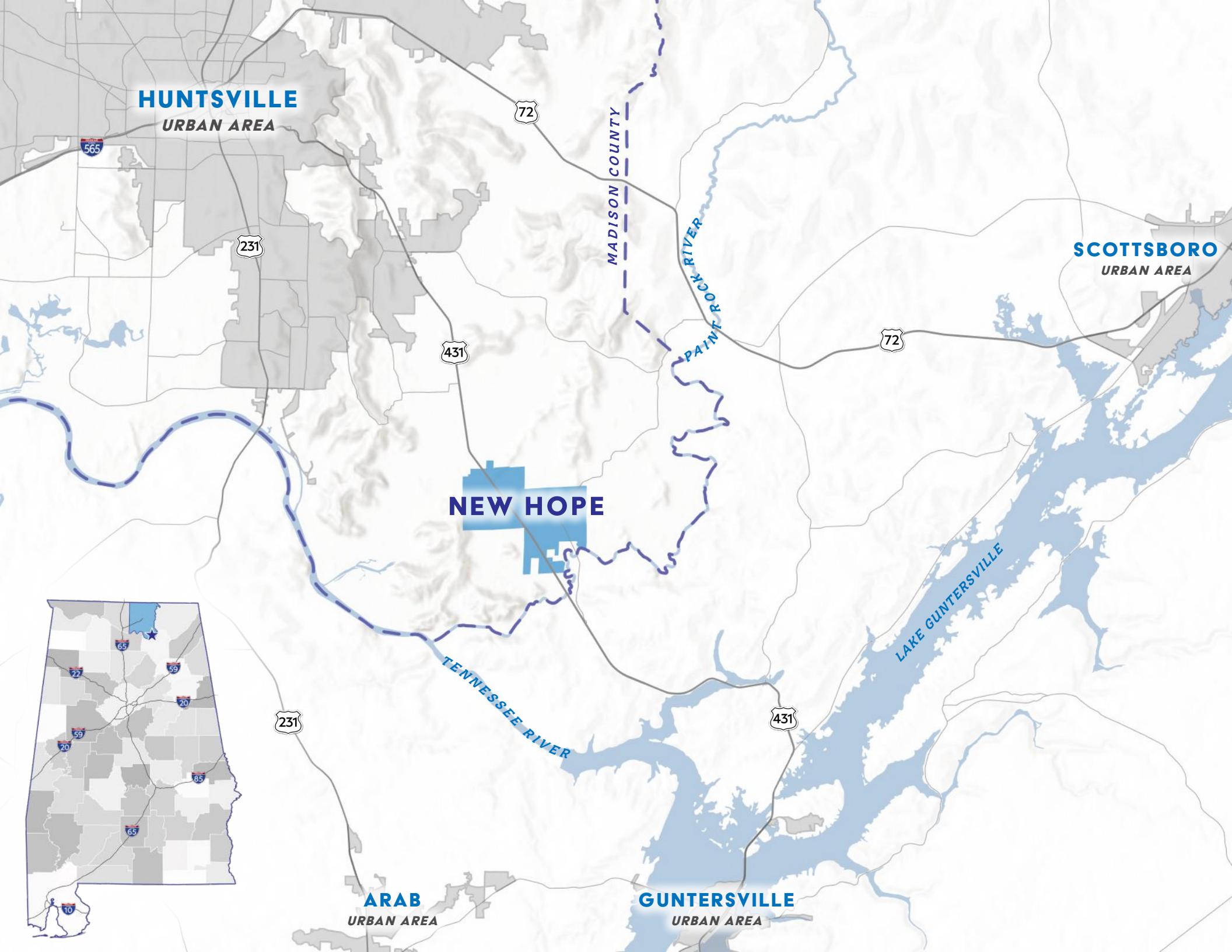




# HOME-TOWN

## NEW HOPE

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



*plan*

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# INTRO



*welcome to*

# HOMETOWN

## NEW HOPE

### *WHY IS THIS PLAN IMPORTANT? WHY NOW?*

#### ***Growth and change are headed to New Hope.***

The City of New Hope is situated on one of the most significant growth corridors in one of the fastest growing cities in the nation. You just need to look a few miles up the road to see massive development in Huntsville's Big Cove community spilling over down Highway 431, with substantial growth in Owens Cross Roads poised to soon start spilling over into New Hope.

Madison County, and especially its rural towns, are changing fast. With the free market, New Hope cannot and should not attempt to shut its doors to growth or development. Rather, the city must get ahead of the coming changes and responsibly leverage new opportunities to enhance quality of life. That is the purpose of this plan... to put policies, projects, and programs in place that will regulate change, allowing some smart growth while preventing overdevelopment.

***The recommendations in this plan are based on community input and data analysis.*** This plan seeks to provide the balance between growth and rural preservation that was top of mind for New Hope's residents. It focuses on strategies for activating downtown, enhancing development along Highway 431, coordinating growth with infrastructure, and new opportunities for walkability, recreation and placemaking.

***Read on to learn more about New Hope's vibrant, small-town vision for the future!***

*official*

# ADOPTION & ENDORSEMENT

## RESOLUTION NO. 590

### CITY OF NEW HOPE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE NEW HOPE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, according to the Section 11-52-8 of the Code of Alabama, it shall be the function and duty of the City of New Hope Planning and Zoning Commission to make and adopt a comprehensive plan for the physical development of New Hope, Alabama and;

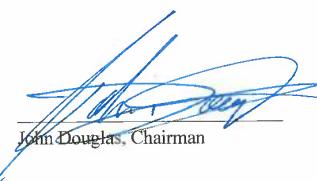
WHEREAS, the City of New Hope Planning and Zoning Commission has made careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the land use, housing infrastructure, design, environment and economic development of New Hope, Alabama, and;

WHEREAS, the City of New Hope Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed the Comprehensive Plan and finds it to best promote the health, safety, prosperity and general welfare of the citizens of New Hope, Alabama, and ;

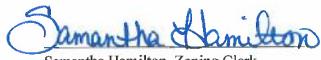
WHEREAS, all requirements of the laws of the State of Alabama with regard to preparation, public review and notification of said "New Hope Comprehensive Plan" have been met.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of New Hope, Alabama that the planning document entitled "New Hope Comprehensive Plan" and all official maps pertaining thereto are hereby adopted the 4th day of November, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be transmitted to the New Hope City Council and recommended for endorsement.



John Douglas, Chairman



Samantha Hamilton

Samantha Hamilton, Zoning Clerk

## RESOLUTION NO. 591

### A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF NEW HOPE ENDORSING THE NEW HOPE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, according to Section 11-52-8 of the Code of Alabama (1973), it shall be the function and duty of the City of New Hope Planning and Zoning Commission to make and adopt a comprehensive plan for the physical development of New Hope, Alabama and;

WHEREAS, the process involved the New Hope City Council and New Hope Planning and Zoning Commission holding public meetings to compile, evaluate and review data with regard to land use, housing, infrastructure, design, environment and economic development of New Hope, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, the City of New Hope Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed the "New Hope Comprehensive Plan" and finds it to best promote the health, safety, prosperity and general welfare of the citizens of New Hope, Alabama, and ;

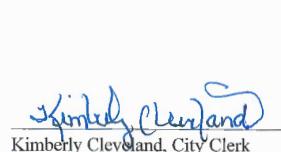
WHEREAS, the City of New Hope Planning and Zoning Commission adopted the "New Hope Comprehensive Plan" and all official maps pertaining thereto on the 4th day of November, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of New Hope, that the Council hereby endorses "New Hope Comprehensive Plan" as a tool to be used in planning New Hope's future development and redevelopment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, "New Hope Comprehensive Plan" shall be made a permanent part and parcel of this Resolution by reference.

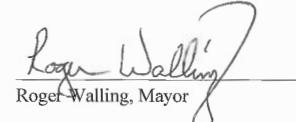
THEREUPON, Billy Jones, Jr., a council member, moved and Donnie Dowdy, a councilmember, seconded the motion that Resolution No. 591 be given vote and said resolution passed by a majority vote of all members of the Council present and the Mayor declared the same passed.

ADOPTED this 17 day of November, 2025.



Kimberly Cleveland

Kimberly Cleveland, City Clerk



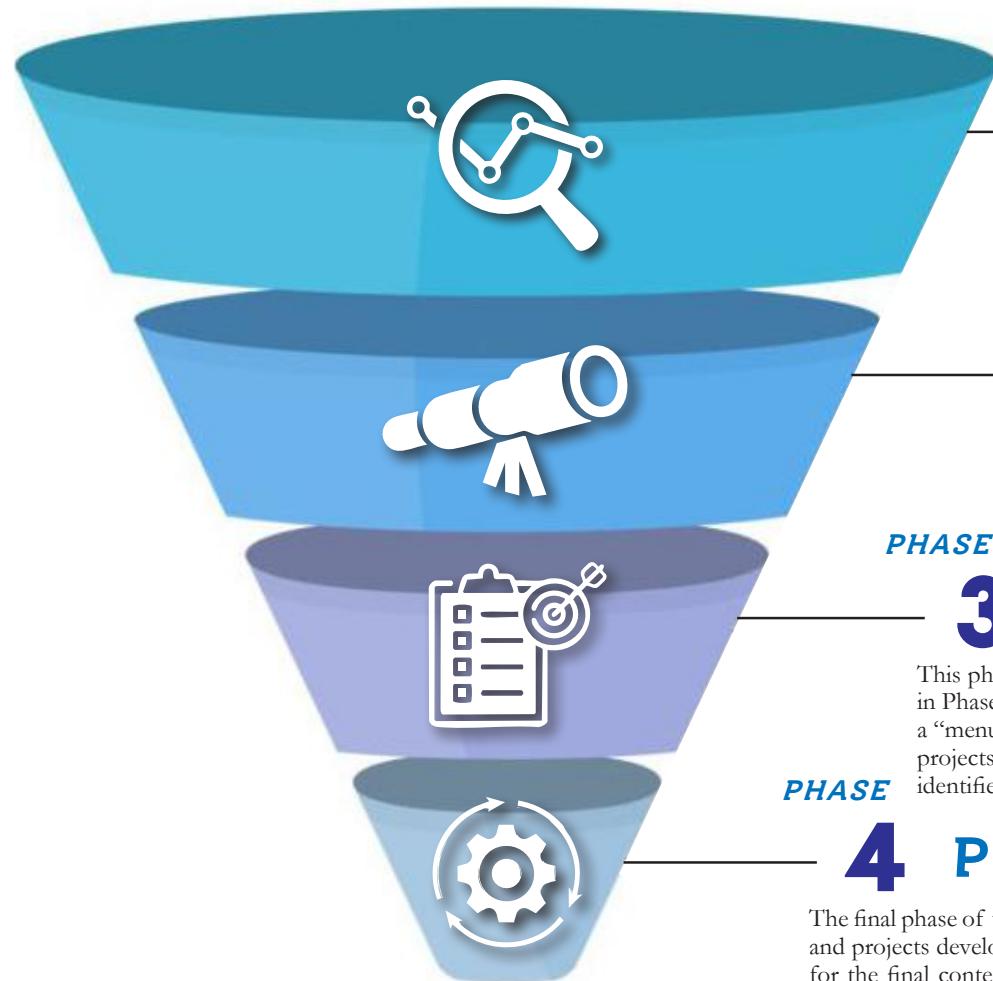
Roger Walling

Roger Walling, Mayor

*comprehensive*

# PLANNING PROCESS

**GENERAL KNOWLEDGE**



**PHASE**

## 1 RESEARCH

The first phase focuses on gathering and analyzing data on current trends and conditions. This phase establishes a statistical foundation for understanding the city's demographics, economy, land use, infrastructure, and housing, helping identify key challenges and opportunities while providing the basis for data-informed decision making and goal setting.

**PHASE**

## 2 VISIONING

The second phase of the planning process involves an extensive round of community engagement to assess community interests and priorities. Through public meetings and online surveys, this phase builds consensus and helps define the overall direction and focus of the final plan based on specific feedback and priorities shared by residents.

**PHASE**

## 3 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This phase is centered around ideation and goal setting. Based on the data and input gathered in Phases 1 and 2, planning experts consult with city officials and local stakeholders to develop a "menu" of catalytic projects for the city. By defining achievable goals and identifying specific projects, this final plan lays out a road map for addressing the challenges and opportunities identified in Phase 1 and for achieving the shared vision established in Phase 2.

**PHASE**

## 4 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The final phase of the planning process is geared toward action and implementation of the individual goals and projects developed in Phase 3. This includes a final round of public engagement to confirm support for the final content of the plan and to prioritize its recommended goals and actions. Responsibilities, timelines for action, and potential funding sources are identified for each of the plan's goals in order to facilitate successful implementation of the comprehensive plan.

# VISION / PRIORITIES



*community*

## VISION STATEMENT

“ New Hope is a safe, welcoming, and walkable community that honors its **small-town charm** while embracing **thoughtful growth**. We support families, preserve our heritage, and invest in infrastructure, education, and local businesses to create a thriving, inclusive **HOMETOWN** for all. ”

# engagement

# METHODS

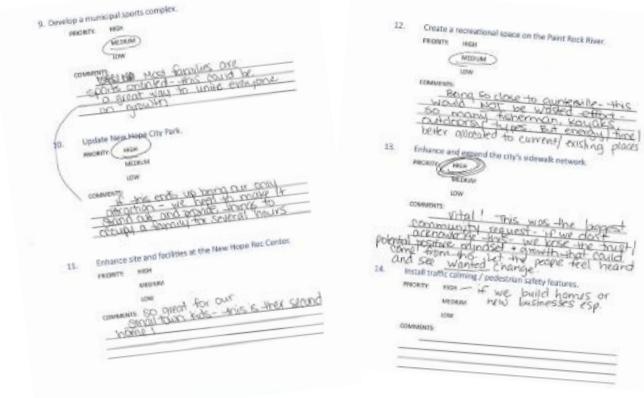
## ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

- February 20, 2025 - May 20, 2025
- 194 responses
- 28 questions, 5 subject areas

## CITY LEADERSHIP / ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS

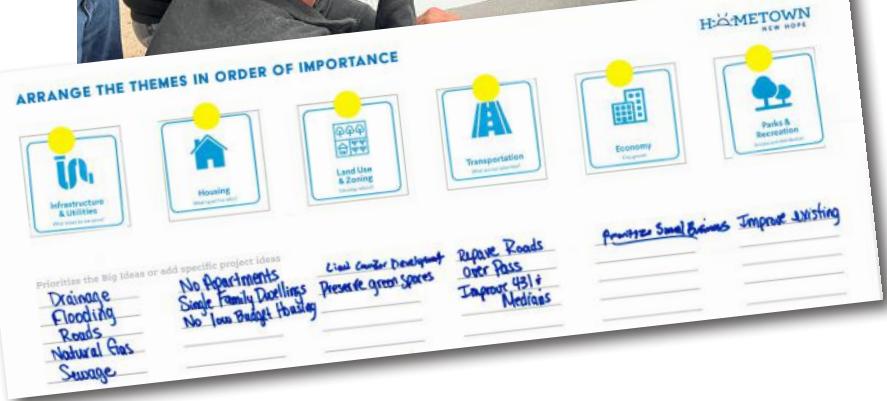
### Advisory Committee Responsibilities

- ✓ UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE
- ✓ PLAN DEVELOPMENT
- ✓ NETWORKING AND RECRUITMENT
- ✓ PUBLIC MEETINGS FACILITATION AND SUPPORT
- ✓ PLAN PRESENTATION AND RECOMMENDATION



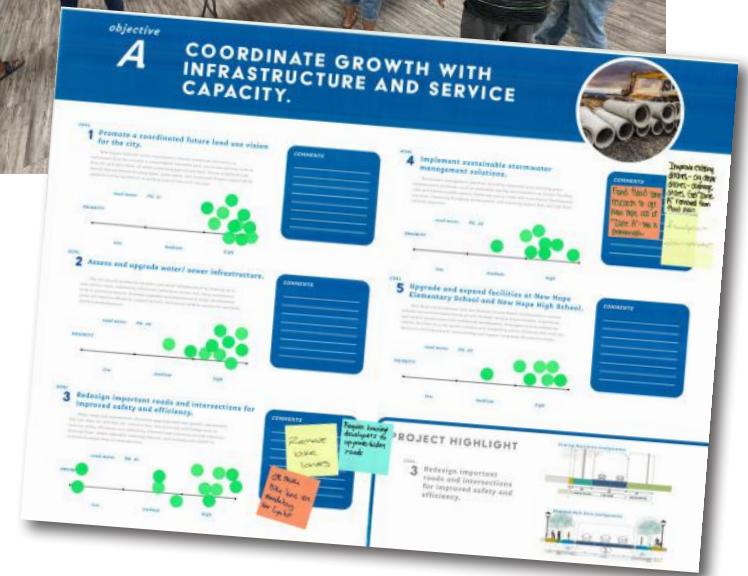
- 14-person advisory group formed of civic leaders and local stakeholders
- Periodic meetings throughout the project timeline to test ideas and coordinate project logistics
- Early feedback on preliminary visions/ ideas

# PUBLIC WORKSHOP - Visioning Kickoff



- March 20, 2025 at New Hope Elementary School
- 165 attendees
- Planning Process / Trends + Conditions presentation
- 15 different engagement groups
- Visioning exercise
- Priorities exercise

# PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE - Draft Plan Review



- September 30, 2025 at City Hall
- 60 attendees
- Review of the draft plan document
- Goal comments / priorities exercise

# ACTIONS





# OBJECTIVES

**A**

Coordinate growth with infrastructure and service capacity.

**B**

Make the city a better place for walking and biking.

**C**

Enhance local opportunities for parks and recreation.

# GOALS

**1** *Future Land Use*

**2** *Water / Sewer Infrastructure*

**3** *Road / Intersection Design*

**4** *Stormwater Management*

**5** *School Facilities*

**6** *Pedestrian Infrastructure*

**7** *Traffic Calming*

**8** *Cycling Infrastructure*

**9** *Sports Complex*

**10** *New Hope City Park*

**11** *New Hope Rec Center*

**12** *Paint Rock River Access*

D

Strengthen the city's sense of identity through placemaking.

*13 City / District Gateways*

*14 Municipal Branding*

*15 Street Trees*

*16 Public Art*

E

Create an environment that supports local and small businesses.

*17 Chamber of Commerce*

*18 Downtown Streetscape*

*19 Adaptive Reuse*

*20 Infill Development*

*21 Town Center Housing*

F

Support elevated development along the Highway 431 corridor.

*22 Building + Site Design*

*23 Mixed - Use Node*

*24 Industrial Park*

*objective E*

# COORDINATE GROWTH WITH INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE CAPACITY.



## **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Rural preservation
- Neighborhood developpment
- Water / Sewer improvements
- Road / Intersection design
- Traffic efficiency
- Stormwater management
- Schools



# 1 Align the city's zoning code and map with the Future Land Use plan.

A clear, coordinated land use vision can support thoughtful growth while preserving the city's small-town identity. This vision includes a more vibrant, mixed-use downtown that supports local businesses and active community life. The vision also includes additional and enhanced development opportunities along the Hwy 431 corridor with more diverse business and service options. It also calls for the consolidation of warehousing and manufacturing uses scattered throughout the city into a future light industrial park with better infrastructure and access. The intersection of Hwy 431 and Main Drive should evolve into an attractive, mixed-use gateway node with shops, offices, lodging, and limited residential uses. Additionally, new residential growth should be concentrated around core areas and key corridors—especially Main Drive and Old Hwy 431—to protect most of the city's existing agricultural land. Future neighborhoods should feature interconnected streets, access to parks and green space, and a variety of housing types. This should include options such as townhomes etc., especially in and adjacent to downtown. To bring this vision to life, the city should update its zoning regulations to align with the following future land use plan.

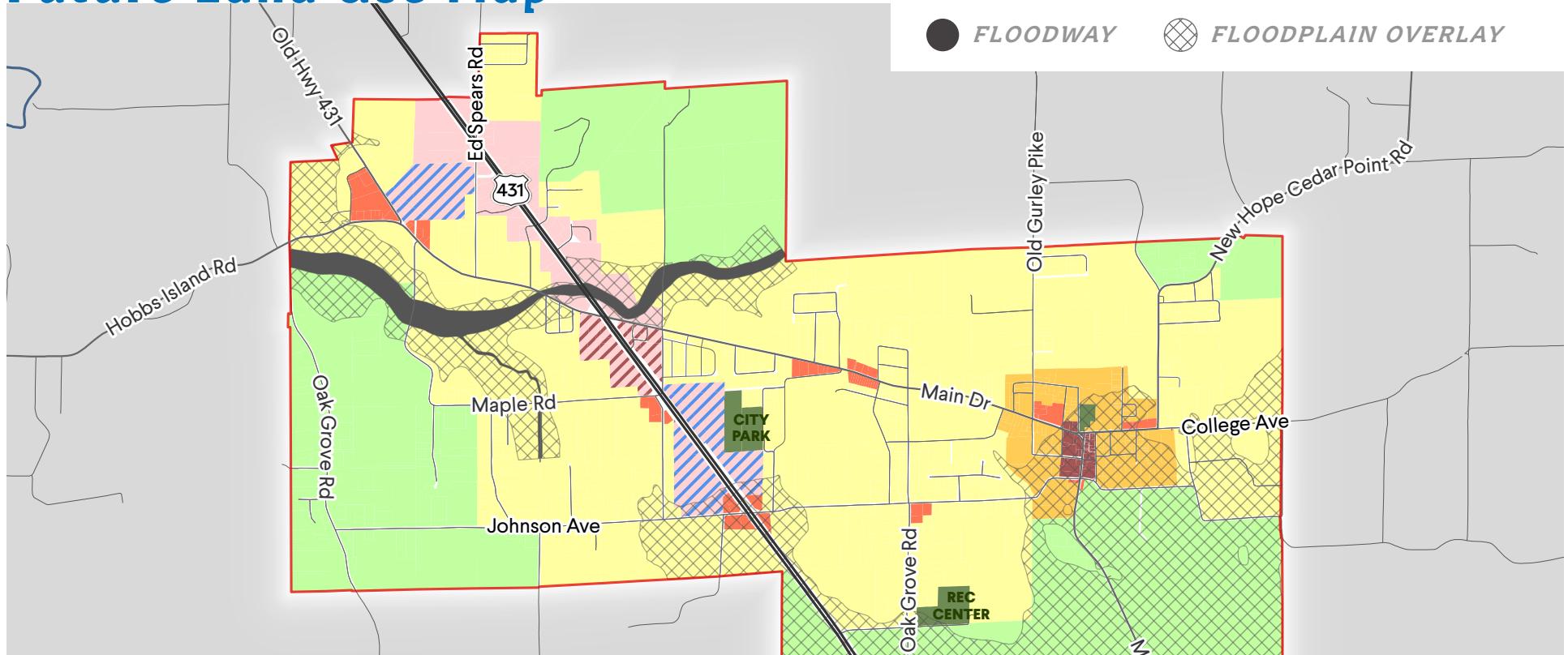
## NEXT STEPS:

1. Update the city's zoning map based on the Future Land Use Map.
2. Implement text amendments to the zoning code as necessary to align existing permitted uses with the future land use vision.

*SEE MORE*

*ON NEXT TWO PAGES*

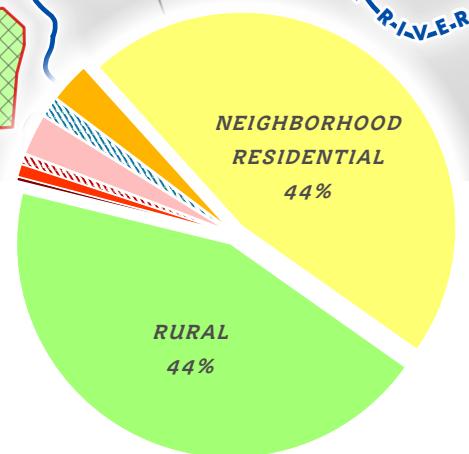
# Future Land Use Map



## DISCLAIMER!

This is a future land use map. **IT IS DIFFERENT FROM ZONING AND HAS NO DIRECT IMPACT ON PERSONAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.**

The future land use map is a tool intended to guide rezoning decisions. If a property owner were to request a rezoning of their parcel, this map will serve as the official recommendation for which type of zoning category to allow.



- TOWN CENTER
- GENERAL BUSINESS
- HIGHWAY CORRIDOR
- HIGHWAY NODE

- LIGHT INDUSTRY
- TOWN CENTER NEIGHBORHOODS
- NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL
- RURAL

## TOWN CENTER



pedestrian-oriented; local shops/ restaurants; small businesses; parks; loft residences; etc.

## GENERAL BUSINESS



auto-oriented; local retail/ restaurants; small businesses; offices; vet; salon; bank; etc.

## HIGHWAY CORRIDOR



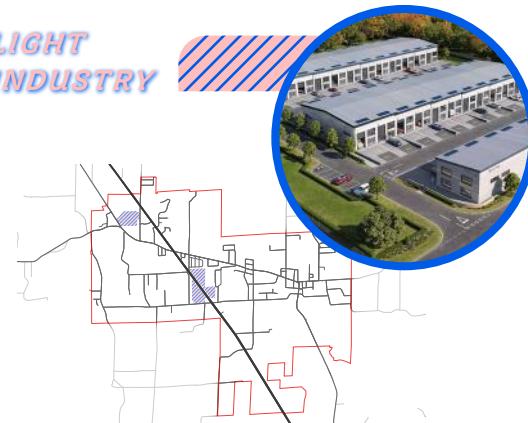
auto-oriented; big box stores; national chains; fast-food; strip retail; multifamily; etc.

## HIGHWAY NODE



pedestrian-auto hybrid; dine in restaurants; offices; retail; lodging; etc.

## LIGHT INDUSTRY



auto-oriented; light manufacturing; office park; warehousing; wholesale; distribution; etc.

## TOWN CENTER NEIGHBORHOODS



pedestrian-oriented; single family detached homes; duplexes; townhomes; cottage court; etc.

## NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL



auto-oriented; single family detached homes; parks; schools; churches; etc.

## RURAL



auto-oriented; very low density single family detached homes; farms; forests; churches; etc.

## FLOOD OVERLAYS



no development permitted in floodway; special building/ site requirements in flood zone

**GOAL**

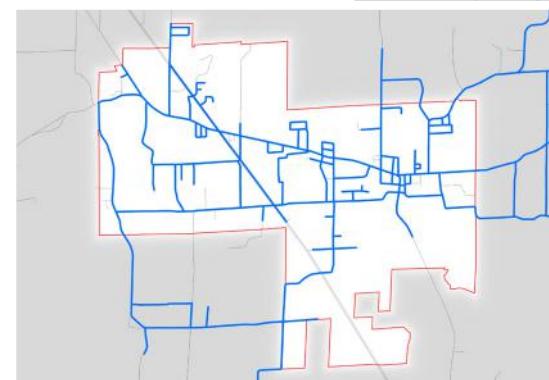
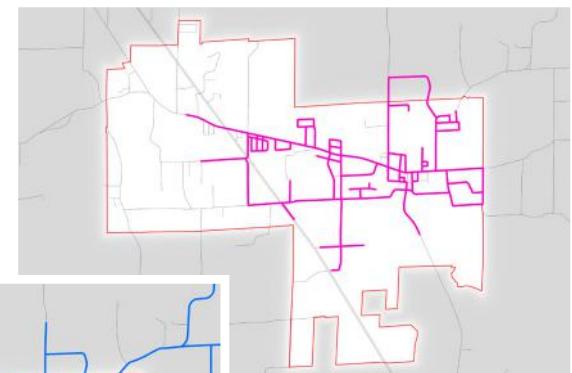
## 2 Assess and upgrade the city's water and sewer infrastructure.

New Hope should conduct an assessment of its water and sewer infrastructure to guide future repairs, upgrades, and system expansions. A key first step is addressing the city's outdated, disjointed, and incomplete mapping of existing water and sewer lines. Developing a modern, consolidated mapping and record-keeping system would greatly benefit both city administration and developers by improving coordination, transparency, and long-term planning. Much of the existing sewer system also struggles with significant inflow and infiltration (I&I), which leads to inefficiencies, system strain, and limited capacity for growth. To better understand system conditions, the city should consider using tools like the Sewer Line Rapid Assessment Tool (SL-RAT) to quickly evaluate and prioritize problem areas. Beyond addressing aging infrastructure, New Hope should plan for strategic expansion—along Old Hwy 431, for example—to support future development in the area. By improving system records, investing in upgrades, and extending service to target growth areas, New Hope can ensure safe, efficient infrastructure service delivery that supports both current residents and future development.

### NEXT STEPS:

1. Hire a firm to map existing lines and assess conditions using SLRAT technology.
2. Identify priority capital improvements based on mapping/ conditions assessment.
3. Upgrade water lines as necessary to 6 inches for enhanced fire protection services.
4. Identify and pursue potential funding sources (state revolving funds, grants, bonds, etc.)

*Existing sewer lines (to fullest knowledge)*



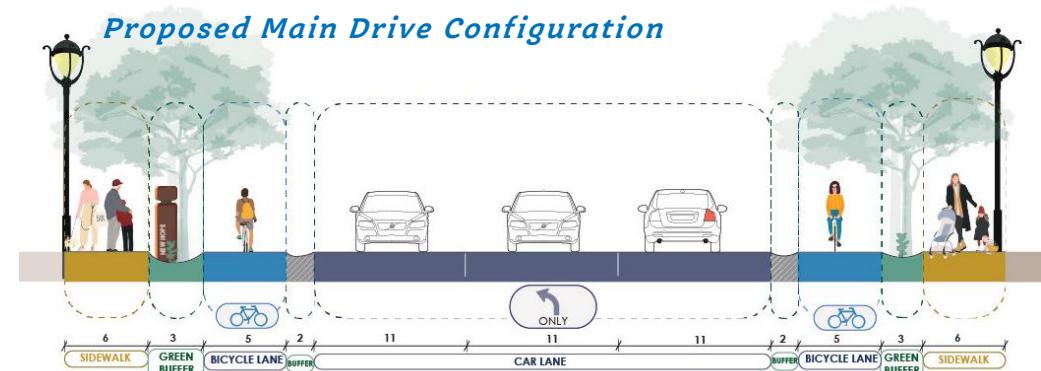
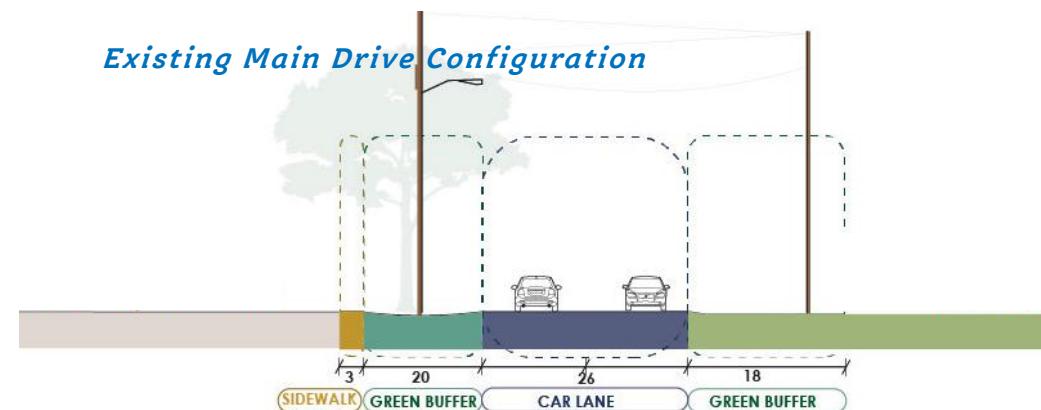
*Existing water lines (to fullest knowledge)*

### 3 Redesign important roads and intersections for improved safety and efficiency.

A major priority for the city should be upgrading key roads and intersections to enhance safety and efficiency. The city roads most frequently identified during public input for needing repairs and upgrades were Main Dr, Johnson Ave, Oak Grove Rd, and College Ave. A variety of potential improvements may include repaving, drainage upgrades, and reconfigurations—such as widening Main Drive to three-lanes between Hwy 431 and downtown. In the city's Capital Improvements Plan, all major road improvement projects on Main Dr, Johnson Ave, and Oak Grove Rd (east of the highway) should incorporate sidewalk improvements. The city should also collaborate with ALDOT to secure improvements at key intersections along Hwy 431, particularly at Main Drive, Johnson Avenue, and Ed Spears Road. Traffic signals should be strongly considered at the Johnson Ave and Ed Spears Rd intersections.

#### NEXT STEPS:

1. Hire a firm to conduct an assessment of existing road conditions citywide using PACER, PCI, etc.
2. Identify priority roads and intersections using crash data, congestion analysis, and public input.
3. Develop conceptual redesign options, including bike/ ped infrastructure on major thoroughfares.
4. Coordinate with ALDOT on signalization/ crossing improvements on Hwy 431.
5. Identify and pursue potential funding sources.



## 4 Implement sustainable stormwater management solutions.

Sustainable stormwater management strategies should be employed to reduce flooding and to protect buildings and infrastructure, especially in important areas within floodplains, like downtown. The city should focus on green infrastructure solutions—such as bioswales and permeable paving—that not only manage runoff but also beautify spaces. Development within floodways should be strictly prohibited, and construction within floodplains should only be permitted when appropriate stormwater site solutions are included. New Hope should integrate Low Impact Development (LID) measures into its building and zoning codes, ensuring future growth is more flood-resilient. The city should also consider implementing a stormwater impact fee based on impervious lot coverage to help fund stormwater improvement projects citywide. Priority areas for stormwater upgrades should include downtown and other vulnerable infrastructure such as Hwy 431. A high-visibility demonstration project—such as a green stormwater retrofit at City Hall—could serve as a public example of sustainable solutions in action.

### NEXT STEPS:

1. Hire a firm to assess citywide stormwater systems to identify flooding hotspots, water quality issues, and infrastructure gaps.
2. Update stormwater design standards to promote LID practices (bioswales, permeable pavement, etc.)
3. Adopt a stormwater impact fee ordinance to help fund stormwater infrastructure improvements.

*Priority Stormwater Intervention Areas*



*Bioswales/ rain gardens double as mitigation and beautification*

**GOAL**

## **5 Upgrade and expand facilities at New Hope Elementary School and New Hope High School.**

New Hope should work closely with the Madison County Board of Education to plan and secure necessary improvements and expansions to local school campuses. As growth comes to the city, ensuring that schools can accommodate additional students without becoming overcrowded is critical. Limited space on existing campuses may pose challenges, so thoughtful planning will be key. One strategy could involve relocating certain athletic facilities—such as ballfields or courts—to a proposed city sports complex, which would free up valuable on-campus space for future academic building expansions. As the city reviews new residential development proposals, care should be taken to avoid approving growth that exceeds the capacity of existing school infrastructure. School facility planning should be fully integrated into broader land use and growth discussions to ensure that educational needs are addressed alongside housing and infrastructure.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. Conduct a facilities assessment survey to identify needed improvements.
2. Review 5-10 yr capital plan for New Hope schools.
3. Conduct growth projection/ demographic study.
4. Hire a firm to develop a master plan for the existing campus.
5. Consider rearranging grade structure to convert existing Elementary School to a Middle School and identify potential sites for a new Elementary School.



*objective D*

# MAKE THE CITY'S STREETS SAFER FOR WALKING AND BIKING.



## **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- **Walkability / sidewalks**
- **Cycling**
- **Traffic calming / safety**

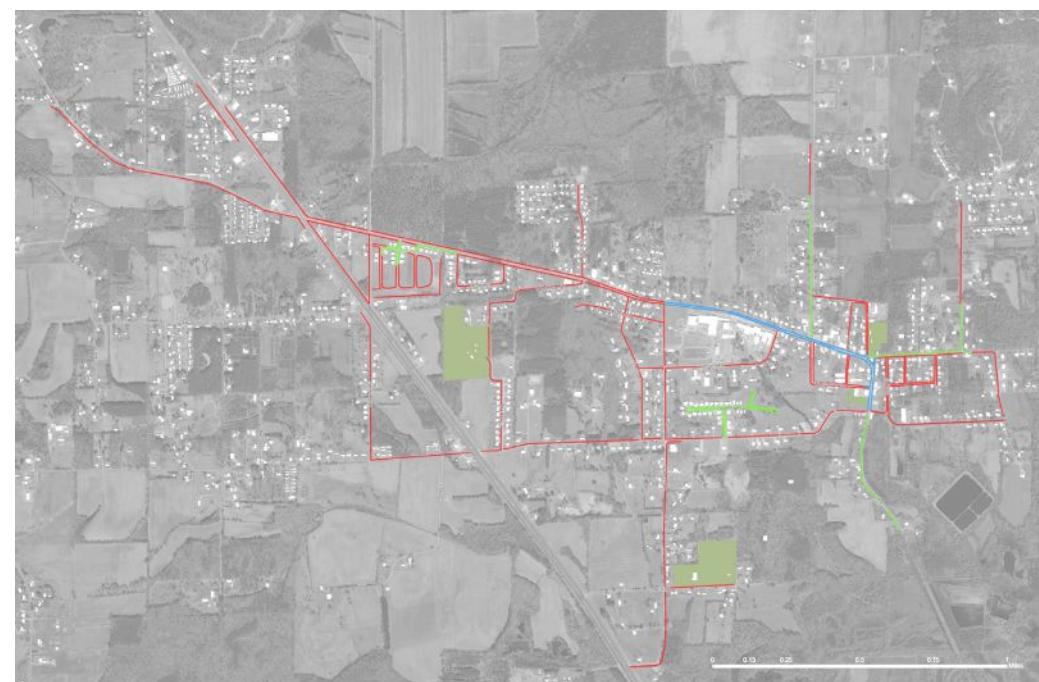
# 6 Enhance and expand the city's sidewalk network.



Improving the city's sidewalks to create a safer, more connected, and walkable community is an important step in enhancing the quality of life for residents. Better sidewalks and greater walkability was the number one priority of residents shared during public input, making this not only a planning need but a clear community demand. Priority should be given to sidewalk projects that create new links between major activity areas—such as downtown, the schools, the library, New Hope City Park, and the New Hope Recreation Center. Existing sidewalk segments in poor condition, especially those crossing streams or drainage ditches where maintenance/ safety needs are common, should be repaired to ensure safe use. High-priority areas like downtown's Main Drive should be upgraded with wider sidewalks, improved landscaping, and ADA accessibility to create a more attractive and functional urban streetscape. Sidewalks should also be extended along Main Drive and Johnson Avenue from downtown all the way to Hwy 431, strengthening links between commercial, residential, and recreational areas. The city should enforce sidewalk requirements in new subdivisions to ensure internal walkability in emerging neighborhoods.

## NEXT STEPS:

1. Conduct a citywide inventory to assess conditions, connectivity gaps, and ADA compliance.
2. Develop a phased improvement plan with cost estimates and priority segments.
3. Identify and pursue funding sources for segments not in subdivisions (TAP grants, etc.)
4. Enforce sidewalk requirements in new development and redevelopment projects.



————— *Proposed Regular Sidewalk*  
 ————— *Proposed Signature Sidewalk (enhance existing)*  
 ————— *Existing Sidewalk*

# 7 Install traffic calming / pedestrian safety features.

Targeted traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements should be made to discourage dangerous driving and create a safer environment for people walking and biking. A variety of effective traffic calming measures—such as bulb-outs, chicanes, speed tables, road diets, and more—can be used to slow vehicle speeds and improve driver awareness. These features should be prioritized in areas with a history of speeding or accidents, as well as in active pedestrian zones like the downtown district and around the school campuses. To better connect the east and west sides of the city, signalized pedestrian crossings should be installed at key intersections on Highway 431—particularly at Main Drive and Johnson Avenue. This would provide safe connectivity between existing/ future residential areas west of the highway and the parks, neighborhoods, and amenities concentrated on the east side. Traffic calming improvements can help support the city's goals of walkability, safety, and accessibility while reinforcing a more balanced transportation network.

## NEXT STEPS:

1. Identify priority locations for improvements based on crash data, speeding concerns, and pedestrian activity.
2. Develop a toolbox of locally appropriate measures such as speed bumps, curb extensions, raised crosswalks, and pedestrian refuge islands.
3. Identify and pursue potential funding sources (ALDOT grants, annual budget, etc.)

*Examples of traffic calming and pedestrian safety interventions*



*Crossing signals / median islands*



*Speed bumps / rumble strips*



*Traffic delineators*

## 8 Build cycling infrastructure on key streets.



Cycling infrastructure should be added to important thoroughfares to make it easier, safer, and more enjoyable for residents to bike around town. Whether for recreation, exercise, or simply getting from place to place, New Hope has a notable level of cycling activity on its streets—and the city should support that with the right infrastructure. There is currently no cycling infrastructure in the city, however, a range of design solutions can be added. Options include sidepaths separated from the road, designated bike lanes (protected or unprotected), and shared lane markings (sharrows) where space is limited. Cycling improvements should be prioritized along key thoroughfares commonly utilized by cyclists, including Main Drive, Johnson Avenue, Oak Grove Road, College Avenue, and Old Gurley Pike. These streets connect important destinations like downtown, parks, schools, and neighborhoods, making them ideal for improved bike access. Providing safe and comfortable places to ride will encourage more people to use bikes for short trips or leisure, while also reducing conflicts between drivers and cyclists. A well-connected network would make New Hope a more active and accessible place for

*Existing Condition*



*Example of bike lanes on Main Dr in front of school campus*

### NEXT STEPS:

1. Conduct traffic and safety studies to assess feasibility and determine appropriate facility types.
2. Develop a bicycle network plan that integrates on-street lanes, shared-use paths, and intersection treatments.
3. Review and update city policies to support bike-friendly road design standards.

*objective C*

# ENHANCE LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARKS AND RECREATION.



## **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Park upgrades
- Athletic facilities
- Health and Wellness
- Amenity diversification
- Sports tourism
- Paint Rock River access

## 9 Develop a municipal sports complex.

A multi-sport athletic complex would help fulfill unmet recreational needs and tap into the economic potential of youth sports tourism. The city currently lacks facilities to host local tournaments, limiting opportunities for regional events. A thoughtfully designed New Hope Athletic Complex could include a mix of baseball and softball fields (from t-ball to full size), soccer fields, tennis and pickleball courts, a pavilion with a concession stand and restrooms, a playground, and a loop trail for walking or running. This type of facility could attract regional tournaments and bring in visitors who support local restaurants, hotels, and shops. Several locations present good opportunities for developing a sports park: land at Old Hwy 431 and Hobbs Island Rd could bring a park facility/ green space to the western side of the city, which currently has no park or walkable destination, and anchor likely future residential growth along the Old Hwy 431 corridor with a quality amenity. Undeveloped land between Hwy 431 and City Park could allow the sports complex to be integrated with City Park as an expansion of that existing asset while also allowing direct highway access. Undeveloped land along Main Dr north of Huntland Estates and Lemley Circle offers the potential of neighborhood access directly off Main Drive as well as a central location in town. A new sports complex would expand recreation options while supporting New Hope's economic and community development goals.



### NEXT STEPS:

1. Conduct a needs assessment to identify priority sports, facility types, and programming needs.
2. Engage property owners on opportunity sites to discuss long-term vision.
3. Consider municipal purchase of property if an opportunity site owner is willing to sell.
4. Hire a firm to develop a site master plan.
5. Identify and pursue potential funding sources.  
(LWCF grants, bonds, etc.)



Potential opportunity sites for a sports complex development

# 10 Update New Hope City Park.



New Hope City Park is the city's largest and most frequently used park, yet its current layout and facilities fall short of its potential. The main entrance is awkward and unwelcoming, ending in a large, unattractive parking lot with little landscaping or sense of arrival. City Park Rd and T R Christian Rd should be connected to form a continuous, ungated loop for better access. The park's entry needs improved signage and gateway landscaping to create a more inviting experience. Renovated restrooms, updated or repurposed baseball fields, and added sidewalks connecting to main roads would greatly improve usability. The city should also explore adding new amenities—such as pickleball courts, a dog park, or other community-oriented features—to serve a wider range of users. Perimeter fencing and landscaping need to be refreshed to improve appearance and safety. As the city grows, the park can become an anchor for surrounding neighborhood development. Strengthening connections between the park and adjacent areas will ensure it remains a central, well-loved destination for all residents.

## NEXT STEPS:

1. Conduct a conditions assessment to evaluate amenities, landscaping, accessibility, and safety.
2. Engage the community to identify priority improvements.
3. Hire a firm to develop a park improvements master plan.
4. Develop a phased implementation plan.
5. Identify and pursue potential funding sources (LWCF grants, bonds, etc.)

*Many park facilities are outdated and need upgrading*



*Entrance / parking lot*



*Paths / fencing*



*Fields / courts*



*Pavilions*

# Conceptual Park Improvements Plan



## LEGEND

- A *Entrance Pavilion - Proposed*
- B *Baseball Field - Existing*
- C *Playground - Add seating / shade sails*
- D *Ephemeral Stream - Landscape and Activate*
- E *Dog Park - Proposed*
- F *Tennis Courts - Existing*
- G *Garden Area - Proposed*
- H *Parking Lot - Proposed relocation*
- I *Grove / Disc Golf - Existing*
- J *Small Amphitheater - Proposed*
- K *Future Parking Expansion - Potential*
- L *Open Space / Flex Lawn - Existing*
- M *New Sidewalk Connections - Proposed*
- N *Grand Entry / Signage - Proposed*

# 11 Enhance site and facilities at the New Hope Recreation Center.

The New Hope Recreation Center is a key community asset, and its continued improvement should remain a priority. The city should coordinate closely with the Madison County Parks and Recreation Department, which owns and operates the facility, to support upgrades that build on recent momentum. Following the county's multimillion-dollar investment in renovating the gym, next steps should include much-needed improvements to the outdoor pool and ball fields to better serve local youth and families. Site enhancements—such as upgraded landscaping, fencing, and modern signage—would improve the center's appearance and visibility. Sidewalk connections along Oak Grove Rd and YMCA Rd should be added to improve access from surrounding neighborhoods and provide safe routes for walking to and from the rec center. The drainage ditch along the front of the property should also be beautified with landscaping or naturalized features to enhance curb appeal and functionality. With thoughtful upgrades the rec center can become an even more valuable asset.

*Many rec center facilities are outdated and need upgrading*



*Pool*



*Building facades*



*Outdoor fields*



*Entrance / landscaping*

## NEXT STEPS:

1. Coordinate with Madison County officials to discuss the city's vision for the property.
2. Conduct a joint assessment of the site and facilities to identify needed improvements.
3. Work with Madison County to hire a firm to develop a master plan for site improvements with phased options and cost estimates.



## 12 Create a recreational space on the Paint Rock River.

The Paint Rock River is an important piece of New Hope's history and natural landscape that is undertutilized as a public asset for the city. The iconic "Humpback Bridge" over the Paint Rock River was historically an important landmark where it and the river served as a gateway to the city on New Hope Highway. However, with the indefinite closure of the bridge in 2023, the city lost one of its last meaningful places on and connections to the Paint Rock River. It is important to develop some kind of public access to the river so the Paint Rock can be restored as a valued feature of the community and not just a flood hazard. A simple but meaningful riverfront space could include a small gravel parking area, a short loop trail along the riverbank, and a kayak launch to provide public access to the water. One promising location is near the base of the "Humpback Bridge". The bridge could serve as a placemaking feature that gives the space a unique identity while preserving a piece of the city's history. A riverfront space with a kayak launch would also link New Hope directly to the Tennessee RiverLine, a growing regional network of water and land trails connecting communities to the Tennessee River that promotes outdoor recreation, tourism,

*Existing Condition*



### NEXT STEPS:

1. Evaluate potential sites for suitability.
2. Engage property owners to discuss vision.
3. Consider municipal purchase of property if an owner is willing to sell.
4. Annex property if not in city limits.
5. Hire a firm to develop a conceptual design for parking and kayak launch.
6. Obtain necessary permits from state and federal agencies.
7. Identify and pursue potential funding sources (LWCF grants, etc.)



*objective F*

# STRENGTHEN THE CITY'S SENSE OF IDENTITY THROUGH PLACEMAKING.



## **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Sense of place
- Cultural identity
- Beautification
- Gateway enhancements
- Public art
- Urban greenery

**GOAL**

## 13 Update the city's municipal branding.

New Hope has a dated and generic brand identity that should be updated to better reflect the city's unique character and vision. The current logo and branding lack visibility in the city's signage and built environment and fail to convey a unique or distinct city identity. A stronger visual identity will help give the city the fresh image it needs to enhance its aesthetic impact in both physical and digital spaces. Hiring a professional marketing consultant to develop a comprehensive brand identity package—including a new city seal or logo, typeface, and color palette—would provide a consistent, recognizable look for use across banners, signage, social media, and official documents. The new brand should also be updated on the city's website and could be included on police cars, fire trucks, and other municipal vehicles. The new design should honor New Hope's history while offering a fresh, modern aesthetic that communicates vibrancy and community pride. Updating the city's brand is a relatively low-cost, high-impact initiative that can serve as a visible first step following adoption of the comprehensive plan. It's a practical way to demonstrate early progress, build public momentum, and lay the foundation for larger, longer-term improvements.

### NEXT STEPS:

1. Hire a marketing/ graphic design firm to develop a suite of conceptual brand update options.
2. Engage the public on their preferred option.
3. Adopt one option as the new city brand.
4. Roll out the updated branding across city signage, digital platforms, printed materials, municipal vehicles, etc.

*Nature Themed  
Branding Concept*



*Historic Small Town Charm Themed  
Branding Concept*



*Existing Municipal Branding*



**GOAL**

## 14 Beautify city and district gateways.



The appearance of key entry points into the city and downtown district should be enhanced to create a more welcoming, attractive environment and improve people's impression of the city. Citywide gateway improvements should prioritize the northern and southern entrances along Hwy 431, where premier upgrades such as larger monument signage, structured landscaping, and targeted lighting can establish a bold civic identity. Secondary entrances—including on Hobbs Island Rd, Old Hwy 431, Ed Spears Rd, Old Gurley Pike, and New Hope Cedar Point Rd—should feature more modest enhancements like smaller signage and more limited landscaping. Within the downtown district, special attention should be given to enhancing gateway points on Main Drive at Old Gurley Pike and Johnson Avenue, as well as on College Avenue at Spring Street. Improvements at these locations could include decorative signage, planting beds, enhanced paving materials, public art, murals, or small-scale sculptures that reflect the community's culture and character. Gateway beautification is a highly visible investment that helps establish community identity and build civic pride.

*Existing Condition*



### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. Develop conceptual designs for welcome signage, landscaping, and lighting.
2. Initiate discussions with ALDOT to review design concepts and secure permission.
3. Prepare cost estimates and identify funding sources.



*Conceptual Gateway Signage and Landscaping*

**GOAL**

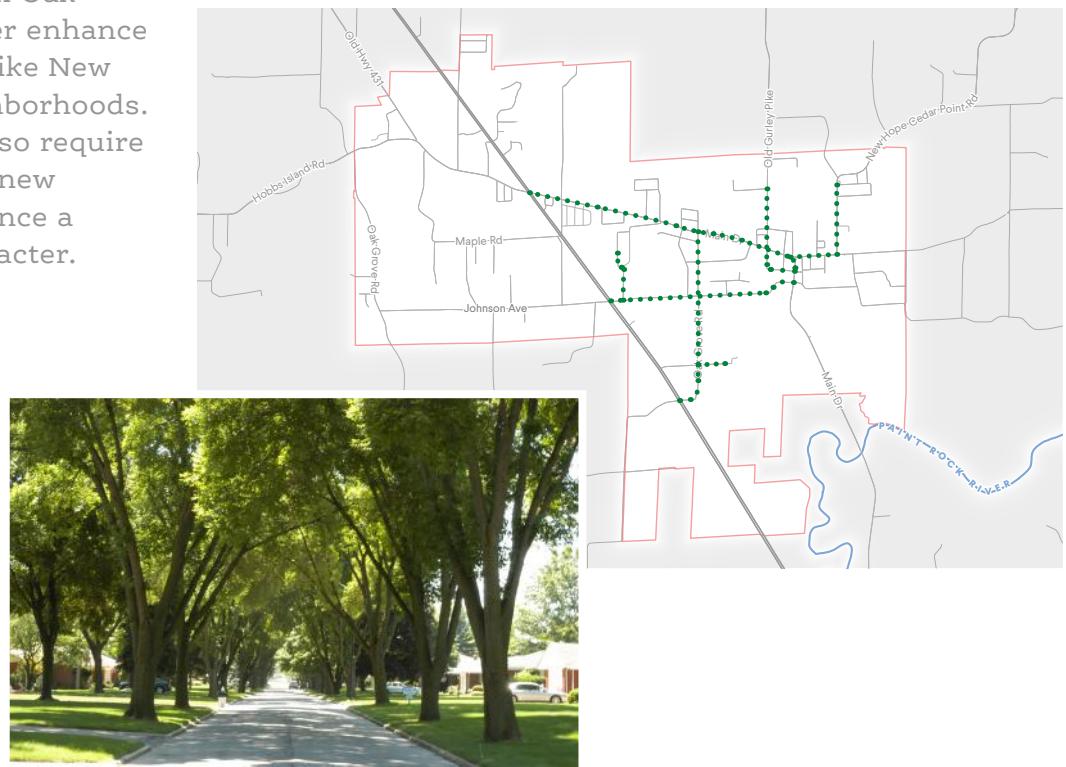
## 15 Create a network of tree lined streets.

A network of tree-lined “green streets” should be planted to improve walkability and enhance the city’s visual character. Street trees provide shade, reduce heat, and contribute to a more inviting, attractive public environment. They are especially important in walkable areas like downtown, where a shaded canopy can greatly improve comfort and encourage foot traffic. Any future streetscape improvements downtown must include a robust street tree planting element. Street trees should also be extended from the downtown core at least to Oak Grove Rd along both Main Drive and Johnson Avenue, as well as along College Avenue between Main Drive and Paint Rock Road. Oak Grove Road from Main Drive to the New Hope Recreation Center should also feature regular street tree cover. In the longer term, extending “green streets” on Main Dr and Johnson Ave from Oak Grove Rd to Hwy 431 would further enhance connectivity to key destinations like New Hope Park and surrounding neighborhoods. Subdivision regulations should also require or incentivize street trees within new residential developments to enhance a neighborhood’s comfort and character.

### NEXT STEPS:

1. Conduct an assessment to determine available planting space, utility conflicts, and soil conditions.
2. Select appropriate species considering size, maintenance, and compatibility with local climate.
3. Develop a planting plan that includes spacing, root protection measures, and irrigation strategies.
4. Coordinate with utility providers.
5. Plant trees!

*Target areas to create a network of walkable shaded streets*



*Street trees provide both aesthetic and functional benefits*

# 16 Incorporate art in public spaces.

Public art should be added to key locations around the city to help define community character and support local activity, especially at gateways and in key districts like downtown. Murals and sculptures are simple, effective tools that can improve the look of public spaces and make them more inviting. Murals in particular offer a low-cost, high-visibility way to demonstrate civic progress and momentum, while also helping to tell the story of New Hope and promote a consistent city brand. Good potential locations for mural projects include the small building just north of City Hall, the old New Hope Historical Museum, the community storm shelter, and the brick wall facing the Veterans Memorial. Public art should also be included in gateway beautification projects. An interesting opportunity the city could pursue is creating a small sculpture garden somewhere like Worley Park or in underutilized space such as around the community storm shelter. A well-planned public art program would support local pride, attract visitors, and contribute to a more unique and engaging public environment.

*Sculptural elements help liven up areas and create spaces with “cool factor”*



## NEXT STEPS:

1. Identify high-visibility public spaces and building façades suitable for art installations.
2. Establish a committee or designate an existing body to oversee project selection and implementation.
3. Engage local artists, schools, and area arts organizations to generate concepts.
4. Work with property owners on opportunity sites to communicate vision and secure permissions.



*Example of a town history themed mural on a town center commercial building*

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*objective A*

# CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS LOCAL AND SMALL BUSINESSES.



## **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Downtown Revitalization
- Business Support
- Adaptive Reuse
- Infill Development
- Historic Preservation
- Mixed - Use Development
- Housing Options

## 17 Establish a New Hope Chamber of Commerce.



The city should work toward establishing a local Chamber of Commerce to strengthen support for existing businesses, attract new investment, and lead efforts to grow the city's economy. A Chamber of Commerce can serve as a central point of coordination for business promotion, events, networking, and advocacy. Responsibilities would include marketing the city to potential investors, helping entrepreneurs navigate local regulatory processes, organizing community events, and supporting recruitment for light industrial and commercial development. Forming a Chamber would begin with a group of local business leaders, city officials, and stakeholders working together to define the organization's structure, mission, and funding model. Once established, the New Hope Chamber should coordinate closely with the Madison County Chamber of Commerce and other regional partners to align efforts and tap into broader resources. This type of collaboration will be especially important for advancing large-scale initiatives, such as the development of a light industrial park. A local Chamber would give New Hope a dedicated voice for its business community.

### NEXT STEPS:

1. Survey local businesses to determine feasibility
2. Form founding steering committee
3. Determine governance structure
4. Incorporate as a 501(c)(6) nonprofit
5. Develop an outreach & membership campaign
6. Secure startup funding & resources



**new hope  
chamber of commerce**

*Example Chamber of Commerce branding*

**GOAL**

## 18 Update the downtown streetscape on Main Drive.



New Hope should give the Main Drive streetscape a fresh look to help downtown businesses grow and thrive. By updating the streetscape, the city can make downtown more welcoming, comfortable, accessible, and attractive for visitors and shoppers. Improvements should include wider sidewalks, better lighting, and spots to sit and gather—small changes that can make a big difference in drawing people downtown and encouraging them to stay longer. Adding trees and greenery will be important not just to beautify the area, but also to help soak up rainwater and reduce flooding—a critical need since downtown sits in a flood-prone area. These updates would help protect local shops from storm impacts while making storefronts more eye-catching and appealing. A nicer, more walkable downtown streetscape can support current businesses, attract new ones, and create the kind of downtown people want to spend time in.

*Downtown New Hope existing streetscape layout*

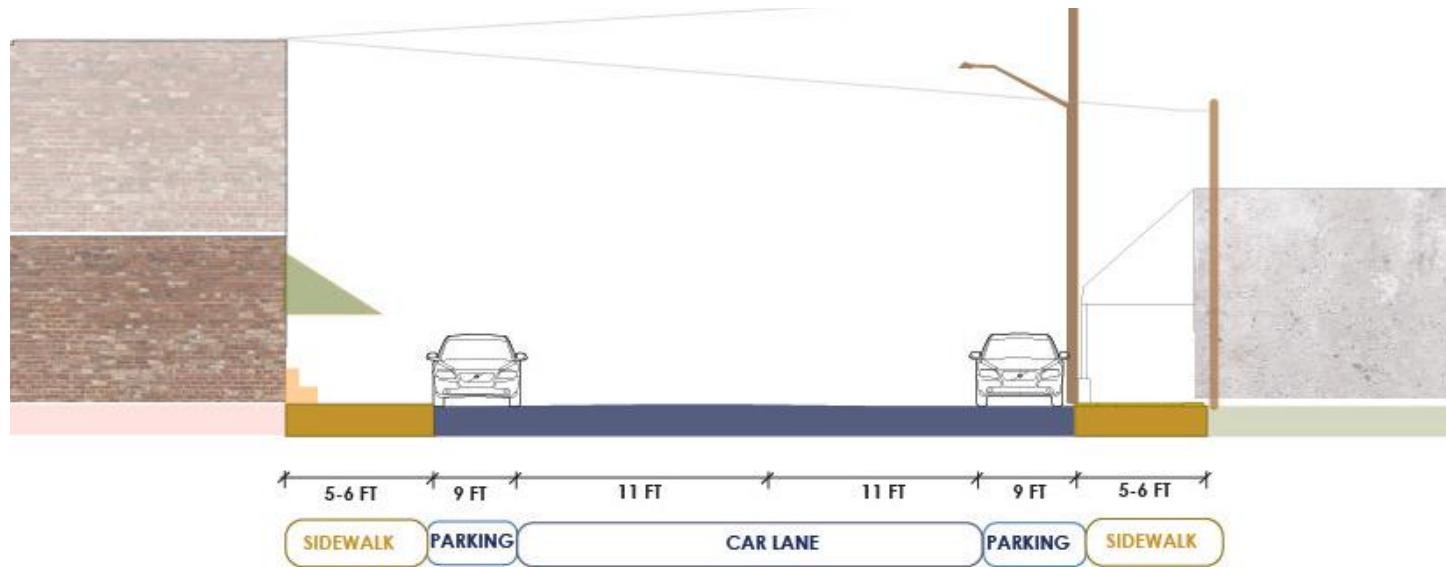


*Widened sidewalks w/ seating and landscaping*

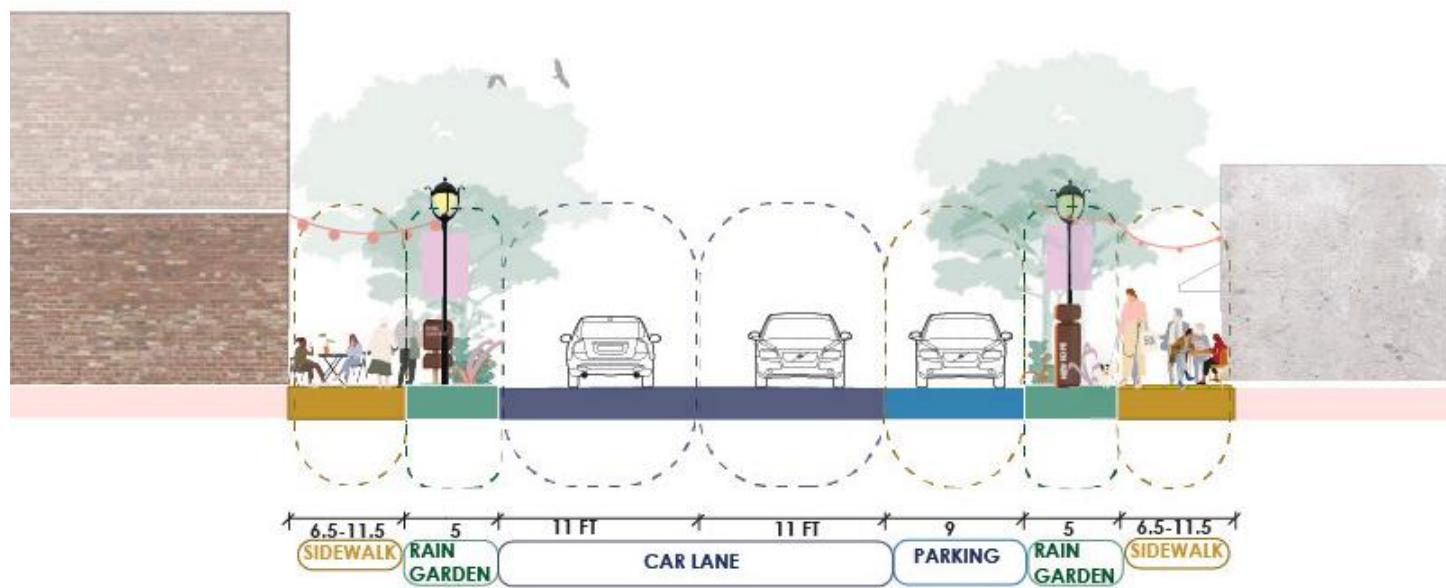
### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. Hire a planning/ engineering firm to create conceptual designs and cost estimates.
2. Develop a phased implementation plan
3. Identify and pursue potential funding sources (grants, bonds, etc.) - TAP grant through ALDOT is a good resource for sidewalk projects

### *Existing Streetscape Configuration*



### *Proposed Streetscape Configuration*



**GOAL****19**

## Incentivize adaptive reuse of existing buildings.



public  
priority



Encouraging the renovation and reuse of existing buildings downtown and elsewhere is an important way to support small business growth, preserve local character, and make smart use of what the city already has. Many of the buildings in the downtown district have strong bones and unique charm, but may need repairs or updates to be fully usable again. By offering incentives—like small grants, tax breaks, or faster permitting—the city can make it easier for property owners and entrepreneurs to bring these spaces back to life. Turning old storefronts, warehouses, or offices into shops, cafes, studios, or housing can help fill empty buildings, draw more people downtown, and reduce the need for new construction. Adaptive reuse also helps keep the character of downtown intact while meeting today's needs. New Hope should make the most of its existing assets and encourage the kind of growth that's creative, affordable, and community centered. Breathing new life into old buildings will support a downtown that feels vibrant and active.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. Identify underutilized or vacant buildings with adaptive reuse potential.
2. Develop incentive programs (tax abatements, fee waivers, etc.)
3. Promote state and federal historic preservation or rehabilitation tax credits.
4. Partner with developers and property owners to facilitate reuse projects

*Example adaptive reuse developments on Main Dr*



*Existing Condition*



**GOAL**

## **20 Promote infill development.**



Encouraging thoughtful infill development downtown should be a long term priority to make better use of available land, attract new businesses, and create a more connected and active downtown. Several sites present strong opportunities, including the underutilized Stapler Construction property and the U.S. Post Office site, both of which could support a mix of commercial and community uses. In the long term, relocating the City Garage and Storm Shelter to more suitable sites could free up additional land for downtown growth. New development downtown should fill in gaps along the street and match the scale, design, and character of surrounding buildings to maintain the small-town charm that makes downtown special. With the right policies and partnerships in place, infill development can bring new life to vacant or underused properties while supporting walkability, business diversity, and a stronger sense of place. This approach will “fill in the gaps” downtown and help bring back some of the historic small town Main Street fabric that has been lost over time.

### ***NEXT STEPS:***

1. Identify underutilized or vacant lots suitable for infill development.
2. Revise zoning to allow for higher-density, mixed-use infill options in the town center area.
3. Create downtown design guidelines to regulate the area's aesthetic
4. Offer incentives (reduced parking, tax abatement, etc.)
5. Streamline the permitting and review process.

*Example downtown infill development*



*Existing Condition*

## 21 Develop more town center area housing options.

More housing in and around downtown is an important missing ingredient in creating a more active and successful business environment. Having additional residents within walking distance of downtown businesses would help bring more consistent foot traffic and patronage to local shops. The city should encourage development of “missing middle” housing types—like townhomes, duplexes, and cottage courts—that fit well with the scale of New Hope’s existing neighborhoods while offering more affordable, flexible options that are increasingly popular. Streets such as Hayden St, Washington Ave, and Spring St offer strong potential for mixed-density residential development that is integrated with downtown. Within downtown itself, the city should also explore opportunities to add housing above shops or as part of mixed-use developments, making downtown more active throughout the day. Innovative housing developments anchored by downtown as a walkable amenity are a good way to attract residents and strengthen downtown’s vitality as a successful business environment.

Existing Condition



### NEXT STEPS:

1. Revise zoning in the town center and adjacent areas to allow for right townhomes, duplexes, and similar medium-density residential typologies.
2. Develop design standards for town center neighborhoods to ensure new housing fits the character of downtown and historic homes.
3. Offer incentives such as infrastructure assistance or pre-approved site plans.
4. Streamline the permitting and review process for missing middle housing developments.



Example townhome development on Main Dr

**MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING TYPES  
APPROPRIATE FOR NEW HOPE'S  
TOWN CENTER AREA NEIGHBORHOODS:**



*Accessory Dwelling Unit*



*Duplex / Triplex*



*Cottage Court*



*Townhome*



*Small Multifamily*

*Example Illustration of a Missing Middle Housing Development*



*objective B*

## **SUPPORT ELEVATED DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE HIGHWAY 431 CORRIDOR.**



### **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Highway Corridor Revitalization
- Building Design Standards
- Site Design Standards
- Signage Standards
- Mixed Use Node Development
- Economic Diversification
- Employment hubs

## 22 Enhance building and site design standards.



The quality and appearance of development along the Hwy 431 corridor needs to be upgraded to improve travelers' impression of the city and elevate the commercial environment for larger scale businesses and national chains. Many existing buildings along the corridor are of lower construction quality, with outdated facades, minimal landscaping, and auto-oriented site layouts that detract from the city's overall image. To address this, the city should apply its existing but unused Hwy 431 Overlay District within the zoning code to establish and enforce stronger design and site standards. These should include prohibiting metal building façades, requiring higher-quality exterior materials, and encouraging architectural features that reflect New Hope's character. Site design standards should also prioritize placing buildings closer to the street with parking and drive-thrus located at the side or rear—creating a more walkable and aesthetically appealing environment. Enhanced landscaping, signage guidelines, and screening for service areas would further improve the corridor's look and feel. These steps will help make Hwy 431 a more inviting corridor that supports business growth while more accurately reflecting the overall quality of the New Hope community.

### *Existing Highway Typology*



### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. Apply the city's unused Hwy 431 corridor overlay to the official zoning map.
2. Establish and enforce a design review process for major renovations and new construction for properties in the overlay district.
3. Provide incentives or technical assistance to business owners, including facade improvement grants, etc.

*Preferred Highway Typology:  
parking in rear, building closer to  
road, side/ service road access,  
sidewalks, landscaping, monument  
signage, no metal facades*

**GOAL**

## **23 Develop a mixed-use node at Hwy 431 + Main Dr.**



**public  
priority**



The city should pursue development of a mixed-use node at the intersection of US 431 and Main Drive to create a more functional, attractive, and vibrant gateway into the city. This highly visible intersection is one of New Hope's most strategically important locations, yet three of its four corners are currently occupied by standard gas stations that contribute little to the area's identity or economic potential. Each of these properties presents a strong redevelopment opportunity. A reimagined node should include a thoughtful mix of retail/ dining, services, office space, and lodging—with the potential for higher-density residential options like apartments or townhomes integrated into upper floors or nearby parcels. Building height and scale should remain modest, ideally no more than 2–3 stories, to reflect the character of New Hope. This new node should offer an alternative to the typical big-box and fast-food highway development found on Hwy 431, instead creating a walkable, well-designed hub that reflects New Hope's unique quality.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. Engage property owners to discuss long-term vision, interest in redevelopment, and potential for parcel consolidation.
2. Zone the site for mixed-use development and include in the highway corridor overlay to ensure design review for any future development.
3. Market the site to developers with a prospectus highlighting zoning, incentives, and long-term economic potential.

*Example highway node-style development at US 431 and Main Dr*



*Existing Condition*



## 24 Create a light industrial / manufacturing park.



A quality industrial park should be built to attract new employers, create local jobs, and diversify the city's economy. Currently, industrial uses are scattered in isolated pockets across the city, often near residential areas and minimally serviced by infrastructure. A consolidated industrial park would provide a more efficient, coordinated setting for industrial businesses to thrive—offering shared access to utilities, infrastructure, and services in a location designed for their needs. Ideal sites should have strong highway access, potentially in areas such as the undeveloped land on either side of US 431 between Maple Rd and Johnson Ave, which offer strong highway access and space for long-term growth. Any new industrial park should be carefully screened with landscaping to reduce visual impacts from the highway and protect nearby homes. A modern, well-serviced park can help attract light manufacturing, logistics, or tech-related jobs while reinforcing the city's role as a place for both quality living and quality employment.

*Industrial properties should be buffered from residential areas*

### NEXT STEPS:

1. Conduct a market feasibility study to assess demand for light industrial and manufacturing space.
2. Market opportunity sites to potential developers.
3. Permit/ expedite light industrial rezoning requests on opportunity sites.
4. Consider offering incentives for industrial park development.



*Potential opportunity sites for a light industrial park development*



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# IMPLEMENTATION





*“Humpback Bridge” over the Paint Rock River*

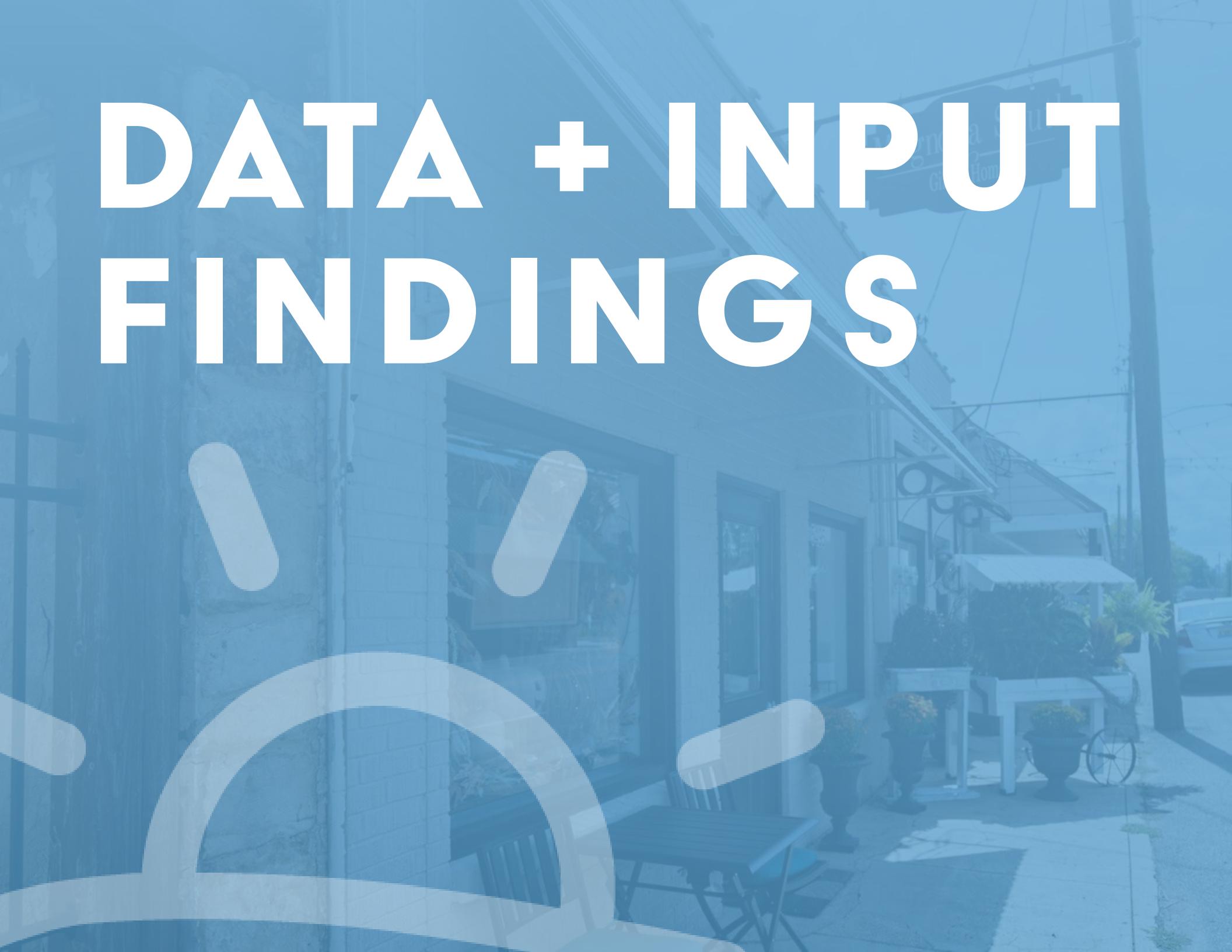


GOAL		PUBLIC PRIORITY	PAGE	START TIMELINE	LEAD COORDINATOR
<b>OBJECTIVE A:</b>		<i>Coordinate growth with infrastructure and service capacity.</i>			
★	1	Align zoning with the future land use plan.	High	17	Short Term (1-4 years) City of New Hope Planning + Zoning Commission
	2	Assess and upgrade water and sewer infrastructure.	Medium	20	Short Term (1-4 years) City of New Hope Water / Sewer Departments
	3	Redesign important roads and intersections for safety.	Medium	21	Long Term (10+ years) City of New Hope Street Department
	4	Implement sustainable stormwater solutions.	Medium	22	Medium Term (5-9 years) City of New Hope
	5	Upgrade facilities at New Hope Elementary and High.	Medium	23	Long Term (10+ years) Madison County Board of Education
<b>OBJECTIVE B:</b>		<i>Make the city's streets safer for walking and biking.</i>			
★	6	Enhance and expand the city's sidewalk network.	High	25	Short Term (1-4 years) City of New Hope Street Department
	7	Install traffic calming / pedestrian safety features.	Low	26	Medium Term (5-9 years) City of New Hope Street Department
	8	Build cycling infrastructure on key streets.	Low	27	Long Term (10+ years) City of New Hope Street Department
<b>OBJECTIVE C:</b>		<i>Enhance local opportunities for parks and recreation.</i>			
	9	Develop a municipal sports complex.	Low	29	Long Term (10+ years) City of New Hope
★	10	Upgrade New Hope City Park.	High	30	Medium Term (5-9 years) City of New Hope
	11	Enhance site and facilities at the New Hope Rec Center.	Low	32	Medium Term (5-9 years) Madison County Facilities Department
★	12	Create a recreational space on the Paint Rock River.	High	33	Medium Term (5-9 years) City of New Hope



GOAL	PUBLIC PRIORITY	PAGE	START TIMELINE	LEAD COORDINATOR
<b>OBJECTIVE D:</b>		<i>Strengthen the city's sense of identity through placemaking.</i>		
13	Update the city's municipal branding.	Medium	35	Short Term (1-4 years) City of New Hope
14	Beautify city and district gateways.	Medium	36	Short Term (1-4 years) City of New Hope Street Department
15	Create a network of tree lined streets.	Low	37	Long Term (10+ years) City of New Hope Street Department
16	Incorporate art in public spaces.	Low	38	Short Term (1-4 years) Chamber of Commerce (proposed)
<b>OBJECTIVE E:</b>		<i>Create an environment that supports local and small businesses.</i>		
17	Establish a New Hope Chamber of Commerce.	Medium	41	Short Term (1-4 years) Private Sector
18	Update the downtown streetscape on Main Drive.	Medium	42	Medium Term (5-9 years) City of New Hope Street Department
★ 19	Incentivize adaptive reuse of existing buildings.	High	44	Short Term (1-4 years) Private Sector
20	Promote downtown infill development.	Low	46	Long Term (10+ years) Private Sector
21	Develop more walkable town center area housing options.	Low	48	Medium Term (5-9 years) Private Sector
<b>OBJECTIVE F:</b>		<i>Support elevated development along the Highway 431 corridor.</i>		
22	Enhance building and site design standards.	Medium	51	Short Term (1-4 years) City of New Hope Planning + Zoning Commission
★ 23	Develop a mixed-use node at Hwy 431 and Main Drive.	High	52	Long Term (10+ years) Private Sector
24	Create a light industrial / manufacturing park.	Low	54	Medium Term (5-9 years) Private Sector

# DATA + INPUT FINDINGS



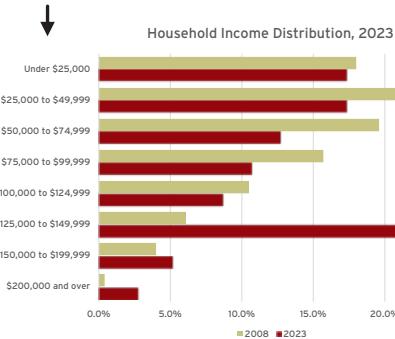


# City of New Hope

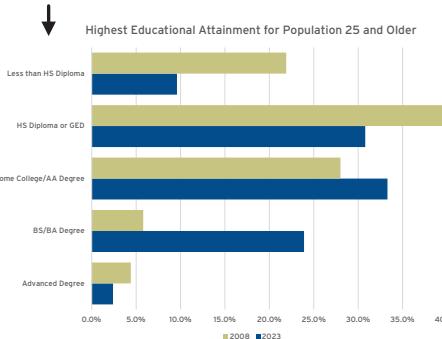
## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

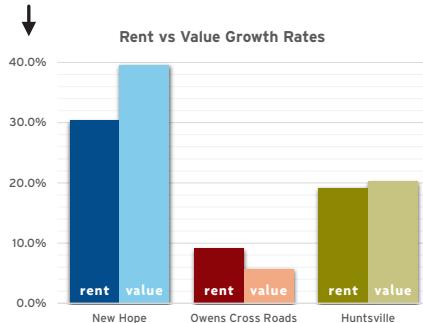
The city's income profile has seen a pronounced shift in the last 15 years, with the median household income increasing by 50% when adjusted for inflation. The statewide median household income increased by 5% during the same period. Although the city is growing wealthier on average, the number of very low income households making \$20,000 per year or less has remained the same despite a 14% decrease in the total number of households. This has left a notable low-income population vulnerable to higher economic pressures.



From 2008 to 2023, the highest educational attainment of the city's residents has also experienced a significant level of change, resulting in a more well educated population and workforce. The share of residents 25 and older with a bachelors degree or more increased from 10% to 26%. This shift moved New Hope from much lower educational attainment than the state to being on par with the state, with 28% of 25+ year olds statewide with a bachelors degree or more. This has helped grow the city's number of local jobs by 27% in 15 years.



Since 2008, the cost of living in New Hope has increased dramatically compared to nearby localities in the metro area. Although the city has not experienced a large net increase in residents or housing units, when adjusted for inflation the median rent has increased by 30% and the median home value has increased by 40%. The city's rapid increase in its cost of living has the potential to put many long-term lower-income residents at risk of displacement.



**\$81K**  
median household income  
↑+50% since 2010  
(inflation adjusted)

**34.2**  
median age  
↓-15% since 2010

**(36% of pop.)**  
**1,035**  
residents 18 and younger  
↑+89% since 2010

**(8% of pop.)**  
**243**  
residents 65 and older  
↓-34% since 2010

**\$922**  
median gross rent  
↑+30% since 2010  
(inflation adjusted)

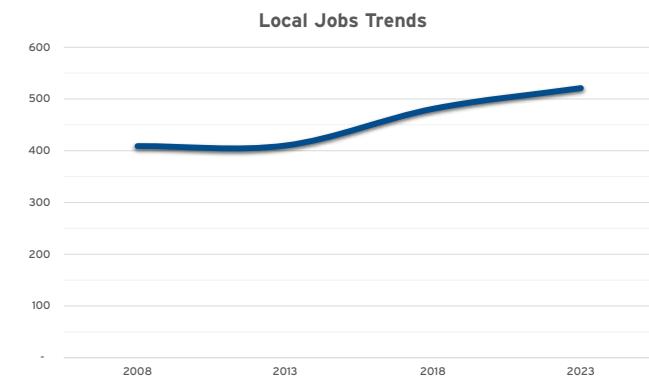
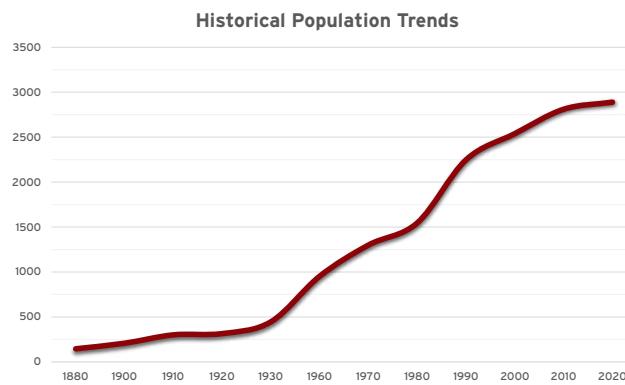
**\$160K**  
median home value  
↑+40% since 2010  
(inflation adjusted)

### GROWTH PROFILE

**+4%**  
total population,  
2008 - 2023

**+101**  
total population,  
2008 - 2023

**+112**  
total jobs,  
2008 - 2023



Although the City of New Hope has not experienced a significant net growth in population over the last 15 years, indicators suggest that the city is poised to experience substantial change over the next 15 years as explosive growth in the Huntsville metro area is projected to continue. New Hope added just over 100 residents since 2008, however, it is located on Highway 431, a major growth corridor for Huntsville. New Hope is situated near the fastest growing section of Huntsville, and the adjacent town of Owens Crossroads highlights the growth potential soon to hit New Hope. Owens Crossroads grew by 90% since 2008, nearly doubling its population in 15 years. New Hope needs to be prepared for additional spillover growth from Huntsville to ensure that new residents, businesses, and housing developments don't negatively impact the city's character and quality of life that are central to New Hope's identity.

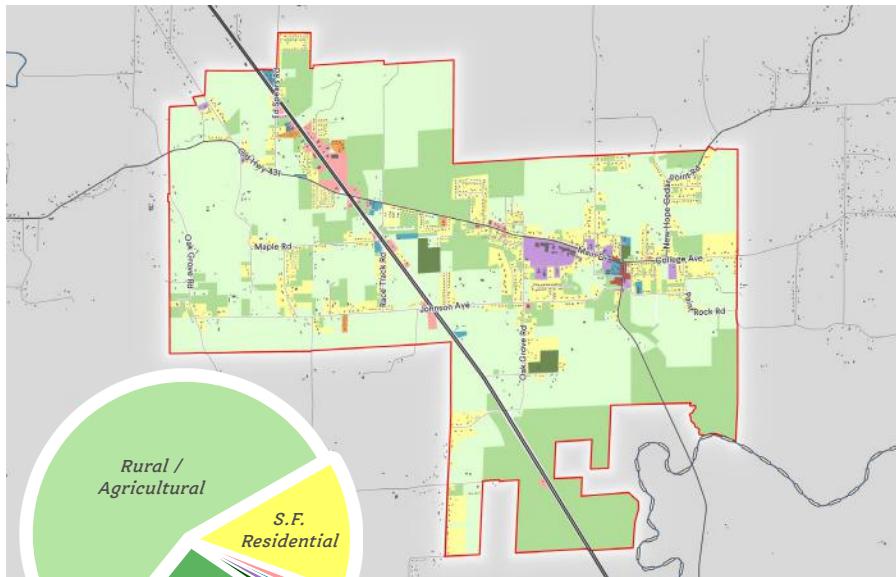
**★ The above community profile for New Hope highlights some of the big picture trends and conditions shaping the city, including local increases in education, employment, income, and housing costs.**

*what we learned about...*

# LAND USE / ZONING

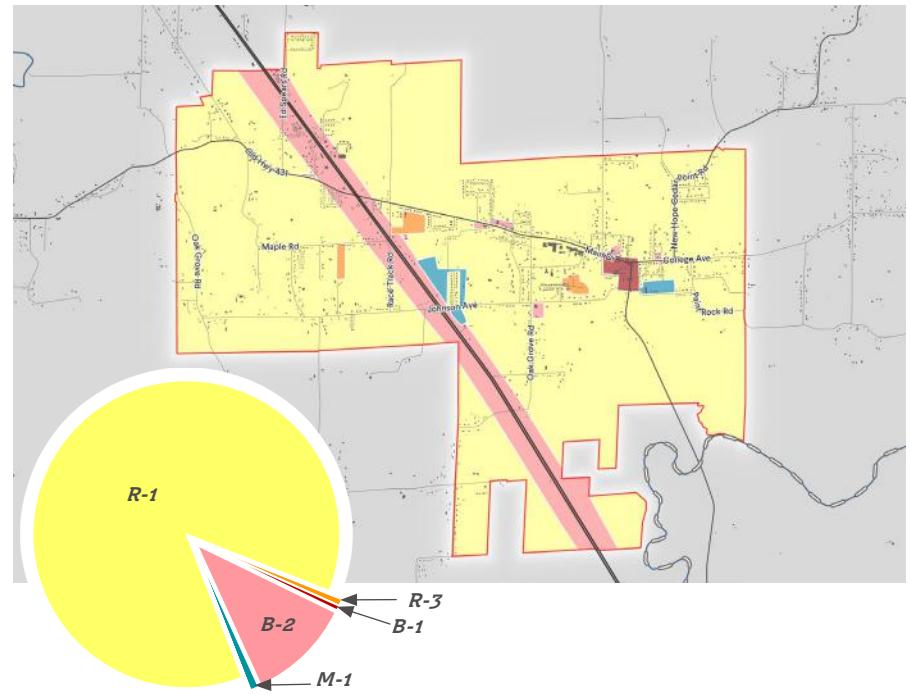


**EXISTING LAND USE**



Rural / Agricultural	53%	Manufacturing	0.5%
Single Family Residential	13%	Civic / Institutional	1%
Multifamily Residential	0.2%	Park	1%
Town Center Commercial	0.1%	Undeveloped / Natural	25%
General Commercial	1%		

**EXISTING ZONING**



AG (Agriculture)	0%
R-1 (Low Density Res.)	87%
R-2 (Med Density Res.)	0%
R-3 (High Density Res.)	0.7%
R-4 (Multifamily Res.)	0%
MH (Manufactured Home)	0%
MU (Mixed Use)	0%
B-1 (Town Center Comm.)	0.5%
B-2 (General Comm.)	11%
M-1 (Light Industrial)	0.9%
M-2 (General Industrial)	0%
PUD (Planned Unit Dev.)	0%
H-431 (Hwy 431 Overlay)	0%
FH (Flood Hazard Overlay)	0%



## MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 New Hope has a lot of low density land.

The City of New Hope is predominantly characterized by rural and agricultural landscapes, which account for 53% of the total land area. Undeveloped and natural spaces comprise an additional 25%, contributing to the city's open space and ecological assets. Residential development is relatively limited, with single-family neighborhoods making up just 13% of the land, reflecting a low-density, rural, community structure.

*IMPACT The prevalence of low density land use patterns leaves the city open to lots of potential new development. Strategic management of land turnover is critical.*

### FINDING

#### 2 Existing zoning is underutilized.

The city's existing zoning ordinance/ map does little to protect sensitive land or support key areas such as downtown. 87% of the city is zoned for low density single family residential, allowing new subdivisions by right almost everywhere. Most of the ordinance's base and overlay districts remain unassigned on the map, limiting the efficacy of local land controls.

*IMPACT Reworking zoning classifications to better protect sensitive rural land and support key areas such as downtown will be imperative.*

### FINDING

#### 3 Housing production has been limited.

Since 2000, the city has averaged about 10 new homes constructed per year. Since 2000, only 2 new subdivisions have been developed in the city (Angela's Ridge and Huntland Estates), which began construction in 2006 and 2008, respectively. Development of new residential areas in the last 25 years has totaled just 55 acres and 100% of new residential construction has been traditional single family detached homes, which are 77% of the housing stock.

*IMPACT Limited and undiversified housing production places artificial strain on local housing dynamics. Allowing new growth (strategically) and providing more diverse options for seniors, etc. is important for maintaining an affordable high quality of life in town.*



## MAJOR PUBLIC INPUT FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 Strong support for targeted growth.

Residents consistently advocated for additional commercial growth as well as limited and strategic residential growth, mainly along existing transportation corridors like Highway 431 and near the downtown area.

**PLANNING**

- Promote more compact development patterns that prioritize infill and redevelopment over sprawl.

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Support additional growth/ development in the Town Center and Highway 431 areas.
- Align zoning and development approval with infrastructure capacity.

**EXAMPLE**

**INPUT** *“Target areas that are underutilized but have existing infrastructure like repurposing vacant or abandoned properties or expand to adjacent areas with good proximity to downtown to encourage more sustainable development.”*

### FINDING

#### 2 Preservation of small-town character.

A frequently expressed concern among residents is that rapid or poorly planned development could erode the rural, small-town identity of New Hope.

**PLANNING**

- Ensure zoning and land use controls are in place to protect rural/ agricultural land from overdevelopment.

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Limit high density multifamily developments.
- Buffer commercial and industrial uses from residential neighborhoods and parks.
- Promote preservation/ adaptive reuse of the city's historic properties.

**EXAMPLE**

**INPUT** *“Continue to be a small town with friendly people; have more access to mom & pop restaurants; improve our infrastructure; upgrade our school(s).”*



## FINDING

### 3 Desire for walkable land uses w/ public amenities.

Many participants expressed a need for land use planning tied to park access, greenways, and walkability — emphasizing that new development and existing amenities should be paired with community-serving infrastructure.

**PLANNING**

- Prioritize walkability in the design of new residential neighborhoods.

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Support development that enhances the Town Center as a walkable, mixed-use district
- Integrate connectivity, trails, and green buffers into future land use patterns.
- Expand and enhance parks and other public spaces as walkable destinations.

**EXAMPLE INPUT** *"I would like to see more businesses downtown and sidewalks and landscaping to tie the library to the downtown area. So, everything is walkable like it was originally and similar to the planned communities Huntsville is building."*

## FINDING

### 4 Support for more diverse housing options.

66% of respondents support or are open to the idea of implementing zoning changes that allow for a greater diversity of housing options, such as townhomes, duplexes, accessory dwelling units, etc. 41% were in favor while 25% were open to the idea.

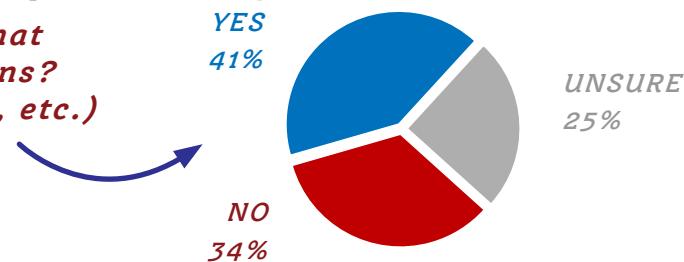
**PLANNING**

- Develop housing options that support a variety of in-demand lifestyles, especially walkable neighborhoods.

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Ensure housing diversity integrates with existing neighborhood scale and character.
- Strategically place denser housing options to support walkable land use patterns and limit single family encroachment.
- Support affordable housing options in new developments for working class families.

**EXAMPLE INPUT** *Would you support zoning changes that allow for more diverse housing options? (townhomes, duplexes, in-law suites, etc.)*

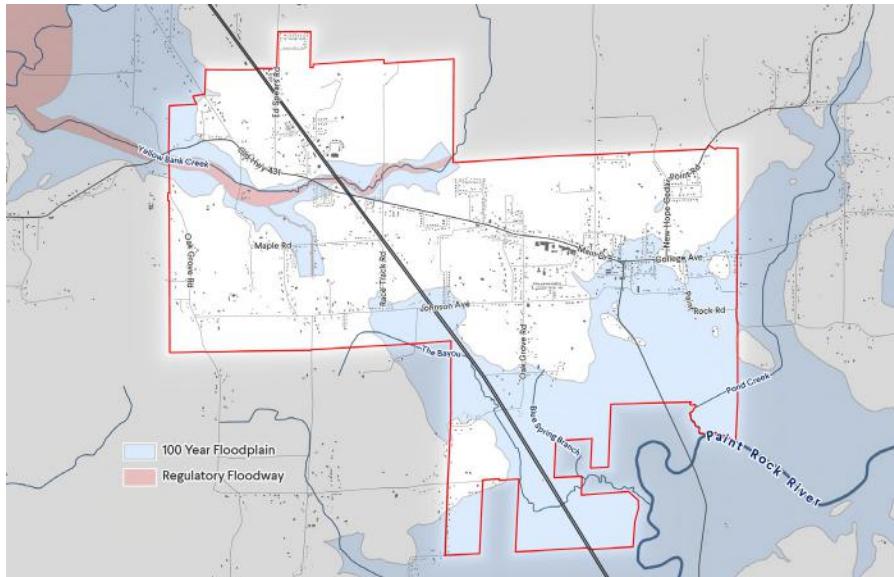


*what we learned about...*



# INFRASTRUCTURE / SERVICES

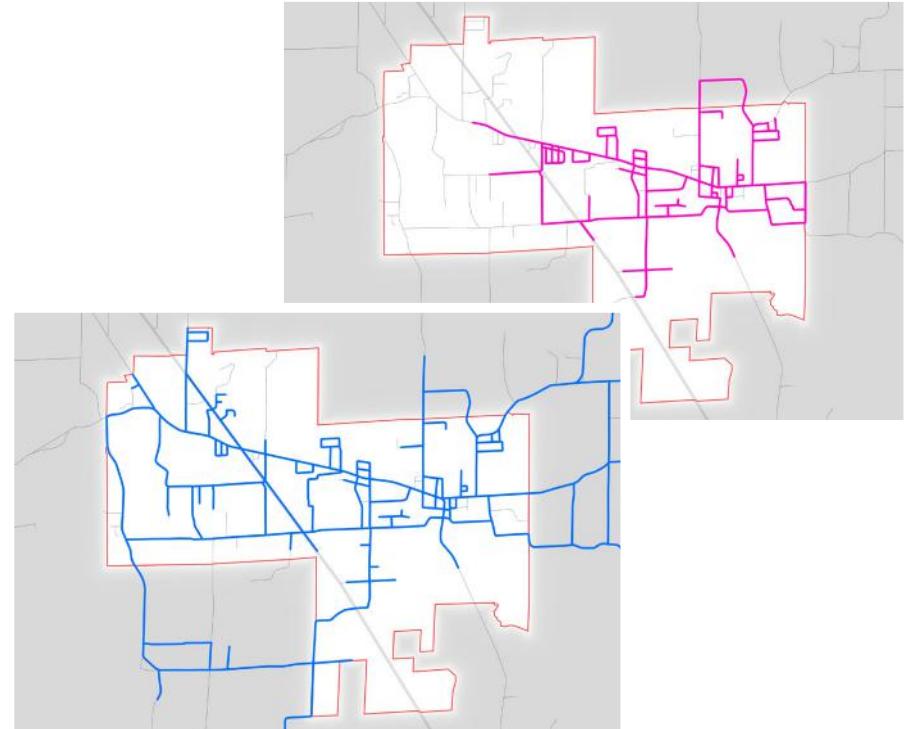
## FLOOD VULNERABILITY



**36%** of the city is in a *100-year floodplain*

**2%** of the city is in a *regulatory floodway*

## PUBLIC SEWER SERVICE AREA



## PUBLIC WATER SERVICE AREA



## MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 New Hope has significant flooding vulnerability.

Approximately 36% of the City of New Hope, including the entire downtown area, lies within a designated flood zone, highlighting significant exposure to flood hazards for critical civic infrastructure. Over the next 30 years, an estimated 484 properties (26%) in the city are at risk of flooding, underscoring the need for proactive resilience and mitigation planning.

**IMPACT** *A variety of stormwater management interventions should be integrated into regulatory development practices, and projects protecting key infrastructure should be prioritized.*

### FINDING

#### 2 Water / sewer improvements needed.

Water and sewer infrastructure in New Hope will require targeted upgrades and expansions to support the city's development goals and accommodate future growth. Existing utility limitations currently constrain where and how much the city can grow, particularly for residential and commercial projects. Strategic investments in these systems are essential to unlock new development areas and ensure long-term service reliability.

**IMPACT** *The comprehensive plan should include goals to coordinate land use decisions with utility capacity and prioritize infrastructure investment in areas targeted for growth.*

### FINDING

#### 3 Only ~1/3 of homes are walkable to a public park.

There are approximately 400 residential properties within a 1/2 mile (~10 minute) walk of an entrance to a public park, out of about 1,150 total residential properties in the city. This share of residents living within walking distance of a park is much lower than the nationwide average of 71%, leaving the city's green public infrastructure more difficult to access for most of the city's residents.

**IMPACT** *Improved park accessibility through an expanded and better integrated park network should be a major goal of the comprehensive plan.*



## MAJOR PUBLIC INPUT FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 Strong support for concurrency requirements.

A recurring concern is that public infrastructure/ facilities — especially schools, water/ sewer, and drainage — must be expanded or upgraded before new housing is approved. Residents associate growth with service strain unless capacity planning is addressed first.

**PLANNING** • Determine projected demand for additional infrastructure capacity based on a desired future buildout scenario.

**IMPLICATIONS** • Require existing infrastructure capacity be sufficient to support new development prior to development approval.  
• Prioritize expansions/ upgrades to public school facilities to prevent overcrowding.

**EXAMPLE** *“Fix the issues within the town first and then address new growth.”*

**INPUT** *“We need slow, controlled growth with great services provided at a reasonable cost to the residents.”*

### FINDING

#### 2 Demand for ongoing parks & rec improvements.

The public emphasized the need for additional improvements to parks and recreation facilities, with top priorities including restrooms, walking/biking trails, and expanded play and sports facilities. Residents also expressed interest in natural amenities like water features and asked for equitable access to parks across all neighborhoods.

**PLANNING** • Develop additional park amenities and prioritize restroom construction.

**IMPLICATIONS** • Expand trail systems to create a park network and serve both recreation and transportation goals.  
• Include both active play areas and passive, natural environments to meet a wide range of community needs.  
• Consider geographic equity in planning park improvements, especially in growing or underserved areas.

**EXAMPLE** *“Enhance existing parks and add new ones in neighborhoods without access.”*

**INPUT** *“Walking/biking trails should be a focus for healthy, connected neighborhoods.”*



## FINDING

### 3 Desire for multigenerational community services.

Many during the engagement process expressed a need for infrastructure and services that support seniors, families, and youth together. This includes community centers, accessible design, and facilities that promote health and connection across age groups.

**PLANNING** • Expand youth-oriented programming and active recreation

**IMPLICATIONS** • Invest in senior-friendly housing and healthcare access  
• Design public spaces that promote connection across all ages  
• Prioritize infrastructure that allows residents to age in place

**EXAMPLE** *“Seniors able to ‘age in place’—we need good medical care and neighborhood amenities.”*

**INPUT** *“Opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy recreational areas, sports...”*

*“More senior housing and support services near the town center.”*

## FINDING

### 4 Stormwater planning is a major public priority.

Residents expressed concern about flooding and drainage, highlighting the need to improve stormwater infrastructure across the city. Many supported the use of natural features like ponds and creeks to manage runoff and enhance community aesthetics.

**PLANNING** • Avoid development in flood-prone areas

**IMPLICATIONS** • Upgrade outdated or underbuilt drainage systems  
• Integrate green infrastructure into both new and existing developments  
• Ensure that stormwater and utility capacity is assessed before approving development

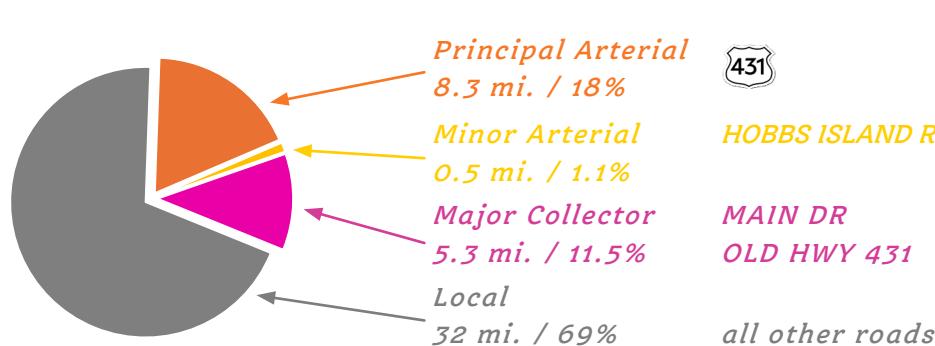
**EXAMPLE** *“We need more natural areas with water features and places to walk. Adds beauty and keeps flooding down.”*

*what we learned about...*

# ROADS / MOBILITY



## COMMUTE PATTERNS



HOBBS ISLAND RD

MAIN DR

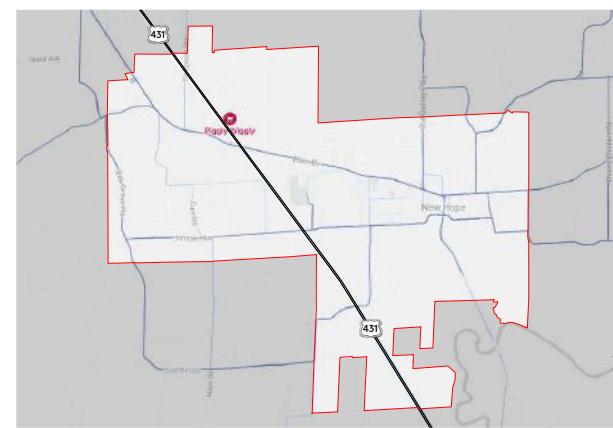
OLD HWY 431

OLD GURLEY PIKE

NEW HOPE CEDAR POINT RD

all other roads

## WALKING ACTIVITY



## CYCLING ACTIVITY



## MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 Daily traffic is increasing on Highway 431.

Average daily traffic levels on US Hwy 431 are increasing rapidly, rising by 20% over just three years — from 9,519 vehicles per day in 2020 to 11,394 in 2023. This growth is placing additional strain on the city's major road infrastructure and reflects mounting regional development pressures and highlights the need for coordinated land use and transportation planning.

*IMPACT Plan for continued increases in traffic along Hwy 431 to coordinate road/ intersection improvements. Additional traffic through the city can support additional business growth.*

### FINDING

#### 2 The city's bike/ ped infrastructure is underdeveloped.

The city's multimodal mobility network is insufficient to support safe and convenient walking and biking. There are only about 1.5 miles of sidewalks throughout the city. Apart from the 2 newer subdivisions and the sidewalks on Main Dr/ College Ave, the rest of the city lacks walkable infrastructure. There is currently no dedicated cycling infrastructure in the city.

*IMPACT With a limited bike/ ped network, locals are more dependent on personal cars to get around town. This increases road usage and wear and hinders popular land uses like downtown.*

### FINDING

#### 3 Commute trends are leading to additional traffic.

Although the city's residential population increased by just 3% from 2013 to 2023, the number of people commuting in and out of the city each day increased by about 28% during the same time period, largely due to an increase in both the number of jobs in New Hope as well as people commuting to and from Huntsville on the city's roads.

*IMPACT Both New Hope and Huntsville are growing as employment centers, leading to an increase in people traveling to and through New Hope. The city's major throughfares must be upgraded to accommodate additional commuters.*



## MAJOR PUBLIC INPUT FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 Popular support for sidewalks and walkability.

Many residents expressed a desire for improved pedestrian connectivity, especially in and around downtown, parks, and residential areas. Comments reflect a broader vision of a walkable, small-town atmosphere that supports daily life, safety, and accessibility.

**PLANNING**

- Develop a sidewalk/ pedestrian master plan for improvements and expansion to the existing network

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Adopt a complete streets policy
- Include sidewalks and trails in capital improvements programs
- Implement traffic calming measures at key locations

**EXAMPLE** *“I would like it to have that hometown feeling. I do think that we need more sidewalks in the city limits.”*  
**INPUT** *“The city should focus on building more sidewalks so I can walk around town more.”*

### FINDING

#### 2 Desire for cycling infrastructure.

Several shared interest in expanding bike-friendly infrastructure, including bike lanes and shared-use paths. Cycling access was linked to broader goals of health, safety, connectivity, and reducing car dependency — especially as part of trail systems and park access.

**PLANNING**

- Develop a cycling master plan to introduce on-road and off-road bike friendly infrastructure to the city

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Adopt a complete streets policy
- Include bike lanes and shared use paths in street improvement and capital planning projects
- Implement traffic calming measures at key locations

**EXAMPLE** *“Walking/biking trails should be a focus for healthy, connected neighborhoods.”*  
**INPUT** *“New Hope should be a safe, walkable, and bike-friendly city.”*



## FINDING

### 3 Demand for general roadway/ traffic improvements.

Cited often was the need for better road conditions, improved traffic flow, and upgraded street infrastructure, (repaving, widening, lighting, etc.). These concerns reflect a desire for roads that are safer, more efficient, and better aligned with the city's growth.

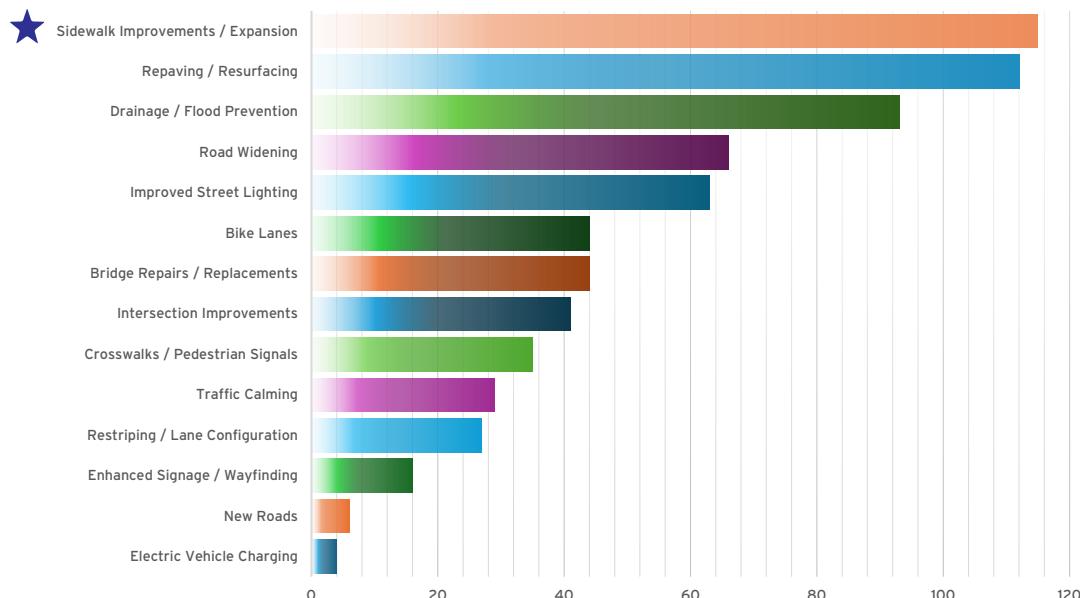
**PLANNING** • Conduct a citywide pavement condition and traffic assessment to help determine needs and investment priorities

**IMPLICATIONS** • Consider alternative roadway configurations at traffic bottlenecks and crash hotspots  
• Upgrade lighting, drainage, and signage along main thoroughfares  
• Coordinate road improvement projects to support future development goals

**EXAMPLE** *“New Hope needs better paved and wider roads.”*

**INPUT** *“Prioritize major roads for traffic and rainwater control... upgraded metal street lights, and beautification.”*

**What transportation improvements should be the highest priority in New Hope? (select up to 5)**



#### TOP ROADS MENTIONED FOR REPAIRS / UPGRADES:

1. Main Drive
2. Oak Grove Road
3. Johnson Avenue

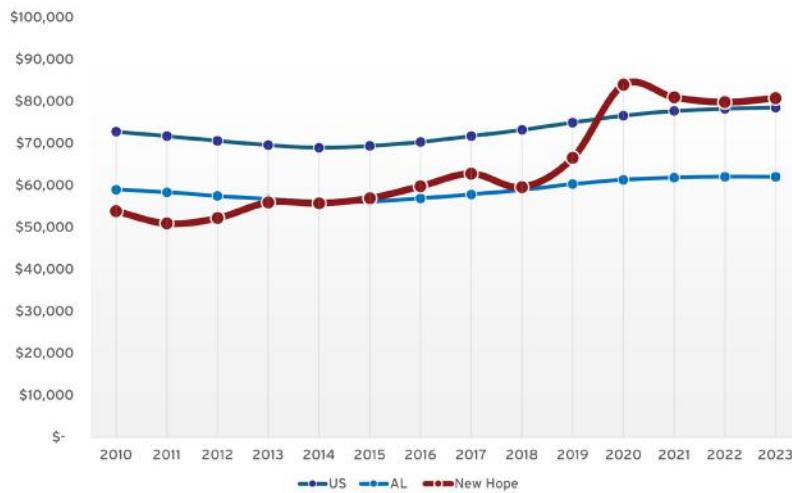
**★ SIDEWALKS** are the most commonly requested transportation improvement

*what we learned about...*

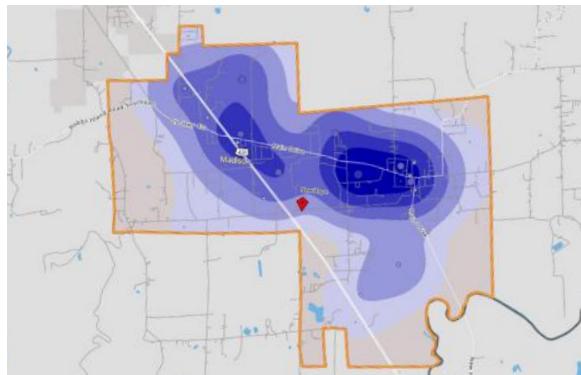
# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / PLACEMAKING



## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME TRENDS

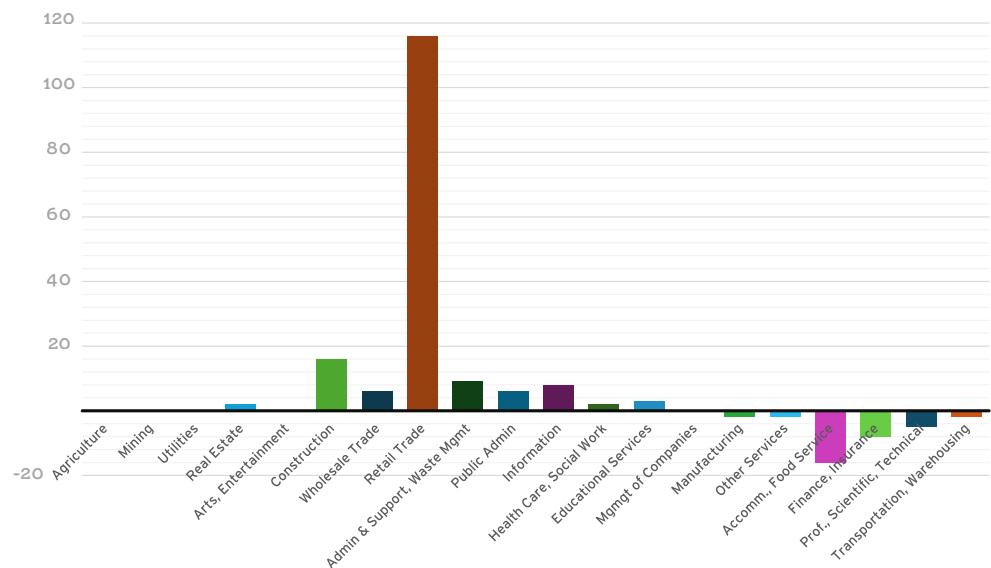


## LOCAL EMPLOYMENT DENSITY



74

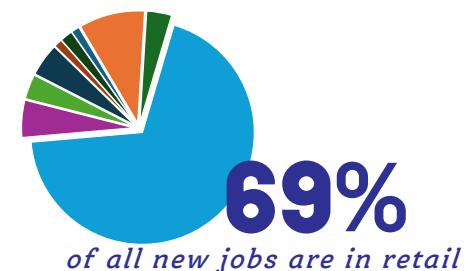
## LOCAL JOB GROWTH BY INDUSTRY SECTOR, 2010-2023



## JOB GROWTH

**+168**

*JOBS SINCE 2010*





## MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 New Hope is growing as an employment hub.

Between 2010 and 2023, New Hope experienced a 34% increase in employment, adding 168 new jobs to its local economy. Notably, 69% of these jobs were in the retail trade sector, indicating a strong shift toward service-oriented and consumer-facing employment. This growth reflects both rising local demand and the city's expanding role as a commercial hub for the surrounding area.

**IMPACT** *Retail focused job growth indicates an economy increasingly dependent on consumer spending. The plan should promote diversification and higher wage industry recruitment.*

### FINDING

#### 2 Median household income is increasing rapidly.

New Hope's inflation-adjusted median household income grew by 50% from 2010 to 2023, reaching \$81,000—a level that now surpasses both the Alabama and U.S. medians. This upward trend in income reflects strong household earning power and increasing economic stability within the community. New Hope exceeded the state median by 2016 and the national median by 2020, positioning it as a financially competitive place to live and do business.

**IMPACT** *The city can be more selective about future development, prioritizing high-quality, well-designed projects, including targeting a higher caliber of businesses for recruitment efforts.*

### FINDING

#### 3 Downtown and Hwy 431 are major activity areas.

Downtown New Hope and the Highway 431 corridor serve as the city's primary economic and activity centers, concentrating most of its commercial services and civic amenities. These areas play a central role in supporting daily needs, small business activity, and community identity. As the city grows, both corridors will be critical for guiding targeted investment, placemaking, and infrastructure improvements.

**IMPACT** *The plan should prioritize strategic investment, design standards, and mixed-use opportunities in downtown and on Hwy 431. These areas should be targeted for infrastructure and placemaking improvements.*



## MAJOR PUBLIC INPUT FINDINGS

### FINDING

#### 1 Strong desire for a walkable, vibrant town center.

Residents envision a revitalized downtown that is more active and walkable, with additional small businesses, civic amenities, and family-friendly gathering spaces. This includes sidewalk connectivity, beautification, and a cohesive small-town character.

**PLANNING**

- Prioritize downtown infrastructure investments

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Encourage mixed-use and infill development in the town center district
- Integrate placemaking and public gathering spaces
- Create a form based code or overlay district for the town center

**EXAMPLE**

*“Cute shops for clothes, food, arts and crafts. Condos in the downtown area would be nice.”*

**INPUT**

*“Make downtown the focus by adding and restoring buildings for outside dining and music.”*  
*“Vibrant downtown with more family dining/entertainment and a farmers/makers market.”*

### FINDING

#### 2 Calls for elevated development on Hwy 431.

Hwy 431 was the most frequently mentioned area for targeted commercial development. Residents supported adding businesses that meet daily needs (restaurants, shops, grocery), as well as enhancing the visual quality of the corridor to reflect the city's identity.

**PLANNING**

- Promote commercial node style development along Hwy 431

**IMPLICATIONS**

- Implement corridor facade, landscape, and signage design guidelines for visual quality
- Coordinate infrastructure planning to support future highway development goals
- Promote retail and service uses that align with community goals

**EXAMPLE**

*“Highway 431 is the best place for growth – it already has traffic and space.”*

**INPUT**

*“Beautify the 431 corridor to attract better businesses.”*



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / PLACEMAKING

## FINDING

### 3 Beautification and aesthetics are a public priority.

Many participants suggested prioritizing improvements to the city's appearance, including landscaping, signage, curbs, lighting, and overall cleanliness. These suggestions were often tied to a desire to make New Hope more inviting for visitors and businesses.

**PLANNING** • Establish a community gateway and corridor enhancement program

**IMPLICATIONS** • Integrate placemaking into capital improvement projects  
• Encourage or incentivize aesthetic improvements to private property

**EXAMPLE** *"If you turn off the highway, you're met with run down homes and properties immediately,*

**INPUT** *so that is a newcomer's first impression of New Hope."*

*"Beautify downtown with murals, lighting, trees, and charm like other small towns."*

## FINDING

### 4 Broad support for more local dining and retail.

Respondents consistently asked for more locally owned businesses, especially restaurants, coffee shops, bakeries, and small retail that give New Hope its own identity. This interest is often paired with a desire to avoid chain-heavy or impersonal development.

**PLANNING** • Streamline zoning and permitting for small business development

**IMPLICATIONS** • Prioritize small business development through infill or redevelopment in walkable areas  
• Create a local business support and incentive program

**EXAMPLE** *"We need more mom-and-pop restaurants and cafes to keep dollars local."*

**INPUT** *"Local businesses, not just chains, to give New Hope its own personality."*

