically served by frequent transit. Businesses along Suburban Corridors serve a large geographic Area and are primarily accessed by car. Buildings tend to be single-story and house a single use with deep setbacks from the street. Some developments have a horizontal mix of uses within a larger site. The types of businesses found along Suburban Corridors range from stand-alone restaurants and stores, to “strip” shopping centers, to regional malls, medical centers, multi-story office buildings, and hotels. Multi-unit residential is also a growing use along suburban corridors, either as new construction or as retrofits of older retail centers or hotels.

Predominant Uses

Retail, townhomes with no more than four units per building, offices, restaurants, personal services, medical facilities, lodging, small workshops and artist studios, recreation and entertainment (such as bowling, mini golf, conference centers, theaters) and assisted living facilities.

Limited Uses

Auto-oriented services when located along a major corridor or at the corner of a major intersection.



RESIDENTIAL

CR

Countryside Residential

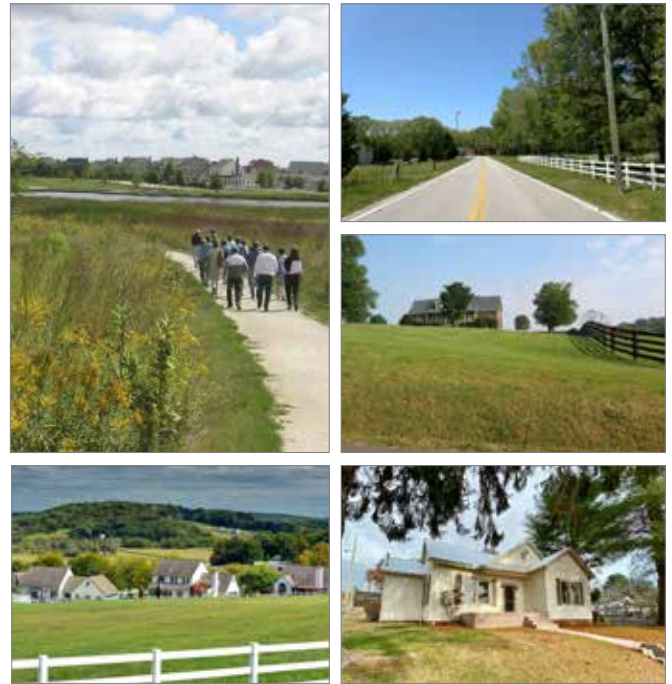
Countryside Residential Place Types have a very rural character and consist primarily of single-family homes on large lots. Countryside Residential may include open fields, woodlands, and streams or lakes, as well as accessory buildings, such as barns and greenhouses. This Place Type also includes the County's agricultural uses related to the production of crops, livestock, forestry uses and agricultural service businesses ranging from roadside vegetable stands or feed & seed stores to larger production facilities.

Residences and development centered around farming 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.

Countryside Residential maximum densities are as follows:

- 1.5 dwelling units per acre (development on septic),
- 3 dwelling units per acre (developed on sewer), and
- 2.75 dwelling units per acre (developed on decentralized sewer systems or where new approved technology allows*)

** When new information or technological improvements to the decentralized systems becomes available, staff will present information to the County Commission for direction.*

**Predominant Uses**

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

Limited Uses

Event facilities, golf courses, and campgrounds where appropriate infrastructure exists and development impacts such as noise, traffic, and activity are directed away from existing residential uses.

Development Standards

The following development standards will guide future development and will be codified in the Hamilton County Zoning Regulations and/or inform zoning conditions:

- Buffer and setback from right-of-way:
 - Require a 30' wide planted landscape buffer from existing ROW.
 - For exterior street facing garages, garage doors must be set back 20' from the right-of-way.
- Perimeter buffer:
 - Plant 2 inch caliper trees around entire perimeter of development; minimum of 30' on center. If existing vegetation is equivalent to or greater along the perimeter, the existing vegetation would count towards this requirement.
- Behind said buffer- require a 25' rear setback and a 10' side setback if the side of the house is adjacent to the buffer.
- Floodplains
 - Floodplains may be filled up to three fifths the distance of the length of the floodplain on the property. For instance if a floodplain is 100' in length from a water body – one can fill up to 60 feet in length of that floodplain length.
- Steep Slopes
 - Adopt a steep slope vegetation policy and planting requirements (*Reference: City of Chattanooga Code Sec. 31-324.4*)



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 residences up to 5 dwelling units/acre, accessory dwelling units (ADUs)

Limited Uses

The following uses when located within a 1/4 mile of a public school or park or center where appropriate infrastructure exists: single-unit detached residences up to 5 dwelling units an acre; townhomes (up to 4 massed units per building); and two, three, and four unit housing

**Development Standards**

The following development standards will guide future development and will be codified in the Hamilton County Zoning Regulations and/or inform zoning conditions:

- *Require ADA compliant sidewalks in Suburban Residential Development Standards unless the average lot size is 1 acre or above, in all plans, to ensure pedestrian infrastructure in denser subdivisions.*

MR

Mixed Residential

The Mixed Residential Place Type is intended to provide a wide range of housing options for residents at various stages of life, and walkable destinations in close proximity. Due to their intensity, Mixed Residential developments are located along major streets, or within walking distance (1/4-mile) of a transit route. The Mixed Residential Place Type includes moderate to higher intensity housing. Taller multi-family buildings are located along streets, with shorter buildings on local streets to provide a transition to any less intense residential uses.

Predominant Uses

Two, three and four unit residences, multi-family residential with 5–12 units per building, cottage courts, townhomes, manufactured home parks, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Limited Uses

Multi-family of over 12 units per buildings should be directed towards major streets/corridor or adjacent to a center.



SPECIALTY DISTRICTS

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.

Uses

Undisturbed open space, visitors' centers, nature centers, public parks, active and passive recreation, trails, cemeteries, and accessory structures such as concessions, storage and parking.



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.

Resort Type A accommodates a more intense outdoor recreation and park experience and could include hotels, conferences centers, large campgrounds/RV parks and related uses or even a full resort. Oftentimes these are located in or adjacent to state or county parks or may develop from a golf course or event facility such as a fairground or agritourism site. The development size and location should be designed so that the impact of this larger-scale format lessens potential negative aspects.

Resort Type B accommodates smaller-scale or less intense recreational activities such as golf courses, ballfields, cultural facilities, marinas, and related accessory use such as parking areas, small campgrounds or cabins, and related retail goods such as camp stores, farm stands, and equipment rental (kayaks/canoes, bicycles, etc.)

**Predominant Uses**

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

Limited Uses

Single-unit housing (detached and attached) and reception facilities as a secondary use integrated into a resort.



CA

Campus

Campus Place Types are characterized by one major activity such as educational, office, industrial, medical, or religious. Campuses are typically based on a master plan that incorporates buildings, open spaces, streets, pedestrian networks, and parking in a unified manner. Campuses have clearly defined edges—often delineated with gateway structures and landscape—that distinguish them from adjacent Place Types. Residential buildings and small convenience services often support the predominant use. Campuses function as major employment and activity centers and are often served by public or private transit.

Uses

Institutions (such as academic, medical, religious or research facilities), offices, clubhouses/ meeting halls, athletic facilities, non-noxious/non-nuisance manufacturing and industrial, open space, multi-family residences (residence halls and dormitories), onsite retail and food services, and staff housing.



Existing schools, large medical and church campuses, government facilities, and corporate headquarters are identified as the Campus Place Type. However, as land use and property owners change over time, the Campus designation may no longer be applicable. In that case, the plan goals, surrounding Place Types, and context should all be considered in identifying future use/ reuse of the former Campus site.

IN

Industrial

The Industrial Place Type supports a variety of manufacturing uses. Unlike the Maker District Place Type, the Industrial Place Type includes both non-noxious operations (no hazardous materials or pollution) and noxious industries (heavy industrial production). The latter are not located adjacent to residential Areas, but are not so far away as to be a commute burden. The size of lots (2+ acres) and buildings are often larger than those in the Maker District Place Type.

Uses

Light manufacturing and industrial facilities, including assembly facilities, offices, distribution, warehousing, wholesaling, retail specifically related to the primary use and self storage facilities.

Limited Uses

Heavy manufacturing should be located along major transportation infrastructure and directed away from existing development.



There are limited areas of industrial uses in the County today. Some smaller scale industrial areas may appropriately transition to Maker Districts supporting a combinations of contractors, skilled trades, repair specialists, artists and artisans, food production, and service centers.

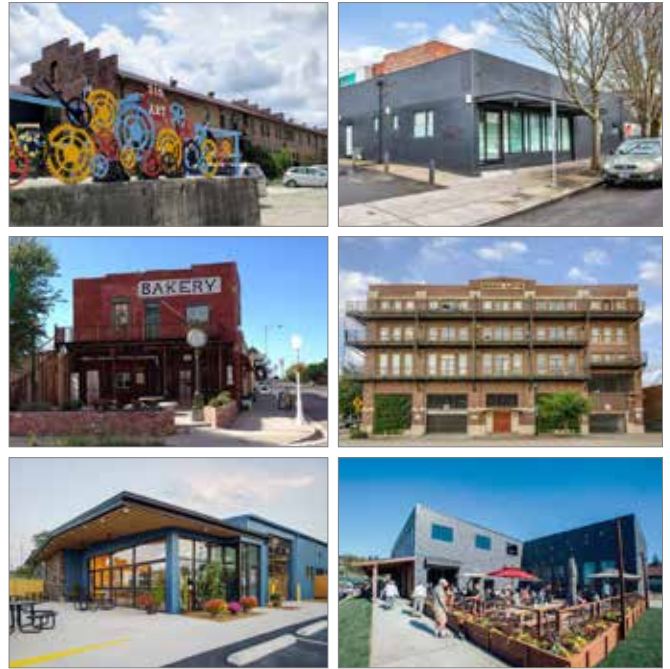


MD**Maker District**

Maker District Place Types are live-work districts where housing and workplaces are located in close proximity to each other, providing residents with convenient access to employment. They include a mix of light manufacturing, assembly, and contractor businesses, along with multi-family residential and commercial uses. Older smaller industrial structures that have been adapted for new purposes are frequently found here. Industrial facilities are non-noxious (no hazardous materials or pollution), and non-nuisance (no odors, excessive light, or heavy truck traffic). Due to these smaller buildings, short block lengths, and the mix of other uses, these Areas are generally walkable. Parks, plazas, and neighborhood-serving retail enhance the character and livability of the Area.

Uses

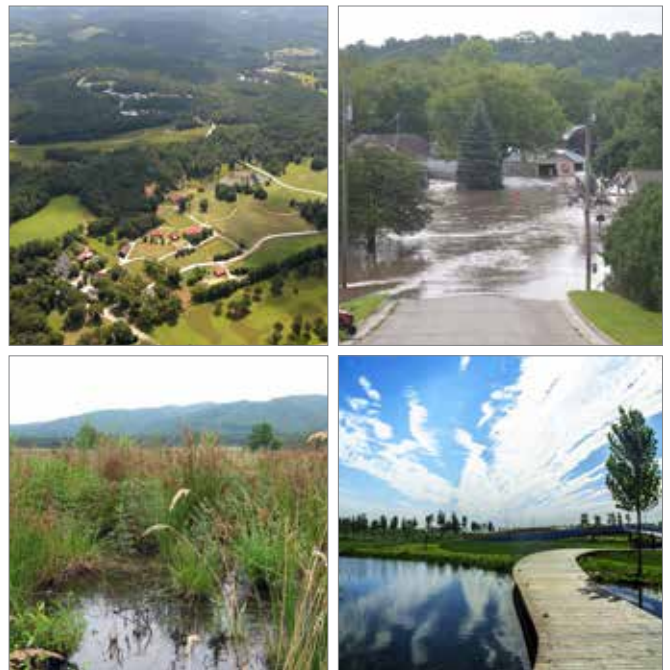
Non-noxious/non-nuisance light manufacturing, assembly, distribution, small workshop/industries (such as woodworking shops, bakeries, or other low impact production), studios, breweries, contractor's offices, live/work, multi-unit residential, retail, offices, restaurants, vehicle repair, gas stations, outdoor storage yard, and self storage facilities

**OVERLAYS****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.



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.

The purpose of the rural corridor overlay is primarily to address new subdivision development. A rural corridor setback for a subdivision for the purposes of the plan refers to a required distance that new development must maintain from a designated corridor, as detailed on the Place Type map. The intent of the setback is to protect the character and environmental integrity of the rural landscape. The setback does not apply to individual homes outside a major subdivision.

**Development Standards**

The following development standard will guide future development and will be codified in the Hamilton County Zoning Regulations and/or inform zoning conditions:

- A 50-foot setback from right of way of existing roadway for any structure including water quality features;
- a 30-foot type A landscape buffer is required along the entire frontage;
- adequate right of way as determined by the County Engineer should also be required as a condition to be given to accommodate an additional lane if a rezoning case is requested along the Rural Corridor overlay.

4.2.3 PLACE TYPES MAP

See separate Place Type Map. Not included due to size.



4.2.4 CENTERS & CORRIDORS VIGNETTES

The Centers and Corridors Vignettes bring to life a vision for thoughtfully guided growth in key locations across our communities. By focusing on high-potential centers and strategically important corridors, these vignettes illustrate how balanced land use—combining residential, commercial, and recreational spaces—can shape places that are both dynamic and resilient. Each vignette reveals how carefully aligned planning can elevate connectivity, support walkable neighborhoods, and foster economic growth while preserving Hamilton County’s distinctive character, natural beauty, and cultural heritage. Through these targeted narratives, we explore how well-designed centers and corridors not only strengthen community identity but also enhance access to essential services, encourage diverse transportation options, and bolster the area’s long-term sustainability. This vision aligns with the unique needs and values of Hamilton County residents, building a legacy of vibrant, and adaptable communities.





Figure 4.4: Recommendation, Village Center at Apison Pike & Old Lee Highway

The depictions shown above are intended to represent one idea of potential future development at these locations. Any future development or redevelopment at these locations would need to be initiated by the private property owner. Where there is a mismatch between a vignette and the Place Type map, the Place Type map reflects the official policy.

4.3 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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 White Oak Mountain's 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 are policy recommendations to implement that goal.

Comprehensive Plans offer a strategic approach to where and how we grow. They address areas for change and areas to preserve.

*Chattanooga - Hamilton County
Regional Planning Agency (RPA)*



4.3.1 GOAL 1 & POLICIES

GOAL 1 BALANCE GROWTH, ECONOMY & COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Policy 1.12.1** Make Village and Town Centers the locations for multifamily apartments/condos, large format retail, and other commercial uses with high trip generation factors. Structure zoning to support this model and target investments in transportation, sewage treatment, and pedestrian infrastructure in these centers.
- Policy 1.12.2** Adopt a comprehensive set of corridor management provisions to strategically locate curb cuts and points of access to commercial properties, plan for safe pedestrian crossings and pathways, incentivize buildings to front the ROW, implement wayfinding signage, consider commercial sign standards, add roadway connectivity, and provide mixed-use opportunities. Take a first step by adopting TDOT's Access Management Manual for all state routes.
- Policy 1.12.3** Consider creating a corridor management plan for Old Lee Highway to specify locations for more intense industrial and center development, establish setbacks, set aside ROW for multi-modal transportation options, transition zones, and rural/natural resource preservation areas.
- Policy 1.12.4** Setback and buffering requirements as detailed in Place Types should also apply to residential plats in agricultural zones.
- Policy 1.12.5** Amend the A-1 Agricultural District to change to the Maximum Density to 1.5 dwelling unit per acre on traditional septic.



4.3.2 GOAL 2 & POLICIES

GOAL 2 PROTECT & ENHANCE NATURAL RESOURCES

- Policy 2.12.1** Hamilton County to 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.
- Policy 2.12.2** Develop Conservation Subdivision Development criteria that incentivize this option for large parcels zoned for agricultural or low density residential.
- Policy 2.12.3** Hamilton County to develop a coordinated conservation, recreation, and non-motorized transportation plan for the Wolftever Creek corridor. This corridor can provide buffer from higher density developments, public access to nature, recreation and wellness opportunities, enhanced water quality, and resiliency from storm impacts. Consider a similar strategy for the Chestnut Creek corridor.



4.3.3 GOAL 3 & POLICIES

GOAL 3 PRESERVE & ENHANCE OUTDOOR RECREATION

- Policy 3.12.1** Build on the success of existing County and municipal assets (Summit Softball Complex, Summit Field, Collegedale Commons, Little Debbie and Imagination Station parks, and the Collegedale-Wolftever Creek Greenway System, White Oak Mountain and Bauxite Ridge trail system). Continue closing gaps in connectivity between these assets, area schools, and commerce centers.
- Policy 3.12.2** Explore partnership opportunities to expand and further connect all of these existing trail networks. Consider funding planning and development of a Chestnut Creek Greenway as a complementary north-south recreation-transportation-conservation corridor to the Wolftever Creek Greenway system.
- Policy 3.12.3** Work with developers of proposed Village Centers at Pattentown Road/Apison Pike and along Ooltewah-Ringgold Road to enhance adjacent recreational properties and extend greenway connections to benefit both the developments and the community at large.



4.3.4 GOAL 4 & POLICIES

GOAL 4 PROMOTE CONNECTIVITY & MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION

- Policy 4.12.1** Explore partnership opportunities to expand and further connect existing trail networks and greenways to offer a comprehensive system of alternative transportation options between community recreation, institutional, and commercial hubs.
- Policy 4.12.2** Consider funding planning and development of a Chestnut Creek Greenway as a complementary north-south recreation-transportation-conservation corridor to the Wolftever Creek Greenway system. This system could link employment centers such as McKee Foods and Southern Adventist University to future residential clusters in the Apison area while also providing recreation, conservation, and environmental benefits.
- Policy 4.12.3** Work with TDOT to test the feasibility of a multimodal corridor paralleling Ooltewah-Ringgold Road as this corridor is being evaluated for standard individual auto based transportation enhancements.
- Policy 4.12.4** Utilize suburban corridor provisions for consolidated points of access, green space buffers, and connectivity requirements to connect current and future developments along primary transportation corridors such as Ooltewah-Ringgold Road, East Brainerd Road, Banks Road, and Standifer Gap.



4.3.5 GOAL 5 & POLICIES

GOAL 5 PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Policy 5.12.1** Consult with school district officials to establish a system for regular reporting on school capacity for use in evaluating capacity for major subdivisions.
- Policy 5.12.2** Work with WWTa to anticipate planned expansion of sewer trunk lines and plan for associated growth. Also establish standards for when decentralized systems will be considered and when density will be limited to be appropriate for individual septic system designs.
- Policy 5.12.3** Require traffic impact studies (FOR THOSE DEVELOPMENTS WITH 100 OR MORE UNITS) as a standard evaluation tool for more types of subdivision applications. Derive these lists from current and future corridor studies and collaboration with TDOT, Hamilton County Roads Committee, the School District and others.
- Policy 5.12.4** Continue to prioritize and fund projects identified in the current list of safety and congestion related transportation improvements. Establish tax districts to allow developers to make infrastructure improvements where the developer and County residents can benefit from such improvements.
- Policy 5.12.5** Prioritize infrastructure spending in and around designated centers and funding of conservation tools in areas recommended for lower densities and preservation of agricultural operations and landscapes.



4.3.6 GOAL 6 & POLICIES

GOAL 6 PROVIDE SUITABLE COMMERCIAL & MIXED-USE CENTERS

- Policy 6.12.1** Incentivize growth to occur in recommended Village and Town Centers. Consider infrastructure investments, and financial vehicles to encourage desired forms of development in appropriate locations.
- Policy 6.12.2** Consider similar public-private investment tools to promote redevelopment of existing highway oriented commercial developments into forms that lessen transportation impacts and improve housing choices.
- Policy 6.12.3** Encourage the Village Center at Pattentown Road and the Resort Recreation Center in Collegedale to catalyze the recreational tourism economy by allowing for complementary lodging, restaurant, entertainment, and event facilities along with a mix of housing types to support these unique businesses.



4.3.7 GOAL 7 & POLICIES

GOAL 7 PROVIDE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS

- Policy 7.12.1** Allow centers, nodes, and crossroads of all types to accommodate a variety of housing types at a density and scale appropriate for the proposed location. Flexibility in housing types allows for educators, emergency personnel, and public employees to live closer to the communities they serve. Young professionals and older generations can live closer to family if they choose.
- Policy 7.12.2** Additional density and housing variety at smaller centers maintains viability for a wider range of neighborhood commercial tenants to be successful in these nodes. It can also have the effect of reducing congestion at larger centers by minimizing the number and frequency of trips to these highly utilized areas.



AREA 12 SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Area 12 is linked to East Brainerd, Chattanooga, and the I-75 corridor through key routes such as East Brainerd Road, Standifer Gap Road, and Apison Pike. Ooltewah-Ringgold Road serves as a vital north-south connection, extending access to the growing communities of Ringgold and Dalton in north Georgia. These corridors are pivotal in shaping transportation patterns, economic activity, and development trends across the region.

The western portion of Area 12 has witnessed rapid residential and commercial growth, driven by its proximity to employment hubs along I-75, including Chattanooga, Enterprise South, and Collegedale. The presence of newer schools and district facilities has further fueled this growth in areas like East Brainerd and Ooltewah. A key objective of this plan is to guide and bring predictability to commercial and higher-density residential development.

Natural features such as White Oak Mountain, Bauxite Ridge, and Wolftever Creek present important features and should be treated with respect in future planning efforts. While sewer infrastructure supports additional growth in the western half of Area 12, development should be concentrated in designated centers. Careful monitoring of school capacity, critical intersections, and sewer systems—including pump stations and collection lines—will be essential to addressing potential limitations on growth.

TOOLS & STRATEGIES

Conservation Subdivisions:

- » Planned roadway and sewer improvements along East Brainerd Road and London Lane will increase development interest in this area. This area also encompasses some of the last remaining contiguous farmland in this part of the County. Landowners wishing to continue farming should be supported with increased landscaping provided by new developments and other policies outlined in the implementation toolbox. This is also an area that is well suited to cluster housing as conservation subdivisions supported by sewer and with

potential lease back of preserved open space to the original landowner or an adjacent farmer. These conservation tools could also be utilized to provide public recreational trail access along Baker Ridge.

Farmland & Riparian Corridor Protection:

- » Agricultural use should be prioritized in the area from Apison east to the County line. While development at A1 zoned density is allowed in this area, property owners who wish to continue agricultural use should be supported with increased landscaping provided by new developments on adjacent properties and other policies outlined in the implementation toolbox.

Centers:

- » Larger scale development requiring rezoning for commercial or higher density residential uses should only be considered as part of a master plan in designated Village Centers at Lee Highway/Ooltewah Georgetown Road, Apison Pike/Old Lee Highway, and East Brainerd/Ooltewah Ringgold Road. Infrastructure capacity must be demonstrated before rezoning is considered. Access management plans must be adopted as these centers are developed.
- » Small footprint infill commercial uses and opportunities for small clusters of mixed-residential townhomes should only be considered in designated Neighborhood Nodes or Crossroads and only on a small portion (less than 20%) of the overall property. However, infrastructure capacity must be demonstrated before rezoning is considered. The transportation projects found in the Hamilton County Transportation Project Priorities List at Bill Reed Road / Standifer Gap are priorities before or as part of Neighborhood Node or Crossroads development designated near that intersection.



- » A Resort Recreation center is designated on unincorporated land in Hamilton County surrounded by Collegedale. Each of the areas that matches this description are suited to this use. They could provide lodging, restaurant, and recreational services to the community while preserving critical public recreational access, future trail connections to existing high value assets (Bauxite Ride-White Oak Mountain Trails, Wolftever Creek Greenway), and preservation of critical riparian corridors. Resort Recreation development could increase tax base, create jobs, training opportunities for students, support amenities for Mckee Foods and Southern Adventist University, while creating lower demand for infrastructure and educational resources than other likely forms of development.

Corridors:

- » The Rural Corridor designation is broadly recommended along the rural portions of East Brainerd Road and Apison Pike, Bill Jones Road, McGhee Road, and London Lane. This designation will require development setbacks allowing for placement of access improvements, pedestrian and school bus facilities, storm water facilities, and maintenance of the rural character of the area where new residential subdivisions are approved.
- » Where Suburban Corridor is designated, this is in recognition of the number of existing businesses or residential subdivision entrances populating this segment of road. It also recognizes the potential need to slow or manage traffic at the designated nodes or centers. The Suburban Corridor designation indicates that smaller setbacks of buildings may be appropriate and that access management strategies need to be employed to prevent future safety and congestion issues. The Suburban Corridor Definition is not meant to reflect any encouragement of infill commercial outside of designated Neighborhood Nodes.

Transportation Infrastructure:

- » Suburban Residential in-fill is expected to continue in the portions of Area 12 west of Ooltewah Ringgold Road. However, the County may make recommendations to improve connectivity between projects and manage intersection design and access to arterials and collectors to avoid exacerbating congestion issues. The transportation projects found in the Hamilton County Transportation Project Priorities List on Standifer Gap must be prioritized prior to rezoning of A1 land along Standifer Gap.

General:

- » Fire safety, and connectivity to existing trail systems and public access recreation are important components of development containing these natural features.





CHAPTER 5

NEXT STEPS & IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 INTRODUCTION
- 5.2 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX
- 5.3 PLAN SUMMARY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as the essential bridge between each community's vision and the actions needed to make it a reality, translating broad goals and strategies into specific, actionable steps. By outlining processes for tracking progress, identifying funding opportunities, and fostering ongoing community involvement, this chapter offers a clear roadmap to bring these plans to life—guiding Hamilton County's growth in ways that honor its unique character, address residents' needs, and protect the qualities that define each community.

Hamilton County's growth has varied significantly across the five Areas examined in this plan, reflecting a wide range of factors. Rapid development has shaped East Brainerd, Ooltewah, and incorporated Collegedale in Area 12, along with parts of Harrison in Area 9 and Middle Valley in Area 8. Similarly, steady interest surrounds Signal Mountain and Walden in Area 7. In contrast, most of Area 13 and the northern sections of Area 9 have largely preserved their rural landscapes and agricultural heritage.

Key infrastructure corridors, particularly I-75, have been instrumental in fostering growth over the past two decades, fueling employment hubs, retail centers, and other commercial services. Interstate access and centralized sewer services has created favorable conditions for development and infrastructure investments in these corridors. Major employers like McKee Foods and Volkswagen, along with their networks of suppliers, have driven demand for nearby housing and led to increased commercial activity. High-performing schools in the Ooltewah and Harrison areas have contributed to further residential demand.

Infrastructure

The presence of sewer trunk lines and available capacity remains one of the single biggest predictors for residential growth. However, the overall availability of sewer capacity is a significant constraint, presenting Hamilton County planners and leadership with critical decisions on where to allocate resources for sewage treatment and collection expansion. Currently, most funding is dedicated to increasing storage for combined sewer flows, aimed at preserving treatment capacity and avoiding regulatory actions tied to water quality. An integrated approach is essential to addressing challenges facing the sewer facilities that serve

Chattanooga and Hamilton County. Better mapping of sewer and water infrastructure is also needed to provide planners with the tools they need to identify infrastructure gaps, investment targets, and areas of the county that can be planned as future growth centers.

Transportation

The County's economic and population growth has created new challenges such as driving demand for efficient and safe transportation alternatives. This need is especially evident in areas experiencing the most rapid expansion. Keeping pace with these demands through infrastructure maintenance, improvement, and expansion is a significant challenge faced at every level of government, and Hamilton County is no exception. As growth continues in the County and the greater Chattanooga and northwest Georgia region, strategic investments in the transportation system will be essential to support future mobility and enhance residents' quality of life.

Hamilton County's role as a regional transportation hub underscores its significance. Interstates 24, 59, and 75 provide critical connectivity for freight, recreation, and commuter traffic across the Southeast and key corridors to the Northeast, Midwest, Southwest, and Florida. Additionally, the county is served by Class I railroads, CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern Railway, offering freight movement alternatives nationwide. The Tennessee River further enhances freight transport options as a navigable waterway.



As Hamilton County grows, a more focused approach to transportation planning will be essential. Key strategies include corridor management plans, access management strategies, and road safety audits. Corridor management plans for routes such as Ooltewah Ringgold Road, Highway 58, can reduce traffic friction and improve access efficiency for businesses and residential areas. Access management strategies, including regulating driveway placement, optimizing intersection design, and promoting shared access points, offer a more detailed approach to improving traffic flow and safety. Regular road safety audits for high-crash routes will proactively identify and address safety concerns.

Many of Hamilton County's critical routes are under TDOT jurisdiction. Leveraging funding for improvements to those routes would begin with adding the desired route or improvement to the long range transportation plan (RTP) so that state and/or federal funding can be allocated based on the prioritization of needs by the MPO. Ongoing coordination meetings are recommended between the Hamilton County Roads Committee, RPA-MPO planners and the staff at TDOT Region 2 to advocate for future projects. This will also allow County leadership to stay informed of changes or opportunities for funding new projects or spot improvements.

To effectively address the unique needs of each Area, strategies must be tailored to specific locations and projects. These approaches should be further refined through detailed, site-specific safety and design studies. Potential tools include:

- » Tax Increment Financing (TIF)– This would be particularly useful in areas where growth is expected to increase traffic demand. The McDonald Farm is a good example of somewhere in Hamilton County that TIF could be applied.
- » Business Improvement Districts (BID)– This would be a similar approach as the TIF but would be more applicable to developed commercial areas to complete smaller road, multimodal, or streetscape projects.

- » Alternative Transportation Funding – Projects involving electric vehicle infrastructure (charging stations) or other solutions such as bike-share or ride-share services often qualify for different funding programs. Given the rural character in part of the County, these types of projects would need to be located in places with the highest probability of success.
- » Public-Private Partnerships – This can be an important tool for funding large infrastructure projects with private companies when the opportunity for an industrial, commercial, or residential projects arise with benefits to the County. The costs, financing, and effort of project delivery can be shared when working with private companies. This should also include an option for Special Tax District designations for new developments.

The transportation analysis for these Area Plans aimed to identify impactful projects that might otherwise be overlooked in the TIP process but are critical to Hamilton County residents. Potential projects addressing roadway safety and traffic congestion were identified across all five Areas and prioritized based on their impact and cost. This list serves as a valuable tool for County transportation planners and engineers, helping to advocate for major projects within the MPO–TIP planning process while also providing a strategic roadmap for efficient local investments by the County that can deliver meaningful results in the near term.

The recommended projects include both design and construction initiatives, as well as engineering studies to refine potential solutions and anticipate future transportation needs. These recommendations are designed to address existing traffic and roadway safety challenges and can be seen as deferred investments needed to support growth that has already occurred. If fully funded and implemented, the Transportation Project Priorities List would create synergistic improvements, significantly enhancing the county's transportation network. However, as new growth unfolds, additional evaluations and investments will be essential to meet evolving demands.



Emergency Services

To support the analysis of current conditions, the County and RPA also commissioned a Fire and Rescue Services Evaluation. Unincorporated Hamilton County is primarily served by a patchwork of dedicated and resourceful volunteer fire departments. With findings that reveal life safety implications tied to new growth, the report underscores the need for the County to address measures it needs to undertake as well as careful planning on where and how future developments occur, taking into account building types, heights, and roadway connectivity in order to adequately protect residents, business owners, and their structures.

Addressing Future Challenges

The benefit of planning for growth within the centers and corridors framework is that it greatly increases the odds of predicting where future sewer, transportation, emergency services, stormwater, water, communications, education, and recreational infrastructure investments will be required. However, realizing these goals will require significant financial and human resources. Outside projections estimate the combined need for infrastructure investments across Hamilton County at around \$3.8 billion—a figure that poses challenges for per capita affordability.

Individual views of elected leaders on where and how much infrastructure investment is needed will undoubtedly vary, but it is clear that higher levels of funding and planning are essential to address existing backlogs across various infrastructure categories. Without an approved Comprehensive Plan, County leadership and staff have had difficulty focusing growth and predicting where infrastructure improvements will be needed next.

While certain areas have already developed strong market dynamics due to key employers, shopping centers, and transportation infrastructure, balanced investments in both traditional and social infrastructure could promote more equitable growth across Hamilton County. However, without adequate sewer capacity, education facilities, and emergency services, further growth-oriented policies may have limited impact.

Hamilton County stands at a critical crossroads where leaders are grappling with past deficiencies in infrastructure investments driven by sustained growth associated with national and regional migration and natural or endemic growth. The county continues to attract residents drawn by job opportunities, climate, quality of life, and comparatively affordable living. Meanwhile, existing residents often express a strong desire to preserve the rural character, safety, and quality education opportunities for their families.

The implementation strategies within this plan aim to directly address these priorities and lay the groundwork for a sustainable future:

1. A multifaceted approach to increasing the quality and capacity of existing infrastructure.
2. Seeking synergies between land use and infrastructure planning and improved standards for new development that maximize the efficiency, capacity, and return on investment for both private and public infrastructure construction and spending.
3. Planning and design strategies that mitigate development impacts and properly utilize existing education, transportation, recreation, and natural resource assets.
4. Initiate new strategies to preserve agricultural production, and associated land.
5. To identify new potential revenue streams, financial vehicles, and public-private partnerships for addressing the needs identified by Hamilton County residents.



5.2 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

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 (see Community Themes). 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.

POLICY SUBCATEGORY (TOOLS & STRATEGIES)

The Implementation Matrix organizes recommendations into specific focus areas, providing a clear structure, by breaking down broader policy goals into targeted subcategories. This section enables a more detailed approach to land use, infrastructure, environmental conservation, and community services allowing Hamilton County to meet the unique needs of each planning area while advancing cohesive, Countywide objectives. These categories are were tailored based on the overall policy objectives in the introduction chapter and the input received throughout the community feedback process. Within the matrix, here are 5 topics with each covering various community aspects of Plan Implementation:

- 1. **Community Character & Land Use Patterns**
- 2. **Natural Resources**
- 3. **Infrastructure & Transportation Network**
- 4. **Economic Health & Community Opportunity**
- 5. **Funding Mechanisms**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Outlines targeted actions to support Hamilton County’s vision for balanced, sustainable growth. Each recommendation offers guidance for decision-makers, addressing key areas such as land use, infrastructure, resiliency, and community development. These recommendations are crafted to reflect the unique needs of each planning area, ensuring that policies not only guide growth but also strengthen community character, enhance infrastructure, protect natural resources, and improve residents’ quality of life.

APPLICABILITY

Identifies where each recommended action is most relevant across Hamilton County’s planning Areas. By specifying how and where the policies can be applied, this category ensures that recommendations are tailored to the unique conditions, needs, and priorities of each community. This targeted approach allows for flexible, area-specific strategies that respect local character while addressing shared Countywide goals.

This helps guide effective implementation, making sure that resources and efforts are directed where they will have the greatest impact.



Case Study/ Exampe Ordinance

Provides practical insights and proven strategies from other communities that have successfully addressed similar challenges. By examining these real-world examples and ordinances, Hamilton County can draw valuable lessons to inform its own policies and practices. This section highlights adaptable approaches for land use, infrastructure planning, environmental conservation, incentives, economic development, and impact fees offering a foundation for local initiatives that align with the unique needs and goals of each Area.

- Requested plan changes will alternate for one side of the Tennessee River every other month to the other side to permit changes six times per year, per side of the river.
- An Area Plan amendment and its companion rezoning case may be heard on the same agenda.

Area Specific Recommendations

As outlined in Chapter 4, the Area Specific Recommendations highlight tailored actions designed to address the overarching recommendations within each Area. By focusing on area-specific solutions, this category provides a roadmap for targeted investments and initiatives that support sustainable growth, protect local assets, and enhance quality of life in each community.

AMENDMENT PROCESS & PLAN UPDATES

In order to ensure that Plan Hamilton best reflects the existing conditions and future vision of Hamilton County, the Plan Hamilton update cycle shall be as follows:

- » Full plan review - every five years
- » Annual review of policy and map changes - annual review by staff
- » Applicant Requested Plan Amendments - as necessary and when requested by rezoning applicant
 - Zoning decisions are based primarily on area plans, which are components of the adopted general plan, in this case Plan Hamilton. The County's five different Area Plans were developed to include Place Type (land use) and capital improvement recommendations to inform rezoning requests.



Table 7: Implementation Matrix

Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.1 Community Character & Land Use Patterns			
5.1.1 Access Management	Utilize TDOT's Highway System Access Manual for driveway spacing, median openings, and separation distances from signalized intersections.	Start with all State Routes where the existing TDOT Highway System Access Manual has standing. Expand to other principal arterials, minor arterials, and major collectors. Create manual, access management requirements, and corridor management plans before new development impacts are felt. Work with land owners to voluntarily contribute in-kind contributions (ROW, Design, Etc) or require development fees for a proportionate fair share of improvement costs as development applications are approved.	0-1 Years
	Target segments of suburban corridor with high rates of traffic congestion, safety incident history, or new development permit approvals. Improve traffic safety, congestion, pedestrian infrastructure and aesthetics by creating corridor management plans and agreements with state and local partners for high priority suburban corridors		1-5 Years
5.1.2 Rural Corridors	Develop policy to maintain rural corridor character including setbacks and vegetative buffers for new subdivisions.	All mapped Rural Corridor segments in the Conceptual Land Use and Place Type Maps and those designated in future map updates.	0-1 Years
5.1.3 Centers	Work with land owners at Center locations to facilitate development, including district/center specific plan, according to center principles and preferred uses.	All designated center Place Types designated on current and future place type maps.	0-1 Years
	Once approved, partner with developers to install and construct streets and streetscape elements in the form of direct participation or financing vehicles like business improvement districts.	Focus joint development efforts on Village and Town Center areas with regional impacts. Expand to smaller centers where local governance and residents request implementation help and have previously participated in a small area plan.	5 + Years



Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.1.4 Conservation Subdivisions Bonus Conservation Subdivisions	Create an Overlay Commercial Zone or District to provide site and building design standards or other guidelines so new commercial development adds value to the community and is compatible with the rural character sought.		0-2 Years
	Create a conservation subdivision option to cluster housing that features at least half of its potentially buildable land area devoted to undivided, permanently protected open space.	Conservation Subdivisions should be an opt in tool available to land owners who want to balance financial returns with conservation legacy. Creation of conservation subdivision provisions in the county subdivision regulations will provide a tool to augment land purchase, and voluntary conservation efforts.	1-5 Years
	The use of an Overlay District, P.U.D., or Zone is recommended for implementation of more specific development criteria associated with residential and mixed use Place Types.		1-5 Years
	Establish Conservation Subdivision provisions and evaluation criteria in the subdivision ordinance.	All of these tools are necessary to preserve the continuity of productive agricultural land, riparian corridors, and recreational assets at a regional or landscape scale. This tool should be selectively applied in A-1 zoned areas adjacent to existing public land or with high conservation value.	1-5 Years
5.1.5 Medium Density Residential	Co-locate future Medium Density Residential adjacent to Suburban Corridor and Center Place Types. Where future Medium Density Residential abuts a Suburban Corridor or Center allow zero lot line single-family and townhomes on a percentage of the overall property. Consider allowing small-scale multifamily in these same areas (6-12 units 3 story maximum).		5 + Years



Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.2 Natural Resources			
5.2.1 Farmland and Riparian Corridor Protection	Build a stakeholder coalition including: NRCS, Trust for Public Land, Land Trust for Tennessee, North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy, Chattanooga Audubon Society, Land Conservation Assistance Network, Soil & Water Conservation District, Thrive Regional Partnership, Tennessee State and others to coordinate farmland and open space preservation efforts in Hamilton County.	Resident input from Areas 7, 9, 12, and 13 all emphasized a strong preference to preserve agricultural land uses, property, and rural character. All five planning areas include riparian corridors that if preserved would help to mitigate flood risks, provide opportunities for contiguous recreational and alternative transportation corridors, storm water quality, and habitat benefits. Development pressures are increasing across the county and in some areas the window for conservation efforts is limited. The time to begin building a coalition of landowners, conservation entities, and funding sources is now.	0-1 Years
	Identify riparian corridors for preservation that have the potential to contribute multiple community benefits including farmland preservation, stormwater filtration, flood resilience, recreation, and habitat. Pursue strategies at landscape scale and on a property by property basis as development is proposed.	Prioritize: North Chickamauga Creek - (Area 8), Wolftever Creek, Johnson Branch - (Area 12), Long Savannah Creek - (Area 9) Falling Water Creek - (Area 7), Possum Creek, and Sale Creek - (Area 13).	0-1 Years

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Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.2.1 Farmland and Riparian Corridor Protection <i>Continued</i>	Undertake a comprehensive assessment of active farms and prime agricultural land.	Farmland preservation is often a unifying place to begin conservation efforts. The first step is identifying the soils and parcels that characterize productive agricultural land. Local Soil and Water Conservation Office personnel and academic partners should be engaged in this process. Making tangible progress on the ground requires partnership between federal programs such as NRCS and local conservation groups who can bridge funding gaps and provide stewardship and monitoring support. Developing relationships with Agricultural land owners and the farming community in Area 13, the northern half of Area 9, and the eastern portions of Area 12 is a critical first step.	0-1 Years
5.2.2 Recreation, Economy and Conservation Synergies	Engage UTC - School of Outdoor Recreation & Tourism Management in a study of potential economic impacts from resort recreation centers, greenway/recreational infrastructure investments, and corresponding riparian corridor preservation.		1-5 Years
	Build on existing successes like South Chickamauga Creek and Wolftever Creek. Invest or seek funding for agricultural demonstration projects, educational, and recreation assets.		1-5 Years
	Pursue partnerships to preserve forested land with an emphasis on areas that further regional trail connections, enhance access to unique recreational, historical, or cultural assets.	Cumberland Plateau in Area 7 and Area 13, Big Ridge Area 9, and White Oak Mountain Area 12.	0-1 Years



Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.2.2 Recreation, Economy and Conservation Synergies <i>Continued</i>	Pursue multiple creative mechanisms and funding for preserving critical recreation and natural resource assets. Look for opportunities to create value in these areas through recreational tourism, wetland or stream bank creation, and consider the value of reduced flood risks and other socio-environmental factors in assessing return on investments.		
5.2.3 Resiliency, Natural Resource Protections, and Development Impact Mitigation	Establish natural resources protection standards for wooded areas, drainages, steep slopes, as well as currently regulated wetlands and streams.	Countywide	1-5 Years
5.3 Infrastructure & Transportation Network			
5.3.1 Connectivity & Congestion Management	Review fire code regarding the number of lots allowed in new subdivision triggering a secondary point of access.	County Wide	0-1 Years
	Require walking path or sidewalk for new residential subdivisions with connections to a safe harbor school bus waiting area.		0-1 Years
	In support of improved traffic safety and congestion management implement spacing requirements for both full and partial (restricted turn movement) intersections on arterial and major collector roadways. (1/4 mile for full access)	Countywide on Arterials and Major Collectors	0-1 Years



Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.3.1 Connectivity & Congestion Management <i>Continued</i>	In support of improved traffic safety and congestion management consider modifications to the subdivision ordinance implementing internal connectivity index standards for developments of more than 500 lots.		1-5 Years
5.3.2 Improvements to Local Roads, Intersections, and Safety Design Features	Follow the Hamilton County Transportation Project Priorities List in this document. Continue to invest County funds and leverage with State and Federal funds to make continuous progress on deferred transportation improvements.	Countywide	0-1 Years On - going
	Explore the use of alternative financing vehicles such as Tennessee's State Infrastructure Bank to amplify County investments.		0-1 Years
5.3.3 Sewage Treatment Capacity and Collection System	Continue to build system storage capacity, resilience for storm events, and greater predictability / flexibility to plan collection system expansion or new treatment capacity. Continue to pursue WIFIA and other capital funding specific to water and wastewater.		On - Going
	Target financing solutions and infrastructure investment to areas that have been identified as suitable for future growth. Proactively plan to shore up capacity or extend collection systems to these areas as necessary to better balance growth impacts.	See Funding Mechanisms	On - Going
	Add further specificity and criteria for utilization of decentralized sewage treatment systems.		0-1 Years
	Evaluate whether tap fees are keeping pace with infrastructure		0-1 Years
	Develop policy with WWTa on decentralized sewer systems with robust criteria and design standards.		0-1 Years



Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.3.3 Sewage Treatment Capacity and Collection System <i>Continued</i>	Evaluate decentralized systems and track projects using the systems to determine rules for use.		1-5 Years
	Evaluate the use of trilateral agreements to add flexibility, predictability, and fairness for developers who choose to collaborate with WWTa in design and construction modifications for future capacity to recoup costs of infrastructure developed beyond project needs.		1-5 Years
5.3.4 Stormwater Infrastructure, LID Features, and Resiliency	Provide resources for complete and expeditious review of stormwater plans including pre-construction site review and post construction inspections.		0-1 Years
	Begin codifying more of Hamilton Co Stormwater quality BMP's.		1-5 Years
	Phase in additional resources for review and enforcement.		1-5 Years
	Develop a more comprehensive approach to stormwater site assessment, design, incentives, and regulations.		1-5 Years
	Implement stormwater fee structures that incentivize BMP's.		1-5 Years
	Evaluate establishing a program for neighborhood or watershed based storm water infrastructure to capture storm water closer to where it falls and reduce combined sewer flows.		0-1 Years



Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.3.5 Fire & EMS	Consider the findings of the Fire and Rescue Services Evaluation March 2024 to identify future service improvements.		0-1 Years
	Evaluate sources of funding to increase full-time personnel and standardize equipment purchases and training to simplify inter-local agreements.		
5.4 Economic Health & Community Opportunity			
5.4.1 Resort Recreation Centers	Engage land owners where resort recreation centers have been identified to participate in small area plans or joint planning sessions. Work to provide examples that would establish the scale and scope of future projects. Help landowners or potential developers understand infrastructure requirements, neighborhood concerns, and connect them with resources to create plans compatible with goals for this place type.	Prioritize land near designated Resort Recreation Centers and with close proximity to existing state and regional recreational facilities and natural areas.	0-1 Years
	Require that resort recreational development on lands adjacent to public land or waterways be a catalyst for securing and enhancing public access to recreational assets in addition to creating private recreational development.	Countywide in designated centers	0-1 Years
	Look for partners to start a recreation and tourism based business incubator/accelerator program.		1-5 Years



Policy Subcategory	Recommendation	Applicability	Timing
5.4.1 Resort Recreation Centers <i>Continued</i>	Engage UTC School of Sport, Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management in a study of potential economic impacts from resort recreation centers, greenway/recreational infrastructure investments, and corresponding riparian corridor preservation.		1-5 Years
	Engage Tennessee Department of Tourism, Chattanooga Tourism Co, SETDD, and SETTA in creating a small recreational resort promotional plan and programming assistance.		0-1 Years
	Explore potential for agriculture based resort or event centers to contribute to agricultural revenue streams. Consider McDonald Farm as a potential case study for synergies between rural resort economic development, traditional agriculture, and recreation.	Sale Creek - McDonald Farm; Birchwood	0-1 Years
	Evaluate outcomes from existing case studies - including preservation goals, impacts on existing farms, housing costs, property taxes, etc.		
	Study Industrial opportunities - both as larger industrial/corporate scaler and smaller Maker District		
5.4.2 Growing the job Base	Pursue development study of future employment centers including emerging industries and manufacturing districts		



Policy Subcategory	Recommendations	Applicability	Timing
5.5 Funding Mechanisms			
5.5.1	Consider use of RIDA as an incentive for developers who voluntarily meet specific infrastructure standards such as: improved street and pedestrian connectivity, LID stormwater improvements, provide easements for regional greenways, trails, or watershed protection.		0-1 Years
	Explore use of alternate funding mechanisms such as TDOT's State Industrial Access (SIA) Program	Hilltop Drive Extension; matching funds for other prioritized projects	0-1 Years
	Consider strategic utilization of Business Improvement Districts, Tax Increment Financing, Trilateral Agreements, or Infrastructure Trust Funds to set the table for desired development patterns (sidewalks/ connectivity, roads and utility infrastructure, landscape buffers, LID enhancements) in identified current and future centers. (Village Centers, Neighborhood Centers, Neighborhood Nodes, Maker Districts, etc.) i.e. Joint Development		1-5 Years
	Use the Capital Funding for Mid-Sized Cities & Counties study as a guide to identifying innovative funding and financing approaches for capital improvements.		

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APPENDIX

Scrivener's Note: with the exception of the Chamber Memo, all other Appendices were removed per the Regional Planning Commission's vote on September 8, 2025 for the adoption of Resolution 825-18

A. CHATTANOOGA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMO

Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce Memo

The Urgent Need for New Manufacturing Locations in Hamilton County, Tennessee

Hamilton County has been known as a manufacturing magnet for much of its history and its county seat, Chattanooga was called the “Dynamo of Dixie” in the late 19th century. This legacy continues to ring true today due to the County’s logistic assets including three interstate highways, two class-1 rail lines and the navigable Tennessee River. However, the county now faces an imperative challenge: identifying new locations for manufacturing operations. The necessity for this strategic move stems from several factors, including economic growth, technological advancements, environmental considerations, and community development. This summary explores the multifaceted reasons behind this need and the potential benefits it could bring to the county. The current Plan Hamilton growth plan has not identified additional areas for manufacturing uses however, the County should be working to identify areas for this use in order to continue to create new jobs and drive economic prosperity and diversification.

Economic Growth and Diversification

In recent years, Hamilton County has experienced significant economic growth. As industries expand and new businesses emerge, the demand for manufacturing space has increased but the number of acres zoned for manufacturing has declined. From 2014 to 2024 acreage with M-1 zoning designation in Hamilton County declined by 1,684 acres. During this timeframe, the county’s Centre South Industrial park reached full capacity and all available parcels in Enterprise South have been sold or have been optioned by companies for future expansion. Furthermore, current facilities for several existing businesses across the county are at capacity and cannot accommodate additional growth, putting continued investment by those companies at risk. Without new locations, the county risks stifling its economic potential. Diversifying the manufacturing base is essential to sustain growth, attract investment, and create job opportunities, thereby ensuring long-term economic stability for the county and its residents.

Demographic Alignment

The manufacturing sector is one of the few industries that provides high-wage, full-time jobs for individuals with various education attainment levels. Approximately 30% of manufacturing jobs are white collar jobs requiring mostly 4-year college degrees. The remaining 70% of jobs in manufacturing require less than a four-year degree and, in some instances, do not require a high school degree. This aligns well with Hamilton County’s demographics where just over 30% of Hamilton County citizens over the age of 25 have a high school diploma or less and only 37% of Hamilton County citizens over the age of 25 have a 4-year degree. Jobs in the manufacturing sector are typically high-wage and include benefits as demonstrated by Hamilton County’s average manufacturing wage of \$74,256.

Technological Advancements

The manufacturing industry is evolving rapidly, driven by technological advancements such as automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence. These innovations require modern facilities equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure. As technological advances in the manufacturing sector continue to grow, manufacturing wages will increase as well, assuring living wage jobs for county residents in advanced manufacturing sectors. Hamilton County is home to dozens of established companies that produce pharmaceuticals, heavy equipment and automobiles and the county has a growing cadre of tech-based manufacturing startups that have been supported by Hamilton County's Business Development Center. These early stage companies leverage 3-D printing, provide research and development services in the battery space and produce sensor and robotic equipment. Making sure that Hamilton County has shovel-ready sites, zoned for manufacturing will help the county both legacy companies as well as early-stage high tech manufacturers as they continue to grow.

Multiplier Effect of Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector is considered a "traded industry sector" which means it produces goods that are sold outside of the local region. Traded industry sectors are critical because they bring in revenue from outside of the local economy, increasing the county's gross domestic product (GDP). This new revenue then circulates in the economy, creating additional jobs. Research by firms such as EMSI shows that manufacturing jobs have a significant multiplier effect with one manufacturing job creating an additional nine jobs in the community. With more than 29,000 people working in manufacturing in Hamilton County, the sector drives significantly economic activity and job creation in the community across retail, healthcare, construction and several other industries.

Site considerations and conclusions

The need for Hamilton County to identify new locations for manufacturing will require future amendments to the Plan Hamilton growth plan. Due to increasing land prices inside Chattanooga city limits, it is likely that any new locations for manufacturing uses will be in unincorporated Hamilton County. Proximity to infrastructure will also be critical with consideration given to properties that have 4-lane highway access, rail infrastructure and proximity to sewer infrastructure. The county's recent utilization of tax increment financing (TIF) should serve as a model for financing infrastructure improvements for sites with limited infrastructure.

The manufacturing sector has been a critical economic driver for Hamilton County. Much of the recent job growth the county has experienced can be tied to the development of Enterprise South Industrial Park by the City and County and the location of Volkswagen in the park. With the county's industrial parks now at capacity and multiple manufacturers reaching full build out on their sites, it is critical that Hamilton County identify new locations for the county's second largest industry sector. grow, manufacturing wages will increase as well, assuring living wage jobs for county residents in

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