



PLAN HAMILTON

OUR COMMUNITIES. OUR GROWTH.



9

NORTHEAST COUNTY AREA PLAN

Birchwood
Georgetown
Harrison/Wolftever Creek
Snow Hill
Ooltewah



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

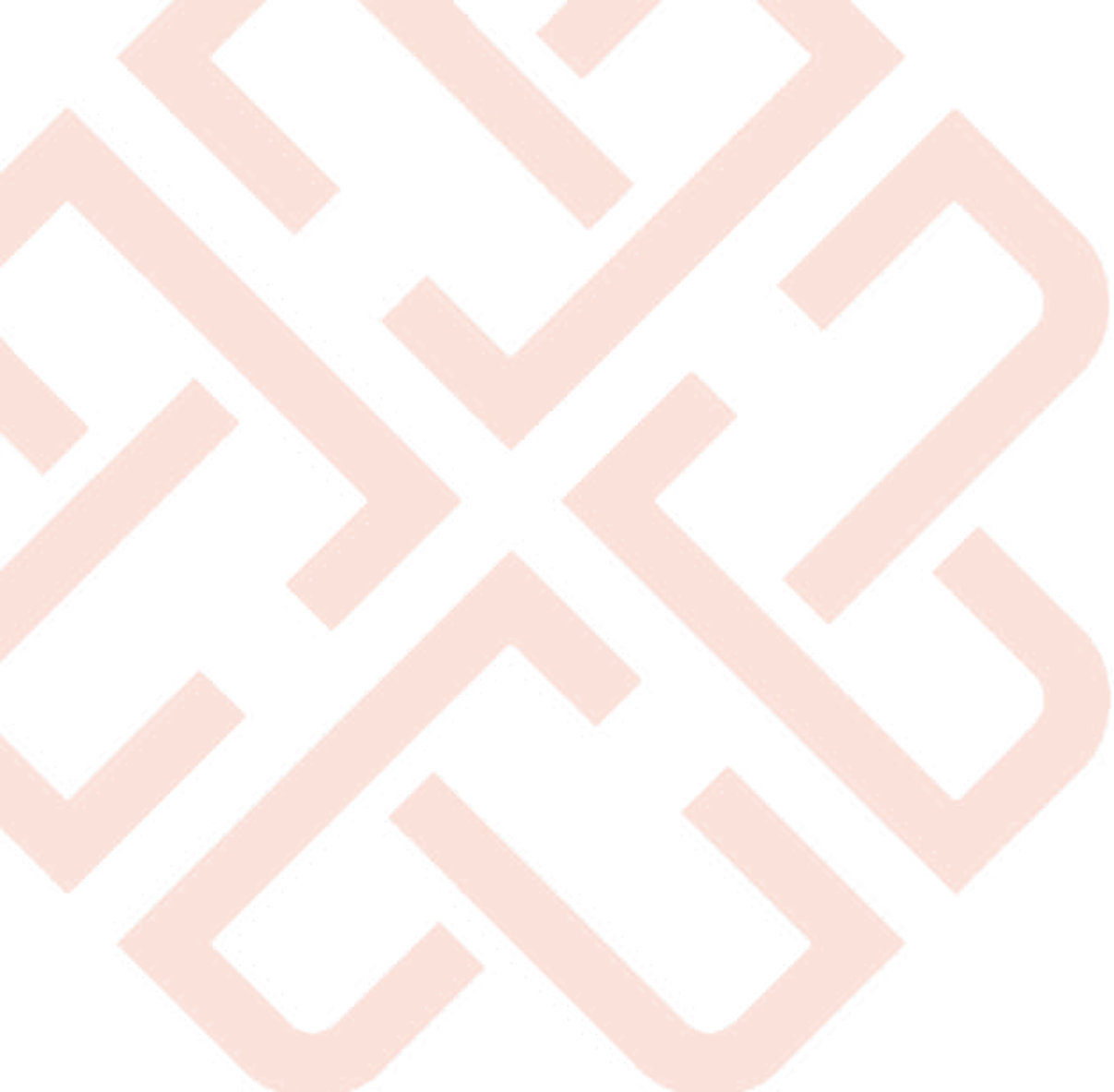
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 NORTHEAST COUNTY AREA 9

1.2 PAST PLAN: WOLFTEVER CREEK AREA PLAN (2007)



As Hamilton County's population grows, comprehensive planning is essential to support and protect existing communities, resident quality of life, and our natural resources. The Hamilton County Area Plans collectively guide responsible growth in unincorporated Hamilton County. The plans are intended to be a living document responsive to ongoing community input and changing needs.

Area Plans serve as a blueprint for determining where growth should occur and each plan will address land use, natural resource preservation, economy, and housing. Topographic, geologic, and infrastructure constraints are also considered, including sewer, emergency services, and road capacity.

The plans will help steer public infrastructure investments and shape zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, and stormwater regulations that govern development.

Key goals will be defined in each area plan. Policies and actions will be implemented to accomplish the goals. The Area Plans include Place Type Maps and descriptions that define future development patterns to facilitate responsible growth.

The plans do not change zoning directly, but they provide necessary information for zoning decisions. Development recommended by this plan does not guarantee rezonings and is subject to review and conditions, such as independent traffic studies, evacuation studies, and necessary infrastructure improvements.

1.1 NORTHEAST COUNTY AREA 9

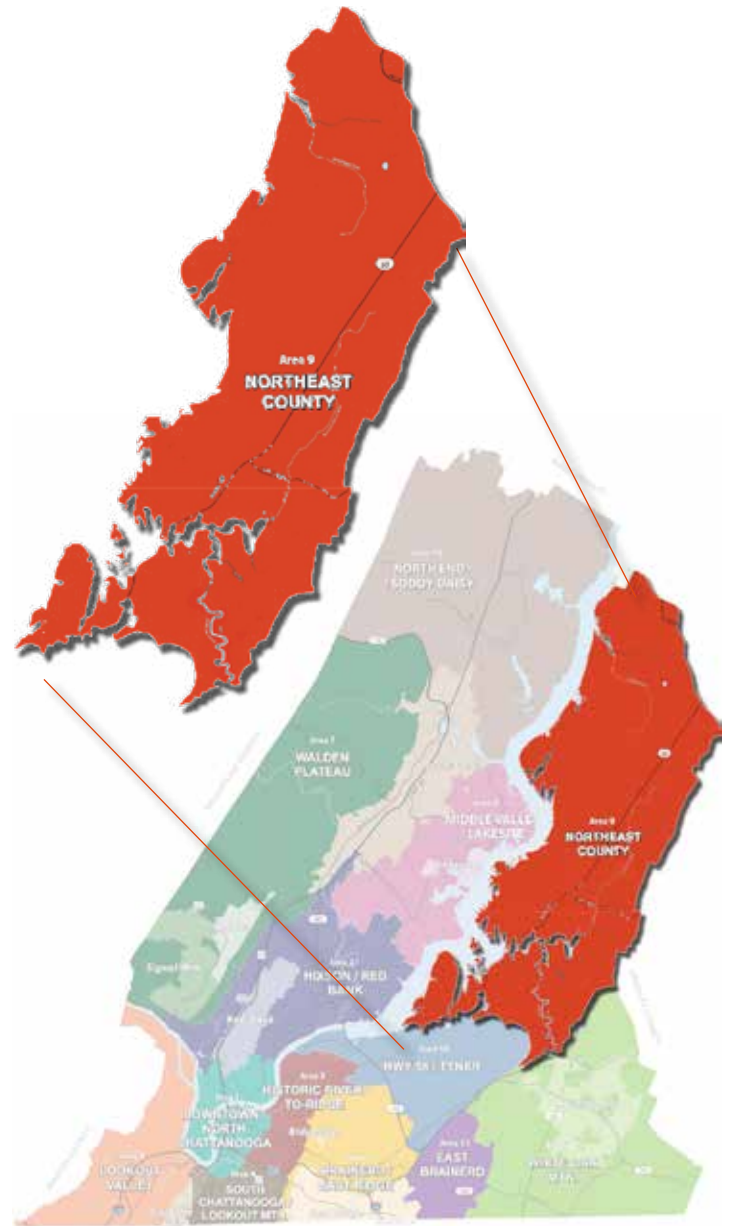


Figure 1.1 - Northeast County Area 9 Map as part of Hamilton County Study Area



Northeast County Area 9 Map

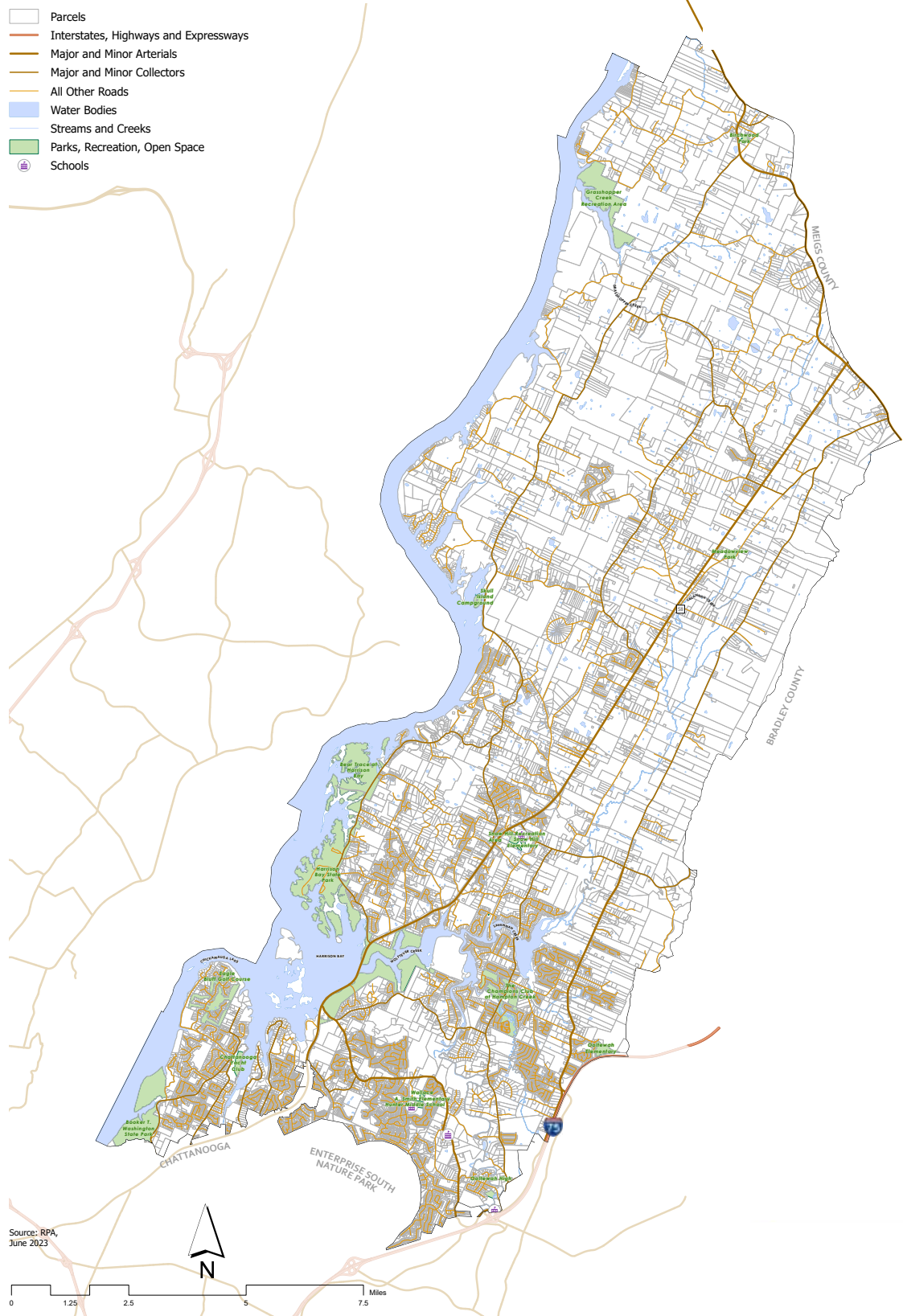


Figure 1.2 - Northeast County Area 9 Map



1.2 PAST PLAN: WOLFTEVER CREEK AREA PLAN (2007)

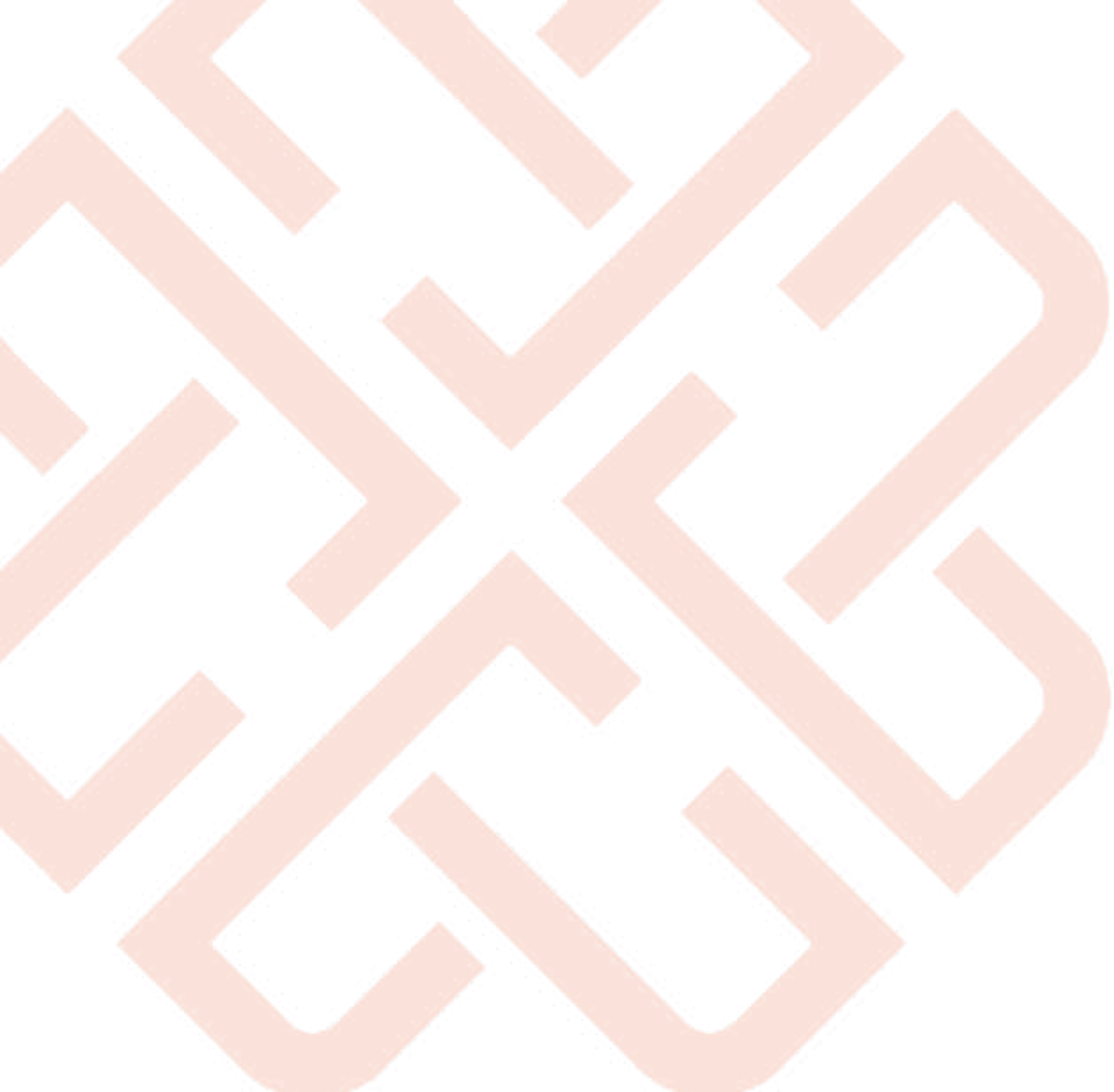
The 1989 Wolftever Creek Basin Area Study projected residential growth on Hunter Road but did not anticipate sewer service expansion and the accompanying growth along the Snow Hill and Ooltewah-Georgetown Road corridors.

The Wolftever Creek Area Plan, adopted by the Hamilton County Commission in 2007, established a vision for the community's future growth with guidance for changing land uses and transportation needs. The Wolftever Plan contains development types and models from Comprehensive Plan 2030 which was adopted by the Hamilton County Commission in 2006. The Wolftever Creek Area Plan has detailed land use recommendations.

But, rezoning decisions frequently ignored the plan, which resulted in overdevelopment and loss of some rural areas and natural resources. The rapid urbanization in portions of Area 9 has strained the infrastructure and led to over congested roads.

Residents expressed a strong desire for the new plan to prioritize responsible growth suited for the existing infrastructure. New development must preserve the rural character and natural resources and be limited to single family homes on large lots and small scale, single story commercial in designated areas.





CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT

2.1 DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

2.2 COMMUNITY SUMMARY

2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS

2.4 DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

2.5 LAND USE

2.6 ZONING

2.7 BUILDING PERMITS

2.8 PARKS & RECREATION AREAS

2.9 AGRICULTURE

2.10 INFRASTRUCTURE

2.11 TRANSPORTATION ANALYSES
AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



2.1 DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The Northeast County Area has a scenic beauty and community spirit that represents some of the best of what Hamilton County has to offer. The Tennessee River completely encompasses the western border, and the eastern border is framed by White Oak Mountain. This area is known for its rural charm and character. Rolling hills, farmland, lush green spaces, and picturesque waterways blend with existing neighborhoods.

Northeast Hamilton County is rich in history and cultural significance. It was home to the Cherokee until their forced removal in 1838. The region was part of James County, often called the Lost County of Tennessee. This plan seeks to preserve our historic rural character that has been enjoyed for generations. Fertile lands have provided a vast array of agricultural uses over the years, fostering a way of life that is deeply connected to the land. It is important to remember where we came from and honor those that lived here before us. Identifying historic sites will help protect them from inappropriate development. The Preserve Place Type includes historic sites such as those listed on the National Register of Historic Places, like the Hiram Douglas House and the Chief James Brown house.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON STATE PARK

Booker T. Washington State Park named after the renowned African American educator, is located on Chickamauga Lake, and completed in 1938. It was specifically created for the African American community. In 1962, all Tennessee parks were desegregated, and Booker T. Washington Park became a space open to everyone. Residents and visitors enjoy the swimming pool, fishing piers, boat ramp, and trails at this 353 acre park.

HARRISON BAY STATE PARK

Located on Chickamauga Lake became the first Tennessee State Park in 1937. The park was originally owned by Cherokee Chief Joseph Vann and was home to three villages. The park was one of the last campsites inhabited by the Cherokee before departure on the Trail of Tears. Today, the park includes a marina, campground, restaurant, and golf course where residents and visitors can enjoy the scenic beauty.

LOST TOWN OF OLD HARRISON

The lost town of Old Harrison was originally named Vannville, also known as Joseph Vann's Town after Cherokee Chief Joseph Vann. Following Cherokee Removal, it was renamed Harrison after President William Henry Harrison. It was the seat of Hamilton County from 1840 to 1870. In March 1935, TVA constructed the Chickamauga Dam which created the Chickamauga Reservoir and submerged Old Harrison. Remnants can still be seen on John A. Patten Island.



JAMES COUNTY

Formed in 1871 from part of Eastern Hamilton County and a small portion of western Bradley County. The new county was formed after Harrison lost the Hamilton County seat to Chattanooga in 1870. But, a few months after James County was formed Harrison would once again lose the county seat to Ooltewah. Harrison eventually rejoined Hamilton County in 1893. James County was dissolved in 1919 due to bankruptcy and the citizens voted to join Hamilton County.



Photo: The Lost Town of Old Harrison
Source: Local 3 News, John Martin



Booker T. Washington State Park
Source: TN State Parks

2.2 COMMUNITY SUMMARY

Area 9 stretches from the Chattanooga City limits north all the way to SR 60 and the Meigs County border. Chickamauga Lake to the west and White Oak Mountain to the east form the natural limits of Area 9.

RURAL CHARACTER

The Northeast County has a rural character and natural beauty that has been enjoyed for generations.

TOPOGRAPHY

Area 9 is characterized by a karst landscape with caves, springs, wetlands, sinkholes, and other features that have shaped the land. Rolling hills and valleys transition to open fields. Several creeks have carved their way through the landscape including Wolftever Creek, Rogers Branch, and Long Savannah Creek. The topography defines the areas suitable for growth.



Natural Resources Map

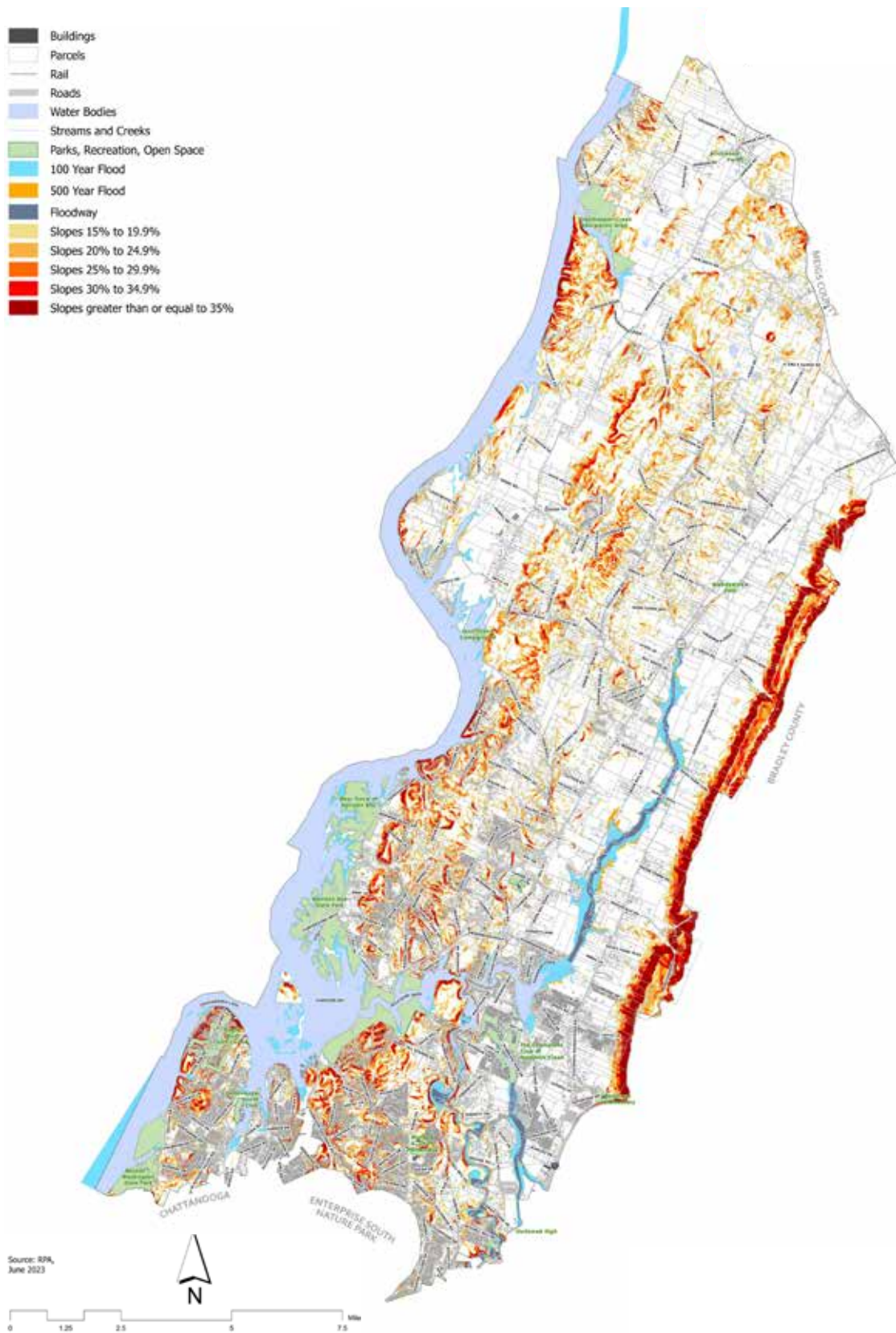
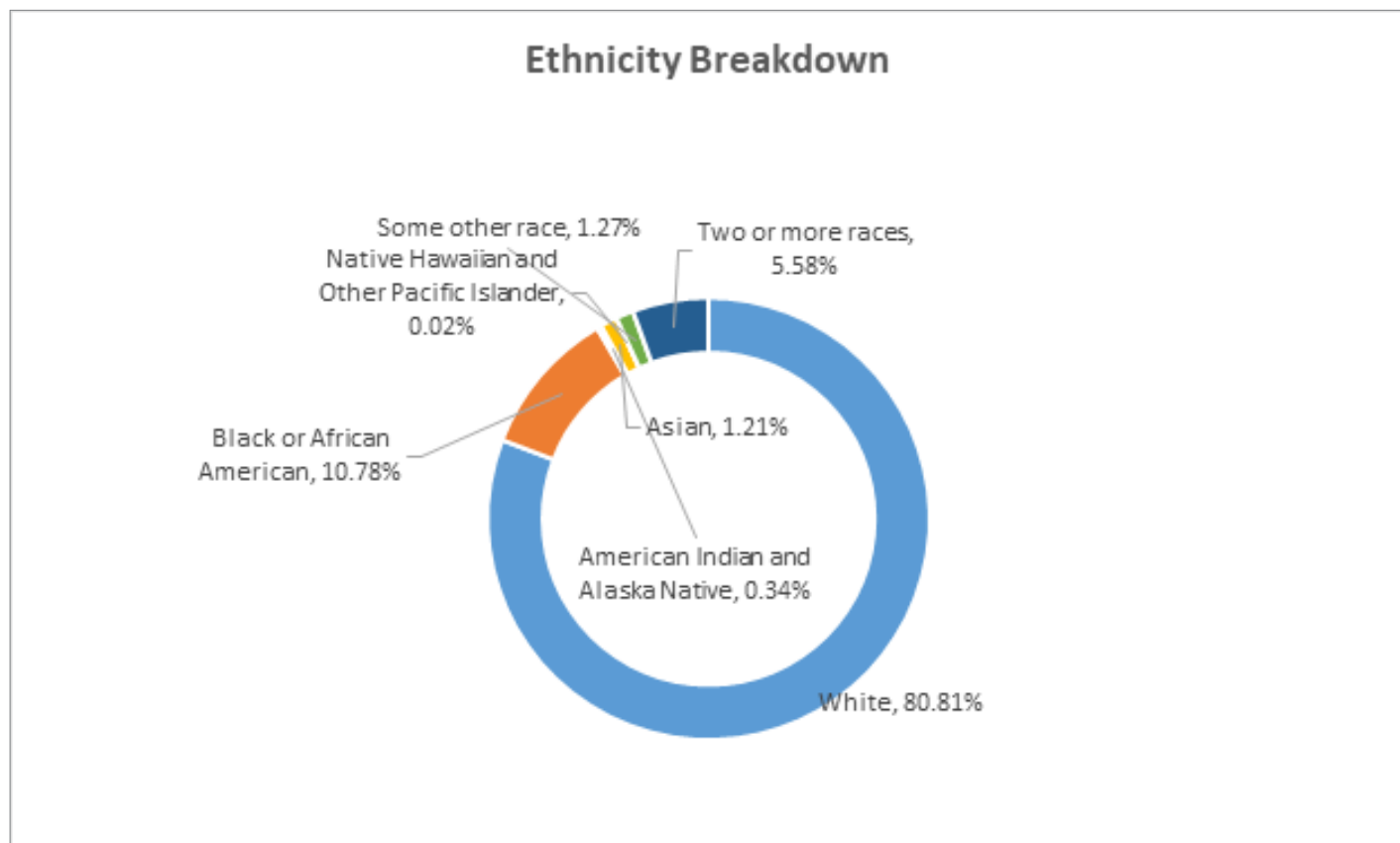
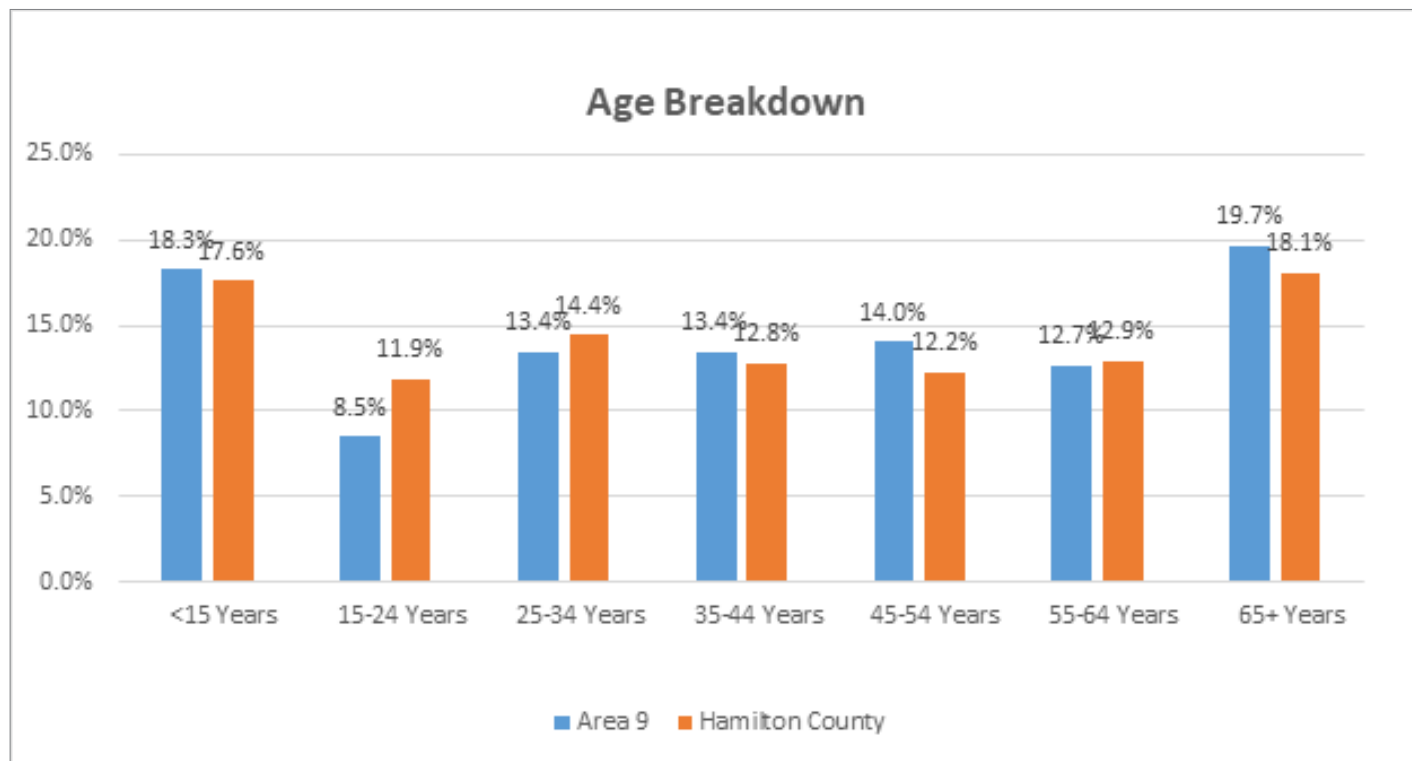


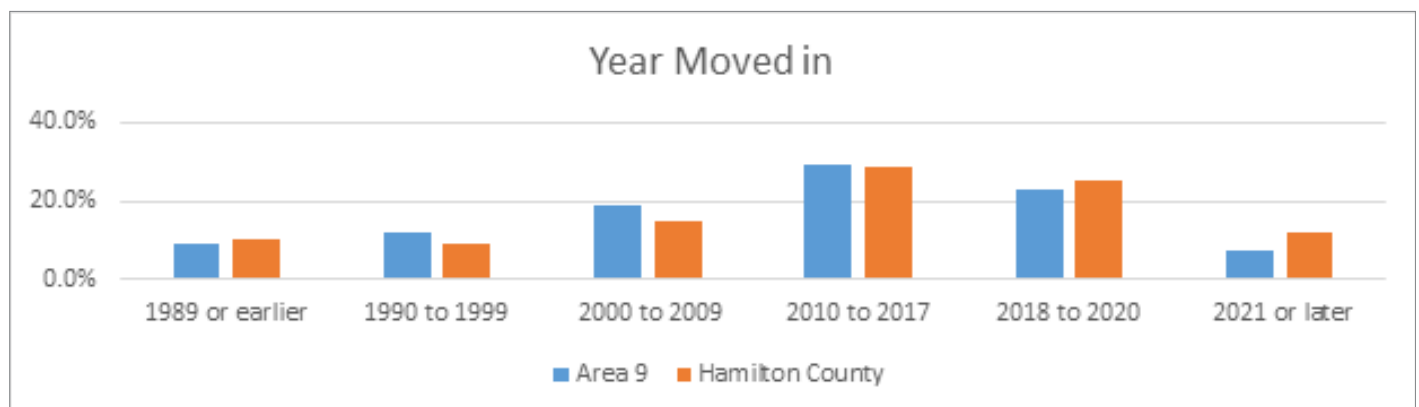
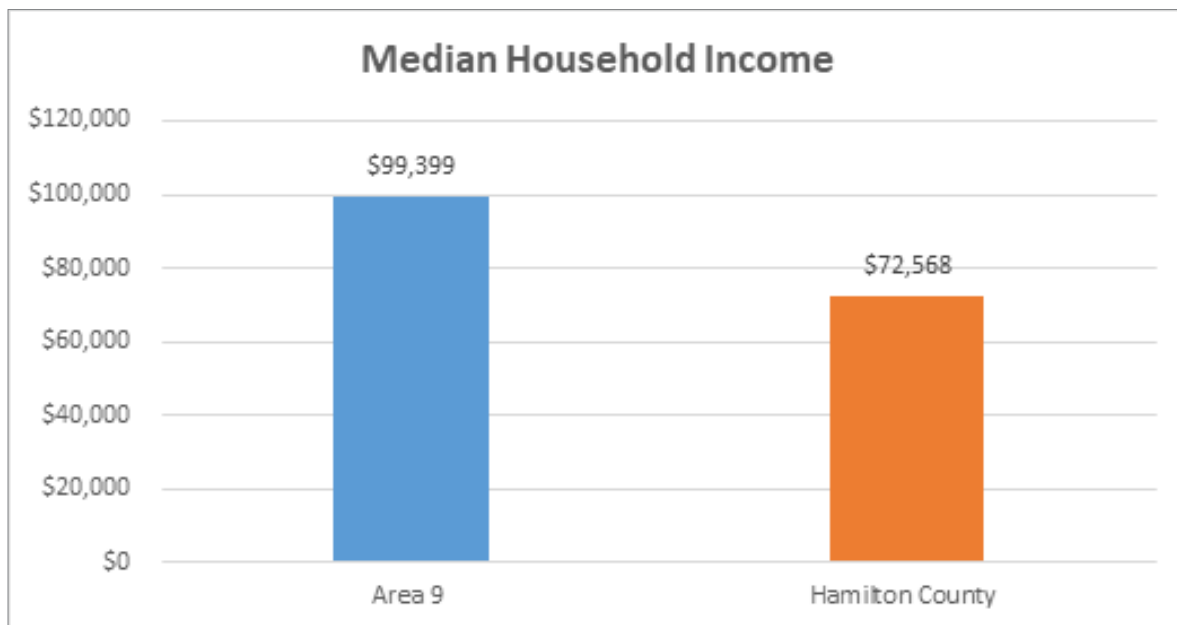
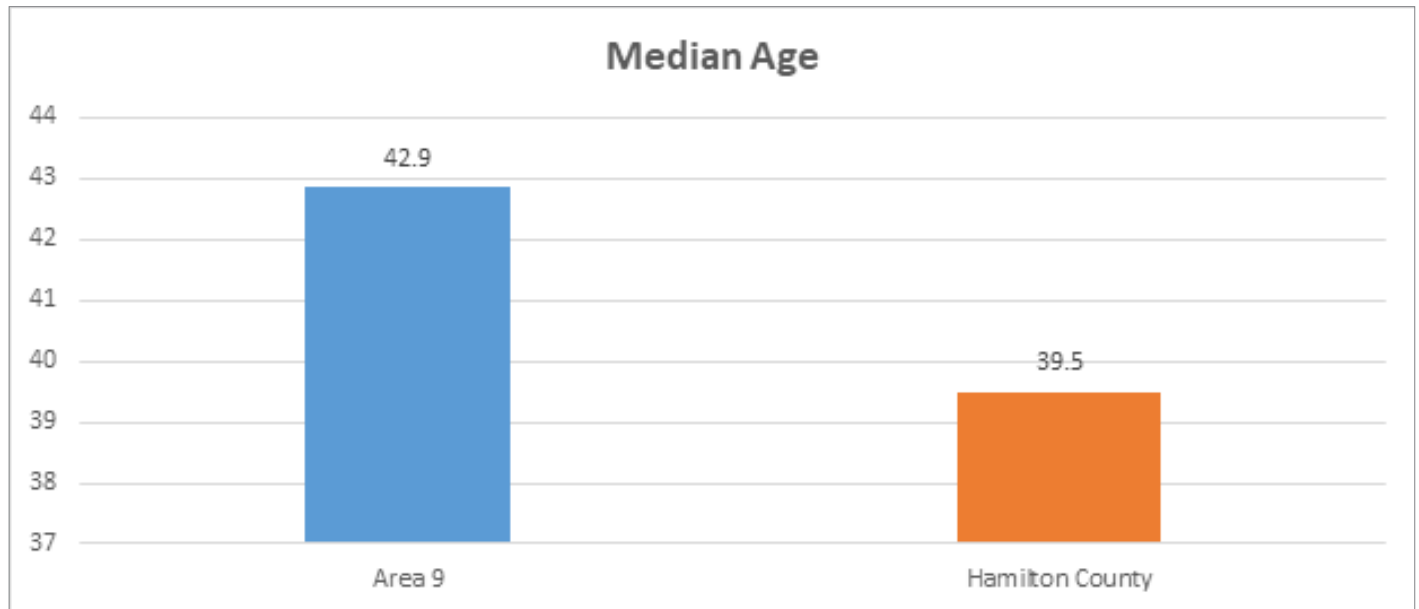
Figure 2.1: Natural Resources Map



2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS

The source of the following data is the American Community Survey 5- year estimates 2019 - 2023 by Census Tracts.





2.4 DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

CURRENT RESIDENTIAL

Northeast Hamilton County has experienced significant residential growth, especially in the Ooltewah/Snow Hill areas.

The areas north of Mahan Gap Road have retained most of the rural character. Older subdivisions and commercial development blend with the rural and agricultural areas.

Over the last 15 years, many areas south of Mahan Gap Road have seen substantial residential growth resulting in significant loss of rural character, scenic beauty, and natural resources. Residential development is concentrated along Snow Hill Road, Ooltewah-Georgetown Road, and Hunter Road at densities of approximately two to four dwelling units per acre. Newer subdivisions have smaller lot sizes and setbacks.

CURRENT COMMERCIAL

Commercial development is predominantly small scale, single story. Commercial development is located at the Mahan Gap Crossroads, the Highway 58 and Greenwood Rd intersection, and a few other areas throughout Northeast County.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Residents expressed a desire for responsible development that preserves the area's unique rural character and natural resources.

Future growth should prioritize low-density single-family residential and small-scale, single-story commercial development.

2.5 LAND USE

Over 60% of the land in Northeast County Area 9 is classified as residential which is predominantly single family detached housing. This substantial portion highlights the community's desire to preserve the rural character.

Land allocated for commercial or industrial purposes comprises less than 1% of the total Area. Institutional uses, such as schools and religious facilities, account for 5% of the land. Approximately 24,091 acres are classified as vacant. This represents about 36% of the Area. Developing this land at base densities of 2 per acre provides ample opportunities for future responsible growth without compromising existing rural character. Additionally, around 17,195 acres are devoted to natural resource uses, including agriculture, reflecting the ongoing commitment to preserve agricultural heritage and natural landscapes.



Existing Land Use Map

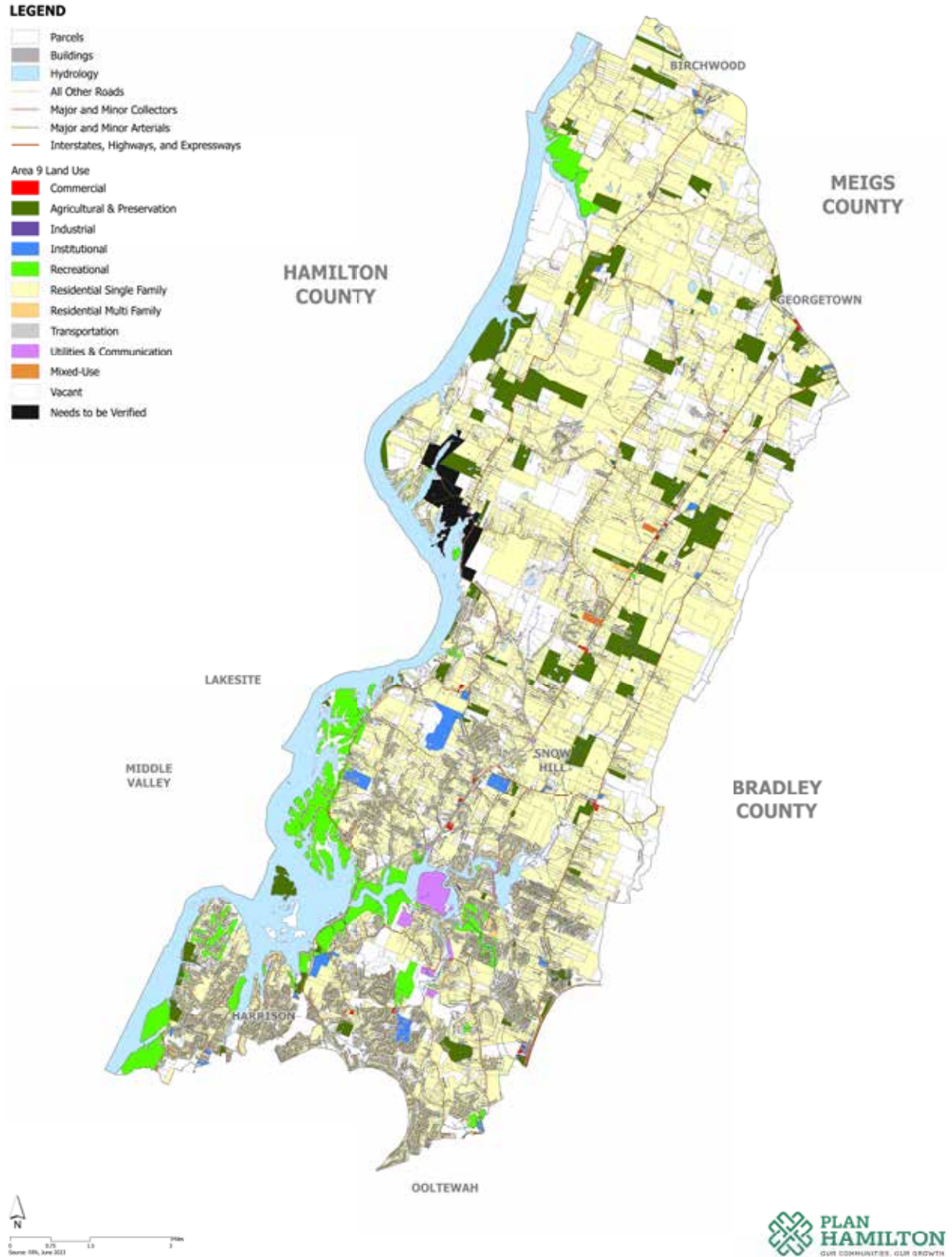


Figure 2.2: Existing Land Use Map (2023)



2.6 ZONING

Currently, the majority of the Northeast County is zoned for residential purposes, making up 80% of the Area. This includes both Residential and Agricultural Zones, the latter of which also permits residential development. Current zoning reflects the community's preference to maintain a predominantly residential landscape that supports a peaceful, rural character with opportunities for agricultural uses.

Commercially zoned areas comprise only 0.46% of the land. These commercial zones are strategically concentrated along Highway 58, Ooltewah Georgetown

Road, and Mahan Gap Road. Essential services and retail opportunities are provided without disrupting the overall residential and rural ambiance of the area.

Future zoning changes must balance growth with the preservation of cherished rural character. Focusing on single family detached housing and agricultural areas with strategically placed small-scale, single-story commercial development will maintain Area 9's unique identity. Infrastructure needs must be addressed for future zoning changes to ensure a high quality of life for residents.

Area 9 Zoning Request Summary

Types	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	3	3	0	1	5	2	12	4	2	2	34
Special Permit	4	4	4	10	4	7	4	3	5	7	52
Zoning	10	2	5	4	4	4	12	12	6	3	62
Grand Total	17	9	9	15	13	13	28	19	13	12	148

Zoning Approved Cases (Zoning To)	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Agricultural				1			1	1	1		4
Commercial/Office	3		2	1			3	1	1		11
Group Home/Senior Living	1										1
Industrial	1		1				1	1			4
Industrial/Storage Facility									1		1
Mixed Use										1	1
Multi-Family Residential		1				1					2
Single Family (Attached)							1				1
Single Family (Detached)	3			2	3	2	4	5	1		20
Grand Total	8	1	3	4	3	3	10	8	4	1	45

Source: RPA

Note: Special permit including cell tower, wedding/event venue, short-term rentals, manufactured housing, etc.



Existing Zoning Map

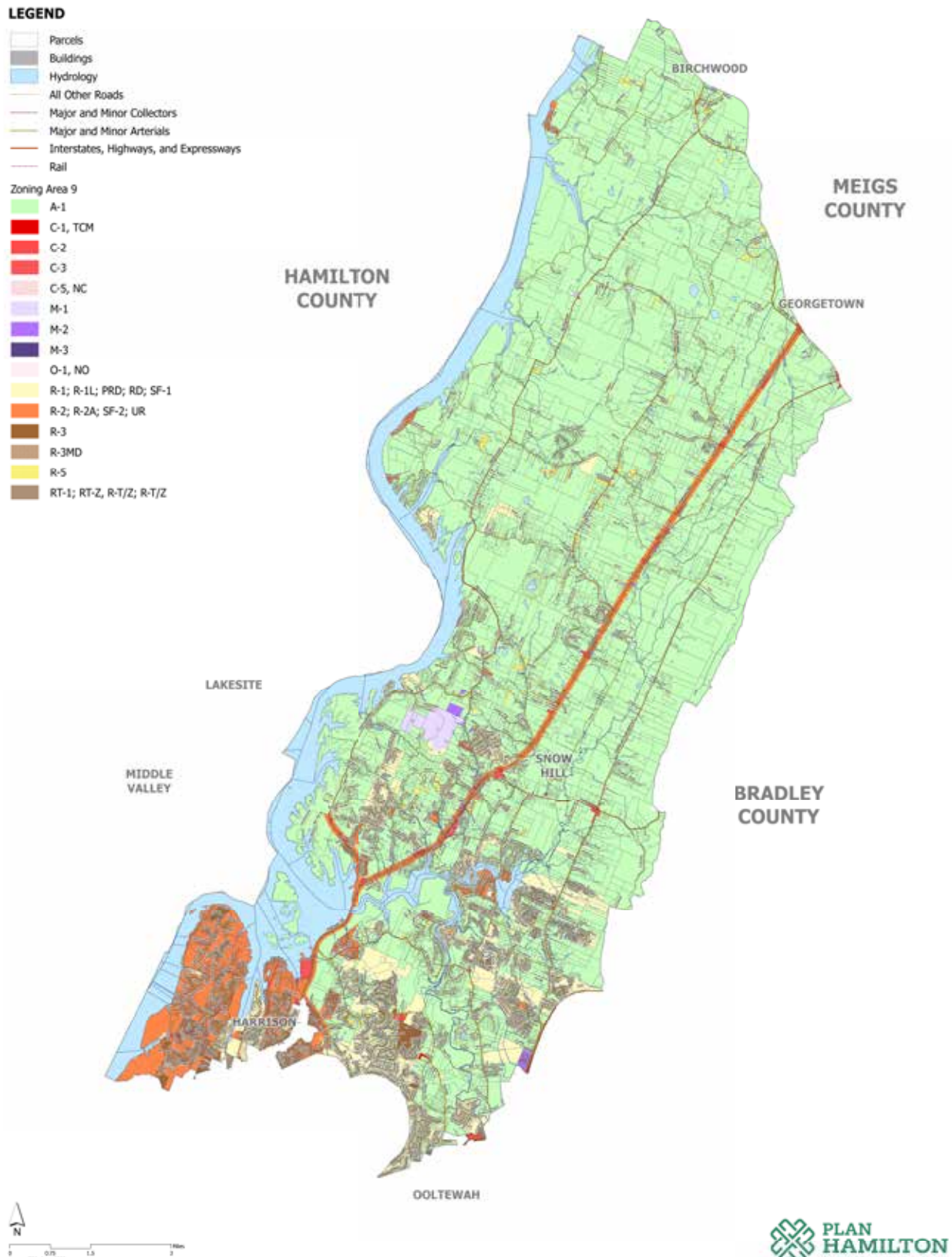


Figure 2.3: Existing Zoning Map (2023)



2.7 BUILDING PERMITS

Over the past decade, Northeast County Area 9 has experienced a tremendous increase in population growth and housing demand that is driven by the Area's rural charm, appeal, and quality of life. Residents have expressed a strong desire to preserve these characteristics for any future residential and commercial growth.

Analyzing building permits and development trends offers valuable insights into the region's growth patterns, infrastructure impacts, and future development.

Activity in both new construction and renovation projects has dominated the last 10 years. The majority of permits issued have been for single-family homes, which aligns with the existing and desired preference of the community.

The "Other" classification, which includes renovations, represents the second-highest category for permit

issuance. Commercial development represents less than 1% of total permits issued.

The insights gained from building permit trends provide a roadmap for future development.

Growth in Area 9 over the past 20 years has strained the infrastructure and created excessive congestion. Recent rezonings will add to the strain.

Land use planning is an essential tool to ensure future development is responsible. Infrastructure and inadequate or nonexistent services and facilities must be addressed for any future development to occur.

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 commercial uses.

Permitted Residential Units

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Hamilton County	2,148	2,252	2,565	2,326	2,009	1,883	3,685	2,936	3,113	3,512	26,429
Area 9	234	259	346	339	199	302	387	307	320	339	3,032
% of County Total	10.9%	11.5%	13.5%	14.6%	9.9%	16.0%	10.5%	10.5%	10.3%	9.7%	11.5%

Recorded Residential Lots including Mixed Use Developments

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Hamilton County	707	832	891	1,393	1,013	880	1,281	1,444	1,136	1,810	11,387
Area 9	168	240	179	282	155	79	176	507	264	349	2,399
% of County Total	23.8%	28.8%	20.1%	20.2%	15.3%	9.0%	13.7%	35.1%	23.2%	19.3%	21.1%



Lot Absorption

Year	Recorded lots	Permitted Housing Units	Non-built Lots*	
			#	%
2015	168	153	15	8.9%
2016	240	220	20	8.3%
2017	179	150	29	16.2%
2018	282	264	18	6.4%
2019	155	145	10	6.5%
2020	79	76	3	3.8%
2021	176	156	20	11.4%
2022	507	396	111	21.9%
2023	264	132	132	50.0%
2024	349	59	290	83.1%
Total	2,399	1,751	648	27.0%

* Non-built lots included community lots



**Building Permits Map
(2013-2023)**



Figure 2.4: Building Permits Map (2013-2023)



2.8 PARKS & RECREATION AREAS

The Northeast County is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, boasting an extensive network of recreation and water-based activities. There are approximately 3,669 acres of public parks, campgrounds, and other recreational areas for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. There are also 568 acres of private recreation areas. See Tables 3 and 4. A separate analysis found all aspects of parks, recreation, and open space is approximately 7% of the total land area.

Harrison Bay State Park, Booker T. Washington State Park, campgrounds, and boat launches offer a variety of activities including hiking, picnicking, wildlife observation, boating, fishing, golf, and more. The parks and

campgrounds are designed to highlight the natural beauty of the Area, providing recreation and relaxation that enhance the quality of life and preserve the region's natural landscapes and resources.

The parks also offer wildlife habitation and observation. Protecting the parks and surrounding area from inappropriate development will ensure that they will be enjoyed by future generations.

Table 3: Public Parks, Recreation, and Greenways

Name	Type of Recreation Area	Size (Acres)
Bear Trace at Harrison Bay	Public Golf Course	387
Birchwood Elementary School Recreation Area	School Recreation Area	10
Booker T. Washington State Park	State Park & Natural Area	495
Grasshopper Creek Recreation Area	Campground & Natural Area	459
Harrison Bay State Park	State Park & Natural Area	2,221
Hunter Middle School Athletic Fields	School Recreation Area	24
Meadowview Park	County Recreation Area	21
Ooltewah High School Athletic Complex	School Recreation Area	>1
Skull Island	Campground & Boat Access	14
Snow Hill Elementary School Playground	School Recreation Area	9
Snow Hill Recreation Area	Recreation Area	27
Total		3,669



2.9 AGRICULTURE

Area 9 has a long history of agricultural activity that has added to the rural character and charm of the area. Agricultural land provides opportunities for healthy food sources, educational programs, and improved environmental function for clean air and water quality.

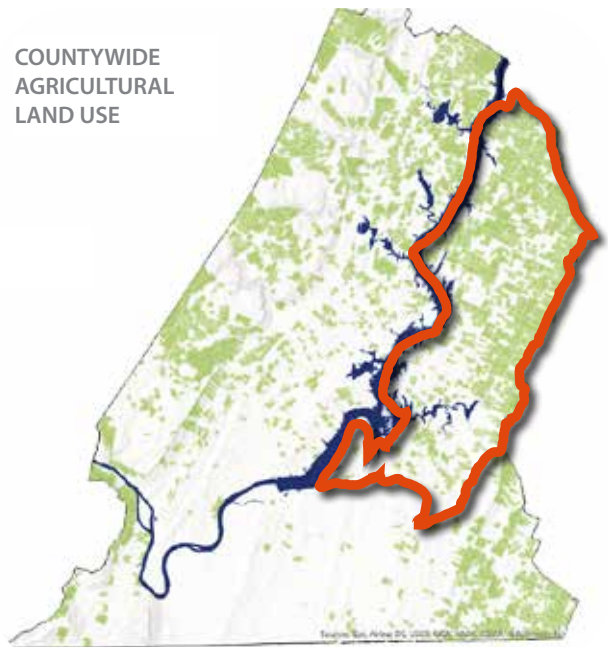
Development centered around farming often includes single family homes on large lots with accessory buildings such as barns and greenhouses. Agricultural land is typically zoned A-1 and utilizes septic systems.

Properties given the “Greenbelt” status (15 acres or more) usually feature a farm or single family home with surrounding open space, pastures or forests with tax benefits available.

COUNTYWIDE
A-1 ZONING



COUNTYWIDE
AGRICULTURAL
LAND USE



AREA 9

- 80.8%** A-1 Zoning
- 61.1%** Single-Family Parcels
- 10.4%** of Permits issued in the County
- 20.8%** of Area in Steep Slopes & Floodway
- 7%** Of Area in Parks, Recreation & Open Space

HAMILTON COUNTY

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



2.10 INFRASTRUCTURE

As the County grows, managing stormwater, sewer, septic systems and overseeing decentralized sewer systems, becomes crucial in preserving these resources. These infrastructure elements play a direct role in protecting water quality, minimizing erosion, and ensuring safe wastewater disposal, particularly in environmentally sensitive and rural areas where traditional sewer systems may not be feasible.

STORMWATER

Stormwater runoff refers to rainwater or melted snow that flows over land surfaces instead of absorbing into the ground. As it travels across roads, rooftops, and other impervious surfaces, runoff can pick up pollutants, debris, and sediment, which may be carried into nearby rivers, lakes, or storm drains.

When new developments clear land, they often remove mature vegetation that naturally absorbs and slows runoff. Without trees, plants, and root systems to retain water, runoff flows more quickly across the landscape, increasing the risk of erosion and the transport of sediment into local waterways. This change not only affects the immediate development site but can also impact adjacent properties and flooding risks are increased in lower-lying areas.

The increased sediment and pollutants carried by unmanaged runoff can degrade water quality in rivers and creeks, impacting aquatic habitats and nearby communities.

Stream buffers and retention of wetlands can help to protect the water quality. Detention ponds, plantings, permeable paving materials, and other state approved methods for managing run-off can help to mitigate potential impacts if they are designed appropriately.

Stormwater Regulations must be reviewed and updated regularly to prevent negative impacts to streams, wetlands, floodplains, and neighboring properties.

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.



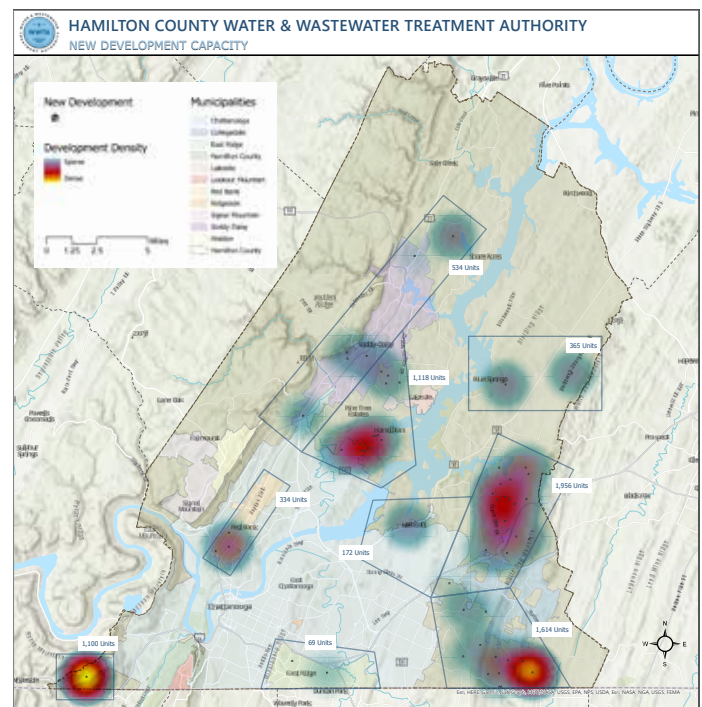
ALTERNATIVE SEWAGE SYSTEM

Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems are a combination of traditional septic and sewer. Buildings or groups of buildings have an on-site septic tank as an initial treatment. Wastewater is then piped to a central location for additional treatment and disposal or to a drip dispersal area. Currently, Hamilton County has several existing systems with WWTa providing oversight. Concerns include long distances from centralized sewage systems and failures which could result in groundwater contamination, surface water pollution, and pathogen spread to neighboring properties. Stricter Regulations must be implemented if these systems will be utilized in the future.

In March 2025, the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners voted to have the Hamilton County Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority (WWTa) to regulate and operate decentralized sewage systems. At the same time, WWTa is actively reviewing and updating its regulations and standards for decentralized wastewater systems, with a focus on ensuring proper operation and management within the county, particularly in areas where traditional sewer extensions are not feasible.

SEPTIC SYSTEMS

In Area 9, septic is the most common wastewater treatment option. Generally, the minimum lot size required for septic systems is approximately 25,000 square feet. Residential development in rural areas without sewer service must therefore be built with larger lots.



Sewer Infrastructure Map

- Existing Sewer
- Force Low
 - Force Main
 - Gravity Main

Types of Lines

- Force Low:** CAN tap (connect) into
- Force Main:** Can NOT tap (connect) into
- Gravity Main:** CAN tap (connect) into

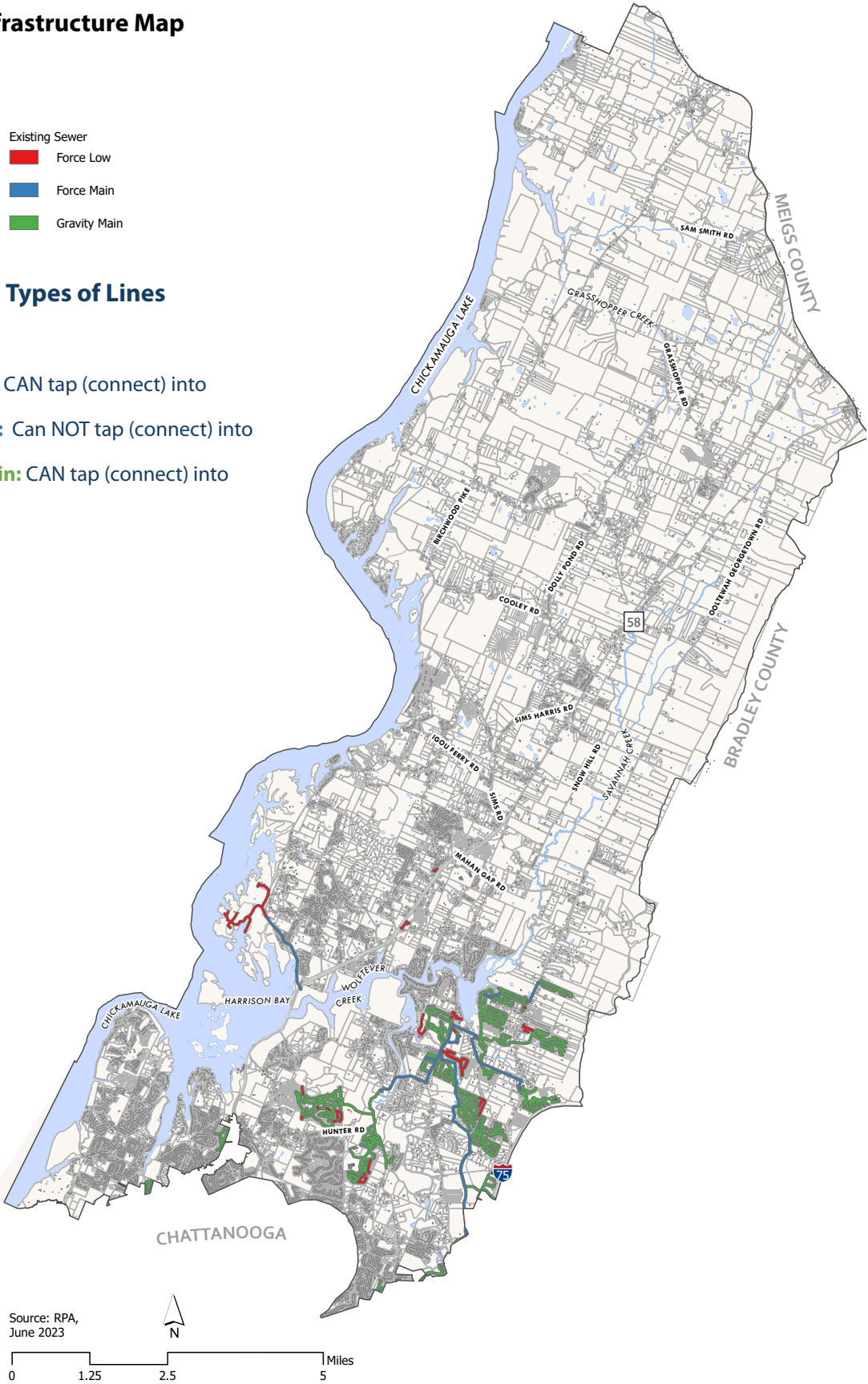


Figure 2.5: Sewer Infrastructure Map



2.11 TRANSPORTATION ANALYSES AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The Northeast County's road network connects neighborhoods, commercial centers, and outlying regions. Area 9 is bordered by Hwy 60 to the north and I-75 to the southeast. The vast majority of the road network consists of two lane roads. There are two main north/south corridors. Highway 58 is a four lane divided highway that transitions into a two lane road and Mountain View Road / Ooltewah-Georgetown Road is a two lane corridor. There are very few east to west connector roads that are miles apart.

Mahan Gap, Snow Hill, Hunter, and other two lane roads feature topography and high traffic volumes that make it difficult and expensive for the County to accommodate medium or high-density developments. Further development along these three roads should be avoided.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Functional classification of the transportation network is used to categorize roadways based on their purpose and role. This classification system differentiates between local, state, and federally owned roads, which can influence the funding sources and oversight agencies. Functional Classification of roads in area 9 are:

The functional classification categories at the local level in Area 9 are as follows:

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

Arterials

Arterials are typically long and have higher capacity and traffic volume compared to other roads with few access points. They typically connect to other arterials. Examples of Principal Arterials include interstates, freeways, and expressways. Minor arterials serve trips of shorter lengths than principal arterials and connect smaller geographic areas to the transportation network.

Collectors

Collectors are shorter and connect local roads to arterials. They have lower speed limits and are classified as major or minor. Major collectors usually allow 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

Local roads 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 MAP

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.

Review of historic crash data identified Hunter Road, Snow Hill Road, and Harrison Bay Road as exceeding the statewide average crash rate based on the frequency and severity of crashes. The historic crash data is shown in Figure 2.6.

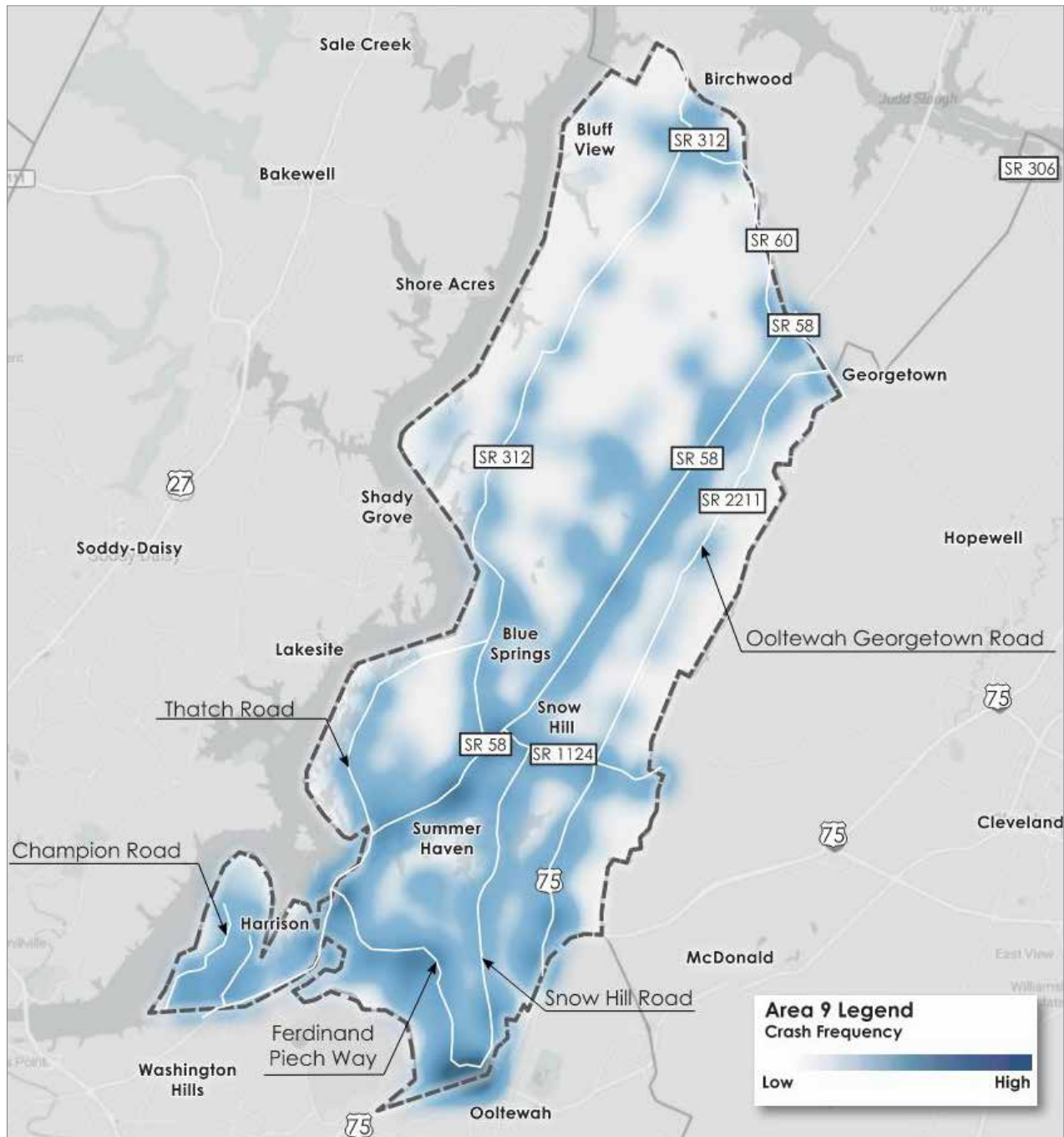


Figure 2.6: Area 9 Crash Data Map (08/24/2020-08/24/2023)



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 Chattanooga-Hamilton County/

North Georgia Metropolitan Planning Organization'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. Roadway segments already at or nearing capacity were flagged for inclusion in the improvement list to address these pressing needs.

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 5: Proposed Roadway Improvements (Area 9 only)

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
Medium-term	Hunter Road	at Garfield Road	9	Intersection
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
Long-term	Hunter Road	from Hwy 58 to Lee Highway	9	Capacity
Long-term	Harrison Bay Road	from Hwy 58 to Birchwood Pike	9	Safety



MPO PLANNED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS MAP

Average crash rates for the entire state of Tennessee were used for comparison to identify roads that might benefit from a safety study or project that would identify detailed crash patterns or implement improvements or strategies that could reduce the number or types of crashes. Three roads within Area 9 were identified as candidates for safety projects including Harrison Bay Road, Snow Hill Road, and Hunter Road.



Figure 2.7: Area 9 TPO Planned Transportation Projects Map



SCHOOLS

It is imperative that Hamilton County Schools be part of the conversation when it comes to growth. 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 considered as sites for new schools are identified.

Area 9 Schools	Enrollment	Capacity	(%)	% Economically Disadvantaged
Elementary School				
Harrison Elementary School	845	1000	84.50%	54%
Wallace A. Smith Elementary School	633	702	90.17%	12%
Ooltewah Elementary School	935	1017	91.94%	13%
Snow Hill Elementary School	628	800	78.50%	26%
Middle School				
Brown Middle School	312	624	50.00%	45%
Hunter Middle School	742	1097	67.64%	14%
High School				
Central High School	636	839	75.80%	39%
Ooltewah High School	1236	1421	86.98%	22%
Magnet School				
Chattanooga School for the Liberal Arts	970	1000	97.00%	11%
Harrison Bay Future Ready Center	No data	-	-	No data

Notes: The above is a list of Hamilton County public school zones that are either primarily contained within or share a portion of their school zone with Planning Area 9. Magnet Schools in close proximity to Area 9 are also included.

Source: Hamilton County
 Source for percent disadvantaged:
<https://tdepublicschools.ondemand.sas.com/schools>



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 9, there are five (5) volunteer fire department stations (VFD) including HWY 58 VFD 2,3,4, and 5 as well as Tri-Community VFD 2. Additionally HWY 58 VFD 1 and Tri-Community VFD 1 are just outside the boundary of Area 9 but both provide services inside the boundary of Area 9. The stations are evenly distributed throughout the Area. Highway 58 VFD serves the 2nd most populous Area in Hamilton County with an estimated population of 31,832.

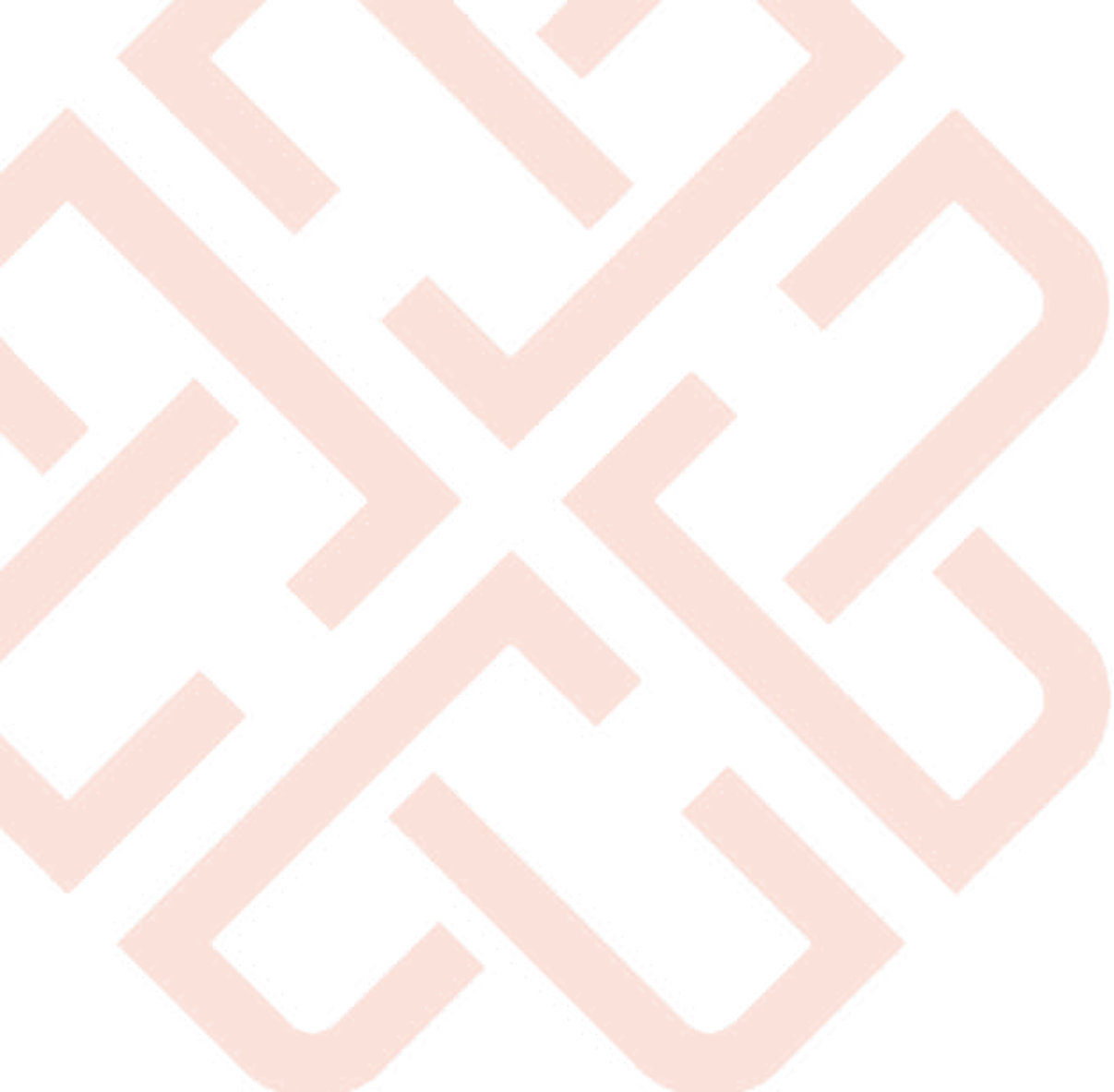
Some areas in the north half of Area 9 have longer travel distances for fire and emergency services that result in slower response times. As growth continues, it will be necessary to continue to evaluate emergency service and response and improve accordingly.

Hamilton County Emergency Management owns and

constantly updates evacuation routes and plans for natural disasters.

Area 9 is in Sequoyah Emergency Preparedness Plan's 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone. Highway 58 is a controlled evacuation route with traffic north from the intersection of Igou Ferry Road into Meigs County and south from the intersection into Chattanooga.





CHAPTER 3

VISION & GOALS

3.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

3.2 SURVEY RESULTS

3.3 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

3.4 VISION

3.5 GOALS



The Plan's vision represents the community's desired future and directs a path for responsible growth. The Vision is further defined and facilitated through the Goals.

3.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community feedback was collected to craft the vision and goals for this plan. An online survey was conducted and meetings, both county sponsored and citizen led, were held to better understand the community's priorities for the future.

3.2 SURVEY RESULTS

The survey consisted of a series of questions with multiple choice answers. Most of the participants for the Area 9 survey lived within the area. The survey results are provided in Appendix C. Some of the results are listed below.

- » 92% said they experience some form of congestion during peak hours and 70% experience congestion in non peak hours.
- » 88% said the top infrastructure need is roads.
- » 96% would like to preserve farmland and rural character, steep slopes, and wooded and riparian areas.

3.3 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Several Community Meetings were held for the Area 9 Plan.

The top concerns are listed below.

- » Recent growth and already approved growth that will occur within the next few years. Residents were unhappy that current plans have not been followed, which led to urban sprawl. The loss of rural areas and character from recent growth. There was a strong desire for new development to preserve the rural character.
- » Infrastructure has not kept up with development. Roads are congested and residents expressed a strong desire for improvements before future growth is approved or allowed. -- Residents would like to see more restrictions placed on decentralized sewage systems to mitigate environmental and health impacts.
- » The loss of natural resources caused by new development. Residents would like to require new developments to preserve natural resources including ponds, streams, wetlands, steep slopes, natural drainage pathways, and mature trees.
- » Future growth increasing evacuation times. Residents would like frequent studies to evaluate what effects current and future growth will have during an evacuation.
- » Development in or near Harrison Bay State Park. Residents did not want inappropriate development in a historically significant area.



3.4 VISION

The following statement was crafted from the feedback provided to form a clear vision for the community's desired future.

"To sustain and enhance the quality of life for current and future residents. Ensure new growth complements or improves existing communities and honors our heritage. Development must be responsible and suited for existing infrastructure while preserving rural character and natural resources. Establish land use patterns that define the quality and character of growth while balancing the priorities and needs of residents."



3.5 GOALS

Goals describe steps to facilitate the plan's vision. Revising zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, stormwater regulations, and permits will align these documents to the Plan's Vision and Goals.

1. Protect and preserve the rural areas and character

The rural area consisting of scenic waterways, forested areas, and large expanses of open spaces will be protected. New residential and commercial development will be required to blend and complement the existing rural character. Corridor management through buffer and year round screening requirements will protect the rural feel of the area.

2. Match infrastructure with growth

Anticipate planned growth and ensure sufficient infrastructure is in place to serve both the residents and the business community. Studies for school capacity and new facilities will ensure the needs of students are met. Traffic studies must be conducted for new development to ensure mandatory improvements are identified and implemented. Analysis of the effects new development will have on estimated evacuation times will ensure the safety of residents.

3. Protect natural resources

As growth occurs, special emphasis will be placed on protecting valuable natural resources such as existing waterways, forested areas, steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas. Preservation of woodlands and wetlands will protect wildlife habitats and the natural environment. Requiring setbacks from karst features, such as sinkholes will provide valuable groundwater recharge and help prevent groundwater contamination. Implementing restrictions for development on slopes greater than 20 percent will provide slope protection and help prevent landslides.

4. Preserve the single-family residential character

The Conservation Subdivision Model with large buffers and substantial open space can serve as an alternative way to preserve the residential character of the area. Decentralized Sewage Systems must follow WWTa rules and regulations, be managed and maintained by the WWTa, and be designed to protect existing residential areas.

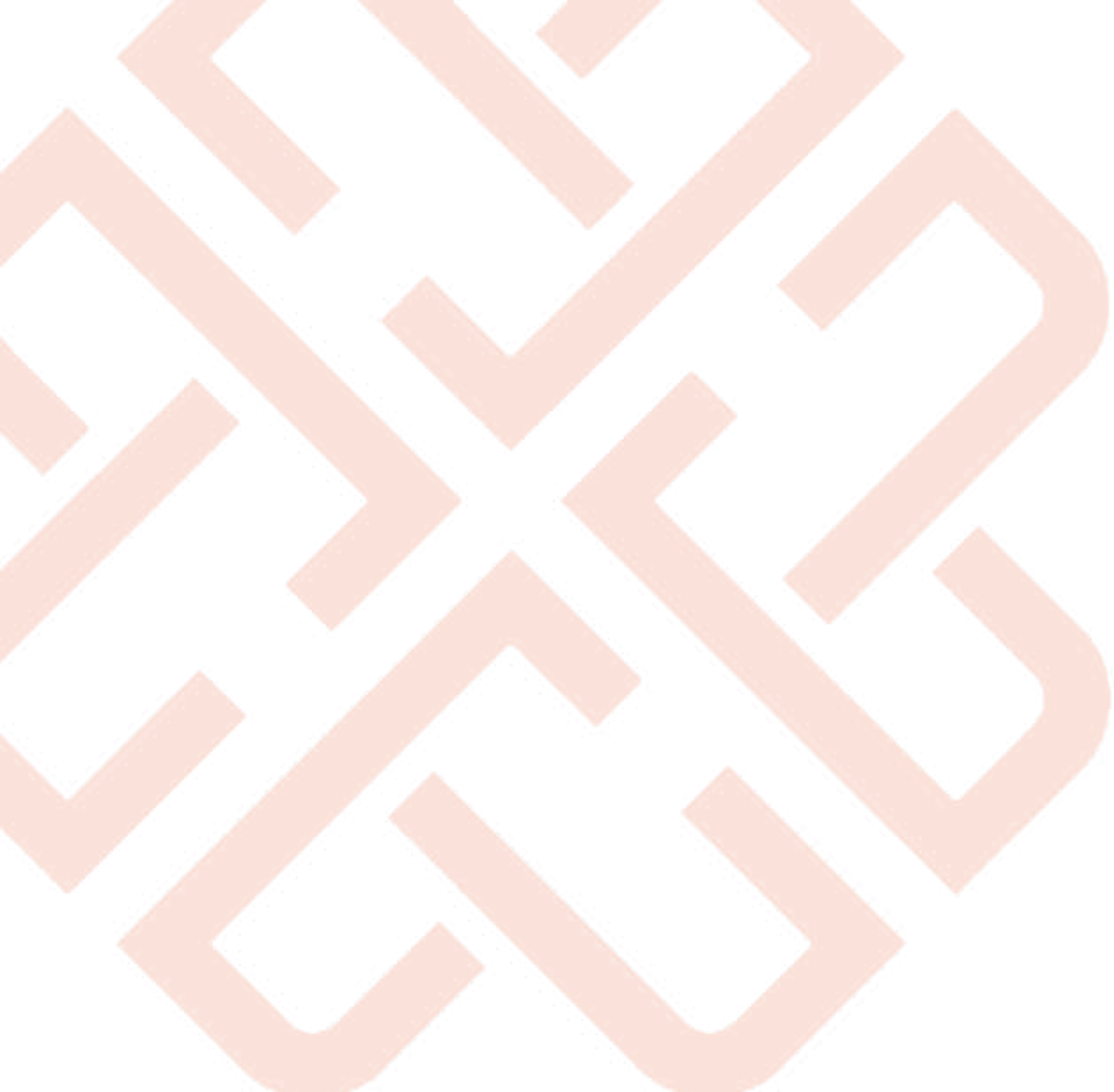
5. Blend commercial development with residential development

Commercial development must be single story and complement existing residential areas. Commercial areas are placed at crossroads or along major routes, but no long stretches of commercial businesses.

6. Align zoning with the Area Plan and assure zoning regulations and subdivision regulations meet current standards

Zoning and Subdivision Regulations will be updated to align with the standards set in this plan. The Regulations should also be reviewed to ensure that current standards, such as flood, fire, and building regulations, are met.





CHAPTER 4

PLANNING PROCESS

4.1 PLACETYPES

4.2 HOW PLACETYPES ARE USED

4.3 GOALS & POLICIES

A wide range of resources was utilized to determine the most suitable land uses in Area 9. Current data, zoning, and land use patterns were examined in the planning process. It was also crucial to recognize the rich history of the Northeast County Area and the residents' specific desires and needs.

4.1 PLACE TYPES

Place Types were developed to serve as a foundation for future land use and to align with the community's vision and goals. Place Types will play a crucial role in maintaining the area's distinct identity and ensuring responsible development for current residents and future generations. Each Place Type will describe the various uses, forms, and character that development can take. Density allowed per acre is designated for each Place Type that allows residential development. Place Types are not zoning, and each one might include one or more zoning districts. The Place Type map was produced using key considerations such as existing zoning, necessary infrastructure, natural resources, and the community's needs.

4.2 HOW PLACE TYPES ARE USED

The Place Types and corresponding Place Type Map will become essential tools for making informed land use decisions such as rezonings and special permits. Zoning changes will be based on how well the proposed zone aligns with the intended characteristics of the Place Type. Additional considerations must also be addressed when making rezoning decisions such as the topography, road conditions, traffic studies, geological studies, natural resources impacts and effects on evacuations. If a proposed zoning change does not align with the Place Type and Map, the plan must be amended before a zoning change is considered.

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.



4.2.1 CATEGORIES & PLACE TYPES IN AREA 9

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)*

SPECIALTY DISTRICTS

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

CENTERS & CORRIDORS

- *Rural Commercial (RCO)*

OVERLAYS

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

Table 7: Density		
PLACE TYPE	MAXIMUM DENSITY	GENERAL INTENSITY
CR Countryside Residential	See Place Type	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
RR Resort & Recreation	N/A	Varies if Type A or B See Place Type Description



RESIDENTIAL

CR

Countryside Residential

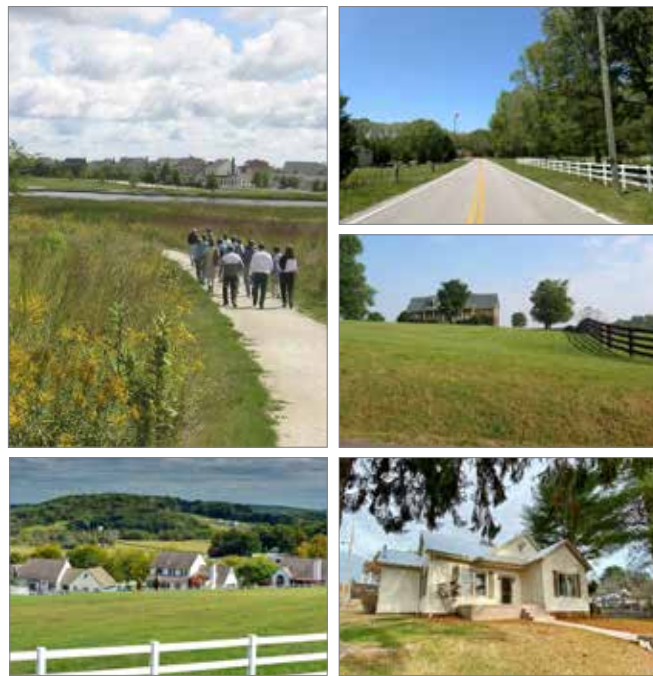
Countryside Residential Place Types have a very rural character and consist primarily of single-family homes on large lots. Countryside Residential may include open fields, woodlands, and streams or lakes, as well as accessory buildings, such as barns and greenhouses. This Place Type also includes the 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.*



SPECIALTY DISTRICTS

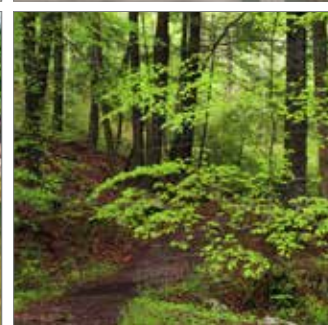
PR

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 & Recreation

The Resort & 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 & 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.



CENTERS & CORRIDORS



Rural Commercial

The Rural Commercial place type is a small-scale, single-story commercial placetype intended to serve rural residents and nearby neighborhoods in Hamilton County. It provides essential goods and services while preserving the rural aesthetic and limiting sprawl. This placetype emphasizes compatibility with surrounding land uses and local economic vitality.

Development Standards

The following development standards will guide future development and will be used to inform the creation of a new Rural Commercial District in the Hamilton County Zoning Regulations and/or inform zoning conditions:

- **Uses:**
 - Limited to rural and neighborhood commercial activities, such as:
 - Grocery store
 - Café or coffee shop
 - General store or farm supply retailer
 - Local artisan shops (e.g., bakery, craft goods)
 - Small pharmacy or health clinic
 - Post office or shipping service
 - Limited service restaurant (e.g., diner or takeout)
 - Prohibited Uses -- Drive Thru Restaurants
- **Building Scale:**
 - Single-story structures only
 - Maximum height: 25 feet
 - Footprint: Individual buildings not to exceed 20,000 sq ft
- **Site Size:** 2–5 acres total, allowing for a cluster of 2–4 small buildings, parking, and open space

Design Standards

- **Setbacks:**
 - Front: 30 feet from the road to allow for landscaping
 - Side/Rear: Side/Rear: 30 feet minimum for property adjacent to residential or agricultural uses. Twenty (20) feet minimum for property adjacent to Commercial or Manufacturing.
- **Parking:**
 - Limited to 4 spaces per 1,000 sq ft of building area
 - Located to the side or rear to prioritize pedestrian access and visibility of storefronts
 - Use of permeable surfaces encouraged for sustainability
- **Signage:** Freestanding signs (max height 25') or building mounted signs. All signage shall have low intensity lighting. No illuminated billboards.



- **Lighting:** Downward-directed, low-intensity lighting to minimize light pollution
- **Landscaping:** Tree plantings along perimeters and in parking areas to enhance rural character and provide shade.
- **Buffering:** Provide thirty (30) feet deep landscape screening/buffer along the shared rear and side property line adjacent to agricultural or residential districts. Buffer shall be planted with:
 - a. Evergreen trees placed in two (2) staggered rows (spaced a maximum of seven (7) feet apart)
 - b. Shrubs spaced a maximum of six (6) feet on center
 - c. Two (2) rows of shade trees spaced a maximum of thirty (30) feet on-center.

Retain existing natural vegetation to serve as a supplement to the required landscaping.

Infrastructure and Access

- **Access:** Shared entrances should be used to minimize curb cuts
- **Pedestrian Connectivity:** Sidewalks linking buildings and to the exterior sidewalk with crosswalks to adjacent residential areas or trails if present shall be considered if pedestrian network is present.



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 Standard**

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.

4.2.2 PLACE TYPES MAP

Please reference a separate map. Map is not included in this online document due to file size.



4.2.3 AMENDMENT PROCESS AND 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.
 - 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.



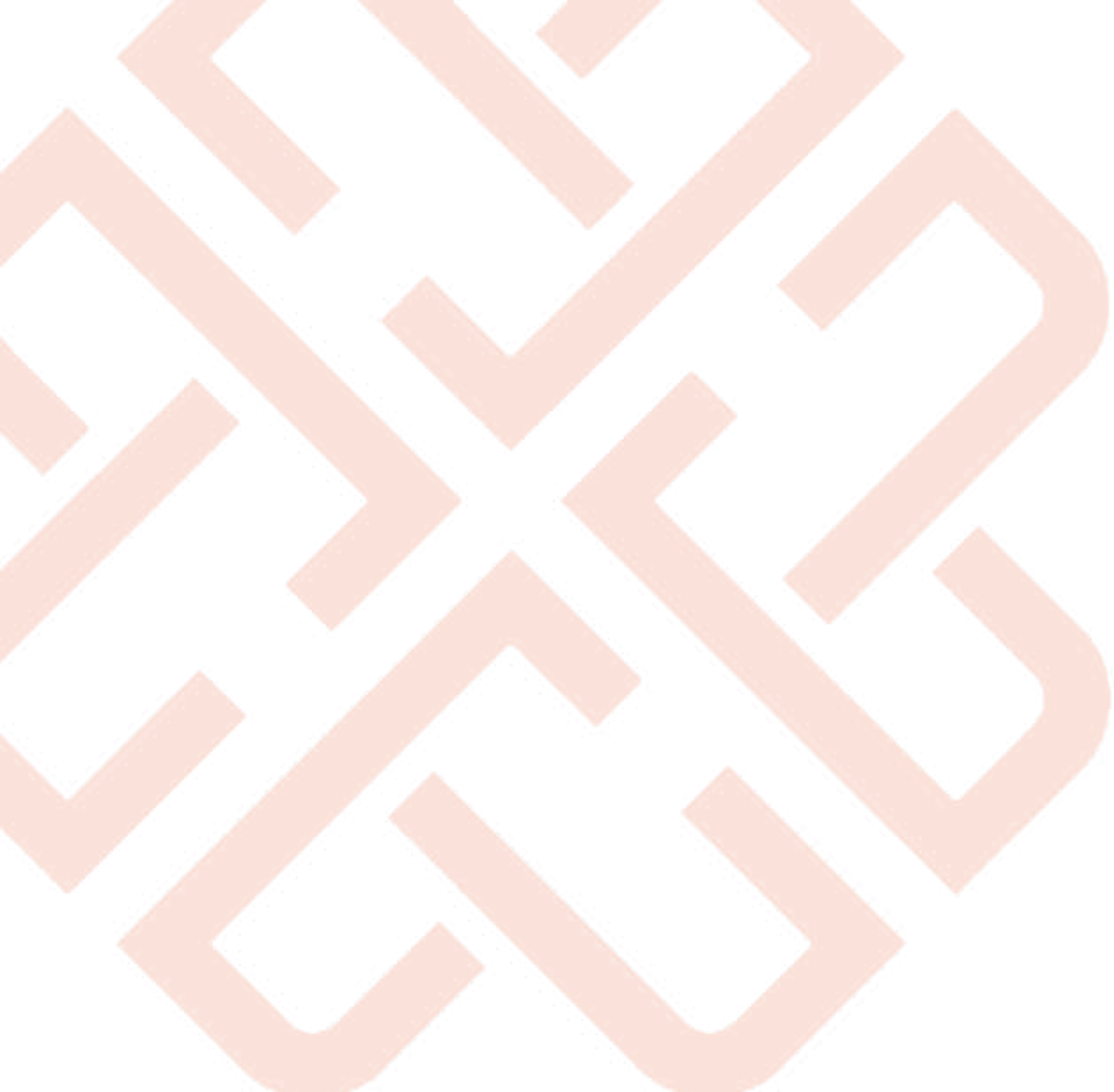
4.3 GOALS & POLICIES

4.3.1 GOAL 1 & POLICIES

GOAL 1 **BALANCE GROWTH, ECONOMY & COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

- Policy 1.9.1** Setback and buffering requirements as detailed in Place Types should also apply to residential plats in agricultural zones.
- Policy 1.9.2** Amend the A-1 Agricultural District to change to the Maximum Density to 1.5 dwelling unit per acre on traditional septic.





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.

