



# TOWN OF HALLS, TN

## MASTER PLAN

ADOPTED MAY 2025

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Halls Master Plan is a guiding document for new private development proposals, infrastructure investment, regulatory tool improvement, and grant funding to ensure compact, fiscally responsible growth consistent with community goals. The plan includes a summary of existing conditions, recommendations for catalyst areas, development policies, and implementation action items. It looks toward the future and is not intended to apply to or impact existing buildings or property use.

Development patterns impact the cost of public services and infrastructure. This plan proposes growth patterns that build from existing assets and help to enhance and expand parks and recreation facilities, encourage a mix of housing choices, and prioritize local business development. Compact, incremental growth building on the existing street grid will help lower the cost of new infrastructure such as streets, utilities, public safety, and parks. Incremental growth also helps ensure that new development pays for itself, rather than increasing the tax burden on existing residents and businesses.

## COMMUNITY GOALS

Community goals are derived from community priorities and form the foundation for planning Halls' future. They provide the framework for policy recommendations and implementation actions included in this plan.

- 1. Enhance and expand parks and recreation facilities**
- 2. Encourage a mix of housing choices**
- 3. Ensure fiscally responsible infrastructure development**
- 4. Prioritize local business development**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan includes recommendations for catalyst areas for development and development policies. The catalyst areas represent locations that should be prioritized for investment, utility service connections, and development. They also provide a structured framework for future zoning, infrastructure, and development decisions within town limits. The development policies will ensure development occurs in an ordered, strategic, and fiscally responsible manner.

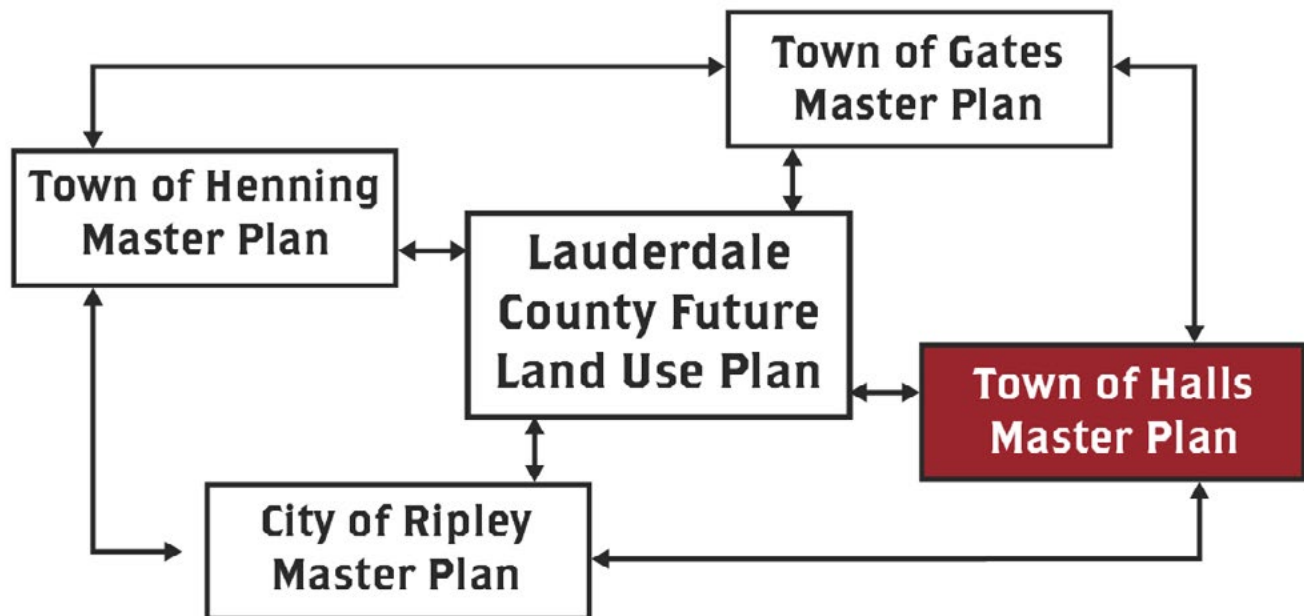
Together, these recommendations help to attract developers with similar community values and bring outside investments into the town to further the community's goals.

# INTRODUCTION

## COLLABORATION

The West TN Planning team developed the Town of Halls Master Plan in coordination with the Lauderdale County Future Land Use Plan and master plans for the municipalities of Ripley, Henning, and Gates. This Master Plan integrates with numerous other plans and studies prepared as part of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) planning services offered to communities in the West Tennessee region impacted by the BlueOval City Megasite. BlueOval City (BOC), a Ford electric vehicle manufacturing facility under construction 40 miles south of Halls, is expected to employ 6,000 workers when it opens.

FIGURE 1. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS



The following planning efforts are either complete or ongoing and have been incorporated into this Master Plan.

- **Regional Planning Activities**

- ▷ West TN Planning Regional Assessment (2023) - Population and employment projections for the 21-county West Tennessee region as well as land use, housing, transportation, and utilities gap analyses.
- ▷ TDOT Rural Regional Transportation Plan (2019) – West Tennessee Rural Planning Organization plan.

- ▷ TDOT BlueOval City Transit Study (2023) – Feasibility study of various transit commuting options to BlueOval City.
- ▷ Building Tennessee’s Tomorrow (2022) – Statewide inventory of public infrastructure and needs.

#### ■ **County-Wide Planning Activities**

- ▷ West TN Planning Lauderdale County Future Land Use Plan (In Progress) – County-wide policy document that will guide future growth and development.
- ▷ West TN Planning City of Ripley Master Plan (In Progress) – Consolidated guide for private development, public infrastructure, and funding opportunities in Ripley.
- ▷ West TN Planning Town of Henning Master Plan (In Progress) – Consolidated guide for private development, public infrastructure, and funding opportunities in Henning.
- ▷ West TN Planning Town of Gates Master Plan (In Progress) – Consolidated guide for private development, public infrastructure, and funding opportunities in Gates.
- ▷ West TN Planning Lauderdale County Housing Market Analysis (2024) – Assessment of housing needs and opportunities.
- ▷ Lauderdale County Select Tennessee Property Evaluation Program (PEP) Report (2018) – Industrial property evaluation that identifies county-wide economic development opportunities.
- ▷ Lauderdale County Ecotourism Master Plan (2018) - plan to create sustainable and educational landmarks and destinations that attract tourists, make a positive economic change, and respect the culture of the place and people who inhabit it.
- ▷ Lauderdale County Land Use and Transportation Policy Plan (2010) – Existing policy documents guiding county-wide growth and development and the county’s major road plan.

#### ■ **Halls Planning Activities**

- ▷ Town of Halls Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan (2016) – Assessment of Halls’ pedestrian and multimodal infrastructure with policies for future improvements.
- ▷ Town of Halls Zoning Ordinance (2005), Zoning Map (2005) and Subdivision Regulations (2010) – Regulatory documents governing development.
- ▷ Parks & Recreation Master Plan, Halls and Ripley (2018) – Assessment and Recommendations for parks and recreational facilities.



ENGAGEMENT AND PROCESS

Stakeholder collaboration and community input form the foundation for the Town of Halls Master Plan. Joint community workshops for the countywide Future Land Use Plan and the community master plans were held from May 20, 2024 through May 23, 2024 at the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) Northwest in Ripley and the Halls Community Center. Across all workshops, 79 people attended and provided input through a variety of activities. In one exercise, community members allocated “tax dollars” among spending priorities, and in another they identified key services, assets to be preserved, and places for improvement. Attendees also shared their goals for each community. At the final workshop, the planning team summarized key findings and presented draft community goals at the final workshop for further input and prioritization.

FIGURE 2. PROJECT MILESTONES



Additionally, a technical workshop on May 20, 2024 drew stakeholders from across the county, including mayors, elected officials, municipal staff, utility and service providers, state employees, and consultants. Workshop attendees provided valuable input related to ongoing efforts, priorities, opportunities, and future needs across the county and within each municipality.

FIGURE 3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT





- Parks and recreation enhancements
- Streets and drainage improvements
- New and upgraded facilities (e.g., streetlights, downtown restrooms)
- Public safety
- Historic preservation

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# HALLS TODAY

## HISTORY & DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Halls was born out of Hall's Station, a railroad stop established in 1882 by Hansford R. Hall and two other Lauderdale County residents. Sawmills, mercantile stores, and cotton gins opened, and telephone lines reached the community in 1900. When World War II started, the U.S. Army established the Dyersburg Army Air Base in Halls, which would become a primary training ground for B-17 bomber pilots and crews. When the base closed in 1945, a portion of the land was developed for industrial uses, and Tupperware located a national manufacturing facility on the property that operated from 1969 to 1991.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Today, Halls is home to approximately 1,900 residents, down from more than 2,300 in 2010.<sup>4,5</sup> The median age in Halls is 37 years, and the racial composition is 64% white and 27% Black. The average household income in Halls is \$40,375, with a poverty rate of 15%.<sup>6</sup>

- 1 Goodspeed Publishing Company. Lauderdale County History. 1887. Cited in Daniel, Jim. 2022, Feb 4. "Goodspeed's Lauderdale County History, Part 2. TNGenWeb Project. Retrieved from [tngenweb.org/lauderdale/2022/02/04/goodspeed-lauderdale-county-history-part-2](https://tngenweb.org/lauderdale/2022/02/04/goodspeed-lauderdale-county-history-part-2).
- 2 Toplovich, Ann. n.d. "Lauderdale County." Tennessee Encyclopedia. Retrieved from [tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/lauderdale-county](https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/lauderdale-county).
- 3 Charter of the Town of Halls, Tennessee, S.B. 393, Tennessee 52nd General Assembly. 1901. Retrieved from [mtas.tennessee.edu/sites/default/files/private/charters/Halls\\_cht.pdf](https://mtas.tennessee.edu/sites/default/files/private/charters/Halls_cht.pdf).
- 4 US Census Bureau. n.d. S0101: Age and Sex, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Halls town, Tennessee. Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).
- 5 US Census Bureau. n.d. S0101: Age and Sex, 2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Halls town, Tennessee. Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).
- 6 US Census Bureau. n.d. "Profile: Halls town, Tennessee." 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2020 Decennial Census (Various). Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

FIGURE 4. ARMY BASE IN HALLS



SOURCE: LAUDERDALE COUNTY MUSEUM

Workers in Halls are employed in manufacturing, agriculture, retail, transportation, and warehousing, and utilities. Residents of Halls are employed throughout the region in a variety of sectors, most notably manufacturing, retail trade, health care and social services, transportation, warehousing, and waste management and remediation. The majority of workers living in Halls travel more than 10 miles to their jobs, and only 16% of the people working in Halls also live in Halls.<sup>7</sup>

Halls has made recent investments in its downtown area and fairgrounds, and has two industrial sites. Alongside other communities in the region, Halls expects to experience new growth and development to support BlueOval City's (BOC) workers and supply chain.

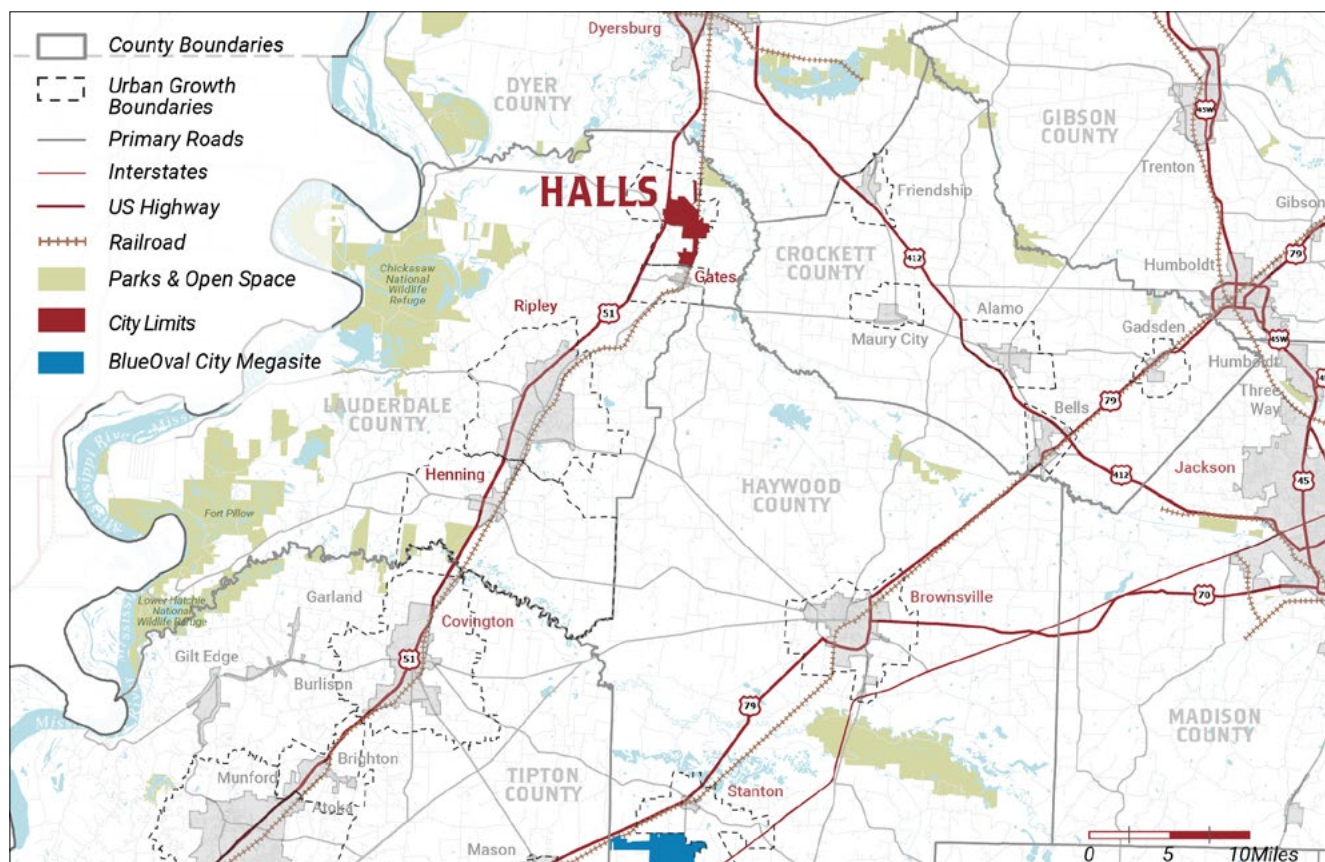
## KEY TAKEAWAY

The historical trend of population decline in Halls is expected to reverse in the near future.

- 7 US Census Bureau. n.d. LEHD OnTheMap: Work Area Profile Analysis, 2021 Estimates. Retrieved from [onthemap.ces.census.gov](https://onthemap.ces.census.gov).



FIGURE 5. REGIONAL CONTEXT



## REGIONAL CONTEXT

Halls is situated along SR 209 approximately 13 miles northeast of Ripley and 40 miles from Jackson. The town shares its southern boundary with Gates, a community of approximately 700 residents. Dyersburg, with a population of more than 16,000, is the largest nearby community and lies approximately 10 miles to the north along Hwy 51.<sup>8</sup>

Hwy 51 runs along the western border of Halls, providing a major transportation connection to the surrounding region. Additionally, Halls is near the proposed route for Interstate 69 that may in the future connect the Canadian and Mexican borders by way of the central United States.

The proposed route for the Tennessee portion of I-69 passes approximately a mile west of Hwy 51 near Halls, but that segment's feasibility is currently unknown.<sup>9,10</sup>

The Mississippi River runs 15 miles west of Halls, through the western portion of Lauderdale County. The 5,000-acre Moss Island State Wildlife Management Area, in the southern portion of Dyer County, is 18 miles west of Halls and offers hunting, fishing, hiking trails, horseback riding, and other outdoor sports.

<sup>8</sup> US Census Bureau. n.d. S0101: Age and Sex, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Dyersburg city, Tennessee. Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

<sup>9</sup> Tennessee Department of Transportation. n.d. Interstate 69 Corridor. Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/tdot/projects/region-4/interstate-69-corridor.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Local Planning Assistance Office. [2010]. Proposed Development Plan 2010-2030: Lauderdale County, Tennessee.

The Chickasaw National Wildlife Refuge is 30 miles west of Halls and also offers hunting, fishing, and outdoor sports. Fort Pillow State Historic Park and the Lower Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge are less than an hour away and add to the ample opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Halls is situated among highly fertile farmland useful for producing cash crops including cotton, corn, soybeans, and wheat.<sup>11</sup>

BOC, the largest new business in the region, is located 40 miles south of Halls and is accessible via a combination of highway and state routes through either Covington or Brownsville on Hwy 51 or SR 19 respectively. BOC and the associated suppliers and additional manufacturers are expected to draw 21,000 new direct, indirect, and induced jobs to the region by 2035, driving a need for additional housing and services in Halls.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Halls' location near BOC and multiple opportunities for outdoor recreation position the town for new development spurred by industrial growth in the region.

## URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY

At the time of this plan's creation, counties in Tennessee have the authority to establish an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) for each municipality within their jurisdiction. Municipalities can only annex property located within their UGB, therefore, updates to the UGB are only necessary if the municipality wants to annex land outside of the currently approved UGB. In general, the Lauderdale

County Commission would need to approve any revision to Halls' UGB. State law in place at the time of the annexation request governs the annexation process.

The Halls UGB was last updated in 2007 and is currently 9,535 acres, or four times the size of the town itself.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

The existing Halls Urban Growth Boundary is sufficient for the future needs of the town.

## LAND USE

Development within Halls is concentrated in its town core and radiates outward from the intersection of N Church St (SR 209) and E Tigrett St (SR 88) in a gridded street pattern. SR 209 acts as the town's primary commercial corridor and hosts a range of businesses and services, including a Food Rite, DG Market, drug store, bank, gas station, florist, auto shops, beauty salons, and two small healthcare clinics. A few specialty shops and restaurants are located throughout downtown within a block or two of Church Street, near two pocket parks and an amphitheater that hosts a summer music series. Several churches are located throughout the community, primarily concentrated near downtown. Businesses located on Hwy 51 include a gas station and liquor store.

The Town of Halls owns two parks. Crichfield Park is southeast of the intersection of Church St and E Main St, and Kevin Ward Park is in the northwest portion of town adjacent to the Lauderdale County Commission on Aging and Rhodes-Bellovs Activity Center.

Most of the town's homes are concentrated within the core street grid on the west side of the railroad tracks, with some residences situated east of downtown near E. Tigrett Street.

11 USDA. 2022. Land Resource Regions and Major Land Resource Areas of the United States, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Basin. Retrieved from [nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/AgHandbook296\\_text\\_low-res.pdf](https://nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/AgHandbook296_text_low-res.pdf)

Recently built homes are generally located on the west side of town. Vacant single family residential lots are scattered throughout the neighborhoods. A tributary to the South Fork of the Forked Deer River originates in central Halls, placing a mainly residential portion of the community north of W. Tigrett Street within the 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone.<sup>12</sup> Land south and east outside of town limits is also in the flood hazard zone, limiting options for residential developments in this area.

Agricultural land dominates the west side of town limits between downtown and Hwy 51, some of which is used for local agricultural businesses.

Several industrial, logistics, and warehousing businesses operate north of town along Sumrow Street and Industrial Road, with only a few vacant industrial buildings in that area. Halls Industrial Park, a 38 acre-Select Tennessee certified site, is located at 302 Entrance Road adjacent to the airport. An additional 59 acre-industrial site at the south end of town is referred to as the Beech Bluff Industrial site.<sup>13</sup> The town currently has a grant for a water, sewer, and gas extension to Beech Bluff to encourage additional industrial development.

Arnold Field Airport, the Lauderdale County Fairgrounds, and the Veterans' Museum are on the north side of town, on the site of the former Dyersburg Army Air Base. Halls owns additional land near the fairgrounds where the Town rents space to local agricultural businesses for temporary storage. The Town is in the process of improving and expanding the fairgrounds facilities to allow for year-round events and additional activation of this (See Figure 7 for a map of key locations and downtown flood zone) important asset.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Halls has a thriving industrial sector and key agricultural assets. Over time, by providing a wider variety of additional housing and improved infrastructure, the Town has an opportunity to increase the percentage of residents and workers that live and work in Halls.

## HOUSING

There are 891 occupied homes for Halls' 1,919 residents, with an average occupancy rate of 2.2 people per household. Approximately 45% of housing units are owner occupied, compared with 55% that are renter occupied. This indicates a lower rate of homeownership among Halls residents than countywide, where 62% of homes are owner occupied.<sup>14 15</sup>

Single-family detached homes make up 77% of Halls' housing stock. Approximately 4% are townhomes or duplexes, 8% are manufactured homes, and 9% are in two-unit buildings. Less than 2% of homes are in multifamily buildings of 3 or more units.<sup>16</sup>

The median household income in Halls is \$40,375, and median household housing costs total \$739 per month. Approximately 30% of Halls households spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs, an indicator of cost burden.<sup>17</sup>

12 FEMA. 2023, Sept 21. USA Flood Hazard Reduced Set.

13 TVA Economic Development | Tennessee Valley Authority ([giswebtechguru.com](https://giswebtechguru.com))

14 US Census Bureau. n.d. B25020: Tenure by Rooms, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

15 US Census Bureau. n.d. S0101: Age and Sex, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

16 US Census Bureau. n.d. S2504: Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

17 US Census Bureau. n.d. S2503: Financial Characteristics, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

Based on population growth estimates, an additional 2,556 new housing units are needed county-wide by 2035, followed by an additional 1,610 units by 2045.<sup>18</sup>

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Halls is poised to see substantial new housing construction due to the community's infill opportunities, capacity in sewer and water infrastructure, existing amenities, and established downtown.

## ZONING

Halls' Zoning Ordinance and Map were most recently updated in December 2005. The Zoning Ordinance establishes five residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4 and R-2SF), two business districts (B-1 and B-2), an industrial district (M), a flood hazard area (FH), and an obsolete airport district (A).

The town is primarily zoned residential, with current agricultural land also zoned residential. R-1 low-density residential generally permits only single-family dwellings, R-2 Medium Density Residential and R-2SF, Medium Density Single Family Residential, allows single-family homes and duplexes. However the R-2 lot minimum size is 10,000 sf whereas R-2SF is 7,500 sf. Lot widths, maximum lot coverage, and set backs are also more compact in R-2SF. R-3 High-Density Residential adds townhomes and multifamily units as allowable uses. R-4 High Density/Mobile Home Park allows all residential uses in R-3 as well as mobile home parks.

Manufactured homes are allowed by right in all of the residential districts, but mobile homes are only permitted by right in R-4, and only within a mobile home park. The residential districts all also allow a variety of other uses as approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals. R-2, R-2SF, R-3, and R-4 allow progressively smaller dwelling types, but the minimum lot sizes remain the same: 7,500 square foot lots with minimum 50' frontage for single family, minimum 9,500 square-foot lots for duplexes, and 6,000 square-foot lots for townhomes and multifamily, as applicable for uses allowed.

The B-1 Neighborhood Business District along SR 209 south of downtown permits retail sales, personal services, select business and government services, and churches. The B-2 Central Business District is generally located downtown and along Hwy 51. Uses permitted include retail sales, services (including restaurants), churches, and civic uses. Apartments are only permitted on appeal in a mixed-use building with the apartments above the ground floor. The municipal code does not allow for liquor to be served on-premises or for special events, although a maximum of two package liquor stores are allowed in town limits.<sup>19</sup>

Off-street parking is designated by use and is required in all districts except B-2. Required minimum parking is generally higher than is found in newer zoning codes. For example, multi-family residential is required to provide two parking spaces per unit, regardless of the size of the unit or the number of bedrooms.

Business and commercial uses are allowed primarily in downtown and along Hwy 51. Areas surrounding Arnold Field Airport in the north part of town and a site at the south end of town are reserved for industrial uses.<sup>20,21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> West TN Planning Lauderdale County Housing Market Analysis (2024)

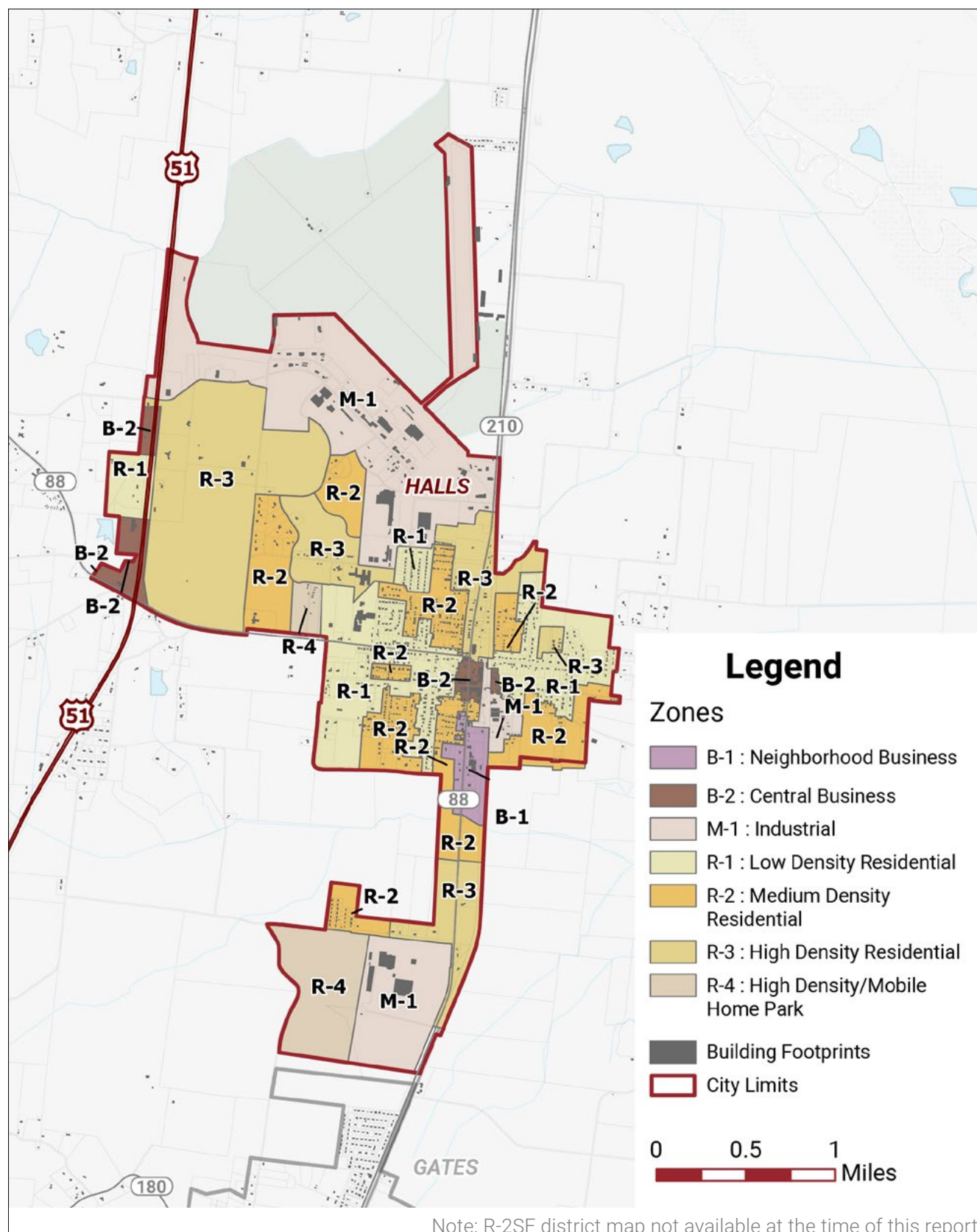
<sup>19</sup> Town of Halls, TN Municipal Code Title 8, updated February 5, 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Town of Halls, TN. 2005. Town of Halls Official Zoning Ordinance (Revised).

<sup>21</sup> Town of Halls, TN. 2005. Halls, Tennessee Zoning Map.



FIGURE 6. ZONING MAP



The Halls Municipal Planning Commission, also designated as a regional planning commission, is tasked by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen with recommending a zoning ordinance, zoning map and subdivision regulations, and providing for its administration, enforcement, and amendment. The Commission consists of seven members that meet monthly with contracted planning support.

## **KEY TAKEAWAY**

Updated zoning regulations that expand housing options will allow Halls to plan for expected new development consistent with community goals.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Halls contains an elementary, junior high, and high school situated along E Tigrett Street a half mile west of downtown. The campus includes a football field and a recently built community storm shelter. The schools serve students from Halls, Gates, and nearby unincorporated portions of the county, which accounts for about 30% of the students across the county system, with the remaining students attending schools in Ripley. The school district estimates that Halls' schools have capacity for a 15-20% increase in enrollment while maintaining appropriate class sizes.<sup>22</sup> There are current plans to expand the school sports facilities.

Halls is a part of the Tennessee Downtowns program and in 2022 was designated as a TN Main Street. The town has been successfully pursuing funding to improve downtown and a local entrepreneur invested in the Hansbrough Market that hosts a farmer's market and retail. This along

with the amphitheater has made downtown a tourist and local destination. The low crime rate adds to the positive community perception and creates a family friendly atmosphere.

Town Hall is downtown on N. Church Street, connected to the town's water treatment plant and adjacent to the Ross Dyer Halls Public Library. The parks and recreation department, police department and volunteer fire station are located in two buildings on Front Street, one block east of Town Hall. A community center sits midway between the school campus and downtown along N. College Street.

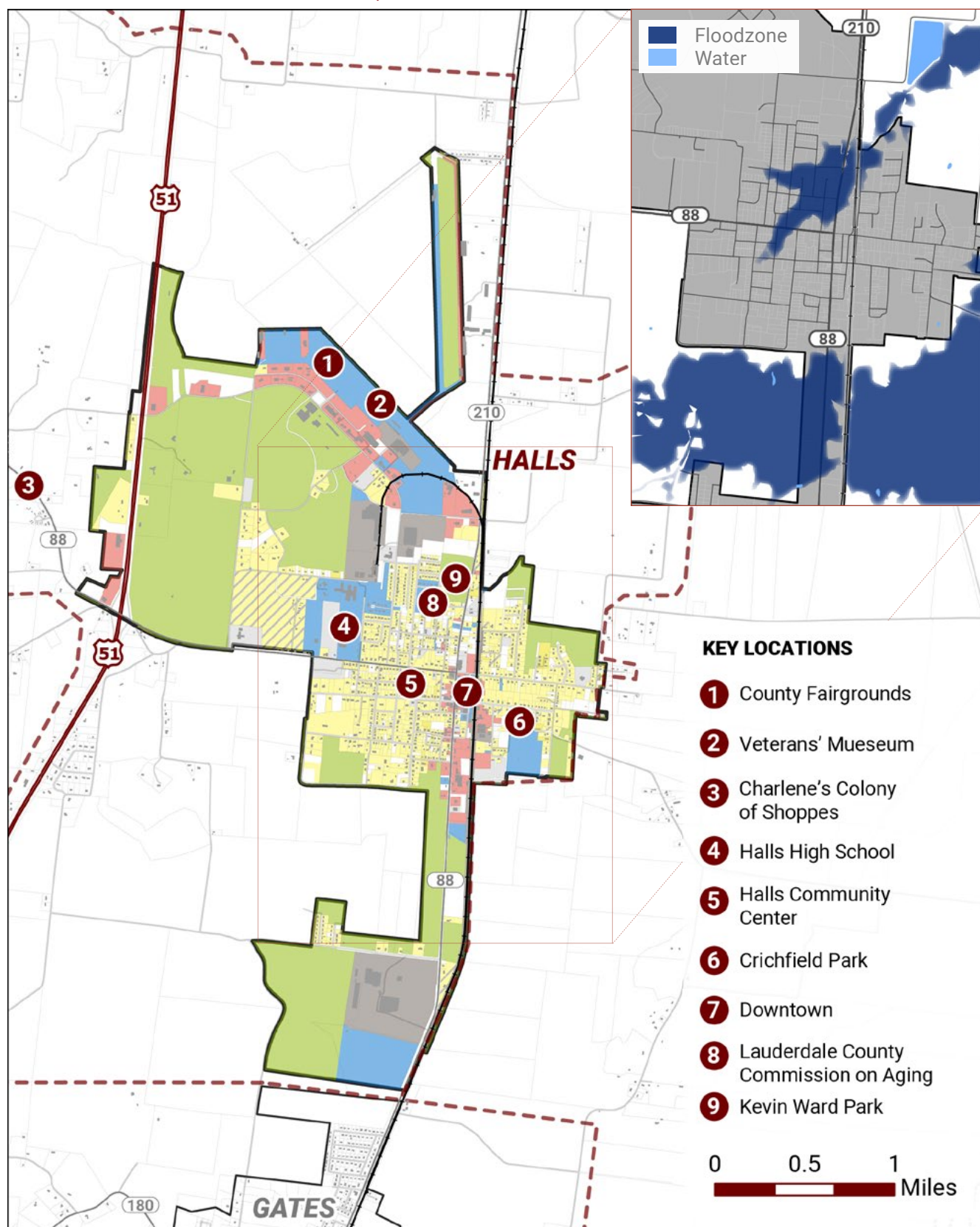
Critchfield Park is located east of the railroad tracks along E. Main Street. It contains a green open space, two playground areas, a picnic shelter, lighted tennis courts, several baseball fields, and a small skatepark. The Town recently received a \$1.5 million grant from the State of Tennessee Local Parks and Recreation Fund for improvements to the park, including new lighting, fencing, and a splash pad. A second smaller, Kevin Ward Park, is located to the northwest of downtown, near the school campus and adjacent to the Lauderdale County Commission on Aging. This senior center offers a variety of programming throughout the week, including exercise classes and social activities. Overall Halls has ample park space per capita, with double the acres per 1,000 residents as the national average.

The Lauderdale County Fairgrounds is located at the north end of Halls adjacent to the Halls Veteran's Museum, on the site of the former Dyersburg Army Air Base. The fairgrounds, museum, and airport host both large and small events and are key tourism assets for the community.

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22 S. Kimble (personal correspondence). 2024, July 8.

FIGURE 7. EXISTING LAND USE, KEY LOCATIONS AND DOWNTOWN FLOODZONE





**FIGURE 8. LAUDERDALE COUNTY FAIR**



Charlene's Colony of Shoppes and the Tea Room, just east of town limits, are also regional destinations for tourists and locals.

**FIGURE 9. CHARLENE'S COLONY OF SHOPPES**



Halls offers sewer and water services to its residents and have recently invested in utility improvements to allow for growth. Halls partners with the Town of Gates on sewer + water treatment facilities.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Halls currently has utility capacity to support new development, but that capacity will need to be evaluated as both Halls and Gates experience growth, especially for industrial sites.

## TRANSPORTATION

Halls is characterized by an extensive roadway network totaling approximately 31 miles, including approximately 21 miles of locally managed roadways, three miles of county-managed roadways, and one mile of private roads. The local network is supported by an additional six miles of state-managed roadways. State Route (SR) 88 and SR-210 are significant thoroughfares, providing direct access to Hwy 51 and providing a north-south connection to other area communities.

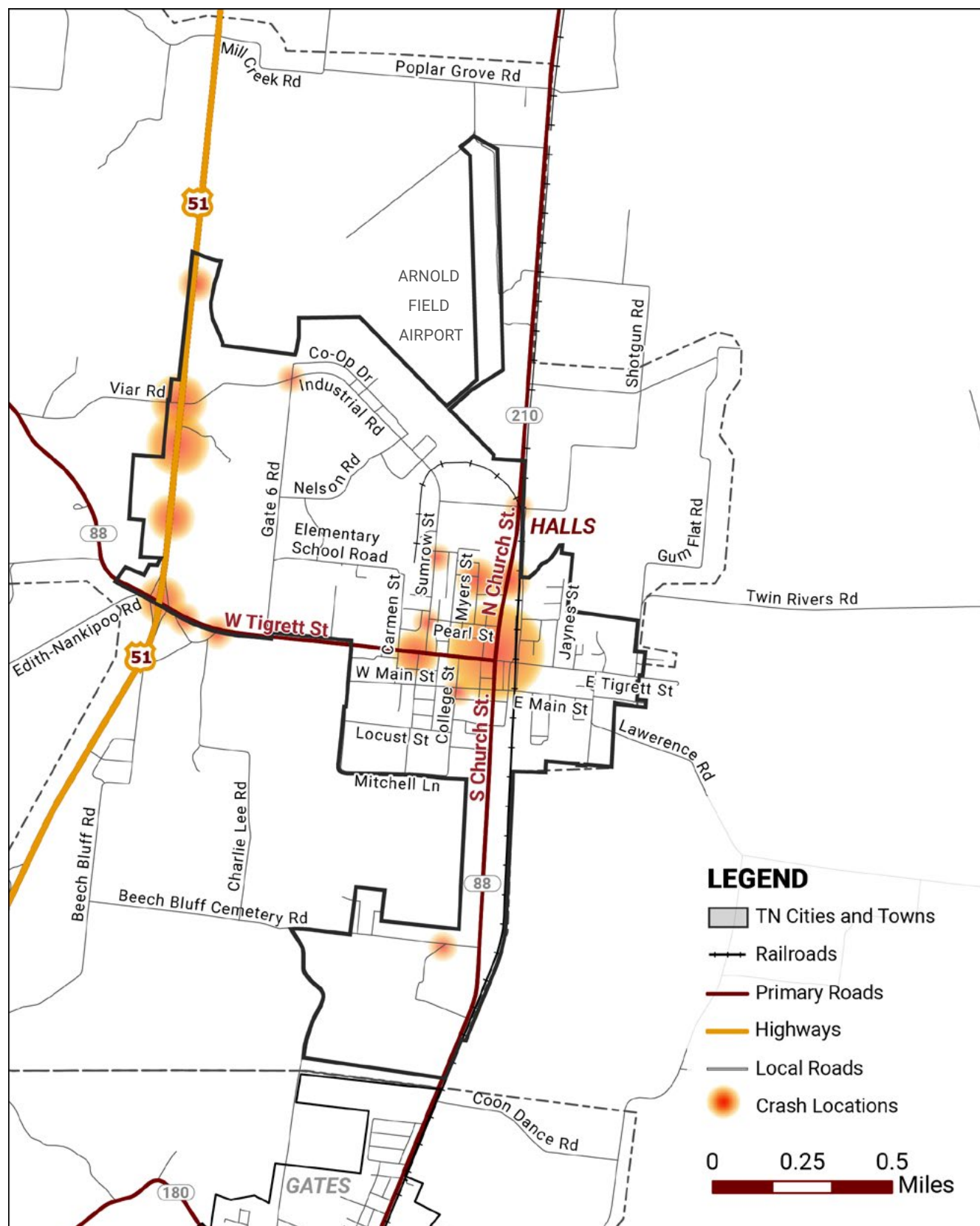
Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data obtained through the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) shows the Town's highest volumes along Church Street, a major collector that runs north from SR-210 to Gates, and W Tigrett Street, which connects to N Church Street.

Agricultural operations within and immediately adjacent to the Town affect traffic patterns, with the transport of products and farm equipment. The Town is bisected by the Class I Canadian National (CN) Fulton rail line, which carries an average of 17 to 23 trains per day. The vehicular access crossings are located at East Main Street and East Tigrett Street, immediately east of Front Street, however, there are no pedestrian facilities at these locations.

There have been 108 crashes within the Town of Halls since 2019, largely clustered along the major highways. Of them, 87 have resulted in property damage, 17 have been resulted in minor injuries, and four have resulted in serious injuries. Serious injury crashes are concentrated along US 51/SR 3 between SR 88/Tigrett Street and Industrial Road, with an additional serious injury crash occurring along SR 88/Tigrett Street just east of US 51/SR 3. Intersection crashes are also observed across town, with multiple crashes observed at key intersections along SR 88/Tigrett Street and Main Street running east-west, and SR 88/SR 210/Church Street running north-south.



FIGURE 10. TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



From an industrial access standpoint, the 2018 PEP report noted: “Hwy 51 is not a controlled-access highway built to interstate standards and would be unacceptable for many prospective companies [who] may be reluctant to invest in Lauderdale County, even if the Lauderdale portion of Hwy 51 has lighter traffic and moves more efficiently. A controlled access roadway would benefit West Tennessee, even if it were not formally designated as an interstate route.”<sup>23</sup>

The transportation cost burden for households in Halls is notable, with the average household spending 24% of income on transportation.<sup>24</sup> With only limited public transportation options, residents primarily rely on personal vehicles for commuting and travel. The Delta Human Resource Agency offers demand response transit service on a request basis, but reservations must be made at least three days before the trip date. School buses transport students, however, some community members have expressed concern about future increased school drop-off and pick-up traffic.

Halls includes sidewalk facilities on approximately 3.4% of roadways in town as inventoried in the 2016 Halls Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan. 72% of those sidewalks were identified as cracking, faulting, spalling, or having obstructions. Sidewalks are mostly concentrated in the gridded walkable area of downtown and connecting to the schools. Halls has no dedicated bikeway facilities.

The 2016 Plan, conducted through a TDOT Transportation Planning Grant, proposed a series of improvements centered around community areas of focus. It noted that some residents rely on walking or biking, especially to key retail locations and the schools, with a total of 75 out of 990 students walking or biking to school in 2016. Recommendations from that plan related to maintenance and connectivity needs are still valid.

Halls is home to Arnold Field, a municipal public-use airport located at the north end of town focused mostly on general aviation, with some military aviation. This important asset is a critical piece of the adjacent Veteran’s Museum and the agricultural community as it hosts three crop dusting businesses. Non-military airport operations are forecasted to grow at an annual growth rate of 0.23% over a 20-year period.

The runway length at 4,800’ long is sufficient for large planes, although the runway is currently in poor condition. Although the Town owns the runway and tarmac, the surrounding land is privately owned and outside the Town’s jurisdiction, making airport expansion currently impossible.

The airport hangars are currently at capacity with a waiting list. Other airfield infrastructure includes a taxiway that connects the aircraft apron to the runway, aircraft parking apron, a public terminal building, a T-hangar facility, and multiple single hangar units.

Although federal funding would be helpful, Arnold Field Airport is not listed on the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), therefore, the airport is not eligible for federal funding as part of the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).

23 Lauderdale County Select Tennessee Property Evaluation Program, 2018

24 Esri. (n.d.). Transportation Insecurity Analysis Tool. Retrieved June 19, 2024, from <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/0920984aa80a4362b8778d779b090723/page/Transportation-Insecurity-Analysis-Tool/>

Short term recommendations from a recent airport assessment include 1) runway rehabilitation for the proper runway dimensions to adequately support critical aircraft, and 2) land acquisition to control the runway and taxiway safety areas, object free areas, and approach areas. A capital improvement plan in the assessment details out three stages of improvements for the airport.<sup>25</sup>

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Halls' central grid offers opportunities for infill and additional active transportation options. Routine road maintenance, repaving, and improved multimodal connectivity through the build-out of sidewalks, particularly in areas near the center of town and on school routes, will improve accessibility and safety. As new residential, industrial, and tourism activity grow, Hwy 51 will need improvements.

**FIGURE 11. OPEN SPACES IN DOWNTOWN HALLS**



**FIGURE 12. MAIN STREET BUSINESSES**



**FIGURE 13. VETERANS' MUSEUM ENTRANCE**



<sup>25</sup> Arnold Field Airport ALP Narrative Report, prepared by A2H, 2020.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous planning efforts, technical analyses, and community engagement have informed the recommendations in this Town of Halls Master Plan. This Plan is meant to guide future development decisions. The Plan supplements, but does not supersede, the Halls Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Commission and Board of Mayor and Aldermen shall use this Plan to guide recommendations related to land use and development within town limits and for each annexation application within the UGB. In addition, the Commission and Board shall use the Lauderdale County Future Land Use Plan as additional reference for development decisions outside of town limits. Where conflicts arise, this Master Plan shall supersede the Lauderdale County Future Land Use Plan within town limits.

Community leaders should formally review this plan every five years to ensure consistency and sustainable growth policies and to be receptive to changing social and economic trends.

## CATALYST AREAS

The following catalyst areas represent locations that should be prioritized for investment, utility service connections, and development. Development locations outside of these catalyst areas should remain very low-density residential and/or agricultural use to maintain the character desired by the community. Consideration of youth facilities and activities should be top priority as growth occurs.

### CATALYST AREAS:

1. Downtown Infill Development
2. Walkable Neighborhood Expansion
3. Fairgrounds Expansion
4. Industrial Development

FIGURE 14. CATALYST AREAS





## Catalyst Area #1: Downtown Infill Development

The town should build on its current success with the TN Main Street program to identify local business development opportunities, working with local property owners and entrepreneurs. Vacant and underutilized parcels in downtown should be prioritized for residential and commercial development that fits within the existing street grid and downtown character. Streets should focus on adding or improving sidewalks and street trees to increase walkability.

Mixed-use residential above retail should be considered with any new buildings along Main Street. Existing pocket parks and public space should be celebrated and improved with a focus on providing public restrooms for Downtown events. This facility will enhance visitor experience, support local businesses, attract events, promote public health, ensure accessibility and support tourism.

**FIGURE 16. HALLS MAIN STREET**



**FIGURE 15. DOWNTOWN INFILL EXAMPLE**



## Catalyst Area #2: Walkable Neighborhood Expansion

These areas are intended for the walkable, connected expansion of the town grid and should be focused on delivering a versatile range of homes that are land-efficient and available at an affordable price range, including small-lot detached and attached single-family homes and townhomes.

Any larger properties should be subdivided as needed to allow for smaller lot sizes and homes affordable to a wide variety of incomes, with a layout and scale that complements existing homes.

By updating zoning regulations to allow small-lot detached and attached single family homes and townhomes, development in this area can positively impact the tax base while providing additional revenue for infrastructure maintenance.

As the town grows west, the existing street grid should be extended and connected to continue to provide walkable block lengths that match the town's existing 350-foot block lengths, sidewalks, street trees, and bicycle infrastructure. Small, shaded blocks build on the beauty of Halls and allow residents to walk or bike safely to school and downtown.

These public and private street projects should be planned and designed so that they will connect to future civic uses, youth facilities, retail locations, and regional trails, parks, and open space.

Allowances of small neighborhood retail and small local businesses should also be considered, as long as they do not divert energy away from downtown. This catalyst area should include parks or open space as appropriate for the amount of new residents to maintain the high quality of park facilities for which Halls is known.

### **Catalyst Area #3: Fairgrounds Expansion**

The Lauderdale County Fair celebrated its 20-year anniversary in 2023 with 28,000 people attending over four days. The fair currently hosts contests, livestock shows, concerts, a kiddie derby, carnival rides, Pick TN products, local food vendors, pro wrestling, truck and car shows, antique tractor shows, and a petting zoo. The property also hosts other local and regional events and fundraisers, making it a critical tourism destination and economic development engine for the county. Halls' goal is to make the fairgrounds a year-round destination, building on the existing site assets by relocating the Flying H Arena adjacent to the fairgrounds, expanding facilities, amenities, and programming of the event space, and leveraging tourism from the Veterans' Museum that celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2024 and the airshow events held at the historic airport.

Discussion with adjacent property owners is critical to understand the locational parameters available for the expansion plans. The Town has applied for funding to develop an architectural site plan, an integrated facilities program, illustrative graphics, phasing plan, economic impact study, construction cost estimates, and financing strategy that will allow for year-round programming to attract tourists and develop amenities to enhance the visitor experience.

The plan and the expansion of the fairgrounds will build on the economic success of the existing

fairground events, adjacency of the Veterans' Museum and airport, its location in a beautiful agricultural area, and the proximity of the recreational and natural assets of Fort Pillow State Park, the Mississippi River, the Lower Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge, the Chickasaw National Wildlife Refuge, and the Bike Tennessee Ripley-Henning loop. Expansion plans should include consideration of parks and recreation facilities that can be used by residents on a daily basis or for the schools.

Once a site plan and illustrative graphics are complete for the future vision of the fairgrounds, the Town should invite philanthropic funding, help engage additional partnerships, and seek future grants and loans to turn the fairgrounds expansion vision into reality. Any development proposals adjacent or nearby the fairgrounds area should take this long-term vision into consideration.

### **Catalyst Area #4: Industrial Development**

Build out of the industrial sites at the north and south end of town provide opportunity for increasing economic development and tax base. The 59-acre Beech Bluff site would work well for a mid-sized industry with less than 400 employees, or multiple smaller industries. Highlighting the site's utilities and rail access will be a benefit, however, solutions to the challenge noted in the PEP plan regarding the lack of a controlled access roadway and a more direct connection to Hwy 51 to the site via Beech Bluff Cemetery Road should be discussed with TDOT.

For the 38-acre Select Tennessee Certified site, with an option for an additional 55-acres adjacent, seek out businesses that are no more than 250 employees, or multiple smaller industries that will complement the other businesses in the area. Traffic flow from this site should be assessed as part of the negotiations to ensure existing industries and the fairgrounds can continue to operate unimpeded.

## DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Policy recommendations are meant to guide the Planning Commission in making recommendations about development proposals to ensure consistency with community goals. As the Town directs development and infrastructure, it should focus on catalyst areas to ensure all four community goals can be met through strategic and efficient use of public funding. This can be done by planning for community needs first and aligning development and investment to produce the most community benefit. Planning for suitable development character will ensure development occurs in an ordered, connected, and fiscally responsible manner and help attract developers with similar community values, thus bringing outside investments into the community.

Future growth should be mindful of preserving regional farmland that carries economic, educational, and cultural value. In addition, any investments in future development must be fiscally responsible. That is, revenue generated from the development must be more than adequate to pay for the cost of infrastructure construction, maintenance, and services. The cost of new water and wastewater connections to development areas should not place any long-term financial burden on existing residents. Future development must be responsible for on- and off-site improvements that are direct impacts of the development, including but not limited to road improvements, upgrades to parks, and the construction of sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle infrastructure, and landscaping. The Town should evaluate development proposals based on long-range construction and maintenance considerations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- A. Focus and prioritize development within town limits near existing infrastructure.
- B. Build on the success of the downtown area, walkable street grid, and high quality park facilities.
- C. Encourage a wide range of housing types, including small-lot attached and detached homes, in a walkable, connected, small block grid pattern.
- D. Ensure development follows the general character of the community, focused on a rural farming lifestyle, large shade trees, community connection, and quality parks.
- E. Ensure fiscally responsible development. Ensure the cost of new water and wastewater connections to development areas does not place long-term financial burden on existing residents.



# IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation framework shown here provides Town leadership with a series of actions to consider in order to achieve the community goals envisioned in this Plan. These actions are assigned a quick win, on-going, short-term, mid-term, or long-term time frame to guide prioritization. Time frames fall into these general ranges:

- Quick Wins: Immediate
- Ongoing: Continually implemented over time
- Short-Term: 0-2 years
- Mid-Term: 3-5 years
- Long-term: 6-10 years

## GOALS

- 1 Enhance and expand parks and recreation facilities
- 2 Encourage a mix of housing choices
- 3 Ensure fiscally responsible infrastructure development
- 4 Prioritize local business development

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- A Focus and prioritize development within town limits near existing infrastructure.
- B Build on the success of the downtown area, walkable street grid, and high quality park facilities.
- C Encourage a wide range of housing types, including small-lot attached and detached homes, in a walkable, connected, small block grid pattern.
- D Ensure development follows the general character of the community, focused on a rural farming lifestyle, large shade trees, community connection, and quality parks.
- E Ensure fiscally responsible development. Ensure the cost of new water and wastewater connections to development areas does not place long-term financial burden on existing residents.



CHECKLIST	WHAT	WHEN
	<b>QUICK WINS</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remove/redirect the Town's outdated website for optimal public transparency.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Expand website information to include official meeting notices, agendas, packets, and meeting minutes for government transparency and to provide clear information on the Town's development process and building permits.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pursue grant funding to relocate police station and parks department and add a public restroom facility in the relocated parks department building.	
	<b>ONGOING</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use this Plan to guide recommendations related to land use and development within town limits and for each annexation application within the UGB. Compare proposals against Community Goals and Policy Recommendations.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue to pursue TN Main Street/Downtown improvement opportunities.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue to pursue Broadband grants and efforts to improve digital access.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Actively recruit developers, small business, entrepreneurs, and industrial suppliers who have a mission consistent with community goals.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pursue grant funding and partnerships for parks, recreation, and local roadway improvements.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue to use incentives and enforcement to encourage private property owners with poorly maintained properties to sell or renovate their properties.	
	<b>SHORT-TERM</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate current administrative capacity, duties, and procedures to determine if technology or process improvement could lead to efficiencies in staff or consultant time spent handling development approvals, repetitive tasks, or other administrative duties.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update the town's Parks and Recreation Plan to maintain eligibility for TDEC grants.	

## CHECKLIST WHAT

## WHEN



Formalize the process for new development and permitting requests, and create a development manual with document checklists and graphic flowcharts that outline the town's approval process and major policies.



Develop a 5-year capital improvement plan for all town expenditures and improvements to help prioritize and strategize future grant opportunities.



Work with TDOT to address traffic safety issues, street improvement projects, sidewalks, and wayfinding needs including, but not limited to:

- Provide signage on Hwy 51 directing to downtown and the fairgrounds as place markers or welcome signage.
- Conduct traffic studies at the Hwy 51 and SR 88 intersection, and Hwy 51 Industrial Rd intersection to address safety concerns.
- Connect the Beech Bluff Industrial Site directly to Hwy 51.
- Implement 2016 Halls Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan recommendations.



Pursue the following Zoning Ordinance amendments:

- Update paragraph IV.B.1 which refers to the 1962 zoning map.
- Develop a permitted uses chart.
- Develop lot width and setback diagrams for easy visualization of information.
- Refine definitions to clarify differences in land use and housing types and sizes.
- Clarify where home businesses are allowed.
- Where appropriate, allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs), adjust minimum lot area and/or maximum lot coverage, and provide flexibility in parking requirements to increase housing development opportunities.
- In all zones, assess lot size and width restrictions, maximum lot coverage, height restrictions, setbacks, bulk regulations, accessory structures, parking requirements, and a better mix of uses that supports community goals.
- Ensure the regulations allow for a mixed of uses and housing types consistent with community needs.
- Consider amending B-1 to allow residential mixed-use, hotel/motel, and/or civic uses.
- Consider permitting as a matter of right: schools, public libraries, art galleries, public museums, parks, playgrounds, municipal athletic fields, municipal recreation buildings and centers, and religious institutions in all residential districts.

CHECKLIST	WHAT	WHEN
	<b>MID-TERM</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate and update existing government service usage charges and fees.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish a financial model for growth and a set of financial management performance criteria.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assess and implement relevant capital improvement plan items in the Arnold Field Airport ALP Narrative Report, prepared by A2H in 2020.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review Municipal Code for relevant updates, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Updating liquor laws to allow on-premises alcohol in the downtown area and for special event permits to bolster economic development, support small business, and increase tax base.</li> <li>▪ Code edition date references.</li> <li>▪ Fees and billing structures.</li> <li>▪ Preferred number of Planning Commission members.</li> </ul>	
	<b>LONG-TERM</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revisit this Master Plan for consistency with community goals.	



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The community members of Halls and Lauderdale County were instrumental in the creation of this plan. A special thanks to Mayor Pugh and staff, the Board of Aldermen, Planning Commission, Radford Planning Solutions, and staff of the Lauderdale Chamber / Economic & Community Development. Numerous regional partners also provided valuable input during the planning process.

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