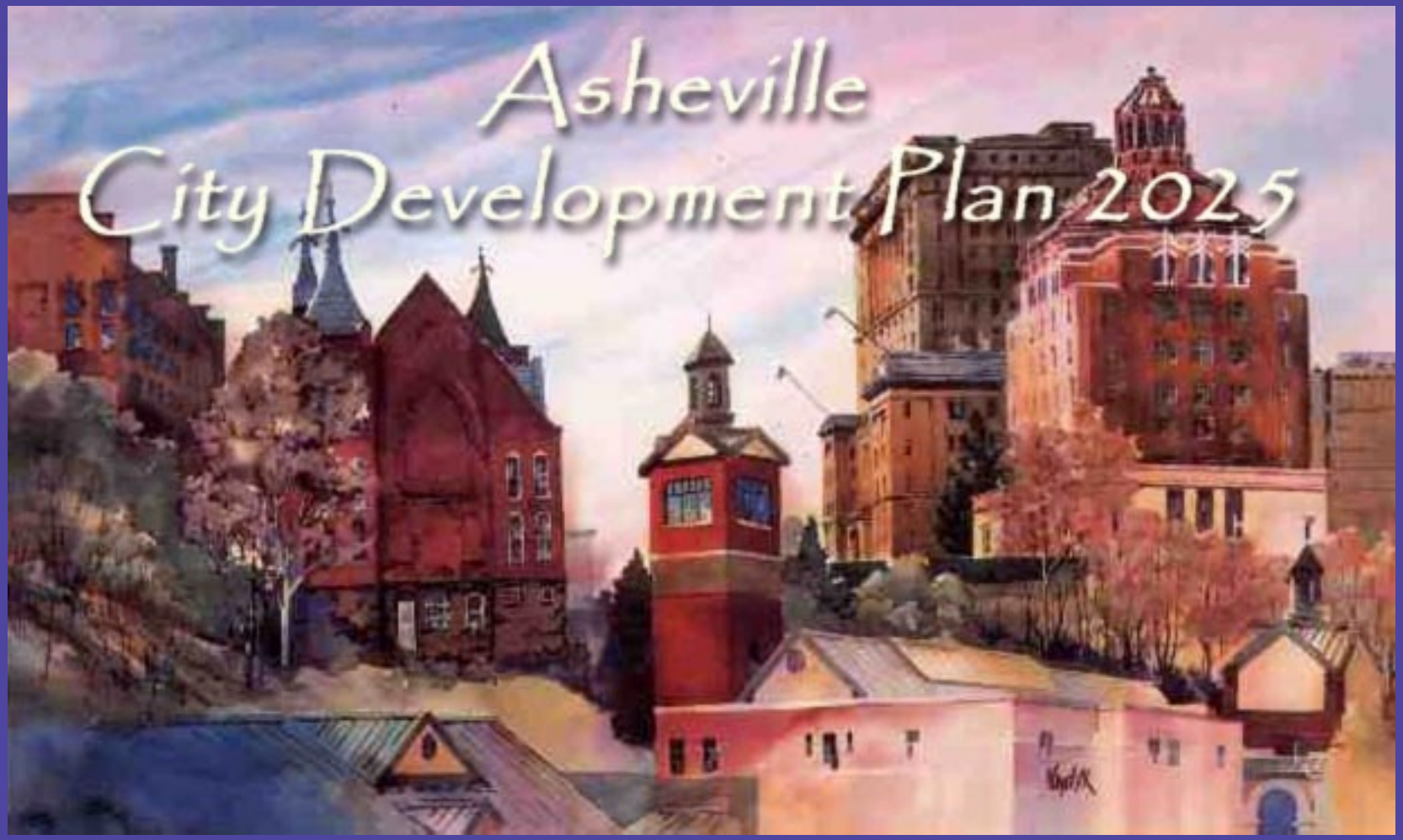

A Vision for the Future Development of Asheville Concentrating on
Land Use, Transportation, Air and Water Quality, and Economic Development

Asheville City Development Plan 2025

Dedicated to the Memory of:

Lionel (Will) Williams - Planning and Zoning Commissioner 1998-2001.
Soft-spoken and thoughtful, Will was an anchoring force whose passion for the community was translated into sound decisions that will continue to shape the future of Asheville.

Benson Slosman – "Gentle Ben" was an enlightened developer who could see value where others could not. His redevelopment efforts epitomized the Smart Growth movement and foresaw the future of the River District.

Julian Price – Julian was a quiet man whose love for Asheville was reflected in extensive physical and cultural investments. He supported Downtown development and Downtown businesses in countless ways. His work continues through the award winning Public-Interest Projects, his development and commercial investment corporation.

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Preface: Public Participation in the Asheville City Development Plan 2025

The Asheville City Development Plan 2025 was the joint effort of the City Plan Advisory Committee, formed by City Council in April 2001, and the City of Asheville Planning and Development staff. The City Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) was a group of 60 citizen volunteers who live and work in Asheville. CPAC's primary goals were: (1) to assure that the people of Asheville's ideas for our City's future were heard and (2) to assure that those ideas were reflected in City Development Plan 2025. The first step in accomplishing these goals was making sure that CPAC represented a broad cross-section of the Asheville community. To that end, the committee included members of all ages and all races, from the business community, neighborhood groups, the development community, affordable housing organizations, local government, property owners, church groups, and other community service organizations.

The members of CPAC wanted to assure both themselves and the community of an open and effective process. They decided that both the plan process and the plan needed to meet agreed-upon principles; that is, they needed to be:

- Relevant: Are we continually working toward a final product that will be relevant to the way our community lives, works, plays and grows?
- Acceptable: Are we continually striving to find outcomes acceptable to the community as a whole?
- Usable: Are we creating a product that community members will be able to clearly understand and effectively use?
- Workable: Does the product work as a tool for equitably balancing our community's diverse viewpoints, wants and needs?

These principles were repeatedly revisited as CPAC went about its work.

Originally six public forums were planned for the summer of 2001. CPAC decided that, to make the process as accessible as possible, more time was needed for spreading the word about the forums and more forums should be made available to the people of Asheville. As a result, a series of nine public forums was held in November in various locations all over the city. Forums were held both in the afternoon and in the evening, as well as on a Saturday, so that work schedules would not prevent attendance. At these forums the public was asked to share their ideas on the future of the City of Asheville. In addition, at the request of CPAC and the planning staff, a website was created to solicit public input over the internet, a dedicated phone line was set up with voice mail to solicit comments from those without access to computers, and walk-in comments were solicited at the "Plan-A-Terrium" storefront offices on Page Avenue and Wall Street in Downtown Asheville. At these offices planning information was made available to the public and City staff members were present to answer questions about the plan and plan

process. These efforts continued through the end of 2001 and, as a result, hundreds of ideas for a better Asheville were generated.

The next stage was review of the ideas generated and creation of the draft plan. Every idea generated was reviewed by members of CPAC and also by members of the planning staff. CPAC members organized the ideas into categories and noted ideas which received repeated mention and support. In addition, every idea generated has been appended to the plan so that they are available to the members of the City Council. These ideas were the basis for the planning staff's drafting of this new comprehensive plan for our City. In the spring of 2002, after more months of work, the draft plan was made available for public comment, both on the website and in the planning office.

While City staff was at work reviewing the community's ideas and creating the draft plan, the members of CPAC were preparing for submission of the plan to the community. It was agreed that the draft plan was not to be submitted to City Council until every member of the community had another series of opportunities to contribute to the plan. Comments on the plan were solicited on the website, via email and printable feedback forms, and CPAC hosted a series of public information sessions and another public forum. For the information sessions CPAC compiled a list of every identifiable community group in Asheville. Each group was invited to send members to one of the series of information sessions. At the sessions, the draft plan was presented and comments were solicited. In addition, the group members were encouraged to publicize final public forum opportunity to their members. The culmination of this outreach effort was a well-attended final public forum held on May 30, 2002. After the forum, the public comment period was extended to June 20, 2002, to assure that community members who missed the forum had every possible opportunity to participate. Although the draft plan was remarkably well-received in the various public comment opportunities described, the 2025 Plan has been greatly strengthened and improved in response to those comments.

The volunteer citizen members of CPAC and City staff have spent hundreds of hours trying to make sure that this plan represents the authentic voice of the people of Asheville. Each resident of our community has had countless opportunities to make his or her voice heard. Many, many residents have taken time out of their busy lives to do their part to guide Asheville's future. The resulting plan is not perfect. It should always be treated as a work in progress. But given the blood, sweat, tears, and time that the people of Asheville have committed to it, we believe the 2025 Plan is representative of our community's hopes and dreams for the future.

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"We are confronted with unsurmountable opportunities."

Pogo

Staff and Other Recognitions

Sincere thanks to **Mr. Chuck Tessier** whose innovative ideas concerning the Riverway and the general development of our community are reflected in this document.

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Special thanks to Jim Torpey, Teresa Torpey and Terry Bellamy for their editing assistance.

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Special thanks to former staff members Randall Barnett, Paul Benson, Gerald Green, Angela Heitter, Mike Matteson, Maggie O'Connor, and Eric Rufa.

“Planning is what you do before you do the thing you want to do.”

Warren Jake Wicker
NC Institute of Government

Photo by Charles Worley, Mayor

On behalf of the Asheville City Council, I am pleased to present the ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025***. This document reflects the work of an extensive committee of volunteers, a variety of City advisory boards and commissions, outside agencies and elected officials, city staff, and, most importantly, the citizens of the City of Asheville.

This document, developed with extensive public participation, reflects a careful and comprehensive analysis of future trends that affect the growth of our City, along with goals and strategies intended to favorably position the City with regard to those trends.

Today, the City of Asheville, just as city planner John Nolen wrote in 1925, "stands on the threshold of a new state in its evolution." Technological advances, rapid population growth, new ideas about the way to effectively manage this growth, public dreams and concerns about the future - all these things affect the future development of Asheville. By taking these matters into account and developing a simultaneously careful and ambitious plan that addresses challenges and seizes opportunities, the City of Asheville is ensuring that its destiny remains under its control.

I want to thank all of those who have generously given their time and ideas to bring this plan into reality. In particular, I want to express my appreciation for the hard work of the City Plan Advisory Committee. The work of this committee has resulted in a document that will effectively facilitate the growth of our City and one that reflects the desires and needs of our citizens. Thanks to their work, this is truly a document of the people.

Charles Worley
Mayor

Summary

"Good government obtains when those who are near are made happy, and those who are far off are attracted."

Confucius; The Analects; ca 480 BC

The City of Asheville has a broad tradition of fine comprehensive planning. From the *Asheville City Plan 1925* prepared for the City by the famed city planner John Nolen to the *Asheville City Plan 2010* prepared in 1987 with widespread public input, the City has a history of effective and implementable comprehensive plans.

The ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025*** was prepared under the direction of a diverse and dedicated group of volunteers, the City Plan Advisory Committee. This committee ensured that public involvement was maximized and that the resulting plan reflected the issues and concerns identified by the community. The committee also made sure that the plan focused on issues of critical relevance to the future of the City.

One of the great challenges for Asheville is how to accommodate growth. *What type?; How much?; Where?* – these are the big growth questions. Public comments and independent analysis of land use, transportation, air and water quality, and economic development trends have told us that the citizens of Asheville need and desire growth in the following areas:

- Skilled workforce, particularly high-tech and medical;
- Entrepreneurship, especially local small-businesses and home occupations;
- Increased property investment, particularly along our commercial corridors;
- Increased accommodation of population growth within the City, particularly along commercial corridors, in compatible neighborhood infill, and in urban villages;
- Mixed-use land use pattern;
- Multi-modal transportation opportunities;
- Development reflecting the character of Asheville; and
- Development that occurs in a pattern that is sensitive to air and water quality concerns.

Purpose of the Plan

The ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025*** proposes a land use pattern, transportation network and system of City services and

infrastructure that reflects the above community desires and wishes concerning the future growth of the City. The plan includes goals and strategies that will guide the City of Asheville in meeting those desires. These goals and strategies typically requires separate actions on the part of City Council, City staff, or other boards and agencies; consequently, periodic adjustments to the plan will be necessary to reflect the actual actions that are taken as the goals and strategies are considered, modified, and/or implemented and as circumstances change. To this end, the ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025*** must be considered as a guide for decision-making, rather than the "final decision" on any particular issue.

Introduction

"We are of course a nation of differences. Those differences don't make us weak. They're the source of our strength."

Jimmy Carter on stage at Al Smith dinner in New York City and October 21, 1976 and as quoted in Power Quotes by Daniel B. Baker (1992)

The first comprehensive plan for the City of Asheville was prepared by the renowned landscape architect and city planner John Nolen. Nolen's plan was called the ***Asheville City Plan 1925***. In that plan, Nolen established the basic development pattern for Asheville. This development pattern continues today, reflected in the homes and apartments, the urban parks and schools, the interconnected streets, and the stately commercial structures of the older parts of the City. We see this timeless, traditional development pattern in Montford, in Albemarle Park, along Haywood Road, and in Downtown Asheville. This development pattern has been preserved by the careful attention of Asheville's citizens and today it constitutes some of the most desirable and livable real estate in the entire City.

John Nolen Plan – 1925

This is why plans are important. Successful city plans create long-term community value; they protect and preserve our open spaces and historic resources; they promote a higher quality of life; they foster a climate for positive and sustainable economic development; they recognize and respond to social and technological changes that shape the future of our community and region.

*"We have used our existing Comprehensive Plan - the **2010 Plan** - for almost 15 years. It has served us well. However, times have changed and with each passing day, the **2010 Plan** becomes less relevant. As Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, at nearly every meeting, I see situations where my board could use guidance about how to apply these new ideas. We need a new comprehensive plan to provide that guidance." Max Haner, Chairman, Planning and Zoning Commission, 1999-2001*

The ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025***, has been prepared and accordance with key guiding principles established by the City Council. These principles promote Smart Growth. As in the Nolen plan, Smart Growth planning is about making the right choices:

- Sustainable economic development that guides us into the New Economy;
- Providing a wide mixture of housing types

for all income levels;

- Protecting our natural resources and respecting our mountain heritage;
- Effectively involving the public in decisions that affect them;
- Providing transportation options where transit, bicycles, and walking join the automobile in getting us around our neighborhoods and business centers; and
- Making farsighted investment in our public streets, in our open spaces and parks, and in our community gathering places.

Smart Growth planning promotes the orderly development of our City. Just as importantly, it seeks extensive public involvement and public agreement in planning our future. Perhaps the most important role for the ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025*** is as a visioning document that reflects and unifies the direction desired by our citizenry for the future development of Asheville.

As the largest city in western North Carolina, Asheville has traditionally been a regional leader in business and cultural activities. Now, because of the City's national recognition as a great place to live, work and play, Asheville is

Many of Nolen's words resonate with us today :

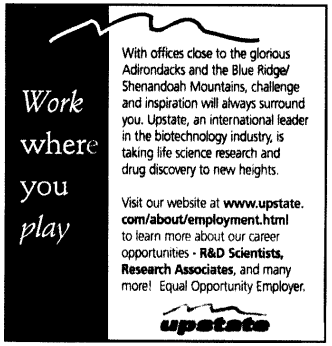
- Asheville stands today on the threshold of a new state in its evolution.
- The automobile is changing the radius of city life.
- Asheville needs a better street system, more parks, a *(new)* Civic Center.
- *(The)* French Broad *(River)* divides City into two distinct localities.
- *A* Passenger *Rail* Station *in* Biltmore is advocated.
- A diagram of the main thoroughfare system of Asheville does not present the same orderly uniform appearance that a similar diagram of rectangular or more level cities would show….*{Consequently,}* State highways are the backbone of Asheville's thoroughfare system.
- Pack Square is and probably always will be the center of activity for Asheville.
- Pack Square is the Geographical Center of the City.
- A well organized, well maintained City Market will greatly stimulate…*{the local economy}*.
- The main lines of the *{greenway}* system follow the banks of the French Broad River and the Swannanoa River….
- *{Regarding native arts and crafts industries of the mountains,}(t)*here are no disadvantages—in fact, there is everything to gain—in encouraging this type of indigenous industrial life and providing for its legitimate extension.
- Biltmore Village is a fine example of town planning.
- Zoning is no panacea for all the evils of shortsighted city building nor an alternative for constructive city planning. At its best, it can only prevent and restrict undesirable building and this acts more in a negative than positive way. Much of the present zoning is being done without a city plan and in such cases it has a tendency to perpetuate existing conditions rather than make possible right future growth.
- We also believe that there should be a certain amount of flexibility in the *{zoning}* ordinance making more allowance for change and growth.

"A city by definition creates jobs."

Frank Vardy from Alex Marshall; How Cities Work

attracting interest from a much broader area. The challenge is to keep Asheville true to its character and recognize that the City's growing reputation is based on that character alone.

Asheville has been highly successful in developing both the reputation for and the reality of its high quality of life. But there are growing pains associated with this success including concerns about traffic and transportation, land use, affordable housing, economic development, and air and water quality.



Advertisement promoting quality of life to attract skilled employees.

The City's mountainous topography and natural resources, including the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers, are both a major strength and a major challenge. These natural features provide breathtaking vistas and outstanding recreational opportunities, while confining and directing development. Asheville is as limited in land for development as she is blessed by her natural resources.

The City of Asheville is truly at a threshold, one that will profoundly affect its future. It is in this context that the ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025*** has been developed.

Plan Format

The ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025***, after this introduction, contains six sections and three appendices. Each section is described in more detail below.

Vision - Smart Growth Initiative: This section indicates the key planning issues affecting Asheville for the future that have been identified through public input and through an extensive analysis of development trends. Additionally, this section provides a philosophical framework – Smart Growth - through which these planning issues can be considered and addressed and lists existing accomplishments, future tasks, and needed tools to accomplish a Smart Growth development pattern for

the City of Asheville.

Communication and Coordination: This section discusses public participation and intergovernmental coordination and establishes goals and strategies intended to improve the effectiveness of each of these important areas of communication.

Land Use and Transportation: This section discusses City land use and transportation issues in a linked and comprehensive fashion, concentrating on changing the development pattern that exists along our major road corridors in a fundamental way and providing greater development flexibility and guidance in order to accomplish these changes, including the promotion of corridor and infill development opportunities as well as expanded transit opportions. Additionally, goals and objectives are identified and proposed for such key City issues as housing, critical development areas, and land use compatibility.

Air Quality and Water Quality: This section identifies key issues and trends related to air quality and water quality in the Asheville area and Western North Carolina region. Additionally, it proposes a variety of goals and strategies intended to direct local and regional efforts to improve air quality and water quality in the City and region.

Economic Development: This section identifies the key national and international trends

A Golden Administration

Farsighted City Investment Created the Asheville We Know Today

The four-year administration of John H. Cathey (1923-1927) produced the following partial list of accomplishments:

- McCormick Field - Land purchase and construction of the baseball field and stands
- Recreation Park - Recreation Park was developed
- Municipal Golf Course - Land purchase and construction
- Pack Memorial Library - Erected on South Pack Square
- School Construction - The Claxton, Vance, Newton and Stephens Lee schools were completed
- Asheville High School - Money was approved and appropriated for the construction of Asheville High School
- Beaucatcher Tunnel – The tunnel was constructed as a joint City-County project
- Bee Tree Reservoir – The reservoir was constructed and a trunk main run to Beaucatcher Mountain
- North Fork Reservoir – Land was acquired for the North Fork reservoir
- City Hall – The City Hall building was nearing completion
- Street Paving – Over $4.5 million dollars was spent to pave streets, primarily in West Asheville

"The ratio of urban to rural dwellers is steadily increasing. By 2015 more than half of the world's population will be urban."

Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Nongovernment Experts: National Intelligence Council; December, 2000

that are shaping the new economy, analyzes those trends in relation to the strengths and weaknesses of the Asheville area, and proposes goals and objectives that will promote a diverse and strong economy for Asheville's future.

City Services: This section outlines the importance of key services and infrastructure and quality of life issues. Public safety, streets, utilities, parks, greenways and open space, are discussed as part of the essential quality of life infrastructure of the City.

Center City: This section discusses the importance of Downtown Asheville to the rest of the City and the region. It identifies critical issues affecting the future development and functioning of Downtown, and proposes a series of goals and objectives that will promote a continued healthy and vibrant Downtown.

Implementation Matrix: This section summarizes the necessary implementation tasks that will carry this plan from concept to reality. Responsibility for each implementation task is indicated, a timeline is established for each task, and, as appropriate, particular public participation processes for involving the public in decision-making are indicated. This matrix will serve as the benchmark for plan implementation as well as the basis for determining the need for periodic changes to the plan.

Interesting Facts

- Asheville has tripled in land area over the past 50 years.
- Asheville's density has decreased by 50% over the past 50 years.
- Between 1990 and 2000, Asheville's population increased by 11.8%, slowest of the state's 15 largest cities.
- Asheville's development patterns since 1950 and its hilly topography make interstates and state roads the main travel routes for local traffic.
- NCDOT projects that 80% of the traffic on the new I-26 Connector will be LOCAL traffic.
- In 2000, neighborhoods contributed 56.5% of City property tax revenue, yielding $1,487/acre.
- In 2000, commercial uses contributed 43.5% of City property tax revenue, yielding only $1,152/acre.
- In 2000, 20% of the land in the City was tax exempt.

Updating and Implemeting the Plan: This comprehensive plan relects the public input and technical analysis from a particular point in time. However, public desires will shift and change, technologic and economic realities will bring new challenges and opportunities, and new approaches will be developed to address new problems and concerns. This plan needs to be fluid in its application; when change occurs, the plan may need to be ammended to reflect an appropriate response to that change. Consequently, the plan is intended to be reviewed annually to determine the progress of its implementation and to identify areas where incremental adjustment is needed. These annual reviews should coincide with the development of the City budget and capital improvement program in order to foster a close alignment between plan implementation and available resources. Additionally, the plan is intended to be fully revised no less frequently than once every five years.

City Growth and 2000 Census: Which Places Grew, and Why; Brookings Institution

Findings:

- The median growth rate for cities in the 1990s was 8.7 percent — more than double the median growth rate of the 1980s.
- Western cities grew the fastest, with an average growth rate of 19 percent. Northeastern cities, on average, declined. Southern cities grew substantially, but at about half the rate as Western cities, while Midwestern cities grew 3 percent on average.
- "High human capital" cities grew. The level of residents' education and income are consistent predictors of urban growth.
- Cities with large manufacturing bases grew much more slowly than cities with strong service industries. Also, cities with high unemployment rates grew more slowly than those with low unemployment rates.
- Cities built for pedestrians and mass transit shrunk (with a few exceptions), while auto-dependent cities grew. Similarly, older cities declined and younger cities grew.
- Foreign-born residents contributed to strong city growth rates. Cities with more foreign-born residents in 1990 grew more quickly than other cities, up to a point.

"The envisioned city of tomorrow is not static; it evolves in response to shifting economies and political coalitions. A city's underlying economic base, its governing coalition, and the vision of its leaders are in constant tension with other conflicting opportunities, possibilities and visions."

Imagining Cityscapes: The Politics of Urban Development by Ann Bowman and Michael Pagano; Landlines, Lincoln Institute of Public Policy; March, 1996

"The elements of globalization--greater and freer flow of information, capital, goods, services, people, and the diffusion of power to nonstate actors of all kinds--will challenge the authority of virtually all governments."

Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future with Nongovernment Experts; National Intelligence Council; December 2000

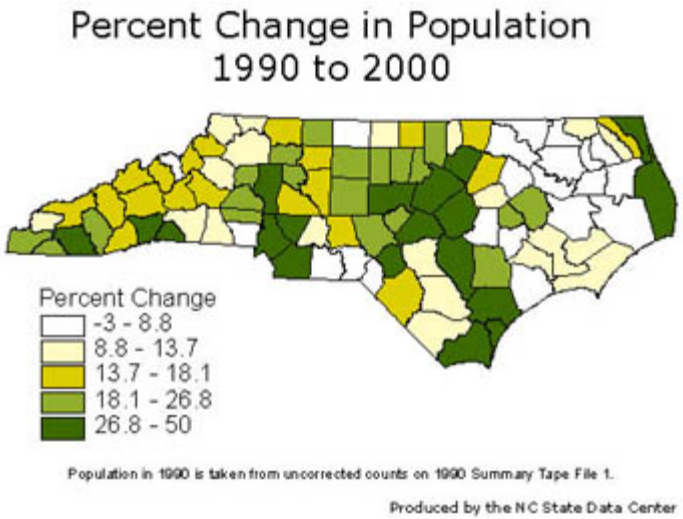
"There will be more people."

Steve Twomey, Washington Post, March 3, 2002

Demographic Changes

The above quote from Steve Twomey's **Washington Post** column on page 29 pretty much sums up the demographic prospects for the City of Asheville and the Asheville area. Our high quality of life is attracting retirees and job seekers and we will be annexing areas on the periphery of our City that have been and are undergoing development. While Asheville grew at the slowest rate of the 15 largest cities in North Carolina between 1990 and 2000, that growth rate was still over 11 percent. Buncombe County grew at about the average rate of statewide growth - over 20 percent.

There are a number of effects resulting from this rate of growth. For example, this growth rate is creating strong demand for housing – the Asheville area housing market is the most expensive in the state, partially as a result of growth pressures. As noted in the Land Use and Transportation section, even relatively small marginal increases in daily traffic resulting from population growth, can result in traffic congestion problems when local roads are operating at or near design capacity. Sprawl development patterns, currently the means of absorbing this growth in effect outside the City Asheville, exacerbate transportation problems, make providing public services more expensive, and impact open spaces, farmland and scenic vistas. This growth will place increased pressure on all our City services, including parks and recreation, police, and fire.



Here are some key demographic facts and trends relevant to the Asheville area:

- The richest generation in the history of the world is at or nearing retirement age. These retirees will be looking for areas that offer a healthy, active lifestyle, dining and entertainment options, vibrant downtowns, and a variety of housing choices. Since we offer these amenities, many of them will be coming to Asheville.
- Due to our high quality of life, young people will be attracted to Asheville and the ones that are here will be reluctant to leave. There will be some willingness to accept underemployment in order to live in our area.
- People with families will also be attracted by our high quality of life, good schools, and enlightened small town atmosphere.
- Housing choices for these demographic groups range from large lot suburban development to high-quality but denser urban development. There is growing information that shows there is a demand by this population in general for more dense urban housing that is some 17% to 33% of the total ("Current Preferences and Future Demand for Future Residential Environments;" Dowell Meyers and Elizabeth Gearin; Housing Policy Debate, Vol. 12, Issue 4; Fannie Mae Foundation). Given the extent to which our City has been developed with low density single family development (see Map 9; page 106), it makes sense to reserve some land for this type of use.
- Downtown Asheville, with its above-shop, highly-urban residential environment, grew the fastest of any neighborhood in the City during the past decade.
- Nationally, household size is shrinking, with married couples without children and single person households making up the country's two largest household types. The City of Asheville has an average household size of 2.14 persons, according to the 2000 Census.

The populations of cities grow in three ways. First, there is the natural increase due to more children being born than people dying. Second, in-migration of people from outside cities add to the "native" population. Finally, the populations of cities grow through annexation.

According to State demographic information, annexation was the primary means by which

"The presence of immigrants is a sign of a first-tier, global city."

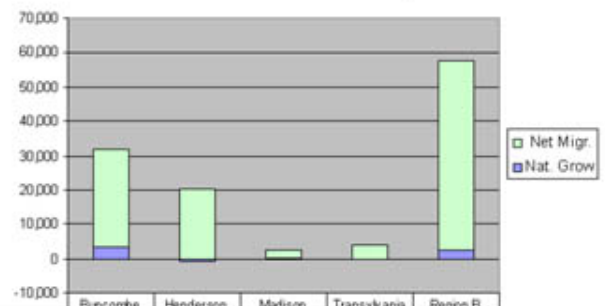
Alex Marshall; How Cities Work

the City of Asheville's population has grown in the past decade, despite the fact that the City did not initiate any annexations during most of the 1990s. This is because certain annexations initiated in the 1980s became effective in the early 1990s and because areas like Biltmore Park annexed voluntarily. According to the State figures, 4,575 people were added to the City of Asheville through annexation; this accounts for 65 percent of our total population growth of 7,034 persons between 1990 and 2000. The remaining 2,459 persons were added through either natural population increase or in-migration, although the bulk of that growth was through in-migration as the following chart indicates.

Immigration from foreign countries has not been a major factor in Asheville until relatively recently when the City began seeing an increase in immigration from Mexico, Central American countries, and from the Ukraine. Economic conditions and political instability in these areas of the world will continue to result in continued immigration of these two population groups to our area, especially since there is a base population to provide support for such immigration and our region's low unemployment, service jobs, and construction employment offer opportunities for relatively easy entry into the workplace. These immigrant populations' social contributions will help broaden the culture of our region. Special efforts may be necessary to educate and assimilate these population groups into the region's culture in order to provide them with an environment for success.

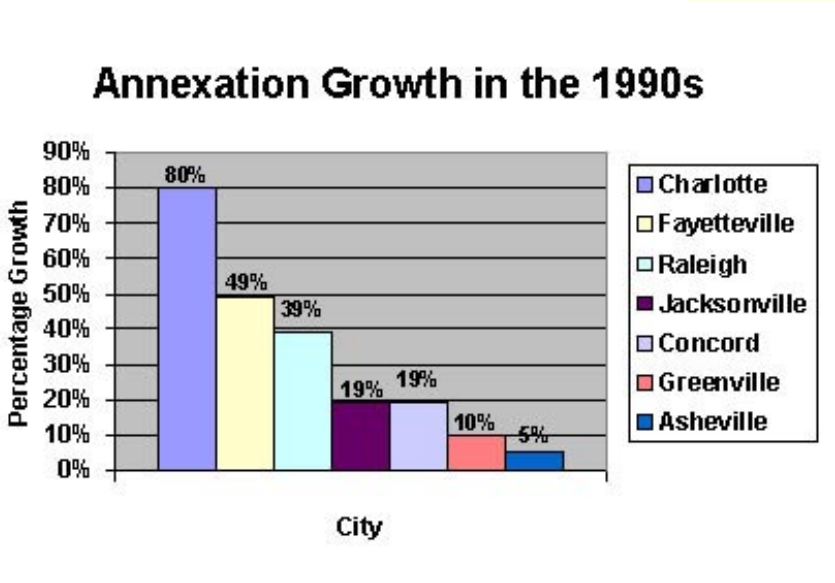
Fig. S.1 Population Change Drivers Natural Increase and Net Migration (1990-2000)

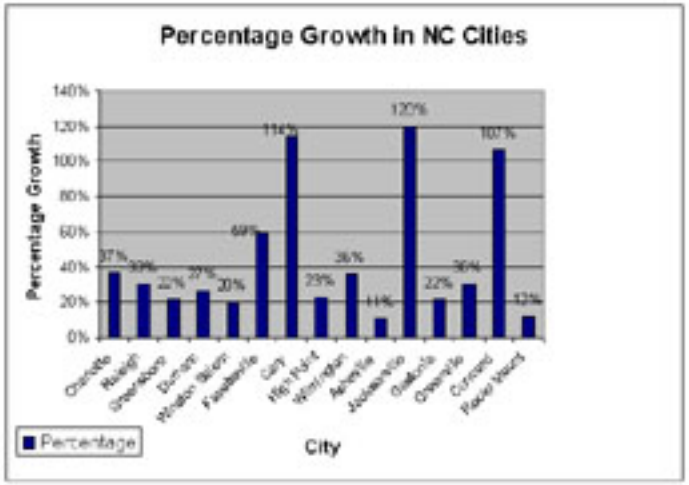
Source: NC Office of State Planning



	Buncombe	Henderson	Madison	Transylvania	Region B
Net Mgr.	28,719	20,214	2,621	3,877	55,431
Nat. Grow	3,254	-788	61	-63	2,464

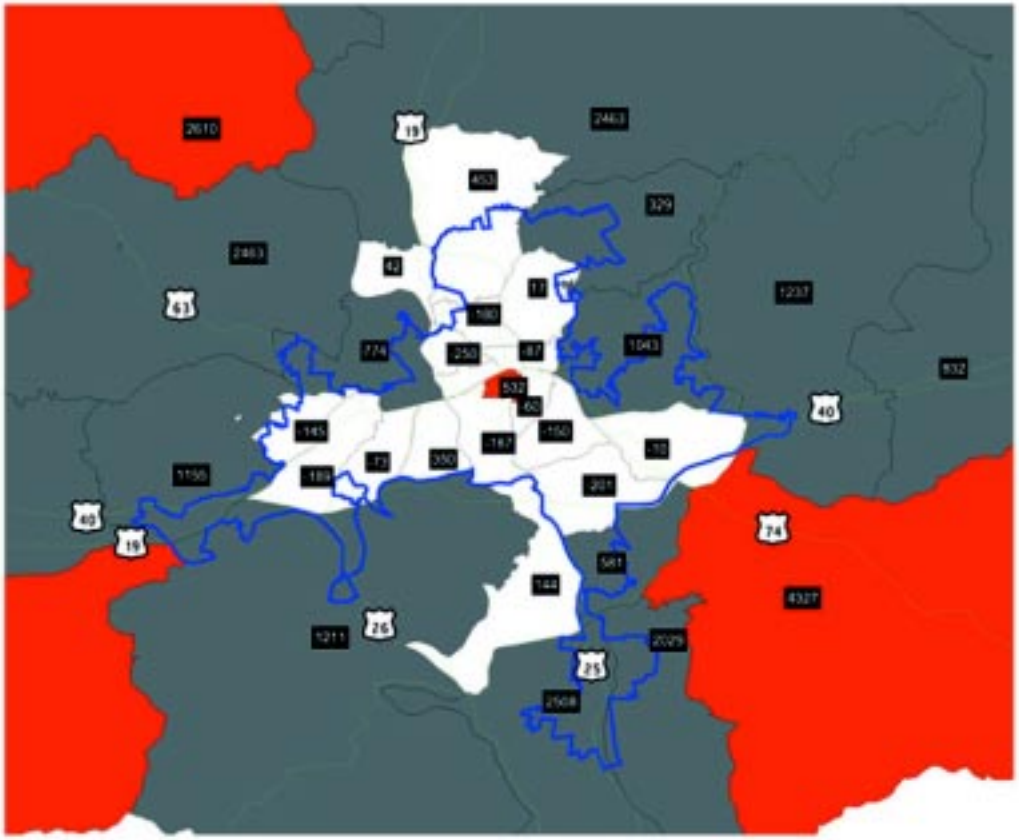
The City of Asheville Smart Growth policies indicate that we will do our best to absorb a growing percentage of the population growth of Buncombe County and Western North Carolina. This means that we will need to respond to both market forces and fiscal equity concerns by accommodating that population growth in denser, higher quality residential and mixed-use developments. City Economic Development Director Mac Williams refers to this as "density with amenity."





Source: Office of State Planning; Raleigh, NC

1990-2000 Poplation Change By Tract
Asheville City Area

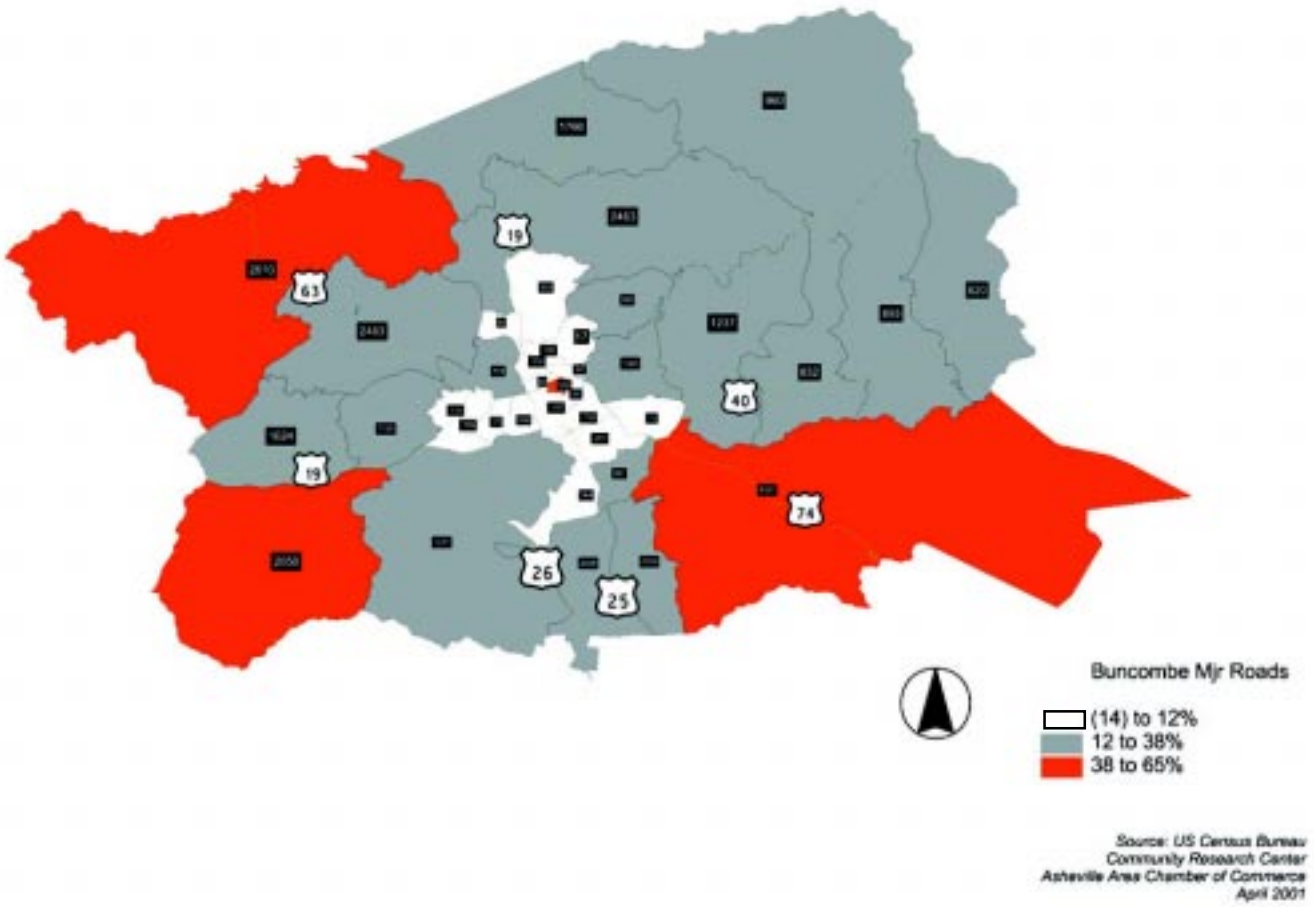


Buncombe Mjr Roads
Asheville City
(14%) to 12%
12% to 38%
38% to 65%

1 0 1 Miles

Source: US Census
Community Research Center
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
April 2001

1990-2000 Population Change By Tract
Buncombe County



Population Projections

Population sources: Surveyed population for 1980, 1990, and 2000 is from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. Population projection to 2010 for Buncombe County is from the Office of State Planning, Raleigh, NC. Population for 2025 for Buncombe County is based on a 2020 projection from the Office of State Planning. Some local officials were contacted for input.

The Long Range Transportation Plan prepared by the Asheville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) included the following tables using State population projections through 2020 and linear trend analysis to project to 2025. This information shows the City of Asheville population reaching just over 90,000 persons in 2025. If this growth was due to forces other than annexation of existing developed properties, given our current average household size of 2.14 persons per household, the City would need 9,917 additional housing units. If we assume that annexation of occupied housing units will make up 50 percent of our total population growth, we would still need 4,959 new housing units.

Additionally, these new residents will generate traffic. Between 80,000 and 100,000 new vehicle or transit trips will be added to the new population of Asheville. For Buncombe County as a whole, between 300,000 and 350,000 new trips will be added to roadways.

While these estimates are indicative of past growth patterns, it is likely that aggressive implementation of Smart Growth policies and continued annexation by the City could result in the desirable circumstance of an even greater proportion of the overall population growth of Buncombe County occurring within the Asheville city limits.

AAMPO and Buncombe County Population Projections

	Surveyed Population			Projected		Annual Percent	
Place	1980	1990	2000	2010	2025	1990-2000	2000-2025
Buncombe County	160,934	174,821	206,330	236,461	281,778	1.67%	1.26%
Asheville	59,985	61,885	68,889	76,701	90,112	1.08%	1.08%
Biltmore Forest	1,499	1,327	1,440	1,550	1,800	0.82%	0.90%
Black Mountain	4,083	5,418	7,511	11,134	19,146	3.32%	3.81%
Fletcher	N/A	2,787	4,185	6,284	10,000	4.15%	3.55%
Montreat	741	692	630	697	812	-0.95%	1.02%
Weaverville	1,495	2,107	2,416	2,705	5,000	1.38%	2.95%
Woodfin	N/A	2,736	3,162	3,654	6,500	1.46%	2.92%

Selected City of Asheville Population Information from the 2000 Census

Total Population	68,889 persons
Total Households	30,690
Population in Households	65,678
Total Families	16,737
Population in Families	46,960
Average Family Size	2.81 persons

They Can Push People Only So Far
By Steve Twomey, Sunday, March 3, 2002; excerpted and condensed from **the Washington Post**

Ours is a Smart Growth nation these days, rebelling against a surfeit of cars, strip malls and despoiled vistas. Wouldn't it be satisfying to live in a Smart Growth kind of place? Pine no more! Move to Loudoun County! But hurry, seating is limited.

Loudoun recently overhauled its planning bible to reshape how, and how much, it will grow, a response to a 1999 ballot-box rebellion against road congestion and the ooze of subdivisions into its lovely western reaches. Oh, there will still be big-time building in the county, which stretches northwest from Washington Dulles International Airport to the West Virginia line, but in the end (or at least by 2020), Loudoun could wind up with 15 percent fewer homes than envisioned under its old plan.

Imagine if your county went on such a diet, if somebody finally did something about the gosh darn money-grubbing developers who make it so infuriating to drive to work and so difficult to park at the mall and so hard to find unblighted nature because they keep dumping so many cars and dwellings on us. Loudoun's makeover is so bold, they talk about it in Chicago, home of the American Planning Association.

There is, alas, a problem. (Isn't there always?) Any county that puts the hurt on growth really doesn't. It merely moves it, perhaps to your county. It's like squeezing a balloon. The dwellings that Loudoun and other places press out of their futures will inevitably bulge somewhere else.

What's to be done with Loudoun's future nomads and those of any other place that squeezes out growth?

Well, they could go even farther out. They might go to more distant Virginia counties or West Virginia. Of course, that means landscapes in those places would get developed. Sprawled, in other words. And because the nomads' jobs might be back in Fairfax or Loudoun itself, they would have long commutes from these farther-out spots. That would create a paradoxical consequence: Traffic might get worse because of Loudoun's new plan. Cars would be on the road longer, because drivers would live farther away than if Loudoun hadn't reduced the number of its housing units.

None of this is meant to suggest that Loudoun's plan isn't noble. Every county, city, town, village, hamlet and outpost ought to come up with more efficient, more attractive and less costly ways to accommodate citizens.

Ultimately, though, Smart Growth must still deal with actual, say-hi-to-the-Joneses growth. We can nudge and shift and plan, but there will be no return to a less-maddening era of breezy commutes and painless development.

There are going to be more people. (Unless there's a ban on procreation, relocation and immigration. And good luck with that.) You will have more neighbors. You will encounter more cars, more malls, more roads. You will notice that more and more open space is being turned over to more and more dwellings.

Vision - Smart Growth Initiative

"We have an opportunity to do some things that have never been done before. We have an opportunity to live in the downtown area where you have not only mixed use but where you have many different nationalities that live side by side, in harmony, and that is the smartest growth that we could have.

James Geter, Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation; speaking on Smart Growth

Introduction

Smart Growth is a planning concept that links growth patterns to fiscal, environmental, and social resources. As planning concepts go, Smart Growth is relatively new, but it is enjoying strong public acceptance and has become the growth management planning policy for many local governments and several states.

Smart Growth is derived from the earlier concept of "sustainability," so it is helpful to first understand sustainability in order to understand Smart Growth. The most commonly quoted definition of sustainability was established by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development; under this definition, sustainability is development that ". . . meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." Another way to define sustainability is a balancing of economic objectives, social goals, and environmental resources in a way that works for both present and future generations. When one of these factors is weighted more heavily than the others, balance is not achieved and sustainability is not attained. Smart Growth occurs when the development pattern is sustainable – i.e., when the physical growth of the community allows the economy, the social and cultural goals, and the natural resources to be in a state of balance.

Smart Growth is often best understood when contrasted with its alternative – sprawl. Sprawl development occurs when local, state and federal governments allow or promote development to occur only in reaction to market forces. Since World War II, the sprawl development pattern has dominated growth management policies and practices across the United States. In many cases, sprawl development has been promoted by government decisions to extend streets and highways, water and sewer lines, and other public infrastructure into the countryside to support or attract new development. More often than not, this public investment fails to pay for itself, creating a development pattern that is expensive to serve, requires continual maintenance of the infrastructure and natural envi-

ronment to support it (and is therefore not sustainable), and ultimately becomes inconvenient for residents and employees. A local example can be found in the effects of the policy decisions of the Water Authority of Asheville, Buncombe and Henderson Counties. These policies have led to the extension of water lines to areas that are hard to serve due to their distance from the main sources of water distribution, to developments that are very low-density in nature and therefore expensive to serve on a per customer basis, and to relatively undeveloped areas in an attempt to attract new development to those areas. Partially as a result of these policies, the Water Authority provides the most expensive water in the state.

As mentioned earlier, sprawl development ultimately proves to be inconvenient to the end-user of the development pattern – the residents and employees of the development. People move to the little subdivision in the country because they appreciate the open space and rural environment. Over time, more subdivisions are built, and the character of the area changes: traffic increases, schools have to be built, and small businesses spring up along

Smart Growth Land Use Policies
Adopted by the Asheville City Council; 2000

1. Mixed use developments and buildings should be encouraged.
2. Compatible, higher density commercial and residential infill development should be encouraged.
3. New development should promote a sustainable land development pattern.
4. Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be recognized and encouraged.
5. Discretionary block grant and local funding for affordable housing and economic development should be used to support a Smart Growth development pattern.
6. Industrially-zoned land should be reserved for industrial uses.
7. Areas with steep slopes and environmentally sensitive areas should be identified and preserved while allowing alternatives to development that protect private property rights.
8. Existing neighborhoods near Downtown Asheville should be strengthened through infill development, housing rehabilitation, proactive enforcement of zoning and building standards, and housing code enforcement.
9. City staff is directed to develop new zoning tools and use existing zoning tools to promote compatible land use projects, protect industrial and environmentally-sensitive land, and allow flexibility in site design to achieve the above policies. These tools may include revision of subdivision regulations to incorporate traditional neighborhood and conservation development practices, as well as continuing existing innovative regulations such as our accessory apartment code provisions. Additionally, capital projects and economic development incentive funding should be supportive of a Smart Growth development pattern where appropriate.

"The opportunity for people to have choices is key."

Gene Bell, Housing Authority; speaking on Smart Growth

the road creating land use compatibility problems for the subdivisions. At some point, the two-lane road that served the little subdivision has to be widened to support all the other subdivisions, the schools and the businesses. Widening is expensive because there were never plans to widen the country road and some houses and businesses in the area have to be condemned in order to get the road widened. The Riceville Road area in Buncombe County just east of Asheville is a good example of how a sprawl development pattern will ultimately become inconvenient for the residents; when more development occurs there and Riceville Road has to be widened to four lanes, the rural character of the area will be lost forever.

"The reality is that sprawl will prevail . . . the alternative of substantially raising densities in existing neighborhoods will be decisively rejected by NIMBY-oriented residents there. As long as power over land use decisions and housing location remains totally in the hands of local governments, their continued support of exclusionary local zoning rules will dominate future urban policy." Anthony Downs; "Can Transit Tame Sprawl?;" Governing; January, 2002

As Brookings Institution researcher and social commentator Anthony Downs' bleak assessment indicates, the habits that support sprawl development patterns are hard to break. Public misunderstanding and resistance to density issues, desires of property owners to turn their farms into subdivisions and mobile home parks, and the resulting pressures on political will all create challenges to the Smart Growth movement. The heated zoning discussion in Buncombe County is a local example of the battleground for more sustainable development patterns.

Taking a bold leadership role, the Asheville City Council recognized the problems of sprawl development and adopted a Smart Growth definition and 18 land use and transportation policies in the summer of 2000. Since that time, development proposals, City capital projects, and development regulations have been evaluated and revised to achieve consistency with that definition and those

policies. Some of the many successes that support this Smart Growth effort include:

- Neighborhood Corridor District
- Urban Residential District
- Flexible Development Standards
- Traffic Calming Program
- Edgewood Crossing Infill Project
- Azalea Road Park
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- ETJ Extension and Zoning
- I-26 Connector Public Input Process
- WECAN Neighborhood Plan
- Pack Square Renaissance

Asheville's definition of Smart Growth takes into account local conditions, fiscal accountability, the City's role in the region, and expected population growth. It also recognizes that Smart Growth must be manifested in the development pattern of the community as well as in City policies, projects, and regulations.

Smart Growth is a City of Asheville development pattern that makes efficient use of our limited land, fully utilizes our urban services and infrastructure, promotes a wide variety of

Smart Growth Transportation Policies
Adopted by the Asheville City Council; 2000

1. Where feasible, new development projects should be designed to connect to the existing street network at multiple points; cul-de-sac development and gated communities should be avoided except where unreasonable due to topographical conditions or inadequacy of some surrounding roadways to handle the volume and/or type of traffic generated by the development project.

2. Strongly encourage improvements that make Asheville a premier walking and biking community, including the use of evaluative and regulatory tools and capital improvements.

3. Implementation of various projects from the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan should be implemented on a priority basis as funding allows.

4. Where possible, multimodal transportation interconnectivity between neighborhoods and to destination areas such as parks and neighborhood shopping locations should be encouraged.

5. New development projects should incorporate mass transit features where appropriate.

6. Improvements to the transit system should be completed in accordance with the established capital improvement program.

7. The traffic-carrying capacity of existing arterials and highways should be carefully monitored and maintained at acceptable levels of service.

8. Efforts to reduce or eliminate traffic problems through closure of existing streets or otherwise disrupting an established street network should be avoided; traffic calming measures intended to improve the compatibility of traffic with neighborhood conditions while maintaining the street network are the most appropriate methods to address these types of traffic problems.

9. City staff is directed to use new and existing zoning tools, the City's capital improvement program (CIP), grants and other means to achieve the above policies.

"I firmly believe it is time to change our culture, time to adopt a new ethos: We will work hard to sustain our incredible economic growth. We will preserve the beauty of our nation and we will protect our environment. And we will do so through land preservation, quality design, and support for our traditional communities, and solid long-range planning. If we do that, we can improve the quality of life for our citizens now and, more importantly, for our children's children."

Maryland Governor Parris Glendening; Solving Sprawl; National Resources Defense Council; 2001

and effectively serves a significant portion of the future population growth of Buncombe County and Western North Carolina, protects the architectural and environmental character of the City through compatible, high quality, and environmentally-sensitive development practices, and recognizes the City's role as a regional hub of commerce and employment. Inherent to this definition is the need to implement Smart Growth through comprehensive, consistent and effective policies, regulations, capital projects and incentives.

The above definition has served as the philosophical basis for ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025.***

American Planning Association Policy Guide on Smart Growth — Draft

Smart Growth is the planning, design, development and revitalization of communities to promote a sense of place, the preservation of natural and cultural resources, and the equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of development. Smart Growth enhances ecological integrity over the short and long term and improves quality of life by expanding the range of transportation, employment, and housing choices in the region in a fiscally responsible manner.

Compared to prevalent development practices, Smart Growth seeks to refocus a larger share of regional growth within central cities and inner suburbs. Simultaneously Smart Growth seeks to reduce the share of growth that occurs on newly urbanized land or in environmentally sensitive areas while making efficient infrastructure investments.

Core principles of Smart Growth include the following:

- A recognition that every level of government, federal, state, regional and local, plays an important role in adopting and implementing policies that support Smart Growth.

- A regional view of community developed through regional planning process and implementation. Smart Growth recognizes the interdependence of neighborhoods and municipalities in a metropolitan area and promotes balanced, integrated regional development.
- Integration of land use and transportation planning to

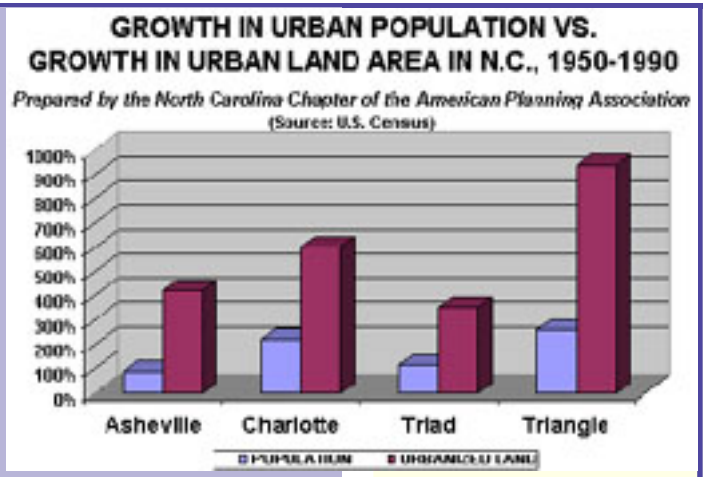
provide increased transportation choices. Transportation planning should include alternatives to the automobile, such as public transportation, bicycles and walking. Development must be pedestrian friendly. Land use planning must support the success of non-automotive transportation modes.

- Efficient use of land and infrastructure. Efficient land use results from compact building, infill development and reducing the amount of land needed to satisfy street and parking standards. Efficient use of public and private infrastructure starts with creating neighborhoods that maximize the use of existing infrastructure. In areas of new growth, roads, sewers, water lines, schools and other infrastructure should be planned as part of overall growth and investment strategies. Regional cooperation for large infrastructure investments is required to avoid inefficiency and redundancy.

- A greater mix of uses and housing choices in neighborhoods and communities focused around human-scale, mixed use centers accessible by multiple transportation modes. Mixed-use developments include a housing, varied by type and prices, integrated with commercial development and places of employment.

- Human-scale design, compatibility with the existing urban context, and quality construction contribute to successful compact, mixed-use development and also promote privacy, safety, visual coherency and compatibility among uses and users.

- Protection of environmental and cultural resources: Smart Growth protects the natural processes that sustain life, preserves agricultural land, wildlife habitat, and cultural resources; integrates ecological system into the fabric of development; encourages innovative stormwater management; is less consumptive and more protective of natural resources; and ensures air quality and water quality and quantity for future generations.



- Planning processes and regulations at multiple levels that promote diversity, equity and Smart Growth principles. Local governments have long been principal stewards of land and infrastructure resources through their guidance of land-use policy. Smart Growth respects that tradition and recognizes the important leadership and partnership role that Federal and State governments play in the advancing Smart Growth principles among local governments.

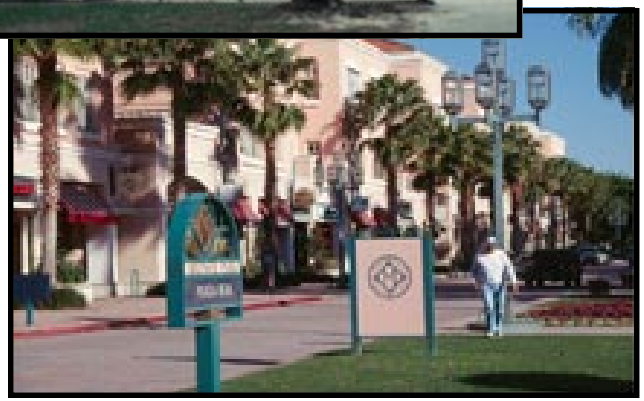
- State and federal policy structure and programs that supports compact development and land conservation. Governmental programs and policies have in many cases contributed to the problem of sprawl. These policies and programs need to be re-examined and replaced with programs and policies that support Smart Growth, including cost effective incentive-based investment programs that target growth-related expenditures to locally designated areas.

"We shape our buildings; thereafter, they shape us."
Sir Winston Churchill, Quoted in Time Magazine
(*from* The City; *James A. Clapp)*

- Increased citizen participation in all aspects of the planning process and at every level of government to ensure that planning outcomes are based in collective decision making. We have been undergoing a profound demographic transformation. Responding to our ethnically diverse society is essential to our well being as a whole and to developing the social capital necessary for shaping thriving, vibrant neighborhoods and communities. We need to design comprehensive strategies to engage meaningful participation in planning processes, to find common ground for shared decision-making by all citizens, and to ensure community equity in the distribution of resources.

Beyond these core principles, Smart Growth may vary from place to place and region to region. Specific Smart Growth practices that work in one region may not work in other regions.

American Planning Association



Clockwise from top: Boston, MA; Boca Raton, FL; Portland, OR; Celebration, FL

Smart Growth - Charlotte Area

Smart Growth - Tryon, NC

Would this two story house fit in your neighborhood?

It actually contains six residential units. Note the six meter electrical box.

Smart Growth - Asheville

"Both the neighborhoods and the development community have to open their minds to a new vision for this City. If it's a quality neighborhood you want, with a school your children can walk to, a little corner grocery store where you can buy your coffee at, a safe place for the children to play, you have to develop that, you have to create that. If, as a development community, you want an open environment for new development to occur, you want some certainty under which you will be able to operate, you want a green light for development, then you have to come up with a vision that fits with the community standards. Neither of those things happen by maintaining the status quo. The neighborhoods and the development community want something better and we have to create the right environment for that to happen."

Chuck Tessier; Commercial Realtor

North Asheville

Biltmore Park

Montford

North Asheville

Transportation Vision

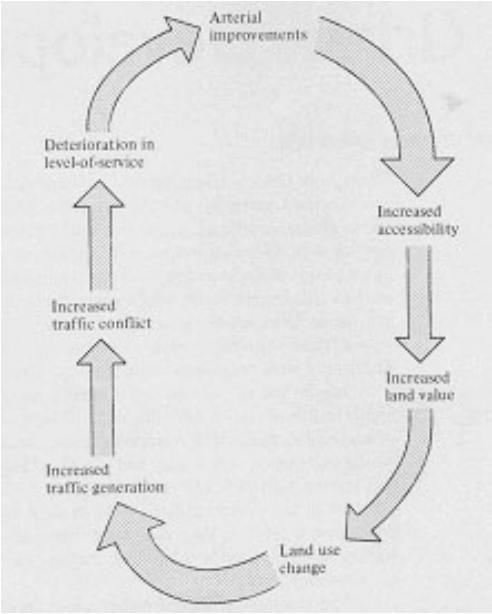
Transportation planning addresses the relationship between land use and travel demand and patterns. The two primary purposes of the transportation system are to provide mobility of goods and people, in addition to providing access to property. The magnitude of access is directly correlated to the type and intensity of land use. There is a close relationship between land use and transportation. Moreover, transportation planning deals with the programming and evaluation of transportation facilities alternatives, including roadways, transit, parking, pedestrian facilities, and bikeways. The long-range planning process presents the Asheville community with an opportunity to visualize Asheville's future urban form and associated transportation facilities.

The automobile has provided personal mobility to Americans that was unimaginable to its early designers. It has also had a profound effect on the land use patterns of the United States and the City of Asheville. Today, however, this sprawling land use pattern contributes to traffic congestion and air pollution. We are learning that simply constructing more and wider roads is not the only solution to these problems, as noted in the following paragraphs. These problems require a balanced approach--adding a new focus on development patterns, transporation demand management, transit, bicycling, and walking to road building will maximize our potential for long-term success.

The process is known as The Transportation-Land Use Cycle (sometimes referred to as "induced traffic"). The widening of a road, in an effort to alleviate traffic congestion, could increase congestion in the long run. For example, a new road is constructed that modifies the accessibility of an area. This, in turn, makes the land more valuable and commercial development occurs. The new development is a destination and traffic volumes increase on the new road. In most cases, the new development will be of the strip-development type with many closely-spaced access driveways. The numerous access points exacerbate the problem with vehicle turning movements into and out of the commercial development. The result is reduced speeds, traffic delays, accidents, motorist anxiety, and a lower level of

service (Vergil G. Stover and Frank J. Koepke; Transportation and Land Development; 1988.). The cycle is completed when the increased traffic demand necessitates further roadway improvements, which is very costly in terms of right-of-way acquisition. The cycle can be broken if travel demand patterns are altered (land use policy) or capital investments in transportation are allocated in a different manner. The Transportation-Land Use Cycle is illustrated below.

The Transportation-Land Use Cycle, (Stover and Koepke, 1988)



It is becoming increasingly evident that streets and roads serve a mix of essential transportation, social, and economic functions. Accommodating motor vehicles is essential. Nevertheless, it is just one piece of the land use and transportation picture that also includes pedestrian and bicycle, mass transit, quality of life, and compact, urban development considerations. It is also clear that streets and roads have two competing purposes – property access and mobility. A street that has property access as its primary function will not move traffic very well; likewise, a road that is intended to move traffic, such as a so-called limited access highway, will necessarily sacrifice convenient property access to mobility. It is necessary to make choices about our transportation system in order to improve its efficiency and effectiveness in a comprehensive fashion.

Pedestrian and Bicycle

Vision: The City of Asheville will have a network of bicycle and pedestrian routes which are safe and provide reasonable transportation choice for its residents as oulined in the Asheville Greenway Master Plan and the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Walking and bicycling are indicators that urban growth is occurring in a pattern that promotes livable communities. Only recently have we begun to realize the benefits and the connection between bicycle friendly and walkable environments, street life, and livable communities.

The City of Asheville is experiencing rapid growth in population that has burdened the existing transportation network and created an unfriendly environment for walking and bicycling. Long-range land use planning presents opportunities to rethink how communities develop to meet the needs of mobility, access, activity and choice.

Walking is the most basic form of transportation. Everyone is a pedestrian, even if only traveling from a parking space to a building. Walking is frequently the quickest means of transport in an urban area. Asheville's Downtown has urban structure that is conducive to walking and bicycling, as do the residential districts, including the western and northern portions of the City. These areas possess pedestrian facilities that allow safe, comfortable travel by foot. Additionally, the land use pattern of these areas is a mix between residential, commercial, and office, which encourages trips to be completed by foot or bicycle.

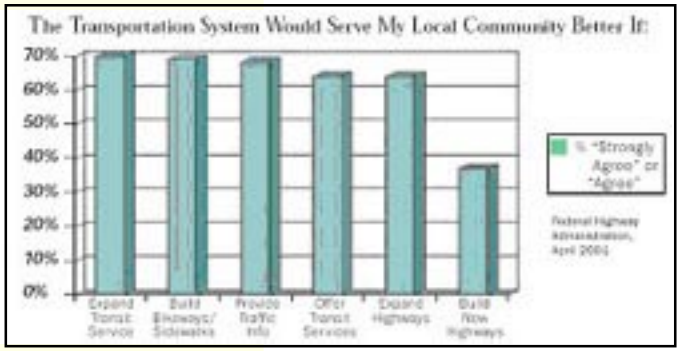
Translating these principles into land use policy has already begun with the establishment of the urban village districts. These districts should continue to be encouraged, based on the utility to the pedestrian and bicyclist. A mix of land uses encourages pedestrian activity and provides a "park once" option with access to numerous services.

Bicycle and pedestrian travel will be encouraged with the continued construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including sidewalks, curb extensions, bicycle lanes, and bicycle parking racks. Land use is an integral component of transportation need and modal choice. Mixed use, densification, nodal development, and proximity are key concepts creating land use that encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Public Transit

Public transit is an important component to the urban transportation system. Asheville's

transit system provides approximately 1,000,000 rides per year, offering a valuable service to the community of Asheville. Asheville's topography places serious constraints on its transportation network. Existing roadways are not well connected and, in many cases, are constrained from being widened. Consequently, the usual traffic engineering solutions to the problem of roadway congestion are not available. It is necessary to rely more heavily on the transit system to overcome these obstacles in order to relieve congestion. The following graph illustrates results survey results conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, and the Atlanta Regional Commission. Public transportation is seen as the most effective method to improve the transportation system.



The topographic constraints of Asheville transportation system present some positive aspects for transit service. The major transportation corridors are oriented similar to the cardinal points on a compass, which provides the framework for high frequency transit routes. These corridors converge in Downtown Asheville creating an ideal destination and transfer point. Moreover, the north-south corridor (Hendersonville Road through Downtown Asheville connecting to Merrimon Avenue) and Patton Avenue and Haywood Road in West Asheville have the potential for enhanced fixed route transit service. Map 1 (page 97) indicates the employment density for the City, illustrating the potential for transit to effectively and effeciently serve employment centers.

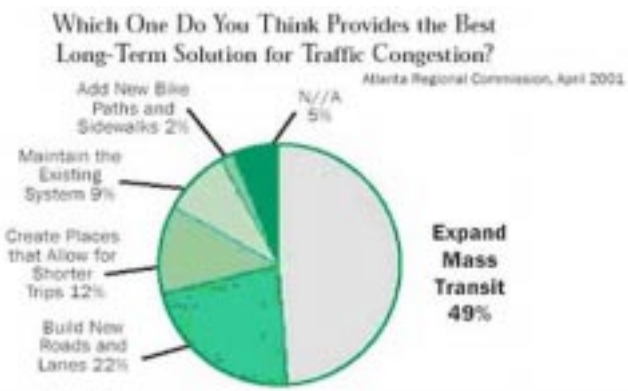
Land use patterns and site design play significant roles in the effectiveness of transit service. Low-density commercial and residential land use patterns reduce the ability of transit to serve patrons in a timely cost effective manner. Transit requires moderately high residential densities in order to operate efficiently. Technical studies have determined that a minimum density of between 8 and 16 dunits an acre is necessary for optimum transit performance. Very few areas in Asheville have this level of density, as illustrated on Map 9, although the proposed Smart Growth develop-

ment pattern has the potential of resolving this to some extent along the City's major transportation corridors. Map 14 (page 152) illustrates this future development pattern.

In addition to the density issue, transit faces a major public perception problem. It is less convenient than the personal automobile, and most people believe that transit is the mode of transportation choice only for the poor. These perceptions need to be overcome through effective route management, public education campaigns, attractive and convenient transit shelters, and improving the transit-riding experience. The Transit System has implemented a number of improved routes to enhance rider convenience, has added bicycle carriers to its buses in order to link two modes of transportation, and is working on the provision of more transit shelters and benches. However, substantial changes need to occur in order to increase ridership to the extent necessary to address congestion problems throughout the transportation network.

Similar in concept to the urban village, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is a strategy to locate services and residential land use around a transit stop. The transit stop is located centrally with a mix of land uses within a comfortable walking distance. The inclusion of residential and commercial land uses creates an origin and destination location that is strongly coordinated with the transit system.

Mass transit is an important component of an urban transportation system. Its success is closely related to land use patterns and policies. Nodal type development that incorporates a mix of land use will promote transit use, in addition to the provision for transit stop amenities. Mixed-use and higher density commercial developments should be encouraged through land use policy and standards. A number of factors are needed to create transit



"Streets and their sidewalks, the main public spaces of a city, are its most vital organs."

Jane Jacobs; The Death and Life of Great American Cities

supportive land use and increase ridership, including improvements to the transit system. The overall objective is to increase the utility of transit and continually enhance the quality of life in Asheville.

Gateway Corridors

Gateway road design is discussed in greater detail in the Land Use and Transportation section; however, it merits consideration as an important component of the overall transportation vision for this community. Asheville is served by a number of five-lane highways, such as Hendersonville Road and East Tunnel Road. This roadway design places a premium on property access at the expense of mobility. The result, as clearly evidenced by Hendersonville Road, is a strip commercial development pattern that contributes to traffic congestion and creates safety concerns due to an unlimited variety of turning movements.

This type of road design is entirely appropriate in some circumstances. As mentioned previously, property access is one of the two major functions for the road network. However, this design is totally inappropriate for major mobility corridors. It is extremely important, in an area as limited by topography as Asheville is, that we preserve these key corridors for the mobility function by adhering to the gateway design concepts.

Summary of Transportation Vision

Asheville has enormous potential to enhance its transportation system. The citizens of Asheville have stated the character of urban structure they desire. The ***2025 Plan*** lays a foundation for future development that supports multimodal travel, providing the citizens of Asheville with an enhanced variety of transportation options.

Affordable Housing

North Carolina's only president, Andrew Johnson, noted the connection between having a home and good citizenship in 1872. Little has changed since that time. Many of the social problems that plague our region, state and nation can be traced to the struggle - often unsuccessful - to find safe, decent and affordable housing.

Affordable housing is one of the most pressing problems facing the City of Asheville. There is a growing gap between the incomes of City residents and the price of available housing in the City. The City's Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan listed ***lack of affordable housing*** as the number one economic development problem for the community, recognizing the connection between affordable housing and economic development. In a community with declining employment in traditional industry, with many people willing to be underemployed in order to live in a high-quality region, and with an increasing percentage of students and retirees making up its demographic base, it would be unusual if housing affordability was not a problem for our community.

"Without a home there can be no good citizen. With a home there can be no bad one."

Andrew Johnson as quoted by George L. Tappan in Andrew Johnson, Not Guilty; May, 1872 from Power Quotes by Daniel B. Baker (1992)

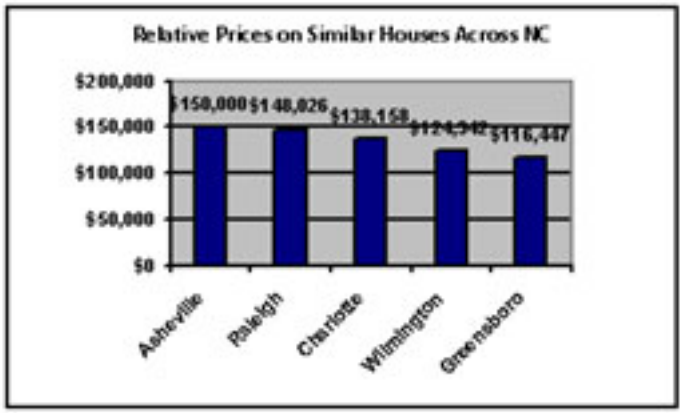
Just what is affordable housing? The most typical definition is that housing is affordable when it costs no more than 30 percent of gross household income. These costs can be either rent or homeownership PITI (principal, interest, taxes and insurance). The following table illustrates what constitutes affordable housing for a four person local family with below median income.

For a four-person household:

Income Level	%AMI	Max. Affordable Monthly Housing Cost
Moderate	80-100%	$980-1225
Low	50-80%	$613-979
Very Low	30-50%	$368-612
Extremely Low	<30%	$0-367
AMI=Area Median Income ($46,800 for Asheville MSA)		

Asheville has the most expensive housing of any metropolitan area in the state, both in

absolute expense and expense relative to median income. The following tables illustrate these facts. The Coldwell Banker Annual Housing Cost Study for the year 2000 indicates that a house costing $150,000 in Asheville could be purchased for $116,000 in Greensboro. Note also that Asheville ranks 121 out of 191 MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) in the country. This means that there are 120 urban areas in the U.S. that have less expensive housing than Asheville and only 70 that are more expensive.



Coldwell Banker Annual Housing Cost Study, 2000

The rental picture in Asheville is also problematic. In 1998, renters had to earn $11 per hour

Asheville: Least Affordable Housing in NC

MSA	Index	Median Income	Median Sales Price	National Ranking (out of 191)
Greensboro	83.2	$56,000	$125,000	26
Greenville, NC	81.5	53,200	116,000	37
Fayetteville	80	43,700	95,000	52
Goldsboro	76.4	45,300	108,000	77
Rocky Mount	76.4	48,800	106,000	77
Raleigh/Durham	75.6	71,300	162,000	84
Charlotte	73.7	64,100	153,000	92
Asheville	67.2	49,000	127,000	121

National Assoc. of Homebuilders; First Quarter 2002

to afford a two-bedroom apartment at the HUD "Fair Market Rent"; but only 44% of area jobs paid this much (Source: ***Consolidated Plan 2000-05***). Additionally, the area rental vacancy rate is only three percent which means that landlords, not tenants, dominate the rental market. Few apartments are actually available at or below "Fair Market Rent". Fortunately, the City has recently approved several large apartment projects and they will help reduce the market disparity, although none of these projects are specifically targeted to the lower income ranges.

One response to a lack of permanent affordable housing to buy or rent is to turn to the mobile home market. This sector is extremely active in our area: more than 50% of new homes in Buncombe County outside Asheville are mobile homes (Source: ***Consolidated Plan 2000-05***). On rented land, the owners are effectively tenants with little or no security of tenure. The value of their units depreciates over time and they build neither equity for the owner nor tax base for the community. Badly sited or poorly maintained mobile home parks may actually erode the tax base and the quality of life of residents and neighbors. Furthermore, they contribute to the sprawl development pattern and put some of the most vulnerable members of society far from the jobs and services they need and where their only transportation option is the automobile.

Institutional resources to address the affordable housing issue are relatively well organized and effective but operate on a limited scale compared with the extent of the problem. These resources include:

Local Public Resources

- City of Asheville Community Development Division – This City division administers federal HOME and CDBG funds for the City of Asheville and the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium. As indicated by the following table and graph, this division supports a comprehensive range of affordable housing programs, including rehabilitation, new construction, and down payment assistance.
- City of Asheville Building Safety Department - This City department administers a comprehensive and highly effective housing code program that provides regular inspections and requires necessary upgrades to ensure that the City housing stock is safe and well maintained.
- Asheville Housing Authority – Guided by an administrative board appointed by the Mayor of Asheville, the Housing Authority operates and manages public housing and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) programs and acts as an entrepreneurial hous-

"So long as one-third of us rent, and so long as many renters are too poor to afford their own home, the foundation of any healthy neighborhood must include an array of affordable, decent, attractive rental housing stock."

National Neighborhood Coalition Voice - January 2002

ing developer with a focus on the very low income population.

City Assisted Affordable Housing Production				
Activity	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01
Homeowner rehab	49	52	49	61
Rental rehab	24	54	18	155
New S/F Homes	16	17	20	31
New Rental Units	44	98	5	100
Downpayment	2	19	14	6
Relocation/Rent	0	0	0	47
Total Production	135	240	106	400

Regional Public Resources

- Asheville Regional Housing Consortium – This four county consortium (Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties) was created in 1992 to receive and distribute HOME funds in a coordinated fashion to address regional affordable housing needs.
- Land of Sky Regional Council – This regional agency provides technical assistance to access a wide range of affordable housing grants and programs.

Non-Profit Resources

There are a wide variety of non-profit agencies and organizations focused on increasing the supply of affordable housing and helping low-income people access existing housing.

- Mountain Housing Opportunities
- Neighborhood Housing Services
- Habitat for Humanity
- WNC Housing
- Riverfront Development
- Eagle Market Streets Development Corp.
- Affordable Housing Coalition
- Hospitality House
- Self Help Credit Union
- Pisgah Legal Services
- Consumer Credit Counseling Services

For-Profit Resources

There is an increasing interest on the part of the private sector in providing affordable housing opportunities, primarily for moderate-income persons. The City of Asheville is supporting these efforts through fee rebates, our local Affordable Housing Trust Fund, development incentive and regulatory streamlining programs, and technical assistance.

Employer Resources

Mission-St. Joseph's Hospital has initiated a program intended to provide housing for qualified employees. Given the economic implications of the lack of affordable housing in our area, we can expect other large employers to examine this technique of attracting and retaining employees.

Funding Sources and Control

Local Control
- CDBG and Section 108 Loan Guarantee
- HOME
- Housing Trust Fund
- Fee Rebates

State Control
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits
- HOME (rental production)
- State Housing Trust Fund
- CDBG (outside Asheville)

Federal Control
- Economic Development Initiative
- Supportive Housing Grants (homeless)
- Section 811 (people with disabilities)
- HOPWA (people with AIDS)

- Public Housing grant support
- Housing Choice Vouchers (section 8)
- Others: Private foundation grants, FHLB, Fannie Mae

Despite this wide array of organizations and financial resources set up to address the affordable housing problem, lack of affordable housing persists. Challenges to addressing the problem include:
- Declining federal funding
- Increasing land and housing prices
- Limited amount of multi-family-zoned land
- NIMBY (not in my backyard) opposition to affordable housing
- Limitations in state law on local governments' freedom to develop local solutions
- Structural problems of serving the very low income population

"One thing is certain, if we don't address the shortage of affordable housing, Asheville will increasingly become a city of haves and have-nots, a place where young people, the next generation of leaders, can't afford to live. That's a prospect that brings with it, among other ills, an inadequate labor force and increased crime. And that's something Asheville can't afford."

Asheville Citizen-Times editorial, February 17, 2002

These obstacles must be overcome for both humanitarian and economic development reasons. The City of Asheville has a huge problem in providing sufficient housing affordable to many of its citizens. It will require a comprehensive and coordinated effort, creative use of existing programs and regulations, strong leadership and political courage, and an open and inclusive attitude of the part of its citizens to address this problem in an effective way.

Affordable Housing Goals and Strategies

The following goals and objectives for affordable housing are established based upon trend analysis, community input, and specific reports adopted by the City of Asheville.

Goal I. Continue to implement the goals and strategies of the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan 2000-2005 and its updates.

Goal II. Continue to fund the City of Asheville Affordable Housing Trust Fund and work toward the establishment of a countywide affordable housing trust fund.

Goal III. Explore the full range of zoning tools necessary to increase both the supply of affordable housing and the compatibility of such housing with existing neighborhoods and community development patterns, including development incentives, code streamlining efforts, neighborhood design standards, and inclusionary zoning practices.

Strategies:

1. Pursue, individually or in concert with other local governments, legislative authority to implement inclusionary zoning regulatory tools at the local level.

2. Develop and implement changes to existing regulations to provide incentives for the construction of affordable housing and insure that these incentives are effective, equitable and certain.

3. Insure that zoning incentives for the construction of affordable housing are balanced by careful attention to good site design, construction quality, and good neighborhood compatible housing design.

4. Continue to provide permit and tap fee rebates for affordable housing and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of such.

Goal IV. Insure that affordable housing programs and projects are consistent with Smart Growth and Sustainable Economic Development objectives and policies.

Strategies:

1. Review every City-assisted affordable housing program and project for consistency with City of Asheville Smart Growth policies.

2. Target City assistance to encourage housing developments that have good access to transportation infrastructure (transit, bike lanes, sidewalks) and services; including the preservation of affordable downtown housing.

3. Review and evaluate updates to the Consolidated Plan with regard to Smart Growth and Sustainable Economic Development objectives and policies.

Goal V. Address the affordable housing problem in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion by allocating available resources to address both the supply and demand sides of the affordable housing issue, as well as promoting public education about the extent of the problem.

Strategies:

1. Advocate for and support efforts to increase earnings in the region to a level where Fair Market Rents are affordable to all working people.

2. Identify and support regional efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing, including employer-provided programs.

3. Provide financial and organizational support for non-profit housing developers and financial support for affordable housing produced by for-profit developers.

4. Develop and implement a public education program targeted at improving public awareness of the extent of the affordable housing problem and addressing neighborhood compatibility concerns.

5. Evaluate the effectiveness of an affordable housing bond issue in order to direct more immediate influx of resources to this critical community need.

6. Evaluate and promote the effectiveness of tax credit programs that encourage the provision of more affordable housing, including providing an appropriate level of technical assistance to person considering this financial tool.

Goal VI. Enforce the City's minimum housing code program as a means of ensuring continued good maintenance and safety of the City's housing stock, including affordable housing.

Tax Equity

An important issue facing the City of Asheville is tax equity. Asheville is a regional hub of commerce, but it is also the medical, government, and cultural hub of western North Carolina. It contains institutions like UNC-A, Asheville Buncombe Technical College, Mission-St. Joseph's Hospital, numerous large and small churches, public schools, and nontaxed retirement/life care facilities such as Givens Estate and Deerfield. Almost 20 percent of the land in the City is nontaxable as a result. Of the City's ten largest employers in 2000, seven are tax exempt.

Largest Employers in the Asheville Area

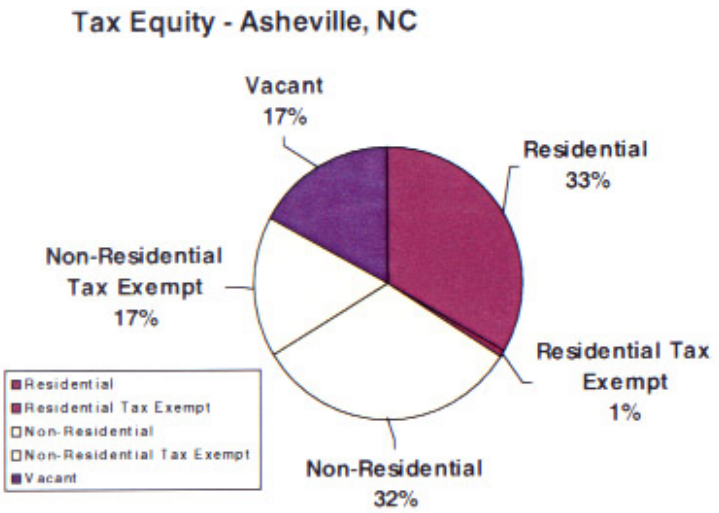
EMPLOYER	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Mission-St. Joseph's Health System	5,250
Buncombe County Board of Education	3,650
Buncombe County Government	1,450
City of Asheville Government	1,237
Community Care Partners	1,200
Veterans Administration Hospital	1,000
Ingles Markets	900
Biltmore Company	900
Grove Park Inn	891
Asheville City Schools	722

Source: Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
May include part-time or seasonal employees

Compounding this problem is the fact that a considerable amount of nonresidential land in the City is underutilized as evidenced by Map 5 (page _). This map illustrates the ratio of the value of improvements to developed land to the value of the underlying land. If this ratio is less than 1.0, it means that the improvements to the land are assessed at a value less than the land itself (i.e., the buildings are worth less than the land). This represents an underutilized development situation. Note that many commercial corridors in the City - Patton Avenue, Tunnel Road, and Merrimon Avenue, for example - have a significant amount of underutilized property.

This is reflected in taxes paid by the residential and nonresidential sectors of the City. The following pie chart indicates the percent of taxes paid by the residential and nonresidential sectors of the City. When this is compared with the total land area devoted to each use sector, the following results are noted. In 2000, residential neighborhoods contributed 56.5% of City property tax revenue, yielding $1,487/acre and nonresidential uses contributed 43.5% of City property taxes, yielding only $1,152/acre. (Source: City of Asheville Budget Office)

The situation argues strongly for a Smart Growth solution. If we are to reverse the trend of the tax burden falling more heavily on the residential sector, we need to provide incentives for nonresidential areas to be redeveloped at a higher level of intensity and at a higher level of quality. A Smart Growth development pattern and development regulations can provide such incentives. The Smart Growth Partners of Western North Carolina interview with urban village developer Jackson Ward in Appendix B illustrates how significantly a Smart Growth development pattern can benefit the City's tax base, while simultaneously providing a much more attractive and functional option to the current development pattern.



Source: City of Asheville Budget Office

Development Tools

Annexation - Purpose and Policy

Annexation is a process through which cities are able to grow by incorporating surrounding areas that meet a State-law definition of being developed for urban purposes. The authority for North Carolina cities to annex is both granted by and closely controlled by the North Carolina General Statutes.

State policy for granting cities the ability to grow by annexation is stated in the annexation statutes:

1. Sound urban development is essential to economic development;
2. Municipalities are created to provide the governmental services essential for sound urban development and for the protection of health, safety and welfare in urban or urbanizing areas;
3. Municipal boundaries should be extended in accordance with legislative standards applicable throughout the State to urban and urbanizing areas to provide high quality governmental services.

Implied in the statutes is that cities are the best units of government to provide an urban level of service, and that annexation is good for the fiscal and social health of cities. Additionally, annexation benefits the residents of the areas being annexed because it allows them to participate in the dominant local government affecting their lives.

Process

After identifying surrounding areas that have become urban or in the process of becoming urban, the City Council may adopt resolutions stating that certain areas are under consideration for annexation. This "resolution of consideration" serves to put interested parties on notice that annexation is being considered for these areas. This step is not required by State law, but benefits the public by providing advance notice of the City's intentions. It also benefits the City by permitting a faster annexation process once the resolution has been in effect for at least one year. Resolutions of consideration stay in effect for two years, but may be renewed.

Cities may only annex areas that meet the

standards in the annexation statutes, which establish specific criteria for what is considered urban. The first step in the actual annexation process is adoption of a "resolution of intent" by the City Council. This resolution starts a series of steps in the annexation process, and sets dates for an informational meeting and for a public hearing to allow the City to explain the annexation and to provide the opportunity for concerned persons to comment on the annexation. As part of the process, the City is required to develop a plan for extending City services to the annexation area. These services are to include police and fire protection service, extension of water and sewer main lines, street maintenance and solid waste collection. Finally, the City Council completes the annexation by the adoption of an annexation ordinance for delineating the specific area to be annexed. Upon the effective date of the annexation ordinance, the annexation area is entitled to City services, and is subject to City regulations and taxation.

History

Since being incorporated as a town by a legislative act in 1797, the City of Asheville has grown from a size of 0.10 square mile to almost 42 square miles in 2002. Annexation has occurred in several ways. First, several major expansions were done by legislative acts as recently as 1979. However, since 1959 when the State legislature enacted the "standards and services law" enabling cities to grow by "involuntary" annexation, most growth has occurred as annexation under this law. Another significant method of annexation has been "petitioned" annexation. Under this method, property owners request annexation. These petitions are typically made to obtain City services or to obtain City alcoholic beverage control privileges. The most active period of annexation by the City of Asheville was from 1973-98. During this period the City annexed 22 areas, including Chunn's Cove, Haw Creek Valley, Oteen area, Beaverdam Valley, Brevard Road area and the West area. These annexations added a total area of almost 9,000 acres or 14 square miles. It should be noted that while some of these major annexations took place in the 1990s, none were initiated in that decade. The year 1999 marked the first time in the 1990s that the City undertook a significant involuntary annexation effort.

Some interesting events in the City's annexation history include the annexation of West Asheville in 1917 by referendum, the annexation moratorium of 1975-79, and the 1979 act of the legislature annexing the airport area.

Current Annexation Program

After a period of relative inactivity in the late 1990s the City has initiated a regular program of annexations for each of the last two years. This annexation program is designed to target urban areas with existing water and sewer service, to eliminate isolated pockets of urban development surrounded by the City that are not in the City, and to improve the City boundary so that is follows more logical features and is easier to for citizens and service delivery departments to identify. This program is also intended to target areas with a high degree of existing urban development and to geographically balance City growth.

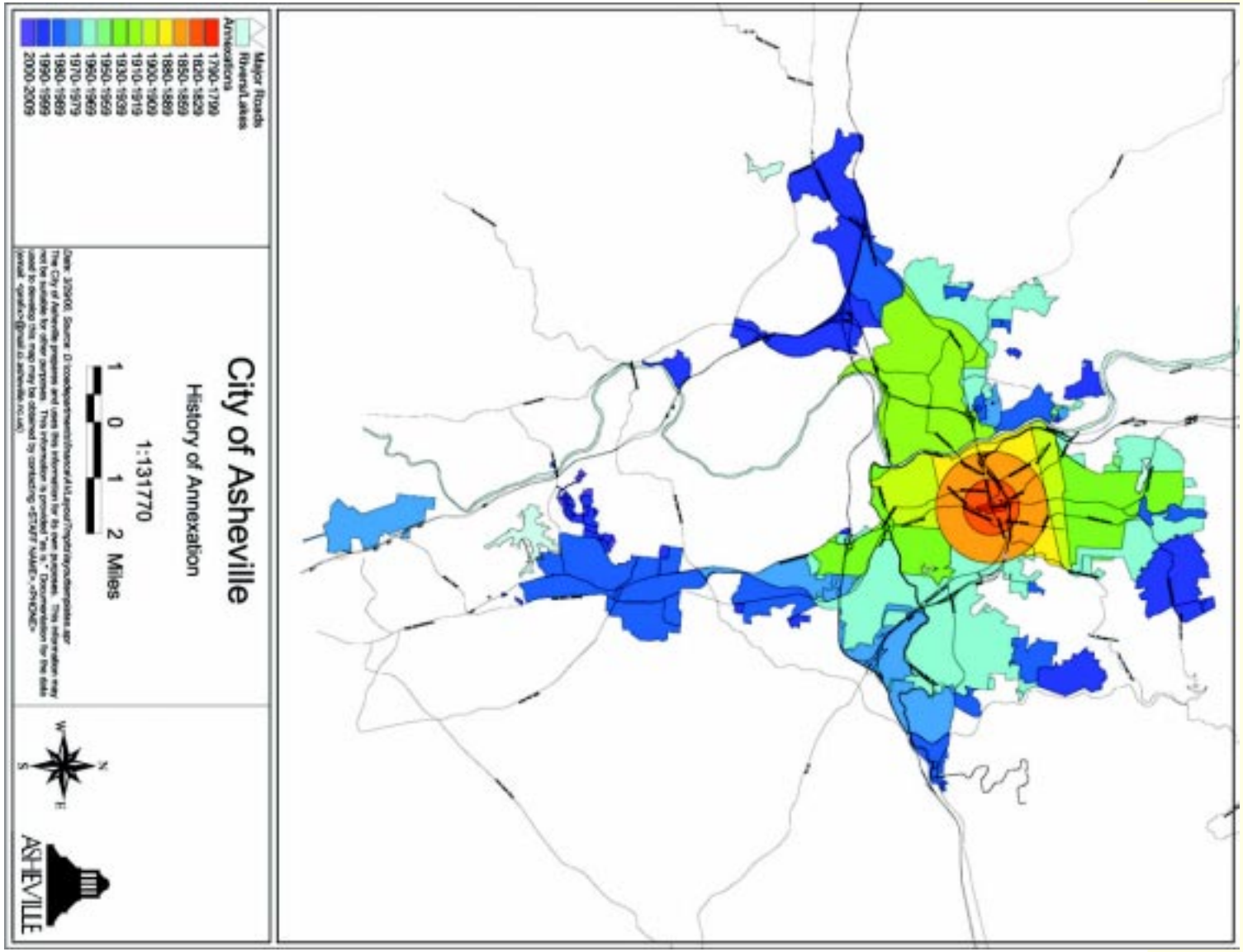
Typically citizens and property owners being annexed benefit from a higher level of police and fire protection, street maintenance services and solid waste collection services than available to County residents. In addition, areas lacking public water and sewer service also receive extensions of these services and, importantly, areas with insufficient water flow for fire protection receive upgraded water lines capable of supporting fire hydrants with adequate flows.

Future Annexation Plan

Significant urban growth is expected in many areas surrounding the current corporate limits, particularly in areas with favorable topography, good road access, and existing utilities or potential utility service. Steep mountain ridges effectively contain growth areas by forming boundaries to all but very low density development patterns, and by limiting the extension of gravity flow sanitary sewer lines.

Areas expected to sustain urban growth in the planning period are shown on the Annexation Plan Map. This map was adopted in 2002 and indicates acres that have the potential for future annexation. Specifically, State law provides for the first step in the annexation process to be adoption of a resolution of consideration delineating an area within which

Map 2


City of Asheville
History of Annexation
1:131770
1 0 1 2 Miles
Major Roads
Rivers/Lakes
Annexations
1790-1799
1820-1829
1850-1859
1880-1889
1900-1909
1910-1919
1930-1939
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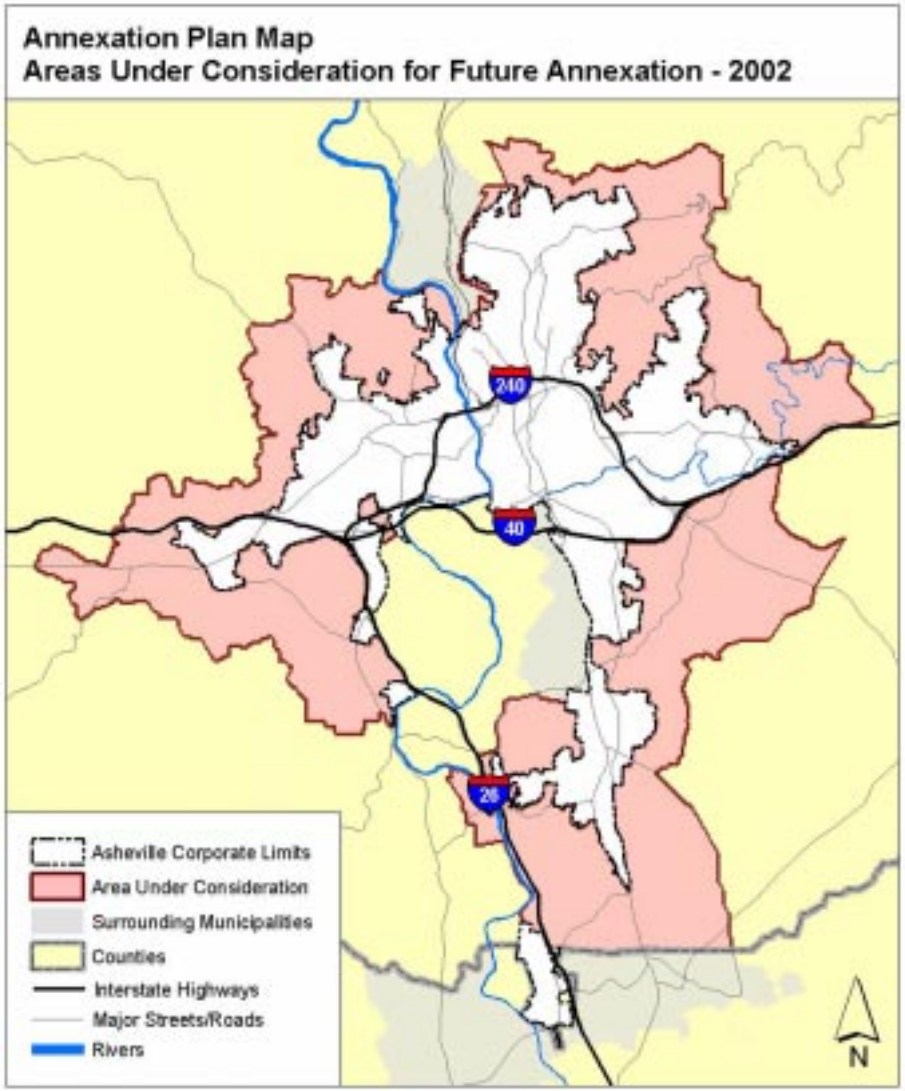
Map 3



the City is likely to consider annexation. The Annexation Plan Map is intended to support and define the area of consideration.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)/Joint Planning Area (JPA)

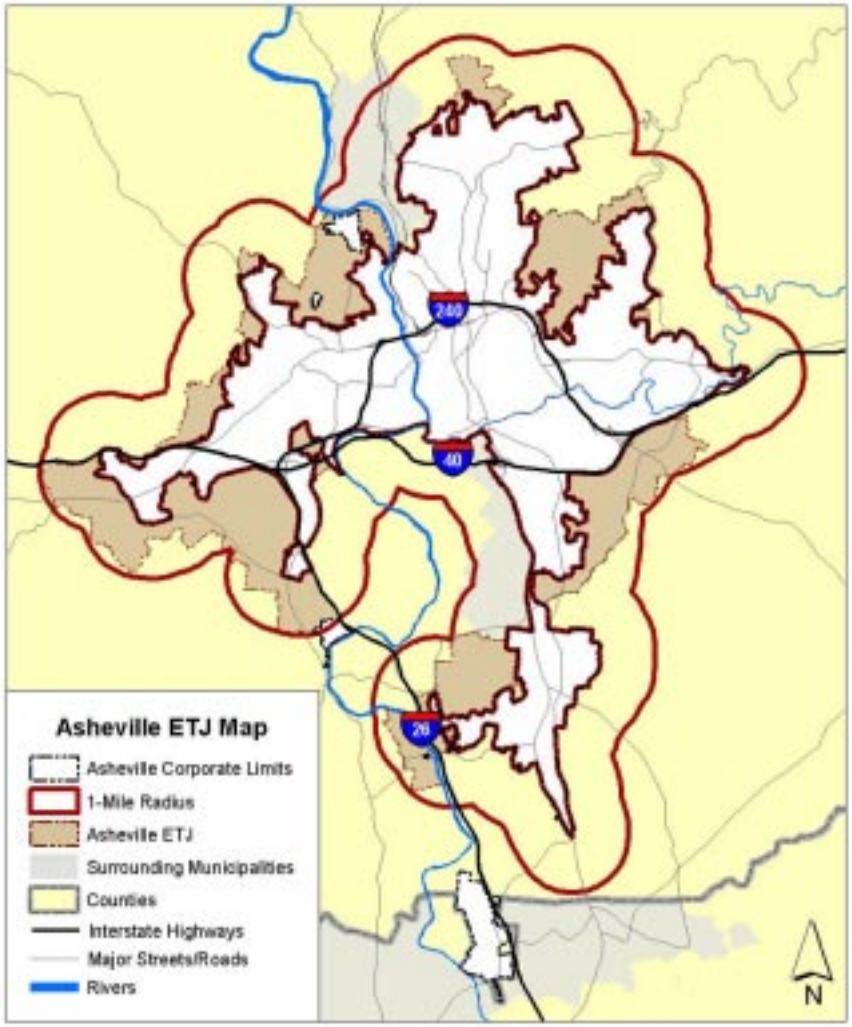
All powers granted by the Land Use and Planning Regulation chapter of the North Carolina General Statutes to municipalities may be exercised within a defined area not more than one mile beyond their corporate limits. In addition, with approval of the county commissioners of the applicable county, cities of 25,000 or more in population may exercise these powers up to three miles beyond their corporate limits. Such areas outside the city limits are referred to as the extraterritorial jurisdiction or ETJ. However, extension of a city's ETJ is not permitted into any area in which the county government is enforcing all three of the following development review requirements – zoning regulations, building codes, and subdivision regulations.

There are several reasons for permitting cities to extend land use planning jurisdiction outside

of their corporate limits. Simply stated, these surrounding areas are the future city in a growing urban environment. As they develop, the application of city development regulations insure that the urban development is compatible with the existing city and that adequate infrastructure is put in place as these areas develop. Without the regulations being in place at the time of development, it could become very difficult, if not impossible, to retrofit such development with the necessary infrastructure, and ensure a compatible development pattern at the time it becomes part of the city.

In recognition of these facts, the City of Asheville has long maintained up to one mile of ETJ, although it has never been granted permission from the Buncombe County Commissioners to exceed one mile. The ETJ Map shows the current extent of the City of Asheville's ETJ. As shown on the map, Asheville's ETJ does not reach one mile in all directions. It is limited by the towns of Woodfin and Biltmore Forest, and by the fact that Buncombe County is enforcing zoning, subdivision regulations and building code enforcement in the portions of the Beaverdam and Limestone Townships outside of the City of Asheville's corporate limits.

Map 4



It is important to note that while a primary purpose of ETJ is to prepare urbanizing areas to be part of the adjacent city, there is no direct link between ETJ and annexation. Many areas within an ETJ area may never be annexed; for example some areas have been in the City of Asheville's ETJ unannexed for over 20 years. In areas such as these, ETJ serves the purpose of protecting the City's gateways and periphery from inappropriate or incompatible development. Neither is ETJ a prerequisite to annexation; the City of Asheville has annexed several areas in recent years that were never in the City's ETJ.

As to the powers that may be exercised within a city's ETJ, virtually all pertain to land use planning and development regulation, except some nuisance abatement codes may apply. Perhaps the most important of these are zoning, land subdivision regulation and building code enforcement. In Asheville's case, it does not currently enforce building code regulations in the ETJ, leaving this job to Buncombe County.

Other powers that may be exercised in the ETJ area (provided that a city may not enforce any regulation in its ETJ that it is not exercising within its corporate limits) include: historic preservation, sign regulation, junked car regulation, farmland preservation, nuisance limitation, housing codes, road right-of-way protection, economic development activities, watershed protection, storm water runoff regulation, mountain ridge protection and erosion control.

In lieu of the City continuing to expand its ETJ, the City and Buncombe County have been working since October 2002 to create a Joint Planning Area (or JPA) in a roughly one mile ring around the City limits. The JPA would be an area in which the City and County would jointly regulate development activities in accordance with an interlocal agreement. Under this agreement, the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners would jointly establish development requirements for the JPA. Day-to-day administration of these requirements would be the responsibility of Buncombe County. A Board of Adjustment with appointees from City Council, Board of C ommissioners, and County Planning Board would consider conditional use permits, planned unit developments, variances and appeals. Any changes to the development requirements or the area(s) to which they would apply would require approval by both the Asheville City Council and the

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners. The JPA would not be static, but would expand with each City annexation in accordance with procedures to be developed under the interlocal agreement. The JPA represents a major opportunity to the City and County to cooperate in planning the land use and future development

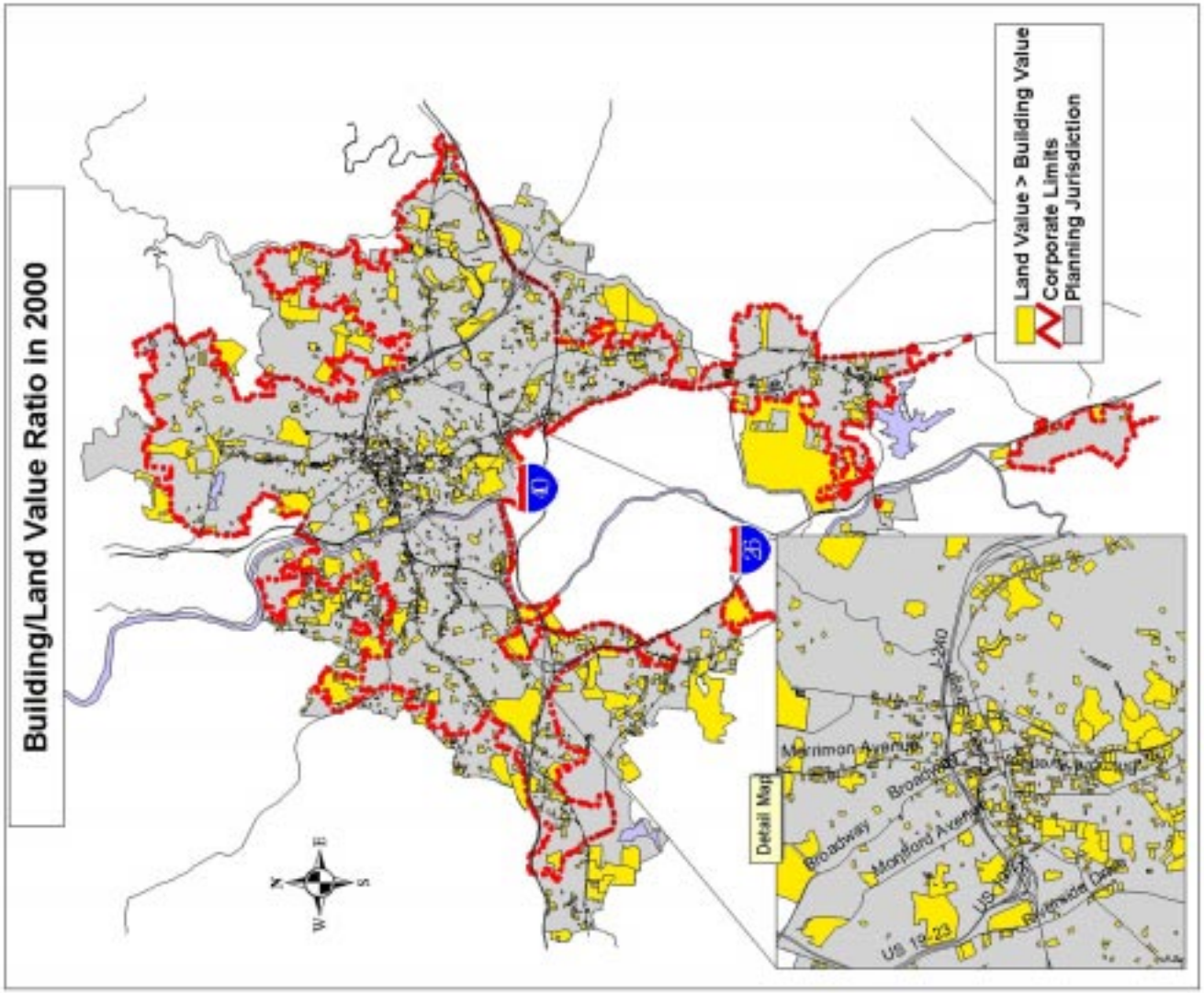
Self Financing Bonds - Self Financing Bonds is a planning and fiscal management tool that allows communities to finance infrastructure and land assembly costs using projected increases in property tax receipts. Typically, bonds are used in conjunction with a specific redevelopment plan intended to improve areas having substandard urban services or property ownership patterns which preclude private sector assembly for redevelopment or where existing development is in a state of dilapidation or blight and requires public investment to overcome these obstacles for better development. The self financing bonds technique, upon implementation, establishes a tax valuation "base level" and requires tax revenues in excess of this base level to be earmarked for use in improving these areas as designated in a specific improvement plan. Self financing bonds are used for a time certain, typically 20 years. At the conclusion of this time period, tax revenue earmarking is removed and the increased tax receipts return to the City general fund. The State of North Carolina does not currently authorize this method of public financing. The City should strongly support project development financing when this development tool goes to NC voters in a 2004 referendum. This tool would be especially useful in neighborhoods like West End Clingman (WECAN) where significant public investment is necessary to correct deficiencies in public infrastructure pursuant to a redevelopment plan.

Transfer of Development Rights - One of the goals that the City of Asheville has set out for the future is to better preserve environmentally sensitive areas, critically-located open space, and small farms. A mechanism which has been successfully used in other parts of the country to preserve wetlands, farmland and open space is transfer of development rights (TDR). This approach allows the creation of 'receiving zones' and 'donor zones' whereby development rights (density) could be transferred from one zone to another, allowing an increased density in receiving zone areas where it is appropriate and allowing preservation of wetlands, open space or farmland in the donor

zone. The TDR technique would allow property owners to preserve their property rights while protecting the resource intended to be preserved. In Asheville, such an approach would allow preservation of critical ridgelines, open space and viewsheds, floodway and floodplain areas, and small local farms. The technique also has a great deal of applicability for preserving farmland and environmentally sensitive areas in the County and region that are being threatened by development; a cooperative regional approach might allow transfer development rights from areas in Buncombe County to areas in the City of Asheville that are more appropriate for urban development. The State of North Carolina does not currently authorize the TDR regulatory incentive. The City should pursue statutory authority for transfer of development rights.

Land Value Taxation - Land value taxation is a property tax appraisal and tax allocation tool that establishes a financial incentive for development or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized property. Generally speaking, under a land value taxation approach, improvements to the land are taxed at a lower rate than the land itself. When communities implement a land value taxation approach, it is usually set up to be revenue neutral with regard to total tax receipts; what happens under this approach is that landowners with fully developed property end up paying less property tax than they currently do and those with undeveloped or underdeveloped property end up paying more tax than they currently do. While there are no net increases in tax receipts to the local government under a revenue neutral land value taxation approach, the approach carries out a public policy by creating an incentive for property owners to develop their property or to redevelop their underutilized property. Such an approach has considerable merit for the City of Asheville given the extent to which the City's commercial corridors are underdeveloped (see Map 5, page 65) and the amount of vacant land in the City that is suitable for infill development. Such a program would have to be carefully tailored to coordinate with other efforts to preserve open space, environmentally sensitive areas and local farms. The State of North Carolina does not currently authorize this tax policy incentive. The City should further investigate the benefits of land value taxation, and, if deemed appropriate for our local situation, pursue statutory authority for land value taxation.

Map 5


Building/Land Value Ratio in 2000
Land Value > Building Value
Corporate Limits
Planning Jurisdiction
Detail Map
Merriman Avenue
Broadway
Broadway
Mansfield Avenue
US 19-23
US 19-23
Ridgeside Drive
N
W
E
S

Design Review - Land use conflicts and concerns often come down to matters of design. People are less likely to oppose a duplex in their neighborhood if it looks like a single-family house; a well buffered commercial project that preserves an important stand of trees can gain the support of the surrounding neighborhood; a new home in an historic neighborhood will "fit in" if it is constructed in context with the neighborhood.

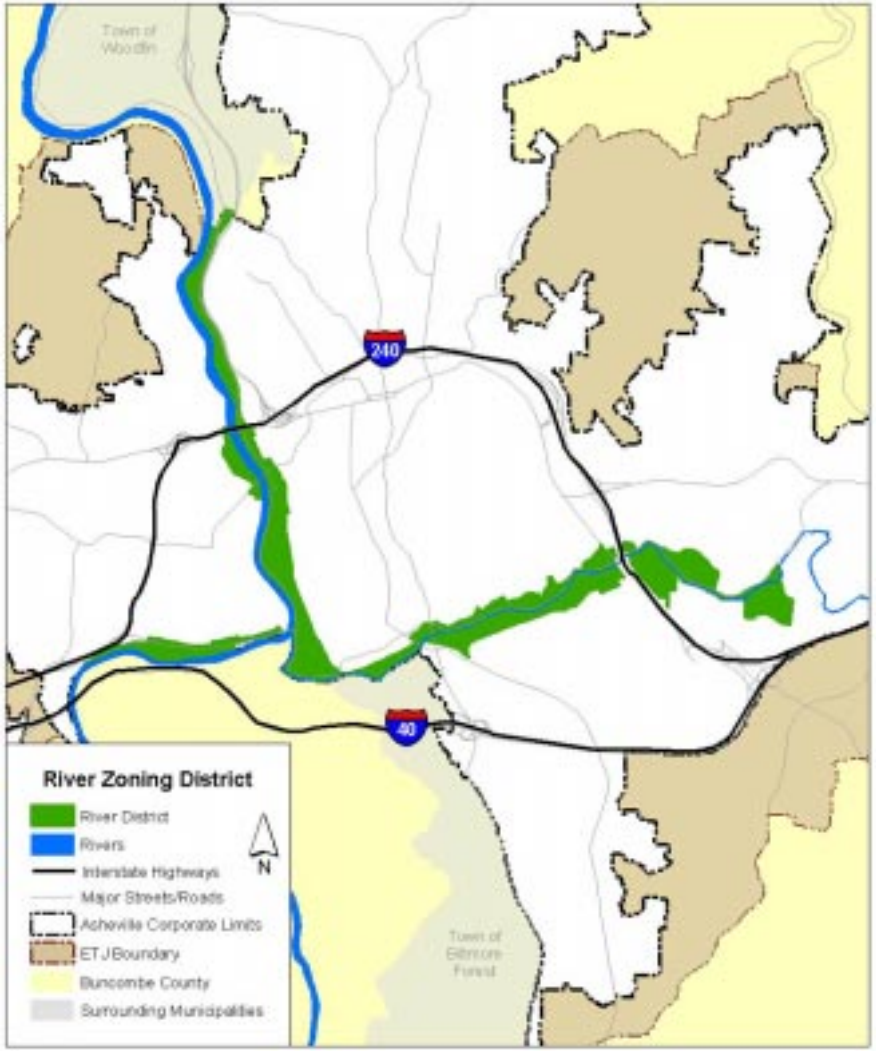
The City of Asheville has several techniques of incorporating design review in the development approval process. In our local historic districts, it is mandatory for most projects to receive consideration and approval by the Historic Resources Commission, a board that uses design guidelines to ascertain whether a project is compatible with the neighborhood in which it is located. In Downtown Asheville and some of the areas immediately surrounding it, the Downtown Commission reviews project for compliance with design guidelines; although this review is mandatory, compliance is voluntary. A similar process is used in the River District, with the River District Design Review Committee implementing a mandatory review/voluntary compliance design review program. Map 6 (page 67) illustrates areas of the City that have a formal design review program.

In addition to these direct design review programs, the City implements design review indirectly through a variety of zoning techniques. Conditional use zoning allows a rezoning request to be tied to a specific development plan; design issues are frequently utilized to ensure that a rezoning is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood through this zoning tool. The conditional use permit process also incorporates opportunities for design review, especially in cases of large retail complexes that must meet a set of performance standards with regard to site and building design. The City also has a number of zoning overlay districts in which building size incentives are provided in exchange for improved site and building design. Finally, the City has specific design requirements in its various zoning districts; these requirements can range from fairly substantial (such as in the case of the urban village district in which design requirements are implemented through building placement, sidewalk width, parking location, minimum and maximum structure

height, and land use mixture requirements) to the setback and building height requirements of single-family residential zoning districts.

While zoning codes can be used effectively in addressing site design issues at the "macro" level (across an entire zoning district), and sometimes at the "micro" level (site specific) through the conditional use zoning or permit process, there is no current statutory authority for addressing structure design issues except in local historic districts. The mandatory review/ voluntary compliance program used in Downtown and the River District, does not always work smoothly if an applicant is unwilling to implement design review suggestions for either site or structure. Additionally, most design review requires some sort of formal public hearing consideration, adding to the time it takes a developer to get his or her project approved. Obtaining statutory authority for mandatory design review regardless of whether the project was located in a local historic district could result in a more streamlined development review process where the design requirements were known upfront through codification in the City regulations. Such a program could minimize neighborhood

Map 6



Before - abandoned gas station on Montford Avenue; After - Viva Europe Cafe

Before - Manor Inn; After - Manor Inn remodeled into apartments

Before - abandoned home of Congressman Richard Pearson; During move - Preservation Society moves the home to a new location; After - Richmond Hill Inn

resistance to infill development while simultaneously expediting the development review process by ensuring that the requirements were known by the developer prior to the initiation of the development process and eliminating the need for board approval. The City of Asheville should explore statuatory authority for mandatory design review, and if such authority is granted, the City should review its potential application to selected zoning districts and to specific areas of the City for which this development tool is determined appropriate.

Adaptive Reuse - Asheville has seen tremendous development activity over the last 100 years and, as result, has a wide variety of old and new buildings. This architectural diversity contributes significantly to the character of the City. However, some buildings are no longer appropriately situated to carry out their original function; the market for their particular use has changed or their location does not support the use for which they were originally built. Examples include a taxi stand on a predominantly residential street, an historic inn in a single-family neighborhood, and a mountaintop mansion accessed through a single-family neighborhood.

It is important to find new, compatible uses for these buildings if we are to preserve the architectural character of the community. In addition, if these buildings stand vacant and dilapidated, they promote neighborhood decline. In the examples listed above, the taxi stand became a neighborhood deli and grocery, the inn is a bed and breakfast, and the mountaintop mansion contains a corporate headquarters and offices. None of these uses could have occurred without some flexibility in the implementation of zoning and building codes. Fortunately, the City has a variety of methods for addressing adaptive reuse in its "regulatory toolbox." In addition, recent changes to City regulations, such as conditional use zoning and the North Carolina version of the New Jersey rehabilitation code, provide new tools to promote adaptive reuse in these types of situations, while ensuring that neighborhood compatibility and public safety goals are met. Adaptive reuse, carefully applied, preserves architectural diversity and contributes to a healthy neighborhood.

Infill Development - Infill development offers another method for implementing the City's Smart Growth vision. There are hundreds of vacant properties scattered throughout the City and there are numerous developed properties that are ripe for redevelopment. When these properties are developed or redeveloped, this is referred to as infill development.

A common definition of insanity: doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Map 5 (page 65) illustrates developed properties where the land value is greater than the improvement value. These are properties that have strong potential for redevelopment; in addition, these properties are not providing the "highest and best" use, thereby representing opportunities for enhancing the City tax base as well as supporting local economic development.

There is usually a reason why properties are vacant or underdeveloped in the City. These reasons include topographical or other physical problems with the property, prohibitive development costs under existing zoning (e.g., insufficient density to yield a return given the potential market for the property's development), high demolition or other site preparation costs, suburban zoning requirements that do not maximize use of the property for urban

Commercial Area Redevelopment

1. Buildings are set back from the street. All parking is in front of building. No street trees and limited pedestrian amenities are provided.

2. Over time, redevelopment happens. New additions are added in front relating to the street. Street trees added as each building is renovated.

3. Streetscape is improved and pedestrian facilities are in place. Building renovations and expansions relocate to the street. Businesses have an opportunity to work together to share parking, encourage a shopping destination atmosphere, and more effeciently compete with larger developments and commercial nodes.

2

1

3

purposes, and lack of knowledge, financing, initiative or creativity on the part of the property owner concerning development or redevelopment alternatives.

The Smart Growth development pattern proposed in this comprehensive plan offers a variety of realistic, market-based alternatives to promote infill development of vacant property and redevelopment of underdeveloped property, particularly along major road corridors. These alternatives range from proposed urban villages locations to denser residential and commercial development templates; both of these development alternatives allow properties to be utilized to a greater potential than suburban zoning.

In addition to a general Smart Growth development pattern, opportunities must be provided for infill development on a case-by-case basis. Some properties may prove "resistant" to development or redevelopment even at the higher densities allowed under the Smart Growth pattern due to the underlying costs associated with site preparation or other factors. Other properties may not located be on or along the key corridors covered under the Smart Growth pattern. Special regulatory tools, such as conditional use zoning, may be required to be used to encourage development of these properties. In addition, it may be necessary to educate the owners of the development potential of their properties. However it happens, effective promotion of infill development through property owner education and market-based regulatory solutions is absolutely essential in addressing the tax equity, tax base enhancement, and Smart Growth development goals of the City.

"Construction has an enormous impact on the natural environment. As builders, we want our impact to be as positive as possible. By building green, a builder can cost effectively produce a high- quality product and at the same time help to preserve life-supporting habitats for future generations."

Matt Kavlor, Building Contractor
Craftsmen Unlimited, Inc.

Green Building

Buildings have a tremendous impact both on the people who inhabit them and on the natural environment. The impact on natural resources starts with the development of the land itself and includes the use of raw materials for construction and the continuing use of resources for building operation. Buildings use one-quarter of all the world's wood harvest and consume two-fifths of all material and energy flows. Building construction and operations account for 35 percent of U.S. CO_2 emissions and 54 percent of total U.S. energy consumption.

Green building is a relatively new concept that has emerged in response to the growing concern for the sustainable use of resources with regard to the design and use of buildings. Green building is an integrated framework of design, construction, and operational practices that address the environmental, economic, and social impacts of buildings.

The green building concept encompasses a host of strategies that emphasize environmentally sensitive building practices that minimize or reduce the environmental impacts of building construction as well as the long term operational aspects associated with use of the building. Green building practices recognize the interdependence of the natural and built environments and seek to minimize the use of energy, water, and other natural resources and to provide a healthy, productive indoor environment. Green buildings also respect and are sensitive to the natural and cultural characteristics of their regions.

As Asheville continues to develop, it is increasingly important to promote strategies that will help to minimize the negative impacts of growth, such as degradation to air and water quality, natural resource depletion, and inefficient land use practices. The built environment represents a major opportunity for the City, along with local designers, engineers, developers, builders, lenders, appraisers, and other sectors of the building trades, to address local and global environmental concerns. Although misperceptions abound, the North Carolina Building Code does not prohibit the use of

alternative building materials or methods.

Benefits of Green Building

- Helps to promote Asheville's Smart Growth and environmental policies including higher density, mixed use and transit-oriented development, redevelopment, increased bicycle and pedestrian access, and stormwater and erosion control.
- Provides long term affordability for owners and tenants who will save money through increased operation and maintenance efficiencies.
- Improves indoor air quality and the health, well-being, and productivity of occupants.
- Helps reduce public infrastructure costs related to development such as decreasing the demand on landfills, water supply, storm sewers, and roads.
- Conserves energy, water and other natural resources.
- Minimizes local ecological degradation (habitat, air, soil, and water) through efficient site and building design, sustainable construction practices, and low impact building materials and operational practices.
- Keeps money in the local economy and creates new local industries and jobs.

Henderson company building 'green' homes

By Tim Reid, ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, March 24, 2002

HENDERSONVILLE — Glade Holdings Inc. opened in Hendersonville only four years ago but is already becoming a good-sized player in the area's booming residential housing market.

The company is building six residential developments totaling more than 300 homes, including the launch next month of its new "Earth Care Builder" program at Highland Golf Villas.

"Earth Care Builder is our version of the green building movement that is occurring across the country," said Mike Collins, Glade Holdings' director of sales and marketing. "It is a conscious effort to build homes that represent a better utilization of land and resources."

Glade Holdings took standards from green building programs in Texas and Atlanta and then developed its own approach, he said. Homes are sited for maximum energy efficiency and minimum impact on the environment.

"If we have to take out trees, we take out as few as possible, and we don't put them in a pile and burn them," Collins said. "We take the logs to sawmills, and the brush is ground into pellets for natural erosion prevention."

Homes are designed and built for maximum energy efficiency, he said, including things like placement of windows, sealing of wall and floor joints, using a sprayed insulation to avoid air gaps, etc. Indoor air quality is a major consideration in choosing construction materials.

Glade Holdings principals Gus Campano and Edmundo Hernandez had been successful real estate developers in Florida before they formed Glade Holdings in Hendersonville four years ago, Collins said.

The Earth Care Builder program will be incorporated in the Bedford Place development and all of the company's new developments in the future.

"We realize the necessity of conserving our natural resources," Campano said. "We want to leave a lasting, healthy environment for our future generations to be proud of."

Green Building Practices and Techniques

Design

- Smaller is better - A smaller well-constructed house lasts longer, uses fewer resources, and is more efficient to operate.
- Energy efficiency - Increase level of insulation, use high-performance windows, and tight construction.
- Renewable energy - Incorporate passive solar heating, natural light, and natural cooling mechanisms. Also consider solar water heating and photovoltaics.
- Optimize material use - Minimize waste by designing for standard ceiling heights and building dimensions. Simplify building geometry.
- Recycling - Provide for storage and processing of recyclables.
- Design for adaptability - Use more classic or timeless architectural styles for long term adaptability to other uses. Consider home office needs with layout and wiring.
- Design for durability - Use quality construction and materials for a long life.
- Incorporate roundabouts at roadway intersections - Roundabouts can eliminate traffic delays and reduce air pollution as well as need for future road widening. They may also require less pervious surface and provide a center island for native plantings that help absorb stormwater.

Land Use & Site Planning

- Reuse older buildings – Adaptive reuse of existing buildings is the most sustainable construction.
- Encourage in-fill and mixed-use development - Encourage the mixing of residential and commercial development to increase walkability and reduce automobile dependence.
- Minimize automobile dependence and design for multi-modal access - Locate buildings to provide access to public transportation, bicycle paths, and pedestrian access to basic services.
- Maximize site resources - Conduct a thoughtful site evaluation, including sun angle, soils, vegetation, water resources, important natural areas, etc., and let this information guide the design to make the best use of solar insulation, vegetation for natural cooling and wind protection.
- Locate development to minimize environmental impact - Identify environmentally

sensitive areas such as steep slopes, mature forests, intact native ecosystems and wetlands. Cluster buildings and minimize road construction to preserve these open spaces and wildlife habitats.

- Reduce impervious surfaces - Design landscapes to absorb stormwater instead of carrying it off-site in storm sewers. Some methods include the use of pervious surfaces for parking lot construction and the incorporation of grass swales, underground filtration and rain gardens, which are natural stormwater filters.
- Design water-efficient, low-maintenance landscaping - Landscape with drought-resistant native plants and perennial groundcovers versus conventional lawns that require irrigation, pesticide use, and generate air pollution from mowing.
- Protect trees and topsoil during sitework - Keep heavy equipment and supplies out of the root zone and avoid major grade changes during grading and construction by fencing off the "drip line" of trees.
- Avoid use of pesticides and other chemicals that may leach into the groundwater - Look into less toxic termite treatments, and keep exposed walls free from obstructions to discourage insects. When backfilling a foundation or grading around a house, do not bury any construction debris.

Conservation of Resources and Materials

- Use durable products and materials with low embodied energy - Try to use more natural and durable products that are not heavily manufactured thus saving energy on the manufacturing process and contributing less to the solid waste stream.
- Choose low-maintenance building materials - Try to select building materials that will require less maintenance (painting, re-treatment, waterproofing, etc.).
- Buy locally produced building materials - Look for locally produced materials, such as local hardwoods instead of tropical woods. This will save transportation impacts in both energy use and pollution generation.
- Use building products made from recycled materials - Building products made from recycled materials reduce solid waste problems, cut energy consumption in manufacturing, and save on natural resource use.
- Use salvaged building materials when possible - Use salvaged materials such as lumber, millwork, certain plumbing fixtures, and

hardware, but don't sacrifice energy efficiency or water efficiency by reusing old windows or toilets.

- Seek responsible wood supplies - Use lumber from independently certified well-managed forests. Avoid lumber products produced from old-growth timber unless they are certified.
- Minimize use of pressure-treated lumber - Use designs that will minimize soil contact and rot. Where possible, use alternatives such as recycled plastic lumber. Take measures to protect workers when cutting and handling pressure-treated wood. Scraps should never be incinerated.
- Minimize packaging waste - Avoid excessive packaging, such as plastic-wrapped plumbing fixtures or fasteners that aren't available in bulk.
- Use recycled materials for parking lots and other paved surfaces - Use recycled base and fill materials such as asphalt grindings, crushed concrete and gravel.

Operational Efficiency

- Install water-efficient equipment - Water-conserving toilets, showerheads, and faucets not only reduce water use, they also reduce demand on septic systems or sewage treatment plants. Reducing hot water use also saves energy.
- Install high-efficiency lights and appliances - Fluorescent lighting has improved dramatically in recent years and is now suitable for home use. High-efficiency appliances offer both economic and environmental advantages over their conventional counterparts.
- Install high-efficiency heating and cooling equipment - Well-designed high-efficiency furnaces, boilers, and air conditioners not only save money, but also produce less pollution during operation.
- Look into the feasibility of graywater for irrigation. Water from sinks, showers, or clothes washers (graywater) can be recycled for watering plants.
- Incorporate Access Management measures into the transportation system - This is safer for drivers, and will reserve highway capacity as well as decrease delay, which helps to improve air quality.

Indoor Environmental Quality

- Avoid materials that will create indoor pollutants - Solvent-based finishes, adhesives, carpeting, particleboard, and many

other building products release formaldehyde and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into the air. These chemicals can affect workers' and occupants' health as well as contribute to smog and ground-level ozone pollution outside.

- Install mechanical ventilation equipment - Mechanical ventilation is usually required to ensure safe, healthy indoor air. Heat recovery ventilators should be considered in cold climates because of energy savings, but simpler, less expensive exhaust-only ventilation systems are also adequate.
- Avoid potential health hazards such as radon, mold, pesticides - Follow recommended practices to minimize radon entry into the building and provide for future mitigation if necessary. Use designs that will avoid moisture problems, which could cause mold and mildew growth. Design insect-resistant detailing that will require minimal use of pesticides.
- Avoid ozone-depleting chemicals in mechanical equipment and insulation, CFC's have been phased out, but their primary replacements – HCFC's also damage the ozone layer and should be avoided where possible. Reclaim CFC's when servicing or disposing of equipment.

LEED Program

The US Green Building Council (USGBC) was formed in 1993 to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable, and healthy places to live and work by accelerating the adoption of green building practices, technologies, policies, and standards. USGBC membership consists of more than 400 organizations including product manufacturers, environmental non-profit organizations, building and design professionals, building owners, and local and state governments. The USGBC is endeavoring to move the green building industry forward with market-based solutions.

The Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (or LEED) Green Building Rating System is a priority program of the US Green Building Council. LEED is a third party certification system designed for rating new and existing commercial, institutional, and high-rise residential buildings. LEED is based on accepted energy and environmental principles and strikes a balance between known effective

practices and emerging concepts. It is a feature-oriented system where credits are earned for satisfying various criteria. Different levels of green building certification are awarded based on the total credits earned. The system is designed to be comprehensive in scope, yet simple in operation.

The LEED system evaluates environmental performance from a "whole building" perspective, over a building's life cycle, providing a definitive standard for what constitutes a "green building". The whole-building approach encourages and guides a collaborative, integrated design and construction process that optimizes environmental and economic factors.

The Four R's of Green Building

- Reduce - Design to minimize the use of energy and raw materials
- Reuse - Reuse materials when practical and structurally sound
- Renewable - Utilize energy and materials from renewable sources
- Recycle - Use recycled materials and design home/office for recycling

Historic Preservation

Historic resources are the tangible reminders that establish social continuity through their links to the past. They give Asheville its sense of place, community, and spirit, and provide it distinction while contributing to the variety of the built environment. These resources include buildings, districts or groups of buildings, structures, objects, historic, and prehistoric sites. Over time, these vestiges of the past acquire a symbolic value in a community that sets Asheville apart from other locations.

Historic resources must be identified and evaluated if they are to be protected. Those that are judged significant deserve private and public consideration and effort to insure their preservation. The fundamental purpose of any preservation program, particularly the historic preservation element of a local comprehensive plan, is to promote the protection of historic resources that are considered important to the community by responsible authorities and property owners.

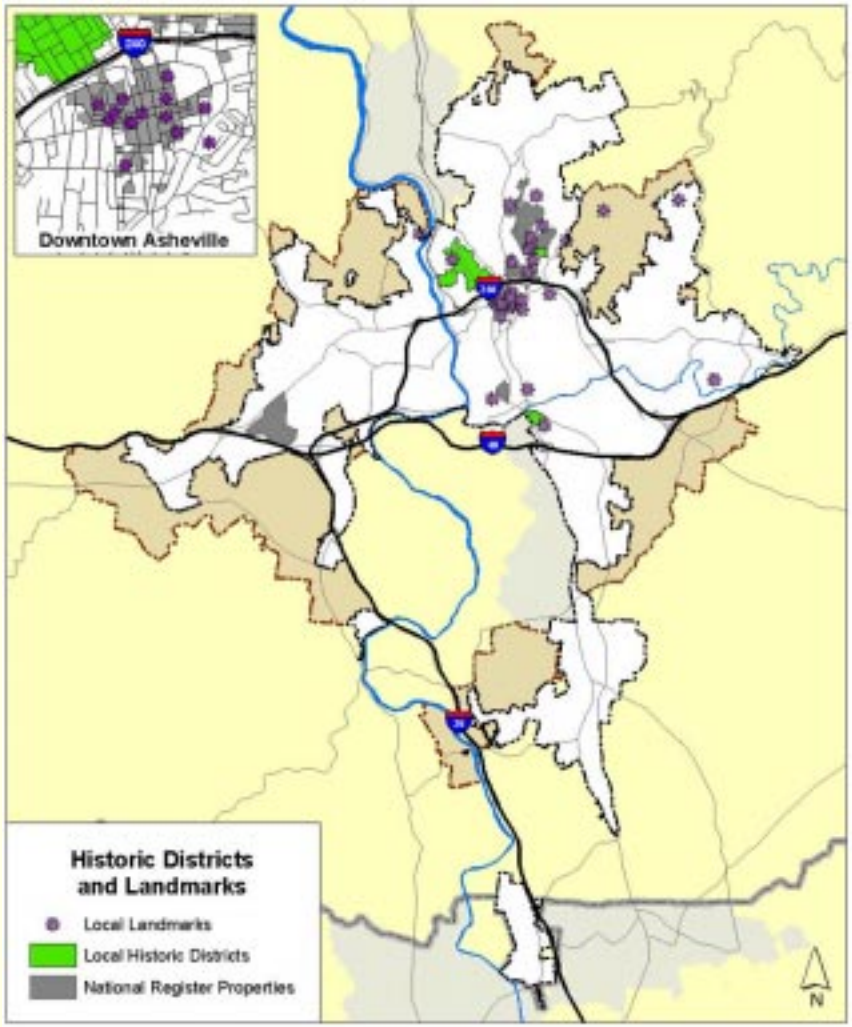
Established in 1979, the Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe (HRC) is specifically mandated to recommend designation of local historic districts and properties and to administer design review of new construction or rehabilitation within these districts and properties. Providing technical assistance and helping to educate the community concerning the merits of historical preservation are additional duties the HRC is required to perform.

Since 1979, based on recommendations from the HRC the Asheville City Council has desig-

"History is a journey without end. And the heritage we leave for the future will depend on how we deal with it now."

Ada Louise Huxtable

Map 8



nated 37 local historic landmarks and three local historic districts, Montford (1980), Biltmore Village (1987), and Albemarle Park (1988). Several additional designated properties are located in Buncombe County. Asheville is home to 43 individual listings in the National Register of Historic Places and six National Register Historic Districts including: Montford (1977), Downtown Asheville (1979), Biltmore Village Multiple Resource District (1979), Chestnut Hill (1983), Grove Park (1989) and Kimberly Amendment to the Grove Park Historic District (1990). (See Historic Districts and Landmarks Map.) Properties listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or located within National Register Historic Districts, may be eligible for federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits. Locally designated historic landmarks are eligible for a 50% deferment in local property taxes as long as the historic integrity of the structure is maintained.

Historic Preservation's Relationship to Smart Growth

Identifying and preserving the existing built environment represents a relatively insignifi-

cant percentage of preservation activities today. Historic preservation has moved to a multifaceted group of activities that uses our built heritage as a means for revitalization, neighborhood stabilization, attraction for tourism, job creation, film industry production, affordable housing, luxury housing, education, transportation, and others. The spin-off from all this activity includes job creation, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, improved community appearance, and greater community pride. Historic preservation is Smart Growth, and smart investment. Historic preservation, in and of itself, has become one of the most important tools in the entire Smart Growth toolbox.

Smart Growth advocates a density of use. Historic residential and commercial neighborhoods were built to be dense and continue today with existing mix-used developments and new infill buildings. The diversity of housing sites, qualities, styles and characteristics of historic neighborhoods stands in sharp contrast to the commonplace character of current subdivisions. The diversity of housing options means a diversity of people who can live in historic neighborhoods. Reinvestment in historic areas in and of itself revitalizes and revalues the nearby existing investment of both the public and private sector.

"Smart Growth is an approach to development that respects the existing built environment as well as the patterns of neighborhoods and commercial districts."

Cathy Baylock

Manor Inn (1898), local historic landmark, converted into 35 apartment units in early 1990s photo courtesy of Albemarle Park Neighborhood Association.

Economic growth means new jobs. Rehabilitation of older and historic neighborhoods and commercial areas is sound economic development policy. Rehabilitation projects, such as the Grove Arcade, create jobs where the

Bledsoe Building (1920s), West Asheville currently undergoing rehabilitation –mixed use development photo courtesy of Pack Memorial Library

workers already exist. As a general rule, new construction is 50 percent labor and 50 percent materials, while rehabilitation projects are often 60 to 70 percent labor. New construction projects consume HVAC systems, sheetrock, and timber from other states and regions, while rehabilitation projects consume services from local carpenters, plumbers, painters, and electricians, who are our neighbors. They subsequently spend their paycheck in the local economy, resulting in a significantly greater local economic impact dollar for dollar than new construction. The rehabilitation of historic buildings and the jobs it creates is Smart Growth and wise economic investment.

The rehabilitation of historic structures does not consume any new land. The conversion of a historic department store into residential units and office and retail space reduces the demand for the conversion of five acres of farmland into a subdivision and commercial center. The economic revitalization of our main streets and Downtown reduces the demand for another strip center. The restoration of a 1920s building, such as the Jackson Building, Westall Building and Legal Building, reduces the demand for another suburban office building. No new land is consumed when rehabilitating a historic building. Almost without exception historic buildings are located where public infrastructure already exists. No new water lines, sewer lines, streets, curbs, gutters required. The revitalization of historic development before absorbing undeveloped properties is Smart Growth. So in the end, protecting our surrounding mountains from new development insensitive to our environment is Smart Growth.

Historic Preservation Trends

During the late 1970s Asheville's Downtown and several of its historic neighborhoods were on a downward spiral into the depths of decay. That erosion led to vacant buildings, marginal businesses, and empty streets in Downtown. Once proud neighborhoods turned into groups of redlined, crime-infested, and run-down buildings, where dilapidation was the norm rather than the exception. Today, those neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown, like Montford, Albemarle Park, and Chestnut Hill, are experiencing a resurgence. This revival has supported the renaissance of Asheville's Downtown. Three important economic incentives helped reverse the erosion of both the structures and the tax base; (1) national and local historic district designations, (2) historic tax credits for the rehabilitation of certified historic buildings, and (3) local historic landmark designations. The positive results from all preservation activities include job creation, a vibrant downtown and stable neighborhoods like Montford, improved community appearance, compatible and appropriate infill structures like McDonald's in Biltmore Village, and greater community pride.

The Tax Reform Act of 1976 created the first federal tax incentive for preserving income producing historic structures. Congress further expanded the act in later years to encourage more private investment. In 1993, the North Carolina General Assembly created the first state historic tax incentives for income producing historic structures. In 1998, the General Assembly further expanded the tax incentives for both income producing and non-income producing historic properties

"It's kind of meaningless to preserve a single historic building surrounded by asphalt and ugliness. When we lose the context of these buildings, we lose a lot."

Constance Beaumont,
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Stephens Lee Gymnasium, a local historic landmark

Since the implementation of the North Carolina State Historic Tax Credits in 1998, the development of residential units in downtown Asheville has boomed, in part due to the 30% historic rehabilitation tax credit for non-income producing properties. These new residential units have stimulated the development of even more independent businesses to serve the new residential and visitor populations.

As a comparison of the effectiveness of the state historic rehabilitation tax credits the following is offered. From 1976 to 1998, the 22 years prior to the State's1998 historic tax credit, there were 103 incoming-producing historic rehabilitation projects completed in Asheville and Buncombe County worth $45,881,515. Since the implementation of the 1998 state historic tax credits, in just three short years, thirty-eight income-producing historic rehabilitation projects have been completed, are currently being rehabilitated or are proposed projects. These projects represent a total of $41,971,291 in investments. From 1998 through May 2001, ten non-income producing projects have been completed for a total worth of $992,648. Thirty-one additional non-income producing rehabilitation projects have been proposed or are under construction for a total worth of $5,860,000 in investments.

The historic tax credit incentive for the rehabilitation of non-income producing historic structures is increasing the demand for National Register status for districts and properties.

Another preservation trend with positive results is the conjunction between the public and private sectors to provide decent housing and at the same time increase property values in one of Asheville's most historic neighborhood. Historic preservation techniques were used to rehabilitate 105 houses in the historic Montford neighborhood, prompting property values to increase 85.5 percent (City average was 40 percent). Funds were allocated through Community Development Block Grants.

Inventory Studies and Surveys

A program to preserve historic resources in a community must begin with identification of those resources. Resources in the City of

Asheville have been identified as the result of comprehensive surveys of Downtown Asheville, Albemarle Park, Biltmore Village, Montford, and Chestnut Hill-Liberty area and of surveys of smaller, individual development parcels. Much identification work still remains to be done. The vast interior land of the City has not been subjected to a comprehensive archaeological/architectural survey.

In 1978, a reconnaissance or windshield survey of the historic resources in the City of Asheville and Buncombe County was conducted. The surveyors inspected locations that contained significant concentrations of these early structures as well as rural locations across Buncombe County. The structures were individually inventoried and briefly described, their number was counted and their general characteristics, such as style, condition, integrity, and size, were summarized. A similar survey of historic resources was conducted in the City of Asheville in 1998.

That architectural inventory led to the placement of twelve districts (including the expansion of the Chestnut Hill National Register Historic District to include Hillside Street, Madison Avenue, Oak Park Road, and Arlington Road) and eight individual properties on the State Study list a preliminary step to inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Once the State has determined a district or property is eligible for National Register status a National Register nomination must be submitted to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. Subsequent to the 1998 survey both West End/Clingman and Shiloh were placed on the State Study List.

"You always have models of what works if you are retaining some of your past."

Jody Kuhne; Historic Resources Commission

New Urbanism

"New urbanism" is a land development management concept that has the potential for widespread application in Asheville, especially along the City's commercial corridors. Simply stated, new urbanism establishes a development pattern that is based on structure location, building design and access, parking location, and building height, rather than on the permitted and prohibited land uses that traditional zoning uses as its primary development management tool. In other words, new urbanism regulates land use by defining the "box" in which the land use occurs, rather than specifically listing the land uses that are allowed and those that are prohibited. As such, new urbanism is consistent with many of the City's Smart Growth policies.

Generally, new urbanist development permits a significantly more dense land use pattern than does traditional zoning. Traditional zoning is typically based on the suburban single-family house as the model for all development. In traditional zoning, the building is placed in the middle of the lot through the application of setback requirements, access and parking occurs in front of the building, and all the noxious activities (dumpsters, truck loading, etc.) occur in the back. This generally results in a development pattern that minimizes the amount of building that can be put on a particular lot and emphasizes vehicular access as the predominant means by which people get to the building. In addition, in an area where most commercial development occurs in a linear fashion along major roads, like in Asheville, land use conflicts occur because the unsightly, noise and odor producing activities are relegated to close proximity to adjoining neighborhoods since those activities occur at the back of the site. Furthermore, because the site design favors automotive rather than pedestrian traffic, it is not usually very easy get from the neighborhood to the commercial use.

For more information about New Urbanism, see Appendix C that contains the "charter" of this planning movement.

Retrofitting a new urbanist development pattern onto an existing commercial corridor developed under traditional zoning regulations can occur fairly readily. The new urbanist development pattern provides a strong finan-

cial incentive through increased land use intensity for the property owner, thereby creating a market-based conversion mechanism. In addition, existing structures can often be accommodated in the retrofit project. The Atlanta Bread Company development (pictured below) at the corner of Merrimon and Edgewood Avenues is a local example of how this retrofit can start.

Additionally, at right is an illustration of how one of Asheville's older commercial centers can be retrofitted using New Ubanist principles. (Illustration by Alan Glines, City Urban Designer.)

Conceptual Redevelopment of Innsbruck Mall

New Urbanist Convenience Store/ Gas Station Design, *New Hillsborough Land Use Plan; Andres Duany, Jame Moore, et. al.*

New Urbanist Vehicle Service Designs

Some cities have chosen to implement a new urbanist development pattern throughout their entire jurisdiction. Given Asheville's existing development pattern (predominantly large lot single-family) and topographical constraints, such a step does not seem to be advisable. However, provision should be made to incorporate new urbanist development practices along many of the City's commercial corridors and to accommodate these practices for some infill development.

The City's Urban Village zoning district creates a new urbanist development pattern. In addition, zoning overlays along North Charlotte Street and part of Montford Avenue will also result in that same pattern. Certainly the Central Business District (CBD) zoning in Downtown and along part out of Haywood Avenue in West Asheville also promote this pattern. Several new zoning districts are in the process of development to provide for the application of new urbanist principles along selected commercial corridors and in appropriate infill areas.

Some flexibility needs to be provided to accommodate modern land uses that do not readily fit into the new urbanist "box." Three of these land uses are: (1) convenience stores/gas stations and other uses with drive-through facilities; (2) vehicle repair facilities and (3) automobile sales operations. Each of these specific land uses is, quite naturally, heavily reliant on automobile access, making it difficult to accommodate them through a standard new urbanist development pattern. Consequently, a different technique can be used to allow these uses to occur. This technique is the "development template." Development templates are required site designs that respect the operational needs of these types of uses, while allowing them to fit into the urbanist development pattern. The illustration and photograph pn this page show how these land uses can be accommodated through this zoning technique. (Please note that the model for the development template for vehicle repair facilities is the Public Works garage located on South Charlotte Street.)

Open Space, Forest and Wildlife Habitat Protection

An important goal of the City's Smart Growth program is the protection of open space including forests, agricultural lands, and other natural areas. The preservation of these key environmental resources is critical to sustaining our quality of life. The positive aspects of open space preservation are many and include environmental benefits such as the preservation of native plant communities, the protection of wildlife habitat, the mitigation of air and water pollution, erosion control, and wind and noise abatement. There are also economic benefits such as an increase in the property tax base, reduction in the need for infrastructure construction, the protection of working farmlands and an increase in income from tourism.

The forest ecosystems in and around Asheville are one of the most biologically diverse in the world. Although most of the area was logged around the turn of the 20th century, the forests have since regenerated. Except in areas that were converted to agriculture, the species composition of the second growth forest is largely the same as the virgin forest, which they replaced. Now the forest faces new threats such as urbanization, which results in the fragmentation and loss of native wildlife habitat. In addition the proliferation of invasive, exotic species that were often introduced for agricultural and horticultural use, are now a problem for many native plant communities.

Wildlife biologists and ecologists have long recognized that the best way to preserve native plants, and wildlife habitat is to create an interconnected system of green space to counter habitat fragmentation. Protecting and restoring connections between parks, riparian corridors, greenways and other important ecological areas is a key concept for the science of conservation biology and the practice of ecosystem management. Networks of preserved open spaces and riparian corridors can also help to shape and guide urban form, while at the same time helping to prevent urban sprawl.

Just as a community needs basic infrastructure such as roads, sewers and telecommunication networks, it also must have a network of green spaces. Green infrastructure is a term

that is being used more frequently in land conservation discussions. Green infrastructure as defined by the Conservation Fund is "an interconnected network of green space that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations." The green infrastructure approach ties in with Smart Growth and differs from conventional conservation approaches in that it attempts to work within the framework of land development, growth management and infrastructure planning rather than in isolation or in opposition to development.

One of the major problems associated especially with suburban development is the explosive increase in land consumed relative to the population growth. For example, a large lot subdivision that consumes a wooded site or farm for one acre house lots. Utilizing a different approach to land development that embodies the concept of green infrastructure and incorporates the principles of conservation design could result in a development that yields the same number of houses, while at the same time retaining a large portion of the original site as woodland or farmland. Utilizing this approach allows a community to preserve its own unique natural and cultural heritage.

Blue Ridge Parkway

Asheville is fortunate in that the Blue Ridge Parkway passes through the City as it winds its way through the Appalachian Mountains from the Shenandoah National Park to the Great Smoky Mountains, providing a truly unique, high quality scenic and recreational experience. The park's uninterrupted corridor facilitates the protection of a diverse range of flora and fauna, including rare and endangered plant and animal species. The Parkway's importance to the region goes beyond its national popularity and is deeply rooted in the culture of the Blue Ridge. Additionally the Parkway contributes to the regional tourism economy while promoting a shared regional identity and a venue for the interpretation of the natural and cultural history of the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

Land Trusts

Land trusts have been gaining momentum throughout the southeast in the past decade. A land trust is a private, non-profit organiza-

tion whose primary purpose is the protection of open space. The land trust typically will focus its efforts in a specific community, state or region and protect the kind of open space that is important to that specific area. The City of Asheville cooperates with a number of land trusts in order to preserve open space for future generations.

Conservation Trust for North Carolina
The statewide Conservation Trust for North Carolina is an umbrella group for all of the land trusts in the state. The Conservation Trust works cooperatively with private landowners, communities and local land trusts to protect land in its natural state. The Conservation trust is also involved in protecting land along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy
The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy is the local land trust for the Asheville area. Their mission is to protect the world's oldest mountains for the benefit of present and future generations. The Emerald Lands Program (ELP) of The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy was formed specifically to conserve natural, scenic, recreational, and historic urban and rural lands throughout Buncombe County for present and future generations. The ELP works with private landowners, local citizens' groups, and public agencies to help identify and preserve those lands that clearly benefit the local community, by protecting farms, forests, stream banks, ground-water recharge areas or wetlands that have a likelihood of future development which would not preserve their special value to the community.

Trust for Public Land
Founded in 1972, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) is the only national nonprofit working exclusively to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being. TPL helps conserve land for recreation and spiritual nourishment and to improve the health and quality of life of American communities. TPL's real estate specialists work with landowners, government agencies, and community groups to:

- Create urban parks, gardens, greenways, and riverways
- Build livable communities by setting aside open space in the path of growth

- Conserve land for watershed protection, scenic beauty, and close-to-home recreation
- Safeguard the character of communities by preserving historic landmarks and landscapes.

TPL pioneers new ways to finance parks and open space; helps generate federal, state, and local conservation funding; and promotes the importance of public lands. TPL helps communities create a "greenprint for growth" by protecting important land that may be threatened by urban or suburban sprawl.

Governor's Million Acres Initiative
The NC Million Acre Initiative is a collaborative, state-led endeavor to accelerate the rate that land is protected in North Carolina and to permanently preserve an additional one million acres of land by the end of 2009. The state is accomplishing these goals by:

- fostering partnerships among private and public land protection partners
- promoting regional open space planning, and
- providing information about the importance of open space protection.

Development Tools Goals and Strategies

Annexation, Extraterritorial Jurisdiction and Joint Planning Area

Goal I. Continue to use the urban development tools of annexation, joint planning area, and/or extraterratorial jurisdiction, as applicable, in providing for the orderly growth of the City.

Strategies

1. Promote voluntary annexation of developing and developed areas by offering high quality urban services and upgrading these services as needed as the City's boundaries grow.

2. Continue to regularly pursue annexation of areas developed at urban density levels on the periphery of the City.

3. Utilize and maintain the resolution of consideration alternative as a public awareness and annexation facilitation tool.

4. Promote cooperative land use planning and

development regulation in the Joint Planning Area in a manner consistent with the provisions of the interlocal agreement between the City of Asheville and Buncombe County.

5. Consider expanding the range of services offered in the extraterritorial jurisdiction to the full range of zoning, subdivision, building permitting and inspection, nuisance abatement, and economic development services offered to City residents.

Green Building

Goal I. Develop an incentive-based green building program incorporating the LEED system.

Strategies

1. Promote public education about the benefits of green building through such activities as:
- Educate architects, contractors, builders and the general public about environmental impacts of buildings and how these impacts can be minimized.
- Develop a program to promote green building through formal recognition of projects that are environmental friendly.
- Integrate information about green building concepts into the City's Website.
- Develop a brochure outlining green building practices.

2. Educate City inspection and plan review staff about the benefits of green building; provide training intended to make them "ambassadors" of the green building program.

3. Eliminate disincentives for the use of green building techniques and materials in City codes and development review practices.

4. Promote green building concepts through the use of Smart Growth planning practices, including infill and adaptive reuse, mixed-use development, and transportation system design that incorporates roundabouts.

Historic Preservation

Goal I. Identify, evaluate, document, and promote Asheville's prehistoric and historic resources.

Strategies

1. Perform a comprehensive survey to locate buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects significant to the prehistory and history of Asheville and to continue to seek funding for such surveys.

2. Develop and reflect documented historic resource data on all maps and documents maintained by the Planning and Development Department to promote responsiveness to patron requests, public education, and efficiency in reviewing development applications.

3. Establish and expand educational and public outreach programs such as staff-supervised volunteer-internship within the Historic Resources Commission, providing brochures, lectures, exhibits, etc. regarding historical resources, preservation programs and organizations, thereby promoting preservation and tourism and seek funding sources to support such programs.

4. Seek to establish, maintain, and strengthen preservation partnerships with municipal agencies and local institutions for implementing preservation objectives.

Goal II. Continue efforts involving the preservation, enhancement and management of change within local historic districts and properties and the continuing education towards the preservation of historic resources in The City of Asheville.

Strategies

1. Encourage the preservation of prehistoric and historic resources by providing incentives for preservation through such programs as the Griffin Awards program, which recognize outstanding preservation efforts.

2. Encourage citizen awareness and participation in efforts to rehabilitate historic neighborhoods and structures and inspire interest in local historic preservation by providing technical assistance to citizens in appropriate preservation techniques.

3. Support the expansion of the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County

and the Historic Resources Commission's celebration of the National Preservation Week, known locally as "Heritage Week".

4. Encourage the City and County school systems to further develop historic preservation programming.

5. Promote revolving funds and other preservation techniques for continued assistance to endangered properties throughout the community.

Goal III. Encourage neighborhood livability and property values through the restoration and rehabilitation of existing and future historic districts consistent with the Smart Growth initiatives.

Strategies

1. Promote the adaptive reuse of the City's valuable commercial and residential historic resources.

2. Encourage the establishment of a low-interest loan program through private sources for rehabilitation assistance to local property owners in designated local historic districts.

3. Recognize and develop the historic component of Asheville's tourist economy through coordination with the Asheville-Buncombe Tourism Development Authority.

Open Space, Forest and Wildlife Habitat Protection

Goal I. Protect scenic views and vistas.

Strategies

1. Continue to enforce existing ordinances that address building height, billboard control, and cell towers.

2. Coordinate with the Blue Ridge Parkway to determine the effectiveness of current viewshed protection measures and bring forward any necessary adjustments to these measures for consideration.

3. Continue to protect steep slopes through enhancement of the hillside development

regulations and technical standards for development on steep slopes.

4. Develop specific regulations addressing ridgetop development and land clearing to preserve scenic views and vistas.

Goal II. Promote environmental education and awareness.

Strategies

1. Work with other agencies and organizations to improve environmental awareness.

2. Develop a brochure to educate public on best management practices.

3. Continue efforts to develop a demonstration garden, showcasing species suitable for use in this area.

4. Produce a landscape guide for developers, with emphasize on use of native plants, eradication of invasive species and proper planting and maintenance techniques.
5. Develop appropriate regulations to promote the use of native vegetation and to prohibit the use of deleterious exotic species.

Goal III. Identify areas of unique natural heritage, primary scenic vistas, potential wildlife corridors, and areas of critical environmental sensitivity; develop programs for the conservation of these areas.

Strategies

1. Create a comprehensive conservation map for the City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

2. Coordinate open space conservation plans with Recreation and Greenway Master Plans.

3. Develop and continue to enhance existing regulations that require development clustering and preservation of open space.

4. Pursue statutory authority for transfer development rights to provide opportunities for flexible conservation of critical areas while respecting private property rights.

5. Develop requirements for wildlife relocation

when large tracts of undeveloped land are proposed for development.

6. Develop a fee in lieu of program for the preservation of open space.

7. Continue to work with conservation organizations to identify and preserve important natural resources.

8. Enhance the existing density bonus provision for preservation of key environmental features.

Communication & Coordination

"What we have here is a failure to communicate."

Cool Hand Luke

Public Participation

These famous last words in the movie *Cool Hand Luke* too frequently resemble our public participation process. Public participation is often a win-lose scenario defined by legalistic procedures and characterized by acrimony and frustration.

Since public participation is highly prized in Asheville, it is important that the process set up to receive public input is effective in achieving the desired results. In most cases, public participation should be seen as a process of negotiation as opposed to an opportunity to state inflexible positions and principles and hope that there are enough decision-makers of a like philosophy to win the argument. In other words, public participation processes should be set up to allow people to define where their interests lie and provide facilitation intended to demonstrate how those interests can be achieved.

Public participation is also an important tenant of Smart Growth, as the following quote from the draft Smart Growth Core Principles under development by the American Planning Association illustrates:

Increased citizen participation in all aspects of the planning process and at every level of government to ensure that planning outcomes are based in collective decision making. We have been undergoing a profound demographic transformation. Responding to our ethnically diverse society is essential to our well being as a whole and to developing the social capital necessary for shaping thriving, vibrant neighborhoods and communities. We need to design comprehensive strategies to engage meaningful participation in planning processes, to find common ground for shared decision-making by all citizens, and to ensure community equity in the distribution of resources.

Public Hearings

One of the most common forms of public participation used by local governments is the public hearing. Public hearings offer an opportunity for decision-makers to hear how the public feels about a particular project or program. They are often held pursuant to statutory requirements when land use issues such as

zoning and conditional use permits are involved.

A typical public hearing includes the following components:

- A presentation or announcement of the project or program by City staff.
- Additional information about the project or program is provided by the applicant (if the applicant is someone other than City staff).
- Public comments are taken; those comments usually express either support for or opposition to the project or program, but may include requests for information.
- Discussion by the decision-makers.
- A decision by the decision-makers.

Public hearings do not always result in effective identification of people's interests or allow for coherent negotiation. They are usually run under specific rules that limit the amount and type of information that can be expressed in an effort to focus discussion on predetermined areas of review. Decisions are usually regarded as a "win" by some participants and as a "loss" by other participants.

"It is evident that our whole political machinery presupposes a people so fundamentally at one that they can safely afford to bicker; and so sure of their own moderation that they are not dangerously disturbed by the never-ending din of political conflict. May it always be so."

Arthur Balfour, 1st Earl of Balfour, in an introduction to Walter Bagehot The English Constitution; *November 1927, from Power Quotes by Daniel B. Baker (1992)*

Design Charrettes

Design charrettes are public participation opportunities intended to obtain public input in a highly facilitated fashion. Usually a design charrette involves a particular development project, such as the one held in the summer of 2000 for the re-design of Pack Square. They can be broadened to include the design of an entire neighborhood as well, such as the design charrette held for the West End Clingman Area Neighborhood in early 2001.

A design charrette first involves the collection of basic information about the project or neighborhood by a trained design professional or a group of design professionals. In the public participation process, this base information is used to help find feasible ideas about the project design so that an element of practicality is introduced into the process at an early stage. A design charrette has as its goal a final product – the ultimate design of a project or neighborhood. This product orientation re-

"Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and test of our civilization."

Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi

express a position as opposed to actually defining their specific interests. For example, if the end result of the process is defined as a park design, a participant will not be effective if he or she expresses the position that a park is not needed.

Focus Groups

Like design charrettes, focus groups offer an opportunity to gain public input about a project or program in a facilitated fashion. Focus groups are relatively small groups of participants whose discussion is facilitated by a person or persons who are trained to insure that participants have a fair and equal opportunity to provide input about the program or project. Focus groups are often used early in program or project development to identify key issues and interests so that the program or project can be designed to accommodate those interests. Focus groups often precede design charrettes as a means of gathering the base information for the charrette discussion.

Public Forums

Public forums can be likened to large-scale focus groups. They are often initiated with some presentation on a particular project or program. Participants then provide input about the program or project. Discussion is guided by a facilitator or moderator. The intent of a public forum is usually to provide an initial opportunity to seek input and identify potential conflict points.

Community or Neighborhood Meetings

Community or neighborhood meetings are opportunities for people to provide input on a wide range of issues. As used in Asheville, the agenda for community or neighborhood meetings is to simply open up discussion for whatever people would like to discuss. Often there is an opportunity for people with expertise on issues that are likely to be raised to provide information or responses to questions during the community or neighborhood meeting. These meetings often result in follow-up information being provided later in order to address or respond to issues or concerns raised at the meeting.

Neighborhood Meetings

City staff encourages voluntary pre-application meetings between developers and the affected surrounding neighborhoods or adjoining property owners. Additionally in late 2003, the Asheville City Council established a voluntary process in which a professionally faciliated neighborhood/developer meeting can substitute for a public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission. The purpose behind these meetings is to acquaint the surrounding property owners with the development project. These meetings can be very effective in answering questions and resolving concerns prior to the start of the formal development review process.

Mediation

Mediation is a formal dispute resolution process intended to address a specific issue or issues. Mediation sessions are generally facilitated by professional mediator. Participation is usually limited to a specific number and/or category of participants and those involved in the process usually agree to abide by the results of the process.

In some communities, mediation is either a required or an optional procedure for resolving land use disputes. It is not frequently used in Asheville, but could be explored as a possible dispute resolution process for land use issues.

Community Oriented Government

The City of Asheville has a formal Community Oriented Government program. This program is neighborhood-based and typically involves arranging a tour of a particular neighborhood by an extensive task force of City staff members; neighborhood leaders usually determine the tour route and conduct the tour. Specific neighborhood problems are noted and, after the tour, remedial projects and efforts are taken to resolve these problems. A formal follow-up is provided to neighborhood leaders to demonstrate what steps have been taken to address these problems.

It is extremely important to use the appropriate public participation method if the goal is effective communication. If the format for receiving public input is not carefully chosen, a failure to communicate is frequently the end result. In the Implementation Element to the

"There is no process that will make a difficult decision easy."

Bob Oast, City Attorney

"People are always 'down on' what they aren't 'up on.'"

Ernie Daniels as Quoted by Jim Ellis, Asheville City Council Member

Intergovernmental Coordination

An effective Smart Growth development pattern should not end at the city limits. Some of the great benefits of a more compact urban pattern is its ability to preserve farmland and open space, preserve infrastructure capacity, and create a transportation system that is both efficient and cost-effective. If this pattern stops at the City limits, the promise of Smart Growth will not be fully realized in our area.

Consequently, it is important for the City of Asheville to begin discussions with Land of Sky Regional Council, Buncombe County, Woodfin, Biltmore Forest, the Water Authority. The Airport Authority, and the Metropolitan Sewerage District - and any other interested jurisdictions - about the future of land development in our area. These discussions should first identify broad community goals, then look to the tools, incentives and programs by which these goals can be implemented.

Public Notification

While not specifically a form of public participation, public notification is necessary if there is to be effective public participation. For public hearings, the City follows state law with regard to the required public notification process. A variety of other means of public notification are used for public participation processes that do not have specific statutory requirements. These include: signs; mailed notices; "door hangers", broadcast faxes, telephone messages, advertisements, newspaper and other media announcements and press releases.

Public notification must be tailored to the specific project or process. The 10 day notice required for public hearings may not be at all suitable for notice to business owners when a major widening project is planned for the street in front of their property. Development of a formal public notification plan would facilitate public participation and public awareness.

Use of Technology and the Media

"The media" is an all-inclusive term that basically addresses the method by which information is disseminated to the public. The City of Asheville uses a variety of media to get information out to its citizens, including press releases, government access television (Channel 20), the City webpage, weekly newspaper columns, and similar methods.

Technological advances such as the internet, automated telephone messaging, and government access television offer enormous opportunities to improve the effectiveness of public participation. It is highly important to inventory the various types of media available for involving the public and utilize the most effective medium (or media) to accomplish the particular participation goal.

Pursuant to this, each goal and strategy contained in this document is listed in an Implementation Matrix (p. ___) that includes the method and medium/media of public participation that will be used in implementing the goal and strategy. Additionally, this section includes a variety of goals and strategies for the development of a comprehensive public participation program.

"The government is us; we are the government, you and I."

Theodore Roosevelt in a speech in Asheville, NC, September, 1902, from Power Quotes by Daniel B. Baker (1992)

Public Participation and Intergovernmental Coordination Goals and Strategies

Goal I: To insure that the appropriate public participation process is selected so as to result in the most effective communication and to insure the receipt of public input.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the following public hearing processes and make adjustments as needed to improve public participation:
   - Zoning and Conditional Use Permit Hearings
   - Technical Review Committee Hearings
   - Board of Adjustment Appeals

2. Examine the development review process

"The process is always suspected by people who aren't satisfied with the outcome."

Scott Shuford, Asheville Planning Director

for opportunities to more effectively engage the public earlier in the initial project concept development.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of pre-application meetings between developers and affected neighborhoods as provided in current City ordinances.
- Consider whether mandatory pre-application meetings should be required and, if so, whether they should be facilitated by City staff or by professional mediators/ facilitators.
- Develop better methods of public notification.

3. Continue to effectively implement and promote the Community Oriented Government program.

Goal II. Continue to promote and facilitate effective and efficient intergovernmental coordination.

Goal III. Use technology more effectively in alerting the public to issues of importance.

Stategies

1. Explore better use of the City web page and government access (Channel 20) in communicating information about development activities and other related items of public interest.

2. Examine the use of other media in getting information to the public.

Land Use & Transportation

"To achieve excellence should be a struggle."

Joe Riley, Mayor of Charleston, SC

"There is no better defense of property rights than a good plan, implemented. Good planning assures everyone, not just the moneyed or powerful, equal treatment in the development process."

Robert Manly, testifying before the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution

Introduction

The pattern of a city is defined by the street system. In successful plan after successful plan, from the design of Washington, DC to that of Seaside, FL, the basic street network forms the foundation for the ultimate development of the city. Land use and transportation cannot – and should not - be separated. Asheville is no different than other cities, with land use and transportation closely linked. Originally a bit tenuous, with development dependent upon natural features as well as accessibility, this linkage has become more intertwined in the past 50 years. Development of all types closely follows the location of roads as evidenced by the pattern of Asheville's development during the past 30 years.

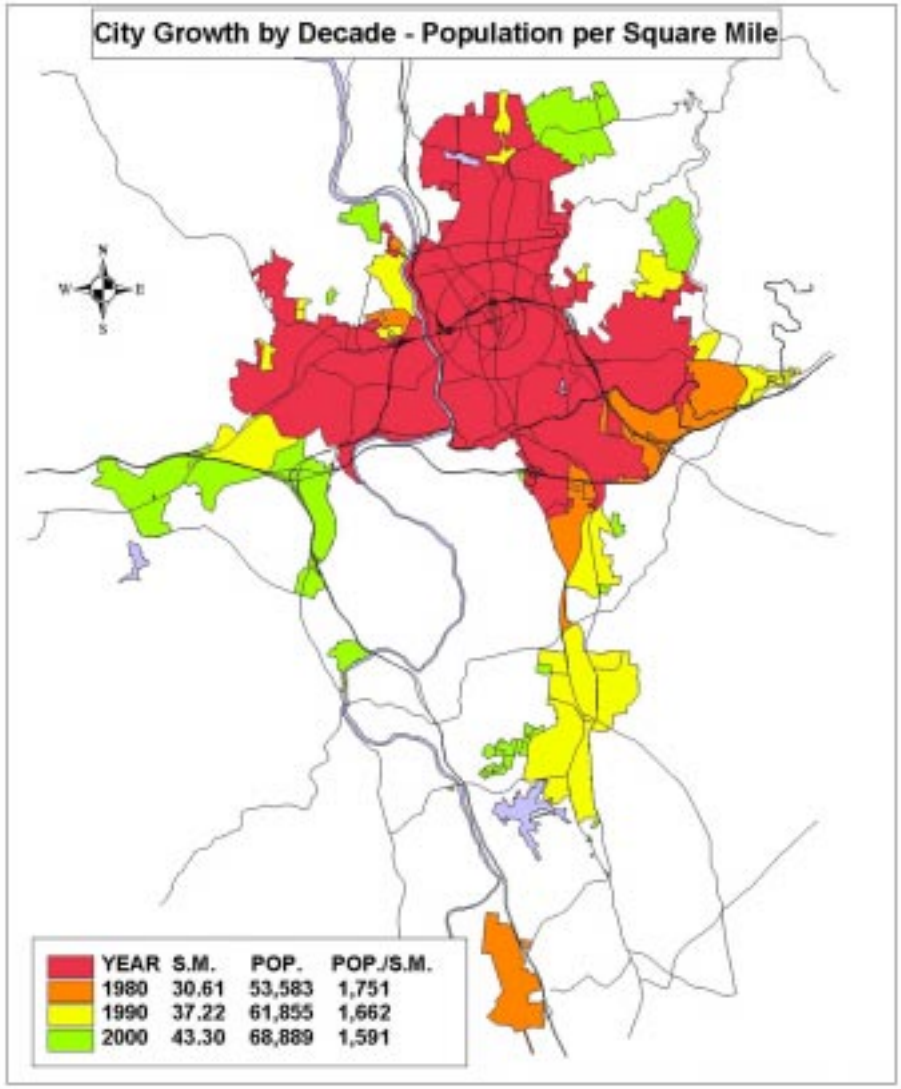
As development activity follows roads, the traffic generated by the development necessitates road improvements. The road improvements encourage more development, which places a burden on the roads, creating a seemingly unending cycle. This cycle typically results in low-density development spread out along transportation corridors that are overburdened at peak hours. This pattern of development, which has been the dominant pattern since the 1950s, leads to a sprawling city that inefficiently consumes resources (land and money) and is costly to provide with urban services.

At its most basic level, an ideal transportation system will efficiently move cars, trucks, and buses, and provide those vehicles with a high degree of mobility throughout the region, and will provide access to residences, employment, shopping, schools, and activities. But the transportation system can and should do much more for a community. The system should promote economic development – not only by providing mobility – but also by promoting a high quality of life. Thoroughfares and streets in Asheville are the public realm, and perform an important civic function. Whether by auto, by bus, by bike, or on foot, the streets are the places where we connect with our community, conduct our business, and interact with our

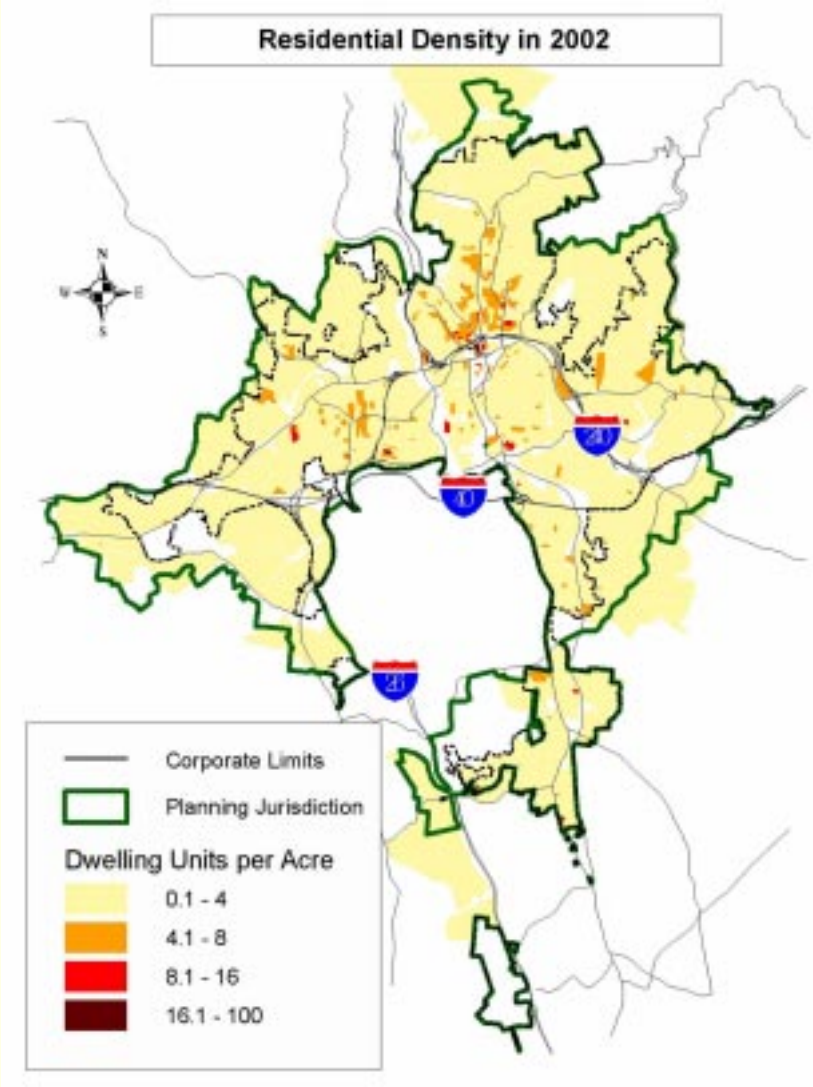
neighbors. The look and feel of these corridors help define our community. The transportation system also provides the framework for the development of the community. Land uses needing easy access locate along streets that can provide the level of access required to assure the success of the land use.

The strong link between transportation and land use dictates that these two issues be considered together as we plan for the future development of Asheville. Transportation planning must be as much a part of the total urban planning process as land use planning. The transportation system and the land use pattern must be designed to support the overall goals of the community, whether these goals are physical, economic, or social. **The *Asheville City Development Plan 2025*** recognizes the link between land use and transportation, taking into consideration the impact of decisions and policies in one of these areas upon the other. This section will review land use and transportation patterns and identify goals and strategies that will help to achieve the community envisioned by residents who participated in the public forums conducted at the beginning of the comprehensive planning process.

Map 8



Land Use



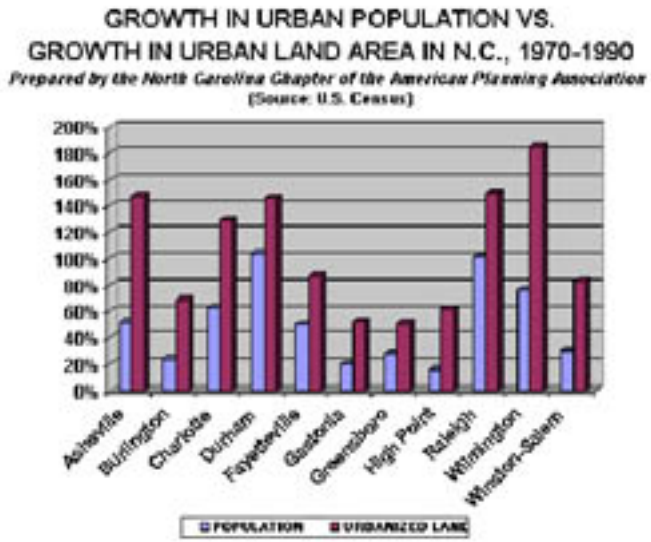
Map 9

Introduction

As noted in the introduction, the distribution and location of land uses in Asheville have been heavily influenced by the transportation system. Although the City's transportation system has played a major role in determining the land use pattern, other factors have also influenced development. The sprawling pattern that has served as the dominant template for Asheville's development during the past 50 years has been partially codified by zoning and other land use regulations. Until recently, the City of Asheville's zoning standards required large front setbacks for all uses. The official reason for the large setbacks was to provide adequate room for widening of streets to accommodate more traffic. Commercial and office uses were not permitted in residential areas and, although residential uses were permitted in commercial and office districts, market forces prevented this mixture of uses. In fact, areas that were zoned for mixed uses often changed from residential to non-residential uses (see the discussion in the insert "The Need for Well-Defined Policies"). Areas zoned as single family did not permit multi-family uses, even on such a limited scale as permitting

accessory apartments. Many of the older neighborhoods zoned as single family still incorporate a variety of land uses, with a significant number of multi-family developments. The image of a homogeneous neighborhood, and the perception that this is the ideal has led to a low public opinion of multi-family uses and the attempt to limit, or at least hide, these uses. Subdivisions served by dead end cul-de-sacs with no requirement for any type of connection to neighboring land uses is a standard development template that is permitted, if not endorsed, by City regulations. Recent changes in zoning requirements and other development standards address many of these issues, but many other changes are needed to alter the dominant development template.

In addition to the sprawl encouraged by development activity following transportation corridors, natural features also play a role in the area's development pattern. The steep topography and flood areas found in Asheville result in lower density development due to the inability in many cases to develop contiguous tracts. The impact of these development determinants on the City's growth pattern is significant. During the period 1950 to 1990, Asheville's urbanized area grew 4.8 times faster than the population. During the period 1970 to 1990, Asheville's urban area grew 2.8 times faster than the population. As this graph indicates, these statistics rank Asheville near



the top of the most sprawling cities in North Carolina. Not only does our development pattern result in the City spreading out to use more land, the land that is developed is often used inefficiently. In many cases, particularly

along commercial corridors, the land is more valuable than the improvements (buildings) on the land. (Map page 119.)

Asheville's predominant development pattern for the past 50 years cannot be sustained. This pattern is auto-dependent, single use, discontinuous, low-density new development continually occurring at the edge of the City. This pattern has resulted in traffic congestion, lower air quality, separation of non-residential uses from residential uses, loss of open space, strip commercial development, and lack of connectivity between subdivisions. The issues associated with a sprawl development pattern have transcended traffic and loss of open space to include a number of economic, social, and environmental issues (see the insert discussion "What is Sprawl?"). The impacts of this development pattern on the quality of life of Asheville residents argue for a redirection in the way we manage our growth.

In addition to the less tangible costs of sprawl, the financial costs cannot be maintained if the City is to remain financially healthy. The cost of extending public infrastructure (streets, water, sewer, and schools) to serve development that is spread out at a low density over a large area cannot continue to be borne by all residents. The health costs are increasing yearly, as Asheville's and the region's air quality continues to decline in large part due to pollutants emitted by automobiles. The time spent in traffic by residents commuting to work, going shopping, or running errands makes the area less attractive as a place to live or do business, ultimately affecting the quality of life on which our economic development program is based. Much of Asheville's allure as a place to live, work, and play is due to the fact that the City is not like "everywhere else." If the City continues to grow in the same way that has made other urban areas unattractive and led to a wide variety of problems, Asheville itself may well become less attractive.

The popularity of the Asheville area as a place to live means that we will have to accommodate a significant amount of growth during the coming decades. In order to effectively use our resources and to maintain our quality of life, we must redirect our pattern of growth. Existing infrastructure must be used more efficiently, land must be developed more intensely, commercial corridors must be fully

developed, and a range of development options must be made available to citizens. The challenges facing us are many, but with a shared determination to create a great community for all, the citizens of Asheville can create a City that honors our past while providing for sustainable development in the future.

Historic Land Use Patterns

An aerial view of Asheville displays a variety of development patterns that have evolved over time. Downtown Asheville and surrounding neighborhoods that developed before the dominance of the automobile are dense and have an interconnected street system. Uses are mixed and easily accessible with streets and sidewalks providing a range of transportation options. The greatest mixture of uses is found in Downtown Asheville, where everything from offices to retail outlets to residential uses can be found. Downtown has and continues to serve as the heart of the City, providing goods and services to residents and visitors. The roadways that intersect in Downtown Asheville and radiate out from it provide connections to the rest of the City, providing

What is Sprawl?

Sprawl is discussed in a research paper entitled "Wrestling Sprawl to the Ground: Defining and Measuring the Elusive Concept", with a couple of definitions identified for this pattern of development. One definition is "Continuous low density residential development on the metropolitan fringe, ribbon low density development along major suburban highways, and development that leapfrogs past undeveloped land to leave a patchwork of developed and undeveloped tracts." The authors provide a conceptual definition of sprawl as "a pattern of land use in an urban area that exhibits low levels of some combination of eight distinct dimensions: density, continuity, concentration, clustering, centrality, nuclearity, mixed uses, and proximity." A more understandable definition of sprawl defines it as a pattern of development that includes:

- Large-lot subdivisions that lack a connected street system;
- Separation of shopping, jobs, and services like parks and schools from where people live;
- Strip commercial development;
- Construction in areas that require extension of public services; and
- Superstores rather than locally owned businesses.

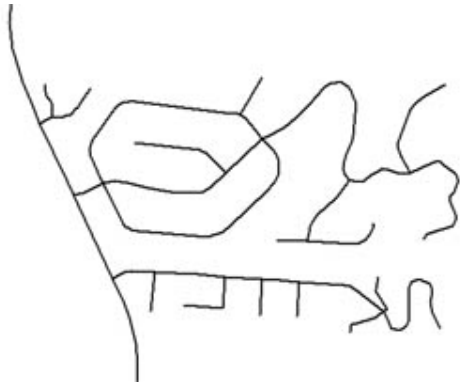
While precisely defining sprawl may be a task best left to academicians, the impacts of this development pattern are easy to see. Some of the costs associated with sprawl include:

- Loss of open space;
- Traffic congestion and air pollution;
- Urban disinvestment;
- Crowded school classrooms outside the core area;
- Sevice costs of new development exceeds revenue; and
- Loss of community character.

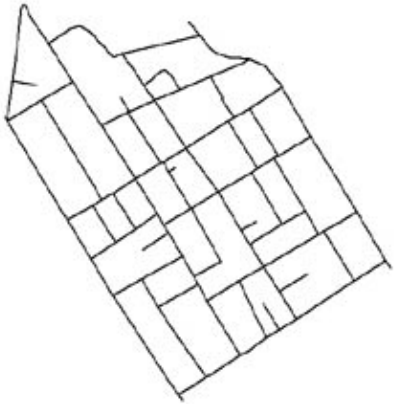
Wrestling Sprawl to the Ground, Defending and Defining the Elusive Concept

lifelines for the flow of people into and out of Downtown.

Arterial Street Development Pattern



Connected Street Development Pattern



The older neighborhoods surrounding Downtown are home to single family residences, multi-family dwellings, and neighborhood shops and offices. These neighborhoods were linked historically to Downtown by numerous street connections but, in most cases, these links were severed by the construction of the I-240 expressway around Downtown. While many of these neighborhoods continue to be stable residential areas, the residential integrity of some has been eroded by changes of use from residential to non-residential and demolition of homes for road improvements and urban renewal projects.

After a period of stagnation and deterioration that began in the 1960's, the older neighborhoods close to Downtown are experiencing rejuvenation as people see the value of living in walkable neighborhoods close to Downtown with its mix of activities and opportunities. The development template common in these older neighborhoods used land very efficiently while providing numerous connections to surrounding properties.

Radiating out from Downtown are the commercial corridors (Merrimon Avenue, Tunnel Road, Patton Avenue, Hendersonville Road, and, on a smaller scale, Charlotte Street and Broadway). Most of these corridors saw their prime development in the 1960's and are in need of redevelopment that takes advantage of the existing infrastructure and more efficiently uses the land along the corridors. The portion of Tunnel Road around the Asheville Mall and the portion of Hendersonville Road south of Rock Hill Road continue to experience significant development but the development typically is not interconnected, leading to increased traffic congestion.

Most new commercial and large office center

development is occurring at nodes located at interstate interchanges. The commercial developments at I-240 and Tunnel Road, I-240 and Fairview Road, I-40 and Smoky Park Highway, and I-26 and Brevard Road constitute the bulk of recent commercial activity in the City. The interchanges of I-40 and Sweeten Creek Road and I-40 and Hendersonville Road are the locations of large regional office developments. These locations provide easy vehicular access and visibility for the tenants. In encouraging continued development and redevelopment at these nodes, better connectivity must be required in order to preserve the traffic carrying capacity of the road systems serving the areas.

In many ways, West Asheville is a smaller version of Downtown Asheville. The commercial core of West Asheville located on Haywood Road near its intersection with Brevard Road has a dense development pattern and a mix of uses that serves as the West Asheville downtown. On both sides of Haywood Road are residential areas developed with a mix of single family and multi-family residential uses. Schools, churches, and parks complement the retail and service uses located in close proximity to the residential uses. These neighborhoods are interconnected with a street system that provides many options for traveling from one location to another.

On the edge of the older neighborhoods are the neighborhoods developed prior to World War II, including Malvern Hills, Colonial Heights, and Oakley. The development of these neighborhoods recognized the role of the automobile but did not surrender to its dominance. While the uses are primarily single family residences, they have interconnected street systems that make it easy to get from one location to another without placing the entire traffic burden on one street.

Starting after World War II and becoming common after the 1960s was the isolationist pattern of residential development. One entry into the neighborhood, large lots, and no

Architect's Views on Sprawl and Smarth Growth

"The towns of today can only increase in density at the expense of open spaces with are the lungs of a city. We must increase the open spaces and diminish the spaces to be covered. Therefore, the centre of the city must be constructed vertically."

LeCorbusier, The City of Tomorrow and Its Planning

"The outcome of the cities will depend on the race between the automobile and the elevator, and anyone who bets on the elevator is crazy."

The Chrome-Plated Nightmare (Television Program, May 27, 1974) From The City, *James A. Clapp*

sidewalks are features that characterize this pattern. While there are a few exceptions to this pattern in post World War II residential development, most of the residential development that has occurred in Asheville since 1950 exemplifies this pattern. As has been noted, this development pattern makes inefficient use of limited land. As we identify templates for future development, we must ensure that a range of development options is available to all while maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and efficiently using our limited land.

Recent development is incorporating some of the characteristics of older, more traditional urban development. Traits that characterize these developments include interconnected street systems, sidewalks and/or walking trails, single family and small scale multi-family residential uses, small commercial and office uses easily accessible to residential areas, and less parking that relies upon the accessibility of different uses to reduce the dependence upon the automobile for making all trips. Examples of this type of development include Artisan Park located off Haywood Road, and Biltmore Town Centre in Biltmore Park located off Long Shoals Road.

Biltmore Park Town Center

As Asheville has grown and developed, institutions located in the City that serve residents of and visitors to the City and region have grown to meet the needs of the growing region. These institutions include public non-profit institutions (Mission-St. Joseph's Health Center, University of North Carolina at Asheville, Asheville-Buncombe Community Technical College) and private institutions (Grove Park Inn and Biltmore Estate).

These institutions not only provide services for residents and visitors, they are also a significant economic force, providing jobs and job training programs for thousands of residents.

Each of these institutions has undertaken significant expansion during the past 10 years and is planning additional expansion and growth during the next 5 to 10 years to better serve residents of and visitors to the region. Past expansion has included construction of new buildings, renovation of existing facilities, and, in the case of Mission-St Joseph's, consolidation of campuses. All these institutions have received notice for the quality of the programs and services they provide, bringing recognition not only to themselves but also to Asheville and the region. Mission-St Joseph's and UNCA have recently completed master plans for their campuses and facilities. The master plans provide direction for the growth of these institutions during the next 5 to 10 years. The Grove Park Inn is currently preparing a master plan for the use of its property. In developing plans and policies for the City of Asheville's development, the need of these important institutions to grow to meet the increasing needs of residents and visitors must be acknowledged.

The Need for Well-Defined Policies

As policies are developed to implement the goals identified in this plan, we must be aware of all the potential results of the policies. This awareness will help assure that the policies actually achieve the goals we hope to accomplishment. Some examples of policies that had results other than the goal intended serve to remind us of the importance of reviewing policies carefully.

The area bounded by Chestnut Street on the north, Woodfin Street to the south, Central Avenue on the west, and Charlotte Street to the east provides an example of how a neighborhood can change over time. The changes experienced by this neighborhood are the intended and unintended results of policies and actions by different actors. Developed at the turn of the 20th century, the neighborhood consisted of primarily single family dwellings that provided easily accessible homes for Downtown workers. The neighborhood remained fairly stable until the 1960's, with some of the larger homes converted to multi-family uses. Change started occurring more rapidly in the 1960's, instigated by road improvements. Woodfin Street was upgraded and widened to improve access around the edge of Downtown. As a result of this improvement, the change from residential uses to non-residential on this edge began. This change was exacerbated by the construction of the I-240 Expressway. The construction of the expressway eliminated some of the connections between the neighborhood and Downtown and resulted in more noise, making the area less desirable for residential uses. In the late 1970s a change in the zoning of the area codified and gave a stamp of approval to the land use changes underway. The area was zoned R-4, a residential classification that permitted office uses, in an effort to promote mixed uses. However, the R-4 development standards placed no limit on the number or location of non-residential uses nor did it require a mix of uses on individual properties. With this zoning change, the convenience to Downtown, and the low real estate costs, the conversion of residential uses to office uses began in earnest. In this former residential neighborhood there are currently two single family homes, one apartment building, one residential group home, and one mixed-use building with residential uses located above retail uses. The offices located in these former homes are generally a good use of this land, but the goal of creating a mixed-use area was not achieved due to the lack of standards clearly linked to the goal. As we develop policies for Asheville's future, we must be cognizant of the impact of market forces on these policies and how the policies affect the accomplishment of our goals.

"Most of the monarchies of Europe were really destroyed by their greatest and most ardent supporters. It was the most reactionary people who tried to hold onto something without letting it develop and change."

Prince Phillip - quoted by John Pearson,
The Selling of the Royal Family; *1986*
From Power Quotes by Daniel B. Baker (1992)

Future Development Pattern – The Smart Growth Alternative

Asheville's development patterns provide us with development templates for the future and present challenges that must be addressed in order to effectively manage the City's development over the next 20 years. Our vibrant Downtown, stable neighborhoods, successful redevelopment projects, and community commercial areas offer strategies for guiding the City's development. Lessons learned in dealing with issues associated with these successes must be translated into policies to guide development for the next 20 years. Challenges confronting the City must be identified and addressed to ensure that today's challenges do not become the problems of the future. These challenges include limited land for development, the physical constraints of topography and floodplains, the inability to improve many of our roadways, the inefficient use of land along many commercial corridors, protection and enhancement of neighborhoods, and the need to make a variety of housing types available to all residents, among others. Goals and strategies for guiding the City's future development must build on the successes of the past and address the challenges presented by our natural and built environment.

As we develop goals and policies for guiding future development, a range of choices must be made available to current and future residents of Asheville. Different lifestyles, income, and interests result in the desire for different types of homes. For some people an apartment in Downtown Asheville is the correct option, for others a home in an older neighborhood within walking distance of the commercial development on Haywood Road in West Asheville provides the home of choice, while others choose a home located in a newer subdivision convenient to the services and jobs in south Asheville. Policies and strategies developed to implement the goals identified in this plan must assure that a range of options are available that will meet the housing needs of all residents regardless of lifestyle, income, and interest.

Asheville's future development pattern should be based upon the Smart Growth policies adopted by City Council in 2000. These policies call for a more efficient use of land and other resources to provide opportunities for a larger proportion of the region's population. Comments provided by citizens at the public forums held to obtain input on the future of Asheville clearly indicate a desire for more efficient use of our resources, infill development, and wiser use of existing infrastructure. Development in the City over the next 20 years should incorporate mixed uses that provide citizens with the opportunity to live and work in the same area. Areas within the existing urban fabric that are vacant should be targeted for compatible infill development that takes advantage of existing infrastructure. Promotion of transit and other alternatives to the automobile will be important to reduce the need for road system improvements. We must assure that new development is sustainable, with buildings and sites designed to serve the community for generations rather than for a decade. Protection, preservation, and enhancement of existing neighborhoods must be as much a part of our development pattern as promoting new construction.

The development pattern must acknowledge the link between land use and transportation. The success of our transportation system in moving people efficiently through the City is dependent upon the arrangement of land uses. The City can no longer afford to have land uses fully segregated by type, resulting in people driving long distances to their jobs or to access every day services. The arrangement of land uses must not only provide for viable alternative modes of transportation, it must also use land and infrastructure resources more efficiently. Asheville's tendency to sprawl during the past few decades has resulted in traffic congestion, higher infrastructure costs, and the increased isolation of residents from those uses that provide for their daily needs. Given the economic and political costs incurred by road improvement projects, we can no longer assume that all traffic problems can be fixed by widening an existing road or constructing a new one.

"Many people hold internally inconsistent preferences, such as the desire for low density and the desire to reduce auto dependence. Conflicting preferences suggest that neither traditional neighborhood design nor conventional suburban development may be the housing consumer's ideal."

Housing Policy Debate, Volume 12, Issue 4

"Smart Growth is growth that happens in somebody else's neighborhood."

John McClure; commenting at Asheville City Council Meeting; February 11, 2003

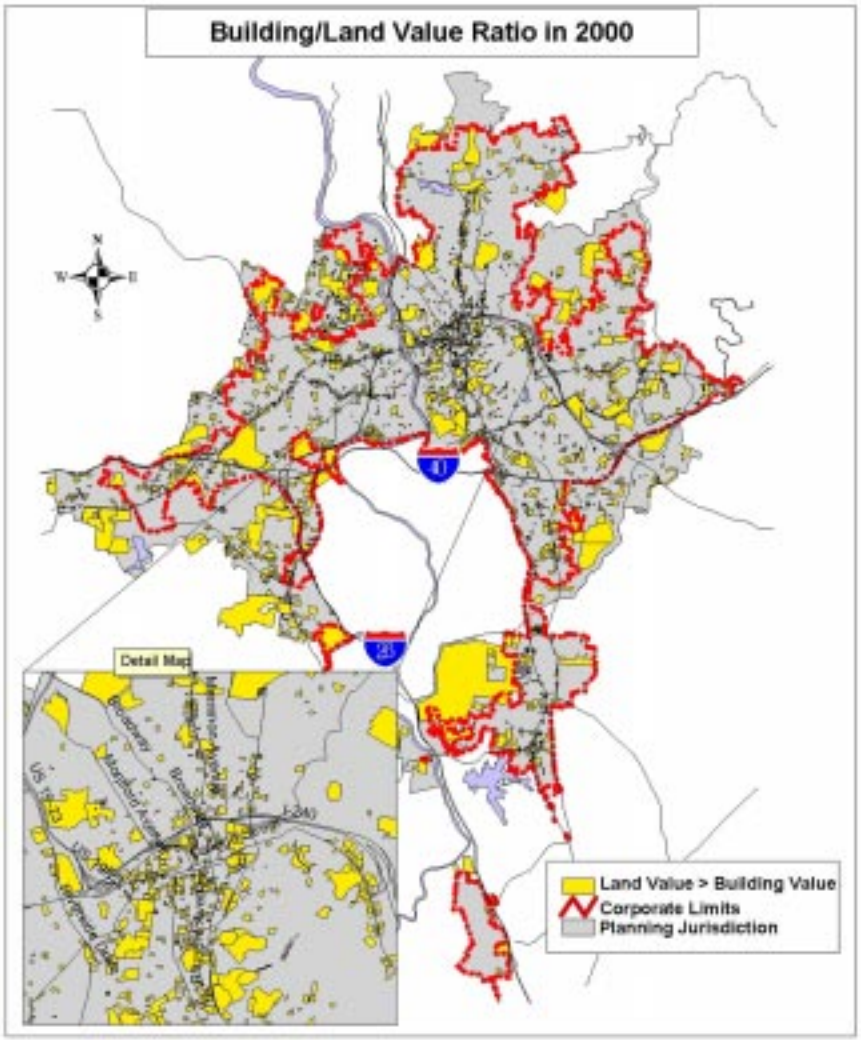
As we plan for Asheville's future development, we must be cognizant of the following facts:

- Asheville is limited in land for development;
- Our natural resources, particularly the mountains, and our historic resources play a major role in defining the City of Asheville and must be protected;
- Efforts must be made to preserve sensitive areas, such as steep areas, flood plains, and other unique natural areas, as well as limited agricultural lands and open spaces;
- Existing road systems must be used more efficiently due to the constraints on building new roads and widening existing ones;
- Mixed use redevelopment and infill development efforts must be concentrated on corridors where land values are greater than the value of the improvements on the land;
- A minimum residential density of 8–16 units per acre is necessary to support transit;
- Development must be located in those areas where infrastructure exists or can be easily provided;
- Residents and visitors must be offered viable transportation options for moving around the City;
- Past development has left scattered undeveloped sites in developed areas. The development of these vacant lots offers opportunities for increasing density without changing the character of the area and should be a high priority;
- Throughout the City are older buildings that are no longer used as originally intended. Codes should be flexible enough to promote adaptive reuse of these structures;
- Strong neighborhoods within walking distance of Downtown strengthen Downtown;
- Nodes located at the intersections of interstate highways and major arterials provide easily accessible locations for large commercial, office, and employment developments;
- Major institutions, including Mission-St. Joseph Health Center, AB Tech, UNCA, and the Grove Park Inn, contribute significantly to the vitality of Asheville and the region. Plans for the future must accommodate the future development of these institutions.

The following quotes from *A Pattern Language* (Christopher Alexander, et al; 1977) illustrate other facts that must be taken into account in our planning.

- "Bus stops must be easy to recognize and pleasant, with enough activity around them to make people comfortable and safe."
- "Nobody wants fast traffic going by their homes."
- "Mark every boundary in the City which has important human meaning – the boundary of a building cluster, a neighborhood, a precinct – by great gateways where the major entering paths cross the boundary."
- "Exaggerated zoning laws separate industry from the rest of urban life completely, and contribute to the plastic unreality of sheltered residential neighborhoods."

Cognizant of these factors, we can formulate goals and strategies to guide Asheville's development for the next 20 years.



Transportation

"Get used to being stuck in traffic. Get a climate controlled car with a stereo, tape-deck, player, telephone, fax machine, and even a microwave oven, and commute with someone you really like."

Anthony Downs, Stuck in Traffic, 1992

Introduction

Asheville has always enjoyed a high quality of life and relatively low levels of traffic congestion on our streets and highways. Traffic congestion in Asheville is not yet at the levels of larger urban areas, but the continued growth of Asheville and the surrounding region are beginning to burden the transportation system and congestion will likely become more of a part of our way of life.

The way we build our transportation system will have a far-reaching impact on the way the region grows, the character of development, and the quality of life for Asheville citizens. There are critical choices to be made about the transportation system – whether to continue "business as usual" or whether to look to new approaches to moving people and goods. As we look to other areas that have experienced rapid growth in recent decades, we are able to ask the question – what do we want our transportation system to look like? Do cities like Knoxville, Raleigh, Greensboro, Charlotte and Atlanta provide good role models for Asheville? Or do we need to look to other cities to find guidance for our transportation decisions?

Most people agree that we need to provide a balance of transportation choices, and that our transportation system should provide good access and mobility for all transportation modes – cars and trucks, buses, bicycles, and for pedestrians. We must use our limited financial resources wisely and coordinate transportation decisions closely with land use plans. As we look to other growing cities for guidance, we begin to see that conventional transportation solutions do not always produce the best long-term outcome. We will have to carefully focus on the improvements that will best serve the community over the long term. Effective transportation solutions will require a new way of thinking about the role of transportation systems in our community. Through our transportation decisions, we can address objectives in a wide range of disciplines including economic development, air quality, aesthetics, mobility, access, and transportation choice.

Constraints on adding new roads and widening existing ones (other than I-26 and the proposed Riverway) means that Asheville must

make the best use of its existing corridors. This implies a need to concentrate on multi-modal transportation options from a transportation strategy standpoint and on a nodal development pattern from a land use strategy standpoint.

Development Patterns and Transportation

Transportation decisions have a far-reaching impact on growth and development patterns. Similarly, land use patterns impact the transportation system in an equally profound way. This impact is evident at two very important levels. On the large scale, growth patterns and density of our region influence the demand for transportation services, the distance and time it takes to travel, and the ability of citizens to travel by means other than the automobile. On a much smaller scale, the type of development adjacent to the roadways will impact traffic flow and safety, and it will also impact the ability to provide attractive transportation facilities for transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Planners and citizens have long recognized the need to coordinate land use and transportation planning. The actual coordination of land use and transportation decisions will not be easy. It will require diligence and at times some tough choices. But with a vision in place, transportation and land use decisions should provide the following:

- Downtown's importance as a center for employment, entertainment, and activities.
- Development nodes such as urban villages as pedestrian and transit-friendly development.
- Preferential treatment for streets in Smart Growth zones.

The Asheville Area MPO

The Asheville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the transportation decision-making body for the urbanized areas of Buncombe County, including Asheville, Biltmore Forest, Black Mountain, Weaverville, Woodfin, and the Town of Fletcher in Henderson County. The City of Asheville serves as the lead planning agency for the MPO, and receives federal funding to conduct transportation planning and provide staff services.

The MPO is made up of two primary committees. The policy-making committee is the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), which is made up of two members of the Asheville City Council, one elected official from each of the other member governments, and the North Carolina Board of Transportation representative for a total of ten members. The other committee is the Technical Coordinating Committee, which is a staff level committee that provides recommendations to the TAC concerning transportation decisions.

The MPO process is designed to meet federal requirements for transportation planning. MPOs exist in all urbanized areas in the country that have a population of more than 50,000. The US Census defines urbanized areas to be included in MPOs. The 2000 census included towns in Henderson and Haywood Counties as part of the greater Asheville urbanized area. Sometime in 2003, it is likely that the MPO will expand to include the towns of Hendersonville, Flat Rock, Laurel Park, Waynesville, Canton, and Clyde and portions of unincorporated Henderson and Haywood Counties. Also, because the population of the MPO will be over 200,000, we will received the additional designation of a Transportation Management Area (TMA). TMAs are required to meet more stringent federal planning requirements.

For the last fifty years, urban and suburban development has focused on catering to automobile travel. In some ways, this pattern has been a model of success for businesses and customers. Businesses rely on high visibility from major thoroughfares, and customers who can afford to drive cars have come to expect easy access to convenient parking. At the same time, this model of development has a downside. People often lament the loss of community character and the frustrations of driving on crowded thoroughfares. Over time, as these commercial corridors become more crowded, they become less safe and less attractive. And what about the people that are unable to drive a car because of age, disability, or income? Their options for travel are severely limited. Our thoroughfares do not serve the needs of people who are unable or choose not to drive.

Transportation Planning in North Carolina: The Importance of Land Use

The General Assembly of North Carolina recently revised the laws for transportation planning to require cities and towns to have an adopted land use plan prior to state involvement in transportation planning. This law is important for several reasons. For the first time, land use plans will be one of the basic inputs into transportation planning. This strengthens the importance of having a comprehensive plan for the City of Asheville that reflects the values and goals of the community, and considers the future of the transportation system.

The pattern of automobile-centered development typically provides few connections between adjacent land uses, and separates buildings from the street with large expanses of parking. This pattern makes it almost impossible to walk from residential to shopping areas or from one shopping area to another. In addition, the pattern often forces cars to re-enter the main thoroughfare to move from one shopping area to another. Through development review, we should work to minimize access to major and minor thoroughfares and maximize connections between adjacent land uses.

It is time to develop a new model of success for commercial development. Automobiles still have an important place in this new model, but they are not the only design consideration. While convenient parking will continue to be a priority, it is time to explore ways to make our commercial development more walkable, easier to serve with public transit, and more reflective of the unique character of Asheville.

Concentrated pockets of more dense urban development or "urban villages" present an opportunity to provide a better transportation

system for the community. These concentrated urban developments and select locations are easier to serve with public transit, and offer the opportunity for people to park once and walk to several destinations.

As Asheville and the surrounding region continue to grow, these concentrated areas of development will serve even greater importance in the efficiency of the transportation system. Downtown Asheville will continue to serve an important role as a center for employment, entertainment, shopping, festivals, and civic functions. Concentrated "urban villages" along major corridors will support the central hub of downtown. This type of development pattern is important to the success of bus transit, rail transit, carpooling, vanpooling, and other measures that will reduce congestion on our streets and highways, and ultimately preserve our investment in the transportation system.

Streets and Highways

Automobiles will continue to be the dominant form of transportation over the next 25 years. Conventional improvements to the transportation system such as road widening, highway improvements and new roadways, will continue to be an important tool for providing mobility and access to the citizens of Asheville. But because of our mountainous terrain and limited funding for roadway improvements, opportunities for these conventional solutions will be limited. When we do widen a road or build a new road it will be of paramount importance to make sure that the design meets all of the long-term goals of an urban community. Too often, we widen a roadway to meet the goal of serving growing traffic volumes without considering the design details that will make it function well in an urban environment over the long term. Our scarce financial resources and limited land availability will drive the need to pursue creative strategies to get the most out of the transportation system.

One of the most important components to an

"Here as elsewhere, mass transit facilities are minimal; in addition, this city has been built outward from its own center in long glittering strings of plastic, neon, glass and ersatz. Now, for miles before a motorist reaches what used to be the city, shopping centers, the fast-food joints, the service stations, the apartment and housing developments, the glass office buildings and the ugly mobile home sales lots line the roads in endless tribute to an illusory prosperity."

Tom Wicker, The New York Times, *December 4, 1973*

efficient transportation system is the traffic signal system. Asheville's traffic signals are in need of a major upgrade to modern technology in order to provide a citywide synchronized system. Hendersonville Road is a prime example of a roadway on which traffic signalization sychronization is required. The North Carolina Department of Transportation is in the process of evaluating the Asheville signal system for such an upgrade. This project should be one of the highest priorities among our transportation needs.

Other creative solutions to traffic congestion will play a part in creating a more efficient road network with limited resources. Targeted intersection improvements, such as adding right and left turn lanes, go a long way toward preserving the capacity of the roadway. Another promising intersection option is the modern roundabout. Roundabouts present a demonstrated successful alternative to signalized intersections. Roundabouts maintain a constant flow of traffic through an intersection and can improve safety.

Source: Scott Melrose & Associates

Because major highway projects and new thoroughfares will be difficult to implement in our mountainous area, we need to look for opportunities to make connections in our local street system. A network of interconnected streets provides drivers with more options and disperses traffic throughout the street network. Historically, many of our transportation solutions have severed connections in the local street network. In this new era of transportation, we need to look for opportunities to increase the local street connections.

Although we will never be able to create the traditional urban pattern of a grid street network due to our topography , a few key connections in the local street network will go a long way toward reducing connections on

our major thoroughfares. The Asheville subdivision regulations should be modified to include requirements for street connectivity and provisions for street stubs to adjacent properties. Improvements to the roadways paralleling the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers could provide a scenic route connecting the eastern edge of the City with the northern edge. Access would be provided to all areas and uses along the route, including the regional shopping area around the Asheville Mall, Biltmore Village, AB Tech, and UNCA. Roadway improvements to Riverside Drive, Lyman Street, Meadow Drive, and Swannanoa River Road will be required to create the Riverway. Improvements should create a true scenic parkway with a unified design, landscaping, and provision for multi-modal use including bicyclists and pedestrians.

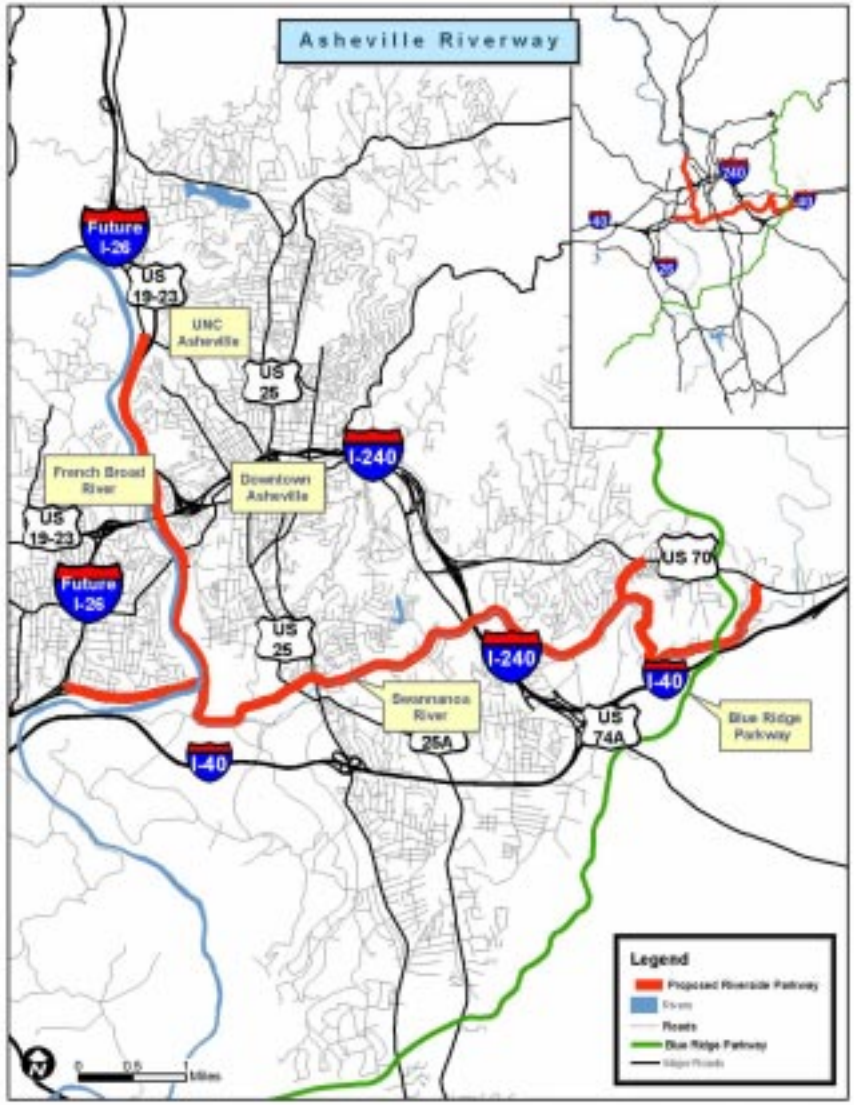
Traditional roadway improvements such as new construction and road widening will continue to be one of the tools for improving the transportation system. The development review process will play an important part in supporting these roadway improvements. Possible tools to support roadway improvements include requirements for right-of-way dedication in subdivisions and conditional use projects.

Travel Demand Management

Asheville's topography and diminishing land supply will make it increasingly difficult to build new roads and widen existing roads in the future. Therefore, new strategies must be pursued to reduce congestion on Asheville's streets. Programs designed to increase the number of persons in a vehicle, or influencing travel during the peak period help maximize the existing capacity of the street network. These programs are collectively know as Travel Demand Management (TDM).

The goal of TDM programs is to discourage the use of the Single-Occupant Vehicle (SOV) as the primary means of travel. Measures include carpool and vanpool programs, parking management, and employer-based programs such as flexible work hours. These programs are relatively simple to initiate but require very little investment. But other support measures will be needed to provide the incentives to carpool. These strategies include: preferential parking for shared riders, guaranteed ride home

Map 10



programs, carpool subsidies, and parking pricing.

For most TDM programs to be effective, the programs need to extend region-wide. This is especially true for efforts such as High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes, parking management and congestion management. Carpooling and vanpooling programs and employer-based incentives will all benefit from regional cooperation. Collectively, TDM strategies serve to reduce congestion during peak travel times, increase the capacity of the existing roadway system and improve air quality.

Access Management

All streets and highways serve two primary functions: mobility and access. Mobility is simply how well the road moves people from point A to point B. And access is the ultimate purpose for any trip – whether it is access to a shopping center, the doctor's office, a concert, the airport, or your house – at the end of every trip, there is a need for access. Different types of streets in the transportation systems serve different functions with regard to mobility and access. We call this the access-mobility con-

tinuum. For example, an interstate highway provides a high level of mobility, with very few opportunities for access. Access is limited to interchanges at evenly spaced intervals and there is no opportunity to access properties that are directly adjacent to the highway. At the other end of the spectrum, a residential street primarily functions as access to adjacent homes. The purpose of a residential street is not to provide a high level of mobility for through traffic.

To provide good access and good mobility requires a balancing act. Property owners and businesses must be given adequate access to make use of their property. At the same time, access must be limited to the extent necessary to preserve traffic flow. "Access Management" is the term used to describe efforts to improve the traffic flow and safety on a roadway by controlling the access points. A successful access management plan will provide access to adjacent properties through shared driveways, access roads, and turning lanes at intersections. Access management should be a component of all new roadway improvements. For existing commercial thoroughfares, access management plans should be developed that attempt to consolidate driveways and coordinate evenly spaced access points.

Congestion and Levels of Service

One of the most fascinating and frustrating aspects of transportation planning is how quickly roads seem to get congested. Roads are built to certain traffic handling capacity standards; consequently, it is logical to assume that this capacity will someday be reached and congestion will occur. What is counterintuitive is how quickly congestion seems to occur after a long period of a road operating without congestion.

The Florida Department of Transportation has created tables for different roadway types that relate traffic volumes to levels of service. A level of service "A" represents a free-flowing traffic situation where there is absolutely no congestion whatsoever; a level of service "E" represents a situation where extreme congestion occurs on a regular basis. Examining these tables provide us with the answer to our question about why congestion occurs rapidly.

The following table represents Florida Department of Transportation estimates of traffic volumes for different levels of service for a four-lane freeway in an urban area. Please note that it takes a major increase in traffic volumes to move from a level of service "A" to a level of service "B;" conversely, it takes relatively little traffic volume increase to move from a level of service "D" to a level of service "E." Since most roads are designed to handle traffic volumes at a level of service "C" or "D," it does not take much extra traffic to create a congested situation.

Levels of Service for a Four-Lane Urban Freeway

Level of Service	A	B	C	D	E
Traffic Volume	27,800	42,800	61,100	73,800	79,300

Traffic volumes are expressed in average daily traffic – the average number of cars using the road per day.

The Importance of Design

Thoroughfares like Tunnel Road, Patton Avenue, Hendersonville Road, Merrimon Avenue, and Brevard Road collectively carry hundreds of thousands of vehicles every day. Asheville residents and visitors alike experience Asheville on these thoroughfares. These thoroughfares serve to provide mobility for through traffic, provide access to adjacent land uses, and help define the character of the community.

Unfortunately, these roadways don't perform any of those functions very well. In many cases, the land uses along the thoroughfares have changed incrementally over time with no consideration for the functions the thoroughfares should serve. The arrangement of the land uses and the design of the thoroughfares have often resulted in a diminution of the roadways' ability to accommodate thorough traffic and detracted from the character of the community. Improvements to existing thoroughfares and construction of new thoroughfares must place a high priority on design to assure that the thoroughfares perform the function of providing mobility for through

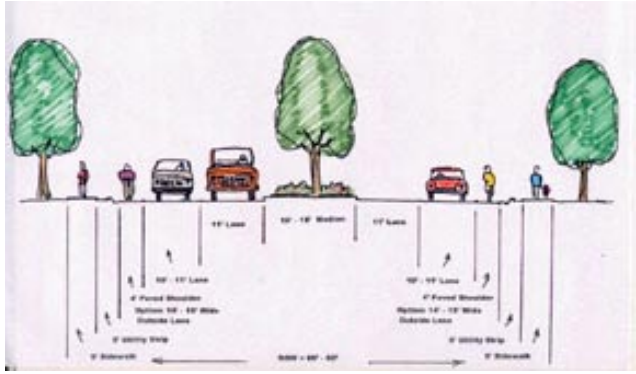
traffic and access to adjacent land uses while defining and contributing to the character of the City of Asheville.

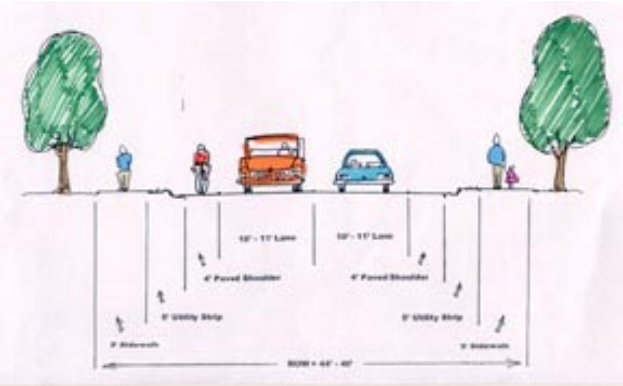
Incorporating design in the development of plans for improving existing thoroughfares and constructing new ones will significantly enhance the experience of driving along the thoroughfares. Design standards that address the functions of the functions (mobility, access, and defining community character) of the thoroughfares will reduce long-term costs, as their useful life will be increased. The City of Asheville has identified certain design elements and considerations that should be incorporated in the improvement of existing thoroughfares and construction of new ones.

The first step in developing a street design plan is to determine the long-term function of the roadway and the desired land use pattern along the corridor. Next a street type should be applied to the corridor that is sensitive to street function. Setback requirements should be based on the ultimate design cross-section envisioned for a particular street. Setbacks should then be measured from the centerline of the street. By establishing a vision for the roadway cross-section and the relationship to adjacent development, it will allow a greater emphasis on the design of the streetscape. This will be accomplished through more focused attention to the design of the sidewalks and street trees and their relationship to adjacent buildings.

To truly integrate land use and transportation planning, we must develop street design templates that not only address the design of the roadway, but also address the character, scale, and design of adjacent development. Preferred street design cross-sections should provide provisions for bike lanes and sidewalks and should also extend beyond the right-of-way to address items such as building setbacks, parking location, and scale and size of buildings. Creating this typology for Asheville streets will provide a blueprint for future transportation improvements and future development. The result will be a better coordination between land use and transportation planning.

Corridors that are urbanizing are often "improved" to accommodate traffic projections for a twenty-year planning horizon. But these





improvements are missing the element of a vision for these corridors that includes land use. A few basic assumptions should be in place for improving urbanizing transportation corridors. First, unless the facility is a limited access highway, it should be assumed that there will be adjacent development. Second, all developed corridors and urbanizing environments have a need for safe and attractive pedestrian facilities and consideration of bicycle transportation.

Improvements to streets and widening of thoroughfares should meet the following goals:

- Provide safe mobility and access for motor vehicles and other users of the road.
- Provide the safest design to reduce accidents and the associated costs.

Several studies found that muti-lane roads with medians have a lower crash rate than roads with a continuous center turn lane.

Georgia Study - Medians have a 15% lower crash rate
Florida Study - Medians have a 25% lower crash rate
Michigan Study - Medians have a 58% lower crash rate

Source: Transportation Research Center, University of Florida, 1993

- Preserve the public investment in the transportation infrastructure.
- Provide facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders.
- Enhance the long-term economic vitality and appearance of the community.

Map 14 classifies the major thoroughfares in Asheville into four major categories: Gateway Boulevard, Urban/Neighborhood Corridor, Connecting Corridor, and Regional Commercial Corridor.

Gateway Boulevard - Typically includes a raised-landscaped median. Coordinated access points at select locations characterize the roadway. The design includes wide outside lanes for bicyclists, and may also include an off road greenway. Adjacent development may occur on larger parcels with few access points. Adjacent development might take the form of residential subdivisions, apartment complexes, office parks, or concentrated commercial development.

Urban/Neighborhood Corridor - The Urban/Neighborhood Corridor connects neighborhoods with each other, with employment centers, with institutional uses, and with major thoroughfares. Mixed-use structures, typically 2 to 4 stories in height, contain retail, office, and residential uses that serve and are complemented by adjacent neighborhoods. Sidewalks, streetscape and builidng design acknowledge and provide a safe environment for the significant pedestrian users of the urban/neighborhood corridor. The urban/neighborhood corridor may be two, three, or four lanes and might include a landscaped median or a continuous center turn lane and on-street parking.

Connecting Corridor – The purpose of the connecting corridor is to preserve the flow of traffic along major thoroughfares that connect compact centers of urban development. Connecting corridors are characterized by land uses such as offices and apartments, and should not include regional shopping destinations. Connecting corridors might be three or four lanes and may include a landscaped median or a continuous center turn lane. Connecting corridors are a high priority for access management plans.

Regional Commercial Corridor – The Regional Commercial Corridor serves nodes of regional commercial development including big-box retail and regional shopping destinations such as malls. The Corridor is characterized by an emphasis on measures to maintain traffic flow and preserve the capacity of the transportation system. Access management, effective signal timing, and turning lanes at intersections will all be important design features of the Regional Commercial Corridor.

The following arterial roads in the City and its ETJ are described using this classification system.

Sweeten Creek Road
- Gateway Boulevard from Interstate 40 South to US 25
- Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from Interstate 40 to Biltmore Village

Brevard Road
- Gateway Boulevard from Long Shoals Road to the Biltmore Square Mall Area
- Regional Commercial Corridor in the area of the Biltmore Square Mall
- Gateway Boulevard from I-26 to I-40

Riverway
The character of the Riverway will vary, and its design will be based on the results of the Riverway Corridor Study taking place in 2002. It is likely that the core areas of riverfront redevelopment may take on an urban character in the style of the Urban/Neighborhood Corridor and the remainder of the parkway may be designed more in keeping with the Gateway Boulevard Concept.

Hendersonville Road
- Urban/Neighborhood Corridor in selected urban village locations (see map)
- Connecting Corridor for the remaining sections

Tunnel Road
- Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from the tunnel to South Tunnel Road

South Tunnel Road
- Regional Commercial Corridor

East Tunnel Road
- Gateway Boulevard

Patton Avenue
• Regional Commercial Corridor near Interstate 40 (exit 44)
• Urban/Neighborhood Corridor in selected Urban Village locations
• Connecting Corridor for the remaining sections

Merrimon Avenue
• Urban/Neighborood Corridor from Hillside Street to Colonial Place

Biltmore Avenue
• Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from Patton Avenue to Victoria Road
• Connecting Corridor from Victoria Road to Swannanoa River Road
• Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from Swannanoa River Road to I-40

Haywood Road
• Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from Patton Avenue to Ridgelawn Avenue
• Gateway Boulevard from Ridgelawn Avenue to French Broad River

Clingman Avenue
• Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from Hilliard Avenue to French Broad River

Long Shoals Road
• Connecting Corridor from Hendersonville Road to I-26
• Gateway Boulevard from I-26 to Brevard Road

New Leicester Highway
• Connecting Corridor

Broadway Avenue
• Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from Downtown to Weaver Boulevard

Charlotte Street
• Urban/Neighborhood Corridor from I-240 to Edwin Place

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation

In conventional roadway improvements, pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, pedestrian signals at intersections, and crosswalks are considered as an afterthought to the design. By treating these facilities as an afterthought, these corridors become places that work well for cars, but pedestrians and bicy-

clists seem out of place. The presence of a sidewalk or a "share the road" sign does not address the true need to provide people with choices about how to travel. It is not in the interest of the health or vitality of the community to relegate pedestrians to a narrow strip of concrete between parking lots and travel lanes. In urbanizing environments, it should be assumed that pedestrian facilities and pedestrian needs should be an integral part of the design of roadways. In planning roadway improvements, if we fail to consider the long-term urbanization of the corridor, we destine the thoroughfare to be a place for cars only.

As roadways in Asheville have been improved and/or uses along the roadways have changed, accommodation for pedestrians has often not been considered. For example, Hendersonville Road was widened by the NCDOT approximately 10 years ago. No sidewalks or other pedestrian amenities were included in the improvement. There is a large elderly population along Hendersonville Road that can not access shopping and services that are located literally across the street. The danger they face by trying to cross this highway in an automobile is much less than the danger they would face by crossing it on foot. Because they have to drive to shopping and services across the street, these residents contribute to the traffic congestion on the roadway and to the lessening of the region's air quality.

Land use changes along Merrimon Avenue have produced an environment that is not friendly to pedestrians. Originally a two lane street lined with homes, with commercial uses located at or near key intersections, the street is now four lanes with most residential uses converted to retail or office uses. Numerous and random curb cuts, narrow (and sometimes missing) sidewalks, and speeding traffic create a dangerous environment for pedestrians. Although a large residential population is adjacent to Merrimon Avenue, few people walk along the street due to the danger to pedestrians posed by the street.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning

In keeping with the goals of making Asheville more walkable, and promotion alternative modes of transportation, the City of Asheville has a need to provide more facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians. The need for these

Choose An Appropriate Standard of Review

Our expectations for buildings should be modest and realistic. An such realism starts with the perspective--the standard of review--that we use to evaluate new buildings in our landscape.

We are too harsh on our architects and builders. We somehow expect each new work to be novel and full of surprise. This point-of-view does not help to create amiable cities. It looks at the wrong things. People--architects included--often speak of a building and decry is as *derivative* or *nothing special*. When questioned further, they will readily admit that the building isn't bad, really, but it's not "great work."

To wonder if a particular building is a great work is to hold it up to a flawed standard of review on two counts.

First, such an approach tends to overemphasize the purely visual; one examines the building as if it were a photograph on a wall and one talks of balances and composition and so on.

Secondly, the very nature of the question asks one to view the building as a discrete object--isolated on its own lot--not as a piece of a city landscape.

Both aspects play into the misuse--albeit ancient--of architecture as a tool of social aggrandizement, posturing and pompsity. Such an attitude may feed the hungry maw of the architecture and design press but it does little to nourish the eye or body of the would-be urban villager.

The *great work* standard is out-of-scale. Something more modest is needed.

More often than not, the important question is not whether some particular building is a great building. the correct standard of review is more this: "If this building were just about standard for the community, would we still want to live here?"

Be realistic. Does the building follow the very few basic rules of urban design? If so, grant the permit and build it.

Of course every town needs a few memorable structures of civic pride and joy: a stadium, a tower, a church or temple. But these are by practical necessity few; the majority of buildings will be (we hope) good, solid, money-making background buildings. It is only occasionally that a building--by special use or unique site--needs to be a focal point. Our cities have a long way to go before it's appropriate to use the great work standard of architectural review for everything.

Let's define our standard of greatness so that striving and self-promotion are excluded.

From City Comforts: How to Build an Urban Village; *David Sucher, 1995*

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans

"The Asheville Urban Area will have a network of bicycle and pedestrian routes which are safe and provide reasonable transportation options for its citizens. Individual jurisdictions within the MPO and the MPO itself will provide leadership in the promotion, education, law enforcement, and facilities development that supports the network."

Asheville MPO Pedestrian and Bicycle Thoroughfare Plan (1999)

"The Vision for the Asheville Greenways System is a network of land and water corridors in Asheville, with greenways serving to protect and promote the qualities of these corridors, places where land connects to work, school and shops; and city connects to countryside."

Asheville Greenways Master Plan (1998)

"Local governments, developers, NCDOT and the MPO need to help create a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the region. The region needs more sidewalks, bicycle lanes/paths, crosswalks and modifications in road design to improve the safety for pedestrian and bicyclists."

Transportation Options of Western North Carolina: A Regional Plan for Mobility (2001)

"This plan identifies existing substandard sidewalks needing reconstruction, sidewalk obstacles needing removal or relocation, needed wheelchair ramps, pedestrian hazard areas, needed pedestrian crossing improvements, and needed pedestrain linkages. The total estimated cost to address all of the needs of the Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan is approximately 38.5 million dollars."

City of Asheville Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan (1999)

facilities is well-documented in plans developed in recent years (see cited quotes from these plans). The City of Asheville Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan, adopted in 1999, identified approximately 38.5 million dollars worth of pedestrian needs in the city. These needs include repairing deteriorating sidewalks, widening sidewalks, removing obstacles, adding wheelchair ramps, improving crossings and building new sidewalks.

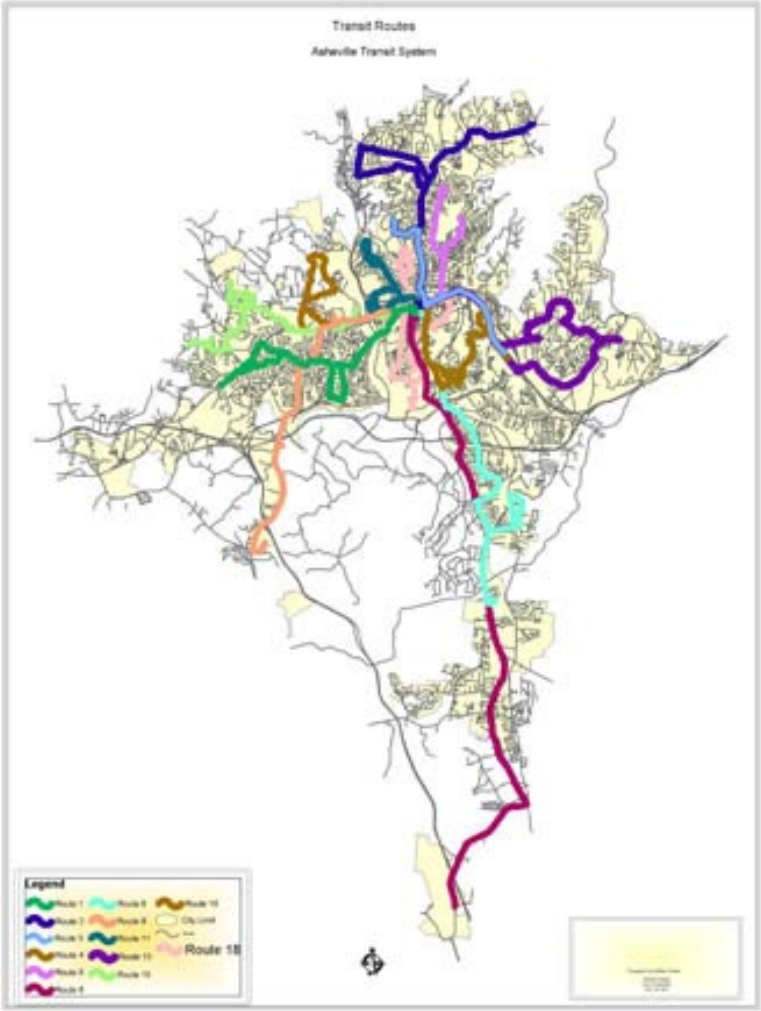
Similarly, the Asheville Greenways Master Plan lays out a network of greenways to connect the city for recreation and transportation by bike and on foot. The first pieces of the plan are being implemented, but much more needs to be done. The need to better serve pedestrians and bicyclists is also documented in the Asheville MPO Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and Transportation Options for Western North Carolina: A Regional Plan for Mobility Choices. The challenge in the coming years will be to develop a funding strategy to implement all of these plans. The infrastructure to move pedestrians and bicyclists is of paramount importance to the overall goals of reducing congestion, lessening air pollution, and creating livable streets.

The Importance of Transit

Asheville's topography places serious constraints on its transportation network. Existing roadways are not well connected and, in many cases, are constrained from being widened. Consequently, the usual traffic engineering solutions to the problem of roadway congestion are not available. It is necessary to rely more and more heavily on the transit system to overcome these obstacles in order to relieve congestion.

Transit requires moderately high residential densities in order to operate efficiently. Technical studies have determined that a minimum density of between 8 and 16 units an acre is necessary for optimum transit performance. Very few areas in Asheville have this level of density, as illustrated on Map 9, page 106, although the proposed Smart Growth development pattern has the potential of resolving this to some extent along the City's major transportation corridors. Map 14, page 152, illustrates this future development pattern, including some recently approved urban village and multifamily projects.

Map 12



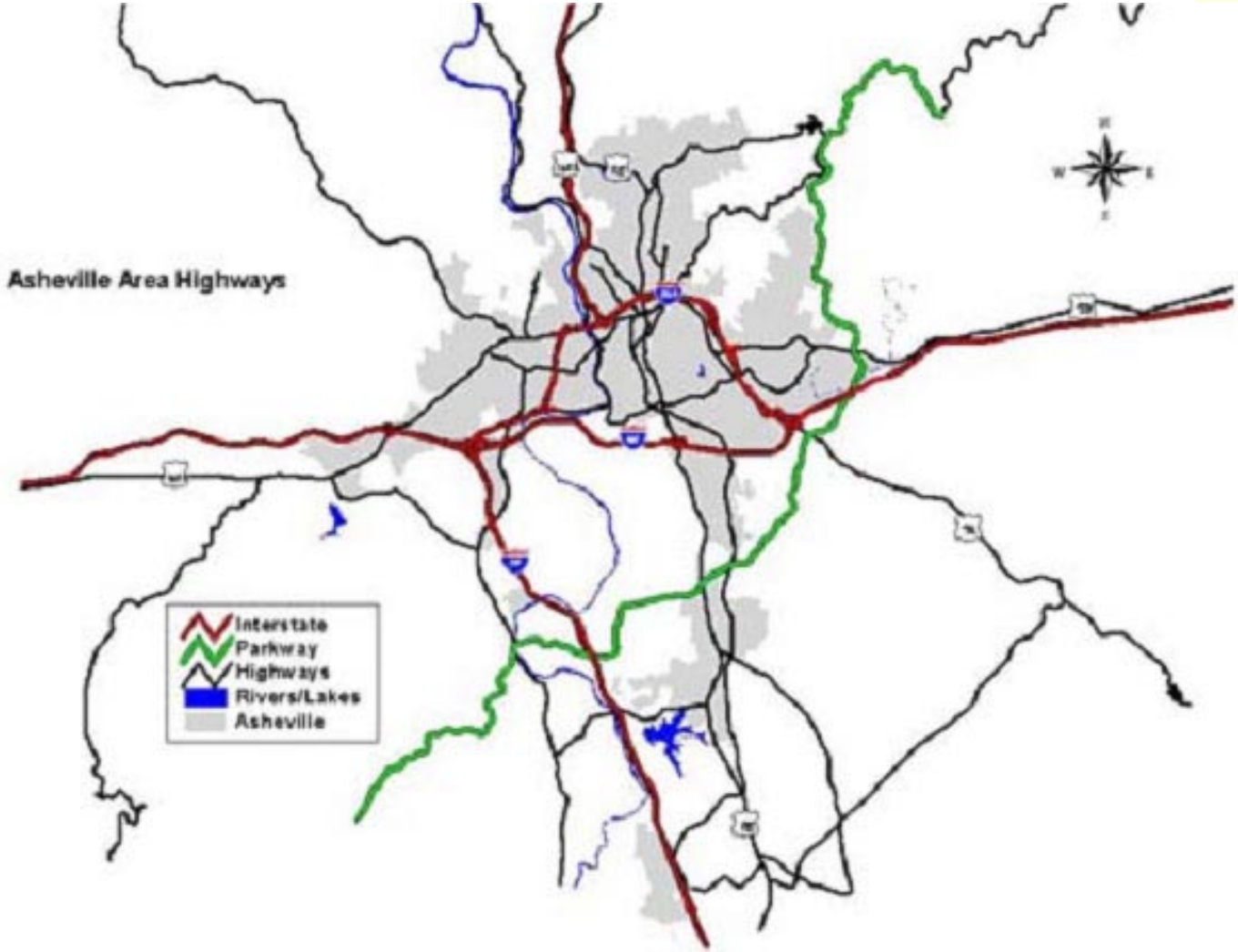
In addition to the density issue, transit faces a major public perception problem. It is less convenient than the personal automobile, and most people believe that transit is the mode of transportation choice only for the poor. These perceptions need to be overcome through effective route management, public education campaigns, attractive and convenient transit shelters, and improving the transit-riding experience. The Transit Authority has implemented a number of improved routes to enhance rider convenience, has added bicycle carriers to its buses in order to link two modes of transportation, and is working on the provision of more transit shelters. However, substantial changes need to occur in order to increase ridership to the extent necessary to address congestion problems throughout the transportation network.

Interstate Highways

"State highways are the backbone of Asheville's thoroughfare system." Asheville City Plan 1925

John Nolen's statement about Asheville's transportation system is just as valid today as it was in 1925. This is especially true with regard to the interstate system through Asheville. Two interstate highways meet in Asheville – I-40 and I-26. In addition, Asheville is served by an interstate loop – I-240. I-26 currently terminates in Asheville, but construction designed to complete this interstate through Tennessee and into Ohio is well underway, with the final segment being the so-called "I-26 Connector" that will link the converted US 19/23 to I-240. Current projections show that link to be complete in 2010. Map 13 (page 139) illustrates the Asheville area interstate system, with the Connector link and converted US 19/23 designated by a dashed line.

Interstate highways are constructed to promote the movement of goods and people between states and regions. However, due to the lack of connectivity and other limitations of Asheville's existing local street system, interstate highways play a dominant role in handling local traffic. NCDOT estimates that 80 percent of the traffic on the Connector will be local traffic. This need for interstates to handle local traffic has resulted in traffic volume projections that appear to warrant widening of the existing segment of I-26 south of


Asheville Area Highways
Interstate
Parkway
Highways
Rivers/Lakes
Asheville

Map 13

"I'm pretty sure that ten years from now, when you and I are driving on this Connector, it will be a much better road and asset for our community than it would have been without the committee's efforts."

Lou Bissette, Co-Chair, Community Coordinating Committee

I-40. Plans are underway to widen I-26 to six lanes in Henderson County to the Buncombe County line and further discussion is occurring regarding extending that project north to I-40.

I-26 Connector

The route that the Connector takes and the extent to which I-26 is to be widened are topics of great controversy in the City of Asheville. Concerns include impacts on community character, promotion of economic development, loss of businesses and housing, public safety, construction noise and congestion, business access during construction, and further inducement of a sprawl development pattern. To address these concerns, in 1999, the Asheville City Council and the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization supported the creation of an independent committee to examine the study the issues and provide recommendations. This committee was named the Community Coordinating Committee or CCC.

The CCC was assembled to provide a representative range of input on the I-26 Connector project and to coordinate the associated public involvement process. Constituted in April, 2000, the CCC was charged by the Asheville City Council with developing an effective method of gaining extensive public input on the Connector projects while simultaneously keeping the project on schedule.
Pursuant to this charge, the Committee organized the I-26 Education Forum on June 15, 2000 and the I-26 Design Forum on July 21 and 22, 2000. These forum events were extremely well-attended and offered the public a significant opportunity to learn more about the Connector project as well as to provide local guidance into the design of the project. Both events were held with the full knowledge and cooperation of the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

Members of the CCC included representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, I-26 Connector Awareness Group, Council of Independent Business Owners, City of Asheville, Buncombe County, Town of Weaverville, Land of Sky Regional Council, affected neighbor-

I-26 Committee a Model of Solid, Productive Community Cooperation

A few months ago, Brownie Newman and Lou Bissette would have seemed an unlikely team. Co-chair of the Western North Carolina Alliance, Newman is an environmental activist and one of the young turks challenging the way things have always been done. An attorney, Bissette is a former mayor of Asheville, and firmly ensconced in the city's old-guard establishment. But these days they're singing the same tune, and in harmony, no less.

Bissette chairs, and Newman co-chairs, the I-26 Connector Community Coordinating Committee, appointed by Asheville City Council in April to provide a representative range of input on the I-26 Connector project and coordinate the associated public involvement process. Bissettelaughs now about his reaction when he saw the list of people who'd been appointed to the committee and admits he had serious reservations about whether they'd be able to get anything done. But with Newman as co-chair, they laid down some ground rules: no personal attacks; we're seeking agreement, not a vote; and the project must be completed on time.

"Every meeting got better and better," Bissette says.

The committee wisely decided to begin the process of public involvement with an Education Forum held June 15. They brought in highway experts from other states, state Department of Transportation engineers, city planners and others to talk about different aspects of the connector design. Hundreds of people came and learned about the complexity and the possibilities. Five weeks later, the committee sponsored a design forum at which hundreds more came to share their views and help chart the course of the project. Reluctant at first, state DOT engineers became more and more engaged in the process as it proceeded.

"At first we were having to drag them along," says Newman, "They're nice people but they're all engineers. They were not used to dealing with big crowds of people. But by the time we got to the design forum, they really got into this thing."

The design forum produced hundreds of ideas. The committee has prioritized them into a manageable number of goals and produced a report with nine key project goals for DOT to use in designing the project. They've also established criteria for measuring whether each of the goal s is met.

The process has been so successful it is a potential model for civic engagement, as guest columnist and board member of Smart Growth partners of Western North Carolina Andrew Euston wrote in August. It is certainly a model for North Carolina communities who want more self-determination introduced into the process of designing highway projects. More importantly, it's been a tremendous community building experience for Asheville.

It's a long way from here to a finished road that meets the design goals, but there's every reason to believe DOT will work to incorporate them in the project.

Here's a salute to Bissette, Newman and all those citizens who wanted to make their city a better place and were willing to take on one of the most formidable bureaucracies anywhere to make it happen.

Asheville Citizen-Times Editorial; September 17, 2000

"Traffic congestions remedies should not be expected to eliminate the problem altogether. Rather, they should aim to (1) reduce the duration of maximum congestion appreciably, (2) reduce the average length of time required for commuting, (3) increase the average commuting speed, (4) increase the proportion of all commuters traveling during periods of maximum convenience, and (5) reduce the intensity of commuter frustration."

Anthony Downs, Stuck in Traffic, *1992*

hood groups and landowners, RiverLink, the Western North Carolina Alliance, and a variety of other groups and organizations. This broad representation resulted in considerable credibility for the Committee's final recommendations. These recommendations were:

- The alternative alignment concept developed at the Design Forum should receive serious study for inclusion in the project Environmental Impact Statement.
- The NCDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and local citizens should work together as a "Committee on Visual Design" to develop ideas for bridge design, signage, overpass design, landscaping and other aesthetic issues that reflect our community's character.
- The NCDOT and FHWA should expedite the development of new and updated traffic models for use on the ultimate design of this project, including regional air quality modeling.
- The NCDOT and FHWA should explore engineering and signage options to improve the north-to-east connection of eastbound I-26 traffic with I-40 in an easterly direction as part of this project or a simultaneous project. The specific concerns involve limiting commercial truck through-traffic on I-240 and on lesser-classified roadways proximate to residential areas.
- Roadway design should reflect the Committee's general consensus that the bicycle and pedestrian connectivity be restored to link neighborhoods and the French Broad River while simultaneously exploring traffic calming measures to reduce the vehicular impact on residential streets.
- The NCDOT and FHWA should ensure that all interchange design is community sensitive. To achieve this end, it would be helpful to provide artist's renditions of feasible design alternatives for public review.
- The NCDOT and FHWA should seriously examine safety issues in project construction and design including maintenance of traffic during construction and emergency

access after construction.

- The NCDOT and FHWA should release any unneeded right-of-way at the completion of this project to the City of Asheville to be zoned and used in accordance with a land use plan to be developed by the City in cooperation with the NCDOT.
- The NCDOT and FHWA should keep the I-26 Connector project on its current or, preferably, an expedited schedule.

The Asheville City Council and the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved these recommendations in 2000 and they have been forwarded to the NCDOT and FHWA as clear indicators of community consensus. Since that time, the CCC has endorsed further study of four alternatives for Connector design. Two of these alternatives - Alternatives 4 and 5 - achieve an important local goal of separating interstate traffic from local traffic in the vicinity of the Smoky Park bridges in order to improve safety and reduce congestion. The other two alternatives – Alternatives 2 and 3 - were previously developed by NCDOT in advance of community input that occurred in 2000. The Committee continues to work closely with NCDOT, FHWA, City, and MPO staff to see that all of the CCC recommendations are implemented to the extent possible given the complex design constraints associated with this project.

I-40

There are no current plans to widen I-40, although the MPO has identified the need for a new interchange west of Asheville in the vicinity of Dogwood Road. An interchange project at Sweeten Creek Road was completed in 2001. A full interchange with I-26 has been added to the I-26 Connector project along with improvements to the I-40 Enka/Candler interchange with 19-23 (Smoky Park Highway). Another new interchange providing access to the Biltmore Estate and the Riverside Parkway is being studied.

I-240

I-240 creates a loop that connects West Asheville, Downtown Asheville, the Tunnel Road regional business node, and East Asheville along a scenic route that crosses the French Broad River, skirts the north side of Downtown Asheville with its historic skyline, and passes through a "cut" in Beaucatcher

Mountain. Due to these scenic qualities and the importance of I-240 to local and regional access to Downtown and the principal centers of commerce of East and West Asheville, any modifications to this interstate loop require careful consideration relative to community appearance and economic development goals. Every opportunity should be taken to improve interchange functioning, interconnectivity of the local transportation system across the interstate, and the visual appearance of the road. Projects such as the I-26 Connector and the proposed improvements to the Merrimon Avenue interchange should be examined closely for the potential to address these community goals.

Rail Transportation

Rail transportation to Asheville is currently limited to freight service provided by Norfolk-Southern Railway. As a result of demand for passenger service to Asheville, the Rail Division of NCDOT has been working with City staff to bring passenger Rail (AMTRAK) service to the City. The passenger trains will use the existing rail owned by Norfolk-Southern. A site in Biltmore Station near historic Biltmore Village has been selected for the passenger station and the site has been surveyed and appraised. An architect has been hired to develop a conceptual plan for the station. Upon approval of the conceptual plan, the site will be acquired and construction will begin.

The projected date for bringing passenger rail service to Asheville is 2005, although state budget issues may result in the postponement beyond that date. It is envisioned that this passenger rail station will serve as a multi-modal hub for passenger rail, Asheville fixed-route bus transit, and commercial inter-city bus transit. In addition, the Biltmore Village area is a walkable historic village, and will serve significant pedestrian traffic. There are also plans to tie the passenger rail station into the Asheville greenway system The extension of passenger rail service to Asheville will provide an important alternative mode of travel for residents of and visitors to the region.

In the first few years of rail service, the number of passengers might be small. But over time, as the number of passengers grows, this rail station presents the opportunity to be a

real multimodal connection. At this location, people will be able to transition from inter-city travel by rail to intra-city travel by bus, by bike, by car, or on foot. This hub will be a long-term fixture in the transit system. For all of these reasons, construction of the station should be supplemented by improvements that will accommodate a bus transfer facility, and surrounding roadway improvements. Roadway and traffic signal improvements may be needed on Biltmore Avenue, Thompson Street, Decatur Street and Elliot Street. Additionally, a pedestrian crossing will be needed over the railroad tracks linking the Biltmore Station area with the Biltmore Village shopping district. These infrastructure improvements will be a vital part of creating a true multimodal center in conjunction with passenger rail service to Asheville.

Air Transportation

The Asheville area is served by the Asheville Regional Airport (FAA call letters AVL). The Airport provides general aviation and commercial air service with a full-service terminal building, air traffic control tower, and an 8000 foot runway. AVL is a major economic generator for the community, with an estimated $199.8 million in annual direct, indirect and multiplier benefits, creating an estimated 2,956 jobs. General aviation accounts for 70-80% of total air movements at the Airport.

The Airport is managed by a professional airport director whose work is overseen by an independent airport authority whose members are appointed by the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Board of County Commissioners. The Airport Authority is in the process of updating AVL's master plan. The plan calls for a variety of short-term, intermediate, and long-term improvements to the Airport. These improvements will be paid for by federal and state air transportation improvement funds. These improvements are described in more detail below.

A significant issue affecting the Airport involves the degree to which it is constrained by the limited property it owns and by the surrounding roadway network. Land is needed for facilities expansion and for a parallel runway. Typically, when an airport reaches 60 percent of its runway capacity, it should begin planning for additional runway space; AVL is slightly

Buildings are much like their human users. *Conversation* between buildings, as among humans, is a poignant sign of neighborliness. It is the height of rudeness--though all too often the expected norm in cities--for neighbors to speak not a word to each other for years on end. Buildings which do not *talk* to their neighbors are also rude.

"Fitting In", *City Comforts: How to Build An Urban Village*, 1995

over 50 percent of its runway capacity at the current time. The estimated cost for runway construction is roughly $20 million. These land acquisition and construction costs are not included in the figures below.

Short-term improvements (0-5 years):

- Parking, baggage claim, restaurant, regional hold room expansion, and other operational improvements.
- Relocate rental cars to south side of Airport.
- Relocate air traffic control tower.
- Possible conversion of existing rental car lot to taxi and bus area.
- Total cost: $20.5 million.

Intermediate improvements (6-10 years):

- Various terminal improvements, including additional waiting area, ticketing space, and possible parking structure.
- General aviation additions.
- Total cost: $18.4 million.

Long-term improvements (11-20 years)

- Resolving gate constraints.
- Additional public parking.
- Terminal building expansions.
- General aviation additions.
- Total cost: $13.1 million (not including land acquisition and parallel runway construction).

The Asheville Regional Airport is a critical component in our local transportation picture, as well as a major economic generator for the community.

Air Quality

The scenic beauty and vitality of the Asheville area, and the health of area citizens is threatened by increasing air quality problems. Topographically, the Asheville area is prone to "inversion" episodes that trap pollutants within the Asheville basin. The pollutant that causes the most concern in the Asheville area is ozone. A significant contributor to this problem is the nitrogen oxides from power plants in the Tennessee Valley Authority, and other

sources outside the region. Although outside sources contribute some of the pollutants, local sources, including mobile sources such as autos and trucks, are still a significant factor in local ozone pollution problems.

This fact underscores the need to have a balanced, multi-modal approach to transportation planning. Strategies must be devised to address mobile source pollutants by reducing vehicle miles traveled, increasing vehicle occupancy, and promoting bicycling, walking, and transit use as convenient alternatives to the automobile. Alternative transportation modes can be especially effective in reducing the most polluting short vehicle trips. In addition, transportation planning and land use planning must be coordinated to reduce dependence on the automobile.

The Environmental Protection Agency has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants such as ozone. The level of ozone pollution in the Asheville area is monitored at stations throughout the region. If it is determined that the level of ozone pollution exceeds the EPA standards, the Asheville area will be classified as "non-attain-

Transportation Planning and Public Involvement

Public involvement is an integral part of making enlightened transportation decisions that benefit the entire community. Transportation decisions have far-reaching impacts on growth patterns, economic development, and quality of life. The Asheville Area MPO has an adopted Public Involvement Policy, to guide local transportation decision-makers and to ensure that the public has a voice in these decisions. According to the policy, public involvement in transportation decision-making in Asheville should include a variety of techniques including public notices, comment periods, workshops, charrettes, public hearings, newsletters, surveys , and media outreach. The techniques employed will vary, depending on the specific planning task. The following is an excerpt from the policy:

"The purpose of the AMPO Public Involvement Policy is to create an open decision-making process whereby citizens have the opportunity to be involved at all stages of the transportation planning process. This policy is designed to ensure that transportation decisions will reflect public priorities."

Objectives of AMPO Public Involvement Policy

- Bring a broad cross-section of the public into the public policy and transportation planning decision-making process.
- Maintain public involvement from the early stages of the planning process through detailed project development.
- Use different combinations of public involvement techniques to meet the diverse needs of the general public.
- Determine the public's knowledge of the metropolitan transportation system and the public's values and attitudes concerning transportation.
- Educate citizens and elected officials in order to increase general understanding of transportation issues.
- Make technical and other information available to the public.
- Establish a channel for an effective feedback process.
- Evaluate the public involvement process and procedures to assess their success at meeting requirements specified in the ISTEA, TEA-21, NEPA, and the Interim FTA/FHWA Guidance on Public Participation."

"Buncombe County has some of the highest levels of air toxins in the state – pollutants that have been linked to serious health problems"

Asheville Citizen Times; March 1, 2002

ment." A status of non-attainment means a much greater level of responsibility in the area of transportation to prove that transportation improvements do not worsen the air quality problems.

Based on recent air quality monitoring, it is likely that Buncombe County may be designated as an air quality non-attainment area by the EPA. This designation may come sometime in 2003 unless it is avoided through the Early Action Compact Process described below.. Non-attainment means that an area has exceeded acceptable levels of certain air pollutants in the air. For Buncombe County these pollutants are ozone and particulate matter.

The City of Asheville has entered into an Early Action Compact with EPA and several other cities and counties in order to develop regional solutions to air quality problems. The Compact, or its alternatives, means that our area will be required to take steps to reduce these pollutants. One of the greatest impacts of the designation will be on transportation planning. Our area will be required to show that transportation plans and new transportation projects conform to the state's plan to improve air quality in our region. If our plan does not conform, then transportation funding could be put in jeopardy. The EPA might also require other measures to improve air quality in the region – measures such as reformulated gasoline and vehicle emissions inspections.

There are important land use and transportation strategies to improve the air that we breathe. No single strategy will do the entire job. Clean-fuels vehicles in the private and public sectors will play an important role in reducing pollution from automobiles and trucks. We can also reduce auto pollution by promoting development patterns that allow people to walk from their homes to nearby shopping or services, or from one shopping area to another. We can reduce congestion through better signal timing and more efficient intersection design. And we can place a greater emphasis on modes of transportation that reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicles such as carpooling, public transit, and bicycling.

Land Use and Transporation Goals and Strategies

Land Use

Goal I. The City should pursue compatible adaptive reuse, redevelopment and infill development, while insuring that sufficient infrastructure capacity exists or will be provided to accomodate this development.

Strategies

1. The City, in order to preserve architectural diversity and to protect neighborhood viability, should promote adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized structures, while ensuring that neighborhood compatibility and public safety goals are met.

2. The City should actively promote infill development through property owner education and market-based regulatory solutions in order to address the tax equity, tax base enhancement, and Smart Growth development goals of the City.

3. The City should continue to use flexible development standards to enable infill lots to meet development standards. These standards should be revised as necessary to address the development of infill lots.

4. The City should amend development standards to permit/require more intense mixed-use development at underdeveloped commercial nodes where excess public facilities exist.

5. The City's economic development incentive program should be reviewed to determine if incentives can be offered for infill development along commercial corridors and at commercial nodes identified as key areas for infill development.

6. Through with the City's Economic Development office, identify and market brownfield sites, giving preference to the development of these sites.

7. Permit lots as originally platted to be developed provided they meet access requirements and the development would be in harmony with the character of the neighborhood.

8. Provide incentives for the development of infill lots. These incentives could include a waiver or reductions of permit fees, elimination of excessive requirements, and expedited review.

9. Identify infill opportunities and make this information available to interested developers. The information could include identification of properties available for infill, incentives for development of these properties, and development/design standards.

10. Provide assistance and incentives for compatible redevelopment in older neighborhoods. The assistance and incentives could include waiver of permit fees, improvement of infrastructure and/or amenities, and making surplus City–owned land available for development.

11. Permit more intense development in some areas. Areas identified for more intense development could include transit nodes, underdeveloped areas where excess public facilities exist, areas proximate to the Central Business District and targeted infill areas. Development should be in accordance

Broadway Corridor Master Plan; from Community Corridors, LLC

with infill design standards tailored to single family and multi-family residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial areas.

12. Provide density bonuses as a stimulus for infill development. Density bonuses should be provided for work force affordable housing, targeted infill areas, areas where excess public facilities exist, and brownfield sites. Development should be in accordance with design standards tailored for the areas.

13. Promote the advantages of infill development to developers and neighborhood groups. This can be done through presentations at regular meetings of these groups and at special workshops.

14. Working with other City departments, develop plans and policies for the enhancement and strengthening of existing neighborhoods. These plans and policies should address infrastructure improvements, amenities (parks, streetlights, landscaping, etc.), crime prevention, litter control, and code enforcement, as well as seeking ways to protect these neighborhoods from inappropriate non-residential encroachment. Five

West End Clingman Avenue Conceptual Designs

From MHO/Corre Valle Valle Plan

neighborhoods specifically identified for this planning effort are Shiloh, Montford, Mission + St. Joseph's area, Burton Street, the east River Road area and East End.

15. The City should permit duplexes and other low intensity multifamily development meeting design and spacing requirements as a use by right subject to special requirements in single family zoning districts.

16. Appropriately scaled non-residential uses that serve residents of neighborhoods should be permitted in appropriate locations.

17. The City should have an aggressive program for the demolition of deteriorated and condemned structures in order to make land available for infill development.

18. Develop new regulatory tools for enhancing land use compatibility within existing neighborhoods including creation of large lot or rural zoning districts, neighborhood conservation overlay zones and similar measures.

Goal II. Implement a new urbanist development pattern along selected commercial corridors and in infill areas where appropriate.

Strategies

1. Develop new zoning districts and development template requirements necessary to implement a new urbanist development pattern; apply these districts and development templates to selected commercial corridors.

2. Develop a new zoning district or zoning technique that will allow infill development to take advantage of new urbanist development principles where appropriate.

3. Promote wider use of the Urban Village zoning district by identifying sites where it may be appropriate and directing developer interest to those sites.

4. Continue to look for opportunities to expand the boundaries of the Central Business District to areas appropriate for that type of development.

A new model for transportation and land use planning? Case study: Merrimon Avenue

Consider Merrimon Avenue – the central artery in North Asheville – one of the most prominent and heavily traveled corridors in the region. Merrimon Avenue has long been identified as one of the corridors most in need of improvement. The current four-lane section on Merrimon is unsafe and frustrating for drivers. Vehicles make unpredictable movements into and out of driveways. Lanes often abruptly come to a halt when vehicles attempt to turn left. The sidewalks are narrow, and obstructed by signs and utility poles. The driveways are spaced so closely together that there is more "curb cut" than sidewalk along the street.

The result? Merrimon Avenue is a transportation corridor that doesn't work very well for anyone. Drivers are frustrated, access to businesses is obstructed during congested travel times, pedestrians feel unsafe and unwelcome, most bicyclists won't dare to ride this route. So, we ask the central question: Is there a transportation solution that will benefit the business environment, improve traffic flow, and at the same time provide an attractive environment for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders?

Traditional solutions to thoroughfares like Merrimon could be disastrous. Consider the results of a feasibility study for Merrimon conducted by The North Carolina Department of Transportation. The study identified an option for widening Merrimon Avenue to five lanes. The benefit ? Traffic would have a shared center turn lane, which would improve traffic flow in the other lanes. The problem? A widening to five-lanes would require condemnation of xx number of Merrimon Avenue business and residents. And the cost? Fifty-five million dollars.

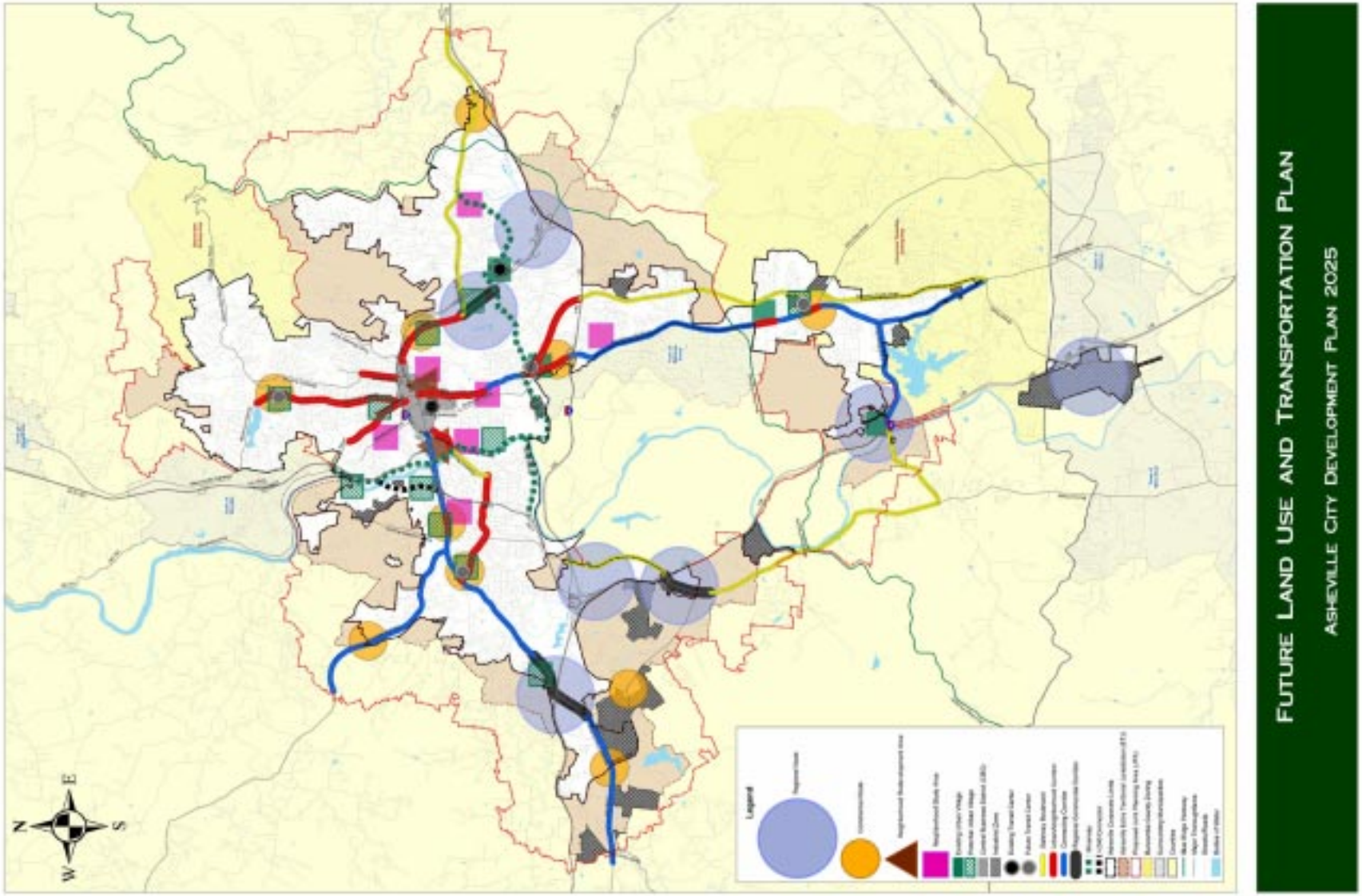
What if we looked for a solution to the problems on Merrimon Avenue with a whole new approach to transportation and land use planning. If we took the same 55 million dollars that it would take to widen Merrimon Avenue – and if there were no restrictions on how we could spend the money - what kind of creative improvements could we make? Consider the following budget, and how it might achieve all of the goals.

$15 million - Turn lanes at congested intersections
$2 million - Coordinated signal system
$3 million – Access management improvements
$15 million - Parking improvements for businesses
$5 million - Façade business appearance loan program
$10 million - Streetscape and pedestrian improvements
$5 million – Transit service improvements
Total: $55 million

With the budget outlined above, we could provide businesses with much needed parking improvements and at the same time, consolidate and eliminate driveways that contribute to congestion. Through signal timing and targeted capacity improvements, we could improve traffic flow and predictability for drivers. In addition, we could put unsightly utility wires underground and create a magnificent boulevard for residents and tourists alike. Merrimon Avenue could be a destination, where people stroll and shop and interact. On top of all this, we would have enough money left over to run a bus up and down Merrimon Avenue every 15 minutes.

Of course, the above scenario does not mean to suggest that, under the current system, we could spend federal highway money on improvements such a shared parking or transit service. But the above scenario serves to illustate that there is a different model available for thinking about transportation improvements in a congested urban corridor. It is time for our transportation solutions to begin to address a wider range of goals, including economic development, business climate, air quality, pedestrian environments, and a balance of transportation modes.

Map 14


Future Land Use and Transportation Plan
Asheville City Development Plan 2025
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Goal III. The City should permit and encourage transit supportive density (8-16 units per acre minimum) along and adjacent to major corridors and at logical transit nodes.

Strategies

1. Consider the development of a flexible zone that would permit higher density at appropriate locations within a five minute walk of transit stops. The higher density development should be in accordance with design standards tailored for these areas.

2. Require the provision of transit shelters in new commercial, office, mixed use and industrial developments that are of sufficient size to attract a significant transit ridership including larger residential developments containing a minimum density of 8 units per acre.

Goal IV. The City should revise its development standards for corridors to ensure that the corridors are developed in an urban manner.

Strategies

1. Development standards should be prepared for primary corridors that address the need to increase density along the corridors. The standards should provide incentives for mixed-use development that incorporates residential uses.

2. Minimum setbacks (or "build-to" lines) should be required, with buildings permitted to front on the street.

3. Prepare design guidelines for corridor development. Guidelines should promote an urban style (multi-story, pedestrian oriented) of architecture along the corridors.

4. Look for opportunities to create "transition points" where land use character changes e.g., a roundabout or entry marker where a commercial area stops and a neighborhood begins, a land use node that demarks the transistion from one neighborhood to another.

Goal V. The City should encourage the construction of affordable housing

throughout the community.

Strategies

1. The City should provide administrative density bonuses for affordable housing in all zoning districts subject to design standards that ensure compatibility with the neighborhood.

2. The City should provide incentives for the inclusion of affordable housing in mixed use developments along corridors.

3. The City should pursue legislation authorizing inclusionary zoning for larger residential developments. Density bonuses and development incentives, carefully tailored to encourage the local development community to accomodate inclusionary zoning provisions, should be provided as a trade-off for the inclusion of affordable housing.

4. The City should revise its standards to provide for administrative approval of density bonuses for affordable housing.

Goal VI. Where appropriate, the City should pursue statutory authority for a greater variety and range of development tools in order to actively promote development and redevelopment within the City and its ETJ.

Strategies

1. The City should pursue statutory authority for project development financing and selectively implement this development tool in neighborhoods like West End Clingman (WECAN) where significant public investment is necessary to correct deficiencies in public infrastructure pursuant to a redevelopment plan.

2. The City should pursue statutory authority for transfer of development rights in order to provide an opportunity to protect environmentally sensitive areas, scenic lands and farmland through a market-based regulatory incentive program.

3. The City should further investigate the benefits of land value taxation, and, if deemed appropriate for our local situation, pursue statutory authority for the applica-

tion of a land value taxation system for properties within the City.

4. The City should pursue statutory authority for mandatory design review for areas other than local historic districts in order to promote a Smart Growth development pattern by overcoming land use compatibility objections.

Goal VII. The City of Asheville should assure that it continues to serve as the regional commercial center for western North Carolina by providing opportunities for the location of large commercial uses within the City.

Strategies

1. The City should identify appropriate areas for the location of large commercial uses. These areas should be adequately served by public services, particularly transportation and public transit, be easy to access from the interstate highway system, and have vacant areas or areas with potential for redevelopment as regional shopping venues.

2. The City should refine its development guidelines for large retail uses to ensure that the site and building design for these uses are reflective of the natural and architectural heritage of Asheville.

Goal VIII. The City should enhance its role as western North Carolina's regional medical and education center.

Strategies

1. The City should work with Mission-St. Joseph's Health System in the implementation of the Health System's Master Facilities Strategic Plan.

2. The City should continue to work with Mission-St. Joseph's Health System and other area property owners in the development and implementation of a streetscape plan for Biltmore Avenue from I-40 to Downtown.

3. Working with Mission-St. Joseph's Health System and other property owners in the area, the City should prepare a small area plan for the area around and including the Health Center to address the need for the

location medical and medical-related land uses in this area. Development of these uses should respect the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

4. The City should coordinate with the University of North Carolina-Asheville in the implementation of the UNCA Campus Master Plan.

5. Working with UNCA and the surrounding residential neighborhoods, the City should develop plans and policies to address the needs of the campus and of the surrounding neighborhoods.

6. The City should work with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (AB Tech) to address the needs of the college as it expands.

7. Provision of improved access to AB Tech should be considered during the development of the Riverside Parkway.

Goal IX. The City should ensure that the environmental quality and natural beauty of the area is protected as tracts of undeveloped land are subdivided and/or developed for residential development by providing alternative templates for the development.

Strategies

1. Incorporate conservation/open space design standards into the City's subdivision regulations. This alternative design template should be available to all subdivisions and required for those above a certain size and/or proposing development of sensitive lands (steep slopes, unique natural features, wetlands and flood plains, etc.).

2. The City should identify sensitive areas and steep slopes that should be treated with caution during development and prepare additional regulations that promote their protection while reasonably respecting private property rights; such regulations may include transfer of development rights.

3. The City should revise its standards to permit clustering of buildings in residential developments in order to avoid steep areas, ridgetops, wetlands, and other sensitive areas.

4. Revise the City's open space standards to require the incorporation of more well-defined open space into the City's land use pattern. Provide an option for the payment of a fee-in-lieu-of providing open space in developments.

5. The City's open space standards should require the connection of open space areas where feasible and logical.

6. The City should develop a resource conservation zone that provides incentives for the protection/preservation of important natural resources during the development process.

7. The City should develop an "estate" zoning classification requiring very large lots to apply to selected areas when such a development pattern is already a part of the neighborhood or to protect critical environmental or open space areas.

Goal X. The City should assure that as land is developed or redeveloped, provision is made for access by various means of transportation.

Strategies

1. The City should revise its subdivision regulations to require pedestrian and, where feasible, vehicular connections within the subdivision and between the subdivision and adjacent property.

2. When development is proposed along an existing or future transit route, the City should require the construction of a transit stop or shelter as part of the development.

3. The City should continue to require sidewalks or other pedestrian walkways in all new development.

Goal XI. The City should work with property owners, institutions, and public and private agencies to enhance the streetscape along streets and roads in the City.

Strategies

1. The City should prepare streetscape design plans to serve as guide for development and treatment of the City's streetscapes. Plans should be done for the City's strategic areas,

such as Downtown, the river district, historic districts, and urban and neighborhood corridors. The streetscape plans should work to beautify these areas, reduce the environmental impacts of development, encourage pedestrian activity, and uniquely identify these areas. The streetscape design plan should provide for the following:

- An inventory of street trees.
- A schedule and policy for replacement of street trees.
- Streetscape design templates for different areas/categories of streets.
- Appropriate setbacks and building heights for different areas/categories of streets.

2. The City should reevaluate how the public right-of-way is used. As part of this re-evaluation, the following should be considered:

- Revision of the City's engineering standards to require street trees between the street and the sidewalk.
- Permitting on-street parking on most streets.
- Eliminating private use of the public right-of-way unless approved through a process that evaluates the public costs and benefits of such use.

3. Preserve and reuse historic materials in public works projects.

4. As new development is proposed, encourage/provide incentives for developers to incorporate streetscape terminating vistas (public art, buildings) as part of their developments.

5. The City should work with businesses, residents, and community organizations to develop a sense of community pride and support of efforts to control litter.

6. The City should work with NCDOT to identify gateway areas and develop a streetscape/landscape plan, including signage, for each gateway that emphasizes each area as an important entrance to the City.

7. The City should work with local artists and community organizations to incorporate public art throughout the City of Asheville.

8. The City should work with utility companies to bury overhead utility lines as funding becomes available.

9. The Planning and Development Department staff should continue to work with the City's Urban Forester on better selection, placement, and care of street trees.

10. The City should develop an ordinance requiring tree pruning to be done according to accepted professional standards and practices.

Goal XII. The City should assure that new development and redevelopment is of high quality, complementing and adding to the character of the City of Asheville.

Strategies

1. Revise standards to require connectivity between parcels and development projects. Connectivity should include vehicular connections, frontage or service roads, alleys, and/or pedestrian connections.

2. Establish standards for building orientation through the development of building templates that address build-to lines and site relationships.

3. Develop design templates for structures that promote contextual design.

4. Through revision of development standards, the City should eliminate the opportunity for suburban development in urban settings.

5. The City should identify areas for development focus, identifying and establishing standards for the type of development appropriate for the areas.

6. The City should develop design standards for multi-family structures and non-residential uses in single family areas.

7. The City should develop plans, programs, regulations and incentives for upgrading developed sites to meet new development standards.

Goal XIII. The City of Asheville should initiate discussions about the future land

use pattern outside the City's jurisdiction with the appropriate local governments and independent authorities in order to promote and implement Smart Growth development concepts in this area.

Transportation Goals and Strategies

Goal I. The design of streets and highways should be consistent with the economic goals of the City of Asheville and should be compatible with the physical character of the community.

Strategies

1. Implement the road design concepts, as described elsewhere in this plan, for all new corridors and for any significant remedial expansions and improvements to existing corridors.

2. Road design should be "user-friendly" and attractive out of respect for the area's tourist economy, including, but not limited to such items as: directional signage should be prominent and clear; interstate security fencing should use black-coated chain link and landscaping to hide the fencing; and intersection "fixes" should avoid such mandatory merge movements such as the eastbound merge onto Tunnel Road from I-240.

3. Interstate roads should incorporate local construction materials and native landscaping into new corridors and any significant expansions to existing corridors; examples include: stone-faced overpasses; median landscaping; and landscaping of both sides of noise walls.

4. Where possible and desirable, median design should offer opportunities for vertical separation of opposing lanes of travel.

5. When not precluded by physical constraints, median design should be landscaped with both trees and shrubs. Creative design measures should be undertaken to overcome routine physical constraints such as median width limitations; a good example of such creative design is the median in the I-240 "cut" through Beaucatcher Mountain that creates an elevated landscaped median using a Jersey barrier design.

6. New billboards should not be allowed along any road corridors and existing ones should

be amortized and removed unless adjacent to federal aid primary highways.

7. Develop a comprehensive street classification system that includes long range goals for street width, development type, building setbacks, parking placement, and areas for right-of-way reservation.

8. City staff should perform regular evaluations of the area road network in order to determine whether the City should assume maintenance of state roads.

9. Formal proposals should be presented to the NCDOT offering to accept certain state roads if specific one-time improvements are made.

10. Regularly evaluate the appropriateness of assuming maintenance of State roads taken into the City through annexation.

Goal II. Develop a system of sidewalks, greenways and bicycle facilities that will make Asheville a more walkable and more livable city.

Strategies

1. As an expansion of the traffic calming program, create a "Walkable Intersection Program" as a cooperative effort between the City of Asheville and NCDOT. Intersections will be evaluated for changes in geometric design, signalization, signs, and markings that will benefit pedestrians.

2. Create pedestrian oriented zones throughout the City in tandem with urban villages and concentrated areas of development. Link the pedestrian oriented zones through attractive and usable pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

3. Pedestrian zones and identified pedestrian-thoroughfares should be incorporated into long-range transportation plans, and addressed during roadway facilities planning.

4. Greenways and other identified bicycle facility needs should be constructed in conjunction with roadway improvement projects. The Asheville Greenway Master Plan should be referenced in the planning of transportation improvements, and greenway right-of-way purchase and construction should be integrated into the process of roadway design

and construction.

5. Adopt land use strategies and site design standards that encourage bicycling and walking.

6. Implement the Greenway Master Plan and the Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan using public funds, grant monies, and privately raised dollars by the Parks and Greenway Foundation.

Goal III. Maximize the efficiency of the existing transportation system through targeted, cost-effective improvements and programs.

Strategies

1. Upgrade the traffic signals in Asheville to create a state of the art coordinated system.

2. Pursue targeted capacity improvements at intersections to improve traffic flow, with particular emphasis on turning lanes and creative solutions such as roundabouts.

3. Access management should be an integral part of preserving traffic capacity and improving pedestrian environments. Roadway improvements should always include access management strategies. Retrofit access management programs should be developed and implemented.

4. Develop plans and marketing materials to provide a strong local Transporation Demand Management Program, including updating the long-range transporation plan to provide a Transportation Demand Management component and working with the NCDOT to secure funding for such program.

Goal IV. Increase the level of investment in the transportation system to support economic development and promote quality of life.

1. Pursue a local funding source to support a variety of transportation improvements such as roadway and intersection improvements, greenways, sidewalks, streetscape improvements, and transit enhancements. Explore funding options that will equitably distribute the burden among those who use the transportation system.

2. Aggressively pursue local, state and national funding sources to implement the Asheville Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan and the Greenways Master Plan.

Goal V. Develop a network of highways and thoroughfares that serves the long-range needs of the City of Asheville and the surrounding region.

Strategies

1. Based on the long-range street classification plan, implement a program for right-of-way protection, and right-of-way dedication as a part of the development review process.

2. As needed roadway improvements are identified, make design-related decisions early in the process.

3. Modify the Asheville subdivision regulations to require street connectivity and street stubs to adjacent property.

4. Develop a plan for the future of I-240 through downtown Asheville that will address projected traffic volumes, and provide good access to downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. This plan should create a highway corridor with minimal impact on the urban environment. The plan should look for ways to "bury" or "hide" the highway and create opportunities urban scale development and parks that will link Downtown with surrounding neighborhoods and business districts.

Goal VI. Develop a transit system that is capable of meeting the needs of all residents of and visitors to the region.

Strategies

1. Promote a land use policy that is supportive of transit service, such as Urban Villages and nodal pedestrian-oriented development.

2. Expand service hours and frequency of service.

3. Provide service to the greatest possible number of households within the service area, with emphasis on those not possessing automobiles, blind and other partially impaired people, the elderly, tourists, environmentally conscious people, and other markets as they appear.

4. Expand inter-city service to Hendersonville, Black Mountain, Weaverville, Mars Hill, and Sylva.

5. Upgrade and expand amenities at the transit center and bus stops, including system maps, information systems, benches, and shelters.

6. Develop a multimodal approach to transit service, including integration with the train station when passenger rail operations begin in Asheville.

7. Increase community knowledge of the transit system through marketing.

8. Locate and implement informal park and ride areas.

9. Expand access to outlying recreational facilities in the Asheville area.

10. Continue to upgrade and expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities and services consequential to the use of the Asheville Transit System.

Goal VII. Provide viable passenger rail service to Asheville and western North Carolina.

1. The City should continue to work with NCDOT, Norfolk-Southern Railway, and other agencies and individuals in the development of a passenger rail station at Biltmore Station.

2. Develop the passenger rail station as a multi-modal hub where people will be able to transition from inter-city travel by rail to intra-city travel by bus, by car, by bike, and on foot.

3. Construction of the rail station should accommodate a bus transfer facility.

4. Construct a pedestrian crossing over the railroad tracks to link Biltmore Station with Biltmore Village.

5. Implement roadway and traffic signal improvements on Biltmore Avenue, Thompson Street, Decatur Street, and Elliot Street as needed to accommodate traffic generated by the passenger rail station.

Goal VIII. Support improving transporta-

tion access to and from the airport.

Strategies

1. Work toward improving multimodal transportation access, primarily taxicab and mass transit transportation.

2. Examine the Airport's need for an additional interstate interchange in the Glen Bridge Road area.

Goal IX. Support the growth of the Asheville Regional Airport consistent with the general aviation and commercial air traffic demands as well as the operational needs of the Airport.

Strategies

1. Examine zoning requirements in the vicinity of the Airport to ensure that incompatible uses are prohibited; expand annexation efforts to bring more of this area under City of Asheville zoning jurisdiction as a means of implementing this strategy.

2. Support Airport Authority plans to insure adequate space for future growth.

Goal X. Develop and comprehensive set of implementation strategies intended to reduce local vehicle miles traveled in accordance with State of North Carolina transportation policies.

Strategies

1. Identify appropriate ways to measure local vehicle miles traveled in order to establish benchmarks for determining the effectiveness of any implementation strategy or strategies.

2. Develop a comprehensive approach to accomplishing Goal X through such efforts as establishing a Smart Growth development pattern, promoting multimodal transporation options, and prioritizing transportation funding priorities.

3. Work with other local governments and regional agencies to create a similar regional effort to reduce regional vehicle miles traveled in accordance with State of North Carolina transporation policies.

Air Quality & Water Quality

Yielding a return is the consideration that settles everything in this little town which seemed to you, just now, so attractive. The stranger arriving there, beguiled by the beauty of the cool, deep valleys on every side, imagines at first that the inhabitants are influenced by the idea of *beauty*; they are always talking about the beauty of their scenery: no one can deny that they make a great to-do about it; but this is because it attracts a certain number of visitors whose money goes to enrich the innkeepers, and thus, through the channel of the rate-collector, *yields a return to the town.*

(The Red and The Black; Stendhal; 1829; emphasis by the author)

Introduction

Like the residents of Stendhal's fictional town, we have come to realize that there is a strong connection between the environment and our economy. The connection between clean air and clean water, the natural mountainous beauty of our surroundings, and our tourism industry is direct and simple. We are further coming to understand that our quality of life determines the strength of the other sectors of our economy as well, since many businesses today are able to locate where they choose and they are choosing to locate where there is a high quality of life.

Just as there is an economic rationale for being good stewards of our environment, there are strong health-related reasons for protecting our air and water quality, our scenic vistas, and our forests and wildlife. Study after study indicates the importance of clean air and water to the direct health of our people; recent data indicates the clear connection between particulate matter in the air and a variety of pulmonary diseases. Stormwater and other sources of pollution can taint our drinking water and create serious health problems. One effect of stormwater, flooding, can directly jeopardize public safety.

Finally, there is what may be termed a "moral" component associated with environmental protection. Every major religion has established tenets relating to the stewardship we owe to the world in which we live. There is something about us as a human species that places an intrinsic value on our natural resources.

This section of ***Asheville City Development Plan 2025*** addresses air quality and water quality and what is necessary to protect and preserve them for our enjoyment, our health, and our economic prosperity – and for the enjoyment, health, and prosperity of future

generations. Air quality and water resources - our two most pressing environmental concerns - are discussed in considerable detail in this section.

Air Quality

Asheville has long been known for its exceptional scenic beauty with panoramic mountain vistas, abundant natural resources and varied recreational opportunities. The mountain landscape of verdant forests and clear running streams boasts one of the most diverse biotic communities in the world. People have been attracted to the area for generations, to escape the summer heat, to find relief from health problems and to enjoy the outdoors.

Asheville's exceptional quality of life has made it desirable as a unique and diverse place to live, work and play. But, the vitality of the community is directly related to the sustainable use and care of the natural resources on which the people, plants, and animals depend. Asheville is currently facing a serious air quality problem that threatens not only the resource base on which our communities rely, but also the natural heritage and quality of life that area residents hold dear. Air pollution is not only affecting human and environmental health but the regional economy as well.

Recreation and tourism are mainstays of the local economy with cultural, heritage and nature-based tourism especially important to Asheville. Spectacular mountain views and clean air are the primary reasons visitors come to the area. But, over the years, the views have increasingly become obscured. The visibility impairment typically manifests itself as a uniform haze that reduces visibility in every direction. Visibility, especially in the summer months has continued to degrade since the 1940's. Since 1948, when the first reliable records of visibility were collected from regional airports, visual range has decreased in the Southern Appalachians from a distance of 93 miles to the current average of 22 miles.

"While making small conscientious adjustments in our lives because we are disturbed by ecological degeneration of our planet, we have somehow failed to notice that the largest edifice made by human beings - the city - is radically out of sync with healthy life systems on earth, and is functioning in nearly complete disregard of its long-term sustenance. Many of us believe something is very right about our life in our cities. We seem to be a sociable species and cities serve this sociability... now if only we can make cities fit gracefully into the world we share with all other natural creations."

Sustainability and Cities, *by Newman & Kenworthy (1999) quoting Richard Register at the First International Ecocity Conference*

"There is no question that air pollution is the biggest threat to Western North Carolina tourism."

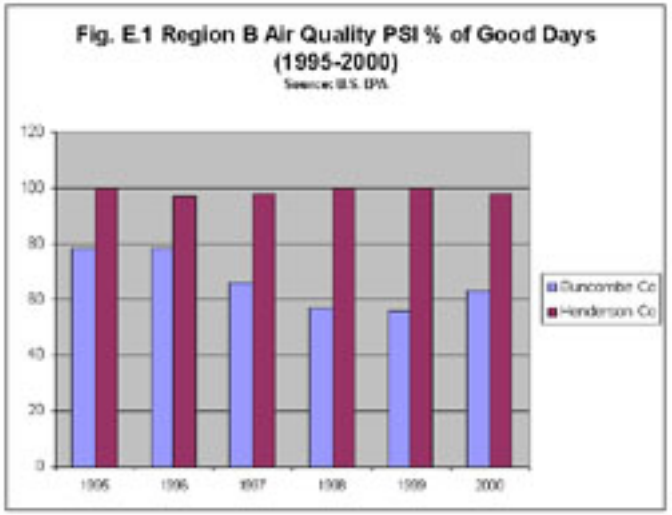
Hugh Morton

We need clean air to sustain tourism and other aspects of the economy.

Air pollution can affect public health in many ways with both short-term and long-term effects. Certain segments of the population may be affected in different ways. For example, young children and elderly people are often more susceptible to the effects of air pollution. People with health problems such as asthma, heart and lung disease may also suffer more when the air is polluted. The extent to which an individual is harmed by air pollution usually depends on a combination of factors, including the duration of exposure, and the concentration of the chemicals. We need clean air so people can breathe without triggering asthma and other cardio-respiratory related illness.

Air pollution also has a detrimental effect on mountain ecosystems. Although most people are aware that air pollution can affect their health, it is also true that these same pollutants can adversely affect the growth and reproduction of the plants and trees that beautify our City and the surrounding mountains. Pollution can alter soil chemistry and create an unhealthy environment for plants. Air pollutants impact a wide variety of vegetation, including agricultural crops, landscape plants, forest and native vegetation. Plant life may become more susceptible to pests and disease and crop yields are reduced. Acid deposition in streams can lead to elevated levels of aluminum which is harmful to fish and other organisms. We need clean air to preserve our forests, streams and lakes for public recreation and wildlife.

With the explosion of development in the Sunbelt over the past 25 years, the Southeast



has enjoyed a boom in economic prosperity. With this development and the subsequent increase in population comes an increased demand for transportation facilities, energy to operate our cars and our buildings and industry to meet our needs for more manufactured goods. Emission from cars, power plants and processing plants are contributing to poor air quality in the region and threaten to undermine a critical resource on which human health, the environment and our economy depend.

Geography and the prevailing wind pattern also play a role in the region's air quality. Prevailing winds in Asheville are predominantly from the north and northwest in both summer and winter, but southerly winds are also frequent. Many of the pollutants reaching the mountains are transported by the wind from other parts of the country. At the same time, much of the air pollutants come from local sources, especially on hazy, stagnant days. Additionally, the southeastern United States has more frequent episodes of air stagnation than most other areas of the country. The mountains surrounding Asheville tend to restrict airflow and trap pollutants near the surface. Frequent calms and stagnating high pressure cells combined with the trapping effect of surrounding mountains, limit the

Pollutant	Effects	Source
Sulphur Dioxide contributes significantly to haziness. Sulfates also are the major cause of acid rain.	Aggravates lung diseases, especially bronchitis. Constricts breathing passages in asthmatics. Causes wheezing, shortness of breath, and coughing, especially when exercising. Long term exposure to both pollutants leads to higher rates of respiratory illness.	Power plants, large industrial facilities, diesel vehicles.
Nitrogen Dioxide combines with VOC's to form ozone.	Nose and throat irritation, especially in people with asthma. Increases susceptibility to respiratory infection.	Power plants, large industrial facilities and motor vehicles.
Ozone is a secondary pollutant.	Irritate lungs and breathing passages, causing chest pain, sore throats and coughing. Increases susceptibility to respiratory infections and reduces the ability to exercise. Effects are more severe in people with asthma and other respiratory ailments. Long-term exposure leads to scarring of lung tissue and lowered lung effeciency.	Ozone at ground level is formed through the interaction of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds in the presence of sunlight.
Particulate Matter consists of solid particles of dust, smoke or ash.	Aggravate existing heart and lung diseases, changes the body's defenses against inhaled materials, and damages lung tissue. The elderly, children and those with chronic lung or heart disease are most sensitive.	Diesel cars, trucks and buses, power plants, industry and woodstoves, etc.

"Our citizens' health and livelihood and the health of our forests all depend upon clean air."

Senator John Edwards

capacity of Asheville to support a heavy burden of emissions.

During these calm periods, pollutants can remain over the mountains for several days at a time. The naturally high humidity of the area magnifies the haze generated by airborne particles. Distant views are obscured as well as the clarity of the landscape features. Colors appear washed out and much less vivid. Haze reduces visibility and is caused by the scattering of light when it encounters small particles in the air. This reduces the view of distant vistas and also the clarity and color of what we see. Sulfates in particular scatter more light, especially in humid conditions.

Scientific research and evaluation indicates that air pollution is not confined to state boundaries. Because air pollution travels across jurisdictional boundaries, any meaningful attempt to improve air quality must be addressed by a regional approach. Air quality is a shared resource, and all sectors of society bear a responsibility for improving air quality and protecting our natural resources. There are many local and regional organizations working to address the issue. Several of these are described below.

Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency

The Mission of the Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency is to protect and monitor the area's air quality to safeguard the public health, safety, and to protect the environment. The goals of this Agency will be met by ensuring both public and private sources of air pollutants in Buncombe County operate within the constraints of local, state, and federal regulations. The Agency will conduct its mission in a manner that will seek to preserve the quality of life and the economic vitality of Buncombe County.

Land of Sky - Clean Air Campaign

The Clean Air Campaign works to reduce air pollution in Asheville, and the French Broad River Valley through increased public awareness and participation. The campaign is focused on educating the public about air quality problems, and what they can do to help solve

Decade-long Air Pollution Project to Release Findings This Summer

Recommendations from a 10-year project called the Southern Appalachian Mountains Initiative, or SAMI, are expected to be released this summer. The initiative examined where pollution is coming from and its effect on ecosystems in eight Southeastern states.

"We don't know yet what SAMI will recommend, but in terms of understanding the problem, we made great progress there. The results give us a much stronger understanding of what's going on," said Tom Elmore, director of the initiative. "The answers have been a long time coming, so I think people are starting to pay attention to the results."

Preliminary findings show that pollutants from Tennessee contribute to WNC's air pollution problem, and emissions from Georgia play a role when it comes to acid rain, according to Bill Jackson, U.S. Forest Service air resource specialist. But Jackson said models show North Carolina achieves the greatest benefit statewide by decreasing emissions inside North Carolina.

"The most important thing for us here in North Carolina is that we are our own worst polluter," said Michael Shore, Southeast air quality manager for the environmental group Environmental Defense.

The study predicted future emission levels if no action is taken other than regulations already on the way including the amendments to the Clean Air Act, according to Jackson. The research found, for example, that across all eight states, sulfur dioxide emissions would drop by 23 percent by the year 2010 without additional action. However, those projections assume aging power plants will be upgraded when they reach a certain age.

The study also predicts future emission levels if more stringent controls - controls that would use the most advanced technology available like scrubbers for power plants and zero-emission cars - are put in place. The results show that sulfur dioxide emissions could be reduced by as much as 86 percent with the most stringent strategies.

"The question becomes do we want to go further than we are now?" Jackson said.

The initiative research is not without criticism. Some worry the consensus nature of the work will lead to watered- down recommendations. At least one local doctor is also concerned there's been no focus on the health effects of air pollution, which some see as a major piece of the air quality puzzle.

"They are looking at barely the tip of the iceberg as far as the health," said Dr. Clay Ballantine, who treats heart and lung diseases at Mission St. Joseph's Health System in Asheville. "We know from dozens of studies that ozone drives asthmatics into the ER in hordes."
Ballantine said the research looked only at mortality and not at health costs associated with doctor visits, hospitalizations, lost work days and other medical expenses. He believes the health-related costs of air pollution will be grossly underestimated.

"The fear is that we could get watered down recommendations. But on the flip side, the hope is that if we can get all parties to agree to something, the recommendations will come to fruition," Shore said. "The air quality problem is one that we can absolutely solve if there's public demand and political will."

Asheville Citizen Times; Julie Ball; Jan. 20, 2002

Increasingly it is becoming apparent that for this state to remain strong economically we must take steps to ensure that our environment is protected. It is amazing to me that our air quality and water quality and quantity have declined to the extent that they have in this state and, yet, many in government, business and elsewhere are blind to the damage that is being done. We have real problems that are affecting our health and the health of our families. Many believe the increased incidence of pulmonary problems in Western North Carolina are a direct result of air pollution. Our water is at risk of becoming undrinkable and we are literally going to run out of water in part of the state if we don't act now.

Thomas W. Ross; Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

these problems.

Citizens for Safe Drinking Water and Air

Citizens for Sate Drinking Water and Air (CSDWA) is an association of citizens devoted to increasing and empowering citizen involvement in learning and making decisions about water and air in Asheville, Buncombe and Henderson counties in particular, but also in the context of our state and the USA. It favors and seeks regional cooperation and advocates vigorous enforcement of air quality standards and supports the work of the WNC Air Quality Agency and Board and the Regional Water Authority.

Southern Appalachian Mountains Initiative

In 1992, the Southern Appalachian Mountains Initiative (SAMI) was formed to study these challenging issues and "recommend reasonable measures to remedy existing and prevent future adverse effects from human-induced air pollution" on the forests, streams, and vistas of the Southern Appalachians, weighing the environmental and socio economic implications of any recommendations. SAMI is a voluntary, consensus-based partnership of state and federal environmental agencies, federal land managers, industries, environmental groups, academia, and interested citizens.

Governors Summit

At the Third Annual Governors' Summit on Mountain Air Quality, Governors Michael Easley of North Carolina, Roy Barnes of Georgia and Don Sundquist of Tennessee committed to work together to improve air quality in the mountains as well as in each of our states by signing the Southern Air Principles Agreement in recognition of the need to protect and improving air quality to safeguard public health, protect our natural resources and promote the long-term economic vitality of the South.

Key Provisions of the Southern Air Principles Agreement

- Each state must do its part to protect and improve air quality.
- Regional air quality problems must be addressed through regional approaches that

address each state's unique qualities and needs.

- The southern states must continue to work together to develop and implement new strategies that will improve regional air quality, such as multi-pollutant regulatory strategies for reducing nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide and mercury and innovative transportation and energy policies.

While a significant part of our local air quality problem results from pollution occurring in other areas, there is a great deal that we can do locally to improve our air quality situation. As the newspaper article excerpted below indicates, most of our pollution problems are created by local sources.

Generally speaking, movement toward a Smart Growth development pattern that is supported by a well-connected multi-modal transportation network and a "green building" program will be a strong step in the right direction. The City is also pursuing recycling, fleet conversion to alternative fuels, intelligent transportation systems, landscaping regulations, and other activities that will have an effect on improving air quality. Additionally, we need to join City of Asheville voices with those of others in the region to lobby for appropriate state and federal legislation to address problems outside our immediate control. A more compete list of local activities to improve air quality is provided below.

Green Building

- Implement green building program.
- Develop energy-saving landscaping codes.
- Recognize projects that incorporate energy-saving or other ideas that help to improve air quality.
- Plant more trees on streets and in parking lots to help absorb pollutants and clean the air.

Smart Growth/ Land Use

- Promote Smart Growth concepts.
- Promote mixed use development.
- Promote redevelopment and infill development.
- Promote and implement a connected street pattern.
- Establish and maintain a healthy Downtown
- Increased density around urban centers.
- Increase residential density at mass transit nodes and closer to places of work and play.
- Design walkable communities to decrease car dependency.

Transportation Improvements

- Develop multi-modal transportation options (transit, bicycles and pedestrian).
- Design new roads and improve existing corridors utilizing access management principles to maximize traffic capacity and improve traffic flow.
- Construct sidewalks, greenways and bicycle paths/lanes.
- Promote multi-modal transportation opportunities.
- Design new roads and retrofit existing roads to accommodate multi-modal transportation.
- Synchronize traffic signals and implement intelligent transportation systems.
- Increase roadway connectivity.
- Provide mass transit alternatives.
- Improve mass transit operations so as to increase ridership.

Regional Efforts

- Coordinate with other agencies, other local governments, and State and federal agencies to develop and promote programs to improve air quality.
- Continue to support an independent local air quality board.
- Participate in an Early Action Compact to identify and implement regional air pollution reduction measures.

Regulatory Enhancement

- Support efforts to address the problem locally through such efforts as vehicle emissions testing.
- Lobby State and federal lawmakers for better air quality legislation and enforcement, such as the Clean Smokestacks Act.
- Continue to support local air quality enforcement efforts.

Alternative Fuels

- Convert City fleets to alternative fuels and consider all available or emerging clean air technologies for City operations.

City Committed to Use of Alternative Fuels

With its beautiful mountain vistas, unique architecture and reputation for healthful living, the community places a high priority on a clean environment. The City of Asheville and its partners are committed to leading the community in its quest for a clean environment and healthful living for its citizens and many visitors. The City believes that proactive, sensible leadership will pave the way for a new paradigm in energy and transportation. In response to the need to provide a leadership role in the community regarding responsible stewardship of the environment, the City of Asheville has joined with Mission St. Joseph's, Buncombe County, the Towns of Biltmore Forest and Woodfin, CP&L, WNC Regional Air Quality Agency, and the Chamber of Commerce to initiate an alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) program for their respective fleets.

Water Quality

Water is a valuable resource on which all life depends. Asheville has been blessed with an abundant water supply, receiving an average of 48 inches of rain per year. The availability of clean water for drinking, recreation and to support native ecosystems and industry contributes significantly to the high quality of life residents have come to expect. However, the growing population and subsequent urban development places a greater demand on our water resources, while at the same time creating more waste and pollution that, if not properly managed, could further degrade our water resources. To insure that water of adequate quantity and quality is available for future generations, careful planning and sound management are necessary.

Urban growth is both necessary and desirable, however we must ensure that the increased stormwater runoff from urban development is dealt with both in terms of quality and quantity. Water quantity refers to the volume and rate of runoff, while water quality deals with the characteristics of the water itself, regarding the health and safety for drinking, recreation and the capacity to support life. Of course, the two are often interrelated as in the case of urban stormwater management where both quantity and quality issues come into play.

> "Urbanization has the highest impact on water quality of any other land use- more that farming, timber or industry. Somehow we've got to get across to people that what they put on their lawns, drains into the watershed. We don't think of rivers and waterways as starting in our backyards, or at the end of driveways and strip malls."
>
> *Can McNutt, Basin Planner, DENR Division of Water Quality*

The management of urban watersheds has become increasingly complex in recent years. Urbanization, if not properly planned and managed can dramatically alter the natural hydrology of an area. Urban development results in an increase in the amount of land covered with impervious surfaces such as streets, parking lots, and rooftops. Increased impervious surface cover decreases the amount of rainwater that can natural infiltrate into the soil and increases the rate and volume of stormwater runoff. This leads to a number of problems that are outlined below.

- There is less opportunity for groundwater infiltration, consequently streams carry more stormwater and are more inclined to spill over their banks, causing local flooding.

- Stream flow velocities increase, which accelerates stream bank erosion.
- Peak flow is higher, which also increases the incidence of flooding.
- Base flow is lower during dry weather, due to lack of infiltration.

In the urban watershed, as the natural drainage patterns are altered due to the concentration of paved surfaces, stormwater flows increase and there is a greater potential for more frequent flooding, even during minor rainfall events. In addition to downstream flooding, the increased streamflow due to the higher and more rapid peak discharge can lead to streambank erosion, and overloading of the stormwater drainage system. Flooding is costly to the community and damaging to private property and public infrastructure. Eroding streambanks clog channels, culverts and pipes and the sediment is washed into ponds and lakes further reducing their capacity to store water.

Various pervious paving techniques have been developed in order to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff. Water-pervious materials such as crushed gravel, grass pavers and pervious concrete can be used for driveways, parking areas, walkways, and patios to minimize runoff, and increase infiltration. Pervious materials allow water to enter the ground by virtue of their porous nature or through large spaces in the material. Although, the initial cost of pervious materials is somewhat greater than asphalt, from a holistic perspective greater savings are realized due to a reduction in construction costs for traditional stormwater control mechanisms. Land reserved for stormwater ponds can be better utilized for buildings, parking and landscaping. Energy costs for air conditioning may be reduced

Pervious pavement at an Asheville medical office.

beneficial to trees as the material allows water and air to reach tree roots.

Stormwater runoff has also been identified as a leading contributor to pollution of our waterways. Increased human activity in the watershed results in a concentration of various pollutants from driveways, lawns, construction sites, roadways and parking lots. Pollutants such as sediments, nutrients, bacteria, heavy metals, pesticides, oil and grease are washed off during precipitation events and pollute streams. These pollutants also can raise the temperature of water in the stream so that it no longer is hospitable as trout habitat and m ay also be detrimental to other aquatic wildlife.

Water quality can be affected by point and non-point source pollution. Nonpoint sources have diffuse places of origin such as lawns, parking lots, roads, abandoned land fills and agricultural fields. Point sources are associated with identifiable conveyance systems such as municipal storm sewers, pipes and industrial drainage channels.

Sediment is the largest single non-point source pollutant and the primary factor in the reduced quality of surface waters. Most sediment is derived from the grading associated with the construction of roads and buildings, but can also be the result of streambed scouring due to increased velocity of steam flow. Dissolved sediment in the streams causes turbidity, which is detrimental to aquatic life. High turbidity also prevents aquatic plants from receiving the sunlight they need for survival. Sediment also lowers dissolved oxygen levels, literally choking our fish and other species. Asheville has a sediment control ordinance in place. However, especially in the mountains, the sediment control devices often do not confine all run-off to the project site even when properly installed.

Best Management Practices (BMP's) are recognized as being the "best" way to treat or eliminate pollutants in stormwater runoff. The applicable practice may vary based on site conditions and the given application. Some examples are:

- **Wet Ponds -** Wet ponds have been used to treat stormwater for years and were initially used to control the quantity of water and prevent flooding. Currently wet ponds are

"The landscape should belong to the people who see it all the time."

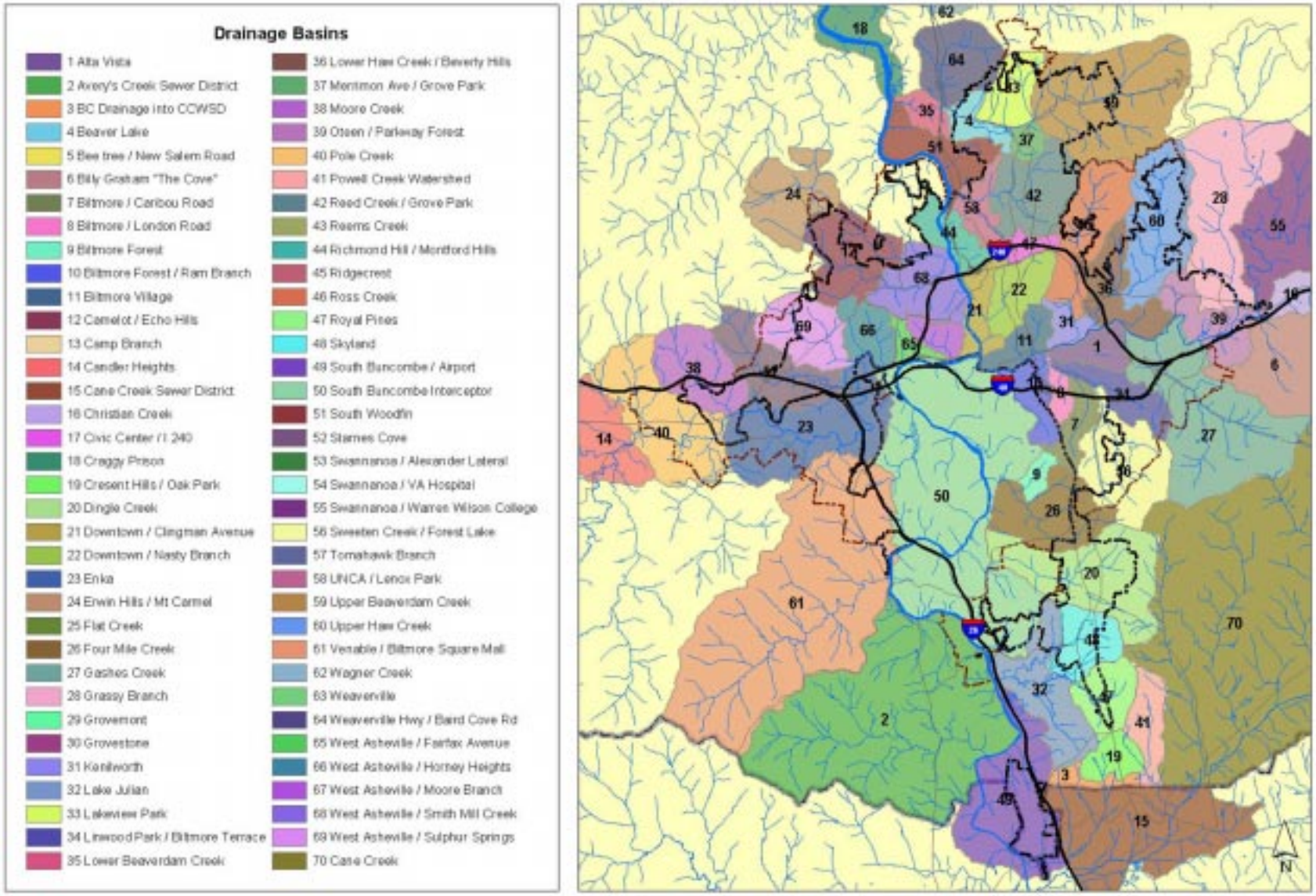
LeRoi Jones, Home, *1996*

also designed to improve the quality of stormwater runoff. The wet pond allows for sediment and polluting chemicals to settle out. These sediments can easily be removed by providing access to excavation equipment.

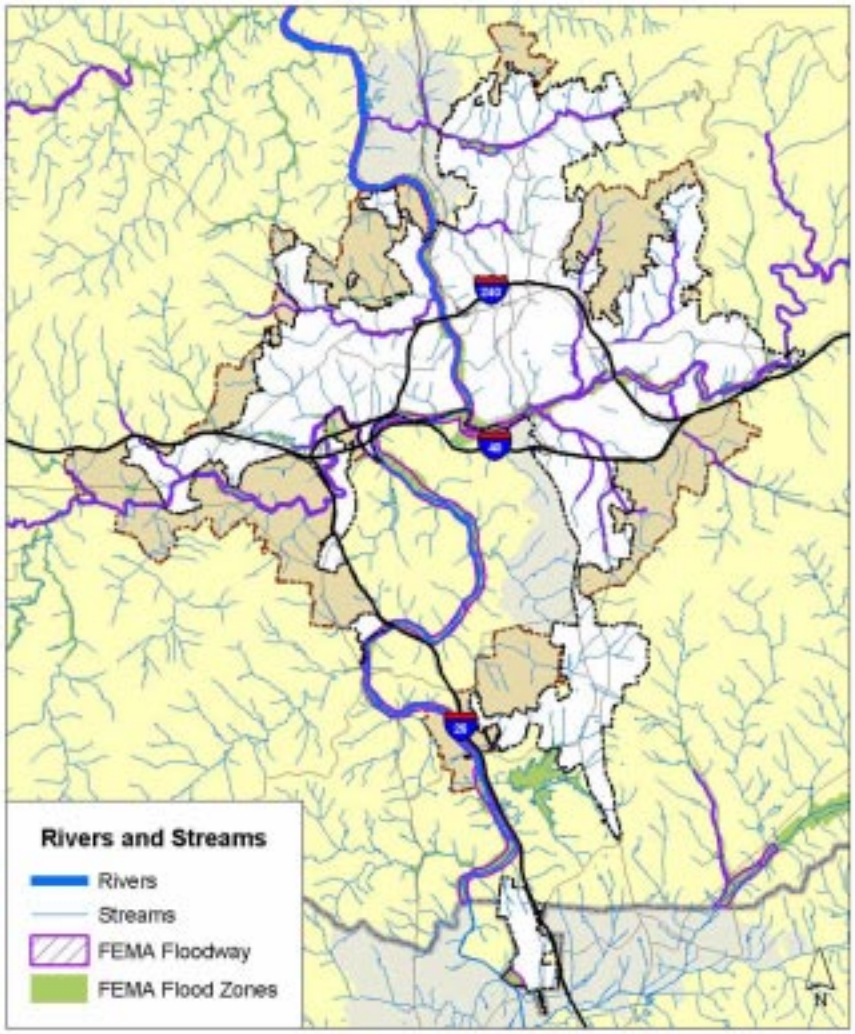
- **Stormwater Wetlands -** Constructed stormwater wetlands have become popular in urban environments. They are basically similar in design to a wet pond, only shallower so they have little capacity for flood control. Similar to the wet pond they also have an area where solids can settle out and easily be removed. The main body of the wetland consists of high and low areas, which encourage a variation in wetland vegetation. They are also designed in a sinuous fashion to maximize the flow path and increase detention time.

- **Bio-Retention and Rain Gardens -** The rain garden is becoming a popular BMP. Rain gardens detain water for a shorter length of time and thus can support a greater variety of plant material. Thus are more attractive and consequently have received a greater degree of acceptance by the community. On the surface is a layer of loamy soil, suitable for plant material, but the key to the success of a rain garden is the surrounding soil. Sandy soils work best. Some soil types may require the addition of underground drains.

- **Riparian Buffers-** Riparian buffers are vegetated strips of land along streams and other waterways, planted with native trees, shrubs and grasses. The vegetation serves to filter pollutants before they enter the waterway. Riparian areas serve vital ecological functions for aquatic life. Vegetation stabilizes stream banks and provides food for aquatic species. Stream bank vegetation also moderates water temperatures and provides large woody material for stream structure and fish habitat. Buffers can also serve as travel corridors for wildlife, reduce the incidence of flooding and provide recreational opportunities. The graphic on the next page illustrates an ideal riparian buffer zone in both an urban and rural setting. A riparian buffer is a vegetated strip of land along a stream or waterway that protects

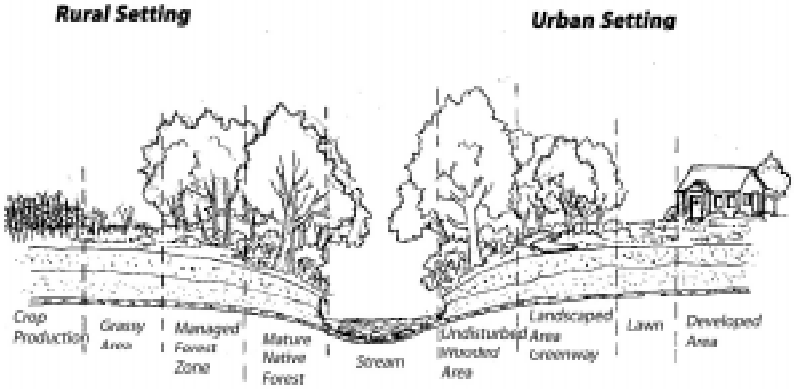

Drainage Basins
1 Alta Vista
2 Avery's Creek Sewer District
3 BC Drainage into CCWSD
4 Beaver Lake
5 Bee tree / New Salem Road
6 Billy Graham "The Cove"
7 Biltmore / Caribou Road
8 Biltmore / London Road
9 Biltmore Forest
10 Biltmore Forest / Ram Branch
11 Biltmore Village
12 Camelot / Echo Hills
13 Camp Branch
14 Candler Heights
15 Cane Creek Sewer District
16 Christian Creek
17 Civic Center / I 240
18 Craggy Prison
19 Cresent Hills / Oak Park
20 Dingle Creek
21 Downtown / Clingman Avenue
22 Downtown / Nasty Branch
23 Enka
24 Erwin Hills / Mt Carmel
25 Flat Creek
26 Four Mile Creek
27 Gashes Creek
28 Grassy Branch
29 Grovemont
30 Grovestone
31 Kenilworth
32 Lake Julian
33 Lakeview Park
34 Linwood Park / Biltmore Terrace
35 Lower Beaverdam Creek
36 Lower Haw Creek / Beverly Hills
37 Merrimon Ave / Grove Park
38 Moore Creek
39 Otsen / Parkway Forest
40 Pole Creek
41 Powell Creek Watershed
42 Reed Creek / Grove Park
43 Reems Creek
44 Richmond Hill / Montford Hills
45 Ridgecrest
46 Ross Creek
47 Royal Pines
48 Skyland
49 South Buncombe / Airport
50 South Buncombe Interceptor
51 South Woodfin
52 Starnes Cove
53 Swannanoa / Alexander Lateral
54 Swannanoa / VA Hospital
55 Swannanoa / Warren Wilson College
56 Sweeten Creek / Forest Lake
57 Tomahawk Branch
58 UNCA / Lenox Park
59 Upper Beaverdam Creek
60 Upper Haw Creek
61 Venable / Biltmore Square Mall
62 Wagner Creek
63 Weaverville
64 Weaverville Hwy / Baird Cove Rd
65 West Asheville / Fairfax Avenue
66 West Asheville / Horney Heights
67 West Asheville / Moore Branch
68 West Asheville / Smith Mill Creek
69 West Asheville / Sulphur Springs
70 Cane Creek
N

Map 16



water quality, reduces erosion, provides wildlife habitat and provides recreational opportunities such as a greenway trail. The width of the buffer varies depending on the adjacent land use and the physical geography of the surrounding area. An effective buffer is usually at least 50 feet wide with a grassy filter strip separating the forested area from the land disturbing activity. See picture below.

Watersheds, riparian areas and stream habitats have been extensively altered by human activity in the Asheville area and throughout the southeast over the past 200 years. Scientists have begun implementing various wetland mitigation and stream restoration techniques.



Wetland and stream restoration is not an exact science but is an evolving art based on scientific theories and successful experiments. Ecological restoration is an attempt to reverse unsustainable development trends. These techniques should be considered for Asheville area streams and wetlands.

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 and subsequent amendments provide the legal framework for the protection of water resources. The objective of the Act is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's waters. Under the Clean Water Act, the discharge of pollutants into waterbodies is regulated and limited through the National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES). Nonpoint source pollution is controlled through the development and implementation of Best Management Practices.

Since the passage of the Clean Water Act, the quality of our waters has improved dramatically. Despite this progress, however, there are still improvements to be made. There are still a significant number of impaired streams in the state. A leading source of this impairment is generated from polluted stormwater runoff. Phase I of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) stormwater program was promulgated in 1990 under the CWA. Phase I relies on the NPDES permit system to address stormwater from medium and large municipal storm systems.

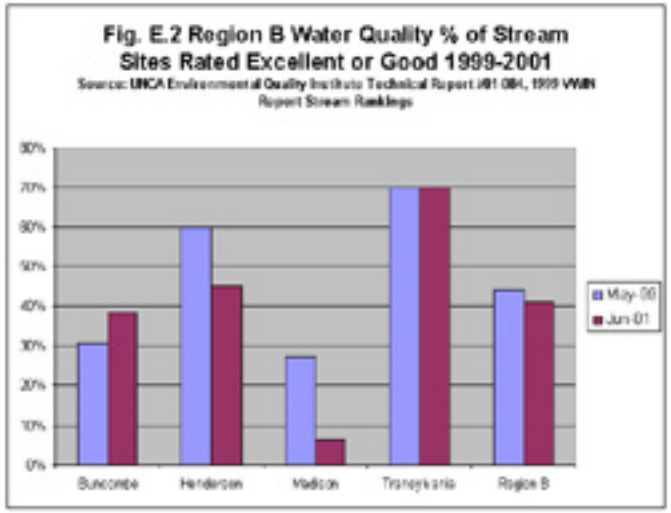
The Stormwater Phase II program is the next step in the EPA's effort to protect the nation's waterways. The Phase II program extends coverage of the NPDES stormwater rules to certain "small municipal storm sewers and takes a slightly different approach with development and implementation of the program. The City of Asheville has been designated under the Phase II program and has already taken some proactive measures towards implementation such as having an Ordinance in place that requires control for the 10 year storm event. The City Engineering Department has also mapped all outfalls utilizing a Geographic Information System.

"... Asheville is so lucky to have two rivers that run right through the middle of the City. You always think about the mountains but you don't have mountains without rivers."

Karen Cragnolin; Executive Director, RiverLink

Water Supply

According to rainfall numbers collected at the USDA Forest Service's Coweeta Hydrological Lab in Otto, Western North Carolina is in the midst of a drought that began in 1998. Many residents remember the dry weather that sparked mandatory water restrictions back in 1998. Residents couldn't water lawns or wash cars. Only essential water use was allowed. The restrictions ended when reservoirs refilled, but the area never really got out of the dry pattern. WNC remains in a long-term drought, according to area meteorologists. The drought has also caused significant damage to our urban forests, allowing them to be more susceptible to insects and disease. Not only has the drought caused crops and lawns to suffer, it has also drained small streams endangering the fish and wildlife that live there. Eventually rainfall will increase and the drought will subside, but in the meantime conservation measures should be practiced.



Our primary source of water is located in Black Mountain in eastern Buncombe County where the water flows from pure mountain springs and streams into a lake known as the North Fork Reservoir. This pristine lake is surrounded by 20,000 acres of highly protected mountain forests owned by the City of Asheville. This preserved land is nature's perfect water filter. The water is so pure that very little treatment is required. Our newest source of water is the Mills River, which was brought on-line in late 1999 and will ensure that residents of this region continue to enjoy exceptionally high quality drinking water well into the 21st century. The Mills River Watershed is very different from our watershed in the east; however, it still provides an excellent source of water. The watershed covers 47,440 acres in Henderson and Transylvania counties, with approximately 75 percent of it being in the Pisgah National Forest. It is a mixture of forest, farmland, and low-density development. This mixture of

forest and low-density development accounts for the excellent water quality in the Mills River. Although the Mills River is not pristine, it has the advantage of providing our region with a natural resource that has multiple uses, including being an invaluable drinking water source, trout fishery, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational resource.

The City of Asheville coordinates with a number of local organizations in an effort to improve water quality. Some of those programs are outlined below.

RiverLink

RiverLink is an Asheville based regional, non-profit organization that is leading the economic and environmental revitalization of the French Broad River and its tributaries as a place to live, work and play. RiverLink is interested in promoting growth in an environmentally sustainable fashion and has been involved with various water quality initiatives along the French Broad River and its tributaries.

For example, Riverlink is coordinating North Carolina's first cost share urban watershed improvement program in the Swannanoa Valley. The program is designed to make improvements to property that will enhance water quality in the watershed. The Swannanoa watershed project will also demonstrate innovative methods of urban stormwater treatment for regional and statewide reference.

Land of Sky Regional Council

The City has also been working with the Land of Sky Regional Council to address water quality concerns for the Ross Creek Watershed, most of which falls within the City of Asheville. The Regional Council prepared a restoration strategy for the watershed. The watershed was chosen because of its urban character and the fact that it has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as an impaired waterway. The watershed restoration strategy will include site-specific designs for one or more demonstration projects. Dependent on the site, the demonstration projects might illustrate stream bank stabilization and/or stormwater management techniques.

Air Quality Goals and Strategies

Goal I. Promote and implement a Smart Growth development pattern.

Goal II. Promote a well-connected multi-modal transportation network that utilizes best available technology for operational effectiveness.

Goal III. Implement an effective "green building" program.

Goal IV. Support regional efforts and state and federal regulatory actions to continually improve air quality.

Strategies

1. Coordinate with other agencies, other local governments, and State and federal agencies to develop and promote programs to improve air quality.

2. Continue to support an independent local air quality board.

3. Support efforts to address the problem locally through such efforts as vehicle emissions testing and the use of zero emissions vehicles.

4. Organize to effectively lobby State and federal lawmakers for better air quality legislation and enforcement such as the Clean Smokestacks Act.

5. Participate in an Early Action Compact to identify and implement regional air pollution measures in a manner consistent with relative City impacts on air quality and the City's ability to pay for air quality enhancements.

Goal V. Continue and enhance City programs that promote improve air quality.

Strategies

1. Work to convert City fleets to alternative fuels and consider all available or emerging clean air technologies for City operations.

2. Continue the innovative and highly effective City recycling program.

3. Work toward enhancing City landscaping regulations.

4. Implement intelligent transportation systems on City streets and state roads.

5. Consider development of a municipal renewable energy program.

Water Quality Goals and Strategies

Goal I. Continue to coordinate with and support efforts by RiverLink, Land of Sky Regional Council, and state and federal agencies to improve water quality.

Goal II. Implement stormwater management practices mandated by federal laws in an effective and timely fashion.

Goal III. Develop and use best management practices to address the effect of development on stormwater runoff and water quality.

Strategies

1. Develop and implement drainage basin level stormwater management and erosion control plans in cooperation with private property owners, regional agencies, state and federal agencies.

2. Encourage the preservation of riparian zones through reclamation of developed properties in these areas to a more natural state.

3. Encourage the use native plants to reduce non-source point pollution from lawns and minimize water usage during periods of drought.

4. Reduce impervious surfaces by minimizing parking requirements.

5. Require landscape retrofitting of existing parking lots to reduce impervious surface and stormwater runoff.

6. Encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve riparian areas.

7. Develop appropriate riparian buffer requirements, as needed, to enhance the environmental function of streams, creeks and rivers.

Economic Development

"A thing is right when it supports the stability, integrity and beauty of the community o f life."

Aldo Leopold

Introduction

Economic development has become a critical topic of concern for the City of Asheville. It was listed as one of the four priority areas of focus for the development of this comprehensive plan by the City Plan Advisory Committee. The Asheville-Buncombe VISION undertook economic development as its strategic area of focus for 2001/2002. The City retained an economic development consultant in 1999 to develop, with extensive public input, a Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan for the City.

Factors that have contributed to economic development becoming such a critical issue in our area include:

- Transition of mountain area industrial base away from "smokestack" and traditional industries.
- Loss of land suitable for industrial purposes to other uses, primarily retail and low density residential development (see Map 16, illustrating available industrial land in the City's jurisdiction, page 190).
- Moderate-to-rapid population growth that has had a consequent effect on increased demand for services, property values, and housing prices.
- A growing realization that wages in Western North Carolina are lagging behind local increases in the cost of living.
- A recognition that the City has many physical constraints to development and that much of the City's existing commercial development is underutilized (see Map 5, page 65 illustrating development constraints and underutilized properties).

At the public forums on ***City Plan 2025***, considerable emphasis was placed on the attraction of new industry (especially "high tech" industry), small business attraction and retention, attraction and retention of a highly skilled work force, and leveraging quality of life as an economic development opportunity. These comments, along with information from the Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan and the work of The Asheville-Buncombe VISION, are reflective of national and global trends in economic development.

Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan

The Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan (2000) offers significant additional insight into the realities of economic development in our City and region. This plan was developed by a citizen task force assisted by an economic development consultant (Lockwood Greene Consulting, Inc.). Four priority issues were identified by this task force and these issues formed the basic focus areas of the Strategic Plan. The four issues, broadly defined, are:

Real Estate - Addressing the shortage of industrial sites/buildings and developing a more efficient and sustainable urban land use pattern within the City.

The Development Process - Making the development review process as business-friendly as possible while addressing other community issues.

Workforce Education/Training - Preparing the labor force to compete in a knowledge-based economy.

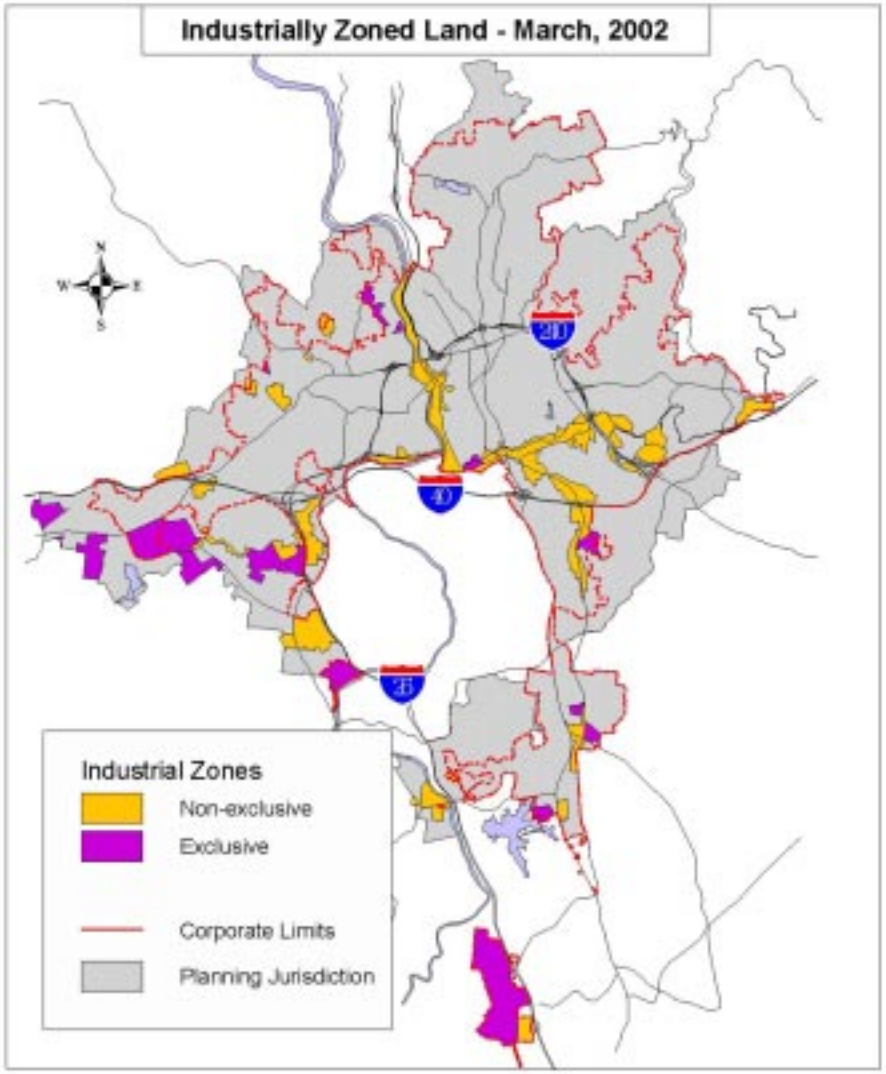
Staff Commentary – Sustainable Economic Development

Successful economic development requires a vision of the desired economic future and a commitment to achieve that vision. In today's economy, communities generally get what they ask for. If a community's vision is one of minimal development regulation and virtually no "interference" with the private sector, that community is usually rewarded with lowest common denominator development, such as mobile home parks and used car sales lots. This type of development requires minimal investment on the part of the property owner while maximizing short-term return on that investment. It represents an economic model that maximizes short-term profits for the individual at the expense of long-term public good.

Every vision has consequences. The consequences of a minimal development regulation approach are increased social costs and reduced long-term community value creation. For instance, mobile home parks limit what adjoining property owners are able to develop on their land, places the most vulnerable members of society in a home equity depreciation situation and in locations that are typically far from their employment or any social services that they may need, and requires dispersed public infrastructure to serve the development. By accepting a minimal development regulation approach, the community is also accepting lower property valuations and increased social and infrastructure costs.

The City of Asheville has a different vision. This vision incorporates a comprehensive approach that focuses on identifying and attracting "industries of the mind," balancing higher development standards with increased development intensity and flexibility, promoting affordable housing options which result in increasing homeowner equity, identifying and providing infrastructure improvements that promote a Smart Growth development pattern, concentrating on quality of life and community appearance objectives that support residents' and tourists' visions of a clean, prosperous city, promoting a diversity in population that provides economic and cultural vitality to the community, and seeking appropriate regional cooperation to maximize the potential for economic success. The City refers to this as sustainable economic development.

Map 16



Riverfront - Revitalizing this unique feature of the City's physical environment as an asset for both enhancing quality of life and attracting economic activity.

Lockwood Greene Consulting, Inc. analyzed the local industrial site situation and made the following key findings:

- Asheville and Buncombe County have the smallest total inventory and most limited mix of developed industrial sites and parks of all the metropolitan areas that the firm has examined in recent years.
- Speculative industrial buildings are needed to provide critical space to industrial prospects.
- Additional land should be acquired by either local government or by the private sector to support future development needs.

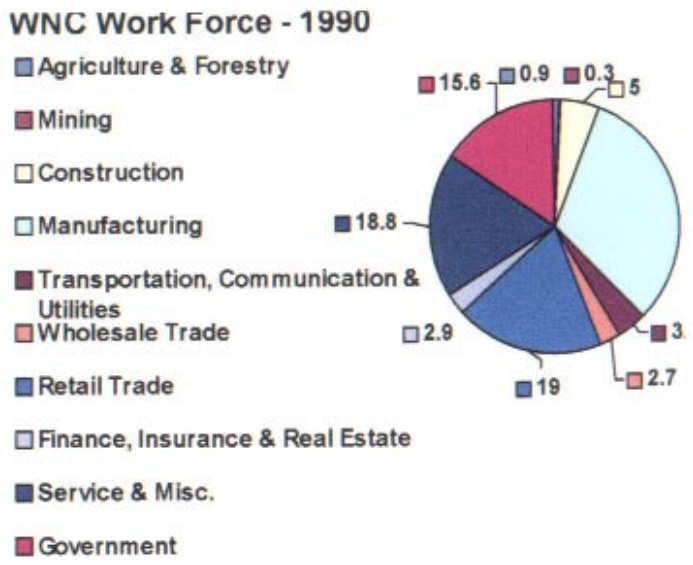
The Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan identified twelve economic development priorities. These priorities are listed below in order of priority.

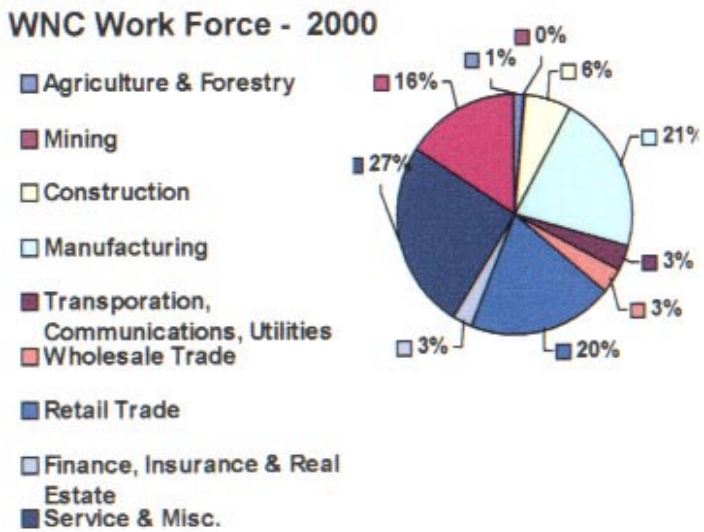
1. Shortage of diverse and affordable housing within the City, including rental units.
2. Lack of developable sites.

3. Tight labor supply with a shortage of skilled workers.
4. Lack of local agreement about the type business and industry the City should try to attract.
5. The water supply is inadequate and high cost.
6. Lack of prestigious research institutions and technical graduate programs.
7. Problems with the planning, zoning, and permitting process.
8. Lack of cooperation between City and County governments.
9. Need to revitalize the riverfront.
10. High underemployment.
11. Lack of available buildings for manufacturing and distribution.
12. City's economic development role needs to be more clearly defined.

Key Economic Development Trends by Sector

The following trend analysis by general economic sector is provided in order to put these economic development concepts and ideas into perspective.





Asheville-Buncombe VISION – Economic Development

The Asheville-Buncombe VISION is a citizen-driven nonprofit organization of community members and leaders whose goal is to make Asheville and Buncombe County a better place for work, recreation, retirement, and family life. The Asheville-Buncombe VISION initiated the Community Dialogues program in 1999 as the next step in its process of obtaining citizen input on vital community issues. The Community Dialogues are designed to initiate discussions about specific topics of importance among people of diverse backgrounds with different interests, values, and traditions. In 2001, the Community Dialogues topic was **Jobs and Wages**.

The overall VISION Benchmark in Economic Development is: Improve Buncombe County's ranking compared to North Carolina Counties for average wage per job.

"Capitalism always operates where there is the rule of law, including a court system to keep a record of contracts and enforce them. It operates even better if government creates a transporation system, a clean water supply, and other basic public goods."

Alex Marshall, How Cities Work

General Employment

- Flexibility in work hours and adaptability to new work circumstances will be critical due to trends toward contract employment, "just-in-time" inventory delivery, and Internet technology. People will change jobs frequently and work a wider range of hours. This will affect such things as child care, leisure time activities, shopping habits, and educational and job-training needs. Residential patterns will also be affected, with more people wanting to reside in immediate proximity to their workplace, thereby making above-shop residential and live-work loft apartments increasingly attractive residential options.
- ·Advances in videoconferencing and inconveniences associated with airline travel will result in less "face-to-face" meetings with clients and vendors.
- Telecommuting will become increasingly popular, as will home occupations. These changes will alter vehicular travel demands so that the "peak hour" traffic pattern associated with employment travel may become less intense than it might have given a more traditional 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM employment model.
- Technological proficiency will become increasingly essential. Persons having in-demand specialty skills in the technology field will benefit greatly due to competition for their services.
- An increasingly affluent society, particularly retirees, will demand an increased amount and variety of personal services, travel opportunities, and entertainment options, making these growth fields for employment.
- People will be able to live and work in areas that appeal to them. There will be an increasing trend to provide intrinsic job benefits to attract employees.

Job Growth

- According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projections (***Occupational Employment Projections to 2010***; Daniel E. Hecker), computer technology and health-care jobs will account for 27 of the 30 fastest growing jobs through 2010.
- According to the same report, most growth among the self-employed is projected to be

in two areas:

- Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations; and
- Computer and mathematical occupations.

- Also from the same report, occupations requiring a postsecondary vocational award or academic degree will generate 42 percent of all job growth.
- These trends indicate that Asheville's focus on high-tech and medical professions is in keeping with national trends. This reflects a continuing need to concentrate local efforts in these fields, including "lifelong learning" and "education while employed" programs.

Manufacturing

- The trend toward greater automation requires less space but a more sophisticated building, with adaptable utility and technology infrastructure within the building and a heating and cooling system that can be adjusted to different demands associated with that infrastructure.
- Automation trends will continue to reduce the need for a large employment base with particular manufacturing skills. Specialty skills will still be needed, just not in large numbers of employees.
- The trend toward "just-in-time" inventory delivery requires less storage space and a work force that can be readily contracted or expanded depending upon current orders.
- Automation, reduced storage demand, and domestic trends towards healthcare and "high tech" manufacturing will result in greater compatibility of manufacturing uses with other land uses. This will allow manufacturing to coexist with retail, office, and even residential development. Consequently, there will be an increased tendency to

The Importance of Place in Attracting Human Capital

In remarks given at the Harvard University Conference on Entrepreneurship and Public Policy on April 10 2001, Richard Florida, Director of the Software Industry Center, listed three things that he had identified that would attract "human capital" to a place:

- **Thick labor markets** — "Thick labor markets" refers to a location with a large number of desirable jobs. Highly trained and educated people entering the workforce today recognize they will work for and with many companies during their lifetime and want to locate in an area where an opportunity exists for them to change companies without changing communities.
- **Diversity** – Knowledge-based workers desire cultural and social diversity because it reflects an openness that is important for their creative outlet.
- **Quality of place** — Human capital is attracted to places with strong neighborhoods, good physical design, social and cultural energy, active entertainment and active outdoor recreation.

"To prosper in the global economy of 2015, governments will have to invest more in technology, in public education, and in broader participation in government to include increasingly influential nonstate actors. The extent to which governments around the world are doing these things today gives some indication of where they will be in 2015."

Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future with Nongovernment Experts; National Intelligence Council; December 2000

assimilate manufacturing uses into shopping centers, malls, office complexes, mixed-use developments and other higher prestige locations. Underutilized shopping centers or abandoned "big box" sites may prove to be good locations for light manufacturing uses.

- If transportation costs continue to remain constant or decline, manufacturing uses will continue to decentralize and will not be dependent upon locating near raw materials, vendors, or customers.

Office

- The trends toward outsourcing and Internet technology will result in increased demand for smaller office spaces and a greater reliance on telecommuting employees, whether they are full-time or contract employees.
- As with the manufacturing sector, a more sophisticated office building will be needed, with adaptable utility and technology infrastructure within the building and a heating and cooling system that can be adjusted to different demands associated with that infrastructure.

Retail/restaurant/entertainment

- Concentrations of employees will offer an opportunity for retailers and those involved in the entertainment service industry. Restaurants, movie theaters, and retail shops will locate near employment centers in order to cater to employees before and after the workday and during the lunch hour. Flexible work hours will extend shopping and dining opportunities. There will be a trend to convert space within large shopping centers and malls to office and light manufacturing uses in order to create a "built-in" customer base.
- Destination retail/restaurant/entertainment centers will become increasingly popular and larger in size.
- "Big box" retailers will become more diverse in order to capture a wider range of consumers and keep them shopping longer at the same location. They will become more sensitive to the aesthetic appearance of their buildings and sites for the same reason.
- Downtowns that can overcome building

obsolescence problems and that can provide a substantial amount of housing will be ideally positioned to take advantage of these trends.

Tourism

- An affluent society will travel recreationally. This will be especially true of affluent retirees who have large amounts of leisure time. People are retiring earlier in life and are expecting a more active tourism experience. The tourism industry will need to concentrate on creating and marketing "destination" travel opportunities to attract these travelers.
- Quality of the tourism "experience package" will become increasingly important - there will need to be a seamless continuum of quality associated with destination tourism. It will not be enough to provide a high-quality experience at the hotel or on the resort; the entire experience within the community must be of a consistently high quality. Communities will need to pay particular attention to aesthetic appearance and environmental quality issues in order to provide this expected level of service.
- There will be an increased tendency toward

Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan

The citizen task force that developed the Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan identified the following strengths and weaknesses of the City of Asheville:

Top strengths of the City

- Availability of adequate health care
- Level of cultural/recreational activity and facilities
- Quality of the climate and attractiveness of the physical environment
- Quality telephone service
- Public safety (law enforcement)
- Impact of the tourism industry and the City
- Availability of adequate lodging facilities and quality restaurants
- Adequacy of retail shopping
- Availability of the community college and adult continuing education
- Presence of major highways serving the City
- Downtown Asheville
- Programs for senior citizens

Top Weaknesses of the City

- Availability of housing for low income families
- Cleanliness of the community
- State and local permitting and regulation process for business
- Availability of fully served and suitable industrial sites and buildings
- Cost of housing
- Cost of water and sewer service
- Adequacy of local streets and local traffic problems
- Availability of quality jobs
- Adequacy of local environmental protection
- Adequacy of local newspaper for promotion of the City's business activity
- Level of wages and salaries paid locally

Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan

Lockwood Greene Consulting, Inc. identified the following locational advantages and disadvantages of the City of Asheville.

Locational advantages

- Quality of life
- Health-care
- Availability of community college/technical training
- Highway transportation/access
- Small-business development and entrepreneurial spirit
- Vibrant downtown
- Development of the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers
- Low labor cost
- Education/schools
- Tourism's economic impact
- Telecommunications infrastructure
- Higher education resources

Locational disadvantages

- Lack of industrial sites, office space, and cost of real estate
- Housing availability and general cost of living
- City relations with business and industry
- Lack of graduate education and university research in the sides and engineering disciplines

offering a wider variety of recreational and retail options at particular tourist sites, especially resorts, in order to keep tourists - and their dollars - "on campus."

- Family-oriented tourism has been identified as a local need.
- These trends will create an opportunity for hoteliers to partner with local craftspeople, personal service providers, restaurateurs, outfitters, and similar businesspeople to create a "destination" environment. Local government will be called upon to augment the available things for tourists to do by supporting sports venues, festivals, concerts, museums, local heritage and culture activities, and other entertainment activities.

Energy

- Absent some currently-unknown new advance in energy technologies, the world energy situation will continue to be dominated by petrochemical fuel sources with their attendant problems of supply and pollution for the foreseeable future.
- While 80 percent of the world's total oil reserves and 95 percent of the world's total natural gas reserves are still in the ground, the political instability of many oil producing states and concerns about the environmental effects of extraction technologies create concerns about the future availability and pricing of these critical energy resources.
- New and compelling information about the effects of locally produced pollution in the Asheville mountain basin also warrant caution concerning development patterns based upon continued oil-based fuel availability at low prices.

Technology

- "Fifteen years ago, few predicted the profound impact of the revolution in information technology. Looking ahead another 15 years, the world will encounter more quantum leaps in information technology (IT) and in other areas of science and technology. The continuing diffusion of information technology and new applications of biotechnology will be at the crest of the wave. IT will be the major building block for international commerce and for empowering nonstate actors. Most experts agree that the IT revolution represents the most significant global transformation since the Industrial Revolution . . .
- The integration — or fusion — of continuing revolutions in information technology, biotechnology, materials science, and nanotechnology will generate a dramatic increase in investment and technology, which will further stimulate innovation within the more advanced countries. . .
- Biotechnology will drive medical breakthroughs that will enable the wealthiest people to improve their health and increased their longevity dramatically. . .
- Breakthroughs in materials technology will generate widely available products that are multifunctional, environmentally safe, longer lasting, and easily adapted to particular consumer requirements."

Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Nongovernment Experts; National Intelligence Council; December, 2000

Existing Economic Development Incentives

Current economic development policies and incentives include local, state and federal opportunities for business and industrial assistance. In addition to those listed below, the City of Asheville offers fiscal restraint and development review streamlining as part of its standard operating practice. Businesses are encouraged to bring forward concerns or issues for City consideration as part of Asheville's commitment to a strong economic climate.

City of Asheville Programs. The City offers both an incentive grant program and an infrastructure grant program. Both programs reimburse businesses and industries a portion of the added property-tax receipts that result from their investment in the City.

There are two types of incentive grants currently offered by the City. The first is an industrial development grant that applies to large projects with a minimum investment of $1.5 million. There are four grant levels offering between 75% and 90% property tax reimbursement for up to a five-year period. The small business development grant is geared toward businesses investment of $250,000 or greater; this is a single level program that allows a 75% property tax reimbursement for up to a three-year period.

The infrastructure grant program is set up in a similar fashion as the incentive grant program, except its purpose is to provide assistance with the installation of street and utility infrastructure. It offers up to a 90% property tax reimbursement for up to a five-year period.

The City has an interdepartmental team exploring other possible opportunities for promoting economic development using City resources. Ideas being discussed and developed include:

- Utilizing the City capital improvement program as a mechanism for providing incentives for economic development activities.
- Where possible, expanding both the range of incentives and the amount of funding offered by the City for economic development.
- Pursuing user-supported funding sources to provide quality of life infrastructure, particularly room tax and prepared food and beverage tax options, for funding improvements to such major capital facilities as the Civic Center.
- Seeking public-private partnerships for the provision of infrastructure.

State and Federal Programs. The state currently offers a variety of economic development incentives through its Development Zone program. These primarily include machinery and job creation investment tax credits. In addition, historic preservation tax credits are available through both state and federal sources. More historic preservation tax credit funds have been allocated to Asheville than to all the other cities in North Carolina combined. Other economic development incentives need to be authorized by the state, including tax increment financing and transfer of development rights.

Quality of Life As An Economic Development Incentive

Cities in North Carolina are hampered by the tax structure dictated by the General Assembly. The State has relatively few incentives and programs available at either the state or local government level to promote economic development. This puts us at a competitive disadvantage relative to neighboring states which are able to offer a wider range of state and local incentives.

Fortunately, the economic development landscape is changing to make these traditional types of incentives less of a factor. Most state and local government incentives are not especially well tailored to business needs in the new economy. For the high tech, media, communications, research and development, and medical businesses and industries that make up our primary target industrial category, traditional economic development incentives are not as important as a highly skilled labor force. Skilled labor is highly mobile and is attracted to areas where there is a high quality of life. Asheville is able to offer the amenities that create a high quality of life that attracts this labor force:

- A wide variety of cultural and recreational opportunities
- A scenic location with a mild climate
- A vibrant and exciting Downtown
- A community-wide appreciation of the entrepreneurial spirit and a tolerance for cultural and lifestyle diversity

"Imagine two communities in the Rocky Mountain region in the late 1860s. One is located along the transcontinental railroad; the other is 100 miles to the south. Which community would come to dominate the region by the turn-of-the-century? Counterintuitively, the latter community did. There, aggressive entrepreneurs and community leaders orchestrated the completion of a spur linking the town to the railroad and then commenced a promotional campaign on the community's behalf. Over time, that town, Denver, flourished, while the other, Cheyenne, did not. Denver leaders did not rely on chance. Instead they mobilized public resources to pursue their vision of Denver as a major city . . . {successful} public economic development is the result of purposive political decisions. . . ."

Imagining Cityscapes: The Politics of Urban Development *by Ann Bowman and Michael Pagano; Landlines, Lincoln Institute of Public Policy; March, 1986*

"Beyond the weather, the most important factor driving the success of a city is its human capital base. Cities with skilled workers or high median incomes grew; cities with high levels of poverty shrank. This suggests city leaders who want to encourage growth need to think about whether their policies are encouraging skilled workers to live there."

City Growth and the 2000 Census: Which Places Grew and Why; *The Bookings Institution*

Economic Development Goals and Strategies

Goal I. Implement the six key goals of the Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan:

- Insure that Asheville's urban planning, zoning, and permitting processes, as created and administered by the City, facilitate sustained and positive development.
- The availability of suitable sites within the City will meet its business needs into the future.
- The City's future development will balance economic objectives, social goals, and its natural resources to the benefit of present and future generations.
- The institutions of higher education and training in the Asheville area will meet the skill needs of the businesses and industries in the community.
- The local workforce will have the basic education, life skills, and technical skills to meet the demands of Asheville workplace in the future.
- Asheville's "total" riverfront (inclusive of the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers) will be redeveloped to maximize both its full potential as a quality of life amenity as well as for commercial opportunities.

Goal II. Ensure that the comprehensive plan, building and zoning codes, local economic development incentives, capital improvement program, and other City development regulations and incentives are regularly reviewed and modified to meet the technological and social changes of the local economic development situation.

Strategies

1. Continue to use the implementation team process developed by the Sustainable Economic Development Task Force to regularly review and propose changes to key City documents.

2. The economic development director and planning and development director shall jointly prepare a report to City Council on economic development trends, indicating any necessary changes to key City docu-

ments to put the City in a better position to respond to these trends. This report shall be presented at least once every two years. Other department directors shall contribute to this report on an as- needed basis.

Goal III. Actively pursue regional, state, and federal partnerships and seek new legislation and economic development incentives that put Asheville at the forefront of business recruitment and retention.

Strategies

1. Lobby for state and federal legislation that increases the number of economic development "tools" available to the City, including tax increment financing, land value taxation, transfer of development rights, design review and other key fiscal incentives and growth management tools.

2. Partner with other local governments, regional agencies and organizations, and state and federal agencies to combine individual strengths and mitigate individual weaknesses for the betterment of Western North Carolina's business and industrial environment.

3. Lobby for state and federal legislation that increases the number of economic development "tools" available to the City, including project development financing, land value taxation, transfer of development rights, design review and other key fiscal incentives and growth management tools.

Goal IV. Insure compatibility between the local infrastructure and regulatory environment and the needs of business and industry.

Strategies

1. Complete key transportation projects on time and in a manner that supports the economic development of the community, including the I-26 Connector, the Riverside Parkway, and the Merrimon/Broadway interchange.

2. Identify and remove institutional barriers that hinder the smooth delivery of public utility services to business and industry, particularly the revision of the water agree-

ments to reflect a sound business model and the development of comprehensive and fiscally-responsible water and sewer extension policies and plans.

3. Implement a comprehensive Smart Growth development pattern, a comprehensive and effective affordable housing program, streamlined development review and inspection processes, and other growth management incentives that promote a business-supportive regulatory environment.

4. Invest in cultural and heritage events and "social infrastructure" such as the Civic Center, Bele Chere, the Urban Trail, , Goombay, YMI, First Night, Shindig on the Green, and Pack Square.

5. Preserve the scenic, historic, and environmental character of the community through such actions as sound land use planning, effective design review, strong environmental policies and programs, and effective application of tax credits and other incentives, while lobbying for regional and state reduction of key pollutants at their sources.

6. Insure that City codes and regulations adequately provide for the increased role that home occupations, arts and crafts production, and telecommuting will have on our economy.

7. Seek opportuntities to partner with major tourism destinations (e.g., Grove Arcade, Grove Park Inn, Biltmore House, N. C. Arboretum, Blue Ridge Parkway, etc.) to enhance gateways, improve visual appearance of surrounding properties, preserve historic resources, and take other similar actions intended to promote an enhanced visitor experience for these key tourist destinations.

8. Seek opprotunities to promote an enhanced family tourist experience by promoting family-oriented festivals and events, youth sports activities, family-oriented recreation and entertainment venues, and similar activities.

Goal V. Effectively market the economic development strengths of Asheville by promoting the quality of life of the Asheville area using both general and tar-

geted promotional methods in cooperation with other economic development actors.

Goal VI. Work toward increasing City-controlled funding sources for economic development incentives and promotional efforts.

Strategies

1. Utilize the City capital improvement program as a mechanism for providing incentives for economic development activities.

2. Continue existing City economic development incentives and, where possible, expand both the range of incentives and the amount of funding available for economic development.

3. Pursue user-supported funding sources to provide quality of life infrastructure; in particular, pursue the room tax and prepared food and beverage tax options for funding improvements to such major capital facilities as the Civic Center.

4. Seek out opportunities for public-private partnerships in the provision of infrastructure.

Goal VII. Explore opportunities for increasing entrepreneurship training to targeted population groups and for the targeted business categories (e.g., high tech research and production, medical research, software development, etc.).

Goal VIII. Create an inventory of property suitable for development or redevelopment for targeted industrial and commercial uses and implement a program to encourage development or conversion to these uses.

City Services

Introduction

In this section, *basic infrastructure* will be discussed. For the purposes of this section, basic infrastructure includes streets, water, sewer, solid waste collection and disposal, and recycling. City services include fire, police, public schools, and parks, recreation and office space. Infrastructure and city services provide the vehicle for growth, substantially contribute to the perceived quality of life, support the public safety and health and welfare of the community, and consume a large portion of the City budget.

The City of Asheville has numerous infrastructure challenges. In many areas, the local street network is not well-connected and continued pressure is placed on a limited number of arterial and collector roads to carry an ever-increasing volume of traffic. Deferred maintenance of streets and utilities compounds infrastructure problems and further exacerbates underfunded capital improvement programs. The Asheville area topography and climate make the installation of streets and utilities, as well as their maintenance, more difficult than in flatter areas. In addition, some infrastructure that is now seen as critical to local economic development efforts - particularly sidewalks, parks, open space, and stormwater management systems - were regarded as "luxuries" by the community, even the relatively recent past.

In order to understand and appreciate how the current situation came to be, it is necessary to examine historical information about the City's fiscal circumstances beginning with the Great Depression. In 1927, the assessed valuation of the City of Asheville was approximately $100 million. In 1933, the taxable values in the City were reduced by almost 50 percent to $51 million. At that time, the bonded debt of the City, including its proportionate share of County debt and that of the Asheville School District, was about $36 million. With the reduction in valuation, the City had bond debts amounting to over 70 percent of the total value of <u>all</u> of the properties in the City. To compare this with today, this level of debt would equal $3.2 <u>billion</u>. By contrast, the current City general fund debt (also FY 2000-2001) is $42 million and the legal cap on the debt level the City could undertake is $380 million - 8.5 times <u>less than</u> $3.2 billion.

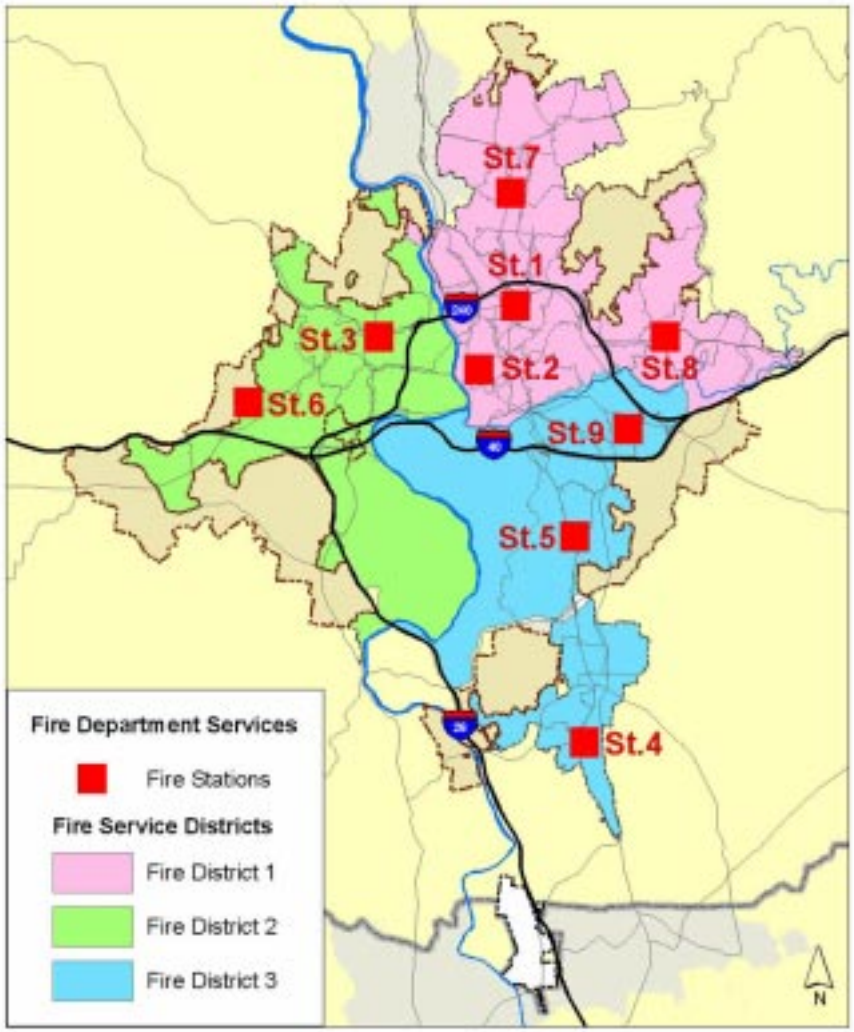
In the Depression, many communities were faced with similar financial circumstances. Most chose to default on their debts. By contrast, the City of Asheville chose to refinance their debt and it was paid off in full by the mid-1970s. This course of action placed a huge burden on the taxpayers of the community and, as a result, most government expenses, except for basic public safety, were eliminated or deferred. The deferral of basic infrastructure and capital infrastructure investments have resulted in severe strains and challenges to the City's infrastructure that can only be corrected with many years of earnest investment.

Fire

The Asheville Fire Department was created in the 1800's to respond to fires within the City of Asheville, North Carolina. The Department has evolved over the past century into the Asheville Fire and Rescue Department, providing an array of emergency and preventive services for the citizens of Asheville.

The Department provides emergency services to the corporate limits of the City of Asheville

Map 18



and also provides services through contractual agreements with the Town of Biltmore Forest and the Biltmore Estate. In addition, the Department provides hazardous materials response to Western North Carolina through contract. The Department is a participant in the Buncombe County mutual aid agreement, responding anywhere in Buncombe County when necessary.

Emergency services currently provided by the Department include: fire response, emergency medical response, hazardous materials services, technical rescue services, urban interface services, fire scene investigations and basically response to any emergency situation that occurs within the City of Asheville.

Preventive services currently provided by the Department include: periodic fire inspections, new construction code enforcement, permits, public fire and life safety education programs and injury prevention programs including child safety seat checks.

Map 18 (page 203) illustrates the three Fire and Emergency Service Districts in the City. The North, central and eastern areas of the City are recognized as District 1, the western area of the City as District 2 and the southern area of the City as District 3.

Map 18 also illustrates the location of fire stations throughout the City. Deployment of companies within these stations is as follows:

- Station 1 – Downtown- Engine Company, Ladder Company, Rescue Company
- Station 2 – South French Broad – Engine Company
- Station 3 – West Asheville – Engine Company, Ladder Company
- Station 4 – Skyland Area – Engine Company
- Station 5 – South Asheville – Engine Company, Ladder Company
- Station 6 – West Asheville – Engine Company
- Station 7 – North Asheville – Engine Company
- Station 8 – East Asheville – Engine Company, Ladder Company
- Station 9 – Oakley Area – Engine Company

Preventive services are carried out by dual role Deputy Fire Marshals who provide specialized code enforcement services, but are also trained as firefighters. The Asheville/Buncombe

County Arson Task Force operates from this division. This is a joint City/County program for determination of the origin and cause of fires and the apprehension of persons committing the crime of arson.

The Asheville Fire and Rescue Department contracts with the State of North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety to provide technician-level hazardous materials services to Western North Carolina. The State provides funding and equipment and the City provides staff to carry out the necessary functions.

The Department is rated by the North Carolina State Fire Marshal (OSFM) and the Insurance Services Office (ISO) as a class 3 fire department. The rating scale goes from class 10 (considered unprotected) to class 1 (considered the highest level of protection). The department's public protection classification rating has a direct relationship to insurance premiums paid by property owners within the area serviced by the department. Non-sprinklered, commercial properties receive discounts for the public protection classification rating at each level. One and two family homes receive discounts through class 6. On average, the savings to property owners in Asheville is approximately twice what their funding share is for the Asheville Fire and Rescue Department services. In 2002, an average homeowner saves approximately $400.00 annually because of the services of the Department.

Through OSFM and ISO standards, placement of operating fire stations and companies is accomplished. Engine companies are located with the objective of traveling no more than 1.5 miles to any area in their first due, or immediate, response area. Ladder companies are located with the objective of traveling no more than 2.5 miles to any area in their first due response area. Rescue companies are located with the objective of traveling no more than 5 miles to any area in their first due response area.

In 2002, Asheville had very good compliance with the national response and deployment standard of responding to any location for an emergency situation within 5 minutes 90% of the time. This includes turn out and actual travel time. Asheville has good compliance

with a secondary unit arriving within a total of 8 minutes 90% of the time.

Medical emergencies are definitely increasing in number. Our population overall is getting older and with advances in medical care and treatment, pre-hospital treatment services are becoming more and more important to the Asheville community. In 2002, medical emergencies comprise approximately 65% of all emergency calls. By 2010, it is estimated that medical emergencies will comprise over 75% of all emergency calls. In response to that need, the Department may need to continue to diversify and become more involved in pre-hospital care. The Department will explore adding a paramedic/firefighter on engine companies to provide a higher level of patient care. In addition, the Department plans to operate quick response vehicles (QRVs) to respond to most medical emergencies at all stations with two or more companies located there. The QRVs are specially-equipped pickup trucks that can respond more quickly and more cost efficiently than large apparatus.

Additional collaboration and partnerships with volunteer fire and rescue departments in Buncombe County will need to occur. As annexations reduce the response areas for traditionally volunteer fire departments, we will need to be receptive to new and innovative ways to work together and utilize the resources that we have to the best of our ability. A good partnership exists with the Skyland Fire Department. Similar opportunities may exist with the Reynolds, Riceville, Haw Creek, Reems Creek, Woodfin and Enka-Candler departments.

Goals and Strategies

Goal I. Maintain Departmental ISO rating at class 3 in the 2003 classification rating evaluation and work toward improving the ISO rating in future evaluations.

Goal II. Achieve national accreditation by 2005.

Goal III. Continue to add stations and equipment to maintain and improve levels of service.

Strategies

1. Add additional Ladder company at Station 4

in Skyland by July, 2003.

2. Renovations and improvements to Station 8 in East Asheville and Station 3 in West Asheville are scheduled for 2003-2005.

3. The addition of a station on the western area of the City is in the planning phase. The City has purchased land to relocate Fire Station 6 from the current location on Haywood Road to a new location on Eastview Drive, near I-40, exit 44. The station is planned to be both a fire station and a police service center. It is anticipated that this station will be in place and in service prior to 2005.

4. An additional station is also in the planning phase for the Biltmore Square Mall area.

5. Supplemental coverage is needed in the far northern area of the city known as Beaverdam. A stronger City fire and rescue presence is needed in that area and it is possible that cooperative agreements can occur which would enable the City to accomplish a stronger presence at minimal costs.

6. Systematic, periodic replacement of apparatus will continue to occur through 2005.

7. A fourth geographical district may be created in response to providing service to annexation areas.

Goal IV. Diversify services and technology in response to more specialized demand for services and to improve organizational effectiveness.

1. Increase emphasis on emergency preparation and pre incident planning, including homeland defense and preparedness for terrorism incidents.

2. Implement traffic pre-emption technologies for emergency vehicles in congested areas.

3. Become more involved in pre-hospital care through such efforts as integrating a paramedic/firefighter on engine companies and operation of quick response vehicles (QRVs).

4. Modernize Stations 6,7 and 9 to accommodate today's fire apparatus and fire officers.

5. Place a much greater emphasis on installa-

tion of automatic fire sprinkler systems in both new construction and existing construction.

Goal V. Identify opportunities to collaborate with other agencies and entities, such as the rural fire districts and private landholders like the Biltmore Estate, to enhance fire and rescue services.

Police

Since its beginning in 1849 with one captain and nine volunteers, the Asheville Police department has grown into a modern, professional force of 174 sworn and 48 non-sworn employees offering full police services to all of the citizens of the city and its many yearly visitors.

The department is organized into four functional divisions:

Administration – provides top management support, direction, and coordination for all operations and activities of the department. Specific activities include professional standards, project management, and employee services.

Investigations – responsible for investigating all serious crimes reported to police. Functions include general investigations, youth services and sexual assault investigations, support for the Metropolitan Enforcement Group, Forensic Services, DARE, School Liaison, and Victim Services.

Support – provides services to both the public and the police operating divisions. Functions include police and fire communications, property control, police records, court liaison, crime analysis, and building maintenance.

Patrol – responds to public calls for service, conducts criminal incident and traffic accident investigations, enforces laws, maintains continuous 24-hour patrol, and provides organization and leadership in community-based problem solving activities.

The police department is headquartered in the City's Municipal Building, which was built in 1925-6 and renovated in 2001. It also maintains police community resource centers in its five patrol districts, each of which is assigned its own patrol officers, a Traffic Officer, a K-9 Officer, and a Community Resources Officer.

The five patrol districts and their corresponding Resource Centers are shown in Map 19. These resource centers serve as district offices and places for police and district resident interaction.

Departmental divisions work together to help achieve the goals set forth by the Department in its Strategic Plan.

Police Goals

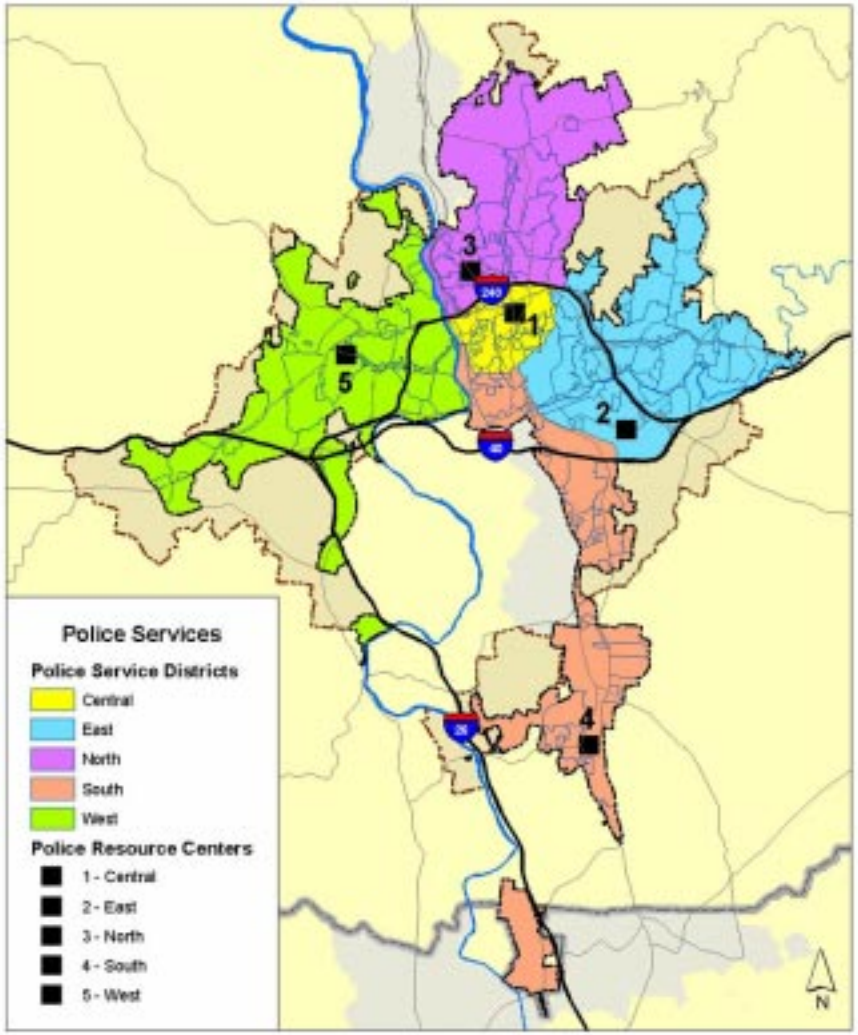
Goal I. Partner with the community to enhance the quality of life and resolve neighborhood concerns.

Goal II. Establish a working environment that encourages teamwork, empowerment, communication, and professional development.

Goal III. Utilize resources efficiently in preventing and suppressing criminal activity.

Goal IV. Foster a dynamic organization that utilizes leading-edge technology and methods in enhancing community policing.

Map 19



Goal V. Enhance external and internal communication.

Goal VI. Maintain the highest level of quality of service, integrity, and professionalism.

Goal VII. Continue to use community-oriented police practices, including assignment of officers by district, to promote effective law enforcement.

Goal VIII. Utilize CPTED practices and development review and in retrofitting existing infrastructure and neighborhoods in order to reduce the incidence of crime.

The in the coming years the department will also continue to use its crime prevention program named Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CEPTD). CEPTD is based on the belief that the way the built environment is constructed and managed can impact both the fear of crime and the actual frequency of criminal events in a given location. The five principles of CEPTD are:

1. Defensible space
2. Natural and technological surveillance
3. Lighting designed to reduce criminal activity
4. Landscape planting sensitive to issues of crime prevention
5. Physical security measures used to delay or deny access to protected space

Streets

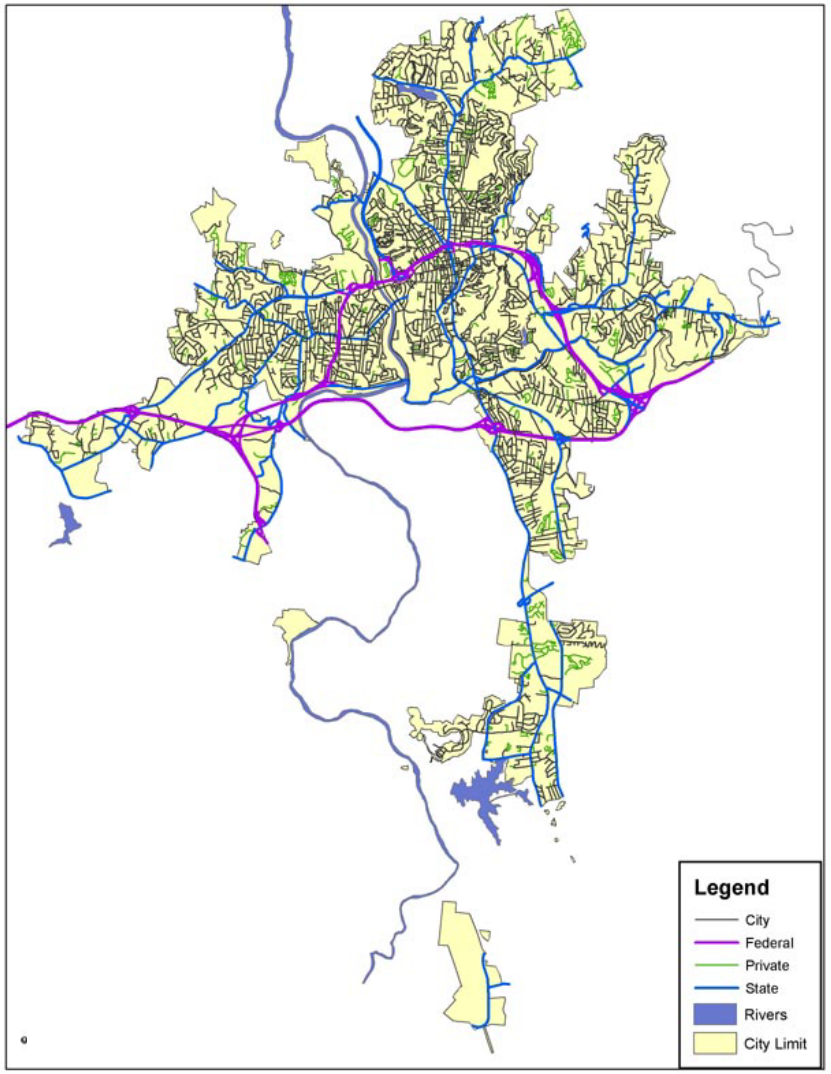
The City of Asheville owns and maintains more than 377 miles of paved public streets. To help maintain this street network, the State of North Carolina provides what is known as "Powell Bill" funding from State gasoline tax proceeds. Powell Bill funding for Asheville is based on population and the amount of street mileage under municipal maintenance. As new streets are constructed or taken into the City through annexation, City Powell Bill funding is increased consistent with the reimbursement criteria.

For Asheville, Powell Bill funding is about $2.4 million per year. In 2000, recognizing the insufficiency of these funds to cover the growing street infrastructure needs, the

Asheville City Council raised property taxes to add to the capital resurfacing funds. Approximately $4.2 million is currently earmarked for maintaining the City street system; this figure includes $500,000 for singles and markings, $1.2 million for capital resurfacing projects, and $2.5 million for the Streets Division budget.

The Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) recently surveyed the Asheville street network. The survey included a physical inspection of every City maintained street. The streets were rated on a scale ranging from 1-100 with 1 being the lowest rated with the poorest conditions and 100 being the best with the highest rating. The study found that the average rating for City maintained streets was 74. The ITRE has conducted similar studies in North Carolina cities and found that their average rating was 85. Based on this finding, the City of Asheville has relatively poor pavement conditions. The study also determined that the cause of the low average rating was the result of long-term deferred maintenance. The new funds allocated under the year 2000 City property tax increase represent an effort to allow maintenance to catch up with the need. Street

Map 20



maintenance occurs under a priority needs schedule developed by the City's Public Works Department.

The State of North Carolina owns and maintains approximately 90 miles of public streets within the City limits. These streets are primarily arterial roads and include the interstate system and major roads like Patton Avenues and Smoky Park Highway in West Asheville, Hendersonville and Sweeten Creek Roads in South Asheville, Merrimon and Broadway Avenues in North Asheville, and Tunnel and New Haw Creek Roads in East Asheville. Some of the minor State streets within the City are occasionally moved from the State system to the City system as their function changes from regional transportation to more local transportation. Annexed areas are also evaluated as to whether streets should be maintained by the City.

Buncombe County, like other North Carolina counties, does not own or maintain any public streets or roads.

Map 20 (page 213) illustrates the City and State road system in Asheville and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Streets Goals and Strategies

The following goals and strategies are established with regard to the City's street infrastructure.

Goal I. Maintain a level of local spending on street and road maintenance that will ensure that infrastructure is maintained at the state average for pavement condition rating.

Goal II. Continue to encourage the provision of public streets to serve new development.

Strategies

1. Continue to require that street construction within the City limits be to public street standards in order to ensure long service life.

2. Evaluate non-residential development proposals to determine if public streets should be required in within the developments in order to improve interconnection

of public street system and to more effectively serve the projects.

Goal III. City staff will work with the NCDOT to evaluate the area road network within the City limits in order to determine whether the City should assume maintenance of State roads.

Solid Waste Collection and Recycling

The City of Asheville offers a full-service solid waste collection and recycling program to its residents. Commercial waste is handled by private haulers. Some 25,000 households are served by the City solid waste collection and recycling program.

The City has been very aggressive in its effort to recycle a variety of paper, metals and plastic (including mixed paper), and in removing brush and leaves from the waste cycle. Nearly 50 percent of the total solid waste generated is diverted from the landfill, substantially increasing the effective life of the landfill, providing limited revenue from the recycling program, and providing citizens with mulch and compost. The City of Asheville currently has an interlocal agreement with Buncombe County and disposes of its Municipal Solid Waste at the Buncombe County Landfill. The life expectancy of the Buncombe County Landfill is estimated at 15-20 years.

The City is currently automating municipal solid waste collection. As of July 1, 2002, 50 percent of the City had been automated with plans in place complete automation by July, 2004. Automation will result in an overall savings of $250,000 + per year which includes a full automated truck replacement program.

In addition, the City is currently disposing of brush with a private entity at a cost of $90,000 + per year. Administrators are investigating possibility of a City owned facility for grinding of brush. The facility may also contain a leaf composting facility.

Total Annual Per Capita Solid Waste Collected

	Tons	Tons/capita
Municipal Solid Waste	20,130.00	0.292
Recycling	7,076.48	0.103
Brush/leaves	11,334.00	0.164
Total	**38,540.48**	**0.559**

Solid Waste Diverted From Landfill = Municipal Solid Waste + Recycling = 26%

Total Diversion = Recycling + Brush/Leaves = 47.8%

Solid Waste and Recycling Goals

Goal 1. Continue to divert a substantial amount of solid waste and organic materials from landfill disposal through creative and innovative measures.

Goal 2. Continue to use technology and other innovations to reduce the total cost of solid waste disposal and recycling.

Water Infrastructure

Potable water is provided in the Asheville area through the regional organization known as the Regional Water Authority of Asheville, Buncombe and Henderson (the Water Authority). The Water Authority has been formed over a period of years through interlocal agreements between the three local governments that make up the Authority. As part of these agreements, several private water systems were purchased and included in the system.

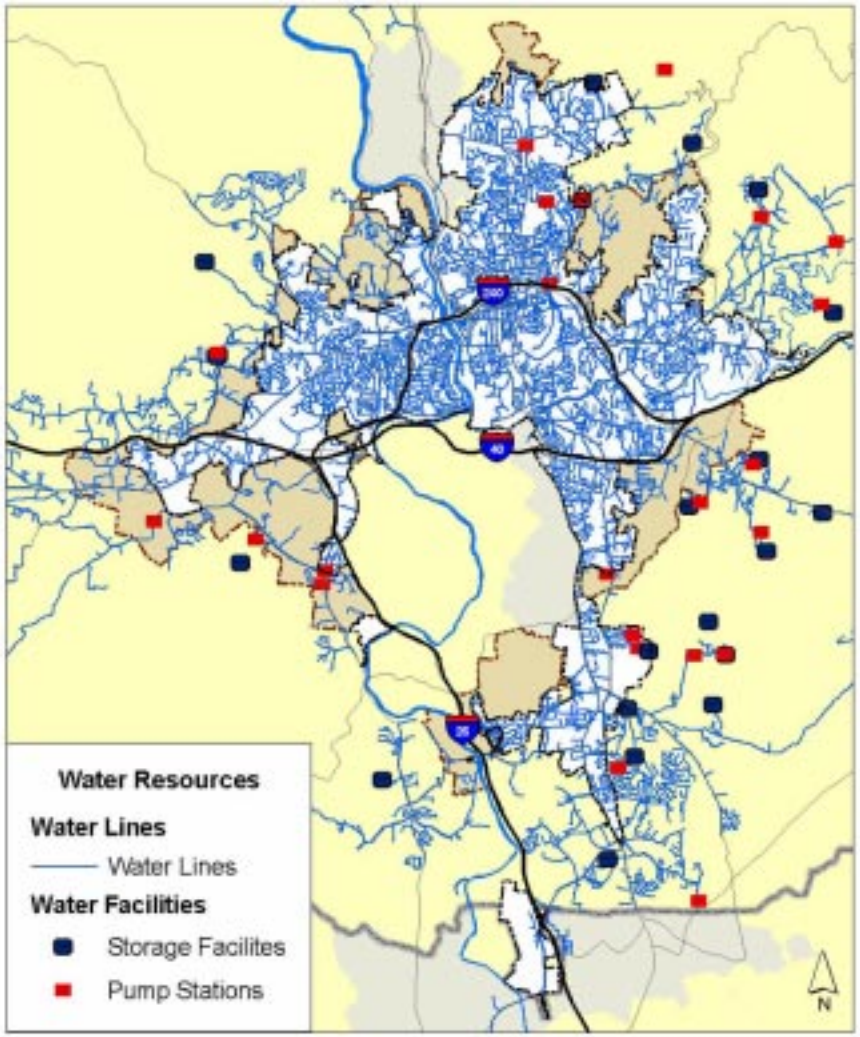
The Water Authority is responsible for establishing policies for the water system and setting billing rates and fees for water and water related services. The staff of the City of Asheville Water Resources Department, under the direction of the City Manager through a Water Resources Department Director, implements the policies and daily operations of running the water system. Water is considered the regional asset and regional water management structures should be limited only to manage assets, which are truly regional in nature. Decisions regarding local issues, such as where to expand or replace water lines within the community, should be made by the governing board of the community, not by a regional agency.

The City of Asheville operates three water treatment facilities. The North Fork Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is a 31 million gallon per day (mgd) direct filtration plant located on an impoundment of the North Fork of the French Broad River. The lake is known as Burnette Reservoir. The William DeBruhl WTP is a five mgd direct filtration plant supplied by the Bee Tree Reservoir. The William DeBruhl WTP has been out of service for 18 months while major renovations are being done to the spillway and water intake structure on Bee Tree Reservoir. The Mills

River WTP is a five mgd direct filtration plant, located at the confluence of the Mills River and the French Broad River in Henderson County, has been operational since 1999.

The City of Asheville's water distribution system contains approximately 1500 miles of mainline pipe with diameters ranging from 2 to 36 inches and supplies approximately 45,000 metered connections. The majority of the distribution lines are 6 inches in diameter. Although some water mains date as early as 1884, most of the water mains were installed from 1920 to 1940 and from 1965 to present. The water lines installed are a cross-connection of water system piping technology ranging from old cast iron pipes and plastic pipes to new ductile iron pipes. The water system pressures are much higher than is normal due to the topography of the service area. This higher water system pressure and the age of much of the infrastructure contribute to a high incident of leaks and higher maintenance cost. Pressures in the system range up to over 600 pounds with a normal operating pressure ranging from 150 to 250 pounds.

Map 21



The water distribution system is served by 21 ground storage reservoirs, ranging in capacity from 30,000 gallons to five million gallons, with a combined storage volume of 22 million gallons. These reservoirs are supplied by 30 water booster pumping stations with capacities ranging from 6 to 25,000 gallons per minute.

Key Facts and Trends - Water Supply

- The abundance of water is increasingly becoming a factor in the location decisions of individuals, businesses, and industries. Our water supply is therefore a regional asset that affects our region's growth and economic development.
- Our regional development patterns and population growth rates reflect a largely suburban, sprawl-type development pattern rather than an urban one. Additionally, some major industrial users have ceased their operation in our area. As a consequence, the Water Authority is selling less water than it did 10 years ago and it is being sold through a much more dispersed distribution pattern.
- Absent other growth management tools like zoning, the provision of water and sewer service is the key determinant of where commercial and high-density residential development will happen. In areas that do have zoning, the provision of utility services is a primary method of carrying out the zoning plans.
- Industrial development needs a dependable water supply at good rates. Industrial site selection professionals will examine all of the following categories, but are most concerned about dependability, affordability and consistent delivery:
    - Water rates and rate structure
    - Water availability, both current and long-term
    - Water quality and treatment system capabilities
    - Customer service capabilities
    - System age and maintenance
    - Incentives that can be offered by the water system

Structural Problems

The structure of the Water Authority, while regional in nature, is not consistent with state statutory requirements for a true independent regional water authority. As a result, some of the benefits that accrue to regional water authorities are not available to the Water Authority, specifically the provision that exempts regional water authorities from paying for the reinstallation of water lines that need to be located as a part of NCDOT road widening projects. This non exemption from what are known as "non-betterment" costs, results in a Water Authority expense of about $1 million a year.

Water is a viable part of economic development and growth in Asheville and throughout the Asheville, Buncombe and Henderson region. Water should be used to help create development and spearhead growth. The following goals help define the Water Authority's position as a regional asset.

Map 22

Water Resources Goals

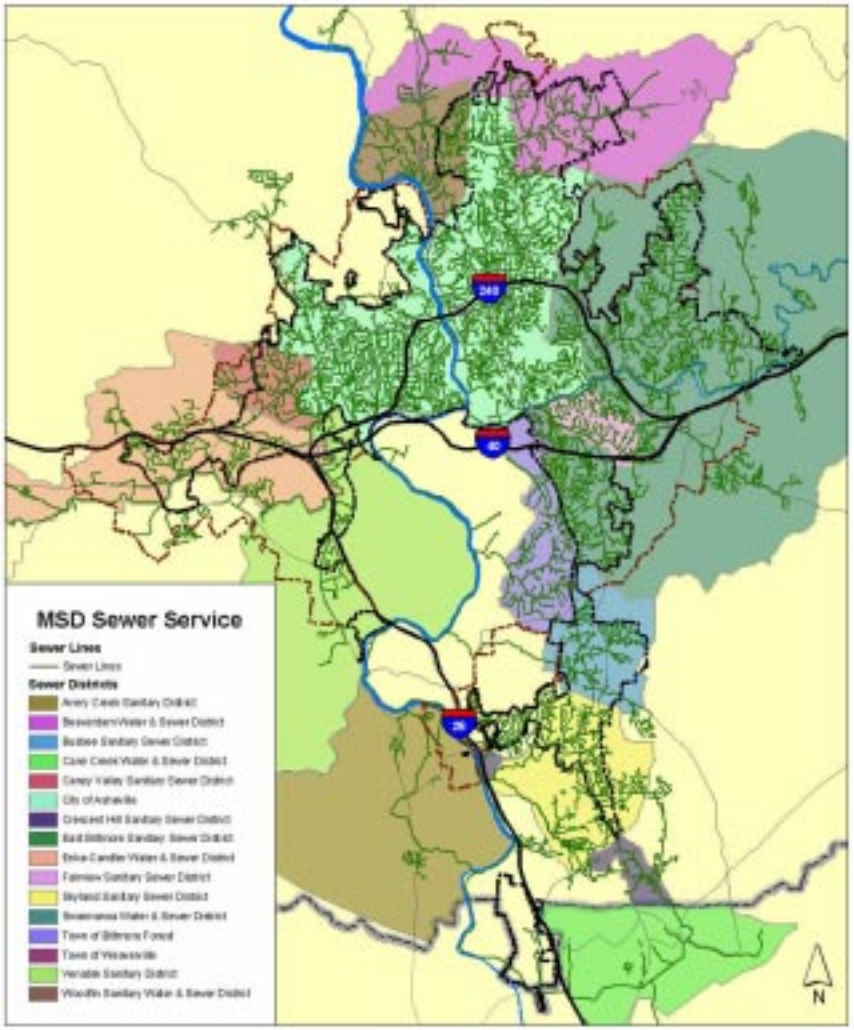
Goal I. Develop a comprehensive plan and set of policies for the extension of water lines in the Asheville area that is consistent with local land use plans for development and conservation of key natural features, along with the financial capabilities of the Water Authority.

Goal II. Continue to make preventative and remedial maintenance and repair a capital improvement priority for the Water Authority.

Goal III. Market the availability and quality of local water resources as an industrial attraction incentive.

Sewer

Sewerage in the City of Asheville, as well as 14 other political districts within Buncombe County is owned, managed and maintained by the Metropolitan Sewerage District of Buncombe County (MSD), created in 1962. The system is highly innovative, containing the largest RBC (Rotating Biological Contractors)



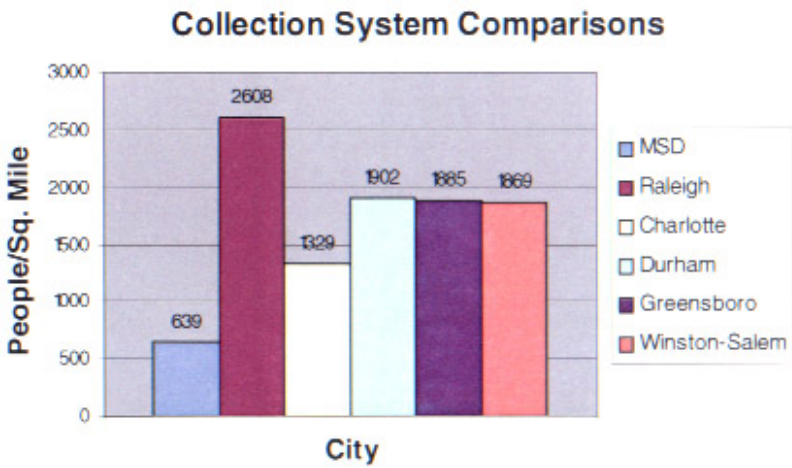
treatment facility in the world, biosolids incubation (using methane gas from a closed landfill), and hydroelectric power generation. The Wastewater System Master Plan Final Report published in December 2001 is the most current study covering all areas of wastewater management. The report is a conglomeration of information and studies designed to evaluate the current system, make recommendations and determine future goals.

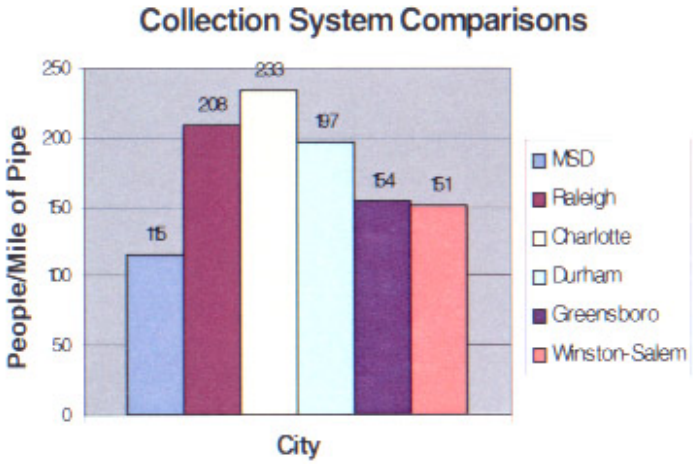
The wastewater system is extensive, consisting of collector sewers, interceptor sewers, trunk lines, pump stations, and treatment plants. The report evaluates the system components based on performance during wet and dry times as well. Other important aspects of the report include evaluations of pump station and treatment plant management, operation, and maintenance, along with recommendations for capital improvements.

Key findings of the report include:

- It is estimated that over 55 percent of the customers of MSD are served through the Asheville metropolitan area.
- As the fastest growing area of western North Carolina, the demand on MSD resources is continually growing.
- Sewage treatment capacity is currently 40 million gallons per day; demands on this capacity currently range between 17 and 22 million gallons per day.
- The plan uses a variety of factors and assumptions to predict future demands on the wastewater system and makes recommendations for capital improvements based on those projections. MSD has a six year $91 million capital improvement program based on this information.

The following graphis illustrate the spread out nature of the MSD system.





Sewer Goals

Goal I. Continue to coordinate between City authorities and MSD to provide consistent levels of service to the development community and residents.

Goal II. Guide developments to areas with adequate infrastructure to support proposed uses.

Goal III. Guide large-scale developments to areas that coincide with future infrastructure improvements.

Goal IV. Continue to make preventative and remedial maintenance and repair a capital improvement priority for MSD.

Goal V. Market the availability and quality of local sewage treatment resources as an industrial attraction incentive.

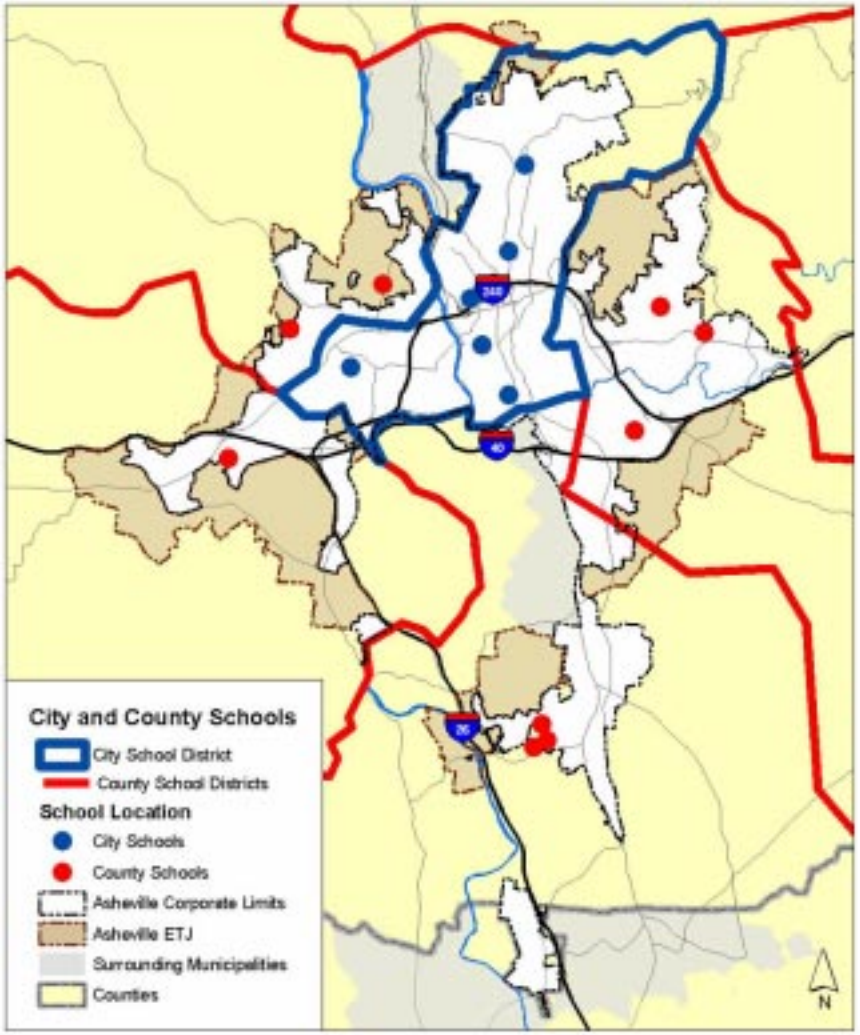
Public Schools

The City of Asheville is served by two different school systems. The Asheville City School system primarily serves the north and central areas of the City. The Buncombe County School system serves the remainder of the City. Map 23 (page 222) indicates the location of all public schools within the City and their respective school districts.

Public schools serve a variety of purposes in addition to their function of providing public education. Frequently, schools - particularly elementary schools – serve as the centers of neighborhoods, providing meeting space, recreational opportunities, and open space that the surrounding community uses.

As a consequence, effective neighborhood planning must recognize these important roles

Map 23



and attempt to facilitate the ability of schools serve as important places in the neighborhood and community. This means that efforts should be made to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to public schools, address the impact of new development on individual schools and the school systems themselves, and mitigate vehicular traffic impacts on neighborhoods due to school traffic.

Public Schools Goals and Strategies

Goal I. Facilitate the effective functioning of public schools as places of education and as important neighborhood and community centers.

1. Recognize public schools as important destinations in transportation planning, especially with regard to bicycle and pedestrian access and traffic calming programs.

2. Support additions to existing schools and the construction of new schools in areas that lend themselves to good neighborhood and community access and where the schools can serve the function of serving as neighborhood and community centers.

3. Continue to involve the school systems in the development review process.

4. Work with the school systems to develop an effective impact analysis methodology to appropriately assign fiscal costs to the entities creating the need for these costs.

"It is our task in our time and in our generation to hand down undiminished to those who come after us, as was handed down to us by those who went before, the natural wealth and beauty which is ours."

John F. Kennedy from a speech dedicating the National Wildlife Federation Building March 3, 1963 as quoted in Power Quotes *by Daniel B. Baker (1992)*

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

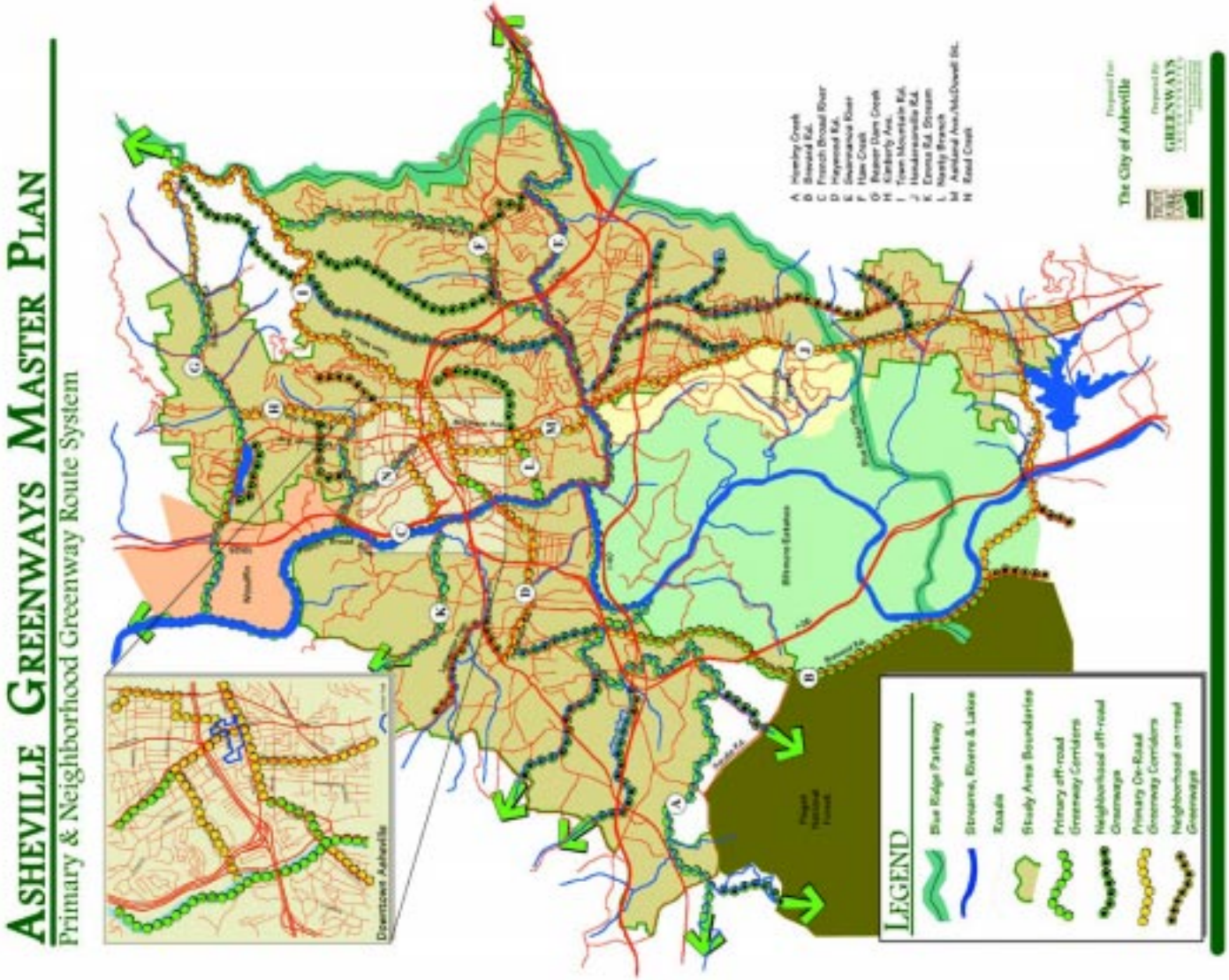
The City of Asheville has a long history of providing community parks and recreation services through the efforts of the Parks and Recreation Department. The first park areas in Asheville were built over 100 years ago. This long program of community leadership has grown in Asheville with considerable success. The Asheville Parks and Recreation Department is the first nationally accredited recreation program in the United States.

The Parks and Recreation Department has evolved to include management of 54 parks on approximately 722 acres, 11 community centers, and 5 after school sites. It serves as the lead organizing agency for 4 adult sports leagues serving 200 teams and 4 youth sports leagues serving 4,500 participants. The department manages and organizes 7 festivals and special events on behalf of the City, including Bele Chere, the largest free outdoor festival in the Southeastern US. It co-sponsors 100 community events, and partners with non-profits to develop park facilities, playgrounds and parks.

The Asheville Parks and Recreation Department has worked very hard over the past several years to develop master plans for the park system and greenway program. These plans reflect current and long-range planning, as well as growth and development trends in the recreation industry to determine the recreation needs of the community. After completion of these plans, the Parks and Recreation Department has focused its energy to begin implementing the goals of the master plans.

In the past few years alone, a regionally celebrated skateboard facility has been designed and built, as have large expansions to the French Broad River Park system and the playground at Royal Pines Park in the south area of the City. In the east area of the City, land has been acquired and a masterplan developed for the important Azalea Road Park on the former Lake Craig property. In addition greenway segments have been completed along the French Broad River and Weaver

Map 24


ASHEVILLE GREENWAYS MASTER PLAN
Primary & Neighborhood Greenway Route System
Downtown Asheville
A Hominy Creek
B Bennett Rd.
C French Broad River
D Haywood Rd.
E Swannanoa River
F Ham Creek
G Reynolds Dam Creek
H Kimberly Ave.
I Town Mountain Rd.
J Hendersonville Rd.
K Emma Rd. Stream
L Newly Branch
M Ashland Ave./McDowell St.
N Reed Creek
The City of Asheville
GREENWAYS
LEGEND
Blue Ridge Parkway
Streams, Rivers & Lakes
Roads
Study Area Boundaries
Primary off-road Greenway Corridors
Neighborhood off-road Greenways
Primary On-Road Greenway Corridors
Neighborhood on-road Greenways

The human body does not wear out with use. On the contrary, it wears down when it is not used.

A Pattern Language, *Christopher Alexander et al. 1977*

Boulevard. The Parks and Recreation Masterplan and the Greenway Masterplan are useful in identifying areas of growth for department programming and expansion of facilities. They act as a roadmap for parks and recreation improvements in the coming decades.

With such a long history of success as important assets for the Asheville community, it may seem unnecessary to examine the numerous benefits to the community from a healthy parks system and recreation programs. The park system and the programming of the recreation programs have the benefit of strengthening the community, developing the individual as a part of the community, being a partner in developing the economic vitality for the City and region, and protecting and improving the natural environment. Many of these benefits are considered to be "public" benefits even if an individual does not participate in a recreation program or visit a park. In short, a parks and recreation department that has strong recreation programs and well-designed parks is the City's partner in recruiting businesses to locate and remain in the City of Asheville. A strong parks and recreation program also benefits the development of healthy lifestyles for City residents, strengthens the community bonds and improves the well-being of the environment.

The population of Asheville will continue to grow and additional facilities will be required to serve the needs of the added residents. The Parks and Recreation Department will continue to offer quality services to the community and will cooperate with commercial recreation and not-for-profit partners to develop facilities and deliver services to the community.

There are some key trends and identified needs that must be reflected in the goals and strategies for the coming years. These include:

- With our shortage of land for all types of land uses, including parks, recreation facilities and open space, along with the diversity of our population with regard to recreational needs, it is highly important to tailor the design of parks carefully in order to maximize their benefit for the community. Techniques that

can be used to achieve this objective include: respecting the history of the area in each park; reflecting the unique qualities and context of each neighborhood in which a park is located; implementing high quality design appropriate for the community where the park is located; and insure that park design reflects the special facilities or needs of the park. Each park should not be a copy of the next park in the adjacent neighborhood.

• Develop special use facilities where possible as a means of maximizing the efficiency of the resources available for parks and recreation uses. "Special use facilities" is a broad category that covers such services as aquatic facilities, skateboard parks, or golf courses. Special use facilities are often income-producing and pay for themselves with extra revenues may help over the long term. Existing sites for improvement with special use facilities include Richmond Hill, City County Plaza, and Thomas Wolfe Plaza.

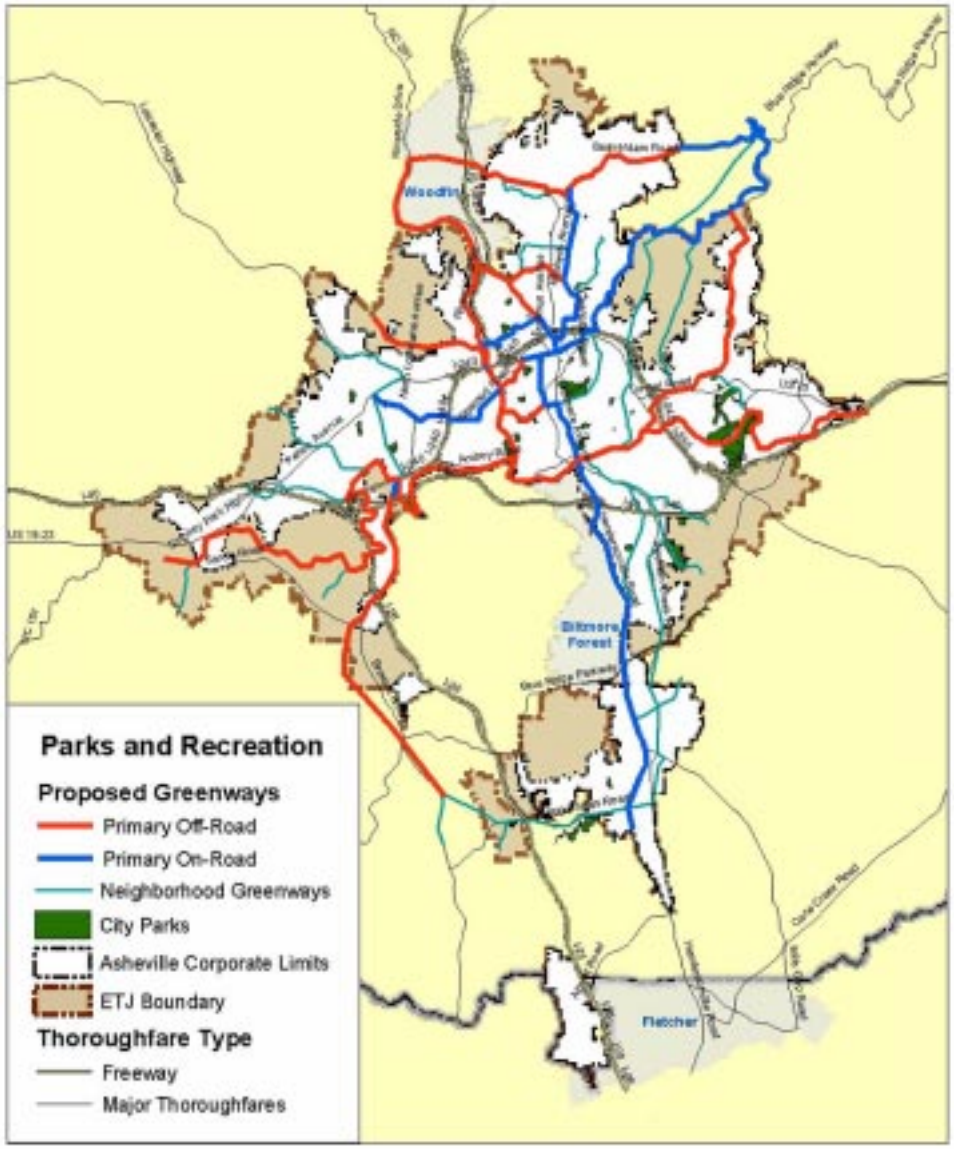
• In the future there may be the need for more adult facilities for semi professional adult sports. Already there is a woman's semi-professional softball team and football team. There are also semi-professional men's sports programs including rugby and football. A comprehensive sports facility to serve these growing segments may be needed in the future.

• There is a need for community parks to serve the North, East, and West sectors of the City. Community parks serve the majority of active facilities and sports fields. The standard of 40 to 75 acre parcels to develop community parks are needed to serve the diverse interests of the community. The Richmond Hill property will be developed as a community park to serve the North and West area of the City. The Azalea Road Park will be developed to serve the needs of the East area of the City.

• Neighborhood parks are typically scattered throughout the community on a smaller scale than community parks and still may provide a

Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan was completed in 1998 as a way for the City and community to vision together the future growth of the park system for the coming 20 years. The plan reviewed the City population and recreation needs and divided the City into 5 planning areas for the purposes of the Master Plan (North, South, East, West and Central). Recommendations were made for each of the 5 review areas of the community. Since then it has provided a road map for the Department to focus its energies to develop parks and facilities for the citizens of Asheville.

The **Asheville Greenway Master Plan** was developed with the help of a citizen steering committee and community meetings to identify in a general way a city-wide greenway trail system. The Plan which was also completed in 1998 made suggestions for the types of uses that would be appropriate for the corridors. The Master Plan also prioritizes the corridors in order of development in the coming decades.



variety of facilities. Five additional parks are needed to serve the north Asheville area (Beaverdam and Merrimon-Elkmont), a South Asheville (Dingle Creek), an east Asheville (Haw Creek Valley) and West Asheville (Starnes Cove area).

- Mini Parks are the smaller parks scattered throughout neighborhoods. They can provide a green respite and often smaller facilities. Nine park facilities are noted in the master plans: two parks in the north planning area; four in the south area of the City; one in the east area; and two parks in the west area of the City.
- The key greenway development continues to be the French Broad River Park greenway system. The greenway has already been incorporated into several parks along Amboy Road. Work will focus in developing recreation and environmental facilities at these locations and linking the off-road trail system.
- A significant piece of land has been purchased in the eastern portion of the City in the Azalea Road area that borders on the Swannanoa River. In addition to park facilities, a substantial greenway segment is planned for the property.
- The Reed Creek Greenway has been master-

planned using a community planning effort. Most of the property has been acquired for a continuous corridor from "Five Points" at Broadway and Chestnut St. north to Catawba Street. Although funds are not in place at this time, this project is an important link for the bike and pedestrian users from downtown, the Montford and Hillside-Mont Clare neighborhoods to UNCA and north Asheville.

• Following the Greenway Master Plan, several other corridors are prioritized and should receive some attention and action. These greenway projects include: Hominy Creek, Beaverdam Creek, Haywood Road, Brevard Road, Haw Creek, Kimberly Avenue, Crystal Creek (noted in the plans as 'Nasty Branch'), Hendersonville Road, Asheland Avenue/ McDowell Street, andTown Mountain Road. Since the Greenway Master Plan was developed another route has been identified: the Beaucatcher Ridge Trail.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Goals and Strategies

Goal I. Continue to cooperate with public agencies and private individuals and organizations in an effort to make the provision

Benefits of Strong Parks and Recreation Program

Benefits to the Community

Promotes City's quality-of-life-based economic development program
Defines focus and spirit of the community
Develops pride in community and nation
Reduces crime and delinquency
Connects families
Enhances ethnic and cultural understanding, harmony and tolerance
Provides constructive outlets for conflict resolution
Supports and educates youth of all ages
Offers lifelines for elderly
Builds neighborhood pride and strengthens neighborhoods
Greenways and parks can provide transportation corridors between origins and destinations such as work, schools, libraries, parks, shopping areas, and tourist attractions
Team building in the community
Promotes volunteerism and developing new skills
Opportunities for individuals to make a contribution to the community

Benefits to the Individual

Healthier longer lives
Reduces risk of stress related disease
Holistic approach to health for general well-being
Increases self esteem and self reliance
Feeling of safety and security
Builds a sense of social belonging and team spirit
Environmental awareness and understanding
Creates balance between work and play

of parks, recreation facilities and programs, and open space as effective and efficient as possible.

Strategies

1. Continue efforts for cooperation between the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department and the Buncombe County Recreation Services to avoid duplication of services and find opportunities for partnerships in serving residents.

2. Continue existing partnerships and identify new partnerships to expand facilities and programming, including: additional programming with Asheville City and Buncombe County School systems, long term leases for land with private corporations, and sponsorships of major facilities and events with local agencies and corporations (such as the recently completed Food Lion Skateboard Park and the current involvement of Mission St. Joseph Health System as a corporate sponsor of Bele Chere).

3. Continue to explore opportunities to work with non profit partners such as Quality Forward and RiverLink to provide critical facility development.

Goal II. Design and build park facilities that address the unique needs of the population they serve and that respect the heritage and character of the neighborhoods in which they are located.

Strategies

1. Plan to add more adult facilities for semi professional adult sports.

2. Look for opportunities to develop "special use facilities."

3. Research and understand the unique place-making characteristics of the neighborhoods and community as a whole and incorporate that through design.

4. Develop "pocket parks" as part of larger scale residential developments.

Goal III. Maximize the use of scarce resources for parks, recreation and open space facility development and programming.

Strategies

1. Examine existing and identify new user fees as a method of financing parks, recreation and open space facility development and programming.

2. Continue to aggressively seek grants and other philanthropic sources of revenue for parks, recreation and open space facility development and programming.

3. Consider opening large tracts of City controlled land for recreation uses, such as Bee Tree Reservoir, North Fork Reservoir, and the Mills River property.

4. Develop open space requirements that include fee-in-lieu-of provisions for new developments above a certain size.

Goal IV. Implement the various adopted parks and recreation master plans through priority capital improvement programming and by responding with flexibility and creativity when opportunities arise.

Strategies

1. Make provisions for the following new park facilities: (2) Community Parks, (6) neighborhood parks, (9) mini parks, (4) renovated existing recreation centers, (2) special use athletic/ sports park, and (1) indoor swimming facility.

2. Offer flexibility from the adopted park and greenway master plans for the location of parks and greenways to respond to market availability of land, as well as grant and partnership opportunities, and be able to identify and move to acquire and/or develop land within short planning horizons.

Goal V. Implement the adopted Greenway Master Plan through priority capital improvement programming and by responding with flexibility and creativity when opportunities arise.

Strategy

1. Have City funds available to leverage public and private grants and to be able to match donations from individuals in the community.

Benefits of a Strong Parks & Recreation Program

Benefits to the economy

A partner in recruiting new businesses to the region

A catalyst in increasing tourism by providing activities and venues for enjoyment

A crucial component of making a community a viable place to live, work and play

Enhances land and property values

Contributes to business retention

Revenue generator and support business opportunities for entrepreneurs

Self supporting programs

Reduces vandalism and crime

Encourages a healthy workforce and reduces health costs

Implementation Matrix

Two critical aspects of any comprehensive plan are how the plan will be implemented and how that implementation will be monitored. Additionally, because of the value placed on public participation in Asheville, how the public is involved in plan implementation is also of critical importance.

To facilitate successful plan implementation, the following "Implementation Matrix" has been produced. Each goal and strategy has been assigned to the appropriate City department or departments, with the lead department indicated in bold type. In addition to assignment of the goals and strategies, the matrix also provides the projected timeframe for implementation and the types of public participation that might be utilized in implementation efforts. Frequently multiple forms of public participation are indicated, but in some cases, the goal or strategy is best implemented through unilateral staff action, in which instance the public participation process is described as "Administrative."

This implementation matrix provides a good basis for both departmental work program development and simple monitoring of the success of plan implementation. It also lets the public know the proposed timeline for implementation as well as the opportunities that they will have to participate in implementing the plan.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal I. Continue to implement the goals and strategies of the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan 2000-2005 and its updates.	**Planning and Development**	**Ongoing**	**Various**
Goal II. Continue to fund the City of Asheville Affordable Housing Trust Fund and work toward the establishment of a countywide affordable housing trust fund.	**Planning and Development**	**Ongoing**	**Public/private teams to develop review within and rank projects; public hearings**
Goal III. Work toward obtaining statutory authority to implement inclusionary zoning practices in the local regulatory process and more effectively use existing zoning tools to implement measures designed to increase both the supply of affordable housing and the compatibility of such housing with existing neighborhoods and the community development pattern.	**Planning and Development Legal**	**Ongoing**	**Focus groups; public hearings**
Strategy 1. Pursue, individually or in concert with other local governments, legislative authority to implement inclusionary zoning regulatory tools at the local level.	Planning and Development Legal	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 2. Develop and implement changes to existing regulations to provide incentives for the construction of affordable housing and insure that these incentives are effective, equitable and certain.	Planning and Development	Ongoing	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 3. Insure that zoning incentives for the construction of affordable housing are balanced by careful attention to good design and neighborhood compatibility.	Planning and Development	Ongoing	Focus groups; public hearings

AFFORDABLE HOUSING			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 4. Continue to provide permit and tap fee rebates for affordable housing and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of such.	Planning and Development Building Safety Water Resources Metropolitan Sewage District	Ongoing	Public hearings
Goal IV. Insure that affordable housing programs and projects are consistent with Smart Growth and Sustainable Economic Development objectives and policies.	**Planning and Development**	**Ongoing**	**Various**
Strategy 1. Review every City-assisted affordable housing program and project for consistency with City of Asheville Smart Growth policies.	**Planning and Development**	**Ongoing**	**Administrative**
Strategy 2. Review and evaluate updates to the Consolidated Plan with regard to Smart Growth and Sustainable Economic Development objectives and policies.	**Planning and Development**	**Ongoing**	**Focus groups; public forums; public hearings**
Goal V. Address the affordable housing problem in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion by allocating available resources to address both the supply and demand sides of the affordable housing issue, as well as promoting public education about the extent of the problem.	**Planning and Development**	**Ongoing**	**Focus groups; public forums; public hearings**
Strategy 1. Advocate for and support efforts to increase earnings in the region to a level where Fair Market Rents are affordable to all working people.	Economic Development Office Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Identify and support regional efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing, including employer-provided programs.	Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Provide financial and organizational support for non-profit housing developers and financial support for affordable housing produced by for-profit developers.	Planning and Development	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings

AFFORDABLE HOUSING			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
Strategy 3. Provide financial and organizational support for non-profit housing developers and financial support for affordable housing produced by for-profit developers.	Planning and Development	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 4. Develop and implement a public education program targeted at improving public awareness of the extent of the affordable housing problem and addressing neighborhood compatibility concerns.	Planning and Development	2004; thereafter, ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; community meetings
Goal VI. **Continue to implement and support the City's Housing Code program as a means of insuring continued good maintenance and safety of the City's housing stock, including affordable housing.**	**Building Safety**	Ongoing	Administrative

DEVELOPMENT TOOLS			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Annexation, Joint Planning Area and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction			
Goal I. Continue to use the urban development tools of annexation and extraterritorial jurisdiction in providing for the orderly growth of the City.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Community and neighborhood meetings; public hearings
Strategy 1. Promote voluntary annexation of developing and developed areas by offering high quality urban services and upgrading these services as needed as the City's boundaries grow.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Continue to regularly pursue annexation of areas developed at urban density levels on the periphery of the City.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Community and neighborhood meetings; public hearings
Strategy 3. Utilize and maintain the resolution of consideration alternative as a public awareness and annexation facilitation tool.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 4. Continue to maintain and consider expanding the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction consistent with the orderly development goals of the City.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Public hearings
Strategy 5. Consider expanding the range of services offered in the extraterritorial jurisdiction to the full range of zoning, subdivision, building permitting and inspection, nuisance abatement, and economic development services offered to City residents.	**Planning and Development**	Evaluate annually	Public hearings

DEVELOPMENT TOOLS			
Green Building			
Goal I. Develop an incentive-based green building program incorporating the LEED system.	**Building Safety** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Promote public education about the benefits of green building through such activities as: * Educate architects, contractors, builders, and the general public about enviornmental impacts of buildings and how these impacts can be minimized. * Develop a program to promote green building through formal recognition of projects that are environmentally friendly. * Integrate information about green building concepts into the City's Website. * Develop a brochure outlining green building practices.	**Building Safety** Planning and Development	2004 and continuing	Various
Strategy 2. Educate City inspection and plan review staff about the benefits of green building; provide training intended to make them “ambassadors” of the green building program.	**Building Safety** Planning and Development	2004 and continuing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Eliminate disincentives for the use of green building techniques and materials in City codes and development review practices.	**Building Safety** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Focus goups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 4. Promote green building concepts through the use of Smart Growth planning practices, including infill and adaptive reuse, mixed-use development, and transportation system design that incorporates roundabouts.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Focus goups; public forums; public hearings

DEVELOPMENT TOOLS			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Historic Preservation			
Goal I. Identify, evaluate, document, and promote Asheville's prehistoric and historic resources.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Perform a comprehensive survey to locate buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects significant to the prehistory and history of Asheville and to continue to seek funding for such surveys.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Develop and reflect documented historic resource data on maps and documents maintained by the Planning and Development to promote responsiveness to patron requests, public education, and efficiency in reviewing development applications.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Establish and expand educational and public outreach programs such as staff-supervised volunteer-internship within the Historic Resources Commission, providing brochures, lectures, exhibits, etc., regarding historic resources, preservation programs and organizations, thereby promoting preservation and tourism and seek funding sources to support such programs.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Focus goups; community and neighborhood meetings; public forums
Strategy 4. Seek to establish, maintain, and strengthen preservation partnerships with municipal agencies and local institutions for implementing preservation objectives.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative

DEVELOPMENT TOOLS			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal II. Continue efforts involving the preservation, enhancement and management of change within local historic districts and properties and the continuing education towards the preservation of historic resources in the City of Asheville.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Encourage the preservation of prehistoric and historic resources by providing incentives for preservation through such programs as the Griffin Awards program, which recognize outstanding preservation efforts.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Encourage citizen awareness and participation in efforts to rehabilitate historic neighborhoods and structures and inspire interest in local historic preservation by providing technical assistance to citizens in appropriate preservation techniques.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Support the expansion of the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County and the Historic Resources Commission's celebration of the National Preservation Week, known locally as "Heritage Week".	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. Encourage the City and County school systems to further develop historic preservation programming.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 5. Promote revolving funds and other preservation techniques for continued assistance to endangered properties throughout the community.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various

DEVELOPMENT TOOLS			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal III. Encourage neighborhood livability and protect property values through the restoration and rehabilitation of existing and future historic districts consistent with the Smart Growth initiatives.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Promote the adaptive reuse of the City's valuable commercial and residential historic resources.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Encourage the establishment of a low-interest loan program through private sources for rehabilitation assistance to local property owners in designated local historic districts.	**Planning and Development**	2004-2005; ongoing	Focus groups; administrative
Strategy 3. Recognize and develop the historic component of Asheville's tourist economy through coordination with the Asheville-Buncombe Tourism Development Authority.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Open Space, Forest and Wildlife Habitat Protection			
Goal I. Protect scenic views and vistas and mountain ridges.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative; focus groups; design charette; public hearings
Strategy 1. Continue to enforce existing ordinances that address building height, billboard control, and cell towers.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Enhance protection of the Blue Ridge Parkway viewshed.	**Planning and Development**	2005	Focus groups; design charette; public hearing
Strategy 3. Continue to protect steep slopes through enhancement of the hillside development regulations and technical standards for development on steep slopes.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; design charette; public hearing

DEVELOPMENT TOOLS			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 4. Develop specific regulations addressing ridgetop development and land clearing to preserve scenic views and vistas.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; design charette; public hearings
Goal II. Promote environmental education and awareness.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Work with other agencies and organizations to improve environmental awareness.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Develop a brochure to educate public on best management practices.	**Planning and Development**	2005	Administrative; focus groups
Strategy 3. Continue efforts to develop a demonstration garden, showcasing species suitable for use in this area.	**Public Works** Planning and Development	2004	Administrative; public forums
Strategy 4. Produce a landscape guide for developers, with emphasis on use of native plants, eradication of invasive species and proper planting and maintenance techniques.	**Public Works** Planning and Development	2005	Administrative; public forums
Strategy 5. Develop appropriate regulations to promote the use of native vegetation and prohibit the use of deleterious exotic species.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Administrative; focus groups; public hearings
Goal III. Identify areas of unique natural heritage, primary scenic vistas, potential wildlife corridors, and areas of critical environmental sensitivity; develop programs for the conservation of these areas.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Create a comprehensive conservation map for the City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.	**Planning and Development**	2004-2005	Administrative
Strategy 2. Coordinate open space conservation plans with Recreation and Greenway Master Plans.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative

DEVELOPMENT TOOLS			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 3. Develop and continue to enhance existing regulations that require development clustering and preservation of open space.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Focus groups; design charettes; public hearings
Strategy 4. Pursue statutory authority for transfer development rights to provide opportunities for flexible conservation of critical areas while respecting private property rights.	**Planning and Development** Legal Department	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 5. Develop requirements for wildlife habitat protection or relocation when large tracts of undeveloped land are proposed for development.	**Planning and Development**	2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 6. Develop a fee-in-lieu-of program for the preservation of open space.	**Planning and Development**	2004	Public forums; public hearings
Strategy 7. Continue to work with conservation organizations to identify and preserve important natural resources.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 8. Enhance the existing density bonus provision for preservation of key environmental features.	**Planning and Development**	2003	Focus groups; public hearings

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal I. To insure that the appropriate public participation process is selected so as to result in the most effective communication and to insure the receipt of public input.	**City Manager** Legal Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1.Evaluate the effectiveness of the following public hearing processes and make adjustments as needed to improve public participation: * Zoning and Conditional Use Permit Hearings * Technical Review Committee Hearings * Board of Adjustment Appeals	**Planning and Development** Legal	2003-2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 2. Examine the development review process for opportunities to more effectively engage the public earlier in the initial project concept development. * Evaluate the effectiveness of pre-application meetings between developers and affected neighborhoods as provided in current City ordinances. * Consider whether mandatory pre-application meetings should be required and, if so, whether they should be facilitated by City staff or by professional mediators/facilitators. * Develop better methods of public notification.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 3. Continue to effectively implement and promote the Community Oriented Government program.	**City Manager**	Ongoing	Community oriented government process

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal II. Continue to promote and facilitate effective and efficient intergovernmental coordination.	**All Departments**	Ongoing	Various
Goal III. Use technology more effectively in alerting the public to issues of importance.	**Public Information Office** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Media
Strategy 1. Explore better use of the City web page and government access (Channel 20). Communicate information about development activities and other related items of public interest.	**Public Information Office** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Media
Strategy 2. Examine the use of other media in getting information to the public.	**Public Information Office**	Ongoing	Media

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Land Use			
Goal I. The City should pursue compatible adaptive reuse and infill development in order to actively promote appropriate development and redevelopment within the City and its ETJ.	**Planning and Development** Economic Development Office	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. The City, in order to preserve architectural diversity and to protect neighborhood viability, should promote adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized structures, while ensuring that neighborhood compatibility and public safety goals are met.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. The City should actively promote infill development through property owner education and market-based regulatory solutions in order to address the tax equity, tax base enhancement, and Smart Growth development goals of the City.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. The City should continue to use flexible development standards to enable infill lots to meet development standards. These standards should be revised as necessary to address the development of infill lots.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. The City should amend development standards to permit/require more intense mixed-use development at underdeveloped commercial nodes where excess public facilities exist.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public hearings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 5. The City's economic development incentive program should be reviewed to determine if incentives can be offered for infill development along commercial corridors and at commercial nodes identified as key areas for infill development.	**Economic Development** Planning and Development	2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 6. Through the City's Economic Development office, identify and market brownfield sites, giving preference to the development of these sites.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 7. Permit lots as originally platted to be developed provided they meet access requirements and the development would be in harmony with the character of the neighborhood.	**Planning and Development**	2004-2005	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 8. Provide incentives for the development of infill lots. These incentives could include a waiver or reductions of permit fees, elimination of excessive requirements, and expedited review.	**Planning and Development**	2004-2005	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 9. Identify infill opportunities and make this information available to interested developers. The information could include identification of properties available for infill, incentives for development of these properties, and development/design standards.	**Economic Development** Planning and Development	2004 and ongoing	Administrative

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 10. Provide assistance and incentives for compatible redevelopment in older neighborhoods. The assistance and incentives could include waiver of permit fees, improvement of infrastructure and/or amenities, and making surplus City–owned land available for development.	**Planning and Development**	2004 and ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 11. Permit more intense development in some areas. Areas identified for more intense development could include transit nodes, underdeveloped areas where excess public facilities exist, areas proximate to the Central Business District and targeted infill areas. Development should be in accordance with infill design standards tailored to single family and multi-family residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial areas.	**Planning and Development**	2003 and ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 12. Provide density bonuses as a stimulus for infill development. Density bonuses should be provided for work force affordable housing, targeted infill areas, areas where excess public facilities exist, and brownfield sites. Development should be in accordance with design standards tailored for the areas.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 13. Promote the advantages of infill development to developers and neighborhood groups. This can be done through presentations at regular meetings of these groups and at special workshops.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; community and neighborhood meetings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 14. Working with other City departments, develop plans and policies for the enhancement and strengthening of existing neighborhoods. These plans and policies should address infrastructure improvements, amenities (parks, streetlights, landscaping, etc.), crime prevention, litter control, and code enforcement, as well as seeking ways to protect these neighborhoods from inappropriate non-residential encroachment. Six neighborhoods specifically identified for this planning effort are Shiloh, Montford, Burton Street, the east River Road area and East End.	**Planning and Development**	Shiloh and Montford 2004 Mission St. Joseph's Area and Burton Street 2005 East River Road and East End 2006	Focus groups; public forums; community and neighborhood meetings; design charrettes
Strategy 15. The City should permit duplexes and other low intensity multifamily dwellings meeting design and separation requirements as a use by right subject to special requirements in single family zoning districts.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; public forum; public hearings
Strategy 16. Appropriately scaled non-residential uses that serve residents of neighborhoods should be permitted in appropriate locations.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Community and neighborhood meetings; public hearings; public forums; design charettes
Strategy 17. The City should have an aggressive program for the demolition of deteriorated and condemned structures in order to make land available for infill development.	**Building Safety** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 18. Enhance land use compatibility within specific neighborhoods by such methods as creation of large lot or rural zoning districts, neighborhood conservation overlay zones, and similar measures.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; community and neighborhood meetings; public forums; design charrettes; public meetings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 19. Work with neighborhood groups to identify nuisance concerns and develop strategies to address these concerns on a priority basis.	**Planning and Development** Police Public Works	Ongoing	Focus groups; community and neighborhood meetings; public forums; public meetings; community oriented government neighborhood tours
Strategy 20. Identify infill lots suitable for community gardens and similar open space uses.	**Planning and Development** Parks & Recreation Public Works	2004-2006	Community and neighborhood meetings.
Goal II. Implement a new urbanist development pattern along selected commercial corridors and in infill areas where appropriate.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Develop new zoning districts and development template requirements necessary to implement a new urbanist development pattern; apply these districts and development templates to selected commercial corridors.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; design charettes; public hearings
Strategy 2. Develop a new zoning district or zoning technique that will allow infill development to take advantage of new urbanist development principles where appropriate.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 3. Promote wider use of the Urban Village zoning district by identifying sites where it may be appropriate and directing developer interest to those sites.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 4. Continue to look for opportunities to expand the boundaries of the Central Business District to areas appropriate for that type of development.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal III. The City should permit and encourage transit supportive density (8-16 units per acre minimum) along and adjacent to major corridors and at logical transit nodes.	**Planning and Development** Transit	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 1. Consider the development of a flexible zone that would permit higher density at appropriate locations within a five minute walk of transit stops. The higher density development should be in accordance with design standards tailored for these areas.	**Planning and Development** Transit	2003-2005	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 2. Require the provision of transit shelters in new commercial, office, mixed use, and industrial developments that are of sufficient size to attract transit ridership including larger residential development containing a minimum density of 8 units per acre.	**Planning and Development** Transit	2004	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Goal IV. The City should revise its development standards for primary corridors to ensure that the corridors are developed in an urban manner.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public forums; design charettes; public hearings
Strategy 1. Development standards should be prepared for the primary corridors that address the need to increase density along the corridors. The standards should provide incentives for mixed-use development that incorporates residential uses.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public forums; design charettes; public hearings
Strategy 2. Minimum setbacks (or “build-to” lines) should be required, with buildings permitted to front on the street.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public forums; design charettes; public hearings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 3. Prepare design guidelines for corridor development. Guidelines should promote an urban style (multi-story, pedestrian oriented) of architecture along the corridors.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public forums; design charettes; public hearings
Strategy 4. Look for opportunities to create "transition points" where land use character changes (e.g., a roundabout or entry marker where a commercial area stops and a neighborhood begins, a land use node that demarks the transition from one neighborhood to another).	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public forums; design charettes; public hearings
Goal V. The City should encourage the construction of affordable housing throughout the community.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. The City should provide administrative density bonuses for affordable housing in all zoning districts subject to design standards that ensure compatibility with the neighborhood.	**Planning and Development**	2003	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 2. The City should provide incentives for the inclusion of affordable housing in mixed use developments along corridors.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 3. The City should pursue legislation authorizing local development standards to require the inclusion of affordable housing in larger residential development. Density bonuses should be provided as a trade off for the inclusion of affordable housing.	**Planning and Development** Legal	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 4. The City should revise its standards to provide for administrative approval of density bonuses for affordable housing.	**Planning and Development**	2003	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal VI. Where appropriate, the City should pursue statutory authority for a greater variety and range of development tools in order to actively promote development and redevelopment within the City and its ETJ.	**Planning and Development**	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 1. The City should support project development financing and if approved by referendum selectively implement this development tool in neighborhoods like West-End Clingman (WECAN) where significant public investment is necessary to correct deficiencies in public infrastructure pursuant to a redevelopment plan.	**Planning and Development**	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 2. The City should pursue statutory authority for transfer of development rights in order to provide an opportunity to protect environmentally sensitive areas, scenic lands and farmland through a market-based regulatory incentive program.	**Planning and Development**	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 3. The City should further investigate the benefits of land value taxation, and, if deemed appropriate for our local situation, pursue statutory authority for the application of a land value taxation system for properties within the City.	**Planning and Development**	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 4. The City should pursue statutory authority for mandatory design review for areas other than local historic districts in order to promote a Smart Growth development pattern by overcoming land use compatibility objections.	**Planning and Development**	Annually (as needed)	Formal request to legislative delegation; lobbying

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal VII. The City of Asheville should assure that it continues to serve as the regional commercial center for western North Carolina by providing opportunities for the location of large commercial uses within the City.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. The City should identify appropriate areas for the location of large commercial uses. These areas should be adequately served by public services, particularly transportation and public transit, be easy to access from the interstate highway system, and have vacant areas or areas with potential for redevelopment as regional shopping venues. Compatibility with existing and proposed infrastrucuture and potential impacts on neighborhood and natural resources should be additional factors in determining the locations appropriate for these uses.	**Planning and Development**	2002-2005	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 2. The City should refine its development guidelines for large retail uses to ensure that the site and building design for these uses are reflective of the natural and architectural heritage of Asheville.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Administrative
Goal VIII. The City should enhance its role as western North Carolina's regional medical and education center.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. The City should work with Mission-St. Joseph's Health System in the implementation of the Health System's Master Facilities Strategic Plan.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. The City should continue to work with Mission-St. Joseph's Health System and other area property owners in the development and implementation of a streetscape plan for Biltmore Avenue from I-40 to Downtown.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 2. The City should continue to work with Mission-St. Joseph's Health System and other area property owners in the development and implementation of a streetscape plan for Biltmore Avenue from I-40 to Downtown.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Working with Mission-St. Joseph's Health System and other property owners in the area, the City should prepare a small area plan for the area around and including the Health Center to address the need for the location of medical and medical-related land uses in this area. Development of these uses should respect the surrounding residential neighborhoods.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. The City should coordinate with the University of North Carolina-Asheville in the implementation of the UNCA Campus Master Plan.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 5. Working with UNCA and the surrounding residential neighborhoods, the City should develop plans and policies to address the needs of the campus and of the surrounding neighborhoods.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 6. The City should work with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (AB Tech) to address the needs of the college as it expands.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 7. Provision of improved access to AB Tech should be considered during the development of the Riverside Parkway.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	RiverLink Master Plan process

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal IX. The City should ensure that the environmental quality and natural beauty of the area is protected as tracts of undeveloped land are subdivided and/or developed by providing alternative templates for that development.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Incorporate conservation/open space design standards into the City's subdivision regulations. This alternative design template should be available to all subdivisions and required for those above a certain size and/or proposing development of sensitive lands (steep slopes, unique natural features, wetlands and flood plains, etc.).	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus goups; public hearings
Strategy 2. The City should identify sensitive areas and steep slopes that should be treated with caution during development and prepare additional regulations that promote their protection while reasonably respecting private property rights; such regulations may include transfer of development rights.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus goups; public hearings
Strategy 3. The City should revise its standards to permit clustering of buildings in residential developments in order to avoid steep areas, ridgetops, wetlands, and other sensitive areas.	**Planning and Development**	2003	Focus goups; public hearings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 4. Revise the City's open space standards to require the incorporation of more well-defined open space into the City's land use pattern. Provide an option for the payment of a fee-in-lieu-of providing open space in developments.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus goups; public hearings
Strategy 5. The City's open space standards should require the connection of open space areas where feasible and logical.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 6. The City should develop a resource conservation zone that provides incentives for the protection/preservation of important natural resources during the development process.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus goups; public hearings
Strategy 7. The City should develop an "estate" zoning classification requiring very large lots to apply to selected areas when such a development pattern is already a part of the neighborhood or to protect critical environmental or open space areas.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus goups; public forums; public hearings
Goal X. The City should assure that as land is developed or redeveloped, provision is made for access by various means of transportation.	**Planning and Development** Transit Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. The City should revise its subdivision regulations to require pedestrian and, where feasible, vehicular connections within the subdivision and between the subdivision and adjacent property.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	2004	Focus groups; public hearings

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 2. When development is proposed along an existing or future transit route, the City should require the construction of a transit stop or shelter as part of the development.	**Planning and Development** Engineering Transit	2003-2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 3. The City should continue to require sidewalks or other pedestrian walkways in all new development.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal XI. The City should work with property owners, institutions, and public and private agencies to enhance the streetscape along streets and roads in the City.	**Planning and Development** Public Works	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. The City should prepare streetscape design plans to serve as a guide for development and treatment of the City's streetscapes. Plans should be done for the City's strategic areas, such as Downtown, the river district, historic districts, and urban and neighborhood corridors. The streetscape plans should work to beautify these areas, reduce the environmental impacts of development, encourage pedestrian activity, and uniquely identify these areas. The streetscape design plan should provide for the following: * An inventory of street trees. * A schedule and policy for replacement of street trees. * Streetscape design templates for different areas/categories of streets. * Appropriate setbacks and building heights for different areas/categories of streets.	**Planning and Development** Public Works Engineering Parks and Recreation	2004-2006	Focus groups; design charettes; public forums

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 2. The City should reevaluate how the public right-of-way is used. As part of this reevaluation, the following should be considered: * Revision of the City's engineering standards to require street trees between the street and the sidewalk. * Permitting on-street parking on most streets. * Eliminating private use of the public right-of-way unless approved through a process that evaluates the public costs and benefits of such use.	**Engineering** Public Works	2003-2004	Focus groups; public forums
Strategy 3. Preserve and reuse historic materials in public works projects.	**Public Works**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 4. As new development is proposed, encourage/provide incentives for developers to incorporate streetscape terminating vistas (public art, buildings) as part of their developments.	**Planning and Development** Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 5. The City should work with businesses, residents, and community organizations to develop a sense of community pride and support of efforts to control litter.	**Public Works**	Ongoing	Administrative; public forums
Strategy 6. The City should work with NCDOT to identify gateway areas and develop a streetscape/landscape plan, including signage, for each gateway that emphasizes each area as an important entrance to the City.	**Planning and Development** Engineering	2003-2006	Focus groups; design charettes
Strategy 7. The City should work with local artists and community organizations to incorporate public art throughout the City of Asheville.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative; public forums

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 8. The City should work with utility companies to bury overhead utility lines as funding becomes available.	**Public Works**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 9. The Planning and Development staff should continue to work with the City's Urban Forester on better selection, placement, and care of street trees.	**Planning and Development** Public Works	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 10. The City should develop an ordinance requiring tree pruning to be done according to accepted professional standards and practices.	**Public Works** Planning and Development	2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Goal XII. The City should assure that new development and redevelopment is of high quality, complementing and adding to the character of the City of Asheville.	**Planning and Development** Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Revise standards to require connectivity between parcels and development projects. Connectivity should include vehicular connections, frontage or service roads, alleys, and/or pedestrian connections.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	2003-2005	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 2. Establish standards for building orientation through the development of building templates that address build-to lines and site relationships.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 3. Develop design templates for structures that promote contextual design.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 4. Through revision of development standards, the City should eliminate the opportunity for suburban development in urban settings.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 5. The City should identify areas for development focus, identifying and establishing standards for the type of development appropriate for the areas.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 6. The City should develop design standards for multi-family structures and non-residential uses in single family areas.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; public forums; design charette; public hearings
Strategy 7. The City should develop plans, programs, regulations and incentives for upgrading developed sites to meet new development standards.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2005	Focus groups; public forums; design charette; public hearings
Goal XIII. The City of Asheville should initiate discussions about the future land use pattern outside the City's jurisdiction with the appropriate local governments and independent authorities in order to promote and implement Smart Growth development concepts in this area.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Transportation			
Goal I. The design of streets and highways should be consistent with the economic goals of the City of Asheville and should be compatible with the physical character of the community.	**Engineering** Planning and Development Public Works Legal	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Implement the road design concepts, as described elsewhere in this plan, for all new corridors and for any significant remedial expansions and improvements to existing corridors.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Various

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 2. Road design should be "user-friendly" and attractive out of respect for the area's tourist economy, including, but not limited to such items as: directional signage should be prominent and clear; interstate security fencing should use black-coated chain link and landscaping to hide the fencing; and intersection "fixes" should avoid such mandatory merge movements such as the eastbound merge onto Tunnel Road from I-240.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Interstate roads should incorporate local construction materials and native landscaping into new corridors and any significant expansions to existing corridors; examples include: stone-faced overpasses; median landscaping; and landscaping of both sides of noise walls.	**Planning and Development** Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. Where possible and desirable, median design should offer opportunities for vertical separation of opposing lanes of travel.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 5. When not precluded by physical constraints, median design should be landscaped with both trees and shrubs. Creative design measures should be undertaken to overcome routine physical constraints such as median width limitations; a good example of such creative design is the median in the I-240 "cut" through Beaucatcher Mountain that creates an elevated landscaped median using a Jersey barrier design.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 6. New billboards should not be allowed along any road corridors and existing ones should be amortized and removed unless adjacent to federal aid primary highways.	**Planning and Development** Legal	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 7. Develop a comprehensive street classification system that includes long range goals for street width, development type, building setbacks, parking placement, and areas for right-of-way reservation.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	2004-2005	Various
Strategy 8. City staff should perform regular evaluations of the area road network in order to determine whether the City should assume maintenance of state roads.	**Engineering** Public Works	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 9. Formal proposals should be presented to the NCDOT offering to accept certain state roads if specific one-time improvements are made.	**Engineering** Public Works	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 10. Regularly evaluate the appropriateness of assuming maintenance of State roads taken into the City through annexation.	**Engineerin**g Public Works	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal II. Develop a system of sidewalks, greenways and bicycle facilities that will make Asheville a more walkable and more livable city.	**Public Works** Engineering Parks and Recreation Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. As an expansion of the traffic calming program, create a “Walkable Intersection Program” as a cooperative effort between the City of Asheville and NCDOT. Intersections will be evaluated for changes in geometric design, signalization, signs, and markings that will benefit pedestrians.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Various

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 2. Create pedestrian oriented zones throughout the City in tandem with urban villages and concentrated areas of development. Link the pedestrian oriented zones through attractive and usable pedestrian and bicycle facilities.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Pedestrian zones and identified pedestrian thoroughfares should be incorporated into long-range transportation plans, and addressed during roadway facilities planning.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. Greenways and other identified bicycle facility needs should be constructed in conjunction with roadway improvement projects. The Asheville Greenway Master Plan should be referenced in the planning of transportation improvements, and greenway right-of-way purchase and construction should be integrated into the process of roadway design and construction.	**Public Works** Engineering Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 5. Adopt land use strategies and site design standards that encourage bicycling and walking.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; public hearings
Strategy 6. Implement the Greenway Master Plan and the Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan using public funds, grant monies and privately raised dollars by the Parks and Greenway Foundation.	**Parks and Recreation** Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Goal III. Maximize the efficiency of the existing transportation system through targeted, cost-effective improvements.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Upgrade the traffic signals in Asheville to create a state of the art coordinated system.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 2. Pursue targeted capacity improvements at intersections to improve traffic flow, with particular emphasis on turning lanes and creative solutions such as roundabouts.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Access management should be an integral part of preserving traffic capacity and improving pedestrian environments. Roadway improvements should always include access management strategies. Retrofit access management programs should be developed and implemented.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	2003-2005	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 4. Updates to the area Long Range Transportation Plan should include a strong Travel Demand Management component.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Focus groups; public hearings
Goal IV. Increase the level of investment in the transportation system to support economic development and promote quality of life.	**Engineering** Transit Public Works	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Pursue a local funding source to support a variety of transportation improvements such as roadway and intersection improvements, greenways, sidewalks, streetscape improvements, and transit enhancements. Explore funding options that will equitably distribute the burden among those who use the transportation system.	**Engineering** Transit Public Works	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Agressively pursue local, state and national funding sources to implement the Asheville Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan and Asheville Greenways Master Plan.	**Engineering** Transit Public Works Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	Various

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal V. Develop a network of highways and thoroughfares that serves the long-range needs of the City of Asheville and the surrounding region.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 1. Based on the long-range street classification plan, implement a program for right-of-way protection, and right-of-way dedication as a part of the development review process.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. As needed roadway improvements are identified, make design-related decisions early in the process.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Modify the Asheville subdivision regulations to require street connectivity and street stubs to adjacent property.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	2003-2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Strategy 4. Develop a plan for the future of I-240 through Downtown Asheville that will address projected traffic volumes, and provide good access to downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. This plan should create a highway corridor with minimal impact on the urban environment. The plan should look for ways to "bury" or "hide" the highway and create opportunities for urban scale development and parks that will link Downtown with surrounding neighborhoods and business districts.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	2004-2005	Focus groups; design charettes
Goal VI. Develop a transit system that is capable of meeting the needs of all residents of and visitors to the region.	**Transit** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 1. Promote a land use policy that is supportive of transit service, such as Urban Villages and nodal pedestrian-oriented development.	**Planning and Development** Transit	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Expand service hours and frequency of service.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Focus groups; administrative
Strategy 3. Provide service to the greatest possible number of households within the service area, with emphasis on those not possessing automobiles, blind and other partially impaired people, the elderly, tourists, environmentally conscious people, and other markets as they appear.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 4. Expand inter-city service to Hendersonville, Black Mountain, Weaverville, Mars Hill, and Sylva.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; administrative
Strategy 5. Upgrade and expand amenities at the transit center and bus stops, including system maps, information systems, benches, and shelters.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 6. Develop a multimodal approach to transit service, including integration with the train station when passenger rail operations begin in Asheville.	**Transit** Planning and Development Engineering Economic Development Office	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 7. Increase community knowledge of the transit system through marketing.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Media;public forums
Strategy 8. Locate and implement informal park and ride areas.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 9. Expand access to outlying recreational facilities in the Asheville area.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Administrative; public forums

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 10. Continue to upgrade and expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities and services consequential to the use of the Asheville Transit System.	**Engineering** Transit	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VII. Provide viable passenger rail service to Asheville and western North Carolina.	**Economic Development Office** Engineering Transit Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. The City should continue to work with NCDOT, Norfolk-Southern Railway, and other agencies and individuals in the development of a passenger rail station at Biltmore Station.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Develop the passenger rail station as a multi-modal hub where people will be able to transition from inter-city travel by rail to intra-city travel by bus, by car, by bike, and on foot.	**Economic Development Office** Engineering Transit Planning and Development	Ongoing	Focus groups; public forums; design charettes
Strategy 3. Construction of the rail station should accommodate a bus transfer facility.	**Economic Development Office** Transit	2005-2006	Administrative
Strategy 4. Construct a pedestrian crossing over the railroad tracks to link Biltmore Station with Biltmore Village.	**Engineering**	2005-2006	Administrative
Strategy 5. Implement roadway and traffic signal improvements on Biltmore Avenue, Thompson Street, Decatur Street, and Elliot Street as needed to accommodate traffic generated by the passenger rail station.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VIII. Support improving transportation access to and from the airport.	**Engineering** Transit Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 1. Work toward improving multimodal transportation access, primarily taxicab and public transit transportation.	**Transit**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Examine the Airport's need for an additional interstate interchange in the Glen Bridge Road area.	**Engineering**	2003-2004	Administrative
Goal IX. Support the growth of the Asheville Regional Airport consistent with the general aviation and commercial air traffic demands as well as the operational needs of the Airport.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Examine zoning requirements in the vicinity of the Airport to ensure that incompatible uses are prohibited; expand annexation efforts to bring more of this area under City of Asheville zoning jurisdiction as a means of implementing this strategy.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004; ongoing	Administrative; public hearings
Strategy 2. Support Airport Authority plans to insure adequate space for future growth.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various

AIR QUALITY AND WATER QUALITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Air Quality			
Goal I. Promote and implement a Smart Growth development pattern.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Goal II. Promote a well-connected multi-modal transportation network that utilizes best available technology for operational effectiveness.	**Engineering** Public Works	Ongoing	Various
Goal III. Implement an effective "green building" program.	**Building Safety** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Goal IV. Support regional efforts and state and federal regulatory actions to continually improve air quality and to educate the public on the benefit of improved air quality.	**City Council** Engineering Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Coordinate with other agencies, other local governments, and State and federal agencies to develop and promote programs to improve air quality.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Continue to support an independent local air quality board.	**City Council**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Support efforts to address the problem locally through such efforts as vehicle emissions testing and promotion of the use of zero emission vehicles.	**City Council**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. Organize to effectively lobby State and federal lawmakers for better air quality legislation and enforcement such as the Clean Smokestacks Act.	**City Council**	Ongoing	Various

AIR QUALITY AND WATER QUALITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal V. Continue and enhance City programs that promote improved air quality.	**Public Works** Planning and Development Finance Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Work to convert City fleets to alternative fuels and consider all available or emerging clean air technologies for City operations.	**Public Works** Finance Engineering	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Continue the innovative and highly effective City recycling program.	**Public Works**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Enhance City landscaping regulations.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus goups; public hearings
Strategy 4. Implement intelligent transportation systems on City streets and state roads.	**Public Works** Engineering	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 5. Consider developing a municipal renewable energy program.	**Planning and Development** Finance Public Works	2003-2004	Administrative
Water Quality			
Goal I. Continue to coordinate with and support efforts by public agencies and private organizations to improve water quality and to educate the public on the benefit of improved water quality.	**City Council** Engineering Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various
Goal II. Implement stormwater management practices mandated by federal laws in an effective and timely fashion.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal III. Develop and use best management practices to address the effect of development on stormwater runoff and water quality.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various

AIR QUALITY AND WATER QUALITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 1. Develop and implement drainage basin level stormwater management and erosion control plans in cooperation with private property owners, regional agencies, state and federal agencies.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative; public forums
Strategy 2. Encourage the preservation of riparian zones and reclamation of developed properties in these areas to a more natural state.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Encourage the use of native plants to reduce non-point-source pollution from lawns and minimize water usage during periods of drought.	**Public Works** Planning and Development Water Resources	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 4. Reduce impervious surfaces by minimizing parking requirements.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 5. Require landscape retrofitting of existing parking lots to reduce impervious surface and stormwater runoff.	**Planning and Development**	2004-2005	Focus goups; public hearings
Strategy 6. Encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve riparian areas.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 7. Develop land management strategies to enhance the environmental function of streams, creeks and rivers.	**Planning and Development** Engineering	2004-2005	Focus goups; public hearings

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal I. Implement the six key goals of the Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan**:** *Insure that Asheville's urban planning, zoning, and permitting processes, as created and administered by the City, facilitate sustained and positive development. * The availability of suitable sites within the City will meet its business needs into the future. * The City's future development will balance economic objectives, social goals, and its natuaral resources to the benefit of present and future generations. * The institutions of higher education and training in the Asheville area will meet the skill needs of the businesses and industries in the community. * The local workforce will have the basic education, life skills, and technical skills to meet the demands of Asheville workplace in the future. * Asheville's "total" riverfront (inclusive of the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers) will be redeveloped to maximize both its full potential as a quality of life amenity as well as for commercial opportunities.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal II. Ensure that the comprehensive plan, building and zoning codes, local economic development incentives, capital improvement program, and other City development regulations and incentives are regularly reviewed and modified to meet the technological and social changes of the local economic development situation.	**Economic Development Office** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Team involvement; reports to City Council
Strategy 1. Continue to use the implementation team process developed by the Sustainable Economic Development Task Force to regularly review and propose changes to key City documents.	**Economic Development**	Ongoing	Team involvement
Strategy 2. The economic development director and planning and development director shall jointly prepare a report to City Council on economic development trends at all levels that affect Asheville, and indicate any necessary changes to key City documents to put the City in a better position to respond to these trends. This report shall be presented at least once every two years. Other department directors shall contribute to this report on an as-needed basis.	**Economic Development Office** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Reports to City Council
Goal III. Actively pursue regional, state, and federal partnerships and seek new legislation and economic development incentives that put Asheville at the forefront of business recruitment and retention.	**Economic Development Office** Legal Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 1. Lobby for state and federal legislation that increases the number of economic development "tools" available to the City, including tax increment financing, land value taxation, transfer of development rights, design review and other key fiscal incentives and growth management tools.	**Economic Development Office** Legal Planning and Development	Annually (as needed)	Formal requests to legislative delegation; lobbying
Strategy 2. Partner with other local governments, regional agencies and organizations, and state and federal agencies to combine individual strengths and mitigate individual weaknesses for the betterment of Western North Carolina's business and industrial environment.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Various
Goal IV. Insure that the local infrastructure and regulatory environment support needs of business and industry.	**Economic Development Office** Engineering Planning and Development Parks and Recreation Water Resources	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Complete key transportation projects on time and in a manner that supports the economic development of the community, including the I-26 Connector, the Riverway, and the Merrimon/Broadway interchange.	**Engineering** Planning and Development	Ongoing	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 2. Identify and remove institutional barriers that hinder the smooth delivery of public utility services to business and industry, particularly the revision of the water agreements to reflect a sound business model and the development of comprehensive and fiscally-responsible water extension policies and plans.	**Economic Development Office** Water Resources	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Implement a comprehensive Smart Growth development pattern, a comprehensive and effective affordable housing program, streamlined development review and inspection processes, and other growth management incentives that promote a business-supportive regulatory environment.	**Planning and Development** Economic Development Office	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. Invest in cultural and heritage events and "social infrastructure" such as the Civic Center, Bele Chere, the Urban Trail, , Goombay, YMI, First Night, Shindig on the Green, and Pack Square.	**Park and Recreation** Economic Development Office	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 5. Preserve the scenic, historic, and environmental character of the community through such actions as sound land use planning, effective design review, strong environmental policies and programs, and effective application of tax credits and other incentives, while lobbying for regional and state reduction of key pollutants at their sources.	**Planning and Development** Engineering Economic Development Office	Ongoing	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 6. Insure that City codes and regulations adequately provide for the increased role that home occupations, arts and crafts production, and telecommuting will have on our economy.	**Planning and Development** Economic Development Office	Ongoing	Various
Goal V. Effectively market the economic development strengths of Asheville by promoting the quality of life of the Asheville area using both general and targeted promotional methods in cooperation with other economic development actors.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Various
Goal VI. Work toward increasing City-controlled funding sources for economic development incentives and promotional efforts.	**Economic Development Office** Finance Planning and Development Public Works	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Utilize the City capital improvement program as a mechanism for providing incentives for economic development activities.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Continue existing City economic development incentives and, where possible, expand both the range of incentives and the amount of funding available for economic development.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Pursue user-supported funding sources to provide quality of life infrastructure; in particular, pursue the room tax and prepared food and beverage tax options for funding improvements to such major capital facilities as the Civic Center.	**Economic Development Office** Finance Administration	Ongoing	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 4. Seek out opportunities for public-private partnerships in the provision of infrastructure.	**Economic Development Office** Planning and Development Public Works	Ongoing	Various
Goal VII. Explore opportunities for increasing entrepreneurship training and for targeted business categories (e.g., high tech research and production, medical research, software development, etc.).	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VIII. Create an inventory of property suitable for development or redevelopment for targeted industrial and commercial uses and implement a program to encourage development or conversion to these uses.	**Economic Development Office** Planning and Development	2003, then ongoing	Administrative

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Fire Department			
Goal I. Maintain Departmental ISO rating at class 3 in the 2003 classification rating evaluation and work toward improving the ISO rating in future evaluations.	**Fire Department**	2003 and ongoing	Administrative
Goal II. Achieve national accreditation by 2005.	**Fire Department**	2005 and ongoing	Administrative
Goal III. Continue to add stations and equipment to maintain and improve levels of service.	**Fire Department**	2003-2005	Administrative
Strategy 1. Add additional Ladder company at Station 4 in Skyland by July, 2003.	**Fire Department**	2003	Administrative
Strategy 2. Renovations and improvements to Station 8 in East Asheville and Station 3 in West Asheville are scheduled for 2002-2003.	**Fire Department**	2002-2003	Administrative
Strategy 3. The addition of a station on the western area of the City is in the planning phase. The City has purchased land to relocate Fire Station 6 from the current location on Haywood Road to a new location on Eastview Drive, near I-40, exit 44. The station is planned to be both a fire station and a police service center. It is anticipated that this station will be in place and in service prior to 2005.	**Fire Department**	2005	Administrative
Strategy 4. An additional station is also in the planning phase for the Biltmore Square Mall area.	**Fire Department**	2005-2010	Administrative

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 5. Supplemental coverage is needed in the far northern area of the city known as Beaverdam. A stronger City fire and rescue presence is needed in that area and it is possible that cooperative agreements can occur which would enable the City to accomplish a stronger presence at minimal costs.	**Fire Department**	2005	Administrative
Strategy 6. Systematic, periodic replacement of apparatus will continue to occur through 2005.	**Fire Department**	2005	Administrative
Strategy 7. A fourth geographical district may be created in response to providing service to annexation areas.	**Fire Department**	2006-2010	Administrative
Goal IV. Diversify services and technology in response to more specialized demand for services and to improve organizational effectiveness.	**Fire Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 1. Increase emphasis on emergency preparation and pre-incident planning, including homeland defense and preparedness for terrorism incidents.	**Fire Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Implement traffic pre-emption technologies for emergency vehicles in congested areas.	**Fire Department**	2006-2010	Administrative
Strategy 3. Become more involved in pre-hospital care through such efforts as integrating a paramedic/firefighter on engine companies and operation of quick response vehicles (QRVs).	**Fire Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 4. Modernize Stations 6,7 and 9 to accommodate today's fire apparatus and fire officers.	**Fire Department**	2006-2010	Administrative

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 5. Place a much greater emphasis on installation of automatic fire sprinkler systems in both new construction and existing construction.	**Fire Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal V. Identify opportunities to collaborate with other agencies and entities, such as the rural fire districts and private landholders like the Biltmore Estate, to enhance fire and rescue services.	**Fire Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Police Department			
Goal I. Partner with the community to enhance the quality of life and resolve neighborhood concerns.	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Various
Goal II. Establish a working environment that encourages teamwork, empowerment, communication, and professional development.	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal III. Utilize resources efficiently in preventing and suppressing criminal activity.	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal IV. Foster a dynamic organization that utilizes leading-edge technology and methods in enhancing community policing.	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal V. Enhance external and internal communication.	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VI. Maintain the highest level of quality of service, integrity, and professionalism.	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VII. Continue to use community-oriented police practices, including assignment of officers by district, to promote effective law enforcement.	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Public forums; community neighborhood meetings; community oriented government

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal VIII. Utilize CPTED practices in development review and in retrofitting existing infrastructure and	**Police Department**	Ongoing	Public forums; community neighborhood meetings; community oriented government
Streets			
Goal I. Maintain a level of local spending on street and road maintenance that will ensure that infrastructure is maintained at the state average for pavement condition rating.	**City Council** Public Works	Ongoing	Public forums
Goal II. Continue to encourage the provision of public streets to serve new development.	**Engineering** Public Works Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 1. Continue to require that street construction within the city limits be to public street standards in order to ensure a long service life.	**Engineering** Public Works Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Evaluate non-residential development proposals to determine if public streets should be required within the developments in order to improve interconnection of public street system and to more effectively serve the projects.	**Engineering** Public Works Planning and Development	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal III. City staff will work with the NCDOT to evaluate the area road network within the city limits in order to determine whether the City should assume maintenance of State roads.	**Engineering** Public Works	Ongoing	Administrative
Solid Waste and Recycling			
Goal I. Continue to direct a substantial amount of solid waste and organic materials away from landfill disposal through creative and innovative measures, such as recycling and reuse.	**Public Works**	Ongoing	Administrative

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal II. Continue to use technology and other innovations to reduce the total cost of solid waste disposal and recycling.	**Public Works**	Ongoing	Administrative
Water Infrastructure			
Goal I. Develop a comprehensive plan and set of policies for the extension of water lines in the Asheville area that is consistent with local land use plans for development and conservation of key natural features, along with the financial capabilities of the Water Authority.	**Water Resources**	2004-2005	Various
Goal II. Continue to make preventative and remedial maintenance and repair a capital improvement priority for the Water Authority.	**Water Resources**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal III. Market the availability and quality of local water resources as an industrial attraction incentive.	**Water Resources** Economic Development Office	Ongoing	Media; public forums
Sewer			
Goal I. Continue to coordinate between City authorities and MSD to provide consistent levels of service to the development community and residents.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal II. Guide developments to areas with adequate infrastructure to support proposed uses; continue to promote infill development.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal III. Guide large-scale developments to areas that coincide with existing and future infrastructure improvements.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal IV. Continue to make preventative and remedial maintenance and repair a capital improvement priority for MSD.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal V. Market the availability and quality of local sewage treatment resources as an industrial attraction incentive.	**Economic Development Office**	Ongoing	Media; public forums

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Public Schools			
Goal I. Facilitate the effective functioning of public schools as places of education and as important neighborhood and community centers.	**Planning and Development** Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Recognize public schools as important destinations in transportation planning, especially with regard to bicycle and pedestrian access and traffic calming programs.	**Engineering**	Ongoing	Public forums; community and neighborhood meetings
Strategy 2. Support additions to existing schools and the construction of new schools in areas that lend themselves to good neighborhood and community access and where the schools can serve the function of serving as neighborhood and community centers.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Continue to involve the school systems in the development review process.	**Planning and Development**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. Work with the school systems to develop an effective impact analysis methodology to appropriately assign fiscal costs to the entities creating the need for these costs.	**Planning and Development**	2003-2004	Focus groups; public hearings
Parks, Recreation and Open Space			
Goal I. Continue cooperating with public agencies and private individuals and organizations in an effort to make the provision of parks, recreation facilities and programs, and open space as effective and efficient as possible.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 1. Continue efforts for cooperation between the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department and the Buncombe County Recreation Services to avoid duplication of services and find opportunities for partnerships in serving residents.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Continue existing partnerships and identify new partnerships to expand facilities and programming, including: additional programming with Asheville City and Buncombe County School systems; long term leases for land with private corporations; and sponsorships of major facilities and events with local agencies and corporations (such as the recently completed Food Lion Skateboard Park and the current involvement of Mission St. Joseph Health System as a corporate sponsor of Bele Chere).	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Continue to explore opportunities to work with nonprofit partners such as Quality Forward and RiverLink to provide critical facility development.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal II. Design and build park facilities that address the unique needs of the population they serve and that respect the heritage and character of the neighborhoods in which they are located.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 1. Plan to add more adult facilities for semi professional adult sports.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Look for opportunities to develop “special use facilities.”	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Administrative

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Strategy 3. Research and understand the unique place-making characteristics of the neighborhoods and community as a whole and incorporate that through design.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Design charettes; public forums; community and neighborhood meetings
Strategy 4. Develop "pocket parks" as part of larger-scale residential developments.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Design charettes; public forums; community and neighborhood meetings
Goal III. Maximize the use of scarce resources for parks, recreation and open space facility development and programming.	**Parks and Recreation** Planning and Development		
Strategy 1. Examine existing and identify new user fees as a method of financing parks, recreation and open space facility development and programming.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Continue to aggressively seek grants and other philanthropic sources of revenue for parks, recreation and open space facility development and programming.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Consider opening large tracts of City controlled land for recreation uses, such as Bee Tree Reservoir, North Fork Reservoir, and the Mills River property so long as their primary public function is protected and preserved.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 4. Develop open space requirments that includes fee-in-lieu provisions for new developments above a certain size.	**Planning and Development** Parks and Recreation	2004	Focus groups; public hearings

CITY SERVICES			
GOAL/STRATEGY	**LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES**	**TIMELINE**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**
Goal IV. Implement the various adopted parks and recreation master plans through priority capital improvement programming and by responding with flexibility and creativity when opportunities arise.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Make provisions for the following new park facilities: (2) Community Parks, (6) neighborhood parks, (9) mini parks, (4) renovated existing recreation centers, (2) special use athletic/ sports park, and (1) indoor swimming facility.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Offer flexibility from the adopted park and greenway master plans for the location of parks and greenways to respond to market availability of land, as well as grant and partnership opportunities, and be able to identify and move to acquire and/or develop land within short planning horizons.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various
Goal V. Implement the adopted Greenway Master Plan through priority capital improvement programming and by responding with flexibility and creativity when opportunities arise.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Have City funds available to leverage public and private grants and to be able to match donations from individuals in the community.	**Parks and Recreation**	Ongoing	Various

Appendix A - Public Comments

Land Use Ideas

- Tax credits for affordable housing.
- Inclusionary requirement for affordable housing.
- City buy vacant lots and reserve for affordable housing as an incentive.
- Affordable housing in center city.
- More affordable housing for the Latino community.
- Workable/affordable housing incentives.
- Streamline permit process for affordable housing.
- Maintain dedicated tax for affordable housing (loans, not grants with repayment recycled into affordable housing).
- Develop more affordable housing. Support developers and builders to develop affordable housing with an emphasis on downtown.
- Ensure houses lost to development are replaced.
- Affordable housing needs to be developed, review programs in other cities and identify and implement incentives.
- Clean up and reclaim land that is littered and enforce laws including sign ordinance.
- Get rid of billboards.
- Emphasize and upgrade workers skills through existing education facilities. Support and emphasize technical education.
- More incentives for solar energy use in commercial and residential (address in zoning, etc.).
- Urban planning that integrates ecological principles.
- Preserve buffers along all significant streams.
- Limit mountain and steep slope development to protect views
- Protect neighborhoods from light pollution especially after hours. Examples: parking lot lights, lighted signs, etc.
- Have stormwater run-off plan to protect existing areas.
- Incorporate language in the UDO to encourage density when projects meets L.E.E.D. rating. (L.E.E.D. from NC Green Building Council).
- Respect/preserve natural green spaces.
- Expand parks for aesthetic and passive uses, by prioritization, marketing, and funding mechanism for the preservation of key green spaces (tax incentives, consideration easements).
- Provide/require adequate green space and city parks for all multi-family developments.
- Reserve green space as open space.
- Plan for urban forests.
- Incorporate greenspace in business development.
- Incorporate greenways and limit asphalt.
- Reinvigorate idea and spirit of "commons" throughout the city such as providing walking trails.
- Provide a fund for smart growth development and land banking incentive for city to help with front end of feasibility studies.
- Performance zoning = developers meeting qualifications and receiving incentives bonuses.
- Encourage tax credits/incentives for artists/craftsman housing downtown and work/live spaces for artists. Incentives for necessary businesses downtown (grocery, hardware) for profitability.
- Tax credits or incentives for Brownfield development.
- Preserve existing industrial sites and have a good plan and stick with it.
- Protected neighborhoods-industrial in specialized

parks.

- Attract high tech companies by developing high speed telecommunication infrastructure.
- Support the rail effort.
- Hold line on taxes-monitor how non-profit groups use their properties.
- Neighborhood controlled growth.
- Encourage urban village concept.
- Walkable, self-sufficient neighborhoods with local businesses and services.
- Promote downtown mixed-use and business activities - use what we have better (or re-use).
- Higher density/greater zoning flexibility.
- Mixed housing types, diversity, mixes use-neighborhoods.
- More density, less sprawl, mixed use.
- Neighborhoods that are tolerant of mixed-income housing.
- Integrate appropriate mixed-use into neighborhoods.
- More parking decks (mixed-use decks in retail).
- Urban Village concept is good in many places/areas of the City.
- Encourage higher density, mixed use infill in existing areas, i.e., Haywood Corridor. Increase density rather than sprawl.
- Create town centers as special places - transportation, schools, services.
- Encourage mixed use, add retail and office space on first floor of parking garages, promote urban village concept.
- Encourage mixed use development (Urban Village) integrating schools, residential and commercial within the community. Insure that the Urban Village Nodes are capable of supporting/serving the needs of the greater community to avoid corridor sprawl.
- Develop new and existing shopping centers (w/ housing) as mixed-use facilities. This supports lower income folks for shopping needs, jobs, transportation, single location.
- Mixed use-should mandate urban village idea.
- Move Asheville Transit and Pioneer Welding to facilitate residential development.
- River greenway and park between Sayles and nature center with sports/neighborhood/café businesses.
- New development to be in scale with existing neighborhood.
- Encourage infill development with flexible rules.
- Encourage redevelopment (infill) of vacant and abandoned properties with incentives.
- Riverfront development between Smoky Park Bridge and Riverlink Bridge.
- Establish combined City/County government for land use control/zoning.
- Integrate future Asheville with future Buncombe County by educating public and encouraging land use planning and zoning.
- Create more efficient government - combine services (City/County).
- Greater communication with Buncombe County on land use and growth issues.
- Strict enforcement of strict erosion control regulations, including developer education, especially during construction.
- Reduce and review parking standards for big box and add more trees to parking lot and enforce maximum parking standards.
- Smart Growth mandatory for planning new urbanism.
- Land use goals in 2010 Plan for WECAN and CVV

Plan implemented.

- Regarding parking: more on-street parking; parking decks are good idea; reduce # of large parking spaces required for commercial developments; minimize # of surface lots.
- Area specific development guidelines.
- Design all areas for development and redevelopment with perimeter roads for cars and internal roads for mass transit and pedestrian-This will work in South Asheville and downtown.
- Protect historic resources.
- Require design review for all (new construction on vacant property) infill for compatibility.
- Promote small neighborhood commercial hubs.
- Strong design focus for development - Regulations / Smart Growth / New Urbanism.
- Architectural integrity with emphasis on scale.
- Maintain unique beauty of Asheville via enhanced design and broad public support.
- Establish design review standards and review board.
- Buildings that are appropriate in scale for the neighborhood.
- Build pedestrian friendly, human scaled neighborhoods and commercial districts.

Transportation Ideas

- Encourage and fund multi-modal transportation; shift funding toward multi-modal and away from new road construction; recognize that 'auto only' transportation systems does not work.
- Park 'n' Ride.
- Develop downtown to be more pedestrian friendly-discourage auto use with free shuttle and park- and-ride to access downtown, including free shuttle in downtown area.
- Bicycle-friendly street design.
- Incorporate bicycle/greenway/trail systems in road widening and maintenance projects.
- Provide (every 10 minutes) trolly or bus shuttle constantly available downtown-connecting key in town locations (so someone could leave car in one place).
- More sidewalks, bikeways and greenways, wider shoulders.
- Bicycle infrastructure - build routes that connect N-S-E-W areas of the city. Make it possible to use bikes as major transportation in city.
- Sidewalks in heavy traffic areas.
- Complete thoroughfare plan to include use of round-a-bouts instead of traffic signals, with more sidewalks, more crosswalks to be more pedestrian friendly and have bike paths.
- Systematic sidewalk construction/reconstruction.
- Build more sidewalks, bike paths and greenways.
- Expand sidewalk and speed bump system.
- Land use development that minimizes auto use and encourage pedestrian activity.
- Sidewalks-more are needed, every major street should have sidewalks, bike lanes.
- Link "magnet" land uses with transportation, (schools, parks, etc.)
- Make bike lanes and trails an integral part of the transportation system.
- Dedicated bicycle/walking paths/extend greenway system.
- More and better sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Increase ability to use alternative transportation modes.

- Finish sidewalk system in Asheville.
- Non polluting propane/electric mini buses public transportation that is frequent (10-15 times a day) - include Sunday and Holidays (longer hours/flexible schedules).
- Encourage renewable alternate energy fuels for transportation.
- Support less polluting fuels for city fleet; more efficient vehicles.
- Local growing and use of alternate fuels (ethanol).
- Convert buses to hybrid fuels or electric.
- Tax incentives and reduce emissions for individual and mass transit.
- Excise tax for fuel for inefficient vehicles.
- I-26 Connector away from Smoky Park Bridge.
- Affordable/adequate parking.
- I-26 locations should impact neighborhoods to minimum extent as possible.
- Free hour at parking decks should apply 24/7.
- Speed up I-26 community recommendations.
- Small buses, more often.
- Point to point inner neighborhood mini- bus systems connected to each other.
- Train to Asheville services.
- Improve bus system with better and smaller buses and shuttles. Make buses the first choice rather than last resort.
- Small buses to more places.
- Support bond issue for mass transit to make more desirable; encourage ridership and make sure buses run after 6:00 pm and when needed.
- Bring back trolley use (electric) with evening service.
- Regular shuttles to major destinations, heritage destinations and major corridors.
- Incentives for carpooling, bus use, park'n'ride, for employees and employers, all persons.
- Improve public transportation; develop frequent shuttle system between Biltmore/hospital/downtown; construct bus shelters; more frequent buses; increase routes.
- Increase efficiency of bus system; more and better shelters, park'n'ride system, use smaller vehicles where possible, and make system a more desirable alternative.
- Small alternative fuel buses running every 15 minutes, 7 days a week.
- Expand bus service - 7 days, 365, evenings.
- Increase bus service and other mass transit (shuttles, van pools, rapid transit).
- Increase frequency of bus transit, more often and increased hours.
- Expand hours and route of Asheville City transit.
- Use bus transfer at any spot in city.
- Improved air and rail service.
- Rail system between Asheville and Hendersonville.
- Smaller buses but more frequent service and expand service area.
- Rail service to Asheville.
- Develop plan to limit dependence.
- Promote high density mixed use development to make public transportation more feasible.
- Supermarket next to Coxe Avenue bus station.
- Riverside parkway/boulevard/unified riverfront streets.
- Satellite parking for large traffic generators.
- New highway grid plan.
- Improve traffic flow through traffic signal synchronization, use of traffic circles, and improved signage.
- Synchronize traffic lights.

- Synchronized traffic lights.
- Traffic light synchronization in downtown.
- Discourage cul-de-sacs.
- More bridges/overpasses/viaducts to alleviate things like RR crossing congestion.
- Reconfigure I-240 entrance ramps for safety.
- Synchronized traffic signal systems - ex., Patton Avenue Downtown.
- Improve traffic signals coordination.
- Walkable and linkages between neighborhoods-sidewalks.
- Don't keep widening roads-don't locate entities inappropriately-causes traffic problems.
- Service road access to neighborhoods.

Air Quality & Water Quality Ideas

- Decrease reliance on vehicles.
- Car pool network.
- Tire removal issues.
- Litter control with stiffer penalties-include pooper scoop laws.
- Litter /dumping control.
- Asheville needs to take responsibility for its own pollution.
- Develop awareness and a sense of civic pride.
- Pollution free combustion engines (hydrogen fuel cells)
- Incentives for energy-efficiency and alternative energy usage for commercial, private, public, purposes, (heating, cooling, industry production, construction, transportation).
- Encourage energy conservation and alternative energy.
- All new city vehicles use clean fuels where appropriate.
- City should be a model for efficient use of energy, i.e., heating, autos, lighting, office equipment.
- Promote energy efficient equipment and awareness.
- Promote alternative energy sources and offer incentives.
- City buildings and fleets adopt energy conservation measures (alternate fuels, green buildings, etc.) Set example for private sector.
- Combine buffer, landscape, and recreation standards to meet water quality standards.
- Strictly control run-off from parking lots by requiring permeable parking and containment.
- Continue to clean up French Broad for use as a water supply.
- Recognize and honor natural resources, respect rivers and market quality as economic development issue.
- Big fan to move air away (Town Mountain).
- Micro recycling of water (especially industry).
- Natural buffers along waterways to filter run-off, prevent erosion, prohibit intense development along river.
- Turn stormwater into regional amenity (ponds, wetlands).
- Alternatives to asphalt or recycle asphalt waste.
- Track pollution to source and rectify.
- Control stormwater runoff.
- Enforce pollution laws - don't wait for clean up. No straight piping into rivers/streams throughout the region.
- Preserve existing trees during construction, etc., and keep trees untouched.
- Update building codes to encourage new technologies. (ex., re-use gray water systems).

- Promoting verifiable "green building" standards (energy conservation, renewable resources, etc.)
- Programs to support green design.
- Preserve forest and farm land.
- Encourage permeable parking areas/green space.
- Re-visit water rate structure so conservation is not penalized.
- Incentives for high standards for sustainable/green practices.
- Put air quality surcharge (tax) on non-commercial SUV's.
- Fix water leaks promptly, keep infrastructure up to date for water and MSD.
- Water conservation measures (repairs, maintenance, etc.).
- Use French Broad River as water supply.
- Accelerate infrastructure replacement for water and sewer lines.
- Expedite I-26 Connector.
- Systematic and complete replacement of water lines.
- Fix aging sewer system; switch priority from expansion to maintenance of existing lines.
- Improve effectiveness and efficiency of water resources operation (mapping, training, maintenance).
- Promote bus ridership to reduce air pollution.
- Revamp transit system to be more environmentally friendly (rail/trolley and City-owned hybrid vehicles).
- High density, mixed use, walkable communities.
- City to continue to work with Riverlink to develop/implement master plan.
- Regional planning and conflict resolution to solve air quality problems on interstate.
- Regional cooperation to reduce air pollution.
- Regional cooperation to address air/water pollution.
- Unify Water Authority for Henderson and Buncombe Counties.
- Find ways to reduce air pollution from other areas (political will).
- True regional water authority.
- Consolidate water and sewer systems in Asheville/Buncombe.
- Stricter pollution requirements for cars and trucks-encourage mass transit.
- Reward auto owners of small cars with tax incentives who use less/alternative fuels; create city ordinace that restricts high polluting autos.
- Require auto emission testing for autos.
- Support TVA reduction of emissions.
- Land use ordinances that discourage auto use.
- Auto emissions testing.
- Support clean smokestacks act.
- Ensure compliance with regulations to keep waterways clean of contaminants, litter, etc.
- Lobby for regional and national approach to air quality problems.
- Develop and improve and enforce industry standards for air and water pollution.
- Develop rigid standards to protect air and water quality and enforce through state to state (downwind) legislation for air quality.
- Establish and enforce national clean air rules.
- Work toward passing clean smokestacks bill.
- Focus community on air quality crisis and demand passage of Clean Smokestacks Act.
- Implement city fine for visible automobile exhaust - citizen reported.
- Greater regulation of industry to eliminate emissions/industrial pollutants.

- Statewide, may be Federal, approach to air and water quality control.
- Promote higher density.
- Create a walkable community that gets people out of their cars.

Economic Development Ideas

- A well thought out and aggressive marketing plan in force to bring jobs here.
- Recruit large scale venture capital firm.
- Business incubation/promotion of entrepreneurship including crafts.
- Discourage manufacturing industrial development and encourage high tech industry-tax incentives for high tech companies to move here. Encourage high wage employers to locate here and improve wage rates of existing employers.
- Network with existing businesses to determine their needs.
- Give incentives to environmentally friendly businesses (either practices or products).
- Use an outside expert to solicit ideas from existing businesses about what keeps them here and what first attracted them here.
- Coordinated effort between Chamber and City in business recruitment and set higher standards for business recruitment.
- Attract new economy businesses through technical education.
- Change business recruiting focus from Fortune 500 manufacturing to new-economy, small, clean industries (such as desktop publishing).
- Attract industries that are socially, culturally, and environmentally responsible.
- Attract clean, green, high-tech jobs.
- Target and recruit knowledge-based and creative industries.
- Community is our business/quality of life attracts quality jobs.
- Asheville is a regional hub for schools, government and medicine; promote businesses that support these large 'industries'.
- Increased interaction between schools and businesses.
- Deal with prostitution, pan-handling, e.g., Aston Park.
- Support locally owned and operated businesses.
- The major economic asset here is tourism so let's build venues, facilites, and improve the existing civic center to attract conventions and other large groups.
- Capitalize on heritage tourism and ecotourism. Promote historic preservation.
- Diversify economic development.
- Recognize and support building trade as an economic development tool and train people in that field; encourage apprenticeship to promote quality craftmanship and skills.
- Jobs should provide a living wage.
- Promote progressive and innovative development (smart business to compliment smart growth) holistic market analysis.
- Clean industry (non-polluting, non-junk creating biodegradable packaging).
- Diversify economy up from tourism and support and encourage small local businesses (in contrast to chasing large corporations).
- More jobs with living wage and benefits for variety of (all) cultures.
- Wages that keep our children in area.

- Businesses that invest in local employees.
- More jobs and training for disabled persons.
- Less emphasis on tourism.
- Specific business theme districts (arts, entertainment, car sales).
- Variety of job types in diverse economy.
- Education should promote skills needed for "new economy" technology oriented jobs such as medical, bio-tech, building on local strengths.
- Advanced degree in innovative program in environmental design/engineering/architectural/MBA.
- Educational excellence (UNCA, AB-Tech) leading to well trained employees and lifelong learning.
- Partner businesses with high and middle schools (mentoring, internships, etc.)
- Provide graduate and science/engineering programs at UNC-A.
- Emphasis on education-commitment to helping children succeed.
- Ensure awareness of available jobs and career opportunities (eg., in health sector).
- Raise educational standards (Buncombe County and City of Asheville) to give technical support to desirable businesses.
- Biomedical field focus-encourage UNCA to emphasize bio-med engineering.
- Full accountability for business impact on local environment and community and economic impacts.
- Tax incentives for new small local businesses.
- Quickly develop a regional industrial park near the airport.
- Regional industrial development.
- Bring high speed internet service to Asheville.
- Broadband infrastructure.
- Develop high-tech green business here by providing tax incentives and building infrastructure for broad base internet and make this cheap and affordable.
- More innovation in "Branding" (creating image) for Asheville-attracting businesses through development of new infrastructure (promote broad band-innovative community development).
- Continue to improve infrastructure especially airport and provide city wide high speed internet access.
- Improve infrastructure (quality of life) to encourage high-tech businesses.
- Create a "wired" community and affordable (high speed internet access) band with focusing on grass-roots e-business.
- Encourage high tech industry by investing in Broadband infrastructure.
- Recognize economic development is dependent upon land use, transportation and air/water quality.
- Applied research on alternative economic models: Mondragon in Spain-cooperative capitalism. Curitiba, Brazil and Porto Allegre, Brazil; Kerrola, India and Gaviotas, Columbia.
- We need a community audit, regional in scale to include natural, financial, cultural and human skills and talent.
- Continue emphasis on improvement of Downtown and Haywood Road (W. Asheville). Keep Civic Center downtown with integral sports complex.
- Public investment in river area to stimulate economic development.
- Keep downtown economically viable and diverse; redevelop Civic Center downtown.
- Develop a Regional Water Authority.
- Regional cooperation for economic development within

County and outside the County.

- Partnering between Asheville and Buncombe County to enhance economic development of area.
- Major urban design promotion for City.
- Urban Village at Sayles Bleachery.
- Expand tourism base with new attractions that build on existing base.
- Avoid sprawl.

Other Ideas

- Deal with litter/trash/dumping.
- Encourage community member participation in its neighborhoods.
- Encourage community civic mindedness.
- Affordable living-taxes, housing, living wage and social will to make it happen.
- Local/social/economic self sufficiency.
- Encourage local philanthropy for quality of living issues (parks, greenways, etc.)
- Effective solutions to drugs, crime, prostitution, pan-handling.
- Reengineer City government to encourage and engage community broad visioning to include social development.
- Broader based visioning-take time to ensure full participation over long term intense fashion.
- New isn't always better. Keep things that work in place.
- More harmonious inter-government cooperation through area (regional) planning.
- Encouraging social interaction through design in the built environment.
- More effective neighborhood planning (examples: involve neighborhoods earlier in the process, WECAN process).

Appendix B

Smart Growth Partners of Western North Carolina

Interview with Jackson Ward, Developer of the Gerber Urban Village

SGP - Your first proposal for the Gerber site was a fairly standard Super Wal-Mart. From a developer's perspective, what are the advantages of this type of development?

JW - With regard to the proposed Wal-Mart development we felt we were providing what the marketplace was demanding. The existing Wal-Mart store was experiencing strong annual growth in its sales volume. This growth got to the point where the physical design of the existing store was not sufficient to sustain this type of growth. The shoppers, which are the market, continued to support the store and more importantly the type and nature of the store, so we felt that it was appropriate for the immediate marketplace. From the developer's point of view, the immediate advantage of this type of development was that we were dealing with a financially viable tenant and as such our financial risk was minimal. In the end, this was a major driving point in addition to the fact that it was a here-and-now development rather than a project that was built-out over a number of years.

SGP - After Asheville City Council voted against the Super Wal-Mart proposal, you submitted a second proposal for a pedestrian-centered, mixed-use, urban village. Again, from the point of view of a developer, what are the advantages of this more complex type of development?

JW - With regard to the project which is planned now, the advantages include a project which is more openly acceptable to the community. The project potentially offers us the opportunity to increase the city's tax base beyond what the Wal-Mart would have provided. Obviously, this type of project offers a higher profit possibility, however, with this opportunity there is a higher risk quotient. We believe that the proposed project is better for the community and it offers the developer the opportunity to produce a project which is more aesthetically pleasing and a more enjoyable place to visit. To produce a quality project that everyone can point to as an example of quality development is a major benefit and accomplishment for any developer.

SGP - From a smart growth perspective, you've gone from the worst — a single big box in the middle of a sea of asphalt — to maybe the best — a pedestrian-centered high quality urban

village environment. How did you get from one extreme to the other?

JW - We went from one extreme to another by listening to the market and the community. We believe that there is a place for the Wal-Mart in the market and we also believe that there is a place in the market for the type of mixed-use project we have proposed. More specifically, we are doing mixed-use projects in the Florida market and when we studied the Gerber location we felt that this type of development would also be appropriate for this site as well. As time has gone by, we have become a much larger advocate for this type of development and less of a supporter of the big-box type development. We understand the concerns of the small shop owner with regard to the Wal-Mart intrusion and appreciate the quality of life these smaller shops bring to the community. While we appreciate the big-box concept we question if this is best from a community stand point.

SGP - At the Wal-Mart hearing, more than 200 people showed up to oppose the proposal. While for the urban village proposal, not a single person showed up to speak against it and several actually spoke in favor of it. Given this disparity in public opinion, why not go the urban village route in the first place?

JW - The urban village is a much riskier proposition from a financial stand point. It requires more capital, more time, and a larger appetite for risk. This is the simple answer and the truth. Wal-Mart was there with the demand and our risk was low. Now we are faced with a project that has higher risk. The community has stated that this is the type of project it wants. Now we are hoping that when we proceed with this development that the community will back up demand and truly support this project both from a demand and use stand point.

SGP - This isn't the first urban village style of development that you've done, can you tell us about some of your other projects and how you became interested in the urban village model?

JW - Our experience came about as a result of dealing with smaller parcels of land in highly dense markets. This type of development has been driven by the lack of viable land and the financial cost for such land. This coupled with the fact that most municipalities are now incorporating "new urbanism" design requirements in their codes have led developers to rethink how their projects are designed. We currently have two similar projects underway in South Florida with contain residential, retail and office all of which are integrated together. Both of these projects are significant financial undertakings each in excess of

$100,000,000 and both requiring a significant investment in time measured in years as opposed to months. We can tell you that these projects have been met with tremendous market demand and we are hopeful that our Gerber project will experience the same demand and acceptance.

SGP - Can you tell us a little bit about the property valuations of your big box proposal versus the urban village proposal? In other words, how much will the urban village add to Asheville's property tax base when completed and how much would the Super Wal-Mart have added?

JW - While we can not estimate the exact tax base numbers we can tell you the development cost numbers. The Wal-Mart costs were going to be in the neighborhood of $20,000,000 as compared to the new project which is estimated to cost approximately $60,000,000.

SGP - Is there anything else you would like to add?

JW - As we have previously stated before, we were disappointed with the outcome of the Wal-Mart situation at the time it occurred. However, in retrospect we are pleased with where we are now. This situation is due to an effort by all parties involved to try and reach a solution for the subject property that everyone could be happy with. Obviously, we cannot say enough about the City of Asheville's planning staff who were instrumental in reaching a resolution to this matter. We deal with many municipalities in the southeastern United States and we can tell you that you have leaders within that department that listen to not only what their dreams and wishes are, but also to the market realities and what developers can and can't accomplish. We are working very hard with John Spake, an Asheville native, to make sure that everyone's vision is realized with this development and the South Asheville marketplace in general.

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Appendix C

Charter of the New Urbanism

The Region

1. Metropolitan regions are finite places with geographic boundaries derived from topography, watersheds, coastlines, farmlands, regional parks, and river basins. The metropolis is made of multiple centers that are cities, towns, and villages, each with its own identifiable center and edges.
2. The metropolitan region is a fundamental economic unit of the contemporary world. Governmental cooperation, public policy, physical planning, and economic strategies must reflect this new reality.
3. The metropolis has a necessary and fragile relationship to its agrarian hinterland and natural landscapes. The relationship is environmental, economic, and cultural. Farmland and nature are as important to the metropolis as the garden is to the house.
4. Development patterns should not blur or eradicate the edges of the metropolis. Infill development within existing urban areas conserves environmental resources, economic investment, and social fabric, while reclaiming marginal and abandoned areas. Metropolitan regions should develop strategies to encourage such infill development over peripheral expansion.
5. Where appropriate, new development contiguous to urban boundaries should be organized as neighborhoods and districts, and be integrated with the existing urban pattern. Noncontiguous development should be organized as towns and villages with their own urban edges, and planned for a jobs/housing balance, not as bedroom suburbs.
6. The development and redevelopment of towns and cities should respect historical patterns, precedents, and boundaries.
7. Cities and towns should bring into proximity a broad spectrum of public and private uses to support a regional economy that benefits people of all incomes. Affordable housing should be distributed throughout the region to match job opportunities and to avoid concentrations of poverty.
8. The physical organization of the region should be supported by a framework of transportation alternatives. Transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems should maximize access and mobility throughout the region while reducing dependence upon the auto-

mobile.

9. Revenues and resources can be shared more cooperatively among the municipalities and centers within regions to avoid destructive competition for tax base and to promote rational coordination of transportation, recreation, public services, housing, and community institutions.

The Neighborhood

1. The neighborhood, the district, and the corridor are the essential elements of development and redevelopment in the metropolis. They form identifiable areas that encourage citizens to take responsibility for their maintenance and evolution.
2. Neighborhoods should be compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use. Districts generally emphasize a special single use, and should follow the principles of neighborhood design when possible. Corridors are regional connectors of neighborhoods and districts; they range from boulevards and rail lines to rivers and parkways.
3. Many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance, allowing independence to those who do not drive, especially the elderly and the young. Interconnected networks of streets should be designed to encourage walking, reduce the number and length of automobile trips, and conserve energy.
4. Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.
5. Transit corridors, when properly planned and coordinated, can help organize metropolitan structure and revitalize urban centers. In contrast, highway corridors should not displace investment from existing centers.
6. Appropriate building densities and land uses should be within walking distance of transit stops, permitting public transit to become a viable alternative to the automobile.
7. Concentrations of civic, institutional, and commercial activity should be embedded in neighborhoods and districts, not isolated in remote, single-use complexes. Schools should be sized and located to enable children to walk or bicycle to them.

8. The economic health and harmonious evolution of neighborhoods, districts, and corridors can be improved through graphic urban design codes that serve as predictable guides for change.
9. A range of parks, from tot-lots and village greens to ballfields and community gardens, should be distributed within neighborhoods. Conservation areas and open lands should be used to define and connect different neighborhoods and districts.

The Block, Street and Building

1. A primary task of all urban architecture and landscape design is the physical definition of streets and public spaces as places of shared use.
2. Individual architectural projects should be seamlessly linked to their surroundings. This issue transcends style.
3. The revitalization of urban places depends on safety and security. The design of streets and buildings should reinforce safe environments, but not at the expense of accessibility and openness.
4. In the contemporary metropolis, development must adequately accommodate automobiles. It should do so in ways that respect the pedestrian and the form of public space.
5. Streets and squares should be safe, comfortable, and interesting to the pedestrian. Properly configured, they encourage walking and enable neighbors to know each other and protect their communities.
6. Architecture and landscape design should grow from local climate, topography, history, and building practice.
7. Civic buildings and public gathering places require important sites to reinforce community identity and the culture of democracy. They deserve distinctive form, because their role is different from that of other buildings and places that constitute the fabric of the city.
8. All buildings should provide their inhabitants with a clear sense of location, weather and time. Natural methods of heating and cooling can be more resource-efficient than mechanical systems.
9. Preservation and renewal of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes affirm the continuity and evolution of urban society.