

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Lookout Valley Area Plan is twofold: (1) to provide residents, businesses, and policy makers with information on the conditions that exist in Lookout Valley today and (2) to provide a framework for guiding future growth and redevelopment in Lookout Valley in a way that will improve the livability and long-term economic prosperity of the area.

### **Study Area Profile**

The study area is bounded by the Tennessee/Georgia State line to the south, the Hamilton/Marion County line to the west, the Tennessee River to the north and east, and the base of Lookout Mountain to the east. The study area is approximately 13,800 acres or 21.6 square miles. Approximately 33% of the land in the study area is vacant, primarily because of steep slopes. Park, recreation, and open space uses account for 23% of the total land area, while residential, industrial, and other uses account for 22%, 11%, and 11% of the total land area, respectively.

Total population in Lookout Valley according to the 2000 census was 5,209 persons. Population in the area has declined at a rate of 3.5% per decade since 1970. With the new residential development occurring in Lookout Valley, total population is expected to level off rather than continue to decline.

Median household income in Lookout Valley in 1999 was \$38,450, compared to \$38,930 in Hamilton County.

In 2002, 214 businesses and institutions were in operation in Lookout Valley, employing over 2,700 people.

### **Planning Process**

The Lookout Valley Area Plan was initiated by the Chattanooga City Council in the summer of 2002. Regional Planning Agency (RPA) staff began the planning process in January 2003. After several weeks of gathering background data and studying existing conditions in Lookout Valley, the RPA held a series of interactive public workshops to (1) gather additional background data, (2) identify stakeholder perceptions as to the assets and weakness in the community, and (3) facilitate a discussion that would lead to consensus on a vision for the future of Lookout Valley. The input received at these meetings was combined with observations and recommendations from various government agencies, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders. All of this information formed the framework for the plan.

### **Land Use Plan**

The land use element of the Lookout Valley Area Plan addresses a wide range of land use categories including residential, commercial, industrial, and parks and recreation. Maps, descriptive text, and graphics are used to illustrate preferred land use patterns and policies that will help guide decision-makers regarding future development. The implementation strategies provided in the Land Use Plan are designed to achieve the following goals:

- maintain the community's small town atmosphere,
- encourage vibrant, family-friendly neighborhoods,
- promote economic growth and revitalize the traditional commercial core,
- preserve Lookout Valley's natural and cultural resources, and
- improve educational, recreational, and social opportunities in the community.

### **Transportation Plan**

The transportation element of the Area Plan uses a map, text, and graphics to illustrate recommendations for improvements to streets, railroads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and transit facilities. The implementation strategies described in the Transportation Plan are designed to provide a comprehensive, long-range

circulation strategy that will promote the efficient movement of people and goods and support the community's land use and economic development goals.

### **Implementation**

An implementation schedule is included as the final element of the Lookout Valley Area Plan. It outlines all of the recommendations of the plan, identifies the group(s) that should take part in implementation, provides a general timeframe for implementation, and lists the estimated cost of various projects.

The success of the Lookout Valley Area Plan depends heavily upon the level of support it receives from the citizens, business owners, and developers in Lookout Valley, from the area's elected officials, and from government agency staff and other community partners. The vision of this plan can be achieved if all of the groups work together to make it happen.