

SPECIFICATIONS

AREA PLANS UNINCORPORATED HAMILTON COUNTY

General Information

The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency (RPA) is seeking a qualified firm to complete four large Area Plans for the majority of unincorporated Hamilton County.

The scope of work will be the same for each Area and the work for each Plan will be done simultaneously, so much of the research and analysis can be undertaken as a single block. Each Area will, however, have its own community meetings, recommendations that are specific to it, and its own Plan document.

Background

The RPA, through the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update, divided Hamilton County into 12 planning areas. The four Areas included in this RFP are:

- Area 7 | Walden Plateau (northern half only)
- Area 8 | North County
- Area 9 | Northeast County
- Area 12 | White Oak Mountain (update only)

Two Area Plans—Areas 3 and 12—were recently completed in 2020 and 2019, respectively, and the Area 11 Plan is currently in the adoption phase. However, due to recent zoning changes in Area 12 this RFP includes an update of the Area 12 Place Types map and an analysis of potential impacts from any recommended changes.



The primary purpose of Area Plans is to provide a general vision and guide for future development that balances growth with protection of the area’s natural resources, cultural history, and established neighborhoods. Working with the public to identify key issues is an integral part of each Area Plan process.

The Area Plans will provide projections for anticipated growth, forecasts of school enrollment, a better understanding of land use, water and sewer needs and traffic impacts.

Once adopted, Area Plans become the new policy guide to help elected officials, county staff, and private developers make decisions about zoning, capital improvements, and preferred locations for, and types of, development.

Centers & Corridors Approach

The RPA promotes a Centers and Corridors Approach for all Area Plans to help prioritize where city and county resources are invested, and to provide a clear vision for where private growth and investment is encouraged. This land development strategy—which should influence plan recommendations—has three essential concepts:

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

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Place Types

In order to help achieve the community's vision and guide development, the RPA has also created a palette of Place Types that describe the desired character and mix of uses for a range of places across the county – urban, suburban and rural.

A Place Types map is a requirement of the Scope of Work. The RPA will provide the Place Types palette and our mapping methodology to the selected consultant. The consultant and RPA will work together to designate these Place Types throughout each Area.

Other Guiding Policies

The county-wide Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2015) established appropriate general levels of development intensity across Hamilton County based on the presence of sensitive natural resources, transportation and other infrastructure. <https://chcrpa.org/planning-projects/comprehensive-plan/> The six goals of the Comprehensive Plan are intended to form the basis of the subsequent, more detailed, Area Plans.

Other policies that should influence these Area Plans include:

- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) <https://2050rtp-chcrpa.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) <https://chcrpa.org/tip-amendments-and-adjustments/>
- Congestion Management Plan (CMP) <https://chcrpa.org/congestion-management-process/>

Each Area Plan should:

- Identify COMMUNITY VALUES and ISSUES through a robust public engagement process.
- Describe the COMMUNITY'S VISION.
- Provide an ANALYSIS of EXISTING CONDITIONS and TRENDS, such as population projections, transportation, jobs, housing, emergency services, natural resources and development.
- Present multiple GROWTH SCENARIOS for how and where development may occur in the future and the infrastructure and public service implications for each scenario.
- Provide RECOMMENDATIONS for PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, including potential locations for new or redeveloped commercial centers, housing, industry, major employers, parks and greenways, transportation improvements, schools, sewers, and other infrastructure.
- ILLUSTRATE GRAPHICALLY a conceptual redevelopment plan for specific CENTERS and CORRIDORS.
- Inform County decisions about REZONING by recommending the location of various PLACE TYPES, as established by the RPA.
- Help ALIGN GOVERNMENT SPENDING for public infrastructure projects with new private development and promote an efficient use of County resources.

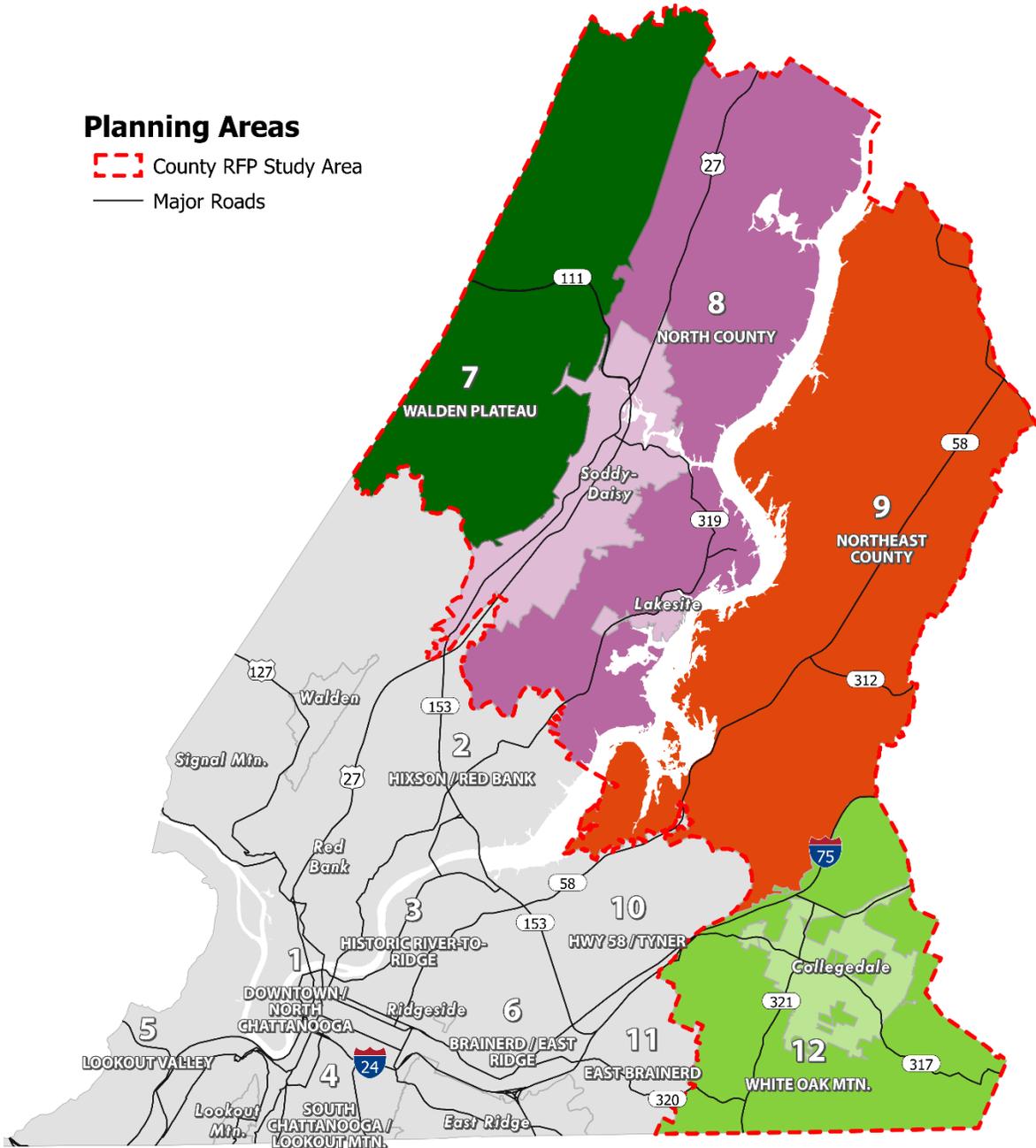
Area Plan Boundaries

The four Planning Areas included in this RFP encompass the majority of unincorporated Hamilton County along with three smaller municipalities as described below. All of these places are experiencing growth to different degrees and in different forms, but also have large expanses that are **still quite rural. The southern portions of Area 8 and 9 have sewer service, but the northern reaches of Areas 7, 8,**

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and 9 do not. Similarly, only the western portion of Area 12 has sewer service. Area 12 is experiencing some of the fastest growth in the county.



Area 7 | Walden Plateau is separated from the other areas by elevation. The southern portion of Area 7 (not part of this RFP) is currently undergoing a separate planning process and includes the Towns of Walden and Signal Mountain.

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The North Chickamauga Creek Gorge forms the southern boundary of the portion of Area 7 included in this RFP. All of this northern half of Area 7 is quite rural with some rugged topography, gorges, and streams. Highway 111 bisects Area 7. Tennessee's premier State Park—Fall Creek Falls State Park—is located off Highway 11 to the west in Van Buren and Bledsoe Counties.

Area 8 | North County borders the Tennessee River and includes the municipalities of Soddy-Daisy and Lakesite.

U.S. highway 27 and State Route 319/Hixson Pike are the major corridors in this area. Soddy Creek, Possum Creek and Sale Creek and major water bodies found in Area 8. Area 8 includes the County-owned Chester Frost Park and Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, both located along the Tennessee River.

Hamilton County recently purchased the 2,170-acre McDonald Farm, in the northern portion of Area 8, for a future industrial site, while preserving some of the land for recreational and natural preservation purposes.

Area 9 | Northeast County is located on the east side of the Tennessee River. State Routes 58 and 312 are the major corridors in this area. Wolftever Creek is a major water body found in this area.

Area 9 includes two state parks—Booker T. Washington State Park and Harrison Bay State Park—both of which are located along the Tennessee River.

Area 12 | White Oak Mountain, located in the southeast corner of Hamilton County, is experiencing some of the highest growth rates in the county. Area 12 also includes the municipality of Collegedale.

The Area 12 Plan <https://chcrpa.org/project/area-12-plan/> was adopted by the Planning Commission in 2019, however since then, the RPA has received rezoning requests for multiple, major housing developments in the more rural eastern portion of Area 12. Because of these growth pressures, an update of the Area 12 Place Types map, along with potential growth scenarios and the resulting implications for county services, is being included in this RFP.

Project Management

The RPA will designate one person to serve as the staff project leader and primary liaison with the consultant. Regular progress meetings (online or in-person) will be required with the project leader. The project leader will contact additional RPA or County staff to be involved as needed.

All presentations, documents and other key deliverables will be reviewed by the staff prior to presenting them in meetings or posting them to the website.

Project Initiation

An initial meeting (either online or in-person) with the staff will finalize the project schedule and confirm key deliverables. The consultant should also meet with the RPA staff, elected officials, and key stakeholders in these areas to identify the key issues, and explore the areas to get a lay of the land.

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Client responsibilities:

- Facilitate meetings with local leaders.

Consultant responsibilities:

- Attend and lead the meetings.
- Document the issues.

Key Deliverables:

- Project schedule, including target dates for public meetings
- Summary of key issues (At the end of each phase, the consultant should submit a draft document that will ultimately form the chapters of each final Area Plan. The staff will review each draft and send edits to the consultant.)

Public Engagement & Outreach

Each Area Plan should include a robust public engagement process throughout each step. Typically, the RPA hosts 1) a public kick-off meeting to confirm key issues and community goals, 2) “Community Choices” meetings to gauge the community’s tolerance for various recommendations, and 3) a public open house to review the draft Area Plan, including a draft Place Types map. The consultant may suggest a different approach, but should accommodate both in-person and online meetings to reach as many people as possible.

Additional meetings with elected officials and key stakeholders should be held at key points throughout the process.

Regular progress updates should keep the community apprised of upcoming meetings, opportunities for feedback, and other information to engage and inform.

Client responsibilities:

- Because the staff of the RPA are more familiar with these communities, we will maintain a spreadsheet of community contacts, send regular progress updates to the community, schedule meetings in coordination with the consultant, and coordinate meeting logistics.
- At the beginning of the process, the RPA will also send a notification letter to all property owners in each Area, including a link to sign-up for our email list.
- The RPA will maintain a webpage for each Area Plan.

Consultant responsibilities:

- Attend and lead community meetings.
- The consultant will be responsible for providing content for these updates, for the website, and for community meetings.

Key Deliverables:

- PowerPoint presentations, poster-size maps, and handouts, for all meetings throughout the process and content for the webpage.
- Report of any surveys conducted.
- Summary of public engagement events, including the number of participants for each meeting, survey, etc.

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Research & Analysis

Research and analysis should paint a clear picture of each Area's existing conditions and trends, as well as the challenges that exist, and potential opportunities for both growth and conservation. Major elements to consider will include population growth projections, school capacities, sewer coverage, and traffic projections. Alternative growth scenarios should illustrate options for various levels of development and the relative impacts on natural resources and infrastructure.

Client responsibilities:

- The RPA will provide the consultant with access to various GIS data files as well as a standard map template we use for Area Plans.
- The RPA will provide the consultant with our latest growth and traffic projections from our land use model. The RPA will facilitate meetings with the Hamilton County Department of Education, Wastewater Treatment Authority (WWTA), and other critical community contacts.

Consultant responsibilities:

- Conduct and document all necessary research and analysis.

Key Deliverables:

- Existing conditions and analysis maps, charts and diagrams
- Projections of growth by Area based on existing and forecasted development
- Growth scenarios including implications for natural resources, transportation infrastructure and public services, and school enrollment needs for each Area
- Locations that are most and least ideal for growth and development, along with recommended zoning changes and/or proposed districts map
- Summary report

Recommendations

Recommendations should give elected officials, the Planning Commission, government staff, private developers, and citizens a clear guide for

- zoning decisions,
- infrastructure improvements and public services needed,
- the best locations for growth,
- the types of development desired,
- locations for the conservation of natural resources, and
- opportunities for new parks, greenways or recreation facilities.

Recommendations should be realistic and achievable, but also provide an aspirational long-term vision.

A Place Types Map—developed in collaboration with the RPA—should reflect the community's desires along with the need for a diversity of housing, good planning practices, and the analysis of each Area's existing conditions.

Client Responsibilities:

- The RPA will provide the standard Place Types palette and the mapping methodology used for designating Place Types.

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Consultant responsibilities:

- Produce a draft Place Types map, to be reviewed with the staff.
- Produce the final Place Types map.
- Create color renderings for each designated Center to illustrate buildout concepts.
- Create color renderings and street sections for major Corridors to illustrate preferred street standards and development forms

Key Deliverables:

- List of recommendations along with any necessary maps, charts or diagrams
- Color renderings
- Draft and final Place Types maps
- Summary report

Document Production

The final documents should be rich with images, graphics, and maps to clearly illustrate the various trends, challenges, opportunities, and recommendations. The text should be thorough, yet succinct and understandable to the average reader without lots of jargon.

Client responsibilities:

- The RPA will provide the consultant with a standard In-Design document template we have used for the final production of previous Area Plans.
- The RPA will also be responsible for final editing and proofreading.

Consultant responsibilities:

- The consultant will create a draft document for each Area for client and community feedback, revise the drafts based on this feedback, and produce the final documents for publishing.

Key deliverables

- Draft and final documents
- Digital copies—that can be edited—of the following will be provided to the RPA for future use: Word document, GIS files for all maps, InDesign files, jpg or pdf versions of all images, graphics, and maps used for meeting presentations, handouts, website posts, and in the final documents.

Content of Proposals

Proposals should include an introduction of the company or firm. All proposals should include names and references from other municipal organizations for which comparable services have been rendered. An explanation of typical, similar service provision should be included in the submittal in sufficient detail to allow the review committee to determine the reasonableness of the planned approach and cost.