



1 Plan for Downtown Development
Revitalize downtown starting with a planning process and development framework plan, a business development and marketing plan, and in the redevelopment of key opportunity sites that would enhance downtown vitality.



2 Develop Land Adjacent to the New US 17
Revitalize vacant, underutilized buildings along US 17. Coordinate land use plans with transportation investment to optimize commercial development, minimize congestion, and enhance quality of life.



3 Enhance Enterprise Development
Stimulate county-wide growth with projects such as a local economic strategy, an industrial commerce park, and innovative financial support mechanisms including micro-enterprise loans.



4 Assess Airport Feasibility
Facilitate an independent study to determine whether a proposed international cargo airport is feasible and would be a viable economic engine for the county and region.



5 Improve Regional Transportation Connectivity
Upgrade major transportation and emergency evacuation routes, including US 17 and a potential east-west corridor, to improve mobility and economic linkages throughout the region and beyond.

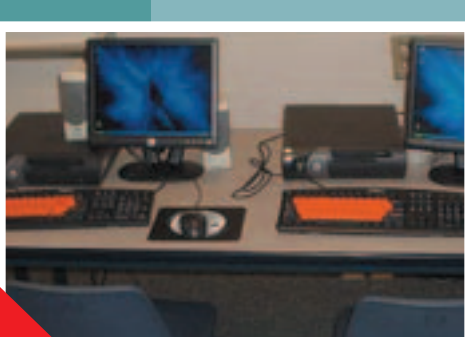


6 Build Homes and Communities
Build a variety of housing options to appeal to diverse community members, including seniors, agricultural workers, people with special needs, and low- and moderate-income residents.

- Plan for Housing Development
- Build Capacity for Delivering Housing



7 Construct a Multi-Purpose Community Facility
Construct a multi-purpose facility and library to meet educational needs and provide activity spaces, a bookmobile, increased Internet opportunities, and improved access for special-needs populations.



8 Upgrade Telecommunications and Access to Broadband
Modernize regional telecommunications systems with state-of-the-art wireless technology, consistent with state goals for rural economic development, to expand economic opportunities and improve life quality.



8 Increase Tourism: Develop a Peace River Heritage Corridor
Increase job and business opportunities and enhance life quality by developing, preserving, and marketing the Peace River corridor and linking it to communities throughout the region.



8 Improve Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Facilities
Protect public health and provide for growth by targeting key improvements for water, wastewater, and stormwater services, such as needed plant upgrades and emergency backup power.



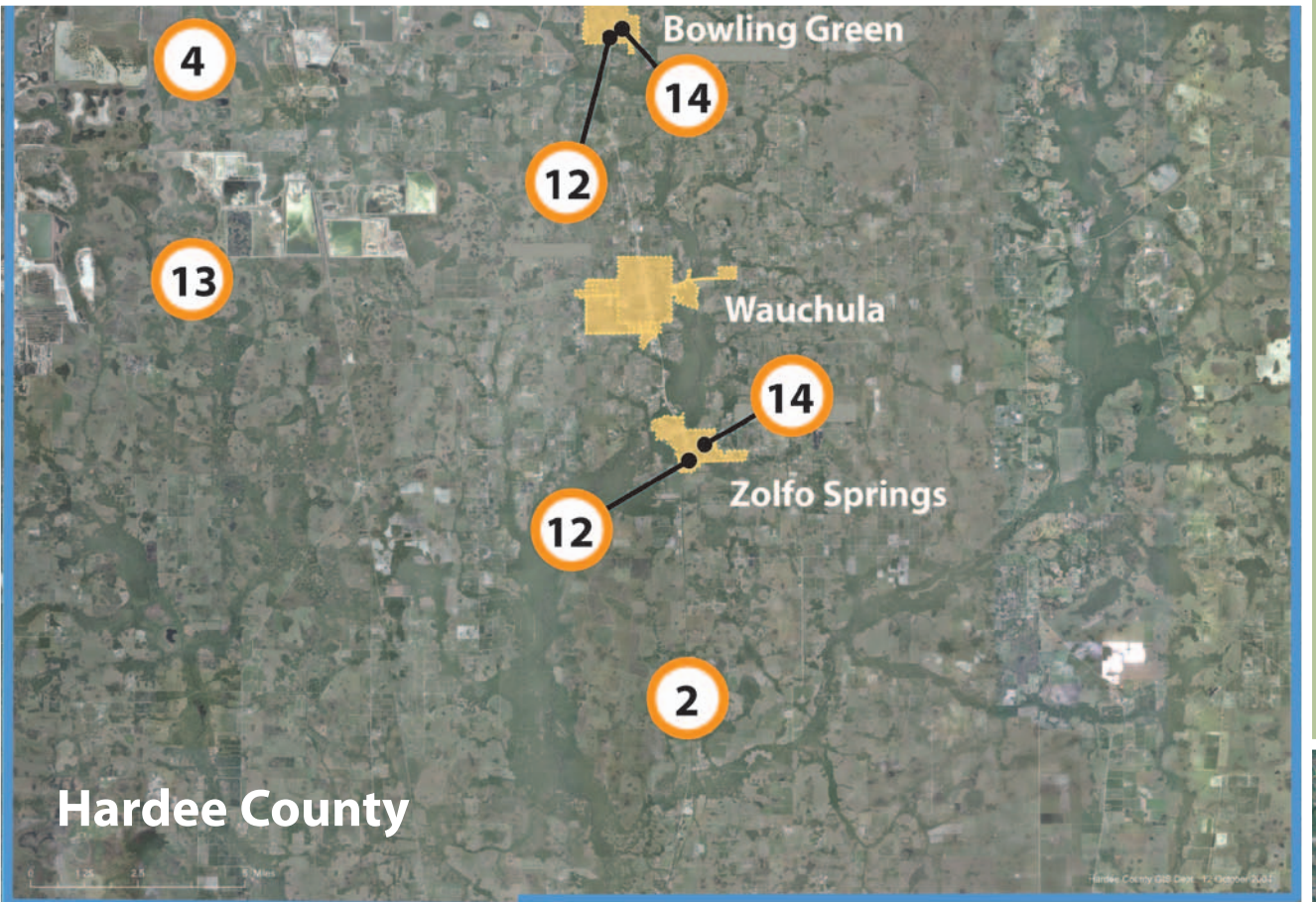
8 Expand and Promote Higher Education and Training Opportunities
Improve workforce skills and make the area more attractive to businesses by identifying and providing additional courses targeted to higher education and vocational training needs.



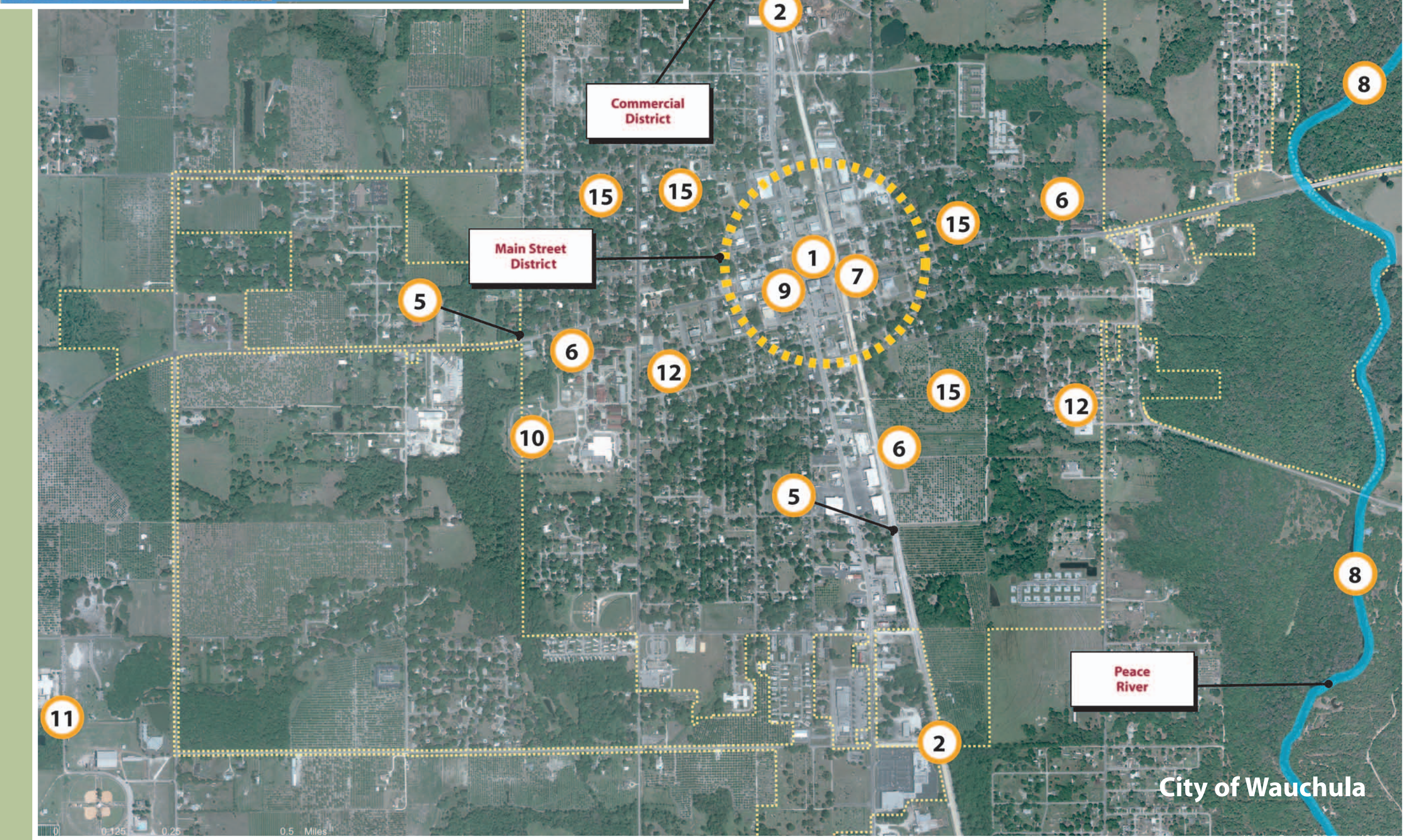
9 Develop Mixed-Use Opportunities
Renovate selected multi-story downtown buildings to include upper-story housing such as lofts or apartments, to help address a critical housing shortage and provide mixed-use opportunities on the ground floor such as offices/retail.



10 Enhance and Expand Athletic/Recreational Facilities
Rebuild the damaged Hardee High School stadium. Develop enhanced athletic fields and playing fields. Expand neighborhood and regional park and recreation facilities.



Hardee County Long-Term Recovery Projects



COMMUNITY VISION

The Community Vision forms the foundation for the long-term recovery projects outlined in this "Road Map to Long-Term Recovery." The Recovery Plan is based on input received from the community regarding their vision for the future. While there was no single vision identified, the overall vision shared common threads expressed during community meetings and discussions held over an eight-week period.

- Hardee County residents have a proud agricultural heritage and wish to maintain and celebrate that history. You are dedicated to improving the economic health of the county by attracting new investment and growing existing businesses.

- You are a future generation-focused community that wants to increase opportunities for its young people in the way of jobs, education and recreation.
- You take pride in your neighborhoods and old Florida tradition.
- You understand the importance of providing quality, affordable housing options for every cross section of the community.
- You acknowledge the unique opportunity of long-term planning.



11 Improve Health and Human Services
Expand and improve medical, health, and human services throughout the county, including hospital, clinic, specialty, long-term care, mental health, and child care facilities.



11 Rebuild the Arena
Restore the Cattlemen's Arena to provide a venue for horse and livestock events, exhibitions, graduation ceremonies, holiday presentations, and other large-scale events.



12 Update Local Mitigation Strategy and Sheltering Plan
Update local plans to reduce disaster losses and provide safe shelter and emergency evacuation. Implement the highest priority projects, such as SafeRooms and hardened shelters.



12 Upgrade Facilities for Public Safety and Emergency Management
Repair or replace buildings and facilities for fire, law enforcement, emergency management, emergency medical, and communications services. Create a coordinated, comprehensive system, with joint or separate structures.



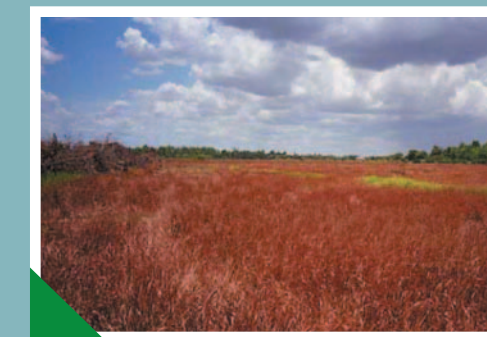
13 Enhance Mining Reclamation
Modify requirements to allow off-site mitigation that meets environmental requirements to protect watersheds and habitat while increasing the available supply of mining land.



14 Connect People and Places
Create more accessible, connected, and livable neighborhoods and improve community quality of life by providing needed paving, landscaping, storm drainage, traffic signals, and sidewalks.



15 Enhance and Create Parks and Open Space
Enhance existing and create new local parks and open space within walking distance of downtown and neighborhoods that are harmonized with property revitalization and housing opportunities.



Build Research Center and Demonstration Farm on Reclaimed Mining Land
Conduct agricultural research to study optimal use of mining lands.



Develop a Hardee County Stormwater Master Plan
Provide for sound stormwater and floodplain management by developing a stormwater master plan. Implement urgent projects, and create a stormwater utility to fund maintenance.



Develop Agricultural Cooperatives
Strengthen small and family-owned agricultural enterprises by developing a local agricultural cooperative that can market, educate, and promote members' products.

Develop Agricultural Water Conservation Programs



Reinstate Tri-County Mobile Health Clinic
Provide affordable health care by reinstating a regional mobile health-care clinic, in partnership with county health departments, medical services, and social-service agencies.



Launch 2-1-1 Helpline, Web Site, and Volunteer Resource Center
Enhance access to the health and social services through a central helpline and Web site. Establish a center to recruit and manage volunteers.



Assess Water Quality and Environmental Issues
Assess the quality of water and other key regional natural resources and determine what mitigation measures are needed to preserve or improve the environment.

Reduce the Risk of Wildfire

Recovery Value Indicators

High Moderate Community Interest