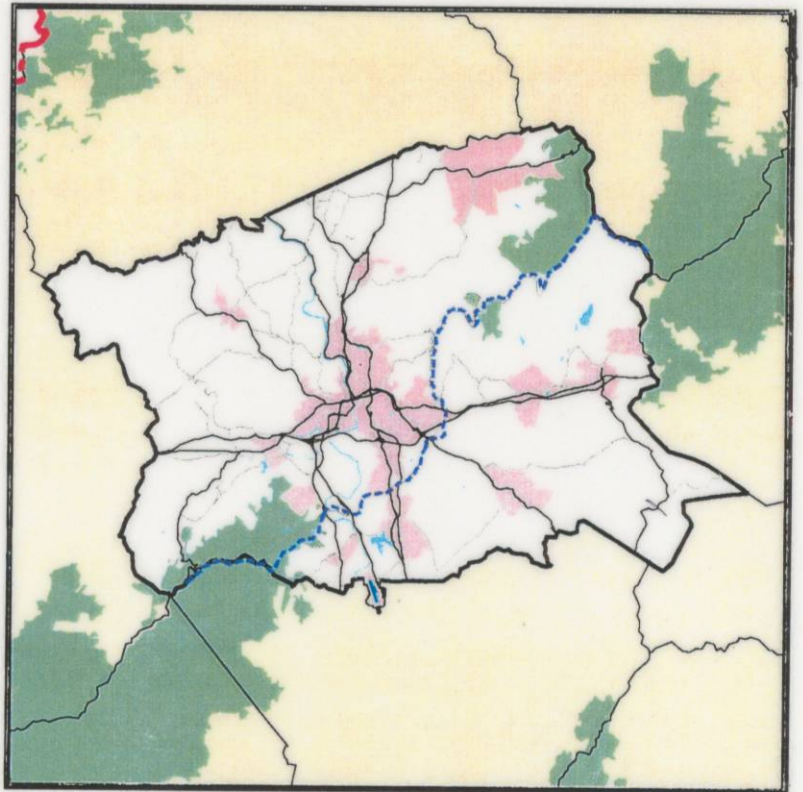


# BUNCOMBE COUNTY

## Comprehensive Land Use Plan



Submitted to: County of Buncombe  
Planning and Development  
46 Valley Street  
Asheville, NC 28801  
(828) 250-4830

Submitted by: LandDesign, Inc.  
1701 East Blvd  
Charlotte, NC 28203  
(704) 333-0325

October 22, 1998

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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### **County of Buncombe**

#### **Commissioners**

Tom Sobol, Chairman  
Patsy Keever  
David Young  
Bill Stanley  
David Gantt

#### **County Manager**

Wanda S. Greene, Manager  
Jon E. Creighton, Assistant Manager

#### **County Planning Department**

James H. Coman, County Planner

#### **Project Steering Committee**

J. Scott Hughes, Chair	Garrett Ramsey
Gary Roberts	Doug Clark
Robert Kendrick	Aubrey Wells
Albert Sneed, Jr.	Patricia Hutchison
Bob Selby	Vonna Fisher Cloninger
Jack Grant	Robert Yeager
Sheila Bennitt	Clay Mooney
Albert Sorrells	John Montcastle
Les Mitchell	Michael Morgan
Janet Moushey	Dean Reed
Leslee Reiter Thornton	Martha McFalls
Mike Tavener	Terry McElrath

#### **Technical Advisory Group**

W.H. Mull, Manager – Metropolitan Sewerage District  
W.D. Smart, P.E., Division Engineer – NCDOT  
Loring McIntyre, District Conservation  
Mike Holcombe, Asheville Buncombe Water Authority  
Bob Bowers, Superintendent – Buncombe County Board of Education  
Alan Lang, Division of Community Assistance  
Laura Rotegard, Community Planner  
Gerald Green, Asheville Planning Department  
Mac Williams, Economic Development Coordinator -  
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce

#### **Consultants**

LandDesign, Inc.  
Michael Gallis & Associates  
William G. Lapsley & Associates, PA  
Conservation Trust for North Carolina

# T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

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PHASE 1 PROJECT ORGANIZATION

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PHASE 2 PROJECT INVENTORY AND  
REGIONAL OVERVIEW

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PHASE 3 ANALYSIS AND COMMUNITY  
ISSUES FORUMS

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PHASE 4 LAND USE PLAN ALTERNATIVES  
PLAN MODEL AND FRAMEWORK

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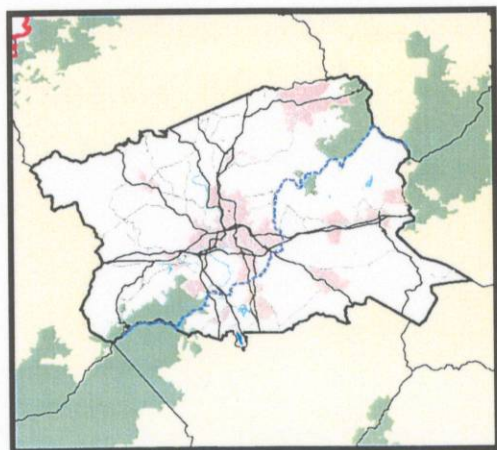
PHASE 5 FINAL PLAN & EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY

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## B U N C O M B E C O U N T Y

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### C o m p r e h e n s i v e L a n d U s e P l a n



C O U N T Y O F  
B U N C O M B E

PHASE 1

C O M P R E H E N S I V E  
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**P H A S E O N E**  
**F I N A L**

Prepared for:  
The County of Buncombe, Planning and Development

Prepared by:  
LandDesign, Inc.  
Michael Gallis & Associates

September 18, 1997

## P R E F A C E

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Phase One of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Buncombe County began in July of 1997 and continued through early August of 1997 when the Phase One Report was completed.

Phase One of the Land Use Plan provided an opportunity to organize the consultant team, establish the resources needs, determine the schedule, refine the process, identify the selection criteria for initiating committee members, and appoint the initiating committee. The Consultant Group met once with the Buncombe County Staff during this phase on July 15, 1997 to review the planning process, refine the project scope, determine the project schedule, discuss the direction of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and to take a partial tour of the County. During Phase One, the client and consultant team developed some preliminary goals and issues related to the project and described the team roles.

In Phase One, a report was prepared to record the decisions made relative to key goals and issues, initiating and technical committee selection criteria, project process and schedule, information needs, and team organization. These decisions will form the background structure for the entire planning process.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Buncombe County is to establish a "foundation" for land use planning in the County through an inclusive community participation process. This process will seek to record current conditions, understand the changing dynamics, and review land use plan alternatives. The final land use plan will be the result of input from a wide range of participants from across the county and across the various urban systems (transportation, infrastructure, etc.) and resource areas (culture, health, education, etc.).

## Global and Regional Changes

Global and regional changes are effecting the traditional social, economic, and urban pattern of Buncombe County. Traditionally, Buncombe County was primarily a rural area with small cities scattered across the landscape. Since 1980, the impact of the emerging global network and the rise of the Southeast has resulted in a dynamic shift in the traditional pattern of urban growth in the Carolinas. Today, the Carolinas are developing large urban centers called metropolitan areas that are composed of multiple cities meshing together to form single continuous urban units.

## Metropolitan Growth-Shaping Forces

Buncombe County is one of the central counties of an emerging metropolitan area in Western North Carolina. Dynamic changes are shifting the traditional patterns of this area and urban growth is transforming the region. New transportation projects and infrastructure development will continue this growth trend. Buncombe County has a tremendous opportunity to capitalize on its geography, resources, and dynamics.

Land use planning is an ongoing process which should involve the community at every stage in the decision making phase. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Buncombe County has been designed to accomplish the following three goals:

1. Document and understand the current conditions, systems, and resources of Buncombe County and what trends are taking place.
2. Define the opportunities and choices available to Buncombe County and what tools would be required to implement these choices.
3. Establish the vision that the community would like to select for their future and define the appropriate land use plan to match this vision.

## A Guide for the Future

Buncombe County is not a uniform county but instead is made up of multiple communities, each facing different issues and occupying different geographies. The Land Use Planning Process should be a first step towards reaching and understanding between the community, government, and consultants towards defining a guide for

development in the future. Through this process, Buncombe County will be able to examine various choices including: no action or present trend scenarios, community preferences, and technical recommendations. From these choices, the County can define its future.

Based on preliminary discussions between the consultant team and Buncombe County Planning staff, a list of key issues and goals were created. This list will serve as a starting point for the initiating committee, steering committee, and larger community forums which will modify these lists during the planning process.

**Key Issues**

- Community Involvement - include and balance both broad geographical, social, and resource representation.
- Coordination with Media - announcements and press coverage of the planning process.
- Urban vs. Rural Conflict - existing cities, urbanizing areas, and traditional rural communities within the same county.
- Relationship to Environmental Groups, Business Groups, and Neighborhood Groups.
- Resistance to Regulations / Zoning - tradition of resistance to government regulations including zoning, development standards, etc.
- Urbanizing Fringe - high growth in key areas of the county is effecting the distribution of resources across the county (e.g. urban growth and annexation).
- Traditional County Citizens vs. Newcomers - conflict between traditional community values and newly relocated citizens.
- Recognize issue of incompatible and undesirable land uses.
- Coordination of provision of infrastructure investment with growth.

**Goals**

- Establish a Land Use Plan that serves as a Foundation for Continued Land Planning and Future Development in Buncombe County
- Develop a Strategic Approach to Coordinated Infrastructure Development, Land Development, and Resource Conservation
- Mobilize the Community Through a Consensus Building Process to gain Critical Input and agreement on the Plan
- Represent Buncombe County government (Planning Department) Positively to the Community
- Provide an Enhanced Database for the Long Term Management and Analysis of Land Use
- Identify and Conserve Critical Environmental Resources
- Build understanding of the importance of land use planning among citizens and owners.

# PROCESS & SCHEDULE

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The project will be conducted over five phases with activities/tasks being provided as follows:

## **Phase One - Project Organization**

1. Meet with county staff to for an initial discussion of project scope/issues, participants, resource/information, and scheduling.
2. Prepare a detailed organizational report for the project based on an assessment of technical information/resources available from the Client, that provides the project schedule of activities/deadlines, information needs and resources, participants and project contacts, project logistics.

## **Phase Two - Project Initiation, Inventory, and Metro Region Overview**

1. Assist the county in forming the Citizen Initiating Committee; meet with the committee to provide an overview of the project and establish preliminary assessment of issues to be addressed by the project and identification of goals.
2. Research and prepare an inventory of existing county land use, environmental and urban resources, infrastructure.
3. Prepare an assessment/overview of growth forces and conditions affecting land use and development in the metro region.

## **Phase Three - Analysis, Land Capability Model, and Community Issues Forums**

1. Assist the Initiating Committee/Board of County Commissioners in forming the Project Steering Committee; meet with the committee to provide a project overview and finalize the definition of issues, project focus areas, and goals.
2. Prepare an analysis of land use, environmental and urban resources, and prepare the land capability model.
3. Conduct the Community Issues Forums to solicit input into the planning process.
4. Review existing codes/ordinances; prepare preliminary recom-



mendations for based on response to community input into land use planning.

**Phase Four - Land Use Plan Alternatives**

1. Prepare alternative land use concepts for different sub-areas/issues and working with staff and Steering Committee, select the preferred concept for each sub-area/issue.
2. Meet with area sub-committees of the Steering Committee to assess and evaluate the land use options.
3. Reconvene with the overall Steering Committee to coordinate the subarea/issue plans; review/finalize goals and recommended policy.

**Phase Five - Final Plan**

1. Integrate sub-area/issue plans to develop a final, comprehensive land use plan; complete final maps/exhibits; prepare a final report(s).
2. Meet with the Steering Committee to present/review the final plan.

## APPOINTMENT SCHEDULE

Appointments to the Initiating Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee should be made at the regular July 22, 1997, Board of County Commission meeting. Notification of these appointments should be made immediately, setting the first meeting of this group (to be facilitated by the project consultants) for August 12, 1997.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

**Phase One:** July, 1997

**Meetings:**

July 18 - meeting with staff to review project organization, schedule, tour the county.

**Deliverables:**

Phase One Report to county staff by August 4.

**Phase Two:** August, 1997 - October, 1997

**Meetings:**

August 12 - joint meeting with staff and Initiating Committee:  
review process/schedule  
review Initiating Committee's role  
brainstorm initial goal setting/issues identification  
review criteria for appointments to Steering Committee  
Meeting w/ staff to be scheduled  
September 18- Initiating Committee  
make appointments to Steering Committee  
status report/update on research  
Arrange meeting with Media- publishers, tv, radio.

**Deliverables:**

Phase Two Report to county staff and Initiating Committee by  
October 17, 1997

**Phase Three:** November, 1997 - January, 1998

**Meetings:**

October 23, 1997 Meeting with Steering Committee  
Subsequent meeting with staff to be scheduled  
January 14-15, 1998 Community Issues Forums  
January 22, 1998 Steering Committee Meeting/Staff

**Deliverables:**

Phase Three Report to county staff and Steering Committee by  
January 22, 1998

**Phase Four:** February, 1998 - April, 1998

**Meetings**

February 25,26, 1998 Alternatives Meetings  
March 19, 1998 Steering Committee Meeting/Staff  
April 16, 1998 Steering Committee Meeting

**Deliverables:**

Phase Four Report to county staff and Steering Committee by  
April 24, 1998.

**Phase Five:** May, 1998 - September, 1998

**Meetings**

June 11, 1998 Steering Committee Meeting  
Subsequent staff meeting to be scheduled

**Deliverables**

Complete draft final report to staff and Steering Committee by  
June 11, 1998  
Complete final report for delivery by September 18, 1998

## TEAM ORGANIZATION

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### **LandDesign, Inc.**

Brad Davis, Senior Partner/Principal  
Twyla McDermott, GIS Coordinator

LandDesign, Inc., Planners and Landscape Architects, is the prime consultant for the Buncombe County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and will direct the project work for the county, coordinate all consultant team activity, and insure the delivery of quality products according to the project schedule. Additionally, LandDesign will provide land use planning services and geographic information services for the project, coordinate activities with the project steering committee, and assist in the facilitation of community input into the project.

### **Michael Gallis & Associates**

Michael Gallis, Principal  
Todd Williams, Associate

Michael Gallis & Associates, Urban and Regional Planners, will co-direct the land use planning and the community facilitation components of the project with LandDesign. In particular, MGA will provide the audit of physical and demographic systems/resources, describe metro growth and a land use plan framework, assist in the preparation of plan alternatives and community consensus building.

<b>Phase 1</b> Project Organization 4 weeks	<b>Phase 2</b> Project Initiation 12 weeks	<b>Phase 3</b> Issues & Inventory 12 weeks	<b>Phase 4</b> Alternatives 12 weeks	<b>Phase 5</b> Final Plan 18 weeks
<b>Tasks:</b>				
Define <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope</li> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Schedule</li> <li>• Information Needs</li> <li>• Participants</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Logistics</li> </ul>	Define <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues</li> <li>• Goals</li> <li>• Document</li> <li>• Existing County Land Use Categories</li> <li>• Metro Region Urbanization Overview</li> <li>• Growth Forces &amp; Factors</li> </ul>	Finalize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues</li> <li>• Goals</li> <li>• Conduct community issues forum</li> </ul> Audit & Record <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Features</li> <li>• Urban Resources</li> </ul>	Develop and Evaluate Land Use Alternatives for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area 1</li> <li>• Area 2</li> <li>• Area 3</li> <li>• Area 4</li> <li>• Area 5</li> <li>• Area 6</li> </ul> Select preferred concept scheme for each sub-area	Develop Final Land Use Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate sub-area plans</li> <li>• Review and finalize goals</li> <li>• Complete required code / ordinance revisions</li> </ul>
<b>Community Organization:</b>				
<p>The flowchart illustrates the community organization process across the phases. It begins with an Initial Staff Meeting (mtg.) leading to the formation of an Initiating Committee (6-8 persons) and a Steering Committee (20-30 persons). A Technical Advisory Group (6-8 persons) is also formed. The Steering Committee oversees six Area-specific subcommittees (Area 1-6) and a central Community Issues Forums. All subcommittees and forums feed into an Alternatives Review process. The process concludes with a Final Presentation, leading to a Final Report and an Executive Summary Report, both marked with a Review (R) box.</p>				
<b>Deliverables:</b>				
Base Maps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buncombe County (G.I.S.)</li> <li>• Metro Region (Digital Illustration)</li> </ul> Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase One Report</li> </ul>	Data Mapping / Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major Features &amp; Characteristics</li> <li>• Buncombe County &amp; the Metro Region                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environment</li> <li>- Transportation &amp; Infrastructure</li> <li>- Urban Pattern</li> <li>- Existing Land Use</li> </ul> </li> </ul> Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase Two Report</li> </ul>	County Resource & Land Use Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Use Mapping</li> <li>• Environmental Resources                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natural Features</li> <li>- Parks</li> <li>- Agriculture</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Urban Resources                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Historic</li> <li>- Economic</li> <li>- Health</li> <li>- Education</li> <li>- Cultural</li> <li>- Governmental Facilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase Three Report</li> </ul>	Sub-area Alternative Land Use Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area 1</li> <li>• Area 2</li> <li>• Area 3</li> <li>• Area 4</li> <li>• Area 5</li> <li>• Area 6</li> </ul> Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase Four Report</li> </ul>	Create Final Land Use Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate Sub-area Plans</li> <li>• Create Final Maps &amp; Documents</li> <li>• Coordinate Ordinance Revisions</li> </ul> Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase Five (Final) Report</li> <li>• Executive Summary Report</li> </ul> G.I.S. Transfer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map Hard Copies</li> <li>• Digital File Exchange</li> </ul>

	July 1997	August	September	October	November	December	January 1998	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	
<b>Phase 1</b> Project Organization 4 weeks	(18) Staff Fourth of July		Labor Day		Thanksgiving	Christmas	New Years				Memorial Day		Fourth of July		Labor Day	
<b>Phase 2</b> Project Initiation 12 weeks		(12) Staff (12) I.C.	(18) Staff (18) I.C.													
<b>Phase 3</b> Issues & Inventory 12 weeks				Staff (23) S.C. (23)			Staff (22) S.C. (22) (14-15) C.F.									
<b>Phase 4</b> Alternatives 12 weeks								C.F. (25-26)	Staff (19) S.C. (19)	Staff (16) S.C. (16)						
<b>Phase 5</b> Final Plan 18 weeks													(11) Staff (11) S.C.			
<b>Legend</b>	Meeting (12) ← Date															Final Report (14)
	Report (4)															

**William G. Lapsley & Associates, PA**  
William G. Lapsley, PE

William G. Lapsley & Associates, Civil Engineers, will provide information to the project pertaining to physical infrastructure- roads and utility systems- and assist the project team in coordinating the provision of infrastructure in Buncombe County with planning for land use and development. WGL will specifically inventory information and plans for infrastructure extension and interview pertinent agencies for their input into the land use plan.

**Conservation Trust for North Carolina**  
Charles E. Roe, Director  
Anne L. Valentine, Associate

The Conservation Trust for North Carolina will provide assistance in the inventory and interpretation of environmental and cultural resources of Buncombe County, and overview the land use planning process from a perspective of environmental and cultural resource conservation. The Trust will specifically assist in the inventory of project data, interview pertinent agencies and conservation groups, assist in the analysis of physical development constraints, and provide input into the preparation of plan alternatives.

# INITIATING COMMITTEE

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## **Initiating Committee Appointments**

The Initiating Committee will be formed at the beginning of the planning process and will help guide the project and assist in directing the project: the committee will discuss and help identify issues, establish overall goals, help clarify and work through the process, assist the Board of County Commissioners in identifying project, select/identify steering committee members, and will be a sounding board for the land use plans and policy. Ideally, up to eight individuals should make up the Initiating Committee. Once the project Steering Committee is established, key members of the Initiating Committee will serve as its Executive Committee.

Appointments to the Initiating Committee should be based on both geographic representation and targeted resource areas. Since there are only six members of the committee the appointments should strategically seek out individuals who satisfy both the geographic and key resource requirements. Above all else, appointments to the Initiating Committee should be made on the basis of finding individuals who are good working as part of a team. The expectation is the committee appointment will last for 12-14 months and will involve a commitment of an average of one meeting per month.

## **Geographic Representation**

It is important for the Initiating Committee to be composed of individuals representing every geographic area of the county, including municipalities. It is not necessary for these individuals to be political representatives, but rather they should be residents of the area they are representing.

## **Key Resource Areas**

Appointments to the Initiating Committee should specifically seek to identify individuals who collectively can represent or provide a knowledge base of the following resource areas in the county:

1. County Commission (county manager's office or county planning office, for example)
2. Medical/health (major hospital, social service department)
3. Education (university, community college, school board)
4. Agriculture/environment (parks commission, natural resource department)



- 5. Real Estate (major developer)
- 6. Economic development (possible two appointment representing a chamber organization and a economic development organization)
- 7. Tourism/culture/arts (convention/visitors bureau, arts council)

Other resource areas which should be represented by appointments to the greater Steering Committee include communication technology, transportation, utility infrastructure, public safety, small businesses, and history.

**Appointments to Project Initiating Committee**

Vonna Cloninger	West / Erka District
Garrett Ramsey	Northwest / Erwin District
Scott Hughes	North District
Michael Morgan	Owens District
Les Mitchell	Southeast / Reynolds District
Bob Selby	South / Roberson District

# TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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## Technical Support Group

This Committee is a behind-the-scenes group who will consult with/advise the consultant team. The purpose of this group is to serve as a resource base for the consultants on technical matters involved with the land use plan. Appointments to the Technical Resource Group should be on the basis of technical support, not political representation. Four to six individuals should be appointed to this group on the basis of recommendations from the County Manager and Planning Director.

## Resource Representation

It is important for the Technical Support Group to be composed of individuals representing broad technical areas which will require significant input into the land use planning process. These individuals should not be political representatives, but rather they should be technical staff from various resource areas as described below.

Areas of expertise to be covered by this group should include transportation, utility infrastructure, water resources/hydrology, land records/geographic information, public services.

## Key Resource Areas

Appointments to the Technical Support Group should specifically seek to identify individuals who collectively can represent or provide a knowledge base of the following resource areas in the county:

1. Transportation (MPO Planner, DOT Planner, etc.)
2. Utility Infrastructure (County Utility Department)
3. Water Resources / Hydrology (Water Utilities, Waste Water Treatment, etc.)
4. Agriculture/Environment (Parks Department)
5. Land Records / GIS (County GIS Coordinator)
6. Public Services (Fire, Police, EMS, Social Services, etc.)

**Appointments to Project Technical Support Group**

W.H. Mull, Manager – Metropolitan Sewerage District  
W.D. Smart, P.E., Division Engineer – NCDOT  
Loring McEntyre, District Conservation  
Mike Holcombe, Asheville Buncombe Water Authority  
Bob Bowers, Superintendent – Buncombe County Board of Education  
Alan Lang, Division of Community Assistance  
Laura Rotegard, Community Planner  
Gerald Green, Asheville Planning Department  
Mac Williams, Economic Development Coordinator  
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce

**Appointments to Project Steering Committee**

Chair – J. Scott Hughes

**North Buncombe District**

Gary Roberts  
Robert Kendrick  
Albert Sneed, Jr.

**Roberson District**

Bob Selby  
Jack Grant  
Sheila Bennitt  
Albert Sorrells

**Reynolds District**

Les Mitchell  
Janet Moushey  
Leslee Reiter Thronton  
Mike Tavenor

**Erwin District**

Garrett Ramsey  
Doug Clark  
Aubrey Wells  
Patricia Hutchison

**Enka District**

Vonna Fisher Cloninger  
Robert Yeager  
Clay Mooney  
John Montcastle

**Owen District**

Michael Morgan  
Dean Reed  
Martha McFalls  
Terry McElrath

# **I N F O R M A T I O N   N E E D S**

## **A   G E N E R A L   P R O J E C T   O U T L I N E**

### **Political Units**

#### **1. Key Maps & Stats**

Maps of Municipal Annexation Limits - 1970, 1980, 1990, 1997  
Municipal Extra Territorial Jurisdictions (E.T.J.'s)  
Date of Incorporation - Municipalities  
Map of State Districts  
Map of Congressional Districts  
Map showing boundary of Council of Governments  
Map showing boundary of Regional Partnership

#### **2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)**

#### **3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Council of Governments, City Councils, County Board of Commissioners)**

### **Environment**

#### **1. Key Maps & Stats**

Location of Parks  
Location of Greenways  
Location of National Forests, Preserves, etc.  
Watershed Boundaries (Map of)  
Designated Wetlands Boundaries (Map of)  
Natural Heritage Sites (Location of)  
Environmental Hazard Sites (Location of)  
Water Basins (Map of)  
Location of Water Intakes  
Location of Water Discharges

#### **2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)**

#### **3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Sierra Clubs, Environmental Agencies , etc.)**

### **History**

#### **1. Key Maps & Stats**

Early Settlements and Dates  
Development Stages of the Region (Map of)  
Historic Districts (Map of)  
Historic Sites (Location of)  
Historic Museums (Location of)

2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Historic Commissions, Preservation Groups, Historic District Organizations)

**Culture / Arts / Entertainment / Sports & Recreation**

1. Key Maps & Stats

- Performing Arts Centers
- Visual Arts Centers
- Science Centers
- Civic / Art Centers
- Festivals (Location, Date, & Average Attendance)
- Sports & Recreation Centers
  - Golf Courses
  - Arenas
  - Stadiums
  - Ball Fields

2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Arts Councils / Boards, Sports Councils / Boards, etc.)

**Education**

1. Key Maps & Stats

- Public K-12 facilities
- Private Parochial and Non-Parochial facilities
- Community Colleges and Technical Colleges (Location and Major Programs)
- Colleges and Universities (Location and Major Programs)
- School Districts (Map of)
- Drop Out Rates
- % 25 and older w/out high school diploma
- % of population w/ high school only
- % of population w/ Bachelor's Degree
- % of population w/ Post Graduate Degree

2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: School Boards, Educational Consortiums, etc.)

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## **Transportation**

### **1. Key Maps & Stats**

- Commercial Airports (Location, Layout, Size in Acres)
- General Aviation Airports
- Interstates
- US Highways
- State Highways
- Local Streets
- Rail Network
- Rail Facilities (Intermodal & Bulk Transfer)
- Transit Network
- Metropolitan Planning Organization Boundaries (M.P.O.'s)
- Thoroughfare Planning Districts (boundaries and current plans)
- State Transportation Improvement Plans (T.I.P.)

### **2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)**

### **3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Department of Transportation , Metropolitan Planning Organization , Highway District Representatives, etc.)**

## **Infrastructure**

### **1. Key Maps & Stats**

- Water Network
- Sewer Network
- Solid Waste Facilities ( Location of)
- Utility Service Area Boundaries
- Wastewater Treatment Facilities
- Telecommunications Service Areas

### **2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)**

### **3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Electric Power Providers, Natural Gas Providers, Telecommunications Providers , etc.)**

## **Economic Development**

### **1. Key Maps & Stats**

- Major Office Parks / Buildings
- Major Retail Concentrations

- Major Hotels Facilities
- Major Industrial Developments
- Employment breakouts (by SIC Codes)
- Wage Rates
- Major Employers / Companies
- Cities and County Tax Base
- County Budgets
- Municipal Budgets
- Economic Sector Values / Sales
- Tourism Statistics
- Vacancy Rates - (Real Estate Sectors)
- Amount of Real Estate - (Real Estate Sectors)

2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Economic Development Commissions, Chambers of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, etc.)

#### **Health & Social Services**

1. Key Maps & Stats
  - Hospitals (location & number of beds)
  - Clinics
  - Nursing Homes
  - Private Physician Concentrations
  - Medical Schools
  - Social Service Facilities
2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Health Departments, Social Service Agencies, etc.)

#### **Public Safety**

1. Key Maps & Stats
  - Judicial Districts (Map of)
  - Courthouses
  - Police Stations
  - Fire Departments
  - Emergency Medical Facilities
  - Key Crime Statistics

- 
2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
  3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Fire Departments, Police Departments, EMS, etc.)

#### **Land Use**

1. Key Maps & Stats
  - Existing Regulations / Ordinances
  - Existing Land Use Maps
  - Existing Land Use Studies
  - Existing Zoning (if any)
2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Planning Commission, Planning Departments, etc.)

#### **Housing**

1. Key Maps & Stats
  - Housing Values
  - Contract Rents
  - Housing Conditions
  - Housing Types (number of units by type)
2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Housing Agencies, Regional Board of Realtors, etc.)

#### **Demographics**

1. Key Maps & Stats
  - Population - 1970, 1980, 1990, 1997, any projections
  - Age Characteristics (by category)
  - Income (per capita for 1970, 1980, 1990, 1997)
  - Key Labor and Wage Statistics (not gathered in Economic Development)
  - Key Education Statistics (not gathered in Education)



2. Bibliography (recent or key reports / documents)
3. List of Key Organizations (ie: Demographic Bureau's, etc.)

# INFORMATION NEEDS

## GIS DIGITIZED INFO FORMAT

The Buncombe County Comprehensive Land Use Plan will be anchored by a rich GIS database that will serve as a framework for documenting the current status of the County. The data collected for the study will be instrumental in effectively communicating issues during the public forums by providing an objective picture of the County in various categories such as the environment, economic development, and infrastructure. The GIS data will also serve as input to the Land Capability Model that will be modified for each of the County sub-areas based upon issues identified during the public meetings.

A "fast track" data needs inventory was initiated to identify geographic data required for the study. A GIS Data Needs matrix was prepared by combining information needs of the Project Team into spreadsheet format. The Data Needs Matrix lists specific data base layers of GIS information, the theme or category of data, availability, source and format. The matrix was forwarded to Buncombe County to allow the County to research data availability and begin the data collection process from various government agencies and utility providers.

Upon completion of the research, the Project Team will evaluate the acquisition and conversion of data in terms of format and costs. Data that is available in hard copy may require extensive resources for digital conversion. Other information, although currently in digital format, may be cost prohibitive. The Project team and the County will mutually determine where resources shall be allocated for data conversion efforts.

Buncombe County is currently converting their existing GIS data—primarily land records related layers, into ESRI's Arc/Info GIS format. The Project Team will also use Arc/Info GIS software for data management and analysis and has specified Arc/Info format data from source agencies. At the conclusion of the study, the County's GIS will be greatly enhanced by the inclusion of data layers compiled for the Study. The GIS database will provide the County with the basis for growth analysis beyond the current Study.

LandDesign, Inc.  
July 28, 1997

1

# GIS Data Needs

Ref. No.	Theme	Data Base Layer	Avail.	Source	Format	Explanation	Summary Level
1	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Civic Arts Centers					
2	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	NC Gamelands	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from NC-CGIA	
3	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Performing Arts Centers					
4	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Science Centers					
5	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Sports & Recreation Centers (Golf Courses, Arenas, Stadiums, Ball Fields)					
6	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Visual Arts Centers					
7	Demographics	% 25 & older w/out high school diploma	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
8	Demographics	% of population w/ Bachelors Degree	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
9	Demographics	% of population w/ high school only	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
10	Demographics	% of population w/ Post Graduate Degree	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
11	Demographics	Age Characteristics	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
12	Demographics	Current Year Population Estimate				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format, if available	
13	Demographics	Income - per capita for 1997					
14	Demographics	Income - per capita for 1970					
15	Demographics	Income - per capita for 1980					
16	Demographics	Income - per capita for 1990					
17	Demographics	Population - 1970	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
18	Demographics	Population - 1980					
19	Demographics	Population - 1990	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
20	Demographics	Population - 1997					
21	Demographics	Population - Projections					
22	Economic Development	Building Permit Data					
23	Economic Development	Employment	y	Bunc. Co.	hard copy	Conversion, 1990-1996	Township
24	Economic Development	Major Hotel Facilities				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
25	Economic Development	Major Industrial Developments					
26	Economic Development	Major Office Parks/Buildings					
27	Economic Development	Major Retail Concentrations				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format; may also show up as code in Tax File	
28	Education	Colleges & Universities					
29	Education	Community Colleges & Technical Colleges					
30	Education	Medical Schools					
31	Education	Private Parochial & Non-Parochial Facilities					
32	Education	Public K-12				Existing & proposed locations, any applicable data, either in hard copy or digital format	
33	Environment	Contours				Contour lines, digital format	
34	Environment	Designated Scenic Areas	p	Camp Dresser & McKee? Bill Lapsley			
35	Environment	Designated Trails					
36	Environment	Environmental Hazards Sites				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
37	Environment	FEMA Flood Plain (FIRMS)				Flood Plain data, digital format	
38	Environment	Greenways					

## GIS Data Needs

Ref. No.	Theme	Data Base Layer	Avail.	Source	Format	Explanation	Summary Level
39	Environment	Hydrography	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract hydro. from parcel data. Alt. source - 1995 TIGER/Line (LDI)	
40	Environment	Land Preserves					
41	Environment	National Forests					
42	Environment	Natural Heritage Sites (Rare & Endangered)				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
43	Environment	Parks				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
44	Environment	Soil Classifications	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records or NC-CGIA	Arc/Info	Detailed soil associations, digital format	
45	Environment	Water Basins					
46	Environment	Water Discharges	y	NC-CGIA	Arc/Info		
47	Environment	Water Intakes					
48	Environment	Watershed Boundaries				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
49	Environment	Wetlands	Partial, 7 of 11 quads	NC-CGIA, National Wetlands Inventory			
50	Health & Social Services	Clinics					
51	Health & Social Services	Health Departments					
52	Health & Social Services	Hospitals				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
53	Health & Social Services	Nursing Homes					
54	Health & Social Services	Private Physician Concentrations					
55	Health & Social Services	Social Service Facilities					
56	History	Historic Districts				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
57	History	Historic Museums					
58	History	Historic Sites	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from NC-CGIA, may need to be supplemented by Bunc. Co. info.	
59	Housing	Contract Rents	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
60	Housing	Housing Types (by number of units)	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
61	Housing	Housing Values	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original data from 1990 Census of Population	Block group
62	Infrastructure	Future & Phased Utility Extension Areas					
63	Infrastructure	Natural Gas Service Areas				Line or polygon digital data, or hard copy summary maps	
64	Infrastructure	Sewer Network	y	Metropolitan Sewer District of Buncombe Co.	AutoCAD		
65	Infrastructure	Solid Waste Facilities					
66	Infrastructure	Telecommunications Service Areas					
67	Infrastructure	Utility Service Area Boundaries				Line or polygon digital data, or hard copy summary maps	
68	Infrastructure	Wastewater Treatment Facilities					
69	Infrastructure	Water Network					
70	Land Use	Existing Land Use	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Land Use Areas: either as polygons or as code in Tax File that can be related to the parcels	
71	Land Use	Existing Zoning - Asheville & Other Municipalities					
72	Land Use	Existing Zoning - Beavertown Twp.					
73	Land Use	Existing Zoning - Limestone Twp.					
74	Land Use	Prime and Important Farmland	y	NRCS	hardcopy	Conversion	Classification
75	Land Use	SAA Land Cover	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original Data from SAA	
76	Political Units	Congressional Districts					
77	Political Units	County Line	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract from parcel data. Alt. source - 1995 TIGER/Line (LDI)	
78	Political Units	Municipal Annexation Limits - 1970, 1980, 1990					
79	Political Units	Municipal Annexation Limits - 1990	y	LDI	Arc/Info	Original Data from 1990 TIGER/Line Files	

### GIS Data Needs

Ref. No.	Theme	Data Base Layer	Avail.	Source	Format	Explanation	Summary Level
80	Political Units	Municipal Annexation Limits - 1997	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract from parcel data.	
81	Political Units	Municipal ETJ's					
82	Political Units	Regional Council of Governments Boundaries					
83	Political Units	Regional Partnership Boundaries					
84	Political Units	School Districts	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract from parcel data.	
85	Political Units	School Districts	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract from parcel data.	
86	Political Units	State Districts					
87	Political Units	Township Boundaries	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract from parcel data.	
88	Property Ownership	Parcel Data	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Parcels, with accompanying Tax File, Appraisal File, and/or any other related digital data files	
89	Public Safety	Courthouses					
90	Public Safety	Emergency Medical Facilities					
91	Public Safety	Fire Departments					
92	Public Safety	Fire Protection Service Boundaries				Any applicable data, either in digital or hard copy format	
93	Public Safety	Judicial Districts					
94	Public Safety	Police Stations					
95	Transportation	Commercial Airports	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract from parcel data. Alt. source - 1995 TIGER/Line (LDI)	
96	Transportation	General Aviation Airports					
97	Transportation	Interstates, US Highways, State Highways, Local Streets	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract ROWs from parcel data & classify. Alt. source - 1995 TIGER/Line (LDI)	
98	Transportation	MPO Boundaries					
99	Transportation	Rail & Rail Facilities (Intermodal & Bulk Transfer)	y	Bunc. Co. Land Records	Arc/Info	Extract from parcel data. Alt. source - 1995 TIGER/Line (LDI)	
100	Transportation	State TIP	y	Asheville Urbanized Area MPO	hardcopy	Conversion; need map	
101	Transportation	Thoroughfare Planning Districts					
102	Transportation	Transit Networks					

Reference Number	Theme	Information Element	Avail.	Source	Format
1	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Arts Councils/Boards			
2	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Festivals (Location, Date & Average Attendance)			
3	Culture/Arts/Entertainment/Sports & Recreation	Sports Councils/Boards			
4	Demographics	Key Education Statistics (not gathered in Education)			
5	Demographics	Key Labor & Wage Statistics (not gathered in Economic Development)			
6	Economic Development	Amount of Real Estate (Real Estate Sectors)			
7	Economic Development	Chambers of Commerce			
8	Economic Development	Cities and County Tax Base			
9	Economic Development	Convention and Visitors Bureau			
10	Economic Development	County Budgets			
11	Economic Development	Economic Development Commissions			
12	Economic Development	Economic Sector Values/Sales			
13	Economic Development	Employment breakouts by SIC			
14	Economic Development	Major Employers/Companies			
15	Economic Development	Municipal Budgets			
16	Economic Development	Tourism Statistics			
17	Economic Development	Vacancy Rates (Real Estates Sectors)			
18	Economic Development	Wage Rates			
19	Education	Drop Out Rates			
20	Education	Educational Consortiums			
21	Education	School Boards			
22	Environment	Environmental Agencies			
23	Environment	Sierra Clubs			
24	Health & Social Services	Social Services Agencies (List of)			
25	History	Development Stages of the Region			
26	History	Early Settlements and Dates			
27	History	List of Historic Commissions			
28	History	Lists of Preservation Groups/Organizations			
29	Housing	Housing Agencies			
30	Housing	Housing Conditions			
31	Housing	Regional Board of Realtors			
32	Infrastructure	Electric Power Providers			
33	Infrastructure	Natural Gas Providers			
34	Infrastructure	Telecommunications Providers			
35	Land Use	Existing "Visioning" Document			
36	Land Use	Existing Land Use Studies			
37	Land Use	Existing Regulations/Ordinances			
38	Political Units	Date of Incorporation - Municipalities			
39	Public Safety	Key Crime Statistics			
40	Transportation	Department of Transportation			
41	Transportation	Highway District Representatives			
42	Transportation	Metropolitan Planning Organization			

# C O U N T Y O F B U N C O M B E

## C O M P R E H E N S I V E L A N D U S E P L A N

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**P H A S E T W O**  
**F I N A L**

Prepared for:  
The County of Buncombe, Planning and Development

Prepared by:  
LandDesign, Inc.  
Michael Gallis & Associates

January 20, 1998



Phase Two of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Buncombe County began in August of 1997 and continued through December 4, 1997 when the Phase Two Report was completed.

Phase Two of the Land Use Plan provided an opportunity to initiate the project, inventory existing county conditions in select resource areas, and provide an overview of the region as a context for land use analysis. The Consultant Group met with the Buncombe County Staff, an appointed project steering committee, and a technical advisory group during this phase on August 12, 1997 and September 18, 1997 to review the County and regional inventory as well as to discuss key issues, goals, growth forces and factors.

A county-wide Steering Committee was appointed by the County Commissioner early in Phase Two in order to review data, reports, and maps.

In Phase Two, inventory maps were produced and a report was prepared to record the data and decisions made relative to key goals and issues. This information and planning decision will form the background context for the entire planning process.

The purpose of the Phase Two inventory is to document conditions in the following five areas: Natural Environment, Transportation, Infrastructure, Urbanization, and Land Use. Data from these areas will provide the leadership team and future community participants with a clear foundation of information and trends affecting land use in the county and across the larger region. In future phases, the information gathered in Phase Two will provide a launching platform for the development of land use alternatives, evaluation, and selection of preferred land use plans.

In Phase Three, this data will be supplemented with additional resource information and put into a land capability model. This model will provide a technical composite of land use capabilities throughout the county.

# SOUTHEAST CONTEXT

## Southeast

Until the 1980's, the Southeast remained a primarily rural region with a domestically-based economy with limited links to the global economy. The rise of Atlanta as the Southeastern US global hub has led to economic changes throughout the region. The Carolinas, following the lead of the Atlanta, developed 18 metropolitan areas with populations over 100,000.

Today, the Southeast can be described by its logistics pattern which includes road networks, ocean ports, rail patterns, commercial airports, surface cable, and satellite networks. These patterns define movements of goods, people, and information within this region and the region's larger connection to the global economy (See Fig. 2.1).

The Southeast has been the nation's fastest growing region over the last 20 years and will continue to emerge as a population and employment center. Key points within this region will have advantages over others as a result of network geometry, new network connections, and most importantly, the vision to plan for future demands.

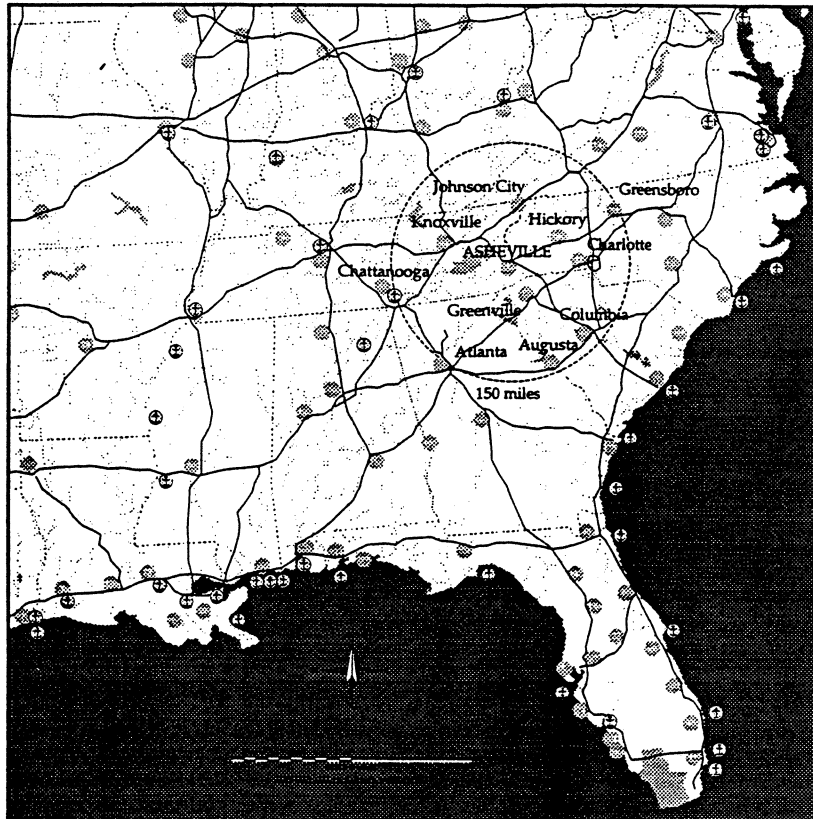


Fig. 2.1: Southeast

Throughout the 1970s, 1980s and into the 1990s, the Southeast (defined here as the 12 traditional Southern states) has grown faster than the nation as a whole. While the area is projected to continue to lead the nation in growth over the next 20 years, it will begin to taper off after 2015 and decline until the Southeast and the nation have equal growth rates for the period 2000 to 2025.

## **The Appalachians**

The Appalachian Mountains historically have been a barrier between the major population centers of the East Coast and the Midwest. Relatively few major interstate highways cross this mountainous region that parallels the East Coast between southern Canada to Alabama. There are few major urban areas located within this mountainous region due in large part to the topography of the area and the inherent access problems associated with their location. Mid- to small-size cities, including Charleston, WV; Roanoke, VA; Bristol, TN; and Asheville, NC are scattered throughout the region among many small towns and villages. However, the entire region is not densely populated.

## **Asheville's Location**

Strategic points within the Appalachians are at the points where major interstate highways cross the mountain range. Asheville is located at such a strategic point. At Asheville, I-26 intersects I-40 a major interstate highway connecting the East Coast with the West Coast. I-40 crosses the Appalachian mountain range and runs directly through Asheville. These two interstate highways have become primary shaping forces on the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and the surrounding areas. The Port of Charleston, a major East Coast seaport, is directly connected to Asheville via I-26. The major airports of Charlotte and Atlanta are both accessed via I-85 to the south of the region. With the completion of I-26 N to Johnson City, TN, the Midwest will be increasingly accessible to this area.

---

## **The Carolinas**

The Carolinas is a distinct two-state area which was divided by the British into North and South Carolina in 1732. Traditionally thought of as a region between Atlanta and Washington, D.C., the emergence of Charlotte as a national banking center, major air hub, and professional sports city, has given the Carolinas a growing national identity. The growth of Charlotte's identity has strengthened the identity of the other more traditionally well-known metros including Charleston, SC; Asheville, NC; Winston-Salem, NC; and Raleigh, NC. The strengthening of the Carolinas identity combined with the urban and agricultural resources of the two states, is fueling the growth of metropolitan areas across the Carolinas.

## **The Carolina MSA's**

There are eighteen Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA's) in NC and SC. These MSA's range in size from 1.29 million in Charlotte, down to 106,000 in Sumter, SC. The metropolitan areas are scattered across the two Carolinas from the Coastal Plain to the mountains. Along the Coastal Plain, there are four metropolitan areas, ranging from Charleston, SC, the largest with a population of 506,420 through Myrtle Beach and Wilmington, down to Jacksonville, NC with 143,000 people. There are eight MSA's in the Sandhills, the largest of which is Columbia, SC with a population of 481,718, down to Goldsboro, NC with 107,712. The four largest MSA's are found in the Piedmont with two in NC, one in SC, and the Charlotte MSA crossing the border of the two states. There are only two mountain MSA's including Hickory-Morganton with 310,236 and Asheville with 207,448.

## **Size and Growth Rates**

Of the eighteen Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA's) in North and South Carolina, the Asheville MSA ranks tenth overall with an estimated MSA population of 207,448 in 1995. The population of this MSA increased from 191,774 in 1990, an increase of 15,676 or 8.2%. This compares to the largest Carolina MSA, the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill MSA, with a population of 1,289,177 in 1995. This MSA had the largest population increase of 127,037 or 10.9% in the time period 1990-1995. However, the Carolinas MSA's with the largest percentage increase over this time period were the Wilmington, NC MSA with a 17.1% increase and the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill MSA with a 15.9% increase (See Fig. 2.2). The Asheville MSA was the 155th largest MSA in the US in 1992. However, this is a drop from the 153rd ranking it had in 1990. The Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill MSA was ranked 33rd in 1992, up from 34th in 1990.

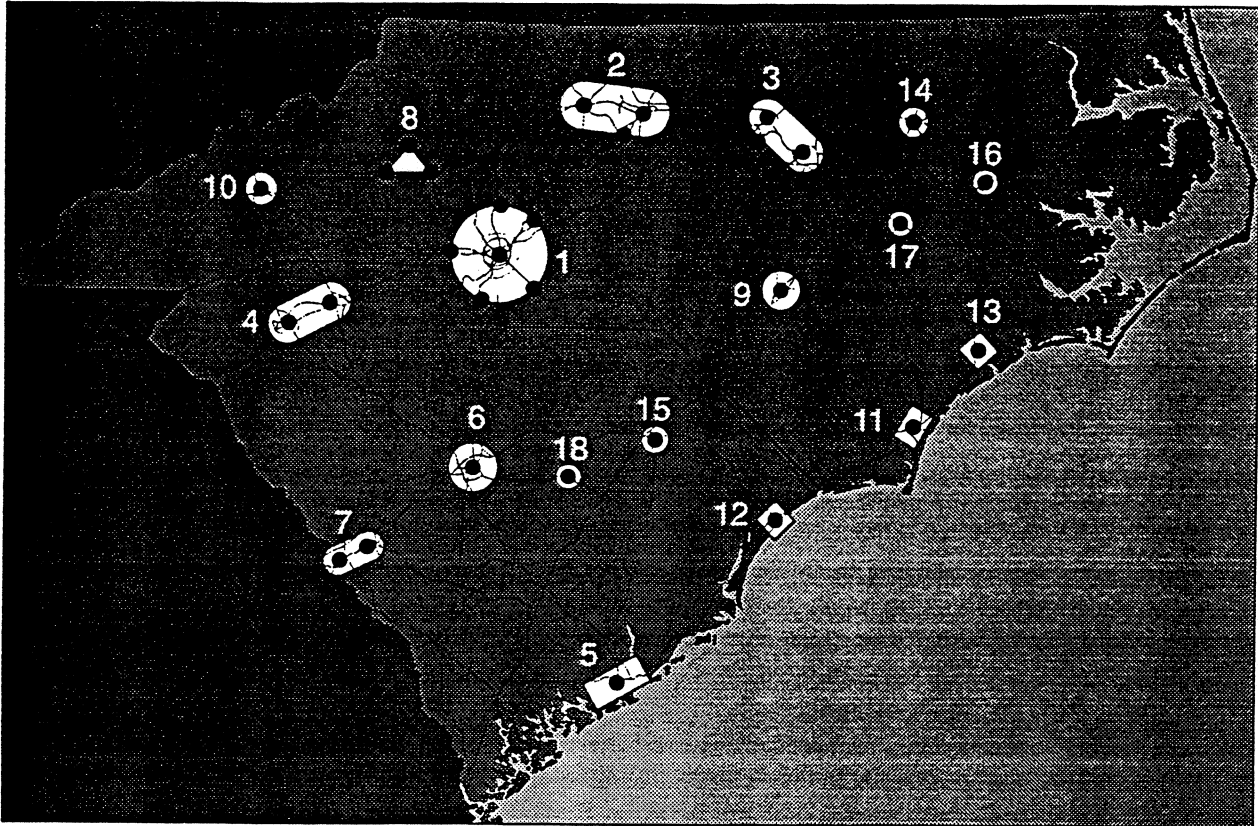


Fig. 2.2: MSA's of NC and SC

Metropolitan Area	Census	Estimated	Estimated	Change '90-'92		Change '90-'95		Rank	
	4-1-90	7-1-92	7-1-95	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	1990	1992
1. Clt-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC MSA	1,162,093	1,212,393	1,289,177	50,300	4.3	127,037	10.9	34	33
2. G'boro-Win.-Salem-High Pt., NC MSA	1,050,304	1,078,377	1,123,840	28,073	2.7	73,536	7.0	39	39
3. Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC MSA	858,485	910,894	995,256	52,409	6.1	136,771	15.9	50	48
4. G'ville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC MSA	830,563	852,962	884,306	22,399	2.7	53,767	6.5	55	55
5. Charleston-North Charleston, SC MSA	506,875	528,587	506,420	21,712	4.3	-457	-0.1	73	72
6. Columbia, SC MSA	453,331	471,837	481,718	18,506	4.1	27,786	6.1	79	78
7. Augusta-Aiken, GA-SC MSA	415,184	443,573	453,209	28,389	6.8	37,989	9.1	85	81
8. Hickory-Morganton, NC MSA	292,409	299,218	310,236	6,809	2.3	17,831	6.1	120	120
9. Fayetteville, NC MSA	274,566	277,322	285,869	2,756	1.0	11,156	4.1	126	127
10. Asheville, NC MSA	191,774	197,463	207,448	5,689	3.0	15,676	8.2	153	155
11. Wilmington, NC MSA	171,269	182,244	200,610	10,975	6.4	29,341	17.1	166	163
12. Myrtle Beach, SC MSA	144,053	152,321	157,902	8,268	5.7	13,849	9.6	189	186
13. Jacksonville, NC MSA	149,838	144,531	143,324	-5,307	-3.5	-6,514	-4.3	182	194
14. Rocky Mount, NC MSA	133,235	136,734	141,932	3,499	2.6	8,563	6.4	201	202
15. Florence, SC MSA	114,344	118,595	122,769	4,251	3.7	8,425	7.4	230	227
16. Greenville, NC MSA	108,480	112,474	117,740	3,994	3.7	9,260	8.5	239	238
17. Goldsboro, NC MSA	104,666	107,712	110,174	3,046	2.9	5,508	5.3	242	242
18. Sumter, SC MSA	101,276	103,723	106,823	2,447	2.4	5,547	5.5	245	243

Source: US Dept of Commerce, Bureau of Census

# METRO REGION

## Metro Region Context

The form of a region describes the shape, arrangement, and relationship of the urban and urbanizing areas of a metro region. It involves a description of the growth and dynamics which are the operative forces changing the form of the urban and rural areas of the region.

A metropolitan region can be described as the framework upon which the various regional centers and resources are organized and inter-connected. The structure describes both the transportation and development skeleton of a region and can be clearly broken into a hierarchical pattern of primary, secondary, and tertiary connections.

The Asheville metro is a form of a bi-polar metro area which is dominated by the city of Asheville, at the center of Buncombe County (See Fig.2.3). Hendersonville forms the secondary bi-polar node directly to the south along the I-26 corridor. Hendersonville, with a 1995 population of 9,274, is the third largest city of the Asheville metro behind Waynesville, with a 1995 population of 9,530. However, Henderson

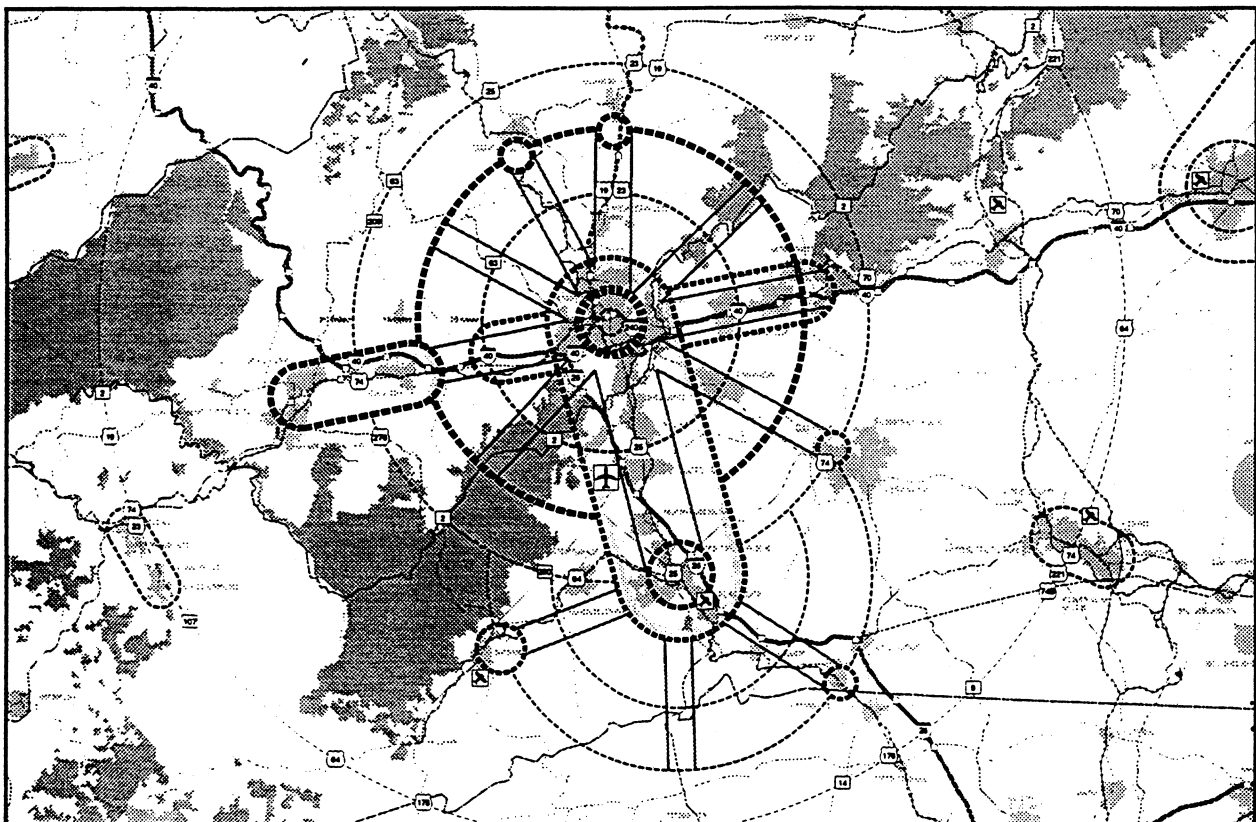


Fig. 2.3: Metro Form

County has consistently shown the highest growth of the regional counties between 1970 and 1995 (See Appendix 1). Between 1990 and 1995, Hendersonville (27.32%) had the second highest growth rate of any regional municipality with a population above 500, behind only Black Mountain (33.45%) (See Appendix 2).

However, urban development within this region is also highly influenced by the topology of the areas surrounding the metro areas. In addition, other centers are located at various distances from the center of the county, primarily set along transportation corridors such as I-40, I-26, US-19/23, US-25, and US-74.

### Counties

There are three groupings of counties that comprise the region in which Buncombe County is located. The "Metro" is defined by the counties that make up the Land of Sky Council of Governments (See Fig. 2.4). These counties include Buncombe, Henderson, Madison., and Transylvania. The "Eastern Region" is comprised of five counties

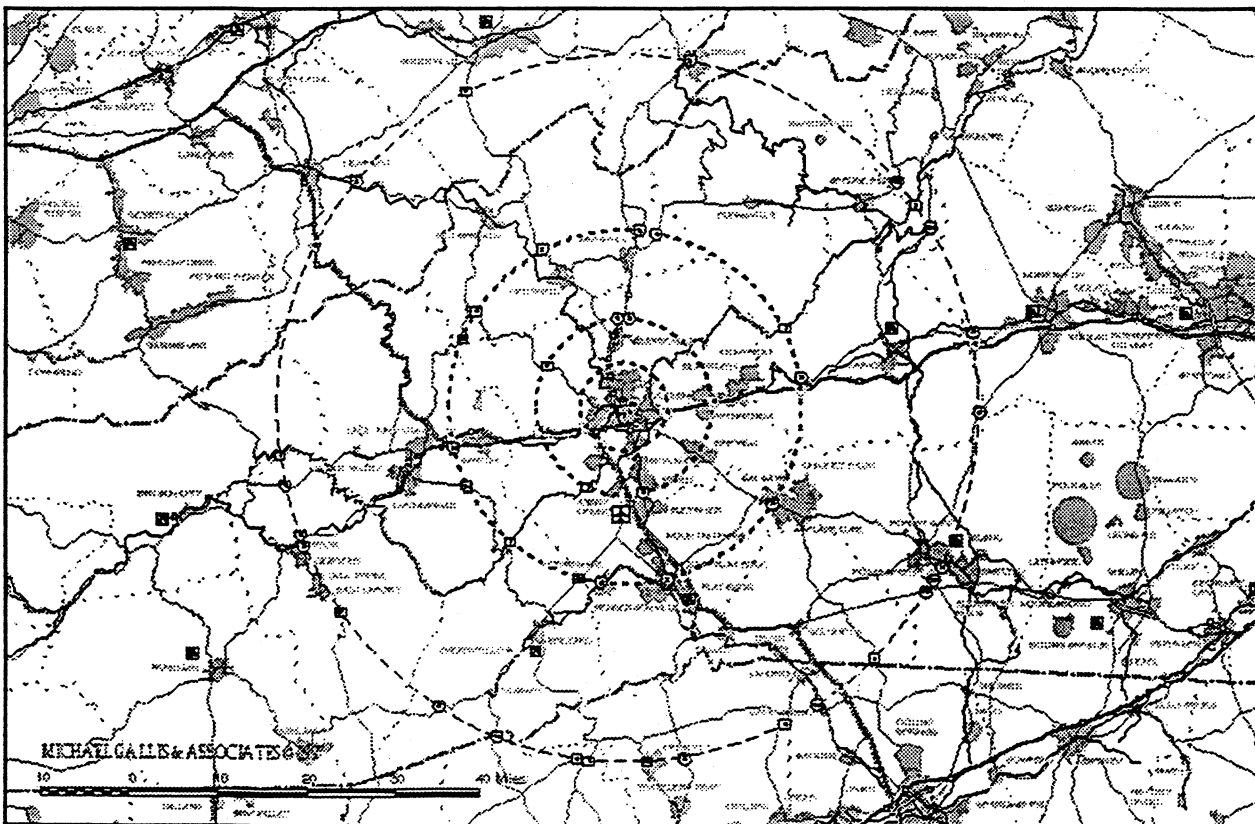


Fig. 2.4 Metro Region

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including McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, and Yancey Counties. The "Western Region" is comprised of Haywood, Jackson, and Swain Counties.

#### **Metro Urban Rings**

There are two rings of cities surrounding Asheville. The area comprising the Asheville Metro falls within the ring that is twenty miles from the center of the city. The Asheville Metro Region generally falls within the forty-mile ring.

#### **Metro Cities (Twenty-mile ring):**

The cities falling on or within the twenty-mile ring form the metro. These cities include: Asheville, Black Mountain, Biltmore Forest, Brevard, Canton, Chimney Rock Village, Clyde, Flat Rock, Fletcher, Hendersonville, Mars Hill, Marshall, Maggie Valley, Montreat, Old Fort, Weaverville, and Woodfin. Other communities falling within the twenty-mile ring include: Arden, Avery Creek, Bat Cave, Cherryfield, East Flat Rock, Fairview, Horseshoe, Lake Junaluska, Laurel Park, Mountain Home, Oteen, Skyland, and Swannanoa.

#### **Metro Regional Cities (Forty-mile ring):**

In addition to the metro cities, the cities falling on or within the forty-mile ring form the metro region. These additional cities between the twenty- and forty-mile rings include: Alexander Mills, Bakersville, Bostic, Brevard, Burnsville, Columbus, Dillsboro, Ellenboro, Forest City, Highlands, Hot Springs, Lake Lure, Maggie Valley, Marion, Rosman, Ruth, Rutherfordton, Saluda, Spindale, Spruce Pine, Sylva, Tryon, Waynesville, and Webster. Other communities falling within the forty-mile ring include Cullowhee, Irwin, Landrum, and Marietta,

In addition to these cities, the Cherokee Indian Qualla Boundary lies on the forty-mile ring. This 56,000 acre reservation established in 1889 borders the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and is home to over 10,000 residents.





# GROWTH SHAPING FORCES

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Many factors are instrumental in shaping the patterns of urban growth throughout a region. These factors may act alone in shaping area growth or may work in conjunction to spur quick growth in an area.

## PHASE II

Growth-shaping forces discussed in Phase II primarily deal with the physical environment and demographic factors of the region. These include the following factors:

### Environment

Important environmental factors shaping growth in the metro region include National and State Forests, watershed basins, rivers, lakes, forest cover, soils, topology, etc. These factors generally act as boundaries and limit urban growth.

### Transportation

Transportation factors affecting growth in the metro region include existing and future interstate highways, arterials, rail lines, and airports.

### Infrastructure

Infrastructure factors affecting growth in the region include existing and planned water and sewer lines, gas service, electric service, etc.

### Urbanization

Urbanization factors affecting the metro region include past urban development and growth as well as population change within the metro.

### Land Use

Current land use in the region is typified by low-density urbanization scattered throughout the county. There are no patterns of centers within the county. Land use will be studied further to determine existing land cover and land use and the effects these factors will have on future development.

### Demographics

Demographic factors studied include population growth, age, income, educational attainment, housing value, and density.

In addition to the growth-shaping forces addressed in Phase II, the existing resources and the patterns they form affect a region as well. These regional resources will be addressed in Phase III.

## **PHASE III**

Growth-shaping forces discussed in Phase III primarily deal with the resources of the region. These include the following factors:

### **History**

Historic resources within the metro region will be documented including historic districts and museums, as well as individual sites.

### **Culture and Arts**

Culture and Arts facilities such as museums, theaters, auditoriums, pavilions, teaching facilities, etc. will be documented.

### **Health**

Medical facilities including hospitals and specialty hospitals will be documented.

### **Economic Development**

The commercial development of the metro region will be documented including retail, industrial, office, and hotel development.

### **Education**

Educational facilities including colleges, community colleges, universities, public, and private schools will be documented.

# **E N V I R O N M E N T**

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## **METRO REGION CONTEXT**

Buncombe County is set within the Appalachian Mountains among some of the Carolinas' most important environmental resources. However, due to the topography of the area, these rugged mountains also act as a barrier to development throughout the region.

The county, at the headwaters of the French Broad River, is bisected by this river which flows from south to north through the largest core city of the metro at Asheville. This river then flows into the Tennessee River.

The greater region includes notable environmental resources including mountain ranges, national parks and forests, hiking trails, equestrian facilities, botanical gardens, lakes, rivers, etc. The county is also intersected and embraced on three sides by the Pisgah National Forest.

### **Environmental Resources**

Other important environmental amenities in the metro region include the Blue Ridge Parkway which links Buncombe County to both the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee. Additionally, the Appalachian Trail runs along the NC/Tennessee border through Swain, Madison, Yancey, and Mitchell Counties in the metro region. The region includes other notable environmental assets including Lake Lure, Chimney Rock, Hickory Nut Gorge, Linville Caverns, Looking Glass Falls, Whiteside Mountain & Devil's Courthouse, and Mount Mitchell among many others. Over 100 species of native trees grow in these mountains, equaling the number on the entire continent of Europe. Additionally, over 1,300 varieties of flowering plant grow in the Smoky Mountains.

### **Environmental Boundaries**

These same environmental amenities that enrich the metro region may also act as barriers to future development within the metro. Buncombe County is surrounded by State and National Forests which act as barriers to future urban expansion.

The Pisgah National Forest is split into two areas, one which is to the north and northeast of Buncombe County and one to the southwest of Buncombe County. The north/northeast portion of this forest encompasses parts of Haywood, Madison, Mitchell, McDowell, Yancey, and Buncombe Counties, as well as other counties outside of the metro region. The southern portion of this forest lies in por-

tions of Buncombe, Henderson, Haywood, and Transylvania Counties.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park encompasses portions of Swain and Haywood Counties, as well as portions of Tennessee to the west of Buncombe County. This is the most-visited National Park in the US, with more than 9 million visitors coming to this 520,408 acre park annually.

The Nantahala National Forest occupies a large part of the westernmost portion of NC. This forest encompasses the majority of Jackson County to the west of Buncombe County and a part of Transylvania County.

The Cherokee National Forest parallels the NC/Tennessee border in Tennessee. Though the Cherokee National Forest lies outside of the metro region, the US-23/19 corridor, which is the future route of the I-26 N extension, runs through this forest towards Johnson City, TN. This will affect future development along this corridor.

## BUNCOMBE COUNTY

### Environment

The natural structure and environmental attributes of Buncombe County are significant assets that should be well understood for their intrinsic and economic value and will also provide a basis to assess where urban growth is appropriate or not.

### The Drainage System

This structure is based on the drainage system, the French Broad River and its corresponding tributary streams and sub-basins. The river originates Transylvania County and flows north- essentially dividing the county in half as it flows into Madison County.

Significant tributaries of the French Broad River include the Swannanoa River and Hominy Creek which further subdivide the county and together establish the pass through which Interstate 40 travels, east to west across the county. Other tributaries include Avery Creek, Bent Creek, Cane Creek, Dillingham Creek, Ivy Creek, Newfound Creek, Reems Creek, and Turkey Creek. Also, the Broad River (which occupies a distinct watershed from the French Broad River) originates in the southeast corner of Buncombe County. The Broad River flows southeast into Henderson County and east to eventually join the Catawba-Pee Dee River system.

Some of the sub-basins are critically important because they are specifically maintained as sources for drinking water. Other drainage sub-basins are not so important as drinking water supplies, but nevertheless support a wildlife regime of plants and animals, which depends on maintaining good water quality. Protection of the county's water quality should be a primary goal related to land use and future growth.

A key component to the drainage system are the floodplains lying adjacent to the rivers and streams. The flood plains are typically more extensive with larger bodies of water (the French Broad River has massive flood plain areas in the county). However, some of the smaller creeks can also have large flood plains depending on the specific size and shape of the sub-basin and the local terrain. Reduction in functional flood plain area will induce greater flooding downstream and a more rapid flush of flood water, greater soil erosion, and degradation of water quality. Often, the most extensive wetlands are associated with flood plain areas. Wetland areas are protected from development in excess of one third of an acre by federal regulation.

#### Terrain and Soils

The character of the terrain and makeup of the subsurface soils are another primary component of the physical environment of Buncombe County. Being located in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and specifically in the French Broad River Valley, the county contains a full range of terrain features. In the lower parts of the valley, the terrain is generally gentle, ranging in slope from essentially flat (floodplains) up to 10% (hilly). These areas are more conducive to urban development because they require less earth moving and buildings can utilize conventional foundations.

Moving up the valley into the more hilly terrain, slopes can range up to 20% which become more difficult and expensive to develop. Greater impacts to the environment are expected when developing in steeper terrain as the probability of erosion increases dramatically and the visual effects of excavations or earth fills are often unsightly due to the cleared vegetation and unnatural appearance.

In the mountainous areas it is common for terrain to slope in excess of 20% up to 50%. These areas are practically impossible for building except for very small-scale development such as individual homes on very large acreages. Public infrastructure (water and sewer) is generally not available in the steeper terrain so that private systems (wells and septic tanks) are required in these locations. In the very steep conditions, it is often impossible to obtain soil

conditions that can support septic drain fields. For this reason, these areas are generally not conducive to development.

### Forest and Surface Cover

Since the 1920's when the forestry industry blossomed in North Carolina, the primary woodlands of Buncombe County have been severely depleted. Only small pockets of primary forest (mature deciduous woodlands) remain in isolated locations. The largest areas are in federal lands- the National Forest and National Park areas associated with the Blue Ridge Parkway. Agriculture (crop-land and tree farms) have certainly reduced prime woodland areas in the county, especially during this century, and continues to be a principal reason for woodland clearing. Nevertheless, vast acreages of woodland remain in Buncombe County even though it is second, third, or fourth generation.

Wildlife thrives in areas where a diversity of surface cover is provided. A forest having a variety of hardwood species including tree cover as well as ground and shrub layer species is perhaps most desirable. However, the combination of open fields, hedges, and woodlands is also a very productive environment for wildlife since it provides both shelter and food sources.

Important concepts for conservation include maintaining a variety of surface covers to encourage a diversity of wildlife and providing continuity of open spaces, i.e.: reducing the amount of encroachment or providing open space connections between wildlife zones.

### Geographic Zones

This map illustrates topographic contours, ridgelines (watershed divides), and watershed basins throughout the county. The physical structure of the county is created primarily by the French Broad River which carries the vast majority of runoff from smaller creeks and streams.

Another significant feature of the county is that much of its borders with adjoining counties are defined by mountain ridgetops. This feature provides for Buncombe County to be largely self-contained in terms of the watersheds contributing natural runoff into the county. Also, the mountains that form the county boundary also create a visual horizon so that the viewshed (the observable vista) is totally contained within Buncombe County. This is especially true along the county's east and west boundaries where the Blue Ridge Mountain range and the Pisgah Range, respectively, define the county perimeter. The eastern boundary includes landmarks such

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as Black Knob, Evans Knob, Swannanoa Gap, Graybeard Mountain, Walker Knob (5,429 asl), and Coxcomb Mountain (5,443 asl). The western boundary features include Pine Mountain, Ferrin Knob, Mt. Pisgah (5,721 asl), Newfound Mountain, and Sandymush Bald, among others. On the northern side of the county this feature of containment by the mountain ridges breaks down, as the French Broad watershed gets larger.

The river divides the county into east and west sections and is then further subdivided into multiple sub-basins of the French Broad. This information was provided by Buncombe County, Buncombe County Water Authority, and NC-CGLA.

#### Natural Areas

This map includes a depiction of NC State Parks, Federally owned Land, County Parks, Natural Areas and other significant areas, old growth forests, and wetlands identified on the National Wetland Inventory. The largest component of the natural area is comprised of the Pisgah National Forest. In Buncombe County, the Pisgah Forest is divided into two areas located in the northeast and southwest parts of the county. Included in the designation of Significant Areas is Biltmore Estate which occupies approximately 3,500 acres in south Asheville. Sources of this information include Land of Sky COG, Buncombe County, NC-GIA, and SAA Database.

#### Slope

This map depicts a classification of terrain throughout the county into four categories ranging from most gradual to excessively steep land. Terrain is described in terms of slope percentage, i.e.: the ratio of vertical change in elevation to horizontal distance. Areas having slopes in excess of 20% are considered prohibitive for development of roads and buildings. The exception to this is for very low density residential development (individual homes) which are carefully designed to seek out pockets of gradual terrain within much steeper areas on which to locate a dwelling. Areas with slope of 15-20% are too steep for extensive developments and will require extensive earthwork and/or building foundations especially adapted to the steep terrain (piers, stem wall, etc.) Much of Buncombe County consists of steep terrain. This condition has historically caused the majority of development to occur in the gentler, valley bottoms. The source of this information is SAA Database.



## Elevation

This map depicts elevation relief throughout the county, illustrated in intervals of 50 feet. The elevations shown are in relation to altitude above sea level. The source for this data is the SAA Database.

## Prime and Important Farmland

This map identifies the best agricultural areas of Buncombe County, based on soil types, which are known to be most suitable for forestry, cropland, and horticultural purposes. Important farmland in Buncombe County is identified by soil types and in areas which have less than 15% slope. Much of this land is alluvial (floodplain) soils associated with river and stream bottoms. Over the past twenty years much of this area has been consumed for urban development.

The farm industry in the county includes cropland (tobacco is the main cash crop), dairy and beef cattle, and horticulture including both nursery and Christmas tree farms. Considerable areas in the county utilize steeper terrain for grazing livestock. The source for this map is the SAA Database and the Soil and Water Conservation District Office.

## Designated Environmental Areas

Key environmental features are shown on this map including Federal and State identified rare and endangered species, state historic byways, high quality water resource areas, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and watershed protected areas. A majority of unique wildlife species appear in the mountainous areas of the county, with the numbers increasing in proportion to elevation and reduced human habitation.

Class 1 Watersheds are designated for drinking water and therefore completely restricted to development. The Asheville-Buncombe County Water Authority has two watersheds consisting of a total of 20,000 acres of completely undeveloped land to maintain its watershed protection.

Many of Buncombe County's country roads are scenic resources of the county. Several are designated as State Historic Byways and the Blue Ridge Parkway traverses approximately forty miles of the county. The sources for this map include NC-CGIA, SAA Database, and Land of Sky COG.

# TRANSPORTATION

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## METRO REGION CONTEXT

Buncombe County and the region is the crossroads for two major interstates, I-40 and I-26. The region is gaining greater access to surrounding regions through several road improvement projects, most notably the I-26 N extension which will connect to I-81 in Johnson City, TN. Additionally, I-85 is directly accessible via its intersection with I-26 in Spartanburg, SC. Approximately 75% of the nation's population is within a day's drive of Asheville. The arterial road structure of the region is primarily radial extending from the core city of Asheville with little or no circumferential road networks.

### Airport

The region's primary airport, Asheville Regional Airport, is positioned along I-26 between Asheville and Hendersonville. This airport is serviced by Atlantic Southeast, Comair, and USAirways/USAir Express. Asheville Regional Airport has 22 flights per day (Charlotte: 8, Atlanta: 8, Raleigh: 3, Cincinnati: 3). Other general aviation facilities are scattered throughout the region.

### Rail Service

Norfolk-Southern Railroad has two lines which cross in Buncombe County. One north-south line runs from Tennessee to the Greenville-Spartanburg metro while the east-west line is a dead-end line from western North Carolina that connects to Statesville and Salisbury to the north of Charlotte.

### Arterials

Land Use in Buncombe County has historically been associated with its principal roads so that one can easily trace the expansion of Asheville during the 1950s and 1960s by driving the older U.S. highways- U.S- 74, US-25, US-70, and US-19/23. Although there certainly has been more recent development along these corridors, and will continue to be, these are the original arteries and are where suburbanization began. Commercial uses in various states of decline are observable along these corridors. Naturally, the main residential areas have been built in the wedges of land between these main highways where other infrastructure services have been provided.

### Interstate Highways

The interstate highway system (I-40 East-West, I-26 South, and the I-240 Downtown Loop) to a great degree parallel the US highways in Buncombe County, reinforcing the growth pattern along these corri-

dors. However, the interstate highways have also displaced commercial development in particular, as sites near the interstate interchange have become available and serviceable.

Urbanization will obviously continue along the interstate routes. It is expected that when US-19/23 is converted to interstate status (I-26 North) greater emphasis on urbanization in the north, to Madison County, can be expected.

Other road improvement projects on the Transportation Improvement Plan (T.I.P.) will also encourage increased development. These projects include Highway 74 East through Fairview, Highway 191 (Brevard Road), Highway 151 (Pisgah Road), and Highway 63 (Leicester Highway).

## METRO REGION

### NC Highway Divisions

The region falls primarily within two highway divisions, Division 13 and Division 14. Buncombe County lies entirely within Division 13. Major road improvements and new facilities are planned in this region including improvements to existing I-40 and I-26, and planned extensions to I-26 N and utilizing US-19/23. This I-26 extension is currently under construction and will connect to the already completed extension of this interstate highway in Tennessee. These projects will improve overall regional access and access to the Midwest.

### Existing Road Network

The region's existing road network is highly influenced by the surrounding topography. Two major interstate highways, and one urban loop are located in the region. All of the region's interstate highways (I-40, I-26, and I-240) intersect in Asheville.

However, Asheville dominates the surrounding radial network of roadways serving the area as well. Asheville is the focal point of this radial network of arterial roadways which include US-74, US-25, US-70, US-19, US-23, NC-251, and NC-63. The majority of these roads follow the valleys and passes of the region. However, due to the topography, there are relatively few major circumferential roads through the area.

### Commuting Patterns

Buncombe County is a net in-commuting county. As of 1990, Buncombe County averaged 6,261 daily net in-commuters. The county with the greatest number of people commuting to Buncombe County was Haywood County with 2,744 daily net in-commuters. Polk County averaged only 59 daily commuters to Buncombe County (See Table 1).

<b>Daily Net In-Commuters to Buncombe County</b>	
<u>County</u>	<u># Commuters</u>
Haywood	2,744
Madison	2,621
Henderson	537
McDowell	470
Yancey	337
Transylvania	77
Rutherford	69
Polk	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,621</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 1990

Table 1: Region: Existing Transportation

## **BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

### Transportation

This map depicts the principal transportation systems in the county and includes the NCDOT Transportation Improvement Plan for 1997, Railroads, Airport, the MPO Urban Area Boundary, and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The main road projects identified on the county's TIP include:

1. The I-26 connector (approximately 1 mile of new interstate construction linking I-240 with US-19/23 across the French Broad River).
2. US-74 East (widening/realignment from Asheville to Bat Cave).
3. NC-151/Pisgah Road (widening/realignment from Candler to Pisgah Forest).
4. NC-63/Leicester Road (widening/realignment) scheduled to begin in 2003.

5. NC-191/Brevard Road (widening) scheduled to begin in 2005. Sources for this information include NCDOT, Buncombe County, and the SAA Database.

The Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning jurisdiction currently includes an area focusing on the City of Asheville and extending through about half of the county along the principal road corridors. It is expected that the MPO's jurisdiction will be extended in the near future to encompass the entirety of Buncombe County. At present, the MPO is preparing to conduct a Comprehensive Transportation Plan which will include multi-modal transportation systems.

# INFRASTRUCTURE

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## METRO REGION CONTEXT

Both the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) and Asheville Regional Water Authority have recently completed master plans which will guide the provision of infrastructure services in the county for years to come. Both entities have anticipated considerable growth in the southern part of Buncombe County, particularly in the Avery Creek, Limestone, and Fairview townships.

The MSD treatment plant presently has capacity to service anticipated growth although some of its current lines are substandard and are presently in progress or planned for upgrade. Should growth in the southern part of the county exceed expectations in the future, MSD may need to evaluate replacing interceptors or installation of a second treatment plant upstream on the French Broad River. Also, future development along I-26 North may require MSD to evaluate alternatives to service that area. The Regional Water Authority will be in a good position to service growth in southern Buncombe County with completion of the Mills River Distribution Plant.

Weaverville is presently constructing a new water plant at Forks of Ivy in north Buncombe County. This plant may be able to serve growth expected in the future I-26 North corridor.

Water and sewer lines extend primarily along major transportation corridors with significant expansion occurring in the south, and southeast quadrants.

## BUNCOMBE COUNTY

### Infrastructure - Sanitary Sewer Systems

Several jurisdictions in Buncombe County maintain sanitary sewer service districts in addition to MSD. These include Avery Creek which presently has lines going to the MSD pump station in that area. In addition, the municipalities of Woodfin and Weaverville maintain service areas and have provided lines linked to the MSD treatment plant.

Private package treatment plants account for some significant service in outlying areas. Some of the larger private systems include Bent Creek subdivision and Carmel Acres.

This map indicates the location of sanitary sewer lines and the service district area provided by the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD). Lines being improved or scheduled for upgrade are high-

lighted on the map. The MSD Sewage Treatment Plant is located in north Asheville on the French Broad River. Also shown on this map are the location of sewer pump stations.

### Infrastructure - Public Water Supply Systems

The location and extent of public water supply systems are shown on this map along with principal reservoirs and treatment plants. Planned facilities and lines planned for upgrade are also depicted on this map. The Asheville Regional Water Authority provides a regional water system with the main sources being Burnett Reservoir (30mgd), and Bee Tree Reservoir (5mgd). A new treatment facility, the Mills River Distribution Plant, is being planned in the southern part of the county scheduled to be operational in December 1998. Initially, this plant will have a capacity of 5 mgd, expandable to 20 mgd.

Weaverville and Woodfin have connections to the regional water authority. However, Woodfin maintains an independent water plant and Weaverville is currently constructing a plant at Forks of Ivy in the northern part of the county. Both Weaverville and Woodfin maintain WS-1 (Water supply) watersheds in the Reems Creek Valley. Both Black Mountain and Montreat also have water plants.

### Infrastructure - Gas

This map depicts the extent of natural gas lines and service area in the county.

# URBANIZATION

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## METRO REGION CONTEXT

The urban areas of the Appalachian Mountains are characterized by relatively few mid- to small-sized cities interspersed through a series of smaller towns and villages. These urban areas generally occur in the valleys of the mountain range versus development in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain where development typically occurs along ridgelines. As a whole, the area is not densely developed.

The primary and largest urban center of the southern Appalachians and of the region is Asheville. However, urban growth is occurring along the major transportation corridors radiating out from Asheville. Significant growth is occurring along I-26 S to Hendersonville forming a bi-polar pattern of urbanization between Asheville and Hendersonville. Urbanization is also occurring east and west along I-40 extending towards Canton and Waynesville to the west as well as Black Mountain to the east. Urbanization is also extending north along US-19/23 (future I-26 N).

### Existing Urbanization

As measured by the percentage of the population living in active, incorporated municipalities, Buncombe county has the highest municipal population percentage of all the counties in the area. Of the 188,736 residents living in Buncombe County in 1995, 44.1% of its population, or 83,248 people live within a municipality.

Rutherford County has the second highest percentage of residents living within municipalities with 31.0% of its residents in these areas. Rutherford County is followed by Haywood County (29.5% living in municipalities), Transylvania County (23.9%), and Henderson County (20.7%) (See Table 2).

The metro region has 35.03% of its residents living in municipalities. This compares with 21.82% municipal residents for the Eastern Region and 20.37% municipal residents for the Western Region. The region as a whole has 29.01% of its residents living in municipalities.

These municipal population percentages for the Buncombe County area are lower than the NC State average of 49.1% of residents living within active incorporated municipalities. Additionally, these county municipal population percentages are significantly lower than those of Mecklenburg County (91.4%), Guilford County (73.8%), Forsyth County (71.6%), Wake County (71.2%), and Catawba County (44.7%).



<b>1995 County Municipal Totals</b>				
<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>Total 1995 Population</b>	<b>Non-Muni. Population</b>	<b>Municipal Population</b>	<b>Percent Municipal</b>
Buncombe	188,736	105,488	83,248	44.10%
Henderson	76,250	60,431	15,819	20.70%
Madison	17,778	14,787	2,991	16.80%
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>27,168</u>	<u>20,667</u>	<u>6,501</u>	<u>23.90%</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>309,932</b>	<b>201,373</b>	<b>108,559</b>	<b>35.03%</b>
McDowell	37,244	31,430	5,814	15.60%
Mitchell	14,838	12,525	2,313	15.60%
Polk	15,743	12,501	3,242	20.60%
Rutherford	59,082	40,791	18,291	31.00%
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>16,143</u>	<u>14,585</u>	<u>1,558</u>	<u>9.70%</u>
<b>Eastern Reg.</b>	<b>143,050</b>	<b>111,832</b>	<b>31,218</b>	<b>21.82%</b>
Haywood	49,946	35,202	14,744	29.50%
Jackson	28,798	26,252	2,546	8.80%
<u>Swain</u>	<u>11,568</u>	<u>10,462</u>	<u>1,106</u>	<u>9.60%</u>
<b>Western Reg.</b>	<b>90,312</b>	<b>71,916</b>	<b>18,396</b>	<b>20.37%</b>
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>543,294</b>	<b>385,121</b>	<b>158,173</b>	<b>29.11%</b>
<b>Comparison Counties</b>				
Catawba	126,240	69,754	56,486	44.70%
Forsyth	279,904	79,486	200,418	71.60%
Guilford	372,097	97,506	274,591	73.80%
Mecklenburg	577,479	49,746	527,733	91.40%
Wake	518,271	149,222	369,049	71.20%
<b>NC</b>	<b>7,194,238</b>	<b>3,662,116</b>	<b>3,532,122</b>	<b>49.10%</b>
Note: "Municipal" refers to active incorporated municipalities				
Source: NC Office of State Planning and Michael Gallis & Associates				

Table 2: 1995 County Municipal Totals

**Development Patterns/Trends**

The city of Asheville is the most densely urbanized area of the region. This urbanization extends outward from this central city along the major metro region corridors (I-26, I-40, US-74, and US-19/23) and spreads in a radial pattern to the adjacent urbanized areas along the twenty-mile ring. The topology of the region has a signifi-

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cant influence on its urbanization. These main metro region corridors generally extend along valleys between rugged mountains and provide access to more developable areas. The mountainous areas are less developable and act as barriers to extended urbanization.

The most urbanized corridor is the I-26 corridor extending southward from Asheville to Hendersonville and Flat Rock. A string of smaller towns lines this corridor extending from Asheville past Hendersonville, including Skyland, Arden, Fletcher, and Mountain Home, East Flat Rock, and Flat Rock. Additionally, an area of urbanization extends from Hendersonville southwest to Brevard along US-64 and includes Horse Shoe and Etowah.

There is also an urbanized area consisting of a series of towns extending to the west from Asheville along I-40. These towns include Enka, Canton, Clyde, Lake Junaluska, and Waynesville.

The least urbanized area lies to the north of Asheville along US-19/23 leading to Weaverville at the ten-mile ring and Mars Hill at the twenty-mile ring. Woodfin and Stocksville lie along this corridor as well. Though this corridor has a relatively small amount of urbanization, growth in this area will most likely begin to increase rather rapidly with the completion of the I-26 extension leading to Johnson City, TN.

There is a small urbanized area to the east of Asheville. This area extends from Asheville to the east along I-40. Oteen, Swannanoa, Montreat, and Black Mountain, all within the twenty-mile ring, form the urbanized area.

Additionally, to the southeast of Asheville along US-74, lies an urbanized area including Fairview, Bat Cave, Chimney Rock, and Lake Lure.

### **City Limits**

Asheville originally formed around the area that is now Biltmore Avenue near its intersection with Patton Avenue and College Street. By 1900, the city limits had expanded greatly. The expansion ran southward to the Swannanoa River, eastward to the area of Kenilworth Road, northward to W.T. Weaver Boulevard and the Grove Park area, and westward to the French Broad River.

By 1960, Asheville had expanded primarily to the southeast, north and west. Asheville extended its limits out US-25 S to around the three-mile ring, and out US-70 past the three-mile ring. To the north, the city limits extended past the the point where US-25 N and

Elk Mountain Scenic Highway split to the area of the four-mile ring. To the west, the city limits were expanded out US-19/23 and NC-63 past the five-mile ring.

The 1960's saw little expansion of Asheville's city limits. However, during the 1970's, the city limits were expanded primarily along several of the major corridors of the city. This expansion included the area between US-70 and I-40 to the Blue Ridge Parkway at the four-mile ring to the east, the area between US-25 S and US-25A to Mills Gap Road at the five-mile ring, and smaller areas further out US-19/23 to the west and the Asheville Country Club to the north.

During the 1980's until the present, expansion has continued primarily along several of the area's corridors including US-70 and I-40 to the east, US-25 S past its intersection with NC-280 around the eight-mile ring, US-26 S and I-40 W around the seven-mile ring, and the area of Beaverdam Valley to the north of the city. In addition, the Asheville Regional Airport was annexed into the city during this time period.

## BUNCOMBE COUNTY

### Urban Growth

The geographic form of the county, a raised basin surrounded by mountains, historically provided for growth in the gentle terrain of the valley bottom, particularly associated with the arable soils of the French Broad River. Historic paths utilizing the river bottoms became the obvious locations for roads. These river bottoms were, and continue to be, the easiest place to build. Asheville was built on a hill overlooking the French Broad River out of danger of flood. However, subsequent growth and the emergence of other communities established the corridors in each direction as paths for urbanization, like "fingers" reaching up the valley.

As growth continues, remaining buildable land in the lower elevations has been, or is being developed. The fingers of growth continue to extend in each direction, especially where water and sewer infrastructure and significant road improvements have been made or are scheduled. This is most evident in the southern part of the county (in Avery Creek, Limestone, and Fairview townships) but is also evident in Swannanoa-Black Mountain, Lower Hominy, Enka, Leicester, and Weaverville.

Industries have historically been located either within Asheville proper, along the river, or have been the anchors for smaller com-

munities such as Swannanoa (Beacon Manufacturing) and Enka (BASF) - all textile related companies. Since 1960, new industries have largely elected to locate in more suburban locations for lower land costs and better truck access, and more recently, office and industrial parks have emerged in suburban locations. Sites such as Cane Creek Industrial Park, Airport Industrial Park, Avery Creek Industrial Park, and more recently, Vista Industrial Center have all been built in the southern part of the county. Numerous single industry sites exist and continue to be located in other areas.

Commercial growth outside the Asheville downtown has a decidedly "strip commercial" pattern. All the older US Highway corridors leading out of downtown, especially US-25 (Weaverville-Hendersonville Road), US-19/23 West (Canton Highway), and US-70 East (Black Mountain Road) have a blend of commercial generations, from original industries, Mom-n-Pop restaurants and motels, fast food establishments, old and new gas stations, to small strip centers in varying stages of decline. Newer commercial development including discount stores, hotels, shopping centers, and support services have generally elected to locate either further out the main highways in proximity to new residential development or adjacent to the interchanges of the interstate highways. There are two retail malls in Buncombe County which clearly anchor the retail development outside downtown. Asheville Mall, built in 1975, is located about two miles southeast of downtown on US-70/74 and Biltmore Square Mall, opened in 1992, is located six miles southwest of downtown at the I-26/Brevard Road interchange.

Until recently, residential development has occurred mainly in small subdivision developments (100 acres or less) or in single lot owner-financed construction. The majority of residential subdivisions have been built in southern Buncombe County where public water and sewer extensions have been practical, while much of the individual home construction has occurred in outlying areas with individual wells and septic tanks.

Only recently, large master-planned communities have become part of the county's residential alternatives. Biltmore Park, a 700-acre mixed-use development, was begun in 1993 and has dominated residential building permits in the county for the past two years.

Considerable mobile home units have been located in the county. Initially, mobile homes were used to augment individual homesteads for expanding families while more recently, mobile home communities have become more attractive as construction costs have increased.

**Buncombe County Municipality Growth: 1990-1995**

<u>COUNTY/Muni.</u>	<u>April-'90</u>	<u>July-'95</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>BUNCOMBE</b>	<b>174,819</b>	<b>188,736</b>	<b>7.96%</b>
Asheville	61,855	68,474	10.70%
Biltmore Forest	1,324	1,376	3.93%
Black Mountain	5,533	7,384	33.45%
Montreat	682	671	-1.61%
Weaverville	2,107	2,387	13.29%
Woodfin	2,736	2,956	8.04%
<b>NC</b>	<b>6,632,448</b>	<b>7,194,238</b>	<b>8.47%</b>

Source: NC Office of State Planning

Table 3: Buncombe County Municipality Growth: 1990-95

Urban Growth

This map depicts current boundaries of the municipalities in Buncombe County and specifically displays growth limits for Asheville in 1797, 1900, 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1996. The sources for this map are Buncombe County and the City of Asheville.

Population Change

Population change in Buncombe County from 1990-1996 by Township is depicted on this map (See Table 3). The 1990 population is based on the Census of the Population, US Bureau of Census data, and the 1991-1996 information is drawn from building permit data supplied by the City of Asheville and Buncombe County (housing units converted to persons).

# LAND USE

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## LAND USE CONTEXT

### Existing

Overall land use in the metro region is a low density spread of urbanization generally set within large rural areas. There are no large commercial centers within the area. Outside the traditional cities, the land use pattern is a random mix of residential and commercial development which results in a combination of residential and commercial traffic on the major and minor corridors throughout the region.

Existing land use in Buncombe County follows a trend typical of most urbanizing metropolitan areas. The county can be defined as primarily rural land uses with corridors and small pockets of intermittent commercial development extending from urban cities and centers. These corridors of commercial land use follow the established transportation corridors which fall primarily in topographic valleys throughout the county.

## METRO REGION

### Land Uses

#### Office

The major center of public and private office space in the region is located in downtown Asheville. Additional smaller concentrations are in Hendersonville. Other office space generally occurs in a scattered pattern, mainly located in single-story small buildings in the commercial strips along the major roads.

#### Retail

There are only two regional malls in the metro region, Asheville Mall and Biltmore Mall, both located in Asheville. There are several power centers which are generally located in the Asheville/Hendersonville metro corridor. Within the traditional cities and towns, retail is concentrated in the downtown areas and has grown in a strip fashion to extend out along all the major arterial corridors.

#### Industrial

The river forms the backbone of the industrial development. Both traditional industry and newly located asphalt plants are all located along the river. Traditional industry is located primarily in the

Asheville area while newer plants are locating north, further down the river.

### Institutional

Several major institutional centers representing clusters of medical, governmental, educational, and religious activities are located in the region. The major medical center is located in Asheville midway between I-40 and the I-240 Beltway. The University of North Carolina at Asheville is located to the northwest of downtown Asheville while concentrations of government buildings are located in downtown Asheville and Hendersonville. Montreat is a well-known and well-used religious center set in the rural area.

### Residential Land Uses

Residential land uses outside of the traditional cities are rather mixed and do not exhibit the typical aggregation of socio-economically defined neighborhoods associated with urban development. Within the cities, distinct neighborhoods with a more uniform socio-economic and physical character do exist. However, throughout the county residential development is mixed in such a way that stick-built single-family and multi-family housing coexists in close proximity with and mobile or manufactured housing.

### Agricultural/Environmental Land Uses

Agricultural uses are spread throughout the county. These uses have tended to be located in the flat valley lands which are also best for urbanization. Increasingly, agricultural and pasture land are disappearing as urbanization increases.

## **BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

### Land Use

This map depicts existing land use in the county and is depicted on a parcel-by-parcel basis. With the exception of downtown Asheville, relatively little commercial use is shown in large concentrations. As expected, the map depicts the majority of commercial development in the county either as linear growth along the main highways, (i.e. strip commercial) or as small clusters at the center of a community, or at a key intersection.

Industrial development has historically been located along the river, adjacent to the Asheville downtown and has extended mainly south.

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More recently, industrial parks have been established in proximity to the airport, particularly in the Avery Creek and Arden areas.

Between the urban corridors and mountain terrain, the county is dominated by large residential areas or vacant land. The presence of vacant land typically corresponds to areas which are very steep, lack water or sewer service, or both. Residential development in the county is a product of growing communities such as Weaverville and Black Mountain and unincorporated areas such as Fairview and Avery Creek. Information for this map was provided by the Buncombe County Land Records Office and the Buncombe County Assessor's Office.





# DEMOGRAPHICS

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## METRO REGION

### Past Population Growth

The region as a whole has experienced significant growth from 1970-1995. All counties in the metro region grew during the time frames studied. However, growth in this region was consistently slower than growth for NC as a whole. The Metro consistently had the highest growth rate between 1970 and 1995 as compared to the Eastern and Western Regions (See Appendix 1).

#### 1970-1980

The Metro, Eastern Region, and Western Region all had relatively close growth rates for this time period. The Metro grew at 16.18%, while the Eastern Region grew at 13.36% and the Western Region grew at 14.49%. The metro region as a whole grew at 15.09%. These growth rates were consistent with the NC growth rate of 15.65% for this time period as well as with the counties used for comparison.

The county with the highest growth rate for this time period was Henderson County with a growth rate of 36.83%. Buncombe County experienced growth of 10.95% while Madison County had the slowest growth of the region with a rate of 5.15%.

#### 1980-1990

Growth in the region slowed significantly during this time period. The metro still had the highest growth rate during this time period at 10.32%. The Eastern region had 4.27% growth while the Western Region had 2.99% growth. The metro region as a whole grew at 7.37%. However, this was much slower than the 12.79% growth rate for NC and the counties used for comparison.

Henderson County had the highest growth rate for this time period with 18.27% growth. Buncombe County experienced 8.63% growth while the county with the slowest growth was Mitchell County.

#### 1990-1995

Growth in the 1990's has roughly doubled the regional growth rates of the 1980's. The Metro has seen growth of 8.15% between 1990- and 1995 which would translate to 16.30% if projected for the entire decade. The Eastern Region has experienced growth of 4.52% (9.04% decade projection) and the Western Region has experienced growth of 6.18% (12.36% decade projection). The region as a whole grew at 6.84% (13.68% decade projection). However, NC grew at 8.47% for the time period (16.94% decade projection). Once again,

Henderson County showed the highest growth rate of 9.99% (19.98% decade projection). Buncombe County showed 7.99% growth (15.98 decade projection), while Swain County showed the slowest growth of 2.66% (5.32% decade projection).

## **Projected Population Growth**

The region as a whole is projected to experience growth through the year 2020. However, this growth will slow compared to the 1990's and will continue to slow through 2020. Some counties within the region may experience negative growth. Regional growth is projected to be significantly below the NC average (See Appendix 3).

### 2000-2010

The Metro is projected to experience the highest growth of the region during this time period. Growth in the Metro is projected to be 8.41%. The Eastern Region is projected to grow at 3.38% while the Western Region is projected to grow at 3.45%. The metro region as a whole is projected to grow at 6.29%, significantly lower than the growth rate of 10.76% projected for NC.

The county with the highest projected growth rate for this time period is Henderson County with growth projected at 10.85%. Buncombe County has a projected growth rate of 8.44%. The county with the lowest projected growth rate is Mitchell County at -0.94%, the only negative projected growth rate for the entire region.

### 2010-2020

Once again, the Metro is expected to experience the highest growth rate of the region during this time period. Growth during this time period is projected to be 6.84%. Projected growth for the Eastern Region should be 2.34%, while growth for the Western Region is projected to be 1.80%. Growth for the entire metro region is projected to be 4.90%. This is significantly lower than the projected growth rate of 9.40% for the state of NC.

The county with the highest projected growth rate is Henderson County, with growth projected to be 8.35%. Buncombe County has growth projected to be at 7.27%. The county with the lowest projected growth rate is Mitchell County with growth projected to be -1.53%, the only negative projected growth rate of the entire region.

<b>County Median Age/% Change 1986-1996</b>			
<b><u>County</u></b>	<b><u>1986</u></b>	<b><u>1996</u></b>	<b><u>% Change</u></b>
<b>Metro</b>			
Buncombe	35.46	38.66	9.02%
Henderson	38.76	43.11	11.22%
Madison	34.88	39.21	12.41%
Transylvania	35.77	41.15	15.04%
<b>Eastern Region</b>			
McDowell	34.17	37.98	11.15%
Mitchell	37.32	41.51	11.23%
Polk	41.43	45.21	9.12%
Rutherford	34.45	36.98	7.34%
Yancey	36.22	40.50	11.82%
<b>Western Region</b>			
Haywood	37.96	42.50	11.96%
Jackson	31.17	36.06	15.69%
Swain	34.07	37.83	11.04%
<b>Comparison Counties</b>			
Catawba	32.91	36.08	9.63%
Forsyth	32.72	35.64	8.92%
Guilford	32.19	35.44	10.10%
Mecklenburg	30.80	33.32	8.18%
Wake	30.07	32.35	7.58%
<b>NC</b>	<b>31.66</b>	<b>34.90</b>	<b>10.23%</b>
Source: NC Office of State Planning, Michael Gallis & Associates			

Table 4: County Median Age/% Change 1986-1996

### Median Age

The median age for the counties comprising the metro region was above the median age of 34.90 years for the entire state in 1996 (See Table 4). All twelve counties comprising the metro region had median ages higher than the NC median age. Only three of the twelve metro region counties (Buncombe, Polk, and Rutherford) had a lower percentage change in median age than the 10.23% change in median age for NC over this time period. Polk County had the highest median age of the metro region in 1996 at 45.21 years. However, its increase in median age was only 9.12%. Henderson County had the second highest median age of the metro region at 43.11 years in 1996, with an 11.22% increase in median age over

## County Per Capita Income/% Change 1991-1994

<u>County</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>% 1991-94</u>
<b>Metro</b>					
Buncombe	\$17,521	\$18,487	\$19,497	\$20,202	15.30%
Henderson	\$17,595	\$18,549	\$19,289	\$20,332	15.56%
Madison	\$13,086	\$13,672	\$14,692	\$15,140	15.70%
Transylvania	\$16,236	\$16,967	\$17,455	\$18,021	10.99%
<b>Eastern Region</b>					
McDowell	\$13,203	\$13,996	\$14,781	\$15,615	18.27%
Mitchell	\$13,249	\$13,911	\$14,560	\$15,271	15.26%
Polk	\$20,796	\$21,361	\$22,184	\$23,265	11.87%
Rutherford	\$14,023	\$14,937	\$15,736	\$16,491	17.60%
Yancey	\$12,446	\$12,979	\$13,646	\$14,546	16.87%
<b>Western Region</b>					
Haywood	\$15,101	\$15,700	\$16,275	\$16,973	12.40%
Jackson	\$13,170	\$13,971	\$14,767	\$15,253	15.82%
Swain	\$10,886	\$11,407	\$12,047	\$12,716	16.81%
<b>Comparison Counties</b>					
Catawba,	\$18,090	\$19,417	\$20,478	\$21,710	20.01%
Forsyth	\$21,445	\$22,578	\$23,568	\$24,567	14.56%
Guilford	\$20,462	\$21,613	\$22,613	\$23,717	15.91%
Mecklenburg	\$22,181	\$23,542	\$24,764	\$25,993	17.19%
Wake	\$21,843	\$23,070	\$24,020	\$24,841	13.73%
NC	\$16,802	\$17,835	\$18,720	\$19,567	16.46%

Source: NC Office of State Planning, Michael Gallis &amp; Associates

Table 5: County Per Capita Income/% Change 1991-1994

1986. Buncombe County had the eighth highest median age of the metro region at 38.66 years. However, it had the second-lowest percentage increase of only 9.02% behind only Rutherford County's percentage increase of 7.34% between 1986 and 1996. Jackson County had the lowest median age of the metro region at 36.06 years, but had the highest percentage increase of the metro region at 15.96%.

**Per Capita Income**

The per capita income of the metro region is generally below the 1994 NC per capita income of \$19,567 (See Table 5). Only three of the nine metro region counties (Buncombe, Henderson, and Polk)

exceed the 1994 NC per capita income. Polk County had the highest 1994 per capita income of the metro region at \$23,265. However, it had the second-lowest percentage increase in per capita income of the metro region at 11.87% between 1991 and 1994. Henderson County was second in metro region per capita income at \$20,332 in 1994 and a percentage increase of 15.56%, while Buncombe County was third at \$20,202 and a percentage increase of 15.30%. The county with the lowest 1994 per capita income in the metro region was Swain County at \$12,716. However, Swain County was one of only four metro region counties (McDowell, Rutherford, Swain, and Yancey) that exceeded the NC per capita income percentage increase of 16.46% between 1991 and 1994. McDowell County had the highest metro region percentage increase in per capita income during this time period at 18.27% while Polk county had the lowest percentage increase at 11.87%

#### **Education**

Only three counties (Buncombe, Henderson, and Transylvania) exceed the NC state average of 70.0% of persons aged 25 or above graduating high school in 1990 (See Table 6). Henderson County had the metro region's highest high school graduation rate with 76.2%, while Buncombe County had the second highest graduation rate at 74.5%. Mitchell County had the lowest high school graduation rate at 55.3%. The metro region fared slightly better in its percentage of college graduates when compared to the NC state average of 17.4%. Five metro region counties (Buncombe, Henderson, Jackson, Polk, and Transylvania) exceed the NC state average. Polk County had the highest metro region college graduation rate of 20.1%, while Jackson County had the second highest graduation rate of 19.7%. Buncombe County had the fourth highest graduation rate at 19.1%. McDowell County had the lowest college graduation rate of the metro region with 8.1% (See Table 4 for overall educational attainment).

#### **Housing**

Housing values were measured by the percentage of owner-occupied housing units falling within specified values for Buncombe County and the eleven surrounding counties (See Appendix 5).

Within individual categories, overall housing values in Buncombe County were very comparable to the overall housing values of North Carolina. Buncombe County had housing values closest to the NC average with the least deviation within individual categories, with Jackson County next closest to the NC average by

Percentage of Persons Age 25 or Above Graduating High School/ College: 1990			
<u>County</u>	<u>Persons ≥25 yrs.</u>	<u>% HS Grads</u>	<u>% College Grads</u>
<b>Metro</b>			
Buncombe	119,815	74.5%	19.1%
Henderson	49,650	76.2%	19.5%
Madison	11,167	56.4%	11.3%
Transylvania	17,344	72.1%	17.9%
<b>Eastern Reg.</b>			
McDowell	23,887	58.5%	8.1%
Mitchell	10,016	55.3%	9.2%
Polk	10,565	69.6%	20.1%
Rutherford	37,401	59.4%	9.8%
Yancey	10,589	60.7%	10.0%
<b>Western Reg.</b>			
Haywood	33,107	68.0%	12.8%
Jackson	16,169	68.7%	19.7%
Swain	7,389	59.0%	9.9%
<b>Comparison Counties</b>			
Catawba	77,710	66.7%	14.2%
Forsyth	176,502	77.6%	24.1%
Guilford	225,647	76.1%	24.8%
Mecklenburg	330,603	81.6%	28.3%
Wake	271,387	85.4%	35.3%
NC	4,253,494	70.0%	17.4%
Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990			

Table 6: % Persons ≥ Age 25 Graduating High School/College

deviation. For the most part, the other counties were significantly above or below the NC average.

Henderson and Transylvania Counties were the only counties in the region to exceed the NC average. Both of these counties had less housing in the bottom half of the value range than the NC average and more housing in the top half of the value range. Of all of the regional counties, Henderson County had the highest percentage of housing falling within the top value ranges (69.17%) followed by Transylvania County (64.35%). Buncombe had the third highest

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percentage of housing units within the upper half of the value range at 54.97%.

The remainder of the counties generally fall below the NC average in housing values. Madison County had the highest percentage of housing falling within the bottom-most value range (37.37%). However, McDowell County had the highest percentage of housing falling within the bottom half of the value range (71.13%) and also had the highest deviation from the NC average. Rutherford County had the second-highest percentage of housing falling within the bottom half of the value range (67.56%).

### **Population Density**

The metro region in general is less densely populated than the NC average of 147.66 persons/mile<sup>2</sup> in 1995 (See Appendix 6). Buncombe County (287.64 per./mi.<sup>2</sup>) and Henderson County (203.86 per./mi.<sup>2</sup>) are the only two counties in the metro region which exceed the average population density of NC. The remainder of the counties in the metro region generally fall significantly below the NC average with Swain County being the least densely populated at only 21.90 per./mi.<sup>2</sup>.

The metro at 166.80 per./mi.<sup>2</sup> is more densely populated than the NC average. However, Madison County at 39.55 per./mi.<sup>2</sup> is the second-lowest density county of the entire metro region. The Eastern Region (80.46 per./mi.<sup>2</sup>) and the Western Region (104.31 per./mi.<sup>2</sup>) both are both significantly less-densely populated than the Metro and NC averages.

## **BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

### **Demographics**

In 1997, the projected population for Buncombe County was 194,545, seventh largest in North Carolina. Between 1980 and 1990, Buncombe County grew at a rate of 8%. From 1990 to 1997, the county has grown 11.4%, a significantly greater rate of growth than any of the other mountain counties in North Carolina. While growth rates have increased throughout the state, Buncombe County's rate is more similar to those counties of the Piedmont Crescent. It is the seventh most populated county in the state and the eleventh most densely populated.

Significant to the growth in Buncombe County is the retirement age and tourism-related growth. During the period 1990-94, the service and transportation-communication-utilities related employment



areas grew by a combined 41.7 %, a significantly greater rate of growth than other employment sectors. Of the total population, 21.5% is 60 years or older. Also significant to the growth of Buncombe County is the recent growth in newly developing, upper income areas of the county. Although statistics are not yet available to support the emergence of a pattern, in the county's largest new planned community, 52% of the buyers are new to Buncombe County. Furthermore, the vast majority of these buyers are moving from distant metropolitan areas.

Population in Buncombe County is 90.9% white (75.6 % statewide); 8.2% black (22%); and less than 1% are other race or ethnic group (3.7%). The per capita income in the county was \$20,202 in 1994, compared to \$19,567 statewide, an increase over four years of 18.8%.

#### Population Density

The density of population in Buncombe County in 1990 in persons per acre is shown on this map. The source for this data is the Census of the Population, 1990, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

#### Per Capita Income

This map depicts per capita income of residents in Buncombe County in 1989. Data for this map was provided by the Census of the Population, 1990, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

#### Population Education

This map indicates the percent of Buncombe County's population 25 years of age or older who have obtained a bachelors degree or higher. This data is provided by the Census of the Population, 1990, US Bureau of the Census.

# APPENDIX 1

## COUNTY POPULATIONS: 1970-1995

<u>County</u>	<u>Apr-70</u>	<u>Jul-75</u>	<u>Apr-80</u>	<u>Jul-85</u>	<u>Apr-90</u>	<u>Jul-95</u>
Buncombe	145,022	153,400	160,897	167,083	174,778	188,736
Henderson	42,838	50,500	58,617	65,085	69,326	76,250
Madison	16,003	16,500	16,827	17,037	16,953	17,778
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>19,713</u>	<u>21,700</u>	<u>23,417</u>	<u>24,948</u>	<u>25,520</u>	<u>27,168</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>223,576</b>	<b>242,100</b>	<b>259,758</b>	<b>274,153</b>	<b>286,577</b>	<b>309,932</b>
McDowell	30,648	33,200	35,135	35,820	35,681	37,244
Mitchell	13,447	14,100	14,428	14,399	14,433	14,838
Polk	11,735	12,600	12,984	14,021	14,416	15,743
Rutherford	47,337	51,000	53,787	56,149	56,919	59,082
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>12,629</u>	<u>14,100</u>	<u>14,934</u>	<u>15,346</u>	<u>15,419</u>	<u>16,143</u>
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>115,796</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>131,268</b>	<b>135,735</b>	<b>136,868</b>	<b>143,050</b>
Haywood	41,710	44,500	46,495	47,344	46,942	49,946
Jackson	21,593	24,300	25,811	26,702	26,846	28,798
<u>Swain</u>	<u>8,835</u>	<u>9,900</u>	<u>10,283</u>	<u>10,846</u>	<u>11,268</u>	<u>11,568</u>
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>72,138</b>	<b>78,700</b>	<b>82,589</b>	<b>84,892</b>	<b>85,056</b>	<b>90,312</b>
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>411,510</b>	<b>445,800</b>	<b>473,615</b>	<b>494,780</b>	<b>508,501</b>	<b>543,294</b>
<b>Comparison Counties</b>						
Catawba	90,873	99,100	105,208	112,069	118,412	126,240
Forsyth	215,118	229,400	243,704	256,980	265,878	279,904
Guilford	288,645	302,000	317,154	329,572	347,420	372,097
Mecklenburg	354,656	377,400	404,270	448,830	511,481	577,479
Wake	229,006	267,600	301,429	360,387	426,301	518,271
<b>NC</b>	<b>5,084,411</b>	<b>5,538,200</b>	<b>5,880,095</b>	<b>6,254,998</b>	<b>6,632,448</b>	<b>7,194,238</b>

Source: NC Office of State Planning/Michael Gallis & Associates

## POPULATION PERCENTAGE CHANGE: 1970-1995

<u>County</u>	<u>%70-80</u>	<u>%80-90</u>	<u>% 70-95</u>	<u>%80-95</u>	<u>%90-95</u>
Buncombe	10.95%	8.63%	30.14%	17.30%	7.99%
Henderson	36.83%	18.27%	78.00%	30.08%	9.99%
Madison	5.15%	0.75%	11.09%	5.65%	4.87%
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>18.79%</u>	<u>8.98%</u>	<u>37.82%</u>	<u>16.02%</u>	<u>6.46%</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>16.18%</b>	<b>10.32%</b>	<b>38.62%</b>	<b>19.32%</b>	<b>8.15%</b>
McDowell	14.64%	1.55%	21.52%	6.00%	4.38%
Mitchell	7.30%	0.03%	10.34%	2.84%	2.81%
Polk	10.64%	11.03%	34.15%	21.25%	9.21%
Rutherford	13.63%	5.82%	24.81%	9.84%	3.80%
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>18.25%</u>	<u>3.25%</u>	<u>27.82%</u>	<u>8.10%</u>	<u>4.70%</u>
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>13.36%</b>	<b>4.27%</b>	<b>23.54%</b>	<b>8.98%</b>	<b>4.52%</b>
Haywood	11.47%	0.96%	19.75%	7.42%	6.40%
Jackson	19.53%	4.01%	33.37%	11.57%	7.27%
<u>Swain</u>	<u>16.39%</u>	<u>9.58%</u>	<u>30.93%</u>	<u>12.50%</u>	<u>2.66%</u>
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>14.49%</b>	<b>2.99%</b>	<b>25.19%</b>	<b>9.35%</b>	<b>6.18%</b>
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>15.09%</b>	<b>7.37%</b>	<b>32.02%</b>	<b>14.71%</b>	<b>6.84%</b>
<b>Comparison Counties</b>					
Catawba	15.77%	12.55%	38.92%	19.99%	6.61%
Forsyth	13.29%	9.10%	30.12%	14.85%	5.28%
Guilford	9.88%	9.54%	28.91%	17.32%	7.10%
Mecklenburg	13.99%	26.52%	62.83%	42.84%	12.90%
Wake	31.62%	41.43%	126.31%	71.94%	21.57%
NC	15.65%	12.79%	41.50%	22.35%	8.47%

Source: NC Office of State Planning/Michael Gallis & Associates

## APPENDIX 2

### MUNICIPALITY POPULATION CHANGE

<u>COUNTY/Municipality</u>	<u>April '90</u>	<u>July '95</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>NORTH CAROLINA</b>	<b>6,632,448</b>	<b>7,194,238</b>	<b>8.47%</b>
<b>BUNCOMBE</b>	<b>174,819</b>	<b>188,736</b>	<b>7.96%</b>
Asheville	61,855	68,474	10.70%
Biltmore Forest	1,324	1,376	3.93%
Black Mountain	5,533	7,384	33.45%
Montreat	682	671	-1.61%
Weaverville	2,107	2,387	13.29%
Woodfin	2,736	2,956	8.04%
<b>HAYWOOD</b>	<b>46,942</b>	<b>49,946</b>	<b>6.40%</b>
Canton	3,790	3,727	-1.66%
Clyde	1,041	1,124	7.97%
Maggie Valley	185	363	96.22%
Waynesville	8,438	9,530	12.94%
<b>HENDERSON</b>	<b>69,285</b>	<b>76,250</b>	<b>10.05%</b>
Flat Rock	1,619	1,806	11.55%
Fletcher	2,787	3,199	14.78%
Hendersonville	7,284	9,274	27.32%
Laurel Park	1,322	1,537	16.26%
Saluda (Part)	3	3	0.00%
<b>JACKSON</b>	<b>26,846</b>	<b>28,798</b>	<b>7.27%</b>
Dillsboro	121	157	29.75%
Highlands (Part)	4	4	0.00%
Sylva	1,809	1,919	6.08%
Webster	410	466	13.66%
<b>MADISON</b>	<b>16,953</b>	<b>17,778</b>	<b>4.87%</b>
Hot Springs	534	535	0.19%
Marshall	809	837	3.46%
Mars Hill	1,611	1,619	0.50%
<b>MCDOWELL</b>	<b>35,681</b>	<b>37,244</b>	<b>4.38%</b>
Marion	4,765	4,887	2.56%
Old Fort	732	927	26.64%

<u>COUNTY/Municipality</u>	<u>April '90</u>	<u>July '95</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>MITCHELL</b>	<b>14,433</b>	<b>14,838</b>	<b>2.81%</b>
Bakersville	332	339	2.11%
Spruce Pine	2,010	1,974	-1.79%
<b>POLK</b>	<b>14,416</b>	<b>15,743</b>	<b>9.21%</b>
Columbus	812	858	5.67%
Saluda (Part)	540	599	10.93%
Tryon	1,680	1,785	6.25%
<b>RUTHERFORD</b>	<b>56,919</b>	<b>59,082</b>	<b>3.80%</b>
Alexander Mills	662	684	3.32%
Bostic	371	366	-1.35%
Chimney Rock Village	116	137	18.10%
Ellenboro	514	521	1.36%
Forest City	7,475	7,776	4.03%
Lake Lure	691	781	13.02%
Ruth	366	372	1.64%
Rutherfordton	3,617	3,648	0.86%
Spindale	4,040	4,006	-0.84%
<b>SWAIN</b>	<b>11,268</b>	<b>11,568</b>	<b>2.66%</b>
Bryson City	1,145	1,106	-3.41%
<b>TRANSYLVANIA</b>	<b>25,520</b>	<b>27,168</b>	<b>6.46%</b>
Brevard	5,388	6,063	12.53%
Rosman	385	438	13.77%
<b>YANCEY</b>	<b>15,419</b>	<b>16,143</b>	<b>4.70%</b>
Burnsville	1,482	1,558	5.13%

Source: NC Office of State Planning/Michael Gallis & Associates

**COMPARISON COUNTIES**

<u>COUNTY/Municipality</u>	<u>April '90</u>	<u>July '95</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>CATAWBA</b>	<b>118,412</b>	<b>126,240</b>	<b>6.61%</b>
Brookford	451	457	1.33%
Catawba	539	638	18.37%
Claremont	980	1,015	3.57%
Conover	5,465	6,477	18.52%
Hickory (Part)	28,395	29,970	5.55%
Long View (Part)	2,995	3,096	3.37%
Maiden (Part)	2,470	2,828	14.49%
Newton	9,077	12,005	32.26%
<b>FORSYTH</b>	<b>265,878</b>	<b>279,904</b>	<b>5.28%</b>
Bethania	347	305	-12.10%
Clemmons	6,020	6,520	8.31%
High Point (Part)	6	3	-50.00%
Kernersville (Part)	10,899	13,146	20.62%
King (Part)	0	116	
Lewisville	6,433	7,093	10.26%
Rural Hall	1,652	2,561	55.02%
Tobaccoville	914	1,465	60.28%
Walkertown	1,200	3,459	188.25%
Winston-Salem	143,485	165,750	15.52%
<b>GUILFORD</b>	<b>347,420</b>	<b>372,097</b>	<b>7.10%</b>
Archdale (Part)	296	329	11.15%
Gibsonville (Part)	1,961	2,159	10.10%
Greensboro	183,894	193,298	5.11%
High Point (Part)	68,910	71,201	3.32%
Jamestown	2,662	2,859	7.40%
Kernersville (Part)	0	0	
Stokesdale	2,134	2,270	6.37%
Summerfield	1,687	1,769	4.86%
Whitsett	268	706	163.43%

Source: NC Planning Office/Michael Gallis & Associates

<u>COUNTY/Municipality</u>	<u>April '90</u>	<u>July '95</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>MECKLENBURG</b>	<b>511,481</b>	<b>577,479</b>	<b>12.90%</b>
Charlotte	395,934	469,809	18.66%
Cornelius	2,581	7,901	206.12%
Davidson (Part)	4,046	5,189	28.25%
Huntersville	3,023	7,343	142.90%
Matthews	13,651	18,362	34.51%
Mint Hill	11,615	15,859	36.54%
Pineville	2,970	3,270	10.10%
<b>WAKE</b>	<b>426,301</b>	<b>518,271</b>	<b>21.57%</b>
Apex	4,789	6,827	42.56%
Cary (Part)	44,397	65,909	48.45%
Fuquay-Varina	4,447	5,389	21.18%
Garner	14,716	17,248	17.21%
Holly Springs	1,024	3,203	212.79%
Knightsdale	1,884	3,463	83.81%
Morrisville (Part)	1,489	2,017	35.46%
Raleigh	212,092	249,332	17.56%
Rolesville	572	712	24.48%
Wake Forest	5,832	7,388	26.68%
Wendell	2,921	3,605	23.42%
Zebulon	3,173	3,956	24.68%

Source: NC Office of State Planning/Michael Gallis & Associates

## APPENDIX 3

### COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS: 2000-2020

<u>County</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>%2000-10</u>	<u>%2010-20</u>	<u>%2000-2020</u>
Buncombe	200,910	217,868	233,706	8.44%	7.27%	16.32%
Henderson	82,121	91,033	98,630	10.85%	8.35%	20.10%
Madison	18,509	19,062	19,393	2.99%	1.74%	4.78%
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>28,518</u>	<u>29,839</u>	<u>30,556</u>	<u>4.63%</u>	<u>2.40%</u>	<u>7.15%</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>330,058</b>	<b>357,802</b>	<b>382,285</b>	<b>8.41%</b>	<b>6.84%</b>	<b>15.82%</b>
McDowell	38,684	39,363	39,391	1.76%	0.07%	1.83%
Mitchell	15,079	14,937	14,708	-0.94%	-1.53%	-2.46%
Polk	16,725	18,228	19,587	8.99%	7.46%	17.11%
Rutherford	60,889	63,415	65,631	4.15%	3.49%	7.79%
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>16,695</u>	<u>17,139</u>	<u>17,343</u>	<u>2.66%</u>	<u>1.19%</u>	<u>3.88%</u>
<b>East Region</b>	<b>148,072</b>	<b>153,082</b>	<b>156,660</b>	<b>3.38%</b>	<b>2.34%</b>	<b>5.80%</b>
Haywood	52,062	53,464	54,033	2.69%	1.06%	3.79%
Jackson	30,358	31,851	32,822	4.92%	3.05%	8.12%
<u>Swain</u>	<u>11,919</u>	<u>12,282</u>	<u>12,500</u>	<u>3.05%</u>	<u>1.77%</u>	<u>4.87%</u>
<b>West Region</b>	<b>94,339</b>	<b>97,597</b>	<b>99,355</b>	<b>3.45%</b>	<b>1.80%</b>	<b>5.32%</b>
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>572,469</b>	<b>608,481</b>	<b>638,300</b>	<b>6.29%</b>	<b>4.90%</b>	<b>11.50%</b>
<b>Comparison Counties</b>						
Catawba	133,578	144,945	155,484	8.51%	7.27%	16.40%
Forsyth	294,822	314,364	333,497	6.63%	6.09%	13.12%
Guilford	394,958	425,404	454,088	7.71%	6.74%	14.97%
Mecklenburg	640,320	757,736	878,995	18.34%	16.00%	37.27%
Wake	602,245	758,364	918,936	25.92%	21.17%	52.59%
NC	7,713,383	8,543,312	9,345,962	10.76%	9.40%	21.17%

Source: NC Office of State Planning/Michael Gallis & Associates





## APPENDIX 4

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: PERSONS ≥ AGE 25

<u>County</u>	<u>Persons ≥ 25</u>	<u>&lt; 9th Grade</u>	<u>9 thru 12</u>	<u>HS Grad.</u>
<b>Metro</b>				
Buncombe	119,815	11,992 10.01%	18,559 15.49%	35,723 29.82%
Henderson	49,650	4,891 9.85%	6,922 13.94%	15,467 31.15%
Madison	11,167	2,522 22.58%	2,348 21.03%	3,318 29.71%
Transylvania	17,344	2,093 12.07%	2,749 15.85%	5,632 32.47%
<b>Eastern Region</b>				
McDowell	23,387	4,467 19.10%	5,441 23.27%	7,221 30.88%
Mitchell	10,016	2,497 24.93%	1,977 19.74%	2,875 28.70%
Polk	10,565	1,604 15.18%	1,604 15.18%	2,855 27.02%
Rutherford	37,401	6,610 17.67%	8,563 22.90%	11,160 29.84%
Yancey	10,589	2,219 20.96%	1,944 18.36%	3,476 32.83%
<b>Western Region</b>				
Haywood	33,107	5,229 15.79%	5,368 16.21%	10,730 32.41%
Jackson	16,169	2,399 14.84%	2,657 16.43%	4,641 28.70%
Swain	7,389	1,395 18.88%	1,638 22.17%	2,134 28.88%

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990

<u>County</u>	<u>Some College</u>	<u>Associate's</u>	<u>Bachelor's</u>	<u>Grad/Prof. Degree</u>
<b>Metro</b>				
Buncombe	21,394 17.86%	9,238 7.71%	14,934 12.46%	7,975 6.66%
Henderson	9,185 18.50%	3,500 7.05%	6,560 13.21%	3,125 6.29%
Madison	1,252 11.21%	463 4.15%	789 7.07%	475 4.25%
Transylvania	2,833 16.33%	926 5.34%	2,091 12.06%	1,020 5.88%
<b>Eastern Region</b>				
McDowell	2,924 12.50%	1,410 6.03%	1,234 5.28%	690 2.95%
Mitchell	1,266 12.64%	476 4.75%	597 5.96%	328 3.27%
Polk	1,824 17.26%	558 5.28%	1,368 12.95%	752 7.12%
Rutherford	5,298 14.17%	2,089 5.59%	2,510 6.71%	1,171 3.13%
Yancey	1,256 11.86%	636 6.01%	739 6.98%	319 3.01%
<b>Western Region</b>				
Haywood	4,992 15.08%	2,550 7.70%	2,810 8.49%	1,428 4.31%
Jackson	2,473 15.29%	817 5.05%	1,693 10.47%	1,489 9.21%
Swain	994 13.45%	496 6.71%	488 6.60%	244 3.30%

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990

<u>County</u>	<u>Persons ≥ 25</u>	<u>&lt; 9th Grade</u>	<u>9 thru 12</u>	<u>HS Grad.</u>
<b>Comparison Counties</b>				
Catawba	77,710	10,001 12.87%	15,879 20.43%	23,284 29.96%
Forsyth	176,502	15,902 9.01%	23,649 13.40%	51,206 29.01%
Guilford	225,647	20,452 9.06%	33,529 14.86%	59,502 26.37%
Mecklenburg	330,603	19,235 5.82%	41,671 12.60%	76,305 23.08%
Wake	271,387	14,800 5.45%	24,937 9.19%	57,917 21.34%
NC	4,253,494	539,974 12.69%	737,773 17.35%	1,232,868 28.98%

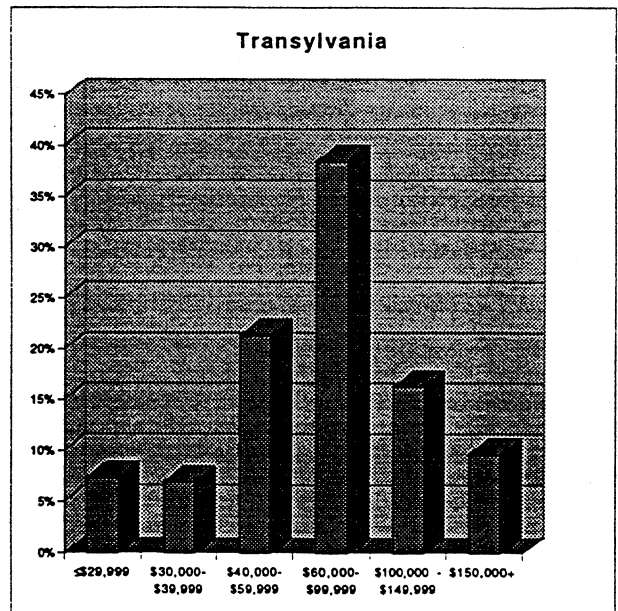
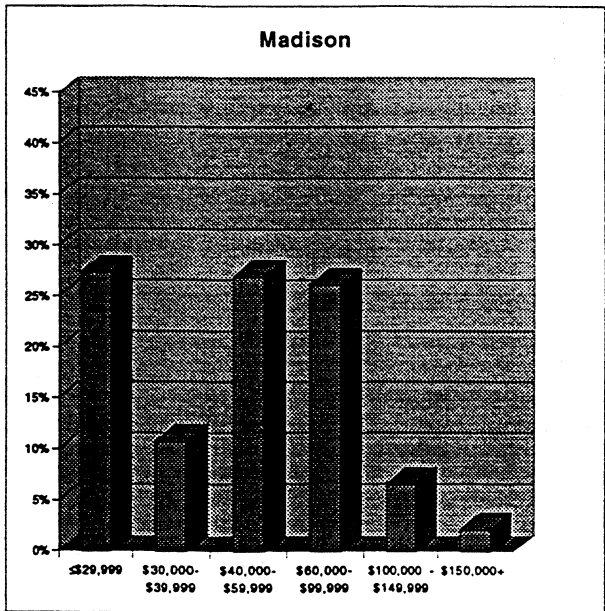
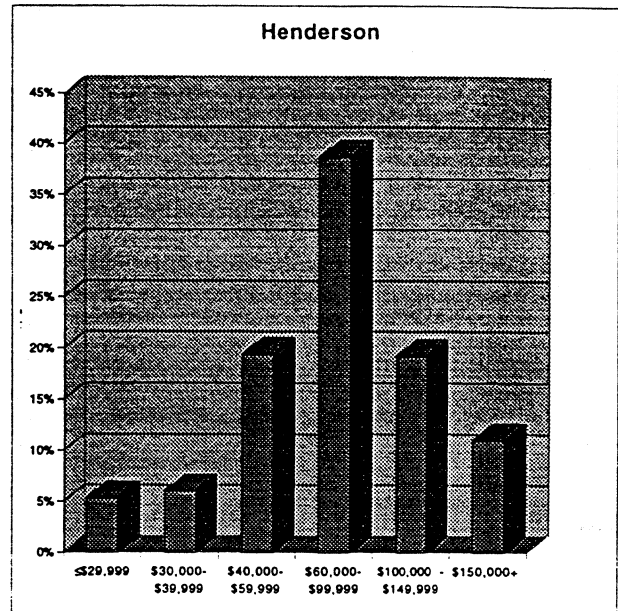
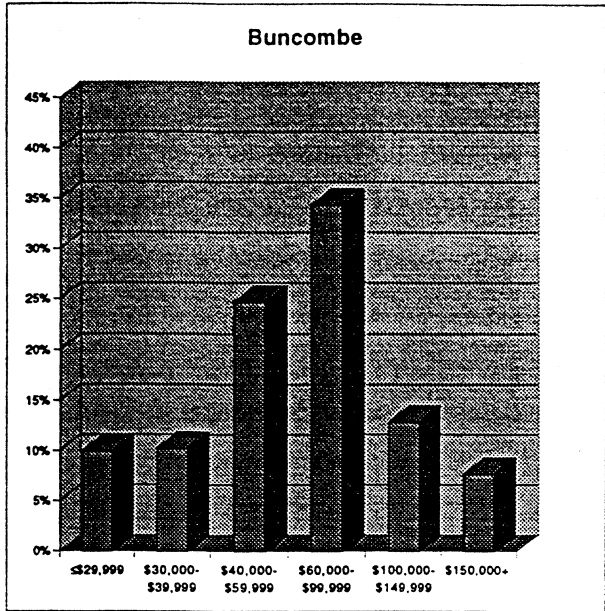
Source: US Census Bureau, 1990

<u>County</u>	<u>Some College</u>	<u>Associate's</u>	<u>Bachelor's</u>	<u>Grad/Prof. Degree</u>
<b>Comparison Counties</b>				
Catawba	11,684 15.04%	5,850 7.53%	8,410 10.82%	2,602 3.35%
Forsyth	31,087 17.61%	12,123 6.87%	28,865 16.35%	13,670 7.74%
Guilford	42,620 18.89%	13,632 6.04%	39,667 17.58%	16,245 7.20%
Mecklenburg	72,985 22.08%	26,774 8.10%	69,928 21.15%	23,705 7.17%
Wake	54,562 20.10%	23,418 8.63%	66,271 24.42%	29,482 10.86%
NC	713,713 16.78%	290,117 6.82%	510,003 11.99%	229,046 5.38%

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990

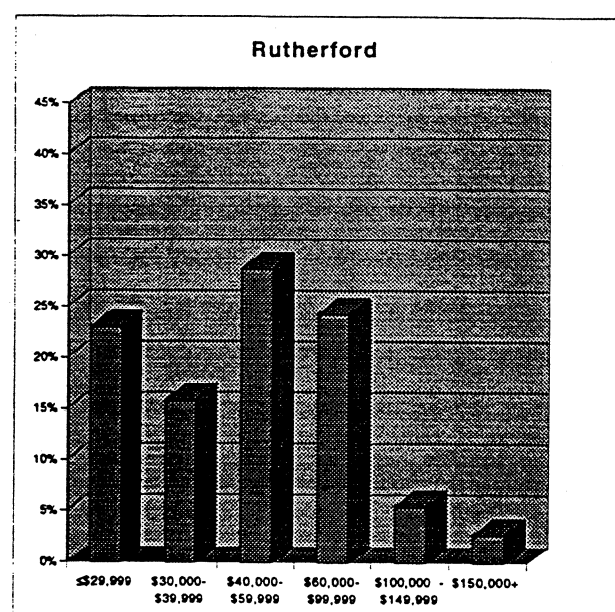
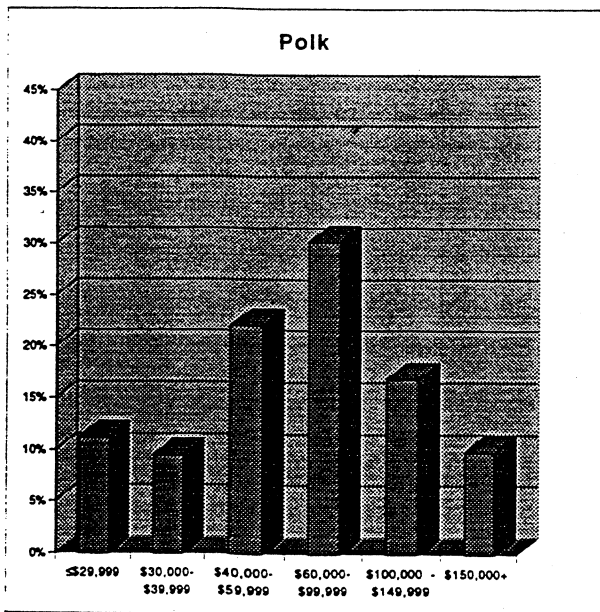
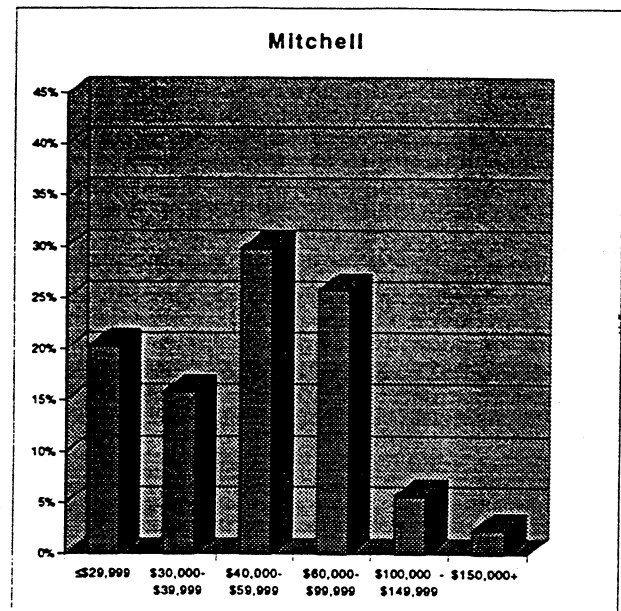
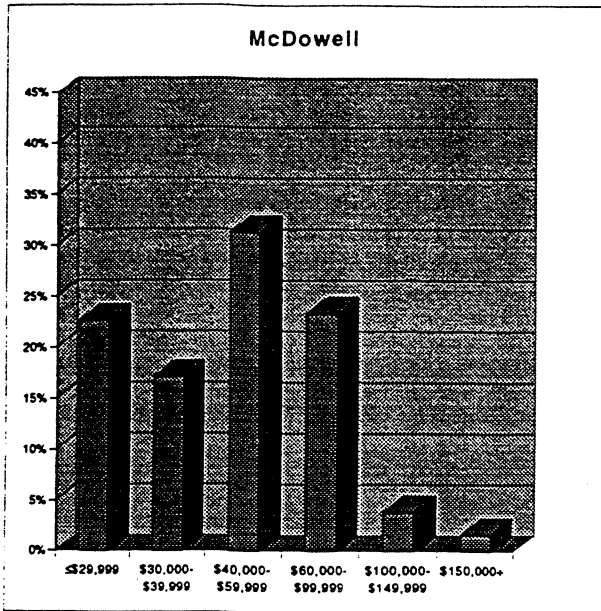
# APPENDIX 5

## % OF TOTAL OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS BY VALUE



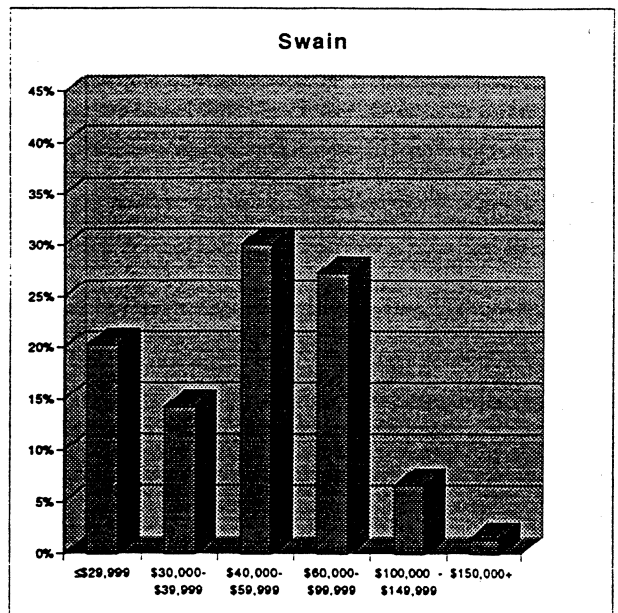
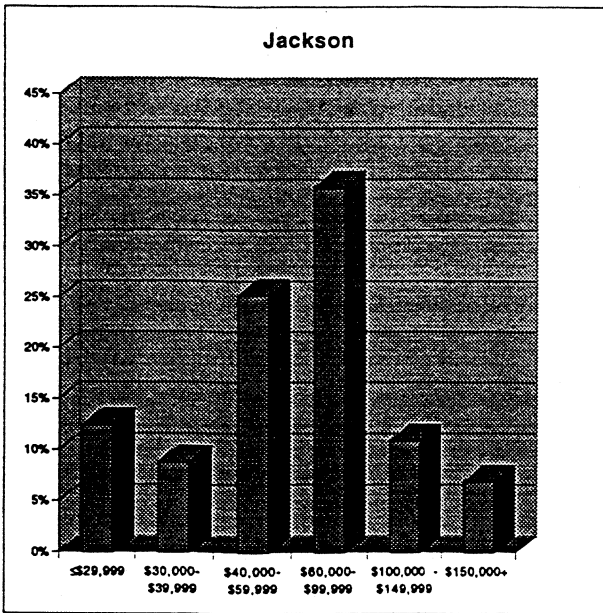
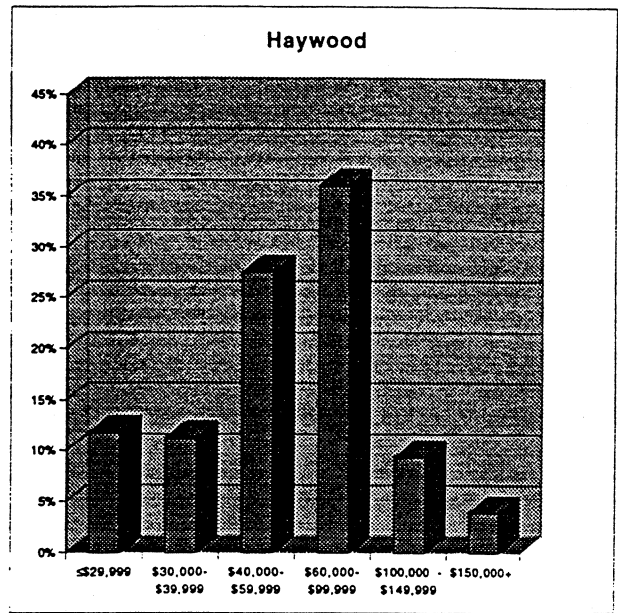
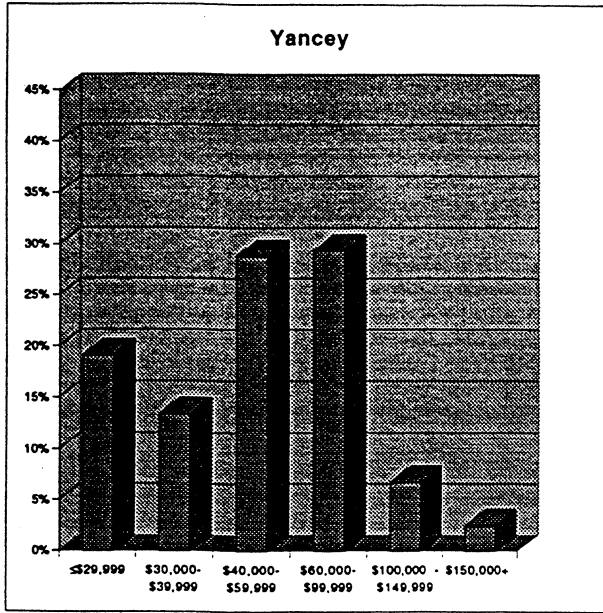
Source: US Census Bureau, 1990  
Michael Gallis & Associates

## % OF TOTAL OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS BY VALUE



Source: US Census Bureau, 1990  
Michael Gallis & Associates

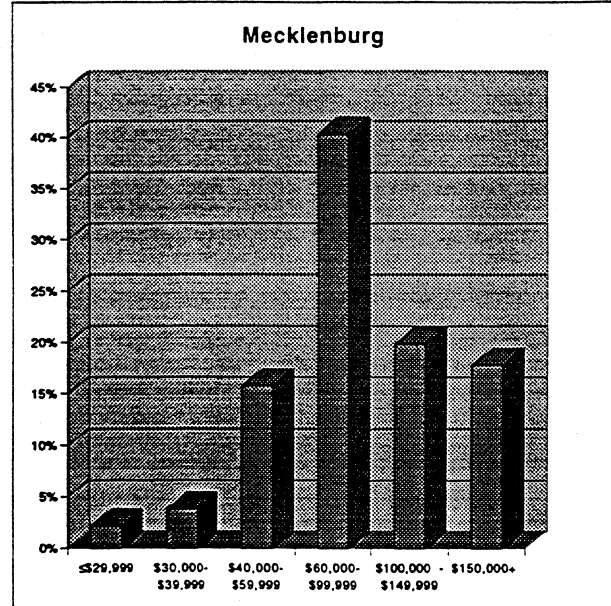
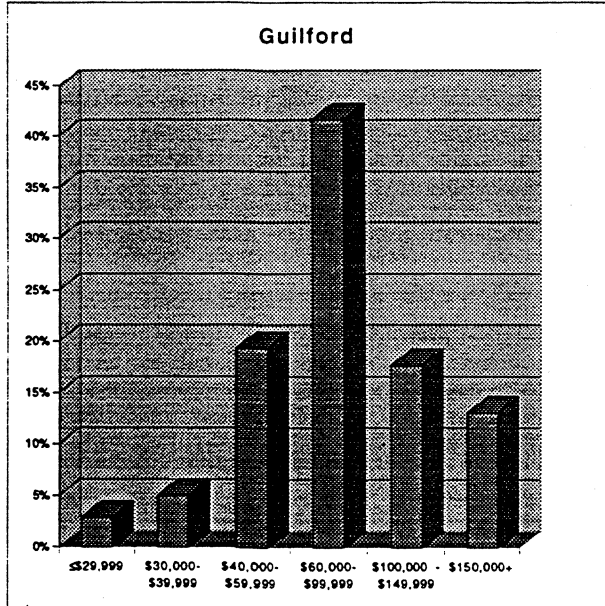
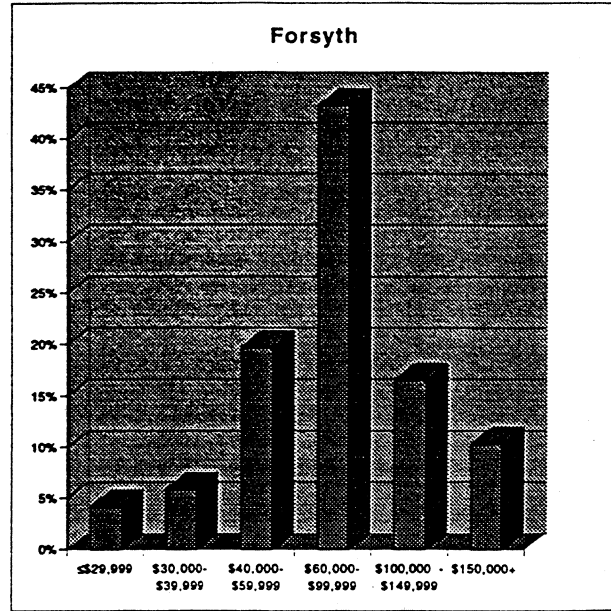
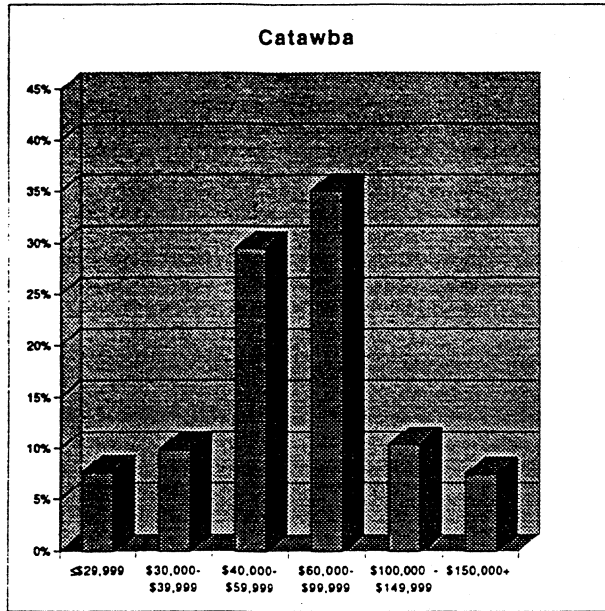
**% OF TOTAL OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS BY VALUE**



Source: US Census Bureau, 1990  
Michael Gallis & Associates

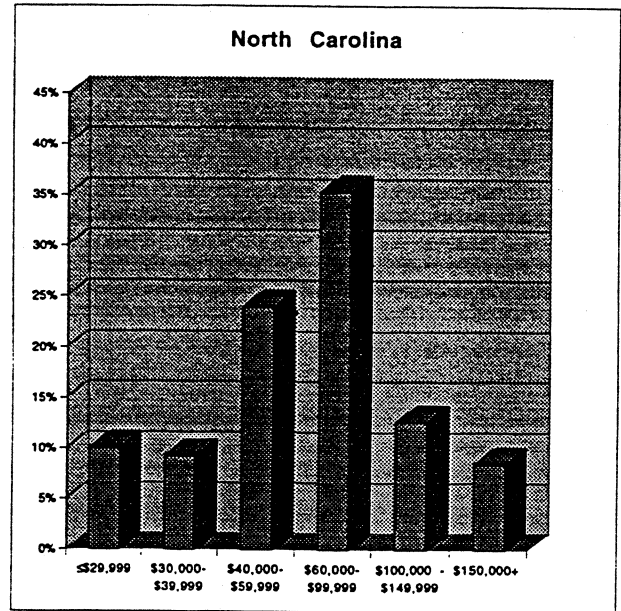
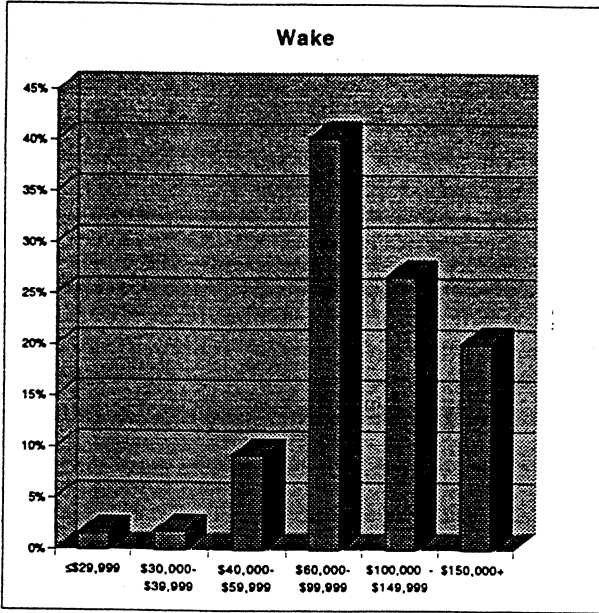


## % OF TOTAL OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS BY VALUE



Source: US Census Bureau, 1990  
 Michael Gallis & Associates

**% OF TOTAL OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS BY VALUE**



Source: US Census Bureau, 1990  
 Michael Gallis & Associates



## APPENDIX 6

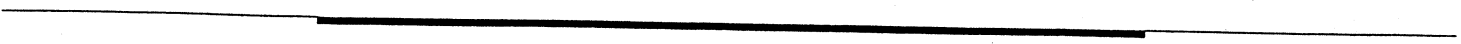
### COUNTY DENSITIES: 1970-1995

(Persons/Sq. Mile)

<u>County</u>	<u>Sq. Miles</u>	<u>Apr-70</u>	<u>Jul-75</u>	<u>Apr-80</u>	<u>Jul-85</u>	<u>Apr-90</u>	<u>Jul-95</u>
Buncombe	656.16	221.02	233.78	245.21	254.64	266.36	287.64
Henderson	374.04	114.53	135.01	156.71	174.01	185.34	203.86
Madison	449.48	35.60	36.71	37.44	37.90	37.72	39.55
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>378.39</u>	<u>52.10</u>	<u>57.35</u>	<u>61.89</u>	<u>65.93</u>	<u>67.44</u>	<u>71.80</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>1,858.07</b>	<b>120.33</b>	<b>130.31</b>	<b>139.80</b>	<b>147.55</b>	<b>154.23</b>	<b>166.80</b>
McDowell	441.73	69.38	75.16	79.54	81.09	80.78	84.31
Mitchell	221.49	60.71	63.66	65.14	65.01	65.16	66.99
Polk	237.86	49.34	52.97	54.59	58.95	60.61	66.19
Rutherford	564.26	83.89	90.38	95.32	99.51	100.87	104.71
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>312.47</u>	<u>40.42</u>	<u>45.12</u>	<u>47.79</u>	<u>49.11</u>	<u>49.35</u>	<u>51.66</u>
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>1,777.81</b>	<b>65.13</b>	<b>70.31</b>	<b>73.84</b>	<b>76.35</b>	<b>76.99</b>	<b>80.46</b>
Haywood	553.93	75.30	80.34	83.94	85.47	84.74	90.17
Jackson	490.62	44.01	49.53	52.61	54.43	54.72	58.70
<u>Swain</u>	<u>528.17</u>	<u>16.73</u>	<u>18.74</u>	<u>19.47</u>	<u>20.54</u>	<u>21.33</u>	<u>21.90</u>
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>1,572.72</b>	<b>45.87</b>	<b>50.04</b>	<b>52.52</b>	<b>53.98</b>	<b>54.08</b>	<b>57.43</b>
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>5,208.60</b>	<b>79.01</b>	<b>85.59</b>	<b>90.93</b>	<b>94.99</b>	<b>97.63</b>	<b>104.31</b>
<b>Comparison Counties</b>							
Catawba	400.02	227.17	247.74	263.01	280.16	296.02	315.58
Forsyth	409.70	525.06	559.92	594.84	627.24	648.96	683.19
Guilford	650.18	443.95	464.49	487.79	506.89	534.34	572.30
Mecklenburg	527.47	672.37	715.49	766.43	850.91	969.69	1094.81
Wake	833.98	274.59	320.87	361.43	432.13	511.16	621.44
NC	48,721.69	104.36	113.67	120.69	128.38	136.13	147.66

Source: NC Office of State Planning





Phase Three of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Buncombe County began in October of 1997 and continued through January of 1998 when the Phase Three Report was completed.

Phase Three of the Land Use Plan provided an opportunity finalize the issues and goals and to complete the audit of resources started in Phase II. The Consultant Group met with the Buncombe County Staff, an appointed project steering committee, and a technical advisory group during this phase on October 23, December 4, and January 22, 1997 to review the County and regional inventory as well as to finalize key issues, goals, growth forces and factors. In addition, Phase III included initial meetings and presentations to community issues forums for the defined six sub-areas.

In Phase Three, additional inventory maps were produced and a report was prepared to record the data and decisions made relative to key goals and issues. This information and planning decision will form the background context for the entire planning process.

The purpose of the Phase Three inventory is to document conditions in the following five areas: History, Culture & Arts, Health, Economic Development, and Education. Data from these areas will provide the leadership team and future community participants with a clear foundation of information and trends affecting land use in the county and across the larger region. In future phases, the information gathered in Phase Three will provide a launching platform for the development of land use alternatives, evaluation, and selection of preferred land use plans.

Data developed in both Phase II and Phase III will be put into a land capability model. This model will provide a technical composite of land use capabilities throughout the county.

# SOUTHEAST CONTEXT

## SOUTHEAST CONTEXT

### History

The Southeast has a long and historical past pre-dating the arrival of Europeans by over a thousand years. The Southeast is home to such historic cities as St. Augustine, FL; Savannah, GA; Charleston, SC; Williamsburg, VA; among many others. Additionally, the Southeast was the site of many Revolutionary War and Civil War battles.

### Medical

The Southeast has many excellent and nationally-known medical facilities. These include facilities located Houston, TX; Durham, NC; and the Center for Disease Control located in Atlanta, GA.

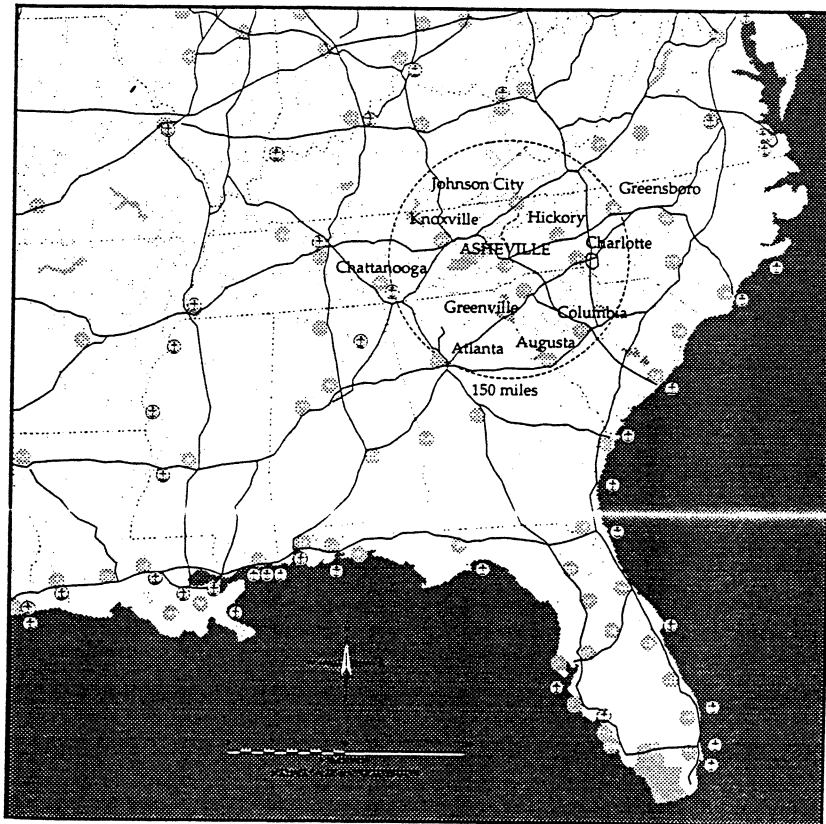


Fig. 2.1: Southeast



**Education**

The Southeast has many high-quality university centers. Each state has excellent universities. These include the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the oldest public university in the nation, located in the Raleigh-Durham education complex along with Duke University and NC State University. Additionally, the University of Virginia, noted for Thomas Jefferson's architecture and for its educational quality is also located in the Southeast.

**Culture and Arts**

The Southeast is recognized as have a very distinct cultural heritage. Visual and performing arts facilities, history, science and specialty museums are located throughout the Southeast. Buncombe County is part of a very distinct mountain culture which exists with its own special attributes and traditions. Asheville is the focus for many visual and performing arts groups and facilities reflecting this mountain culture.

# **GROWTH SHAPING FORCES**

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## **PHASE III**

In addition to the growth-shaping forces analyzed in Phase II, several additional forces act on shaping a region. These growth-shaping forces generally are in the form of resources within the region that affect the surrounding region in many ways. These regional assets may be major tourist attractions, employment centers, or educational centers. These regional forces are as follows:

### **History**

Historic resources within the metro region will be documented including historic districts and museums, as well as individual sites.

### **Culture and Arts**

Culture and Arts facilities such as museums, theaters, auditoriums, pavilions, teaching facilities, etc. will be documented.

### **Health**

Medical facilities including hospitals and specialty hospitals will be documented.

### **Economic Development**

The commercial development of the metro region will be documented including retail, industrial, office, and hotel development.

### **Education**

Educational facilities including colleges, community colleges, and universities will be documented.

These regional growth-shaping forces will be further analyzed in this section.



# HISTORY

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## METRO REGION CONTEXT

Buncombe County and the surrounding counties have a very long and interesting history. For over 1,000 years this area has been home to the Cherokee Nation. This area was first visited by European explorers in 1540 when Hernando de Soto came through the area. He was later followed by white settlers which began farming the area. In 1830, President Jackson ordered the forced removal of the Cherokee to a reservation in Oklahoma. However, a small group of Cherokee hid and their descendants still live in the area on the Qualla Boundary Reservation bordering the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

By 1900, the harvesting of the area's significant virgin lumber resources was fueling the area's economy. Railroads were built through the area to access these resources. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park was established in 1934 and has become the most visited National Park in the US.

## Historical Boundaries

### Buncombe<sup>1</sup>

The recorded history of Buncombe County dates back to 1791, when David Vance and William Davidson filed a petition with the NC House of Commons for parts of Burke County and Rutherford County to be made into a separate county to be named Union County. However, the name of this proposed county was changed to Buncombe County in honor of a Revolutionary War hero from Tyrell County, Colonel Edward Buncombe, who was wounded and captured at the Battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777, and in May, 1778, died a paroled prisoner in Philadelphia. The bill establishing Buncombe County was ratified in early 1792. The county's population at the time was around 1,000.

Instrumental to the early development of the county was the completion of the Buncombe Turnpike in 1827. This turnpike connected Tennessee and Kentucky to South Carolina and ran along the French Broad River through the heart of the county. The development of railroads eventually depleted the impact of this turnpike by the onset of the Civil War which itself had a significant negative impact on the county.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Buncombe County Budget Report, Building Bridges

However, railroads would eventually play a significant role in the emergence of Asheville as the urban center of this county as the first trains rolled into the city in 1880. The county's population was approximately 21,000 in 1880 and was beginning a period of rapid expansion. By 1890, the county had grown by approximately 13,000 people or around 61%.

George Vanderbilt began building what would turn out to be the largest private residence in America, the Biltmore House, in the Asheville area in 1890. This estate originally consisted of over 100,000 acres of land and is now one of the largest tourist destinations in the area.

The climate and scenery of Buncombe County made it a prime tourist attraction during the early 1900's, which it remains today. Asheville, named in honor of Samuel Ashe, Governor of North Carolina, 1796-1798, is the county seat.

#### Madison<sup>2</sup>

Madison County was formed in 1851 from Buncombe and Yancey Counties. The county was named in honor of the fourth President of the United States, James Madison. The county's first court was ordered to be held at the tavern house of Adolphus Baird. After this initial meeting, the majority of the justices could adjourn to any other place they determined until a courthouse could be erected. Seven commissioners were named to select a site for the county seat. When the place was finally decided on, the commissioners were to acquire a tract of land, lay out a town by the name of Marshall, and erect a courthouse. Marshall, named in honor of John Marshall, is the county seat.

#### McDowell<sup>3</sup>

McDowell was formed in 1842 from Rutherford and Burke Counties. It was named in honor of Colonel Joseph McDowell, an officer of the Revolution. The initial court was ordered to be held at the home of Jonathan L. Carson until the county seat could be established. The act also named commissioners to select a site as near the center of the county as possible, acquire land, lay out a town by the name of Marion, and erect a courthouse. Marion is the county seat.

<sup>2</sup> State Library of NC: [NC Encyclopedia](#), County History

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

#### Rutherford<sup>4</sup>

Rutherford was formed in 1779 from Tryon. It was named in honor of Griffith Rutherford, one of the most prominent of the Revolutionary patriots. He led the expedition that crushed the Cherokees in 1776, and rendered important services both in the Legislature and on the battlefield.

The act establishing the county provided that the first court be held at the home of Joseph Walker and the justices were to decide on the most convenient place to hold succeeding courts until a courthouse could be erected. Commissioners were named to select a place for the county seat. In 1781 an act was passed stating that the original act had not been fully carried out and that the previous commissioners had failed to erect a courthouse even though they had selected the land of James Holland in the fork of Shepard's Creek. The act authorized the commissioners to purchase fifty acres of land from James Holland and erect the buildings. In 1784 an act was passed which stated that the place selected by the commissioners was not convenient; therefore, new commissioners were named to survey the county, locate the center, purchase land and erect the public buildings. In 1787 Rutherford was established on the land purchased for the county seat. Two acres were reserved for the public buildings. Rutherfordton was incorporated in 1793 and is the county seat.

#### Transylvania<sup>5</sup>

Transylvania was formed in 1861 from Henderson and Jackson Counties. Its name is derived from the Latin words, trans meaning "across" and sylvia meaning "woods." The first court was to be held at the home of B. C. Langford. Commissioners were named to select a site for the public buildings within five miles of W. P. Poor's store and to acquire land and lay out Brevard. Brevard is the county seat.

#### Yancey<sup>6</sup>

Yancey was formed in 1833 from Burke and Buncombe Counties. It is named in honor of Bartlett Yancey, an eloquent orator, many times a member of the Legislature, speaker of the State Senate and member of Congress. He was also one of the earliest advocates of the public school system in North Carolina. The act establishing the county named and authorized commissioners to purchase land, lay out a town, and erect a courthouse. Burnsville, named for Captain

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

Otway Burns of Beaufort, North Carolina, who won fame in the War of 1812, is the county seat.

#### Jackson<sup>7</sup>

Jackson was formed in 1851 from Haywood and Macon Counties. It was named in honor of Andrew Jackson, who won an overwhelming victory from the British at New Orleans in 1815 and who was twice President of the United States. The first court was ordered to be held at the home of Daniel Bryson, Sr., and after that session the courts were held at Allen Fisher's store until the courthouse was erected. In 1852 an act was passed authorizing an election to be held to decide on moving the county seat from Webster to Sylva. The election was held May 8, 1913, and was carried by a majority of 675. Sylva furnished the site and \$10,000 in cash for the new courthouse. Sylva is the county seat.

#### Mitchell<sup>8</sup>

Mitchell was formed in 1861 from Yancey, Watauga, Caldwell, Burke and McDowell Counties. It was named in honor of Dr. Elisha Mitchell, a professor at the University of North Carolina. While on an exploring expedition of Mt. Mitchell, the highest peak east of the Mississippi River, Dr. Mitchell fell and was killed. He was buried on the top of this lofty mountain. The first court was ordered to be held at Eben Child's. Commissioners were named to acquire the land, establish a town by the name of Calhoun, and erect a courthouse in Calhoun. They maintained it was inconvenient to three-fourths of the citizens. They said the matter should, therefore, be referred to the Assembly. In 1862 an act was passed authorizing the people to decide by ballot for Calhoun, or for Davis as the county seat. In 1863 an act was passed which stipulated that the county seat should be located at the geographical center of the county by actual survey and measurements. In 1863 the justices met and unanimously agreed that Norman's Hill should be selected as the county seat. From 1861-1866 commissioners were appointed to acquire the land and lay out a town. At the regular September term, 1866, held at Davis, the commissioners reported that they had acquired 29 acres of land and sold the lots. In 1868 the county seat was changed to Bakersville from Davis. Bakersville was incorporated in 1870 and is the county seat.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

### Polk<sup>9</sup>

Polk was formed in 1855 from Rutherford and Henderson. It was named in honor of Colonel William Polk "who rendered distinguished service in the Battles of Germantown, Brandywine and Eutaw, in all of which he was wounded." The act directed that the court and records should be kept at the home of J. Mills until a courthouse could be erected. It also named commissioners to obtain a site for public buildings, lay out a town by the name of Columbus, and erect a courthouse. Columbus is the county seat.

### Swain<sup>10</sup>

Swain was formed in 1871 from Jackson and Macon Counties. It was named in honor of David L. Swain, Governor of North Carolina and president of the University of North Carolina. The first court was ordered to be held at Cold Spring Meeting House. Special commissioners were named to select a site for the courthouse, provided all the commissioners could agree on a certain place. If they could not agree, the county commissioners were to submit the question of selecting a place to the voters. The county commissioners were to lay out a town by the name of Charleston which was to be the county seat. In 1889 Charleston was changed to Bryson City in honor of Colonel Thad Dillard Bryson. Bryson City is the county seat.

### **Historic Resources**

The region's historic resources are generally located along the major metro region corridors. The largest concentration of these resources is located in Asheville within the five mile ring. Other concentrations generally occur in the twenty-mile ring cities.

### Historic Districts

There are several historic districts located within Buncombe County and the surrounding region. Most of these districts fall within the urbanized areas of the region, either in Asheville or at the twenty- and forty-mile ring cities.

The largest concentration of these historic districts is in the heart of Asheville, within the five-mile ring. There are five historic districts situated in this area. These districts include the Grove Park Historic District, Downtown Asheville Historic District, Montford Area

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid



Historic District, Oteen V.A. Hospital Historic District, and Chestnut Hill Historic District.

The next largest concentration of historic districts is to the south of Asheville in Henderson County at the twenty-mile ring. There are four historic districts in this area including the Seventh Avenue Depot District, the Flat Rock Historic District, the Main Street Historic District, and the Kanuga Lake Historic District.

Other Historic Districts are scattered throughout the region. These districts include the Main Street Historic District and the Depot Historic District in Marion, the Main Street Historic District in Rutherfordton, and the Cataloochee Historic District in Haywood County.

#### Historic Sites

Historic Sites are scattered throughout the region. These sites primarily are located within the Asheville metro and the twenty- and forty-mile ring cities. However, there are no large concentrations of these sites throughout the region.

The largest concentration of historic sites is located within Asheville, inside the five-mile ring. However, there are only five sites located within this area. These sites include the Biltmore Village, Asheville School, and Biltmore Industries.

Another small concentration of these historic sites occurs in Henderson County, most of which are centered around the Kanuga Lake Inn. Other historic sites occur in Rutherford County in Rutherfordton.

## **CULTURE & ARTS**

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### **METRO REGION CONTEXT**

#### **Culture & Arts Resources**

Buncombe and the surrounding counties share a rich culture and arts heritage. The area's resources range from traditional folk art and artisan galleries/museums to fine arts museums and performing arts centers to museums of history.

Asheville has the largest concentration of culture and arts resources of the region, the majority of which are located within the five-mile ring. Culture and arts facilities located within the five-mile ring include the Asheville Art Museum, the Biltmore Estate and Gardens, Biltmore Village Historic Museum, Folk Art Museum, Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, Asheville Civic Center, NC Arboretum, and the UNC-Asheville Botanical Gardens. Other resources falling within Buncombe County include the Valley Museum in Black Mountain, the Presbyterian Church Department of History in Montreat, and the Zebulon B. Vance Birthplace in Weaverville, all of which lie on or near the ten-mile ring.

Other culture and arts resources in the metro region include the Rutherford County Museum, the Rutherford County Farm Museum, and the Etta Black Maimy Fine Arts Museum, all of which fall in Rutherford County.

Additional culture and arts resources include the Carl Sandburg Home National History Museum in Flat Rock (Henderson County), the Sims Art Center at Brevard College and the Jim Bob Tinsley Museum and Research Center in Brevard (Transylvania County). Other resources include the Carson House Restoration in Marion (McDowell County), the Museum of NC Minerals and the Thayer House of Marquetry in Spruce Pine (Mitchell County), the World Methodist Museum in Lake Junaluska & the Museum of NC Handicraft in Waynesville (Haywood County), and the Mountain Heritage Center at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee (Jackson County).

### **BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

#### **Culture & Arts**

The fact that Buncombe County is nearly surrounded by Pisgah National Forest and is also bisected by the Blue Ridge Parkway are notable attributes to the county's cultural attractions. In addition to the famous pleasure drive and scenery afforded by the parkway (over 24 miles in Buncombe County), a number of historic and cul-

tural facilities are accessed from it including the Folk Art Center, and Western North Carolina Nature Center and many opportunities for hiking, including the NC Mountains-Sea trail.

Many cultural events are held throughout the year in the area, attracting people from considerable distance and adding to the richness of the tourism opportunities and quality of life for residents. Some of these include the Bele Chere Festival held in July, the Mountain Dance and Folk Music Festival and Craft Fair in August, the Rhododendron Festival in June, and the Christmas and Candlelight Tour at Biltmore Estate during the Christmas Holidays.

Churches are rather evenly distributed through the habitable portions of the county with even the smallest hamlet frequently having a place of worship nearby. There are over 280 churches in the county, the great majority being of Protestant faith. In addition, there are several significant church conference centers including the Billy Graham Center, and Montreat Presbyterian Conference Center. There are numerous church-affiliated youth camps throughout the county.

# HEALTH

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## METRO REGION CONTEXT

### Resources

There are thirteen hospitals located in the metro region. The largest concentration of these health care facilities is in the heart of Asheville, within the five-mile ring. These hospitals include Memorial Mission Hospital (453 beds), Veteran's Administration Hospital (355 beds), Saint Joseph's Hospital (220 beds), and Thomas Rehabilitation Hospital (80 beds) for a total of 1,108 beds. This represents 69.64% of the 1,591 beds in the metro and 53.27% of the region's 2,080 beds.

Two other hospitals are located within the twenty-mile ring. These include the Asheville Health Care Center (120 beds) located in Swannanoa and Park Ridge Hospital (103 beds) located in Fletcher, both of which fall at the ten-mile ring. Additionally, the Margaret R. Pardee Memorial Hospital (260 beds) is located in Hendersonville at the twenty-mile ring. Together with the Asheville hospitals, the six hospitals of the metro account for 76.49% of the region's total beds. There are an additional six hospitals located within the region. Transylvania Community Hospital (260 beds) in Brevard and McDowell Hospital (94 beds) located in Marion are both at the thirty-mile ring, while Saint Luke's Hospital (78 beds) is located in Columbus, past the thirty-mile ring. The three other hospitals in the region are located at the forty-mile ring. These include Rutherford Hospital, Inc. (133 beds) in Forest City, Spruce Pine Community Hospital (77 beds), and the Unicoi County Memorial Hospital (42 beds) in Erwin, TN.

The corridor with the most health care resources is the I-26 corridor, south of Asheville. Outside of Asheville, three hospitals are located directly along this corridor with an additional one located just off the corridor. The three hospitals on the corridor include Park Ridge Hospital, Margaret R. Pardee Memorial Hospital, and Saint Luke's Hospital, with the additional hospital being Transylvania Community Hospital in Brevard. Together, these hospitals account for 535 beds, or 25.72% of the regional total. When totalled with the hospitals within the five-mile ring of the Asheville metro, these hospitals account for 78.99% of the region's beds.

In addition to the primary health care providers, there are over 45 health clinics in Buncombe County. Also, there are more than 55 elderly care facilities in the county including 18 nursing homes having a total of over 1,500 beds. Although the elderly facilities can be found throughout the county they, along with the health clinics and doctor's offices, are heavily clustered in the vicinity of the major hospitals along the U.S. Hwy 25 corridor in Asheville.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## METRO REGION CONTEXT

### Regional Economic Makeup

#### Regional Employees

Within the Metro, Services account for 33.60% of all employees, followed by Manufacturing (24.96%), and Retail (22.69%). However, the Eastern Region is highly dominated by Manufacturing which accounts for 52.14% of all employees, followed by Services (18.45%), and Retail (16.78%). In the Western Region, Services account for 34.67% of all employees, while Retail accounts for 27.43%, followed by Manufacturing at 22.94%. For the overall region, Manufacturing is the largest employer accounting for 31.51% of all employees, followed by Services at 29.95%, and Retail at 21.79%. All three of these categories are higher than the NC average for Manufacturing (29.09%), Services (27.74%), and Retail (21.79%) (See Appendix 1).

#### Regional Industry Payroll

Within the Metro, Services account for 32.86% of total payroll, followed closely by Manufacturing (31.24%), and Retail (13.75%). However, the Eastern Region is highly dominated by Manufacturing which accounts for 60.47% of total payroll, followed by Services (14.85%), and Retail (10.03%). In the Western Region, Manufacturing accounts for 33.43% of total payroll, followed closely by Services at 33.34%, and Retail at 17.68%. For the overall region, Manufacturing is the largest source of total payroll at 38.29%, followed by Services at 28.73%, and Retail at 17.68%. All three of these categories are higher than the NC average for Manufacturing (33.30%), Services (26.23%), and Retail (13.34%) (See Appendix 2).

#### Existing Economic Development

There are several regional and local initiatives to spur economic development in the region. These programs are initiated through several different organizations including the Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments and the Mountain Resource Center of Western Carolina University.

#### Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments<sup>10</sup>

The Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments is an organization founded, sustained by, and tied to the 19 local governments (the counties of Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania

<sup>10</sup> Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments Website

and the municipalities of Asheville, Biltmore Forest, Montreat, Black Mountain, Weaverville, Woodfin, Fletcher, Hendersonville, Laurel Park, Hot Springs, Mars Hill, Marshall, Brevard, and Rosman) through state enabling legislation. Its purpose is to establish and maintain local government cooperation to deal with common problems that a single unit cannot adequately handle.

Regional councils assist local governments with planning and decision-making through collecting data, identifying area problems, developing means to meet those challenges and adopting and implementing programs.

#### Land of Sky Economic Development and Capacity Building

The Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments has had many successes in promoting business development and capacity throughout the region. Several of these successes include:

- Facilitated a Strategic Economic Development Plan for Madison County for the period 1995-2000. Approximately 50 people and 40 organizations and agencies worked on the plan.
- Convened a geographic information systems working group that developed the Mountain Area Geographic Information System Consortium. This group will share electronic map data to provide more accurate maps to member governments and utilities at lower cost.
- Facilitated planning retreats for the governing boards of Haywood County, Transylvania County, Riverlink, and the town of Waynesville. The Council has two meeting-process facilitators trained and certified by the NC Institute of Government.
- Assisted area businesses and industries by advising them on how to reduce waste and to become more competitive. This year the Waste Reduction and Technology Transfer (WRATT) project grew from three to thirty assessors -retired engineers and scientists with specialized training in waste reduction. Recommended annual savings sometimes exceed \$100,000 for one plant or facility. This program is supported by contracts with the Tennessee Valley Authority, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Asheville-Buncombe Water Authority.
- Continued work on an EPA grant to create rural jobs through improved solid waste management. The project is modeled after the Economic Renewal Program of Rocky Mountain Institute: Supported existing business through industrial and commercial waste audits; create new businesses (or expand existing ones) in composting, recycling, etc.; and recruited appropriate outside businesses to the local community by working with county economic developers.

- Provided grant search assistance to several organizations throughout the region, including literacy and education organizations, housing non-profits, human service agencies, adult day care organizations, and local governments.
- Continued to advise Madison County on the use of its ARC and Rural Center grants to grade the Madison County Government and Industrial Park and install water and sewer service. Groundbreaking for the park was in August, 1995.
- Staffed the I-26 Corridor Association which is spearheading efforts to complete Interstate 26. Council staff also continued to encourage NCDOT and other state agencies to work with Madison County and area organizations to locate industrial sites in the I-26 corridor, and build a North Carolina State-run Visitor Center near Mars Hill.
- Developed a pioneering manual "Shaping a Region's Future: A Guide to Strategic Decision Making for Regions", under a contract with the Appalachian Regional Commission and the U.S. Economic Development Administration. This is the first published guide to assist with the special considerations of strategic planning for a multi-jurisdictional area.
- Completed Phase I of a Technology Development Plan in cooperation with the seven counties in the CarolinaWest marketing region in 1994. Phase II will further investigate the feasibility of a regional "smart park" as well as linkages among medical community members and other potential networks.

Mountain Resource Center of Western Carolina University<sup>11</sup>

The Mountain Resource Center (MRC) is a service arm of WCU, extending technical assistance, applied research, information, and training to individuals and communities in the western region of North Carolina. The Center also provides opportunities for professional development and community service for WCU faculty and Students. There are several MRC Core Programs including the following:

*Economic Development Administration University Center Technical Assistance Program:* The EDA University Center program is a key outreach service of the University addressing community and economic development concerns and issues. The EDA University Center offers its services to new or existing businesses which need technical advice to either continue or expand. The EDA Center also assists community or local government groups interested in business and economic development projects which benefit a single county or the entire region.

<sup>11</sup> Mountain Resource Center of Western Carolina University Website



The EDA University Center at WCU has been involved in a variety of projects serving the region and assisting communities in preparing for the future, planning their development and addressing emerging issues for business development and leadership capacity building. Major initiatives of this center include:

- State Data Center Affiliate Role
- County Development Information Profiles
- Community Strategic Planning
- Economic Impact and Feasibility Assessments
- The Smoky Mountain Development Center (SMDC), a non profit development corporation to promote and facilitate regional business, industrial and economic development.

*Small Business & Technology Development Center (SBTDC):* The North Carolina SBTDC is an inter-institutional program of the University of North Carolina (UNC). It functions as the Business and Technology Extension Service of UNC. The Mountain Resource Center is one of 14 university-based SBTDC service centers across the state. The major thrust of the Western Regional Service Center, located at Western Carolina University, is to assist prospective and existing small business owners in a 28-county service area of western North Carolina. Assistance includes assessing the feasibility of business plans, preparing loan applications and business plans, finding sources of capital, and developing marketing strategies. The SBTDC offers specialized market development assistance through its special emphasis programs, including the Procurement Technical Assistance Program, the International Business Development Program, and the Technology Group.

The counties served by the SBTDC Western Region Service Center include: Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon, Swain, Jackson, Haywood, Transylvania, Henderson, Buncombe, Madison, McDowell, Polk, and Rutherford.

*The National Association of Management and Technical Assistance Centers (NAMTAC):* NAMTAC is a non-profit professional association operated by a Board of Directors elected by the membership. The Association's mission is to provide advocacy, information, and a forum to enhance the performance of organizations providing business, technical and community development assistance.

*Western NC Chapter of the World Trade Association (WNCWTA):* WNCWTA's purpose is to promote a greater awareness in international trade and a better understanding of its advantages within the business community of western North Carolina in the areas of export, import, and overseas investment. In addition to private sec-

for organizations, WNCWTA also extends its membership to private and public service groups and professionals in the area who support international trade.

#### **Economic Development Patterns/Trends**

The mountains have been going through a significant transition in economic development. Traditionally, agriculture, timber, furniture, and textiles dominated mountain industry. The decline in manufacturing in the 1960's across the US was very evident in the mountain region.

This decline led to a diversification and the need to develop new specialties in manufacturing. Recently, new trends appear to be reversing several decades of manufacturing decline.

#### **BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

##### **Economic Development**

The principal industries in the county are manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, and health care. Technology industries are also expanding in the area. Among major manufacturing employers in Buncombe County are Sonopress, Inc. (918), Beacon Manufacturing (850), Square D Company (646), BASF Corporation (510) and Rockwell International (500). Among non-manufacturing industries, major employers include Mission/St. Joseph Health System (5,000), the Board of Education (3,223), city-county government (2,971), Ingles Markets (1,350), VA Hospital (1,051) and Grove Park Inn Resort (831). New and expanding industries announced for 1996-97 account for over 900 new jobs mainly in manufacturing and technology sectors. Major layoffs or closings for the same period include a loss of 1,455 jobs including ITT Automotive, Gerber Products Company, and Phillips Electronics, among others.

While industries are located throughout the county, many are drawn to south Buncombe for available infrastructure, access to I-26, and proximity to the airport. A number of industrial park properties have been established within the last 10 years, many of which are also located south of the City of Asheville. Of the 9 parks identified, seven are in the Avery Creek, Arden, Sweeten Creek, Cane Creek, and airport areas.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce administers the Certified Industrial Site program as an encouragement to new or relocating industries. Several of its prospective locations are likewise in the southern portion of the county, adjacent to the airport and the Avery Creek area.

Agriculture remains a very strong industry in Buncombe County and serves as a hub of regional agriculture through the tobacco warehouses, cattle market, and farmers market for produce. The Christmas tree and nursery/ornamental plant industries are also quite strong in the area.

The character and type of farms are undergoing significant changes in the area. The average age of a farmer in Buncombe County is approaching 60. Although the total number of farms is declining, the total land area in production is being sustained, suggesting a process of consolidation and opening of new land for production. Competition for land is great due to the consolidation and the consumption of land for urban development. Likewise, over ten years the number of dairies has been cut in half, yet the total number of cows has not decreased.

Cost of living in Buncombe County is comparatively high relative to metropolitan areas in the region. For all items, Buncombe County's index measured 103.4 compared to an average of 100. In particular, housing (114.5) and utilities (114.1) are greater than average, while food (94.6) and health care (94.4) are less than average.

Despite the higher prices, new residential housing permits increased by 24% over a one year period from 1995 to 1996. In the same period, home values increased by an average 4%. During 1995, new residential building represented a total value of more than \$84 million. The greatest number of housing starts were in the Limestone/Arden area followed by the City of Asheville, Reems Creek, Fairview, Leicester, and Upper Hominy communities.

## EDUCATION

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### METRO REGION CONTEXT

#### Education Resources

The region has several public and private colleges, universities, and community colleges. Though, the largest concentration of these educational resources lies within the twenty-mile ring, there is no clear educational center of the region. These educational resources are scattered throughout the region.

Two institutions in the region with over 2,000 students are located within Asheville. These include Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute with 2,919 students and the University of North Carolina at Asheville with 2,653 students. Also within the ten-mile ring is Warren Wilson College with 672 students. The 6,244 students at these three educational institutions account for 61.40% of the 10,169 students in the metro and 34.33% of the 18,187 students in the region.

There are four educational facilities located at the twenty-mile ring. These include Haywood Community College (1,240 students) in Clyde, Blue Ridge Community College (1,170 students) in Flat Rock, Mars Hill College (1,162 students) in Mars Hill, and Montreat Anderson College (353 students) in Montreat for a total of 3,925 students. The 10,169 total students within the metro account for 55.91% of the students in the region.

Western Carolina University, the largest university in the entire region with 5,999 students, is located in Cullowhee at the forty-mile ring. Three other smaller colleges are located within the forty-mile ring. These include McDowell Technical Community College with 757 students, Warren Wilson College with 672 students, and Mayland Technical College with 590 students. These educational facilities account for 8,018 students, or 44.09% of the region's total students, with Western Carolina University accounting for 33.84% of the region's total students itself. All student enrollment numbers are as of 1995.

### BUNCOMBE COUNTY

The Buncombe County School System administers public secondary schools in the City of Asheville as well as throughout Buncombe County. In Buncombe County, there are six high schools, six middle schools, 22 elementary or primary schools, and 1 community school. The total pupil population was 24,679 as of September, 1997, with over 91% of the population being white, 5.3% black, and the balance made up of Native American, Asian, and Hispanic population.

Recent studies prepared by the Buncombe County School System (Pupil Population Analysis, 1996, and Selected School Population Projections, January, 1997) indicate the growth characteristics of school age population, and the relationship to school programs and facilities. Construction criteria identify capital improvement projects recommended by the staff according to priority ranking. Many schools are currently operating over capacity and/or with substandard facilities and utilize modular units to supplement building facilities. Although not an official recommendation, it has been generally suggested that overall growth in the county will warrant the opening of a new elementary school annually over the foreseeable future. New facilities identified for site acquisition/construction include elementary schools in Bent Creek and Cane Creek, and a middle school in Enka.

Site requirements for new schools and optimum enrollment are as follows:

Elementary Schools	15 acres, 450-700 students
Middle Schools	30 acres, 600-800 students
High Schools	50 acres, 800-1200 students

There are also several private schools in Buncombe County. These include Asheville School and Christ School, both of which are for high school age only and provide residential facilities for out of town students, and Carolina Day School which provides for middle and high school. In addition to these, there is also a Catholic School in Buncombe County providing private secondary school education. The student-teacher ratio in private schools in the county is 9:1, compared to a 15:1 ratio in public schools.

## COMMUNITY ISSUES FORUMS

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A series of six Community Issues Forums were held January 20th, 21st, and 22nd, 1998 in each of the six Buncombe County School Districts. At these meetings, the public was given an update of the land use planning process to that point in time. Maps highlighting data for Buncombe and surrounding counties were displayed for the public by the consultant team.

Additionally, the public was given the opportunity to give its input to the land use planning process. From these meetings, the consulting team will use the public input in deriving alternate scenarios for future land use in Buncombe County.

At these forums, representatives from Buncombe County Government, the Land Use Plan Steering Committee, as well as representatives from the consulting team of LandDesign, Inc. and Michael Gallis & Associates were present.

The highlights of each of these Community Issues Forums are given in this section, while the complete transcripts of each of the meeting's minutes are given in Appendix 3.

### Enka District

Concern was expressed for the emphasis placed on a tourism-based economy which provides for lower salaries and not as strong a tax base as other industrial development. It was stated that often the only housing people could afford was mobile homes and that the only way to change this was to improve the job base. It was felt that the loss of usable land to infrastructure including roads and utilities has excessively reduced the net taxable land. It was suggested that "doing better with what we have" would result in a more efficient and more attractive environment. One suggestion was to develop a plan that would manage growth without controlling what people did with their property.

Emphasis was placed on the need for more and improved recreation facilities, schools built to anticipate growth, and the need for a fire station in the area.

There was concern for the proliferation of mobile homes and discussion about standards regulating density and size of mobile home developments.

There was strong support for private property rights and apprehension for the value of land use planning and concern that the planning process would lead to greater regulation, ultimately resulting

in zoning. It was also pointed out that no planning would lead to more problems.

**Erwin District**

A variety of opinion was expressed at this meeting, ranging from support for planning to an apprehension that the planning process was merely the first step toward more regulation.

It was suggested that planning should aim toward a "healthy balance" between conventional home construction and mobile homes. It was pointed out that in order to improve the housing stock, more and better jobs were needed in the county to raise salary levels. Efforts should be made as part of the planning to improve the environment for attracting quality employers to the county.

There were specific sentiments expressed that the worst thing about the area was the strip commercial development on the highways, and a need to provide incentives to save agricultural land in the county.

Many attending this meeting were concerned that low-income housing was planned to be concentrated in the area. There was also a specific need expressed for additional recreation facilities, particularly athletic fields, and a suggestion that the 35-acre property owned by the county be identified for this purpose.

**North Buncombe District**

In general, there was support for the land use planning process and specific interest in controlling the impacts on growth of the opening of I-26 in Madison County and the effect this will have on the quality of life in north Buncombe County. It was suggested that standards and incentives promoting quality commercial and residential development be established.

There was a desire for provisions to be made to protect residential areas from commercial encroachment and zoning to protect residential areas. It was suggested that corridors be established for certain commercial uses and services instead of a broadcast pattern and that specific suitable locations be established for industrial development. Support for protecting the county's key asset, the French Broad River, was expressed.

There was mixed opinion as it related to the issue of the location of an asphalt plant and recent discussion of a junk car ordinance.

### Owen District

There was general support for the land use planning process with particular emphasis on growth management favoring farmland preservation and protecting the scenic value of the higher ridges in the area. It was suggested that stricter ordinances be established for erosion control and limiting development in the floodplains. There was general concern for the degrading of water quality and an expressed desire to provide cleanup of the Swannanoa River.

### Reynolds District

General support was indicated for land use planning, with considerable interest in zoning and additional growth management efforts. There was specific interest in preserving the rural landscape and scenic beauty for the area and a suggestion to enact more effective buffers to development with an emphasis on erosion control and stormwater management. Additional comments included a desire to enact methods of preserving farmland and to give U.S. Hwy 74 a scenic road designation.

### Roberson District

Many attending this meeting appeared comfortable with present efforts toward planning, given much of the area is presently under the jurisdiction of the Limestone Zoning Ordinance. It was expressed that land use planning is the direction of the future. More specific sentiments included the support for the scenic qualities of the area, an aversion to strip development, protection of open space and emphasis on walking and bike trails, and protection of residential areas from commercial development.

Subsequent to the Community Issues Forums, the Citizens Steering Committee for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan identified these points of general concern, common to all the districts, as well as topics that emerged from the meetings which are particularly difficult:

### GENERAL CONCERNS COMMON TO ALL DISTRICTS

- Regard for natural beauty in the county, emphasis on parks and recreation
- Concern for means to implement comprehensive plan initiatives
- Pro & con on mobile homes - possible stricter ordinance
- Support for no growth or growth management
- "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail"
- Too much emphasis on tourism re: quality of jobs
- Protect French Broad River



**DIFFICULT ISSUES**

- Protection of Property Rights
- Zoning or excessive regulation
- Annexation by Asheville or other municipalities
- Asphalt Plant
- Expansion of extra-territorial jurisdiction of Asheville or other municipalities
- Mobile Homes / Affordable Housing
- Uncontrolled Growth
- Newcomers vs. Old-timers

# APPENDIX 1

## 1995 INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES

<u>County</u>	<u>Agriculture*</u>	<u>Mining</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Manufacturing</u>	<u>Trans. &amp; Util.</u>	<u>Wholesale</u>
Buncombe	310	(C)	5,223	19,732	3,220	4,477
Henderson	178	(B)	1,744	7,523	1,282	1,094
Madison	(A)	(A)	139	373	97	74
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>(A)</u>	<u>625</u>	<u>2,928</u>	<u>206</u>	<u>133</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,731</b>	<b>30,556</b>	<b>4,805</b>	<b>5,778</b>
% Metro Total	0.46%	0.00%	6.31%	24.96%	3.92%	4.72%
McDowell	(B)	(B)	615	8,580	410	290
Mitchell	(A)	163	169	1,745	96	125
Polk	32		197	1,167	190	63
Rutherford	65		750	12,163	894	557
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>152</u>	<u>1,761</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>23</u>
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>1,883</b>	<b>25,416</b>	<b>1,746</b>	<b>1,058</b>
% Eastern Total	0.32%	0.39%	3.86%	52.14%	3.58%	2.17%
Haywood	80	(A)	792	3,442	327	329
Jackson	46		622	1,046	199	96
<u>Swain</u>	<u>(B)</u>	<u>(A)</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>968</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>77</u>
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,490</b>	<b>5,456</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>502</b>
% Western Total	0.53%	0.00%	6.26%	22.94%	2.38%	2.11%
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>11,104</b>	<b>61,428</b>	<b>7,117</b>	<b>7,338</b>
% Region Total	0.44%	0.10%	5.70%	31.51%	3.65%	3.76%
<b>NC</b>	<b>17,473</b>	<b>4,179</b>	<b>173,506</b>	<b>870,344</b>	<b>156,650</b>	<b>173,976</b>
% NC Total	0.58%	0.14%	5.80%	29.09%	5.24%	5.81%

\*Agricultural Services, Forestry, & Fishing

\*\*Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate

Data in certain categories is withheld to avoid disclosing data on individual companies. Data is included in broader industry totals.

(A): 0-19 Employees

(B): 20-99 Employees

(C): 100-249 Employees

Source: US Bureau of Census

<u>County</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>F.I.R.E.**</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Unclassified</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% Total</u>
Buncombe	20,018	2,648	30,274	(B)	86,069	70.29%
Henderson	5742	780	7773	(B)	26,197	21.40%
Madison	476	56	826	(A)	2,072	1.69%
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>1,549</u>	<u>291</u>	<u>2,272</u>	<u>(A)</u>	<u>8,103</u>	<u>6.62%</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>27,785</b>	<b>3,775</b>	<b>41,145</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>122,441</b>	
% Metro Total	22.69%	3.08%	33.60%	0.00%		
McDowell	2,345	225	1,891	0	14,408	29.56%
Mitchell	847	111	989	(A)	4,270	8.76%
Polk	678	119	1,272	6	3,724	7.64%
Rutherford	3,594	423	4,320	11	22,777	46.73%
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>715</u>	<u>148</u>	<u>521</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3,563</u>	<u>7.31%</u>
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>8,179</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>8,993</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>48,742</b>	
% Eastern Total	16.78%	2.10%	18.45%	0.04%		
Haywood	3,800	507	3,837	(A)	13,137	55.23%
Jackson	1,828	273	2,466	5	6,581	27.67%
<u>Swain</u>	<u>897</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>1,943</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,068</u>	<u>17.10%</u>
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>6,525</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>8,246</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23,786</b>	
% Western Total	27.43%	3.45%	34.67%	0.02%		
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>42,489</b>	<b>5,621</b>	<b>58,384</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>194,969</b>	
% Region Total	21.79%	2.88%	29.95%	0.01%		
<b>NC</b>	<b>606,963</b>	<b>156,581</b>	<b>830,091</b>	<b>2,412</b>	<b>2,992,175</b>	
% NC Total	20.29%	5.23%	27.74%	0.08%		

## APPENDIX 2

### 1995 INDUSTRY PAYROLL BY COUNTY (000's)

<u>County</u>	<u>Agriculture*</u>	<u>Mining</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Manufacturing</u>	<u>Trans. &amp; Util.</u>	<u>Wholesale</u>
Buncombe	\$5,558	\$0	\$114,580	\$497,183	\$102,511	\$128,796
Henderson	2,688	0	41,700	226,132	32,084	29,547
Madison	0	0	2,407	7,648	3,483	1,100
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>951</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,335</u>	<u>108,051</u>	<u>7,106</u>	<u>2,896</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>\$9,197</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$170,022</b>	<b>\$839,014</b>	<b>\$145,184</b>	<b>\$162,339</b>
% Metro Total	0.34%	0.00%	6.33%	31.24%	5.40%	6.04%
McDowell	\$0	\$0	\$12,099	\$191,827	\$8,376	\$5,838
Mitchell	0	5,007	2,669	34,953	2,855	2,285
Polk	590		3,929	23,209	7,130	1,203
Rutherford	776		14,934	292,124	25,229	14,690
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>704</u>	<u>379</u>	<u>2,736</u>	<u>36,936</u>	<u>3,373</u>	<u>406</u>
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>\$2,070</b>	<b>\$5,386</b>	<b>\$36,367</b>	<b>\$579,049</b>	<b>\$46,963</b>	<b>\$24,422</b>
% Eastern Total	0.22%	0.56%	3.80%	60.47%	4.90%	2.55%
Haywood	\$1,631	\$0	\$14,764	\$126,888	\$8,953	\$7,486
Jackson	724		11,084	18,790	4,658	1,621
<u>Swain</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,109</u>	<u>12,452</u>	<u>638</u>	<u>2,109</u>
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>\$2,355</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$26,957</b>	<b>\$158,130</b>	<b>\$14,249</b>	<b>\$11,216</b> %
% Western Total	0.50%	0.00%	5.70%	33.43%	3.01%	2.37%
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>\$13,622</b>	<b>\$5,386</b>	<b>\$233,346</b>	<b>\$1,576,193</b>	<b>\$206,396</b>	<b>\$197,977</b>
% Region Total	0.33%	0.13%	5.67%	38.29%	5.01%	4.81%
<b>NC</b>	<b>\$299,126</b>	<b>\$152,478</b>	<b>\$4,086,314</b>	<b>\$23,383,857</b>	<b>\$5,191,776</b>	<b>\$5,557,065</b>
% NC Total	0.43%	0.22%	5.82%	33.30%	7.39%	7.91%

\*Agricultural Services, Forestry, & Fishing

\*\*Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate

Source: US Bureau of Census

<u>County</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>F.I.R.E.**</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Unclassified</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% Total</u>
Buncombe	\$258,992	\$73,377	\$675,612	\$0	\$1,861,330	69.29%
Henderson	87,127	20,005	151,681	0	592,367	22.05%
Madison	5,222	1,172	13,966	0	35,496	1.32%
<u>Transylvania</u>	<u>18,120</u>	<u>6,606</u>	<u>41,367</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>196,922</u>	<u>7.33%</u>
<b>Metro</b>	<b>\$369,461</b>	<b>\$101,160</b>	<b>\$882,626</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$2,686,115</b>	
% Metro Total	13.75%	3.77%	32.86%	0.00%		
McDowell	\$26,361	\$4,761	\$30,450	\$14	\$280,486	29.29%
Mitchell	9,025	2,581	16,443	0	76,180	7.95%
Polk	7,178	3,820	18,127	149	65,335	6.82%
Rutherford	44,281	9,779	69,020	143	470,976	49.18%
<u>Yancey</u>	<u>9,163</u>	<u>2,735</u>	<u>8,195</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>64,680</u>	<u>6.75%</u>
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>\$96,008</b>	<b>\$23,676</b>	<b>\$142,235</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>\$957,657</b>	
% Eastern Total	10.03%	2.47%	14.85%	0.04%		
Haywood	\$51,243	\$11,392	\$70,857	\$0	\$293,550	62.06%
Jackson	19,437	5,794	50,115	45	112,268	23.74%
<u>Swain</u>	<u>12,947</u>	<u>787</u>	<u>36,723</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>67,188</u>	<u>14.20%</u>
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>\$83,627</b>	<b>\$17,973</b>	<b>\$157,695</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>\$473,006</b>	
% Western Total	17.68%	3.80%	33.34%	0.01%		
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>\$549,096</b>	<b>\$142,809</b>	<b>\$1,182,556</b>	<b>\$422</b>	<b>\$4,116,778</b>	
% Region Total	13.34%	3.47%	28.73%	0.01%		
<b>NC</b>	<b>\$8,187,329</b>	<b>\$4,917,894</b>	<b>\$18,419,407</b>	<b>\$36,470</b>	<b>\$70,231,716</b>	
% NC Total	11.66%	7.00%	26.23%	0.05%		

## APPENDIX 3: COMMUNITY FORUMS

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### ENKA HIGH SCHOOL JANUARY 22, 1998

Staff attending: Jim Coman, County Planning; Dianne Lankford, County Planning; Denise Braine, County Planning; Anita Metcalf, Training and Development; Elise Israel, Soil and Water Conservation; and Debbie Hay, Community Liaison.

Steering Committee members attending: Chairman Scott Hughes, North Buncombe; Gary Roberts, North Buncombe; Bob Kendrick, North Buncombe; Garrett Ramsey, Erwin; Pat Hutchison, Erwin; Doug Clark, Erwin; Vonna Cloninger, Enka; John Montcastle, Enka; Clay Mooney, Enka; Bob Yeager, Enka.

Consultants attending: Brad Davis, Land Design Assoc. and Todd Williams, Michael Gallis and Assoc.

Chairman Scott Hughes welcomed approximately 49 people to the meeting at 7:07 p.m. The steering committee members, staff and consultants were introduced.

Chairman Hughes then laid the ground rules for the meeting which were as follows:

1. Attendees must respect the right for each person to share his or her opinion.
2. Focus on issues of land use planning.
3. Try to limit comments to five minutes or less.

He then explained the purpose of the meeting stating that in order for the process of land use planning to be effective, the community must take ownership. He continued that because growth was inevitable and issues concerning infrastructure needs and property rights continually challenge the county the Land Use Planning process can help each area direct its use of land resources. He stressed that the plan would not impose any restrictions and that it would be up to each district to decide for itself on that part of the process.

Next, Brad Davis gave a synopsis of the 12 to 14 month process and Todd Williams of Michael Gallis and Assoc. explained the displayed maps to the audience.

At this point, the audience was invited to speak and attention was called to the questions posed by the steering committee which were to serve as a discussion guide. Those were:

1. What is the best thing about this district?
2. What is the worst thing about this district?
3. How is the area changing?
  
4. Has the change been good or bad?
5. If you had the power to change thing in this area, how would things be different? What would be different, what would be the same?

Jerry Rice, Starnes Cove Road, said that with the lifestyle changes which have occurred in the county it is necessary for us to change with the times. He had concerns about the need for a solid job base stating that mobile homes are all many people can afford. He was also concerned that the roads take up some of the prime county land, as do the utility companies. He thought that the County should consider how its current ordinances and policies affect land use.

Roy Thomas, Erwin district, stated his opposition to growth and disagreed that there is no alternative.

Terry Trull, a farmer, responded that growth cannot be stopped. He wanted the mountains and valleys to be protected and saw a need for recreation facilities and ball parks. He believed that we must provide for our children.

Jennifer Styles, Erka, expressed her belief that there is a general fear of the Land Use Planning process on the part of many in the community. She asked what the purpose of it was. Chairman Hughes answered that it established growth patterns and identified infrastructure needs.

Ms. Styles then asked if the plan would lead to restrictions. Chairman Hughes responded that the plan would address bigger picture issues and would not result in regulation.

Ms. Styles then asked Brad Davis what directions the County could take which would manage growth while at the same time protecting private property rights. Mr. Davis noted that where a community wanted to slow growth down, for example, it could guide the placement of infrastructure. It could establish locations to attract good industries which look for good infrastructure and quality of life. It could form magnets for residential growth which would attract commercial amenities and lastly, manage its environmental resources.

Tom Trull, Pisgah Highway, wanted to know what he was going to get out of the Land Use Plan. Chairman Hughes and Brad Davis asked what he would like to get out of it. Vonna Cloninger asked him if he wanted water and sewerage, recreational facilities or land preservation. Jim Coman said that the plan would help make sound decisions about where schools, libraries, pools should go. Gary Roberts added that planning also provided for his grandchildren's future.

Mr. Trull responded that he believed the Land Use Plan would ultimately result in zoning.

Tom Thrash, Enka, added that government cannot be trusted. He continued that growth is market driven and the worst thing about the area was annexation and the one mile ETJ explaining the BASF was driven out because of annexation by the City. He advocated for the continuation of the Community Council as a means to vote for what the community wanted.

Gail Harding, High Meadows, believed that people have to be willing to give a little bit on both sides of the issue. She added that no planning would lead to more problems and that we must work towards the middle.

Dolph Robinson, English Place, requested that the Commissioners hold their regular meetings when working people could attend. He then asked what plans the planning department already had in place. Jim Coman answered that heretofore, the planning department planned in a more reactionary way and that the Land Use Plan could help the County plan more proactively.

Mr. Robinson wanted to control growth while enhancing neighborhoods without controlling what people did with their land.

Regina Lambert requested that schools be built for growth and that there be more recreational opportunities for our children.

Allen Styles asked what the rules were regarding spacing between trailers in a trailer park. Jim Coman replied that the Mobile Park Ordinance requires mobile homes to be at least 20 feet apart from outside wall to outside wall. Garrett Ramsey of the Mobile Park Homes Board added that the ordinance is in the process of being reworked.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.





ERWIN HIGH SCHOOL JANUARY 20, 1998

Staff attending: Jim Coman, County Planning; Cynthia Barklow, County Planning; Debbie Trumpey, County Planning; Gary Higgins, Soil and Water Conservation; Ed Parham, Garage; Helen Beck, JTPA; Marvin Hollifield, Board of Elections; Ronnie Silvers, Board of Elections and Debbie Hay, Community Liaison.

Steering Committee members attending: Chairman Scott Hughes, North Buncombe; Albert Sneed, North Buncombe; Gary Roberts, North Buncombe; Bob Kendrick, North Buncombe; Garrett Ramsey, Erwin; Aubrey Wells, Erwin; Doug Clark, Erwin; Pat Hutchison, Erwin; Vonna Cloninger, Enka; John Montcastle, Enka; Clay Mooney, Enka; Bob Yeager, Enka; and Jack Grant, Roberson.

Consultants attending: Brad Davis, Land Design Assoc. and Todd Williams, Michael Gallis and Assoc.

Chairman Scott Hughes welcomed approximately 195 people to the meeting at 7:07 p.m. The steering committee members, staff and consultants were introduced.

Chairman Hughes then laid the ground rules for the meeting which were as follows:

1. Attendees must respect the right for each person to share his or her opinion.
2. Focus on issues of land use planning.
3. Try to limit comments to five minutes or less.

He then explained the purpose of the meeting stating that in order for the process of land use planning to be effective, the community must take ownership. He continued that because growth was inevitable and issues concerning infrastructure needs and property rights continually challenge the county, the Land Use Planning process can help each area direct its use of land resources. He stressed that the plan would not impose any restrictions and that it would be up to each district to decide for itself on that part of the process.

Next, Brad Davis gave a synopsis of the 12 to 14 month process and Todd Williams of Michael Gallis and Assoc. explained the displayed maps to the audience.

At this point, the audience was invited to speak and attention was called to the questions posed by the steering committee which were to serve as a discussion guide. Those were:

1. What is the best thing about this district?
2. What is the worst thing about this district?
3. How is the area changing?
4. Has the change been good or bad?
5. If you had the power to change thing in this area, how would things be different? What would be different, what would be the same?

William McCoy of Serenity Forest was concerned that a healthy balance be established between "nice" development and trailer parks. He was concerned about the investment he had made to develop his forty acres and the adverse effects of neighboring land use. He believed that the Erwin district had its share of low priced houses.

P.F. Davis, 1843 Leicester Highway, stated that for many people in our county, mobile homes are their only option and that improvements were needed in economic development.

Richard Settles, Lynwood Circle, believed that the reactive growth which had occurred in Charlotte was undesirable and added that the guiding principle to land use should be common sense. He also believed that our park system needed improvement, and that we should avoid using the French Broad River as a dumping ground.

Tom Elmore, Dix Creek area, felt that the nicest thing about the area is the way it looks. He also stated that its agricultural vistas should be protected with incentives to save the land for farming. He continued that the worst things were strip developments and lack of planning on the main corridors. He said that there should be an incentive to put commercial development in a central location. He was also concerned about the safety of the five lane design of Leicester Highway. He suggested that townships were too large for planning purposes and that the County should consider breaking them into smaller blocks. He closed by requesting a traffic count for Leicester Highway. Jim Coman will get that to Tom.

Arlis Davis, Leicester Highway, was concerned about the number of housing projects located in the Erwin district. He advocated for a better mix of income levels as it would improve the schools and the area.

Jim Coman assured Mr. Davis that there were no plans for a new housing project in the Erwin district.

Roger Aiken, West Buncombe district and President of the Erwin Youth League, requested more athletic fields for soccer and baseball. He added that the number of youth participating in the league has

Mr. Henderson replied that it made more sense to build on land the County already owned and that it building it on the 35 acre tract would locate it in the center of the most populated area of the district.

P.F. Davis wondered why the County Commissioners had given \$50,000 to a nursery which caused the highway to be destroyed by the tractor trailers which service it.

Elaine Redmond, Erwin Hills Road, was concerned about the lack of amenities in Erwin stating that the community needed more opportunities for recreation, a library and tennis courts.

She wondered if the County had considered selling the 35 acres. Jim Coman replied that at this point the Commissioners had no intention of selling the land.

Mike Summey, Erwin, admonished that with zoning would come a restriction of freedom. He did not agree with any regulations being put on land use and said that regulation destroy Erwin District Land Use Planning incentive. He believes that people want less government and indicated that if the building restrictions were less prohibitive he would be more likely to build affordable housing. He also wanted the 35 acres to be put up for sale and advocated for a field house at Erwin High School.

Tony Johnson, Macedonia Road, was in favor of more roads and expanding the water system but was against zoning. He also agreed that there is a need for more jobs. He speculated that perhaps the Land Use Plan could be a means to guide our growth and that we needed to have more camping, hiking and fishing areas. He agreed that building codes are too strict. Lastly, he contended that the community must live and work together in freedom.

Joey Maxwell, Emma Road, advocated for refurbishing what we already have. He thought energy and resources should be used to help the people who are here now rather than promoting growth. He saw a need for softball fields and improved school facilities such as eliminating trailers, and building a stadium and concession stand at the high school.

Richard Erwin, Mt. Carmel Road and a teacher a Roberson, believes we need more soccer and baseball fields and basketball courts. He suggested building an athletic complex and added that in Charlotte, old landfill sites are used for tennis courts and soccer fields. He urged the audience to consider the needs of the whole county rather than being so focussed on its own back yard.

Open discussion followed regarding the 35 acres of County land. Questions were asked about when the land was acquired and why the land had been looked at in the last six months. Jim Coman answered that the land was an old farm tract which was part of the old County Home property. He also said that interest in the land cycles every few years and that it had been surveyed last in the '80's. He ended the meeting by inviting attendees to use the forms provided for written comments as needed and that the steering committee would be back in the community in six to nine months.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.



NORTH BUNCOMBE HIGH SCHOOL JANUARY 21, 1998

Staff attending: Jim Coman, County Planning; Cynthia Barklow, County Planning; Debbie Trumpey, County Planning; Don Yelton, Solid Waste; Loring McIntyre, Soil and Water Conservation; Marvin Hollifield, Board of Elections; Ronnie Silvers, Board of Elections and Debbie Hay, Community Liaison.

Steering Committee members attending: Chairman Scott Hughes, North Buncombe; Albert Sneed, North Buncombe; Gary Roberts, North Buncombe; Bob Kendrick, North Buncombe; Garrett Ramsey, Erwin; Pat Hutchison, Erwin; Vonna Cloninger, Enka; John Montcastle, Enka; Bob Yeager, Enka; Jack Grant, Roberson and Allen Lang, Division of Community Assistance.

Consultants attending: Brad Davis, Land Design Assoc. and Todd Williams, Michael Gallis and Assoc.

Chairman Scott Hughes welcomed approximately 75 people to the meeting at 7:08 p.m. The steering committee members, staff and consultants were introduced.

Chairman Hughes then laid the ground rules for the meeting which were as follows:

1. Attendees must respect the right for each person to share his or her opinion.
2. Focus on issues of land use planning.
3. Try to limit comments to five minutes or less.

He then explained the purpose of the meeting stating that in order for the process of land use planning to be effective, the community must take ownership. He continued that because growth was inevitable and issues concerning infrastructure needs and property rights continually challenge the county the Land Use Planning process can help each area direct its use of land resources. He stressed that the plan would not impose any restrictions and that it would be up to each district to decide for itself on that part of the process.

Next, Brad Davis gave a synopsis of the 12 to 14 month process and Todd Williams of Michael Gallis and Assoc. explained the displayed maps to the audience.

At this point, the audience was invited to speak and attention was called to the questions posed by the steering committee which were to serve as a discussion guide. Those were:

1. What is the best thing about this district?
2. What is the worst thing about this district?
3. How is the area changing?
4. Has the change been good or bad?
5. If you had the power to change thing in this area, how would things be different? What would be different, what would be the same?

Eddie Shook, North Buncombe Flat Creek Township, saw that some good changes have occurred with more job opportunities and better housing opportunities. He stressed that with the coming of the I-26 corridor, planning was vital and that we needed to adopt the Land Use Plan.

Judith Pohl, Upper Flat Creek Road, was concerned about how little protection there was in the community against commercial encroachment and believed certain areas which lend themselves to commercial growth should be designated.

Sarah Manning, Wilderness Road and a retiree to the area, advocated the use of zoning to protect residential areas. She added that it is necessary to protect the quality of life in the area.

Victoria Maddox, Ox Creek area, stated that with the phenomenal growth of the area, land use planning is necessary. She continued that the air and water belong to all of us and needs to be protected. She urged the community to adopt a community-based and inclusive Land Use Plan in which community values were assessed and protected. She also advocated for zoning by precincts in which existing businesses would be grandfathered in.

Samantha Gallman, Tipton Hill Road, said that she considered the French Broad River to be our best asset and wondered why landfills and waste treatment plants were located along its banks.

Donna Robinson, Ivy Hill Road, admonished that when Weaverville acquired Barnardsville's water rights, it chose to grow and would have to deal with the growth.

Martha Claxton, Flat Creek Township, was for the Land Use Plan stating that commercial encroachment in residential areas is destructive.

Dr. Claxton read a letter from Gary Hensley which also stated the importance of the Land Use Plan as a means to manage growth with the advent of the I-26 corridor.



Bob Penland, Reems Creek Road, was strongly against zoning and considered the Land Use Plan as means for the County Commissioners to get a toe hold on the community. Zoning, he asserted, would be the natural consequence.

Eddie Crawford, Stoney Knob Road, advocated for the Profitt Asphalt plant saying that we need the jobs. He was against a junk car ordinance and wondered why the County paid outside consultants \$140,000 to display maps which have been at the planning department for years. He also believed that newcomers should be more neighborly to locals.

Janna Gower responded that if we are in favor of paved roads, then we are in favor of a Land Use Plan.

Roy Thomas, Leicester community, urged the community to stop arguing. He also reiterated that we should not grow any more and that we should concentrate our resources on maintaining what we already have. He is against planning because he is against growth.

Larry Moore, Whitt Road, confirmed that no regulations could be imposed without the adoption by the community. He reassured the committee that natives, as well as, newcomers care about land use. He was in favor of a Land Use Ordinance which is reasonable with a strong dose of common sense.

Jim Coman affirmed that through a process which has been in place for nineteen years, the community could adopt zoning when and if it wishes.

Audrey Mankoff, a newcomer, wanted industrial uses of land to be restricted to land designated for that purpose.

Kelly Himolka, Barnardsville, likes the area the way it is and wants to limit development.

Jeff Ledford, Webb Cove Road, asked why there was so much animosity towards outsiders and wondered who sold the land to them in the first place. He urged the community to consider land use planning so that it can have a say in what goes on.

Charles Profitt advocated for his asphalt plant.

GeJuan Buckner, Barnardsville, was concerned that the Land Use Plan would lead to zoning.

Chairman Hughes reiterated that each community has a choice as to whether or not it wants to be zoned.

Barbara Ledford, Whitt Road, submitted that we are not only planning for ourselves but for generations to come and that it is vital to protect the environment.

Danielle Ball, Sandy Mush area, admonished that the land belongs to God and that if we did not come together, God would blow us up. She instructed the audience to give input and that the steering committee would take the good and the bad and decide for the best. An open discussion began about the significance of a plan if there was no enforcement of it.

Chairman Hughes explained that a plan could identify areas prone to growth and help plan traffic patterns, amenities, and where development can and will happen.

GeJuan Buckner wanted to know who would be benefitted by the plan. Chairman Hughes replied that all of us would. He said that the plan would be the community's plan and not that of the steering committee. Brad Davis added that the plan could help a community limit growth if that is what the area wanted. He continued that incentives such as providing infrastructure in certain areas could direct growth patterns without regulations.

Open discussion continued around issues such as a fear of the growth which would be facilitated by the addition of infrastructure. There was a stated preference for the rural nature of Barnardsville.

Brad Davis used a community outside of Charlotte as an example of managed growth. The community chose to refuse the addition of interchanges and thereby limited its growth.

Ruby Baker, Evening Shade Road, requested that the community be more accepting of newcomers.

The meeting ended at 9:10 p.m.

**OWEN HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - JANUARY 20, 1998**

Steering Committee Members attending were: Martha McFalls, Presiding, Owen District; Terry McElrath, Owen District; Les Mitchell, Reynolds District; Michael Morgan, Owen District; Janet Moushey, Reynolds District; Dean Reed, Owen District; Bob Selby, Roberson District; and Mike Tavener, Reynolds District.

Consultants attending were: Michael Gallis, Michael Gallis and Associates; and Greg Jones, Land Design, Inc.

Planning Department staff attending were: Jon Creighton, Director; Denise Braine; Heather Cope; and Dot Cordell.

59 people signed in.

Martha McFalls welcomed those present and thanked the Principal and staff of Owen High School for their hospitality. She stated that the County Commissioners saw the need to establish a foundation for planning in the county through a community participation process. Land Design was selected as the company to assist in drafting a county-wide land use plan. The Commissioners appointed a six-member Initiating Committee, comprised of one person from each school district, later three additional members were added from each school district. This group of twenty-four are known as the Steering Committee. A Technical Committee has also worked closely with the Steering Committee and the consultants.

Steering Committee members and Consultants introduced themselves and talked briefly about their involvement in this process.

Ms. McFalls continued, after several meetings with the consultant to gather and review information, the Steering Committee felt it was time to set community meetings in each of the school districts to hear from the people with regard to land use planning. In order for the process of land use planning to be effective, the community must take ownership, growth is inevitable and issues concerning our future must be addressed. Ms. McFalls stressed that the plan would not impose any restrictions and that it would be up to each district to decide for itself on the direction of that area's use of land resources.

These meetings are being held with no preconceived concepts of what the final county-wide land use plan will be. Ms. McFalls laid the ground rules for the meeting which were as follows:

1. Attendees must respect the right for each person to share his or her opinion.
2. Focus on issues of land use planning.
3. Try to limit comments to five minutes or less.

As a part of the audience comments and discussion the Steering Committee asked that attention be called to the key input questions which will serve as a discussion guide:

- A. What is the best thing about this district?
- B. What is the worst thing about this district?
- C. How is the area changing?
- D. Has the change been positive or negative?
- E. If you had the power to change things in this area; How would things be different? What would you change? What would you leave the same?

Michael Gallis and Grég Jones reviewed the maps, posted on the walls around the room, as to what statistical information was included and the various sources providing the information. The maps reflect the current usage and data of the district and county.

Following are comments received from the audience:

Harry Gebequin, Poplar Street, Black Mountain - The Quality of Life plan from the Vision Committee should be incorporated in this process. A great deal of work has gone into this process including gathering information and holding meetings in the various communities.

Bob Selby, Committee - Benchmarks will be addressed probably by June, this Committee is aware of the information developed by Quality of Life Foundation.

Stephanie Wilds, Dunsmore Ave., Black Mountain - This study should be two dimensional with use of topographical maps. She stressed the conservation of the beauty of the mountains and keeping the ridge lines free of extensive building.

Greg Jones, Consultant - we are in the process of obtaining additional information from the Blue Ridge Parkway regional office.

Michael Sobol, Blue Ridge Assembly Drive, Black Mountain - Remember the importance of property rights of individuals, development should be limited with no property taken without compensation. Sobol spoke to the fact that Montreat had taken additional property for zoning and limited the development with their zoning

regulations, without compensating the residents. Does not want crows nests on tops of mountains. Need to protect mountainsides from development with more control over erosion.

Bob Selby, Committee - addressed some of Sobol's concerns, explained the Soil Erosion Control Ordinance and how builders and contractors file an erosion plan with the erosion control office at Planning Department.

Arnold Ferguson, Buck Eye Cove Rd., Swannanoa - Necessity to retain Farmland Preservation program and Present Use Valuation. Likes country living, he has no need for water and sewer, if he did not have electricity already, he would not get electricity, no need. Wants to preserve land and the beauty through ridge line development restrictions. Believes in living off the land - should be able to cut timber for own use - regulations of timber management. Should have protection from undesirables, such as sewer lines. Private property rights should be emphasized.

Staff, Committee members and Consultant Gallis spoke to concerns.

Lou Millin, Botany Drive, Riceville community - Need soil percolations and drainage control. On site erosion during building process is a large factor of flooding during the rainy periods, need stricter erosion control regulations. Should have ditch banks to increase run-off, pavement only increases run-off.

Dean Reed, Committee, and Bob Selby, Committee - discussed subdivision regulations and erosion control requirements. Les Mitchell, Committee - talked about the Planning Board's role in development.

Elaine Loutzenheiser, Avena Road, Black Mountain - Erosion control ordinance should be stricter and enforced. Now rules apply to one acre or more, should be all development.

Bob Selby, Committee - reviewed fact that the erosion control rules apply to areas less than one acre. However no erosion plan need be filed for less than one acre.

Monroe Gilmore, Pineman Cove Road, Black Mountain - What teeth will the land use plan have? If plan is adopted, what will be the enforcement powers? We need to preserve the atmosphere of being located in the mountains. Wants less growth and retain the quality of life, restrict ridge tops and high mountains development. Wants stronger growth requirements and more controls with input from public. Erosion problems should be addressed.

Barbara Clough, Hickory Lane, off Old Farm School Rd., Asheville - Health and well-being of residents is important, fire and ambulance personnel should be able to reach residents. Must insure public safety access.

Michael Morgan, Committee - spoke of having a watershed co-op, whereby private land owners would sell their excess water to City of Asheville or other municipalities. Believes watershed above Beacon would produce approximately 200 gallons of water per minute and believes it is for sale. Mr. Morgan feel the County should buy this watershed and build other catch basins in the area to retain water from private springs and reservoirs. Morgan discussed co-op versus the French Broad water system.

Porge Buck, Portman Villa Road, Black Mountain - Lives in flood plain area, we need to consider how much is flood plain areas and why we have the flood plains. Drainage and amount of run-off make the flood properties have restrictions.

Arnold Ferguson, a pilot - Loves the mountain tops and river valleys. We need to discourage choking river beds and flood plains. Need managed development, as we are aggravating run-off.

Andrew Pederson, Laurel Circle Drive, Black Mountain - What effect does storm sewers have on MSD? Storm drains are cleared and then plugged again. Swannanoa river banks are filling up, area businesses flooded - third time in two years. Need to require soil test and have rules to govern low lands which will help the people downstream, need land use controls.

Mary White, Black Mountain - For two years she has attended Land Use Task Force meetings. We need to preserve beauty and protect the ridge lines. Discussed conservation easements and conservation trusts, landowners imposing requirements on heirs for control of property.

Iris Sluder, Buckeye Cove Road, Swannanoa - owns three acres. Need to protect rural life and areas scenic beauty. Should have enforcement measures on dilapidated buildings and litter. Limit and camouflage communication towers.

Audience speaker - What is the process for districts wanting zoning?

Jon Creighton, Planning Director - explained the process.

Marilyn Huff, Bethel Drive, Black Mountain - We need attractive and affordable housing, good jobs and good community neighbors. Mountain beauty through development without scraping the moun-

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tainside, this creates flooding and destroys the beauty. Montreat development has created a lot of run-off. In favor of conservation easements. Need 2 or 3 major clean-ups a year of the Swannanoa River.

Sara Raffer, 132 Daugherty St., Black Mountain - Make plans now for the future, important to environment. Preset the rate of area growth and density, important for water run-off, storm water and development. We know what we think will happen through present growth - need to map the future.

Rick Watson, contractor, Swannanoa - Swannanoa River has downed trees, cars, washing machines, as it is in a flood zone the Army Corp of Engineers say we cannot clean river banks. A flood area where the Swannanoa River and North Fork meet. Need to keep our rivers clean.

Richard Cuthbertson, 1244 North Fork Road, Black Mountain - Works with Camp Dorothy Walls, moved to the area 2 years ago from Salisbury. Enjoys the friendliness of the area residents and was pleased to see these meetings were advertised with television spots. Should preserve the beauty of the mountains. Interested in being on area committees and getting involved in the community.

Martha McFalls gave closing comments and thanked the people for attending. Comment forms were available at the doorway. Anyone having further questions should contact the Planning Department.





REYNOLDS HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - JANUARY 21, 1998

Steering Committee Members attending were: Martha McFalls, Presiding, Owen District; Sheila Bennett, Roberson District; Terry McElrath, Owen District; Les Mitchell, Reynolds District; Michael Morgan, Owen District; Janet Moushey, Reynolds District; Dean Reed, Owen District; Bob Selby, Roberson District; Albert Sorrells, Roberson District; Mike Tavener, Reynolds District; and Leslie Thornton, Reynolds District.

Consultant attending were: Michael Gallis, Michael Gallis and Associates; and Greg Jones, Land Design, Inc.

Planning Department staff attending were: Jon Creighton, Director; Mike Bradley; and Dot Cordell.

76 people signed in.

Martha McFalls welcomed those present and thanked the community for their hospitality in allowing the Committee to hold the meeting here at Reynolds High School. She stated that the County Commissioners saw the need to establish a foundation for planning in the county through a community participation process. Land Design was selected as the company to assist in drafting a county-wide land use plan. The Commissioners appointed a six-member Initiating Committee, comprised of one person from each school district, later three additional members were added from each school district. This group of twenty-four are known as the Steering Committee. A Technical Committee has also worked closely with the Steering Committee and the consultants.

Steering Committee members and Consultants introduced themselves and talked briefly about their involvement in this process.

Ms. McFalls continued, after several meetings with the consultant to gather and review information, the Steering Committee felt it was time to set community meetings in each of the school districts to hear from the people with regard to land use planning. In order for the process of land use planning to be effective, the community must take ownership, growth is inevitable and issues concerning our future must be addressed. Ms. McFalls stressed that the plan would not impose any restrictions and that it would be up to each district to decide for itself on the direction of that area's use of land resources.

These meetings are held with no preconceived concepts of what the final county-wide land use plan will be. Ms. McFalls laid the ground rules for the meeting which were as follows:

1. Attendees must respect the right for each person to share his or her opinion.
2. Focus on issues of land use planning.
3. Try to limit comments to five minutes or less.

As a part of the audience comments and discussion the Steering Committee asked that attention be called to the key input questions which will serve as a discussion guide:

- A. What is the best thing about this district?
- B. What is the worst thing about this district?
- C. How is the area changing?
- D. Has the change been positive or negative?
- E. If you had the power to change things in this area; How would things be different? What would you change? What would you leave the same?

Michael Gallis and Greg Jones reviewed the maps, posted on the walls around the room, as to what statistical information was included and the various sources providing the information. The maps reflect the current usage and data of the district and county.

Following are comments received from the audience:

Kendall Hale, Sharon Road, Fairview - moved to Fairview 52 years ago from Boston. Enjoys the natural surroundings. She owns 20 acres and has goats, chickens, barn and a pond. Is pleased that Hwy. 74A was designated as a Scenic Byway. Dislikes the growth in the county, which includes billboards, and cell phone towers. Wants to have a voice, perhaps by zoning. Feels that zoning would have changed the aesthetics of the new Food Lion in Fairview - bright outdoor lighting. Wants walking trails, biking trails and greenways. Appreciates the cultural diversity of our ethnics and foreign born residents.

Bart Ramsey, 1877 Charlotte Hwy., Fairview - a Fairview native, family run dairy farm. He is against zoning. Likes to serve his community and believes the community spirit expressed by members of the volunteer fire department is what he likes best about the district. Property owners should be able to have mobile homes without answering to the county, owners property rights is his largest concern. Believes in private enterprise - people having small businesses in the community and in their private homes. Does not like people moving into the community and telling other people what to do or to make changes. Likes restricted subdivisions without zoning. Believes in positive changes.

Al Mojonier, 29 Old Camby Rd. - moved here three years ago after living in the Chicago area. Loves the trees and beauty of the mountains. Member of the Affordable Housing Coalition, believes that houses should be more permanent than mobile homes.

Mary Jane Hunter, 231 Smith Knolls Road, Fairview - native of Henderson County, husband is native of Reynolds community, has two children. Our common ground should be to preserve the rural landscape and heritage of the community. Enjoys the community family way of life and the scenic beauty. A member of the Scenic Byway Committee involved in 17.7 miles of 74A being designated a Scenic Byway. Wants to retain the beautiful farmlands and mountain vistas. Does not like urban sprawl and widespread commercialism. We should strive for road planning and alternative transportation. She has talked with the manager of the Food Lion about the store lights and lack of buffer trees between Food Lion and the historic property next door. They are working on the issues with their corporate office and Ms. Hunter.

Bill Smith, Fairview - moved from up north twenty years ago. Emphasized the need to protect the environment. Developers should add extra costs into their sales price for paved roads with curbing.

Marvin Keith Gibbons, 42 Little Pisgah Rd., Fairview - added his agreement with the statements of Bart Ramsey. Believes this process is a "forerunner of zoning" and "we want to vote on it". Zoning is encroachment of constitutional rights if not allowed to vote on it. "Don't tread on my freedom." High property taxes is what he dislikes.

Jerry Sayles, Old Fort Road - Needs land use planning, don't want a retirement community. Set up a program of housing growth development, mobile homes and businesses. Developers move in and build houses for sale and then move out - their own gain, does not add to the community. Wants to keep beautiful mountains

Adec - moved here from France. His neighbors awoke one morning to a Frenchman living next door... days later he awoke to a mobile home park of 13 homes next door to him. Mobile home parks are like a cancer that spreads. Enjoys the friendliness of the people in this community. Believes people should use common sense in building and developing. More buffers - impacts the visual appearance and beauty of surroundings.

Cynthia Edmonds, Riceville community - Enjoys the diverse area and natural surroundings. Need a vision for the future with oppor-

tunities for economic growth. Should take care of the land and retain our farmland. Agricultural buffer near waterways. Natural transportation for animals, natural migration. Plan for roadways and grading with erosion control. Standards for air quality - high altitudes are put at risk. Need longer range planning.

Jesse W. Messer, 12 Country Mt. Road - lived 35 years in area near Rose Hill. Likes the area beauty, good schools and fire districts. Dislikes the bad traffic, mornings and evenings out of the city. Area changing rapidly, both positive and negative - people moving in and the increased demand for property.

Isbell Behrer, Garren Creek Road -Preserve the community character. Appreciated the efforts of the consultants paving the way for our growth. She has been a morning walker on Garren Creek Road for past 12 years. Realizes we cannot stop growth so we must plan for growth.

Laura Rotegard, 152 Wilson Road, a native of Minnesota - has good, helpful neighbors. Loves the open spaces and that the community is safe for walking. We should preserve the wildlife and natural settings of trees such as a 200 year old Oak tree in her yard. Dislikes the lights at the new Food Lion in Fairview.

Susan Bakewell, 10 Windy Acres Drive. - not a native of the area, but feels welcomed to the community. We should think about planning and plan for future while respecting each other.

Alan MacNair, 6 Joe Bailey Road, off Upper Brush Creek Road - lived here as a small child and moved to Raleigh, working as a realtor. Moved back with his family to the family farm. Likes the area's rural nature. Wants watershed protection and believes that we should have minimum lot sizes for development. As a realtor he has "never seen a mobile home appreciate in value".

Several comments where made in the audience as to the bright lights at the new Food Lion in Fairview. One comment to the microphone was that if you don't like the lights, don't buy your groceries there.

Jon Creighton, Planning Director, Consultants and Committee members addressed several statements.

Martha McFalls gave closing comments and thanked the people for attending. Comment forms were available at the doorway. Anyone having further questions should contact the Planning Department.

**ROBERSON HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - JANUARY 22, 1998**

Steering Committee Members attending were: Martha McFalls, Presiding, Owen District; Sheila Bennitt, Roberson District; Jack Grant, Roberson District; Les Mitchell, Reynolds District; Michael Morgan, Owen District; Janet Moushey, Reynolds District; Dean Reed, Owen District; Bob Selby, Roberson District; Albert Sorrells, Roberson District; and Mike Tavener, Reynolds District.

Consultants attending were: Michael Gallis, Michael Gallis and Associates; and Greg Jones, Land Design, Inc.

Planning Department staff attending were: Jon Creighton, Director; Mike Bradley; and Dot Cordell.

20 people signed in. A count of the attendees was 33 in the audience and 12 at the Committees table.

Martha McFalls welcomed those present and thanked the community for their hospitality in allowing the Committee to hold the meeting here at Roberson High School. She stated that the County Commissioners saw the need to establish a foundation for planning in the county through a community participation process. Land Design was selected as the company to assist in drafting a county-wide land use plan. The Commissioners appointed a six-member Initiating Committee, comprised of one person from each school district, later three additional members were added from each school district. This group of twenty-four are known as the Steering Committee. A Technical Committee has also worked closely with the Steering Committee and the consultants.

Steering Committee members and Consultants introduced themselves and talked briefly about their involvement in this process.

Ms. McFalls continued, after several meetings with the consultant to gather and review information, the Steering Committee felt it was time to set community meetings in each of the school districts to hear from the people with regard to land use planning. In order for the process of land use planning to be effective, the community must take ownership, growth is inevitable and issues concerning our future must be addressed. Ms. McFalls stressed that the plan would not impose any restrictions and that it would be up to each district to decide for itself on the direction of that area's use of land resources.

These meetings are held with no preconceived concepts of what the final county-wide land use plan will be. Ms. McFalls laid the ground rules for the meeting which were as follows:

1. Attendees must respect the right for each person to share his or her opinion.
2. Focus on issues of land use planning.
3. Try to limit comments to five minutes or less.

As a part of the audience comments and discussion the Steering Committee asked that attention be called to the key input questions which will serve as a discussion guide:

- A. What is the best thing about this district?
- B. What is the worst thing about this district?
- C. How is the area changing?
- D. Has the change been positive or negative?
- E. If you had the power to change things in this area; How would things be different? What would you change? What would you leave the same?

The various maps prepared by the consultants were placed in the middle of the room on tables. The attendees walked around the tables as Michael Gallis and Greg Jones reviewed the maps, as to what statistical information was included and the various sources providing the information. The maps reflect the current usage and data of the district and county. Questions were asked and discussed as the group viewed the maps.

Following are comments received from the audience:

Dick Martin, 17 Mallory Meadow Ct., Arden - Speaking to the classifications on the maps, can the classifications be changed?

Jon Creighton, Planning Director - acknowledged that yes classifications could change, i.e. residential to commercial.

Peggy Mann, 21 Maple Road, Arden - Stated much of the area covered by this district is already zoned by the Limestone Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Mann reviewed this fact and stated that she felt zoning was indeed a success for the area. Land use planning is the direction for the future of the County and applauds zoning.

Ann Campbell, 102 Crowfields Drive - a resident of the City of Asheville, Ms. Campbell does not want to see strip development as it is on Hendersonville Road.

Sonya Friedrich, 7 Eastwood Road, Biltmore Forest - likes the open spaces of the area. She is concerned that Metropolitan Sewerage District (MSD) does not budget for expansion.

Jon Creighton, Planning Director, and Bob Selby, Committee member also a member of the MSD Board - agreed with Ms. Friedrich that at present MSD is focusing their budget on replacement and repair of the districts' aging lines. Selby stated that MSD is now asking the County to bear expenses of expansion.

Jean Webb, White Oak Road - Proposed the question, How do we stop the open spaces from being taken? Stated that County has an Emerald Necklace greenways plan. Need community and political factions working together and City and County should work together to develop.

Audience discussion - Need more media involvement and more interaction with County officials. It was noted that the County Commissioners had recently been in the communities holding meetings to hear from the residents. Would like to see more foot paths. Riverlink has a master plan for greenways. Perhaps walking trails near Nature Center and greenways linking the Northern part of the County.

Bob Selby suggested bike paths from Sweeten Creek Road to Airport Road. Mr. Creighton said this had been suggested in the past but NCDOT was not interested in bearing the expense.

Les Mitchell, Committee - stated that NCDOT had secured enough right-of-way in the 74A Scenic Byway road widening that he was hopeful area residents would take it as a project to have bike and/or foot trails.

Jack Grant, Committee - discussed Blue Ridge Parkway - Scenic Corridor.

Discussion was held as to the reasoning behind land use planning. Questions were asked about conservation easements, land trusts and Farmland Preservation. Mr. Creighton spoke to these issues.

Loring McIntyre, USDA NRCS, Asheville - Spoke to the Agricultural Board and the possibility that Soil and Water may look at working with conservation trusts in the future.

Dick Martin - We need protection in residential areas from commercial development.

A question was asked about the process of forming community councils - Mr. Creighton explained the areas that now have these councils and how councils are established.

Jon Creighton, Planning Director, Consultants and Committee members addressed several statements.

Martha McFalls gave closing comments and thanked the people for attending. Comments forms were available at the doorway. Anyone having further questions should contact the Planning Department.



C O U N T Y O F  
B U N C O M B E

C O M P R E H E N S I V E  
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**P H A S E F O U R**  
F I N A L

PHASE 4

Prepared for:  
The County of Buncombe, Planning and Development

Prepared by:  
LandDesign, Inc.  
Michael Gallis & Associates

August 11, 1998

## **P R E F A C E**

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Phase Four of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan process includes the steps of identifying plan criteria, describing plan alternatives, and setting forth a proposed plan model and framework. These steps have been taken carefully through much deliberation by the project Steering Committee, based on months of research and analysis. In addition, significant input by the citizenry of Buncombe County has been received and incorporated into these recommendations, particularly through the series of community meetings held in January, 1998.

The plan model describes the philosophical basis of the plan, the essential ideals and rationale of the plan approach. The plan framework provides a detailed outline of the plan components and initiatives, giving the plan structure. Among the methods of implementation suggested for the various initiatives, emphasis is placed on creating voluntary incentive programs.

As indicated in the following pages, the recommended plan model combines certain ingredients from several of the alternatives. The plan utilizes the projected infrastructure pattern of roads and utility services as its basis, acknowledging the importance of these services to urbanization. This pattern of infrastructure and services is evaluated in terms of the feasibility to provide services to various parts of the county. Based on this evaluation, the potential for urbanization is defined. In addition to the growth infrastructure, attributes from both the environmental and economic development alternatives are included as overlays to highlight or amend growth initiatives.

The environmental overlay recommends a number of initiatives geared toward preserving the natural, scenic, and historic resources of Buncombe County. In particular, the environmental overlay suggests a limitation of public utility services to the scenic ridges and steep terrain in higher elevations, to encourage buffers in mixed use areas and to protect stream and river corridors, to encourage farmland preservation, and to strengthen the current mobile home park ordinance.

The overlay to strengthen economic development suggests the recognition of certain locations as historic or newly developing commercial hubs and seeks ways to reinforce these areas for concentrating growth and services, as an alternative to expansion of the commercial strip. In addition, specific areas of the county are targeted as preferred locations for new industries or other employers and methods of protecting these locations from incompatible development are sought.

## LAND USE PLAN CRITERIA

Buncombe County is currently in a transition period where it is progressing from having defined towns and hamlets set in a rural landscape to having continuous urbanization throughout almost the entire county. The county is blessed with abundant outstanding natural and scenic resources, and other conditions favorable to significant growth. Certain areas will begin to urbanize quite densely. The geography of the county, including significant areas of mountainous terrain, large tracts in federal or state holdings, and limited area for public infrastructure limit the area available and suitable for urbanization. Since infrastructure is largely confined to the valleys, growth is concentrated along the road corridors which are also located mainly in the valleys.

Much of this growth is occurring as sprawl along these corridors, with an increasing mix of commercial and residential development spread throughout Buncombe County.

This land use pattern results in a variety of undesirable consequences including the elimination of rural farmland, a continual mix of residential and commercial traffic, incompatible uses, and less than optimal land utilization. These conditions raise several concerns for future growth in the county. Among these concerns are the ability of Buncombe County to make effective investments in infrastructure, the degree of confidence investors will have that their investment is secure, the extent to which growth in inappropriate locations may erode scenic and environmental qualities, and a land use pattern which is largely based on the influence of the most recent developing use.

Without land use planning, only tracts of large single-ownership and planned communities provide a truly secure environment for investment. Additionally, with no restriction on incompatible uses these users may place their facilities almost anywhere within the county since there are no expressed community standards with respect to land development. Therefore, users may place non-complimentary facilities adjacent to almost any parcel, producing a potential detrimental effect on the original investment in the area. This leads to the perception that an area may be lacking a secure investment environment.

Without development standards throughout the county, land use is regulated by a "de facto" land use pattern, i.e.: developing land uses will, by their presence, greatly influence the land use of adjoining tracts. Without other forces to influence growth patterns, the conversion of land takes on a domino effect. Almost always these are land uses that are of greater impact than those that preceded them. However, by establishing development standards and methods of implementation including voluntary incentive programs, among others, property owners may experience increasing security in their investments and increasing compatibility of land use in the county.

## LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

There are many alternative criteria which can be used to guide future land use in Buncombe County. Each land use alternative has its own implications on the future tax base, employment base, value of development, quality of life, and on the residents and individual land owners of the county. These future land use alternatives for Buncombe County include:

1. **Continue Existing Trends:** Continue current land use trends which perpetuate a broad mix of existing land uses in an undifferentiated pattern.
2. **Enhance Environmental Qualities:** Future development to be guided by the preservation of existing natural and scenic areas including mountain slopes, ridge lines, rivers, Federal lands, etc. This alternative reduces conflict between urban development and the natural environment.
3. **Transportation/Infrastructure Pattern:** Concentrate high traffic generation commercial, industrial and multi-family residential development along major corridors where the availability of water, sewer, and transportation can be easily maintained and improved in a cost-effective manner.
4. **Strengthen Economic Development:** Create accessible commercial concentrations in a "corridors and center" concept by establishing economic use categories and determining where commercial hubs could most feasibly be developed. Establish logical buffer zones between commercial, industrial, and residential development.

Evaluation of each of these alternatives in terms of their application and impact on Buncombe County will serve as a basis for determining the appropriate plan model.

## **CONTINUE EXISTING TRENDS**

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Currently, within Buncombe County there are very limited regulations regarding new development. Therefore, the county's land use is characterized by an undifferentiated mix of commercial, industrial, and residential development as well as agricultural uses.

This atmosphere provides unlimited development freedom throughout the county. However, it may jeopardize the maximum value of the county as it is built out and perpetuates a fragmented land use pattern.

### **Inability to Plan and Direct Future Growth**

With unregulated growth and development, there is a lack of an ability to plan for future growth and a limited ability to direct this future growth in the most appropriate manner.

- Infrastructure development, including water, sewer, and roads becomes less efficient and utilization cannot be maximized.
- Planning for regional amenities such as schools, libraries, parks, etc. is less efficient because there is no way to determine the future pattern of users of these amenities.

### **Inefficient Land Use**

Unregulated growth and development also leads to inefficient use of the limited developable land resources of Buncombe County.

- Land that is better suited for other uses may be used inefficiently, limiting the ability to develop the land for its best use at a later date.
- Conflicting land uses may be developed adjacent to each other, thereby reducing the potential value of each property.
- Trend line growth development will result in extended urban sprawl throughout the region, while the natural scenic beauty of the region is greatly compromised.

## **ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITIES**

The "Environmental" land use model is based on preserving the environmental assets and visual integrity of Buncombe County. The implementation of this alternative is based on establishing a series of performance standards to guide future development in the environmentally sensitive areas of the county.

### **Scenic Quality Protection Criteria**

The highly varied topography of the region is a primary attribute that contributes to its natural scenic qualities. The potential loss of the natural beauty will have significant long-term consequences on the social, economic, and quality of life of the region.

#### **Ridgeline Protection**

- Ridgeline development restricted to protect the natural appearance of the mountains.

#### **Mountain Slope**

- Density to slope guidelines established for areas above elevation 2,500 feet and areas with topography of approximately 40% slope and greater.
- Development limited in areas of "extreme" and "moderate" slope.

#### **Riverscapes Preservation**

- Development restrictions in 100-year flood plains to protect river viewsapes.

### **Encouraging Parks/Greenspaces within Urban Areas**

Though there is an abundance of natural areas in the State and National Parks in and around Buncombe County, there is a need for the development of additional parks, recreational areas, and preservation of greenspace in urbanized areas.

#### **Enhance Quality of Life of Buncombe County Residents**

- Develop recreational space accessible to current residents
- Protect open space
- Establish greenways
- Plan for future parks in locations of future development

#### **Riverscape Enhancement**

- Expand river access parks
- Establish riverscape protection.

## **Protection/Enhancement of Agricultural Land**

Agricultural land in the region is fragmented and intertwined with non-agricultural uses. As development in the areas surrounding these agricultural parcels progresses, these farmlands become hemmed-in, limiting the ability for these lands to remain in production. Valuable farmland is lost to other uses, generally dictated by the new uses of the surrounding parcels.

### Farmland Aggregation

- Promote/Enhance Agricultural Land Trusts and private conservation purchases.
- Establish incentives to preserve prime farmland and aggregating land to provide continuity of agricultural lands.

## **Environmental Protection Criteria**

### Preservation of Water Quality

- Encourage natural buffers adjacent to waterways.
- Encourage appropriate development in 100-year flood plains.
- Encourage the design and proper implementation of stormwater management and erosion control plans.

### Preservation of Wildlife Habitat

- Protect or preserve "wildlife corridors" by providing contiguous natural greenbelt connecting wildlife habitat through greenway programs and public/private cooperation.
- The wildlife corridors protection program could work in conjunction with the water quality protection by having stream buffers simultaneously serving as a wildlife corridor.

### Encourage Preservation of "Unique Species"

- The areas that are home to sensitive plant and wildlife species could be preserved through incentive programs as part of the wildlife corridors or water quality protection programs or could be considered separately for preservation through individual programs tailored to the needs of that unique species.

### Water Supply Watershed Protection

- Enforcement of development restrictions in all state-mandated watershed classifications.

### Air Quality Protection

- Limiting sprawl will reduce travel distances and travel times and promote more efficient use of mass transit, thereby reducing pollutants.

## **TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE**

Using infrastructure as a basis for guiding future development in Buncombe County, future commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential development will be concentrated in areas that are serviced by sewer, water, and transportation corridors.

Less dense residential development will fill in the areas between the transportation corridors. These guidelines will minimize higher intensity development in areas without infrastructure or areas where there is a mismatch of infrastructure services.

Development for industrial and commercial areas will be maximized in specific areas to utilize existing and planned infrastructure within the county.

### **Roads**

- Encourage design standards which limit exits, curb cuts, median crossings, etc. to direct future development.
- Direct development growth by relating to existing and new state road development.

### **Sewer/Water**

- Encourage the concentration of future development along existing sewer lines.
- Strengthen standards for mobile home parks in areas without infrastructure through enforcement of existing regulations.
- Expansion of utility systems is limited by the topography of the area, therefore limiting future development in areas of difficult terrain.

### **Infrastructure Growth Categories**

#### **Highest Growth**

Primarily commercial and industrial development concentrated in areas with existing infrastructure capacity including water and sewer and immediate access to major corridors or interstate highways.

#### **Medium Growth**

In areas having good access to major arterials and interstate highways locate lighter commercial and industrial development, with more dense residential development in areas of existing or planned water and sewer infrastructure. In areas further from major corridors and limited water and sewer services, primarily residential uses with some mixed-use may occur.



Low Growth

Limited residential growth in areas with little or no public water and sewer capability and low access to major corridors. Residential development may be served by wells and septic tanks.

Minimal Growth

Limited development in critical areas protecting watersheds and ridgelines.

## **STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

This development alternative would promote standards that control the unlimited commercial and residential sprawl currently occurring throughout Buncombe County.

Planned centers of commercial/ industrial land use would be identified to serve as hubs for development. This pattern would concentrate commercial/industrial activities, taking advantage of existing and future commercial/industrial centers in a logical manner, and preserve land for development that would maximize value in these areas.

These standards would preserve lands best suited for industrial and commercial development, protect the county's tax base, and limit incompatible uses.

### **Commercial/Industrial Development Sprawl**

- Establish target areas for commercial, industrial, and residential development.
- Preserve land for industries with specific transportation/infrastructure requirements.
- Guide development of commercial strips by concentrating development in specific locations.
- Encourage re-use of commercial properties
- Limit excessive vacant and deteriorating commercial properties

### **Employment and Tax Base**

- Protect premium industrial or commercial land from inappropriate development.
- Preserve land for industrial/commercial uses to expand or build new facilities.
- Establish a wider industrial base throughout the county to protect the employment base and maximize the tax base.

### **Protect Residential Development from Incompatible Uses**

- Encourage residentially - oriented mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Limit commercial/industrial traffic through residential areas.
- Limit incompatible uses in areas where there presently exists a continuity of land use.

### **Balance Growth**

- Target potential employment growth areas and protect them by implementing restrictions on incompatible development.

### **Protection of "Rural Communities"**

- Identify and protect locally historic properties from unreasonable encroachment by urban development.
- Encourage infill development which is consistent in scale and architectural character with the existing character of the community.
- Encourage preservation of prime farmland through incentives.
- Limit utility expansions to preserve rural character.

## **GROWTH MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

If limited controls on urban growth are perpetuated, Buncombe County will continue its current trend of rapidly expanding mixed urban development. If any of the development alternatives other than the continuation of existing trends are to be achieved (e.g. Environmental, Transportation/Infrastructure, or Economic

Development-based development) some form of growth management will have to be undertaken in Buncombe County. Available growth tools include the following:

### **Policies**

Establishing governmental and utility policies to define future growth in Buncombe County will be the first step in directing this growth. After outlining areas in which the leaders of the county would like to direct growth, plans to use additional management tools may be implemented to direct this growth. These policies will be the basis for future investments, regulations, and plans and studies in the region. Certain policies can create incentives as 'non-regulatory' methods of encouraging certain land use patterns. Such incentives may include waiving certain fees or providing infrastructure improvements, for example.

### **Investments**

Future investment in infrastructure, roads, and regional amenities such as schools and libraries are very instrumental in establishing a direction for future growth in the county. Infrastructure and road investments open new land for development and stimulate growth within certain areas. Specific infrastructure development decisions may determine whether this newly developable land is residential or commercial/industrial in nature. Investment in regional amenities such as schools, libraries, parks, etc. can direct future residential development in specific areas.

### **Regulation**

Regulation may be in the form of development overlays or zoning to control the type and speed of growth. Development overlays determine standards to which new development must adhere. These standards may be in the form of density regulations, permitted uses, setbacks, etc. which directly determine the quality of any type of development and its effects on the surrounding area. Overlays may also be used to achieve other goals such as the protection of regional scenic quality, water quality, natural wildlife habitat, etc.

Zoning regulates the specific type of development that may be put in a specific area of the county. Zoning may be utilized to determine the mix of development options available for an area and protect limited industrial and commercial land from inappropriate uses while preserving the residential nature of specific areas of the county. Zoning can protect land values by limiting incompatible land uses.

The county currently provides for the establishment of local zoning areas at the township level by a petition and referendum of the residents of that area. This particular growth tool is not dependent on the local governing body for its implementation and can be established on a less than countywide basis. The county has agreed that it would enforce any such ordinance established under existing policy and due process.

**Community Plans and Studies**

These plans and studies can be used to determine the specifics of where parts of the county are at a certain point in time and where these areas are heading in terms of their land use mix, land value, contribution to the tax base, etc. These studies will be the basis for future policy decisions that direct growth within the county. These studies may be used to determine where certain types of growth within the county needs to be, where infrastructure investments should occur, what areas need to be protected from development, etc. Certain areas within the county may want a more detailed study to either stimulate or limit future growth in the immediate area.

## **PLAN MODEL**

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The following land use plan model and framework has been developed by the Project Steering Committee, derived from the information gained through citizen input and alternatives presented by the consultant team. They are intended to form a basis for finalizing a comprehensive county land use plan.

**The plan shall be developed using the transportation/infrastructure model as its basic foundation.**

- Concentrate high traffic commercial, industrial and multi-family residential development along major corridors so that available water, sewer and transportation can be easily maintained and improved cost effectively.

### **Overlays**

- Economic hubs will be used to create accessible commercial concentrations by establishing economic use categories and establishing logical buffering between commercial, industrial and residential development.
- Environmental overlays will be used to identify areas of particular environmental sensitivity for the purpose of preserving sensitive natural and scenic areas.

## **FRAMEWORK**

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### **Infrastructure Needs**

- A. Road expansion/improvements
  - Encourage design standards which limit driveway access, curb cuts, median crossings, etc. to direct future development and the use of frontage roads.
  - Reduce traffic congestion by utilizing frontage roads or cross-parcel road connections.
  - Direct development growth by addressing existing and new state road development.
- B. Sewer expansion/improvements
  - Direct sewer service toward areas of high environmental impact from development activities (i.e. high concentration of mobile homes on septic and wells).
  - Identify funding strategies for future sewer expansions.
  - Establish mechanisms that encourage and support a more regional approach to sewer services, specifically with Madison and Henderson Counties.
  - Concentrate future development along existing sewer lines.
  - Prioritize sewer expansions to support the land use plan.
- C. Water service expansion/improvements
  - Direct water service toward areas of high environmental impact from development activities (i.e. high concentrations of mobile home on septic and wells).
  - Identify funding strategies for future water service expansions.
  - Establish mechanisms that encourage and support a more regional approach to water services.

- Prioritize water expansions to support the land use plan.
- D. Transportation
- Establish “park and ride” lots and other mechanisms to reduce transportation congestion in commercial hubs and other important areas and educate the public about their value.
  - Encourage alternative forms of transportation.
- E. Community recreation facilities
- Plan future recreation facilities and county services facilities around school sites.
  - Balance the availability of community and recreational facilities by existing school districts.
  - Identify funding strategies for future community and recreational facilities.
  - Seek and encourage the development of public and private partnerships for the expansion and development of new recreation facilities, including partnering with existing overlapping and governmental units.
- F. Regional approach - Economic Development
- Establish economic development based on a regionalized approach to water, sewer and roads.
  - Coordinate industrial development and areas with other counties resulting in a shared revenue base and tax base.

**Environmental needs**

- A. Density Limitations
- Density Limits based on slope/elevation
    - Limit the provision of public water and sewer service to elevations not exceeding 2,500 feet above sea level and a 40% slope.
  - Density Limits - Mobile homes
    - Strengthen the design standards of the existing mobile home park ordinance.
    - Decrease the existing density requirements for parks with septic systems and wells.
    - Establish a prerequisite that requires any township establishing zoning to make provision for mobile homes or other permanent affordable housing.
- B. Buffering for areas of mixed development
- In areas of obvious mixed use, encourage and/or provide incentives for the establishment of reasonable and logical buffering through permitting and existing ordinances.
- C. Water resources protection
- Encourage voluntary buffering along stream and river corridors.
  - Emphasize the obvious benefits of water resource protection for natural wildlife.
  - Aggressively enforce regulations prohibiting illegal straight piping and improper discharge throughout the county.
- D. Farmland preservation
- Create an active Rural Lands Preservation Trust for Buncombe County.
    - Establish an ongoing funding plan for such purchases by the Trust.
  - Limit new or additional utility taps where feasible on prime farmlands.

E. Blue Ridge Parkway Viewshed Protection

- In the Owen and Reynolds Districts, provide parkway viewshed protection through the voluntary conveyance and purchase of scenic easements.

**Economic needs**

A. Incentives for quality development

- Waive water/sewer impact fees for affordable housing that meets specific desirable criteria.
- Develop incentives and standards for “quality industrial siting” which can include waiving impact fees and MSD charges.

B. Attracting higher paying jobs

- Set aside adequate land with all necessary infrastructure for new employers.
- Develop financial incentives that allow the direction of heavy industries to areas of heavy industrial use.
- Provide for incentives that encourage the recycling of existing industrial sites.

C. Siting future education facilities

- Urge schools to follow land use plan in siting of future facilities and tie such adherence to County budget funding requests.

**Other**

A. Protect individual property rights

- Use incentives to accomplish greenbelts, rural protection areas and viewsheds.
- Develop a mechanism to fund and purchase or accept transfers of conservation easements.

B. Limited zoning for specific uses

- Create limited zoning regulation for specifically identified areas to protect industrial properties for protection of job base.

C. Sprawl limitation

- Through the creation of commercial hubs concept, it is intended that commercial development be focused toward the hubs and not toward extensive strip development along the various connectors and corridors.



## **APPENDIX**

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### **EXISTING ORDINANCES IN BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

Although county-wide land use zoning does not exist in Buncombe County, a number of ordinances have been adopted in the county which provide for the regulation of land subdivision, zoning for certain areas, or regulate a specific aspect of land development or land use. These ordinances are generally applicable to the unincorporated areas of the county. The current ordinances are summarized as follows:

#### **Subdivisions**

The county subdivision ordinance provides an orderly method for the subdivision of property. Every subdivision creating four or more lots on a total area greater than two acres, or for new lots less than ten acres in size is required to meet the requirements of the ordinance.

The ordinance provides minimum standards for lots, public and private roads, and the utility service to lots. The ordinance refers to minimum lot sizes as required by the county health department for satisfactory septic systems and otherwise regulates the size of lots only as it pertains to street frontage in relation to the slope gradient of the lot. The ordinance permits streets to be either publicly or privately maintained but provides minimum design standards for either situation.

A plat, or map, of the proposed subdivision demonstrating the layout of streets and lots, water and sewer service to each lot, compliance with the erosion control ordinance, and sealed by a registered surveyor must be approved and recorded with the county. Subdivisions having fewer than 11 total lots are designated as "Minor Subdivisions", plans having 11 lots or more are defined as "Major Subdivisions. Although the requirements for approval of minor subdivisions are fewer, both require review and approval of a preliminary plat. The preliminary plat is reviewed by the planning department for compliance with the general subdivision standards, the planning board, as well as the highway department, and the county health department.

The ordinance requires that a land disturbing activity is not permitted until the preliminary plat is approved, and that the subdivision cannot be finally recorded and receive final plat approval until the physical improvements on the property- the public streets and utilities- have been inspected and approved for compliance with county standards.

#### **Zoning**

There is no countywide zoning ordinance presently in force in Buncombe County although many of the municipalities in addition to the City of Asheville have adopted zoning ordinances and their jurisdiction sometimes extends beyond their specific municipal boundaries. Townships within the county may adopt zoning ordinances through a public referendum process specifically to apply only to that township area.

At present, two such Townships have adopted zoning ordinances- Beaverdam Community and Limestone Township.

#### **Beaverdam Community**

The zoning ordinance for Beaverdam describes the entire jurisdiction as a low-density residential district, providing for single-family residential uses on minimum ½ acre

lots. Minimum lot sizes increase depending on gradient slope conditions on the lot. Home occupations are a permitted part of the ordinance as an incidental use of the residence. In addition, by granting a special use permit, community and recreation buildings, churches, and cemeteries may be permitted. For these types of uses, additional requirements for off-street parking, buffers, and other development standards are required. Mobile homes and mobile home parks are not permitted in Beaverdam.

The ordinance also establishes a Board of Adjustment, appointed by the county commission, whose duties include making interpretations of zoning maps, providing administrative review as necessary of decisions made by the zoning administrator, and to hear and decide variance requests.

#### **Limestone Township**

The Limestone Township zoning ordinance provides for eight zoning districts, four of which are residential. The ordinance distinguishes between uses permitted by-right and conditional uses (uses permitted provided certain conditions are met). Of the residential districts, the R-2 district provides for higher density including multi-family, and planned unit developments. Public water and sewer must be available for these higher density uses to be permitted. The R-3 district enables these higher density uses and also includes mobile homes and mobile home parks as conditional uses and provided public utilities are provided. Generally, no commercial uses are permitted in any of the residential districts except home occupations.

Non-residential zoning districts encourage the development of commercial uses either as neighborhood centers (NS district) in proximity to the residential neighborhoods they serve, or as planned commercial centers (CS district) designed as hubs and serving a larger community. Both discourage commercial strip development and both either require service by public water and sewer or are expected to have such services in the foreseeable future. The Employment district (EMP) provides for office, industrial, and business-type uses. Typically, residential uses are permitted in the non-residential districts. The Public services district provides areas for clustering uses such as schools, parks, and other government services within residential concentrations.

The ordinance provides specific development standards for each district which specifies dimensional requirements including maximum density, setbacks and other yard requirements, and maximum building heights; off-street parking requirements, and buffer requirements. The ordinance further provides a procedure for approving conditional uses and sets out specific requirements for certain conditionally-approved uses. A section regulating off-premises signs is also included in the ordinance.

The ordinance established a Board of Adjustment appointed by the board of county commissioners to provide for the interpretation of zoning maps, administrative review of decisions by the zoning administrator, review and decide of conditional use and variance requests.

#### **Erosion Control**

The erosion and sedimentation control ordinance is designed to regulate the effect of land disturbing activities of 1 acre or more for soil erosion and the deposit of soil particles in creeks and streams. The ordinance requires obtaining a permit from the county to engage in any land disturbing activity. The permit requirements include a fee payable to the county, and filing an application and erosion control plan. The plan

and application require the demonstration of certain erosion and sedimentation control standards including calculations of storm drainage runoff and the installation of erosion control measures and structures during the land clearing stage of development. The ordinance further requires that the approved structures be maintained and cleaned periodically for the duration of construction until a permanent land cover has been established.

Agricultural uses are generally exempt from the requirements of the erosion control ordinance. The Buncombe County Planning and Development department, Erosion Control Officer, is charged with granting, denying, and revoking permits and for the inspection of building sites for compliance with the ordinance. In addition with the authority to require work to be stopped on a building site in the event of a violation, the county is authorized to levy other penalties including fines.

### **Mobile Homes**

The ordinance is directed at providing minimum standards for manufactured home parks including the requirement of a permit to operate a manufactured home park and provides also for the establishment of a manufactured home park review board. The board consists of seven individuals and its purpose is to resolve requests for variances to the ordinance.

The standards require simply that each mobile home within a permitted park shall have convenient access by at minimum a 16 foot-wide graded, gravel road, at least 20 feet separation between mobile home units, and that regulations pertaining to wells and septic systems be met, where applicable.

### **Signs**

Buncombe County has an Off-Premise Sign Ordinance which is mainly directed at regulating off-premise advertising signs. This ordinance provides a permitting process for the right to erect such signs, regulations for design and placement, and requirements for maintenance of signs.

The standards include a maximum size depending on the size of street or roadway the sign fronts onto, and regulations on the height, spacing, and setback from the road right-of-way.

### **Telecommunications (Cellular) Towers**

An ordinance regulating telecommunication towers is in effect in the county. This ordinance provides a permitting procedure for the erection of towers in order to protect the health, safety, and property values of the public and to protect against aesthetic harm to residential communities. Criteria are established in the ordinance which provide for certain requirements to be met prior to a permit being granted. These requirements include, among others, a limitation on the extent of lighting carried on towers, provides and encourages co-location of telecommunication facilities, limits the height of towers not to exceed 300 feet and limits the height of towers placed on a protected mountain ridge. The ordinance does not limit the location of towers in relation to the type of adjacent land uses.

### **Adult Establishments**

The ordinance regulating adult establishments including adult bookstore or adult entertainment establishment requires a licensing procedure with Buncombe County,

and sets forth prohibited activities under the provisions of the license, mainly limiting the age of individuals patronizing such establishments and limiting the conduct of individuals. The ordinance does not provide any limitations on the location of adult establishments within the unincorporated areas of the county.

#### **Noise**

An ordinance regulating noise levels emitted from one property to adjacent properties is in effect in Buncombe County. The ordinance sets noise thresholds not to be exceeded during certain days and hours.

#### **Junkyards**

This ordinance provides for the definition and regulation of junkyards in Buncombe County, requiring a permit to operate such a facility, and establishing certain minimum standards for all such facilities including requirements for screening from public view. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect the health and safety along public right-of-ways, the scenic qualities of the county, and economic investment along public roads.

The key requirements of the ordinance include the establishment of minimum standards including lot size, frontage, setback, proximity to public facilities, and screening/fencing. Preexisting junkyards are included in the ordinance but are not subject to some of the standards.

#### **Street Naming and Addresses**

This ordinance provides for a systematic way of establishing names and addresses for streets throughout the county. The main purpose of the ordinance is to establish a system that enables emergency response services to quickly locate and find an address. A policy exists which provides for criteria to be applied to determine whether a street name (or address) meets this purpose.

The role of the Street Address Administrator is to carry out county policy in determining need for or changes to street names, considering proposed street names, and resolving conflicts which may arise concerning names or addresses.

#### **Farmland Preservation Ordinance**

As a way of protecting farmland from development and to encourage the voluntary preservation of farmland, the county has a farmland preservation program which it implements through the Farmland Preservation Ordinance. The ordinance provides for the establishment of agricultural districts consisting of 100 contiguous acres or at least two farms within a mile of each other, together comprising 100 acres. To qualify as farmland included in a district, the farm must meet certain requirements including active participation in the North Carolina farm present-use-value taxation program and certification by the Soil & Water Conservation District or North Carolina Forest Services (NCFS). The certification insures that the qualifying farm has been actively used for agricultural purposes, and has soil and growing qualities conducive to agricultural, horticultural, and forestry purposes. The farmland preservation program is administered by an Agricultural Advisory Board appointed by the county commissioners.

Participation in the farmland preservation program entitles the landowner to property tax rates for agricultural land and also a waiver of water and sewer assessments until connections to public water and sewer are made.

### **Water Supply Watershed Protection Ordinance**

Under enabling legislation established by the State of North Carolina, Buncombe County has adopted this ordinance to protect designated watershed areas from encroachment by development that may compromise the public water supply. The ordinance is directed toward all WS-1 water supply watersheds within the county and the Ivy Watershed, which is classified as a WS-2 watershed.

Within the WS-1 watersheds, the purpose is to provide maximum protection to publicly owned areas providing water supply. Uses permitted within these areas are strictly limited to agriculture, silviculture, water treatment facilities, and power transmission lines. No residential or non-residential uses are permitted. Additional restrictions, including the establishment of vegetative buffers adjoining perennial streams, are required of agricultural and silvicultural uses.

The WS-2 watershed, the Ivy Watershed, is described in terms of a "Critical Area" and the "Balance of Watershed," with the Critical Area being subject to more stringent regulations limiting development. The purpose of the Critical Area section of the ordinance is to maintain a largely undeveloped land use pattern. Although residential and non-residential land uses are permitted, the standards provide significant limitations to the intensity of development. Within the Critical Area, single-family residential development is limited to 1 dwelling per 2 acres, and for other residential and non-residential development the standards limit development to no more than a maximum of 6% built-upon area. In the Balance of Watershed area, the standards are relaxed to permit single-family development to a maximum of 1 dwelling per 1 acre, and other residential and non-residential uses to a maximum of 12% built-upon area. Other detailed standards are included in the ordinance including provisions for cluster development and buffer requirements, among others.

The watershed ordinance is administered by the Watershed Administrator. This office is responsible for issuing permits, maintaining records, and enforcing the regulations.

### **Rental Housing Ordinance**

In order to eliminate substandard conditions for rental housing in the county, the Rental Housing Ordinance establishes minimum standards required for such property. Standards are included for plumbing and sanitary facilities, heating, light and ventilation, electrical systems, exterior and interior structural conditions, and space requirements. The ordinance identifies unsafe conditions, and describes responsibilities of both owners and tenants. The ordinance is administered by the Buncombe County Director of Emergency Services.

### **Abandoned Motor Vehicle Ordinance**

The Abandoned and Junked Motor Vehicle Ordinance establishes regulations making it illegal to abandon vehicles, to possess more than two junked vehicles, or to keep nuisance vehicles on properties. The abandoned vehicle section of the ordinance prohibits leaving a vehicle on a property after it has been declared abandoned, and permits the county to take action to remove the vehicle. The junked motor vehicle section permits up to two such vehicles stored on a property provided the vehicle is not being dismantled or in parts, is concealed from public view, and is located on the

property for no longer than six months. The ordinance also prohibits storage of vehicles that have been determined to be a public nuisance on the basis of endangerment of the public health and safety. The Buncombe County Director of General Services is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the ordinance.

C O U N T Y O F  
B U N C O M B E

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**P H A S E F I V E**

**E X E C U T I V E S U M M A R Y**

Prepared for:  
The County of Buncombe, Planning and Development

Prepared by:  
LandDesign, Inc.  
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## **STEERING COMMITTEE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PLAN MODEL**

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The Project Steering Committee was comprised of twenty-four individuals representing a broad spectrum of residents in Buncombe County. Representation was further divided by the six school districts and included a diverse group representing a variety of age groups and interests.

The Committee was uniquely qualified to evaluate the current effects of land use in Buncombe County. While receptive to suggested alternatives proposed by hired consultants, the Committee remained aware that the people of Buncombe County are as diverse as the landscape we attempt to plan for. Not everything that was suggested was accepted. The Committee is painfully aware that land use planning in Buncombe County is much different from other metropolitan areas due to the topography of the area, the immense wealth of natural resources and economic considerations that must support tourism as well as institutional and industrial concerns.

Public hearings were held throughout the County on two separate occasions to obtain citizen input into this process. Generally, the public supports the concept of a central land use plan that incorporates infrastructure availability, planned economic growth and prudent stewardship of our vast natural resources.

A number of people support the idea of regulated land use planning by way of zoning. Some seem to support even the most aggressive centralized and collective planning as a means of restricting the introduction of particularly harsh land uses including heavy industries, and preventing the proliferation of mobile home parks and even commercial strip centers.

Also, there are a number of vocal people opposed to zoning and even some opposed to any central land use plan enforced by regulation or otherwise. More rural areas offered opinions that specifically called for emphasis on individual property rights and more independence from governmental intrusion. Advocates of both controlled land use and unfettered freedom are in agreement, however, that preserving the area's natural beauty is important. Further, the preservation of the area's agricultural resources are of significant concern as well.

A large number of people have continually voiced concerns that the City of Asheville and the other local municipalities can thwart any meaningful land use planning by annexing areas that benefit from infrastructure investments. Land development carried out in a way which is consistent with the county's land use plan may be regarded as counter productive if, after the installation or improvement of infrastructure, the area is lost to the county tax base by being annexed by a municipality. The Committee acknowledges this as a real obstacle to meaningful planning. Further, we recommend that the County Commissioners petition the County's State Representatives and pursue a local bill that requires reimbursement to the County by any municipality that benefits through annexation from the acquisition and zoning controls of an area in which infrastructure has been expanded in accordance with, or as a result of, this or other authorized land use planning activities. The undeniable perception among County residents is that land use planning will result in annexation or zoning.



The Committee, after numerous hours of debate and thought presents the following plan and framework as a basis for land use planning in Buncombe County. The Committee has attempted to be inclusive in the process and responsive to the desires of the community in general. No land use plan will ever meet the desires or expectations of the entire population. However, we believe that this plan and framework, if given reasonable opportunities to develop and work will establish a climate for positive planning with little or at least limited negative impact on property rights issues. The plan as a whole accepts the land use decisions of the past while attempting to guide the land use decisions of the future toward infrastructure efficiency, planned economic growth and reasonable environmental sensitivity.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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In August, 1997, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners approved the undertaking of a county-wide comprehensive land use plan, appointed a project steering committee to oversee the planning process, and retained a consultant to provide guidance and technical assistance. Facing an increasing number of growth-related issues, the Board of Commissioners recognized that having an overall plan for land use would provide a basis for making future decisions regarding the investment of public funds and the utilization of county resources.

The planning process has been conducted over 14 months and included five phases of work: Phase One-Project Organization, Phase Two-Information Inventory and Growth Overview, Phase Three- Information Analysis, Phase Four-Land Use Alternatives, and Phase Five-Final Plan. At two points during the process, the citizens of the county have been asked to provide input into the process. In January 1998, near the conclusion of the Analysis-stage of the project, six community forums were held to review the work-to-date and make comments concerning land use planning in the county. Six additional community meetings were held again in August 1998, to present the alternative land use plan concepts, and seek public review.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan brought forward by the Project Steering Committee consists of three parts - the Plan Model, the Plan Framework, and the Implementation Strategy. The Plan Model is the philosophical basis for the plan, providing the essential ideals and rationale of the plan approach. The Plan Framework is a detailed outline of the plan components and initiatives. The Implementation Strategy describes the approach, priorities and specific initiatives the Project Steering Committee recommends to move the plan into an implementation stage.

The basis for the Plan Model is the provision of infrastructure- the roads and utilities, including public water and sewer. The plan recognizes that urban growth, including much of the commercial development and higher density residential development that will occur in Buncombe County in the future, will depend on the provision of public infrastructure. By making infrastructure the basis for the plan model, emphasis is placed on providing these services in the most efficient and physically suitable locations in order to optimize public investment. In addition to the infrastructure basis, two additional provisions are made in the plan model including an economic development component to assure a continued emphasis on quality employment opportunities and the creation of vital commercial centers, and an environmental component to assure the protection of the county's natural and scenic resources.

The Plan Framework provides detailed recommendations, based on the approach established in the plan model. Infrastructure recommendations are described for transportation, road expansion and improvements, public water and sewer, community recreation facilities, and regional infrastructure initiatives. Economic development recommendations include an emphasis on encouraging new or infill commercial development to be concentrated in hubs, as an alternative to expansion of the commercial strip. In addition, specific areas of the county are targeted as preferred locations for new industries or other employers, and methods of protecting these locations are sought. The environmental component of the plan framework recommends a number of initiatives geared toward preserving the natural, scenic, and historic resources of Buncombe County. In particular, the plan suggests a limitation of public utility services to the scenic ridges and steep terrain in higher elevations, to encourage buffers in mixed-use areas, to protect stream and river corridors, to encourage farmland preservation, and to strengthen the current mobile home ordinance.

As a strategy for implementation of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the Steering Committee recommends the use of voluntary and incentive-oriented implementation tools over regulation. It is recognized that individual townships may choose to adopt zoning or other regulatory measures to implement plan provisions. However, the consensus of the Steering Committee is not to recommend overall regulations but to work with groups and landowners to establish voluntary programs and incentives encouraging preferred development patterns.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan consists of several documents produced during the planning process. These documents include this Executive Summary, a complete Technical Report consisting of the Phase One-Phase Five reports, and the complete set of maps produced during the course of the project including the demographic and physical inventory, as well as the plan alternatives, and the Composite Plan. The Composite Plan map is intended as the principal document illustrating the plan recommendations, as a companion to the Plan Model, Framework, and Implementation Strategy. These maps and corresponding data have been provided to the county as part of an overall county database.

## LAND USE PLAN CRITERIA

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Buncombe County is currently in a transition period where it is progressing from having defined towns and hamlets set in a rural landscape to having urban development throughout much of the county. The county is blessed with abundant outstanding natural and scenic resources, and other conditions favorable to significant growth. Certain areas will begin to urbanize quite densely. The geography of the county, including significant areas of mountainous terrain and large tracts in federal or state holdings limit the area available and suitable for urban growth. Since roads and utility infrastructure is largely confined to the valleys, growth is concentrated mainly in the valley bottoms. Much of this growth is occurring as strip development along these corridors, with an increasing mix of commercial and residential development spread throughout Buncombe County. This land use pattern results in both desirable and undesirable consequences. Desirable consequences are seen in the low cost of development, flexibility and rapid response to market demands, mixed-use neighborhoods, and low cost housing. A variety of undesirable consequences exist including the elimination of rural farmland, a continual mix of residential and commercial traffic, incompatible uses, and less than optimal land utilization. These conditions raise several concerns for future growth in the county. Among these concerns: the ability of Buncombe County to make effective investments in infrastructure; the degree of confidence investors will have that their investment is secure; the extent to which growth in inappropriate locations may erode scenic and environmental qualities; the potential of the county's investment in infrastructure to be usurped through annexation by a municipality; and, a land use pattern which is largely based on the influence of the most recent developing use.

A key responsibility of the county is to make the best possible investment of public funds. As it pertains to land use, urbanizing areas depend on public investments in roads, water, and sewer systems to facilitate growth. To obtain the optimum investment, the plan should identify the most practical and beneficial areas of service for new and improved public infrastructure.

During the current decade the economic forces in Buncombe County have provided positive growth in most sectors. The market driven growth captures new investment in the county and has served to stimulate growth in other sectors. Often, this growth will have a positive influence in the development of the surrounding area. Increasingly, however, a newly developing use will not be compatible with the surrounding area. In these instances, the new use will greatly influence development patterns and land values, causing otherwise stable land uses to convert and the potential devaluation of adjoining areas. In these instances, the adoption of development standards through voluntary and incentive-oriented implementation programs can provide a benefit similar to the continuity found in new communities or planned developments having restrictive covenants. Development standards can be designed to direct growth, segregate incompatible land use, modify density, create buffers, or to achieve a variety of other economic or environmental benefits. Often, the single greatest benefit to landowners is to provide security for their investment by establishing a predictable future for surrounding areas.

The county's rich environment also attracts investment – not only in the tourism industry, but also in attracting new residents and employers to what is perceived as a very high quality of life. For some, these quality of life factors – the scenery and proximity to the mountains, the rural countryside and farmland – are key reasons for the investment in Buncombe County. There are many reasons to protect the county's natural environment, not the least of which is to protect these qualities that attract new investment.

## LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

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There are many alternative criteria which can be used to guide future land use in Buncombe County. Each land use alternative has its own implications on the future tax base, employment base, value of development, quality of life, and on the residents and individual land owners of the county. The alternatives below are those considered most applicable to Buncombe County.

1. **Continue Existing Trends:** Continue current land use trends which perpetuate a broad mix of existing land uses in an undifferentiated pattern.
2. **Enhance Environmental Qualities:** Future development to be guided by the preservation of existing natural and scenic areas including mountain slopes, ridge lines, rivers, Federal lands, etc. This alternative reduces conflict between urban development and the natural environment.
3. **Transportation/Infrastructure Pattern:** Concentrate high traffic generation commercial, industrial and multi-family residential development along major corridors where the availability of water, sewer, and transportation can be easily maintained and improved in a cost-effective manner.
4. **Strengthen Economic Development:** Create accessible commercial concentrations in a "corridors and centers" concept by establishing economic use categories and determining where commercial hubs could most feasibly be developed. Establish logical buffer zones between commercial, industrial, and residential development.

Evaluation of each of these alternatives in terms of their application and impact on Buncombe County will serve as a basis for determining the appropriate plan model.

## **PLAN MODEL**

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The following land use plan model and framework has been developed by the Project Steering Committee, derived from the information gained through citizen input and alternatives presented by the consultant team. They are intended to form a basis for finalizing a comprehensive county land use plan.

**The plan shall be developed using the transportation/infrastructure model as its basic foundation.**

- Concentrate high traffic commercial, industrial and multi-family residential development along major corridors so that available water, sewer and transportation can be easily maintained and improved cost effectively.

### **Overlays**

- Economic hubs will be used to create accessible commercial concentrations by establishing economic use categories and establishing logical buffering between commercial, industrial and residential development.
- Environmental overlays will be used to identify areas of particular environmental sensitivity for the purpose of preserving sensitive natural and scenic areas.

## **FRAMEWORK**

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### **Infrastructure Needs**

- A. Road expansion/improvements
  - Encourage design standards which limit driveway access, curb cuts, median crossings, etc. to direct future development and the use of frontage roads.
  - Reduce traffic congestion by utilizing frontage roads or cross-parcel road connections.
  - Direct development growth by addressing existing and new state road development.
- B. Sewer expansion/improvements
  - Direct sewer service toward areas of high environmental impact from development activities (i.e. high concentration of mobile homes on septic and wells).
  - Identify funding strategies for future sewer expansions.
  - Establish mechanisms that encourage and support a more regional approach to sewer services, specifically with Madison and Henderson Counties.
  - Concentrate future development along existing sewer lines.
  - Prioritize sewer expansions to support the land use plan.
- C. Water service expansion/improvements
  - Direct water service toward areas of high environmental impact from development activities (i.e. high concentrations of mobile home on septic and wells).
  - Identify funding strategies for future water service expansions.
  - Establish mechanisms that encourage and support a more regional approach to water services.
  - Prioritize water expansions to support the land use plan.

**D. Transportation**

- Establish "park and ride" lots and other mechanisms to reduce transportation congestion in commercial hubs and other important areas and educate the public about their value.
- Encourage alternative forms of transportation.

**E. Community recreation facilities**

- Plan future recreation facilities and county services facilities around school sites.
- Balance the availability of community and recreational facilities by existing school districts.
- Identify funding strategies for future community and recreational facilities.
- Seek and encourage the development of public and private partnerships for the expansion and development of new recreation facilities, including partnering with existing overlapping and governmental units.

**F. Regional approach - Economic Development**

- Establish economic development based on a regionalized approach to water, sewer and roads.
- Coordinate industrial development and areas with other counties resulting in a shared revenue base and tax base.

**Environmental needs**

**A. Density Limitations**

- Density Limits based on slope/elevation
- Limit the provision of public water and sewer service to elevations not exceeding 2,500 feet above sea level and a 40% slope.
- Density Limits - Mobile homes
- Strengthen the design standards of the existing mobile home park ordinance.
- Decrease the existing density requirements for parks with septic systems and wells.
- Establish a prerequisite that requires any township establishing zoning to make provision for mobile homes or other permanent affordable housing.

**B. Buffering for areas of mixed development**

- In areas of obvious mixed use, encourage and/or provide incentives for the establishment of reasonable and logical buffering through permitting and existing ordinances.

**C. Water resources protection**

- Encourage voluntary buffering along stream and river corridors.
- Emphasize the obvious benefits of water resource protection for natural wildlife.
- Aggressively enforce regulations prohibiting illegal straight piping and improper discharge throughout the county.

**D. Farmland preservation**

- In cooperation with the Farmland Preservation Program and the Soil and Water Conservation District, create an active Rural Lands Preservation Trust for Buncombe County.
- Establish an ongoing funding plan for such purchases by the Trust.
- Limit new or additional utility taps where feasible on prime farmlands.

**E. Blue Ridge Parkway Viewshed Protection**

- In the Owen and Reynolds Districts, provide parkway viewshed protection through the voluntary conveyance and purchase of scenic easements.

### **Economic needs**

- A. Incentives for quality development
  - Waive water/sewer impact fees for affordable housing that meets specific desirable criteria.
  - Develop incentives and standards for "quality industrial siting" which can include waiving impact fees and MSD charges.
- B. Attracting higher paying jobs
  - Set aside adequate land with all necessary infrastructure for new employers.
  - Develop financial incentives that allow the direction of heavy industries to areas of heavy industrial use.
  - Provide for incentives that encourage the recycling of existing industrial sites.
- C. Siting future education facilities
  - Urge schools to follow land use plan in siting of future facilities and tie such adherence to County budget funding requests.

### **Other**

- A. Protect individual property rights
  - Use incentives to accomplish greenbelts, rural protection areas and viewsheds.
  - Develop a mechanism to fund and purchase or accept transfers of conservation easements.
- B. Limited zoning for specific uses
  - Create limited zoning regulation for specifically identified areas to protect industrial properties for protection of job base.
- C. Sprawl limitation
  - Through the creation of commercial hubs concept, it is intended that commercial development be focused toward the hubs and not toward extensive strip development along the various connectors and corridors.



## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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The proposed plan model and framework were developed using intentionally broad concepts that lend themselves to an ongoing planning process and, where desirable, can be adapted to serve smaller geographic areas in Buncombe County. This plan attempts to address the "big picture." Further development of this planning process will now need to be expanded for the communities and economic centers of the County. To accomplish this task a plan for implementation must be developed. This plan should prioritize the issues raised in the plan and then develop a means by which the long-term implementation of these important strategies can be accomplished. The steering committee offers the following strategies that we believe to be important to plan implementation.

1. The Commissioners should petition our State Representatives and pursue a local bill that would require reimbursement to, or the assumption of proportionate debt of, Buncombe County by any municipality that benefits through annexation from the acquisition and zoning controls of an area in which infrastructure has been expanded or improved in accordance with, or as a result of, this or other authorized land use planning activities.
2. Establish an annual review of the plan and its achievements and effectiveness using a technical review committee that includes the major stakeholders, and report to the Commissioners the impact of the Plan by major framework category. This committee should include citizen representation from each of the six school districts, local business, corporate entities and institutional entities, as well as representatives of the Metropolitan Sewerage District, the Board of Education, A-B Tech, the Economic Development Commission, and the relevant governmental agencies (i.e. Department of Transportation, etc.).
3. Create and support a "regional" commission/foundation to study the multi-county/multi-agency initiatives that the plan suggests and prioritize the various needs and growth issues. Further this group should work directly with governments in the consolidated funding strategies necessary to implement the regional goals and initiatives.
4. As a part of ongoing planning activities, require that the Board of Education formally report to the Commissioners the results of their ongoing planning activities that would be relative to County land use planning. Require that future requests for capital outlay funds include projections of future growth to insure the adequacy of facilities being proposed.
5. Request that public utilities formally report on service expansion and rehabilitation plans for the foreseeable future, on an annual basis to the Commissioners, and such information be communicated to the planning department for consideration in ongoing planning activities.
6. The commissioners must charge some entity with oversight of the plan and charge this entity with the responsibility of educating the public about the plan and disseminating information regarding the plan. Initially, these efforts must be intensive and include a broad spectrum of interests to insure broad participation in future planning efforts.
7. Identify all incentive tools included in the plan and begin dialogue with those agency/partners that would participate in implementing the incentives.

8. Revisit and/or revise the plan every five years to insure that changes in circumstances in the region are included in the plan and that the plan reflects all relevant current land use issues.
9. Give the Plan time to work. The committee feels strongly that the tangible results of an incentive based land use plan must be given adequate time to work before being significantly altered or abandoned.

## **APPENDIX**

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### **EXISTING ORDINANCES IN BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

Although county-wide land use zoning does not exist in Buncombe County, a number of ordinances have been adopted in the county which provide for the regulation of land subdivision, zoning for certain areas, or regulate a specific aspect of land development or land use. These ordinances are generally applicable to the unincorporated areas of the county. The current ordinances are summarized as follows:

#### **Subdivisions**

The county subdivision ordinance provides an orderly method for the subdivision of property. Every subdivision creating four or more lots on a total area greater than two acres, or for new lots less than ten acres in size is required to meet the requirements of the ordinance.

The ordinance provides minimum standards for lots, public and private roads, and the utility service to lots. The ordinance refers to minimum lot sizes as required by the county health department for satisfactory septic systems and otherwise regulates the size of lots only as it pertains to street frontage in relation to the slope gradient of the lot. The ordinance permits streets to be either publicly or privately maintained but provides minimum design standards for either situation.

A plat, or map, of the proposed subdivision demonstrating the layout of streets and lots, water and sewer service to each lot, compliance with the erosion control ordinance, and sealed by a registered surveyor must be approved and recorded with the county. Subdivisions having fewer than 11 total lots are designated as "Minor Subdivisions", plans having 11 lots or more are defined as "Major Subdivisions. Although the requirements for approval of minor subdivisions are fewer, both require review and approval of a preliminary plat. The preliminary plat is reviewed by the planning department for compliance with the general subdivision standards, the planning board, as well as the highway department, and the county health department.

The ordinance requires that a land disturbing activity is not permitted until the preliminary plat is approved, and that the subdivision cannot be finally recorded and receive final plat approval until the physical improvements on the property- the public streets and utilities- have been inspected and approved for compliance with county standards.

#### **Zoning**

There is no countywide zoning ordinance presently in force in Buncombe County although many of the municipalities in addition to the City of Asheville have adopted zoning ordinances and their jurisdiction sometimes extends beyond their specific municipal boundaries. Townships within the county may adopt zoning ordinances through a public referendum process specifically to apply only to that township area. At present, two such Townships have adopted zoning ordinances- Beaverdam Community and Limestone Township.

#### **Beaverdam Community**

The zoning ordinance for Beaverdam describes the entire jurisdiction as a low-density residential district, providing for single-family residential uses on minimum ½ acre lots. Minimum lot sizes increase depending on gradient slope conditions on the lot. Home

occupations are a permitted part of the ordinance as an incidental use of the residence. In addition, by granting a special use permit, community and recreation buildings, churches, and cemeteries may be permitted. For these types of uses, additional requirements for off-street parking, buffers, and other development standards are required. Mobile homes and mobile home parks are not permitted in Beaverdam.

The ordinance also establishes a Board of Adjustment, appointed by the county commission, whose duties include making interpretations of zoning maps, providing administrative review as necessary of decisions made by the zoning administrator, and to hear and decide variance requests.

#### Limestone Township

The Limestone Township zoning ordinance provides for eight zoning districts, four of which are residential. The ordinance distinguishes between uses permitted by-right and conditional uses (uses permitted provided certain conditions are met). Of the residential districts, the R-2 district provides for higher density including multi-family, and planned unit developments. Public water and sewer must be available for these higher density uses to be permitted. The R-3 district enables these higher density uses and also includes mobile homes and mobile home parks as conditional uses and provided public utilities are provided. Generally, no commercial uses are permitted in any of the residential districts except home occupations.

Non-residential zoning districts encourage the development of commercial uses either as neighborhood centers (NS district) in proximity to the residential neighborhoods they serve, or as planned commercial centers (CS district) designed as hubs and serving a larger community. Both discourage commercial strip development and both either require service by public water and sewer or are expected to have such services in the foreseeable future. The Employment district (EMP) provides for office, industrial, and business-type uses. Typically, residential uses are permitted in the non-residential districts. The Public services district provides areas for clustering uses such as schools, parks, and other government services within residential concentrations.

The ordinance provides specific development standards for each district which specifies dimensional requirements including maximum density, setbacks and other yard requirements, and maximum building heights; off-street parking requirements, and buffer requirements. The ordinance further provides a procedure for approving conditional uses and sets out specific requirements for certain conditionally-approved uses. A section regulating off-premises signs is also included in the ordinance.

The ordinance established a Board of Adjustment appointed by the board of county commissioners to provide for the interpretation of zoning maps, administrative review of decisions by the zoning administrator, review and decide of conditional use and variance requests.

### **Erosion Control**

The erosion and sedimentation control ordinance is designed to regulate the effect of land disturbing activities of 1 acre or more for soil erosion and the deposit of soil particles in creeks and streams. The ordinance requires obtaining a permit from the county to engage in any land disturbing activity. The permit requirements include a fee payable to the county, and filing an application and erosion control plan. The plan and application require the demonstration of certain erosion and sedimentation control standards including calculations of storm drainage runoff and the installation of erosion control measures and structures during the land clearing stage of development. The ordinance further requires that the approved structures be maintained and cleaned periodically for the duration of construction until a permanent land cover has been established.

Agricultural uses are generally exempt from the requirements of the erosion control ordinance. The Buncombe County Planning and Development department, Erosion Control Officer, is charged with granting, denying, and revoking permits and for the inspection of building sites for compliance with the ordinance. In addition with the authority to require work to be stopped on a building site in the event of a violation, the county is authorized to levy other penalties including fines.

### **Mobile Homes**

The ordinance is directed at providing minimum standards for manufactured home parks including the requirement of a permit to operate a manufactured home park and provides also for the establishment of a manufactured home park review board. The board consists of seven individuals and its purpose is to resolve requests for variances to the ordinance.

The standards require simply that each mobile home within a permitted park shall have convenient access by at minimum a 16 foot-wide graded, gravel road, at least 20 feet separation between mobile home units, and that regulations pertaining to wells and septic systems be met, where applicable.

### **Signs**

Buncombe County has an Off-Premise Sign Ordinance which is mainly directed at regulating off-premise advertising signs. This ordinance provides a permitting process for the right to erect such signs, regulations for design and placement, and requirements for maintenance of signs.

The standards include a maximum size depending on the size of street or roadway the sign fronts onto, and regulations on the height, spacing, and setback from the road right-of-way.

### **Telecommunications (Cellular) Towers**

An ordinance regulating telecommunication towers is in effect in the county. This ordinance provides a permitting procedure for the erection of towers in order to protect the health, safety, and property values of the public and to protect against aesthetic harm to residential communities. Criteria are established in the ordinance which provide for certain requirements to be met prior to a permit being granted. These requirements include, among others, a limitation on the extent of lighting carried on towers, provides and encourages co-location of telecommunication facilities, limits the height of towers not to exceed 300 feet and limits the height of towers placed on a protected mountain ridge. The ordinance does not limit the location of towers in relation to the type of adjacent land uses.

### **Adult Establishments**

The ordinance regulating adult establishments including adult bookstore or adult entertainment establishment requires a licensing procedure with Buncombe County, and sets forth prohibited activities under the provisions of the license, mainly limiting the age of individuals patronizing such establishments and limiting the conduct of individuals. The ordinance does not provide any limitations on the location of adult establishments within the unincorporated areas of the county.

### **Noise**

An ordinance regulating noise levels emitted from one property to adjacent properties is in effect in Buncombe County. The ordinance sets noise thresholds not to be exceeded during certain days and hours.

### **Junkyards**

This ordinance provides for the definition and regulation of junkyards in Buncombe County, requiring a permit to operate such a facility, and establishing certain minimum standards for all such facilities including requirements for screening from public view. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect the health and safety along public right-of-ways, the scenic qualities of the county, and economic investment along public roads.

The key requirements of the ordinance include the establishment of minimum standards including lot size, frontage, setback, proximity to public facilities, and screening/fencing. Preexisting junkyards are included in the ordinance but are not subject to some of the standards.

### **Street Naming and Addresses**

This ordinance provides for a systematic way of establishing names and addresses for streets throughout the county. The main purpose of the ordinance is to establish a system that enables emergency response services to quickly locate and find an address. A policy exists which provides for criteria to be applied to determine whether a street name (or address) meets this purpose.

The role of the Street Address Administrator is to carry out county policy in determining need for or changes to street names, considering proposed street names, and resolving conflicts which may arise concerning names or addresses.

### **Farmland Preservation Ordinance**

As a way of protecting farmland from development and to encourage the voluntary preservation of farmland, the county has a farmland preservation program which it implements through the Farmland Preservation Ordinance. The ordinance provides for the establishment of agricultural districts consisting of 100 contiguous acres or at least two farms within a mile of each other, together comprising 100 acres. To qualify as farmland included in a district, the farm must meet certain requirements including active participation in the North Carolina farm present-use-value taxation program and certification by the Soil & Water Conservation District or North Carolina Forest Services (NCFS). The certification insures that the qualifying farm has been actively used for agricultural purposes, and has soil and growing qualities conducive to agricultural, horticultural, and forestry purposes. The farmland preservation program is administered by an Agricultural Advisory Board appointed by the county commissioners.

Participation in the farmland preservation program entitles the landowner to property tax rates for agricultural land and also a waiver of water and sewer assessments until connections to public water and sewer are made.

### **Water Supply Watershed Protection Ordinance**

Under enabling legislation established by the State of North Carolina, Buncombe County has adopted this ordinance to protect designated watershed areas from encroachment by development that may compromise the public water supply. The ordinance is directed toward all WS-1 water supply watersheds within the county and the Ivy Watershed, which is classified as a WS-2 watershed.

Within the WS-1 watersheds, the purpose is to provide maximum protection to publicly owned areas providing water supply. Uses permitted within these areas are strictly limited to agriculture, silviculture, water treatment facilities, and power transmission lines. No residential or non-residential uses are permitted. Additional restrictions, including the establishment of vegetative buffers adjoining perennial streams, are required of agricultural and silvicultural uses.

The WS-2 watershed, the Ivy Watershed, is described in terms of a "Critical Area" and the "Balance of Watershed," with the Critical Area being subject to more stringent regulations limiting development. The purpose of the Critical Area section of the ordinance is to maintain a largely undeveloped land use pattern. Although residential and non-residential land uses are permitted, the standards provide significant limitations to the intensity of development. Within the Critical Area, single-family residential development is limited to 1 dwelling per 2 acres, and for other residential and non-residential development the standards limit development to no more than a maximum of 6% built-upon area. In the Balance of Watershed area, the standards are relaxed to permit single-family development to a maximum of 1 dwelling per 1 acre, and other residential and non-residential uses to a maximum of 12% built-upon area. Other detailed standards are included in the ordinance including provisions for cluster development and buffer requirements, among others.

The watershed ordinance is administered by the Watershed Administrator. This office is responsible for issuing permits, maintaining records, and enforcing the regulations.

### **Rental Housing Ordinance**

In order to eliminate substandard conditions for rental housing in the county, the Rental Housing Ordinance establishes minimum standards required for such property. Standards are included for plumbing and sanitary facilities, heating, light and ventilation, electrical systems, exterior and interior structural conditions, and space requirements. The ordinance identifies unsafe conditions, and describes responsibilities of both owners and tenants. The ordinance is administered by the Buncombe County Director of Emergency Services.

### **Abandoned Motor Vehicle Ordinance**

The Abandoned and Junked Motor Vehicle Ordinance establishes regulations making it illegal to abandon vehicles, to possess more than two junked vehicles, or to keep nuisance vehicles on properties. The abandoned vehicle section of the ordinance prohibits leaving a vehicle on a property after it has been declared abandoned, and permits the county to take action to remove the vehicle. The junked motor vehicle section permits up to two such vehicles stored on a property provided the vehicle is not being dismantled or in parts, is concealed from public view, and is located on the property for no longer than six months. The ordinance also prohibits storage of vehicles that have been determined to be a public nuisance on the basis of endangerment of the public health and safety. The Buncombe County Director of General Services is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the ordinance.