



TOWN OF ANDREWS

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ANDREWS, NC 28901
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Town Plan 2035 Comprehensive Land Use & Master Plan

Bringing the future into the present, so that we can do something about it now!

Adopted February 14, 2017



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Town Plan 2035
Comprehensive Land Use & Master Plan

Town of Andrews, NC

Adopted by the Board of Aldermen: February 14, 2017

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1. WHY PLAN OUR TOWN?

The purpose of the **Andrews Town Plan 2035 - Comprehensive Land Use & Master Plan** (“Town Plan”) is to provide information and perspective used to pinpoint and prioritize actions to support a resilient, self-sustaining community. The Town Plan must encourage economic opportunities, while at the same time maintaining the character and resources essential to Andrews’ place as a natural tourism center. An up-to-date plan balancing the changing trends, environmental mandates, and the Town’s vision is essential to the success of Andrews and its inhabitants. Information contained in the Town Plan should serve as the basis for both investment and future development decisions.

Andrews Town Plan has been designed for regular use by citizens, businesses, investors, leadership, and agencies in making decisions affecting the future of Andrews. This Town Plan is vital to making informed decisions that will account for current conditions and how to maintain a perspective about the future when doing so. A Town Plan is the foundation of almost all capital improvement and growth decisions. ***Adoption of Town Plan 2035 is not the end; it is a consensus on where to begin!***

1.1 About Town Planning

Long term planning for the future of a community is vitally important. One tool to guide the future of a community is the planning process and adoption of a comprehensive land use plan. Part of a comprehensive land use plan is designed to provide an overview of a community’s existing conditions and physical development. The main function of the plan is to serve as a guide to a community’s future development policy. The goals of a comprehensive land use plan aim to: involve the community in developing a long-term vision, address what should be maintained or changed in the future, identify future land uses in an overall community-wide context, identify and prioritize future infrastructure improvement, and provide implementation guidance as to the private and public investment strategies to realize the vision. Part of the on-going planning process is monitoring the plan’s progress as a fluid document that should be bi-annually refined and updated. ***Planning is an ongoing process!***

1.2 Official State Policy

The State of North Carolina requires local governments to adopt a plan to be eligible for certain funding, powers and authority. The plan is to be used as an assurance to the public that local decisions are made with a perspective on the future implications of pending decisions, and to affirm that public accountability and fiscal responsibility is considered.

Decisions made about public spending and growth can often appear centered around individuals involved and how they may benefit. By requiring decisions to be both consistent with an adopted plan and reasonable ensures that governing boards balance those individual interest with the interest of the citizens, property owners, and businesses affected by the outcome of a decision.

1.3 Statutory Reference

Andrews Town Plan 2035 - Comprehensive Land Use & Master Plan shall serve as the adopted plan pursuant to §N.C.G.S. 160A-383 in the planning and regulation of development.

2. ABOUT ANDREWS

2.1. Town of Andrews Background

2.1.1. Location

Andrews is located along US Highways 19 & 74 centrally linking to Asheville, Atlanta, Chattanooga and Knoxville, all within a two-hour driving distance. This proximity offers urban dwellers a direct connection to their adventure and recreation destinations.

The [Nantahala Outdoor Center \(NOC\)](#) is located 18 miles to the east, and the Harrah's Cherokee Valley River Casino, is located twelve (12) miles to the southwest.

Locally, Andrews is situated along the Valley River in an unusual valley not typical of the Great Smokey Mountains region. Andrews is in northeast Cherokee County, North Carolina, in between the unincorporated community of Marble, to the southwest, and unincorporated community of Topton, to the northeast. The Town is within the Valley Town Township and lies east of Murphy, the county seat. *(See Figure 2.1.1 – Regional Points of Interest Map and Figure 2.1.2 – Study Area Map)*

2.1.2. History

The Town of Andrews has a rich history steeped in Native American culture and the US railroad industry.

In 1838 and 1839, the systematic removal of the Cherokee Native Americans to the Midwest was carried out under President Martin Van Buren, dubbed the [Trail of Tears](#). This event had an impact on the land that would become Andrews, as there were many Cherokee in the region. Members of the Cherokee Nation from the Andrews area where marched to Fort Delaney within the Town of Andrews, then to Fort Butler, in nearby Murphy, before heading west.

The Old Army Road, connecting Fort Montgomery in Robbinsville to Fort Delaney in Andrews was improved from a Cherokee footpath to a wagon road to aid in transporting the Cherokee to Fort Butler and onward to Oklahoma. Some Cherokee hid in the mountains around the region. From its office in Franklin, NC the National Park Service administers the [Trail of Tears Original Route and Auto Tour Route](#) from north of Andrews, to Murphy and points beyond. Included in the trail is Old Army Road over Tatham Gap accessible on Old Robbinsville Road originating at Main Street in Andrews.

The Richmond and Danville Railroad was constructed to just east of the Town of Andrews. The land that is now Andrews was purchased by Col. A. B. Andrews in the late 1880s to set up a commissary for the railroad construction workers, totaling about 50 acres. In 1890, the area was split into lots to be sold at a land auction, with some of the parcels donated for a school and churches.

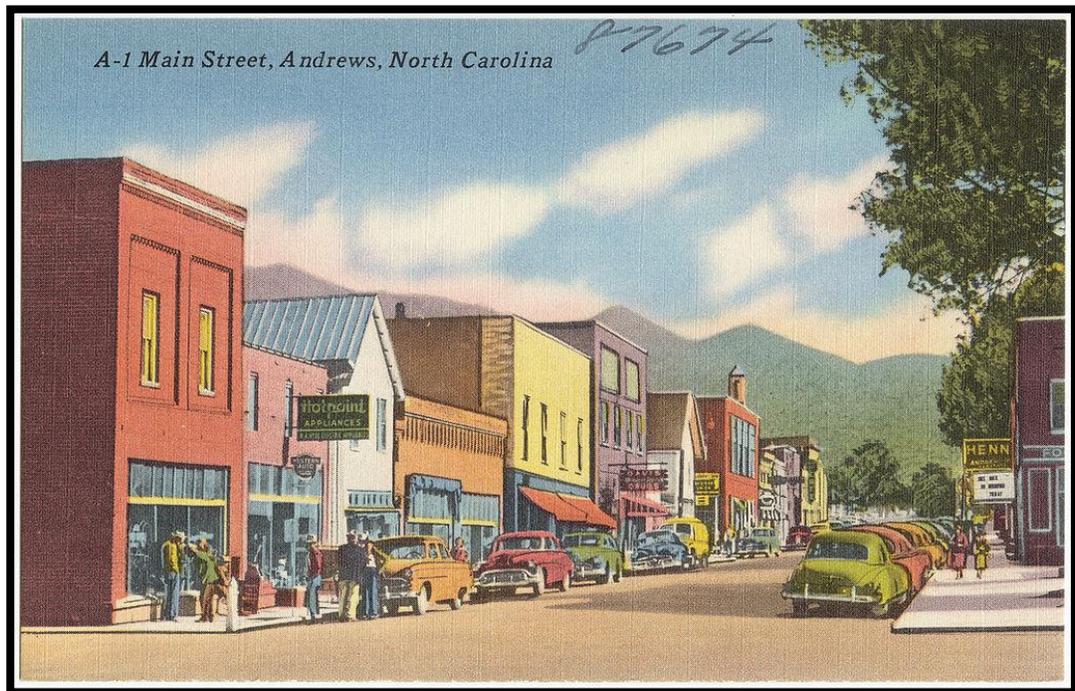
The Town was officially incorporated on February 21, 1905, with David Samuel Russell as the first mayor.

Historically, the Town of Andrews has developed due to the railroad, in relation to the tanning, logging, and agricultural industry. During the mid-20th century, manufacturing became a major employer and economic driver for the Andrews economy. Following the shift in the local economy away from tanning and the predominance logging and manufacturing, Andrews' biggest industry was based upon agriculture (specifically conventional, organic, trout, egg and flower farming) and to a lesser extent services and tourism.

The local commercial service sector remains intact following the departure of many jobs due to off-shore incentives. Since the Great Recession the local commercial services economy has not fully rebounded; however, does show signs of improvement. Cross-over industry, such as beer and wine making has created some vibrancy due to the local context of these businesses. As home to two wineries and two breweries, Andrews is far ahead of most towns our size.

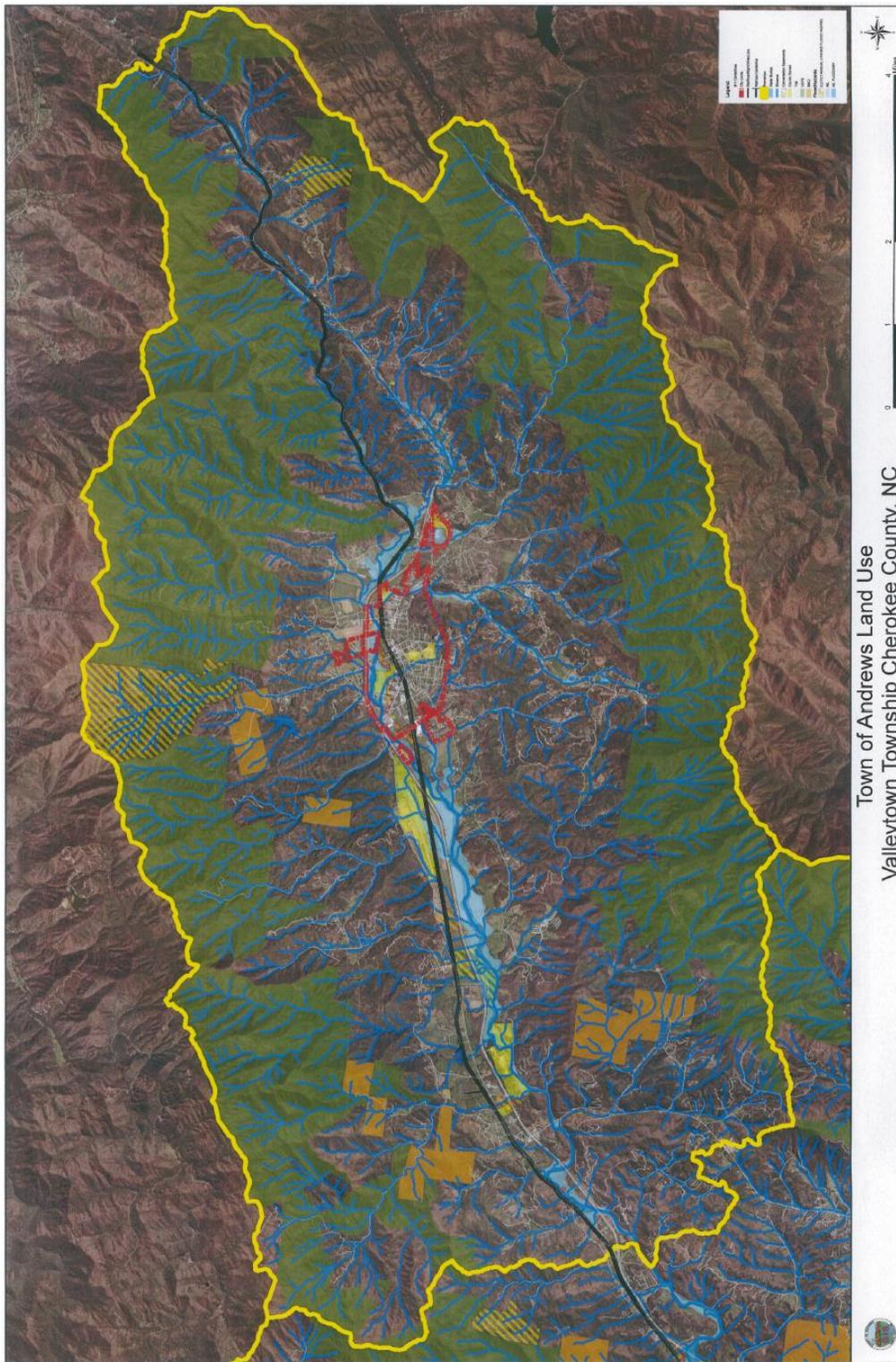
The strategic location of Andrews, however, remains strong with transportation and utility infrastructure to support refreshing and revitalizing growth within the Southwestern North Carolina region in the commercial services, eco-tourism and manufacturing sectors.

Post card of Andrews' Main Street circa 1950's



Source: By Boston Public Library - A-1. Main Street, Andrews, North Carolina, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=36063241>

Figure 2.1.2 – Study Area map



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3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

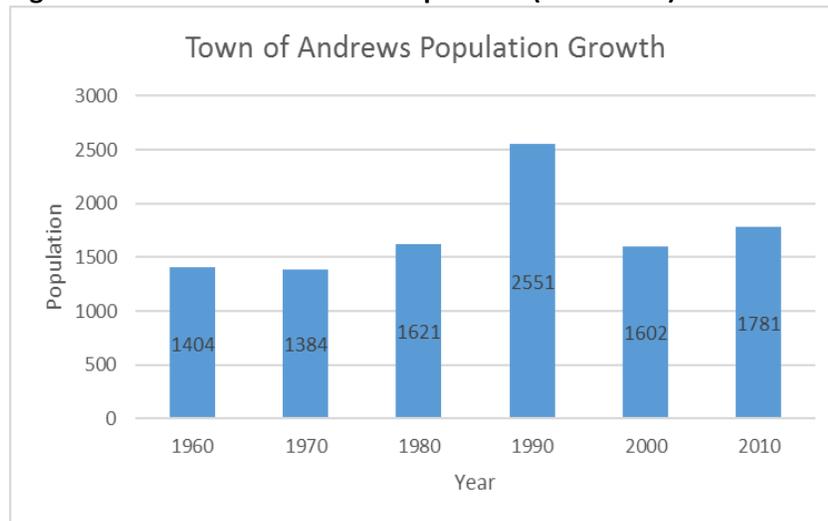
The development of a Town Plan first requires that analysis of certain key growth factors be performed. The intent of the analysis is to ensure that policies contained in the Town Plan address current problems, trends, and issues facing the community, including the immediate area (Andrews Valley Service Area) surrounding the corporate limits. The key growth factors included for analysis are discussed in several subject areas within the Town Plan. Collectively, these key growth factors summarize past and present conditions, while providing the essential yardsticks for estimating future conditions.

3.1 Population

3.1.1 Population Growth

The Town of Andrews, incorporated in 1905, maintained a relatively consistent population between 1980 and 2010, with some fluctuation up and down in population. The 1990 population count reads as 2,551 from the US Census. The annexation and subsequent de-annexation of a large area of the Valletown Township likely is the reason why the population increased by 930 persons in 1990 and decreased by 949 people in 2000. This anomaly in the population should be disregarded in terms of population trends so as not to distort the numbers. The Town of Andrews did not file an official request with the US Census Bureau following this change, therefore, the numbers remain in the files. With the most recent 2010 census count being at 1,781, and a land area of 1.6 square miles, this translates to a population density of roughly 1,100 people/square mile.

Figure 3.1.1: Town of Andrews Population (1960-2010)



Source: US Census Bureau

3.1.2 Population Projections

In order to provide an estimate of the future population of the planning area, it is necessary to compare the population of the Town of Andrews to the total population of Cherokee County since 1970 and determine the approximate percentage of the total population the Town comprises. This percentage remained steady from 1960-1980 around eight and a half percent (8.5%), subsequently leveling off to around six and a half percent (6.5%). The 12.65 percent proportion of Cherokee County’s population that Andrews comprised in 1990 is due to the large jump in the population reading for that Census year. This number (1990 population) should not be included in analyzing growth trends.

Table 3.1.2.A: Town of Andrews to Cherokee County Population Comparison

Year	Town of Andrews Population	Cherokee County Population	Andrew’s Population. as percentage of Cherokee County Population
1960	1,404	16,335	8.59%
1970	1,384	16,330	8.48%
1980	1,621	18,933	8.56%
1990	2,551	20,170	12.65%
2000	1,602	24,298	6.59%
2010	1,781	27,444	6.49%

Source: US Census Bureau

It is difficult to project the population of any planning area due to the unpredictability of the current economy and implications of its recovery from the recession beginning in December 2007, as well as voluntary annexation procedures that may occur over the time. However, four (4) projection methods will be utilized, taking into account the percentages derived from the individual percentage and population increases and decreases between decades from 1970 to 2010, excluding 1990. The results of these projections should not be considered literal but more of a range of likely outcomes based upon factors and variables we can conservatively predict.

The first projection, utilizing the **Constant Share Method**, assumes that the Town’s population will remain a constant percentage of the County’s overall population. The base percentage of this estimate was derived from dividing the 2010 population of the Town of Andrews by the 2010 population of Cherokee County.

The second projection was made utilizing the **Geometric Projection Method**. This projection method is based on previous percentage increases in population from prior censuses. The base percentage increase for this projection was derived by adding the percentage increases or decreases together for each census between 1970 and 2010, excluding 1990, and dividing the resulting by the adjusted number of data points (4). The resulting number was then used to estimate the 2020 and 2030 populations.

The third projection was made utilizing the **Arithmetic Projection Method**. This projection method utilizes the average total number increase in population over a given time period to estimate future population. The base number used in this projection was

derived by adding the total increase or decrease in population from each census between 1970 and 2010, excluding 1990, and dividing the resulting by the adjusted number of data points(4). The resulting number was then used to estimate the 2020 and 2030 populations.

The fourth projection was made utilizing the **Linear Projection Method**. This projection method utilizes the rate of change during the highest growth decade: 1970-1980.

Please note, table 3.1.2.A indicates the highest growth decade between 1980 and 1990; however, this growth includes an annexation (prior to the 1990 census) and subsequent de-annexation (following the 1980 census) of a large land area.

Table 3.1.2.B: Town of Andrews Population Projections (2020-2035)

Year	Constant Share Projection	Geometric Projection	Arithmetic Projection	Linear Projection
2010 (Actual)	1,781	1,781	1,781	1,781
2020	2,125	1,882	1,875	1,980
2030	2,357	1,989	1,970	2,201
Increase	576	208	189	420

Source: US Census Bureau, North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management

These estimates are merely projections based on past trends and vary greatly due to several factors. The Constant Share Projection Method is based upon the growth of Cherokee County. If the Town of Andrews continues to represent over six percent (6.49%) of the County’s population, then growth will be relatively rapid, which is unlikely under the current zoning ordinance and past development decisions. The Geometric Projection and Arithmetic Projection methods are not based upon County population growth, but rather on previous growth in the Town of Andrews. The Linear Projection Method uses the largest population growth decade to create a metric for projection. To avoid the population inflation due to an unexplained increase and subsequent decrease between 1980 and 2000, the second largest population change decade was used, which allows for a more conservative projection.

In conclusion, Actual population growth will be dependent upon many factors, including voluntary annexation, job creation, new residential growth, and land development policy decisions.

3.1.3 Diversity

There are approximately 780 occupied households in the Town Limits of Andrews. Average household size is 2.19 persons; average family size is 2.90 persons. The number of households composed of “families” is estimated at 452; of these, 282 families are made up of married couples. There are approximately 229 families with children living at home, comprising fifty percent (50%) of the family households. Non-family households account for 328 (42.1%) residences within Andrews.

Figures from the 2010 United States Census shown in Table 3.1.3 indicate a vast majority of citizens (95.1%) in Andrews reported only one origin; the majority of these citizens (88.8%) are Caucasian (White). People of Hispanic or Latino origin represent just over seven percent (7.5%) of the total population. The percentages of citizens of African American, American Indian, Asian, or other ancestry were all about one percent. Regarding citizens of other origins, combined they represented less than four percent (3.8%) of Andrews’ population in 2010.

Table 3.1.3: Town of Andrews Population by Origin

Race	Percentage of Total Population
African American	1.3%
American Indian	1.1%
Asian	1%
Caucasian (White)	88.8%
Hispanic or Latino	7.5%
Other Origin	3.8%

Source: US Census Bureau

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3.1.4 Age Groups

The Town of Andrews' population is spread out fairly proportionately among the different age groups. Those age groups with the largest percentages are the 0-4 and 10-14 ranges.

Median age is defined by the United States Census Bureau as the measure that divides the age distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median value and one-half of the cases falling above the median value. As of the 2010 Census, the median age in the Town of Andrew was **33.8** years.

Table 3.1.4: Town of Andrews Population by Age in 2010

Age	Population	Percentage of Total Population
0-4	227	11.6%
5-9	129	6.6%
10-14	182	9.3%
15-19	139	3.7%
20-24	106	5.4%
25-29	139	7.1%
30-34	147	7.5%
35-39	106	5.4%
40-44	151	7.7%
45-49	104	5.3%
50-54	86	4.4%
55-59	80	4.1%
60-64	76	3.9%
65-69	84	4.3%
70-74	98	5.0%
75-79	47	2.4%
80 +	123	6.3%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Andrews population is comprised of a very young demographic. Data indicates approximately one-third of the population is considered a millennial with only eighteen percent above the age of 65. The implications for Andrews' future are that we have a stable long term population with over half considered part of the workforce.

3.2 Housing

3.2.1 Homeownership

When compared with Cherokee County as a whole, as well as the State of North Carolina, the Town of Andrews has a significantly higher percentage of owner-occupied housing units than the County.

Table 3.2.1.A: Homeownership Rates and Housing Values Comparison

Jurisdiction	% of Owner Occupied Units
Town of Andrews	71.13%
Cherokee County	59.6%
State of NC	85.3%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

A look at owner-occupied home values in the Town of Andrews shows the majority (65.9%) fall below \$100,000. ***This number points to a significant amount of lower value housing types that exist within the Town Limits, such as manufactured housing.***

Table 3.2.1.B: Town of Andrews Housing Values

House Value	Number of Structures	% of Total Structures
Less than \$50,000	149	37.9%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	110	28.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	94	23.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	30	7.6%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	0	0.0%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	10	2.5%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0%

Source: US Census Bureau

3.2.2 Housing Stock

Roughly 25 percent of all residential structures in the Town of Andrews are over 50 years old. The remaining 75 percent were built after 1960, characterized by smaller lot sizes. ***This type of development largely replaced the traditional housing pattern of homes on large lots due to availability of sanitary sewer service.***

Table 3.2.2: Town of Andrews Housing Structures by Age

Year Built	% of Total Structures Built
2000-2009	10.93% (10 yrs.)
1980-1999	46.82% (20 yrs.)
1960-1979	17.94% (20 yrs.)
1940-1959	8.07% (20 yrs.)
1939 or earlier	16.24%

Source: US Census Bureau

3.3 Economy

3.3.1 Household Income

Household income calculations include the income of all other individuals aged 16 years and older in the household. When analyzing the distribution of household income in the Town of Andrews, most households fall into the \$15,000 to \$24,999 income range (25%), followed by the less than \$10,000 (20%) and \$35,000 to \$49,999 range (15%).

Median household income divides the income distribution into two parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median and one-half of the cases falling above the median. For households, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of households, including those with no income. The median household income is \$23,594 per year. This is lower than both Cherokee County and the State of North Carolina averages.

Table 3.3.1: Town of Andrews Household Income by Range

Income Range	Occupied Housing Units	% of Total Population
<\$10,000	135	20%
\$10,000-\$14,999	61	9%
\$15,000-\$24,999	166	25%
\$25,000-\$34,999	85	13%
\$35,000-\$49,999	100	15%
\$50,000-\$74,999	72	11%
\$75,000-\$99,999	35	5%
\$100,000-\$149,999	7	1%
\$150,000-\$199,999	9	1%
\$200,000 or more	0	0%

Source: US Census Bureau

3.3.2 Per Capita Income

Per capita income is the “mean income” for every man, woman, and child in a particular group. It is derived by dividing the total income of a particular group by the total population in that group. As compared to Cherokee County as a whole as well as the State of North Carolina, the Town of Andrews falls below both in terms of median household income and per capita income; Andrews’ per capita income is less than half of the North Carolina’s.

Table 3.3.2: Per Capita Income Comparison

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income
Town of Andrews	\$23,594	\$12,167
Cherokee County	\$34,507	\$18,556
State of NC	\$46,693	\$25,608

Source: US Census Bureau

3.3.3 Poverty Rates

Individual and Family poverty rates in the Town of Andrews are considerably higher than the rates for Cherokee County, and the State of North Carolina.

Table 3.3.3: Poverty Level Comparison

Jurisdiction	% of Individuals under Poverty Level	% of Families under Poverty Level
Town of Andrews	29.8%	23.2%
Cherokee County	19.4%	12.9%
State of NC	17.6%	13.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

3.4 Education

3.4.1 Education Levels of Adults

Among citizens that are 25 years of age and older, the Town of Andrews has a higher percentage of people without a high school diploma than Cherokee County and the State; however, **Andrews has a higher percentage of both high school graduates and residents with some college than North Carolina overall.**

Table 3.4.1: Educational Attainment Comparison for Population Aged 25 and over

Jurisdiction	% Without High School Diploma	% High School Graduate	% With Some College	% Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Town of Andrews	26.3%	30.1%	22.1%	15.5%
Cherokee County	17.6%	31.3%	24.1%	18.3%
State of NC	14.6%	26.9%	21.9%	27.7%

Source: US Census Bureau

3.4.2 Public School

The Town of Andrews is served by the Cherokee County School District. The following facilities serve Andrews and the Andrews Valley Service Area:

- ☐ Andrews Elementary School offering grades Pre-K to 5
- ☐ Andrews Middle School offering grades 6 to 8
- ☐ Andrews High School offering grades 9 to 12
- ☐ Marble Elementary School offering grades Pre-K to 5
- ☐ Montessori Learning Center (Private) serving ages 2 1/2 to 5 yrs.

3.4.3 Colleges and Universities

Tri-County Community College is a state-supported community college founded in 1964 near the Peachtree Community. Programs include Early College to grades 9-12, Career and College Promise for grades 11 and 12, and 2-year grade 13 and 14 diplomas. There is a satellite campus in the Marble area just west of Andrews. Western Carolina University is located in Cullowhee approximately 55 miles east of Andrews and is the western most campus of the University of North Carolina.

3.5 Workforce

3.5.1 Employment

The largest percentage of the Town's citizens in the workforce (514 persons aged 16+) are employed in the service occupations (34.63%). This is followed by the management,

business, science, and arts occupations (25.29%). Among industry types “Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services” at 20.82% is the largest industry. Table 3.5.1 illustrates the relationships of the various segments.

Table 3.5.1: Employment by Sector

Occupation	Number Workers	% of Total
Management, Business, Science, and arts occupations	130	25.29%
Service Occupations	178	34.63%
Sales and office occupations	74	14.39%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	30	5.84%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	102	19.84%

Industry	Number Workers	% of Total
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	36	7.01%
Construction	13	2.53%
Manufacturing	66	12.84%
Wholesale trade	7	1.36%
Retail trade	68	13.23%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	8	1.56%
Information	8	1.56%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	8	1.56%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administration and waste management services	79	15.37%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	61	11.87%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	107	20.82%
Other services, except public administration	49	9.53%
Public administration	12	2.33%

Source: US Census Bureau

Manufacturing remains important to the Andrews Valley Service Area economy making up 13 percent of its employment. Top private sector industries include **IOI Enterprises, Inc.**, a sewing contractor and supplier of numerous military products to a network of prime vendors while providing employment opportunities to ADA classified workers; **TEAM Industries Andrews, Inc.**, a high volume, high precision manufacturer of gears for power-trains and drivelines in the automotive, agricultural, and recreational markets; **Snap-On** tool manufacturing; and **MOOG, Inc.** which produces precision-control components and systems used in aerospace products, industrial machinery, and medical equipment.

Other industries present in this area include activities related to outdoor recreation, local heritage, and craft beer & wine. Examples of this type of tourism include: whitewater sports, hiking, mountain biking, professional craft businesses, wineries and breweries.

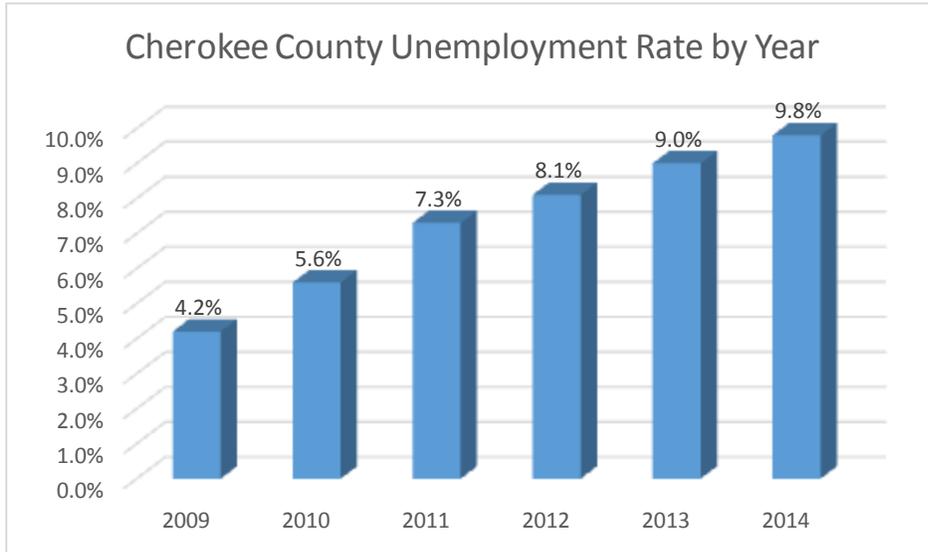
Technical knowledge-based jobs are witnessing the highest growth rate of any sector, outside of tourism. Green infrastructure such as greenways, working farms and forests, and wild and scenic waterways, is now an element of all local and regional economic development strategies. Efforts to preserve watersheds and environmentally-sensitive areas are rapidly gaining popular support. Mainspring Conservation Trust is the largest conservation non-profit organization in the region. It has led to conserving 20,000 acres and has brought over \$35,000,000 of conservation investment into the region since 1999. Other environmental non-profits operating in the district include: the Tuckasegee River Watershed Coalition, the Hiwassee River Watershed Association, and the Western North Carolina Alliance.

3.5.2 Unemployment

Unemployment figures are not generated for the Town of Andrews, so data must be inferred from Cherokee County figures. For the last seven years, unemployment rates in the County have increased from a low of four percent to a high of about 10 percent. This increase shows an ongoing unemployment problem, even post-recession, where the unemployment rate rose from four percent in 2009 to just below 10 percent in 2014. These numbers show a continued decline in employment, which is different from the post-recession trend of improved unemployment rates since 2009. While this information is county-wide data, the continual rise in the unemployment rate implies a growing lack of employment opportunities in close proximity to residents in the Town of Andrews.

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Figure 3.5.2: Unemployment in Cherokee County, 2009-2014



Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

3.5.3 Commuting Patterns

The majority of citizens in the workforce (80.4%) drive their personal vehicle to work. However, a significant percentage of workers (8.2%) walk. An additional six percent (6.4%) of the workforce works from home, with no need for regular employment transportation. The combination of people walking to work and people who work from home (14.6%) may be a very positive indicator about both the existing development patterns of Andrews and the categories of businesses active in the community; however, it may also indicate a lack of affordable transportation options for some members of the workforce.

Table 3.5.3: Town of Andrews Method of Transportation

Transportation Method	% of All Workers
Drive Alone	80.4%
Carpool	1.9%
Public Transportation	0%
Walk	8.2%
Work at Home	6.4%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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3.6 Future Trends Projection - How does Andrews prepare?

Recognizing trends and how market dynamics can and do change will enable Andrews to position itself as a welcoming community for multiple generations looking at buying or renting a home, starting or growing a business, and finding Andrews a good place to visit. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A community where both the new and existing home markets are attractive to future generations and allow for aging members of the community to remain in the community by offering variety of housing products in close proximity to jobs, services and events.

According to contemporary real estate experts, the "50+" real estate market is changing. In these next few years, Generation X will be joining the Boomers and Matures, making serving the 50+ market a challenging puzzle for both communities and the real estate industry itself.

Recent online posting states: "For the **Mature** buyers, those born between the years 1927 and 1945, the decision to move can be an emotional and complicated process. The sense of obligation to the family home may be a burden and a comfort at the same time." The posting goes on to state: "**Baby Boomers** are savvy home buyers. They approach the transaction with high expectations and confidence. They consider the home a reflection of their lifestyle, so image and status are important. Whether they are downsizing, upsizing, or purchasing a second home, vacation home, or investment property, they know what they want and how to tell you about it." And finally, the post states: "Newbies to the 50+ group, **Generation X** stands out because of their strong need for independence and practical yet cautious approach. They take on the responsibility of gathering information and rely strongly on facts and documentation. They ask a lot of questions and don't want to get burned. They expect their home to complement their lifestyle and not the other way around." Source: http://rismedia.com/2016/08/31/education-insider-breaking-down-the-50-market/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eNews

Preparations to embrace current and projected trends are a partnership of land development and real estate industries with local government leadership. New housing construction should address gaps in the market product offering; therefore, land development specifications appearing in the Town's ordinances must be adequate to accommodate these trends. Replacing the town's antiquated zoning ordinance, adding specifications for land development which creates new streets and supporting infrastructure, and maintaining quality control over the implementation of these standards must be prioritized to protect property rights of all parties while creating common-sense opportunities that don't setup for failures in the future.

As with the housing markets, ever changing trends in consumption, product development, technology and generational shifts in personal choices/values must be considered when making decisions about commercial and other non-residential growth. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A community, where traditional values accompany craftsmanship must embrace the presence of technology in everyday life, commerce, and business. Innovation is an ever increasing component of the economy at all levels; therefore, must be considered in the formation of growth policy serving these innovators if we are to adapt and survive global influence on everyday life. *(Also see Sections 6 & 8 of this document).*

4. NATURAL, CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

4.1 Natural Resources

4.1.1 Water Resources

Water resources provide both recreational and life sustaining resources for Andrews and the region.

4.1.1.1 Water Sports

Located approximately ten miles east of Andrews along US 19 & 74 is a world-class white water sports destination. The Nantahala River Gorge attracts visitors to the region year-round and is considered the Mecca of east coast mountain adventure sports.

Rafting, canoeing and kayaking enthusiasts find the Nantahala River a perfect place for an intense experience. *Also see section 6.5.2 of this document for additional information.*



The Valley River flowing through Andrews is a trout stream designated “Hatchery Supported Waters, Class 2” by the State of North Carolina.

Photo by Betzy downloaded from Google Earth

4.1.1.2 Water Supply

Andrews and the Andrews Valley Service Area are within the easternmost regions of the Valley river watershed, a tributary of the Hiawassee River. The rivers generally flow west and ultimately to the Mississippi river basin. The Valley River is not a water supply watershed for Andrews. Local water supply resources are sourced from the Town of Andrews Reservoir acquired by the Town of Andrews from Beaver Creek Lumber Company in 1921. The Dan Holland Creek watershed supplements the Beaver Creek watershed supplying additional water to the Town.

Additional capacity for water treated for consumption is available through an interconnection of the municipal systems of the towns of both Andrews and Murphy. This interconnection is for the mutual benefit of each in the event of emergency. *Also see section 7 of this document for additional information on utility infrastructure.*

4.1.2 Land Resources & Geography

Land resources also provide both life sustaining and recreational resources for Andrews and the region.

Andrews and the Andrews Valley Service Area are centrally located within a broad valley situated between the Snowbird Mountains to the north and the Valley River Mountains to the south. This geographical area creates a disproportionately broad relatively flat

bowl appearing almost stadium like when viewed in raised relief on U.S.G.S maps of Western North Carolina. This configuration is unusual in the region and unique enough to provide numerous opportunities for agriculture, recreation, transportation facilities, and growth.



Photo by Mike Kurtzman downloaded from Google Earth 2016

4.1.2.1 Agricultural

The vastness of the Valley River valley floor is ideally suited for the agricultural activities concentrated in the region. This configuration lends itself to the clustering of activities ranging from agricultural production to crop processing and distribution. Unlike much of the mountainous western counties of the state, the Andrews Valley Service Area of Cherokee County is best suited for a concentration of agribusiness. While Andrews does not extend outward into the agricultural lands the Town and Cherokee County mutually benefit from this concentration. Organic and Hybrid food produced in the Andrews Valley Service Area are common in stores and restaurants throughout the greater region with products identified on restaurant menus from Chattanooga, to Atlanta, to Asheville.

4.1.2.2 Recreation

Andrews rests in the central part of the Andrews Valley Service Area and is home to numerous municipal, county and private recreational facilities. Amenities include parks, trails, a public swimming pool, ball fields, playgrounds, and indoor activities for all ages. These amenities exceed those found in many communities several times the size of Andrews. Mutual cooperation between the Town and Cherokee County in jointly funding facilities has provided this relatively high level of facilities for the community in and around Andrews. Section 4.2.1 of this document offers additional information about recreational facilities, and Section 6.5.2 of this document offers additional information about recreation as a component of the local economy.

4.1.2.3 Transportation Facilities

The Valley River valley floor is host to the Western NC Regional airport. The valley is also bisected by both US Highways 19/74 which consist of both a 2-lane and a 4-lane controlled access highway linking Andrews to Chattanooga, Atlanta, and Knoxville; and by a railroad line under study for repair to reestablish links to Bryson City to the east and Murphy to the west. The [Mountains to the Sea NC Bike Route 2](#) passes directly through Andrews Main Street in route to the coast. *Also see sections 4.3.1.2 & 7.2 of this document for additional information.*

4.1.2.4 Growth

The geography of the Andrews Valley Service Area has traditionally created opportunities for growth beyond the Town Limits of Andrews. Numerous residential areas and businesses have been established in close proximity to the Town leading to some expansion of infrastructure beyond the corporate limits. These out-lying growth areas are home to several businesses and neighborhoods as well as areas experiencing growth in the second-home and mountain estate markets. Numerous high quality construction and exemplary architecturally unique homes have been constructed in the Andrews Valley Service Area relying on Andrews for their essential community needs. Accompanying these investments are year-round residents, seasonal residents and visitors that have found Andrews to be accommodating.

The capacity for Andrews to support such growth contributes significantly to the goals and strategies contained in this document. Growth and expansion of the water and sewer services provided by the Town must require new growth to become a part of the Town through annexation, upon eligibility, in order to offer the lowest possible tax and utility rates to businesses and citizens. Design of both new development and redevelopment in the valley floor should be as barrier free as possible to accommodate all persons regardless of their physical abilities. *(Also see Section 8 of this document)*

4.2 Cultural Resources

4.2.1 Parks & Recreation, Outdoor Adventure, Community Outreach

Andrews has several recreation options within the Town Limits. The Andrews Recreation Park includes one baseball field, one softball field, basketball courts, tennis courts, a skateboard park, disc golf, a community center, and an outdoor pool. Valley River Park includes one baseball field, one softball field, and a paved walking path. Ferebee Park has playground equipment and serves as a neighborhood park centrally located within the Town. Hall Park in downtown Andrews features a pavilion.

Snowbird Outfitters, Inc. is located a mile outside of the Town Limits. This organization offers multiple outdoor and adventure opportunities for visitors from around the globe. Summer Camp is the largest program with approximately 4600 bookings per summer (10 weeks). The 2017 summer booked to capacity in less than 72 hours of opening registration with additional bookings currently being added to the wait list each week. The 50 acre facility features a mix of cabins and outfitter platform tents. Snowbird's Missions Outreach (SMO) is a 10-week summer program where students get hands on experience working in service projects in Andrews and Cherokee County. All projects are focused on serving low-income families and organizations in the community at no

charge. Each summer the program averages 600+ participants and accomplishes 30+ projects. Snowbird's Pinwheel Tutoring is in its second year offering tutoring services to Andrews Elementary School (AES) students. The AES principal and teachers identify which students are in greatest need of tutoring and make our services known to the parents. If the parent chooses to accept our services their child is welcome to participate free of charge. There are currently 35 students in the program. The program runs twice weekly for 2 hours each time. Snowbird provides bus transportation to/from school. All tutoring is 1-on-1 with total tutoring hours per week reaching approximately 140 hours.

Andrews' location in Western North Carolina also provides convenient access to a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities within a 10-20 minute driving distance of the Town. This includes activities such as, hiking, biking, whitewater rafting/kayaking, tubing, fishing, and camping. This close proximity to natural recreation areas, along with the recreation amenities within the town limits, creates numerous options for residents and visitors alike to enjoy outdoor recreation. *Also see also section 6.5.2 of this document for additional information.*

4.3 Historic Resources

4.3.1 Heritage Preservation and Tourism

There are numerous programs aimed at historic or cultural preservation, as well as those aimed at tourism. Below is a summary of a few of such programs that directly affect Andrews, NC.

4.3.1.1 The Cherokee Preservation Foundation

The Cherokee Preservation Foundation is an independent non-profit foundation. This foundation's focus is to help improve the quality of life, economic opportunities, natural environment, and preserve the culture of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI). The foundation works to revitalize the Cherokee language and share artistic traditions with those who live and travel in the region. There are economic incentives and leadership programs for EBCI members, as well as outreach into the rural schools. The "Outdoor Education Classroom" located in downtown Andrews should be completed to host year-round educational functions.

4.3.1.2 Great Smoky Mountains Railroad Line

The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (GSMR) is a tourist railroad company owned by the [American Heritage Railways](#). The line extends for 53 miles between Dillsboro and Andrews. Today, the GSMR runs excursions between Bryson City and the Nantahala Outdoor Center, and between Bryson City and Dillsboro. The rail line from Nantahala to Andrews is currently out of service. GSMR leases the rail line from NCDOT, which retains ownership of the line, including the Andrews-to-Murphy branch.



Source: Photo by Rick Flowe 2016

Efforts to permanently abandon the corridor in Cherokee County through the introduction of legislation during the 2016 session of the North Carolina General Assembly failed due to an overwhelming response from local government level elected officials. Resolutions of opposition to the proposed legislation from the municipal governing boards of both the Town of Andrews and Town of Murphy was accompanied by the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners to show overwhelming local support for the corridor as an important asset to the region.

Collaboration between the GSMR, Town of Andrews and City of Bryson City to explore the feasibility of expanding services to Andrews must be initiated by Andrews' leadership. Actively supporting the Nantahala Gorge adventure tourism industry offers opportunities to reduce automobile traffic through the Gorge, enabling greater numbers of travelers to visit the scenic river, while expanding the services available to travelers in tourism hospitality. Andrews can join Bryson City to serve as a base camp for adventure travelers. *(See section 5.2.1.3, 5.2.10.2 and 6.5.2.6 of this document)*

The study found that this segment of the railroad is still in relatively good shape. The GSMR segment would require repairs and upgrades costing approximately \$4.4 million, with an additional \$2 million in total capital costs for the reestablishing the Andrews Depot. (The total costs for repairs and improvements to the entire Andrews to Murphy line, still owned by NCDOT, are projected to be \$17.4 million). For the entire line, the study estimated a potential regional economic impact of \$60 million and the creation of 1900 jobs over a 15-year period. Rail service to Andrews has the potential to further grow the tourism industry as well as cost-effectively ship goods and materials to markets in North Carolina and beyond, and the aforementioned study provided a compelling case for reestablishing the service. However, the financial obstacles are daunting, and the study did not provide a funding strategy to achieve it. Nonetheless, the Town should continue in a leadership role in reviving the necessary partnerships (and fostering new ones) that could create a 'path forward' on raising the financial resources to achieve this important goal, much like the partnerships that helped defeat efforts to remove the rail infrastructure during the 2016 legislative session in Raleigh.

4.3.1.3 Cultural Arts & Historical Society

The [Valleytown Cultural Arts & Historical Society](#) operates both Andrews Art Museum and performing arts venues at 125 Chestnut Street. The venue is located in the former First Baptist Church of Andrews and hosts social functions and events such as weddings parties.

The Andrews Art Museum should seek to meet established museum criteria in order to attract artists' residency within Andrews. Establishing the foundation for an artist community program will attract investment in Andrews and the number of cultural arts based business enterprises contributing to an entirely new level and degree of tourism.

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5. VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY - BUSINESSES, CITIZENS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Determining what is important to a community is critical. The information gathered through various forms of community participation will establish the foundation of the plan. The voice of Andrews was sought by the techniques described below. This information, when summarized and ranked in order of popularity, provides the “value statements” about Andrews. These statements provide the foundation for the preparation of goals and objectives. From these goals and objectives, the team crafted draft strategies refined for Andrews’ needs by its elected leadership.

5.1 Community Participation – *What does our community want?*

Community participation for the initial planning process in the Spring/Summer of 2016 is a blend of two different, but integral, approaches for comprehensive outreach. Andrews’ professional town planner performed stakeholder interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of ‘likes’, ‘dislikes’, ‘wishes’, and ‘fears’ in the community, as well as identifying top priorities for the Town’s progression toward the future. Secondly, several group presentations with input exercises were conducted. Afterward, a public meeting was held to vet the information gathered from the stakeholder interviews and group presentation/input exercises.

There was a total of 144 stakeholder interviews, plus 64 group participants contributing for a total of 208 persons participating in the initial contact phase, conducted during the Spring/Summer of 2016. The following sections highlight the process, results and opportunities for action.

5.1.1 Stakeholder Interviews – *How these were performed & why so extensive!*

Extensive stakeholder interviews are a great addition to any community engagement process as it gives detailed insight into the opinions and perspectives of many members of a community. What makes this process unique for Andrews is that, due to the size of Andrews, almost every business was interviewed as part of this process. A random sample of business owners would be too small to gain valuable information, so the business community was interviewed, on a one-to-one basis, to fully flush out the main content to be highlighted in Andrews’ plan for the future. In addition to business owners, Town staff, elected officials, and many civic groups were also interviewed.

This outreach process spread good will throughout the Andrews’ community early in the process enabling word-of-mouth insight for this initiative and better community understanding for growing their town. These interviews focused on the community and did not obtain proprietary information about the businesses.

While attempts to reach all businesses were made, there are likely several home-based or e-commerce businesses that were not identifiable. Additionally, a very small number of businesses chose not to make time available to participate; however, often voiced their concerns when approached. These concerns coincidentally were very consistent with the information gathered from participating businesses.

Finally, the vast majority of the interviews were conducted within the place of business. During this months long endeavor, the interviewer traveled by bicycle to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the physical characteristics and local context of the community layout, conditions of infrastructure, and numerous other valuable insights of Andrews. The “guy on the bike” was often seen all over Andrews, increasing awareness of the Town’s commitment to become deliberate in the future decisions affecting businesses, citizens and visitors.

5.1.2 Summary of Interview Results – *What our community said!*

Because the interviews were conducted in person, the survey questions were not distributed ahead of the interview, improving the quality of the results. The results sought were ‘first impressions’, including both the passion and emotion often shared when meeting face to face.

The interview responses were categorized and grouped separately for each of the five (5) questions. These responses were then cataloged for ranking purposes enabling the results to be summarized graphically. The following pages illustrate the responses in order of their respective rankings.

This interview process did have its additional benefits and shortcomings along the way. In the category of benefits, the survey identified whether the business is located inside or outside the Town Limits; furthermore, whether or not the proprietor resided with the town Limits or not. Planners determined that of those business interviews conducted inside the Town Limits, approximately 60 percent of the proprietors (64 of 107) were not residents of the Town. This determination is critically important to note, since many businesses may often have as much or more invested in a town as an average resident. Because these individuals are not eligible to vote in the local municipal elections, this process offered an opportunity for the business community’s voice to be heard in greater numbers than may be represented by local member-supported business organizations.

The one known short coming of the process was the final outcome of the priority listed in the final column of the illustrations appearing on the following three (3) pages. As data was being analyzed, the eventual 2nd priority appeared to be leading the group, resulting in a miss-ranking of the top two priorities presented to the community on August 17, 2016. The final rankings indicate ***‘Jobs’*** as the 1st priority, with ***‘Working together as a Town’*** as a strong 2nd priority.

The 1st priority, ***‘Jobs’*** (24%), particularly higher paying or living wage jobs, a component of economic development, ranked at the top of the interviews. Closely related category of ***‘More businesses’*** (8%) shadowed jobs in 3rd place. The combination of these two priorities represents approximately 32 percent overall within the seventeen (17) response categories. This strong showing encouraged the emphasis on the subject in Section 6 - Economic Development and Section 8 – Land Use, of this document. Please refer to those sections for complete details on these subjects.

The 2nd ranking priority, ***‘Working together as a Town’*** (22%) among stakeholders finished a very close 2nd place. This category of survey interview result highlighted the

opinion that leadership was not focused on moving forward and spent too much time bickering over issues. This observation led the interviewer to prioritize the topic for immediate attention during the August 12, 2016 presentation of the survey results. Because this priority is essentially a no-cost item resting fully in the hands of local leadership, each member of the Board, including the mayor, was asked to recognize this issue and make a public statement of commitment to address the behavior beginning immediately. The Mayor and three of the four Aldermen's commitment during the meeting to overwhelming applause and support from the standing room only crowd in attendance. Since that time, all Board of Aldermen meetings have been much more civil and efficiently address the order of business at hand.

The 4th ranking priority, **'Infrastructure/utility upgrades'** (8%), emphasized the need to prioritize a continuing level of investment in streets, sidewalks, and quality water supplies. Comments in this category often linked this topic to preparations for growth.

The 5th ranking priority, **'Growth'** (7%), underscores the need to increase the population of Andrews to support local businesses. Often referred to as a critical mass, the population of Andrews does have a major role in the feasibility of local businesses to succeed. Strategies in economic development, representing the 1st and 3rd priorities, include attracting interest in Andrews' setting. Many trends and diverse business opportunities of the future, described in Section 6 – 'Economic Development' and Section 8 – 'Land Use' of this document, underscore the significance of Andrews' embrace of modern economic activities in order to thrive.

The 6th ranking priority, **'Good plan & good ordinances'** (6%), surprised the interviewer. Support for the initiative to develop a sound town plan and the ordinances and other tasks associated with implementing town plans often are under-recognized; however, many of Andrews' stakeholders believe this initiative is the highest priority facing the Town. Section 8 – 'Land Use' of this document, describes many of the shortcomings of current ordinances and how to improve Andrews' success in the replacement of existing ordinances at the time of adoption of this document.

The 7th ranking priority, **'Rebuild town, redefine town'** (5%), clearly indicates recognition of the state of transition Andrews faces. When Valletown township was a manufacturing hub, many people residing in Andrews and the surrounding communities relied upon local non-basic economic sectors for their everyday needs. Since that time, a long list of changes has hurt Andrews' ability to revive its' local economy. Changes include the 4-lane bypass, closure of plants due to off-shore movement of jobs, and the major economic crisis of 2008 and beyond that have combined to deliver a blow to the dynamic that was once a thriving community. Today, Andrews is beginning to enjoy increasing investment and new, albeit limited, growth centered around the central core area of town attributable to our location, climate, scenic quality, reasonable property values, and other factors that have made Andrews attractive to new investment. Rebuilding Andrews is the centerpiece to this Town Plan, by emphasizing adding strength and stability at the core before expanding outward. This internally focused strategy relies on encouraging new housing choices and variety close to the activity center of the community. It also focuses in existing developed areas to re-purpose the underutilized properties that abut our neighborhoods, parks, civic and commercial

areas. This ‘rebuild’ redefines our community and prepares Andrews for the next chapter in our community’s legacy. Concepts illustrated in Section 8 - ‘Land Use’ of this document, offer ideas to property owners, local leadership and persons seeking opportunities to visualize the possibilities.

The 8th ranking priority, **‘Beautification’** (5%), reinforced the values identified in several of the initial interview questions regarding what people “like” about and “wish” for Andrews. When viewed in the context of the leading questions of the interview, ‘beautification’ reflects an interrelationship between what people valued most and what people saw as our top priority. The concepts illustrated in Section 8 – ‘Land Use’ of this document, establish a foundation in not only the functionality of the Town as it re-develops and grows, but also the appearance and expectations the community values going into the future. It was evident in the interview process that attention to appearance is important to the success of Andrews and that specific measures must be taken to achieve a higher aesthetic. The subject of ‘beautification’ was not all about cute and pretty, but also included strong statements about the conditions of property. Numerous concerns about property maintenance, neglect, trash, junk vehicles, condition of vacant buildings, unkempt homes, and especially substandard and neglected mobile and manufactured homes were among the highlights of responses.

The 9th through 17th ranked priorities combine for a total of fifteen (15%) percent of the total interview responses to the question of Andrews’ “top priority”. These topics are addressed in sections 5.2.9 through 5.2.17 of this document.

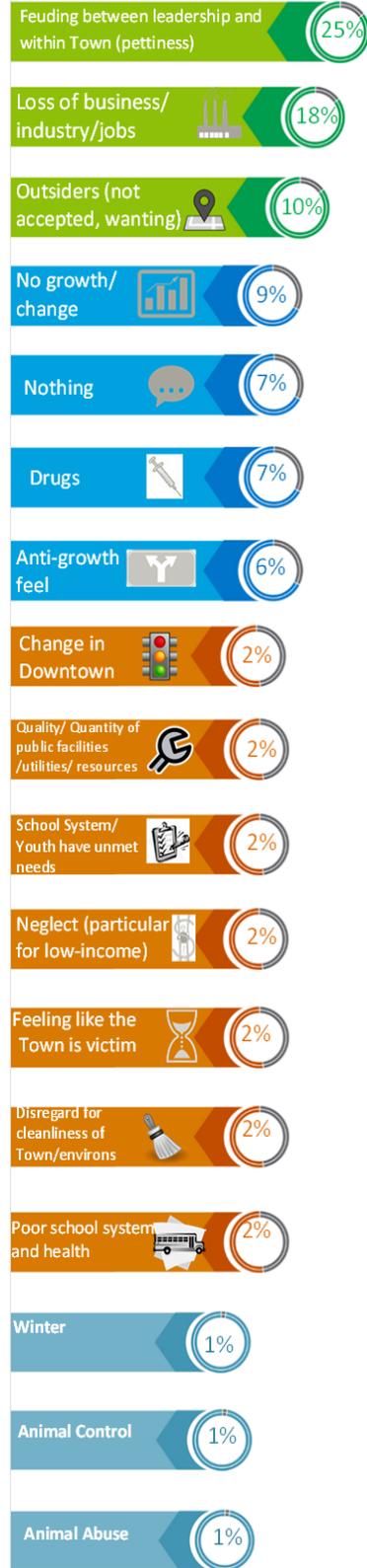
The following graphic pages (28-30) illustrate the responses to the five (5) survey interview questions.

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LIKES



DISLIKES



WISHES



FEARS



PRIORITIES

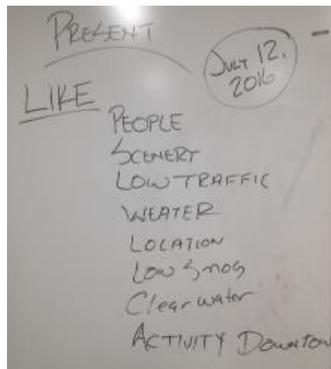


5.1.2 Community Meetings

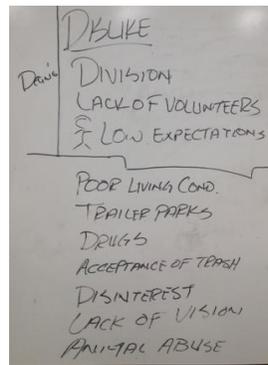
Garden Club, Civitan Club, Lions club, Cultural Arts and Historical Society group exercises were conducted to introduce the planning process and seek first impressions about the community's present and future. The input from these participants is included in the summary data on pages (28-30) to illustrate the responses to the five (5) survey interview questions.



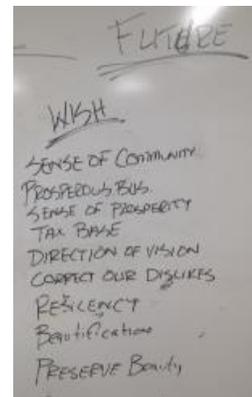
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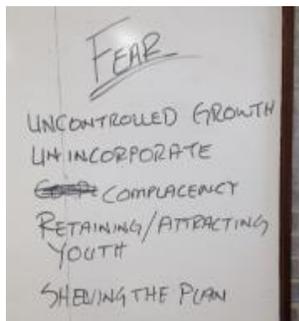
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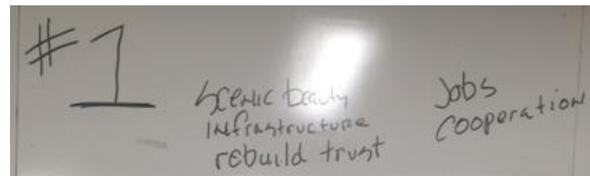
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5.1.3 Social Media Platform

Social media applications (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) have become commonplace. Ninety percent of Millennials (adults born between 1982 & 1998) use social media on a regular basis, along with 77% of adults born between 1966 & 1981. Baby Boomers' use of social media has tripled since the year 2010, and 35% of those aged 65 and older report using social media regularly.¹ Social media has revolutionized the way we communicate with each other (just as the telephone once did) and has become a vital means of interaction between individuals, organizations, and communities.

Local governments are using social media for outreach to constituents, for transparency in their operations, and to increase citizen participation. Common uses of social media include crime prevention and [police assistance](#), emergency alerts and severe weather updates, local activities and event registrations, construction updates and road closings, advertising job openings, public service announcements, and announcements of town Board of Aldermen and advisory board meetings. However, local governments increasingly find social media to be more than just a means of disseminating information, and see it as a way to help staff, citizen advisory groups and elected officials make better decisions, broaden community engagement and improve the public discourse, and ultimately to increase trust in government.²

Development of a social media platform for the Town of Andrews is essential for continuing this outreach. A platform (consisting of the most popular applications) will allow the Town to communicate with its residents, businesses, and landowners on a frequent and 'real time' basis. For the Land Use Plan, a social media platform can be a powerful Community Participation tool as well as a cornerstone of the public relations strategy recommended in 5.2.1.2 Objective 2 (Strategy 3). By using social media, the Town can reach large segments of the populace. Draft documents, meetings and other information can be posted on the [Town's website](#) and linked from the Town's [Facebook page](#), allowing for immediate access by citizens. In addition, Facebook and Twitter could be used to gain valuable public input via posts and tweets. For example, a post can be drafted to read, "What new businesses would you like to see in Andrews?" Residents and non-residents can respond as if they were attending a public workshop. After adoption, the Town can use social media to build support for implementation of the Town Plan 2035. As a tool for citizen engagement, the Town's social media platform can help the *Andrews Town Plan 2035 Comprehensive Land Use & Master Plan* remain fresh and in the forefront of this dialogue, becoming a 'living' document to help Andrews achieve its goals.

¹ Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/08/social-networking-usage-2005-2015/>

² Institute for Local Government, <http://www.ca-ilg.org/social-media-strategies>

5.1.3.1 Strategy: Develop a consolidated Social Media Platform representing the Town of Andrews

Below are near-term action steps the Town of Andrews can take to build its social media platform and widen its digital footprint. The [International City Management Association](#) has a wealth of resources to assist the Town in this endeavor.

1. ***Designate a Town employee as the official social media coordinator.*** This person could be a part-time employee devoted exclusively to the Town's platform (including the official website) or a full-time employee with social media as a collateral duty. The social media coordinator would work closely with all Town departments to provide current information to the public. Following are the most immediate priority tasks recommended for the Town's social media coordinator.
 - a. ***Complete the Town website and fill in missing content.*** There is content missing throughout the website, especially in key areas. The sections under 'Business', 'Government' and 'Residents' are incomplete. The 'Permits' page is missing address and phone number information. The 'Improvements/Renovations' page links to a 2007 draft of the Town Design Guidelines. In its current format, some of the illustrations do not download properly in a browser.
 - b. ***Improve search engine optimization and functionality.*** The Town website could be better optimized for what users are searching for through some keyword optimization and better use of alternative text tags in the images. This would also improve the accessibility of the site. The only terms yielding search results are those actually found in existing headings and content. For example, a search on generic terms such as 'restaurants' or 'economic development' yields no results. The site should also be streamlined for optimization. Currently, the site is loading in 3.5 seconds or more, and weighs in at over 3.5 megabytes. For someone using a prepaid data plan, it would cost them \$0.39 just to load the home page one time. Also, the site needs to be optimized for use via a Smartphone.
 - c. ***Open new social media applications as soon as possible.*** The Town should open [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Tumblr](#), and [Snapchat](#) accounts as soon as possible. Even if posts are infrequent in the beginning, opening accounts now would ensure that the Town can claim the appropriate and authorized 'handles' (e.g., @townofandrewsnc, etc.) and create topical and relevant hashtags (e.g. #visitandrewsnc, etc.)

5.2 Goals-Objectives-Strategies

The objectives and strategies appearing under each goal do not appear in priority rankings, but are listed so they may be pursued as deemed appropriate by the Town, its citizens and businesses.

5.2.1 Goal 1: ***JOBS!***

5.2.1.1 Objective 1: **Attract investment in Andrews that creates permanent employment opportunities for the work-force.**

Strategy 1: Leverage the region's excellent conditions for fresh trout farm-to-table production to grow the local fresh trout sector. North Carolina ranks 2nd in the nation in the total value of farm-raised trout sold and distributed ([NASS, 2015](#)), with the vast majority produced in Western North Carolina. While several trout farming operations exist in the immediate vicinity and Carolina Mountain Rainbow Trout Processing located in Andrews has established its self as the leader in quality fresh trout products distributed widely, there are additional opportunities for growth in this sector. Growth opportunities in processing beyond traditional products such as fillets, butterfly, head-on and other popular fresh trout products include jerky, cake, dips, and nuggets which utilize both larger and smaller fish to maximize yield and minimize waste. These value-added and vertical integrations of the industry offer opportunities to expand the trout industry.

Strategy 2: Leverage the region's excellent conditions for fresh eggs, vegetables and fruits to grow the local sector. The popularity of organically-produced fruits and vegetables has grown dramatically during the last decade, and western North Carolina, particularly through non-profit initiatives such as Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), has become a national leader in creating farm-to-market opportunities, educating producers and consumers, and integrating local food systems into economic development strategies. [Miller Farms](#) is one of the largest Organic farms west of Asheville, producing a variety of fresh vegetables, verifying the fertile valley soils. ***Wood Brothers Farm*** corn and soybean regularly price top three "highest yield per acre" while ***Parker & Reichman Farms*** is one of the largest egg layer in North Carolina.

The State of North Carolina recently released [the final report](#) of the Food Manufacturing Task Force, which outlines a strategy to grow this sector by utilizing the state's underused manufacturing capacity, particularly in the rural areas, to convert NC's diverse agricultural resources into value-added products, like Western Carolina University, MANNA & North Georgia Food Bank. With available water and waste-water treatment capacity and access to four-lane highways and air transport, the Town is well-positioned to establish a food processing sector that can provide value-added products to major urban centers within close proximity (Asheville, Atlanta, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Greenville-Spartanburg).

Strategy 3: Facilitate the redevelopment and reinvestment in vacant, underutilized, and Brownfield properties. The NC Department of Environmental Quality defines a Brownfield site as "any real property that is abandoned, idled or underutilized where

environmental contamination, or perceived environmental contamination, hinders redevelopment.” The redevelopment of Brownfield’s can provide an opportunity to secure and prepare land for new development. Since many Brownfield’s are former industrial sites, they are typically well located, with access to water and sewer infrastructure. In addition, many Brownfield sites are located in low income communities, which could provide an opportunity for redevelopment and job opportunities for those residents. However, Brownfield redevelopment is often hindered by potential environmental cleanup liability, making it difficult to obtain financing. The [NC Brownfield’s Program](#) can help prospective developers alleviate liability concerns and facilitate the redevelopment of these properties. Strategies to facilitate the redevelopment of Brownfield sites include initiating a study to understand the economic value of Brownfield redevelopment in the Southwestern North Carolina region, providing low- or no-cost technical assistance to persons interested in redeveloping Brownfield sites, and establishing a low interest loan program to fund Brownfield clean-up in targeted areas. There are funding sources and funding strategies available for Brownfield remediation and redevelopment.

An inventory of potential sites, such as the former oil distributorship at the intersection of Main Street and Teas Street, should be made to identify candidates and help with prioritization. The Town of Andrews and other Region A partners should pursue establishment of revolving loan fund modeled on the successful Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments program, and identify resources to assist traditional manufacturers repurpose assets and adopt advanced technologies. *Also see section 6.8.3.5 of this document for additional information.*

Strategy 4: Establish a business incubator focused on the arts, and other industry clusters emergent in the western North Carolina region. The Town’s efforts will attract entrepreneurs desiring an intimate, small-town setting, outdoor recreational opportunities, infrastructure, and easy access to major urban centers. Businesses such as CAD composites 3-D based manufacturing, structural honeycomb composite manufacturing already exist within the re-purposed Baker furniture facility.

5.2.1.2 Objective 2: Bring more visitors into the Town of Andrews to visit local businesses.

Strategy 1: Design and install ‘logo billboards’ to direct travelers from US 19/129/74 to local businesses and attractions. The Town of Andrews is not eligible to participate in the [NCDOT Logo Signing Program](#). These blue ‘logo boards’ that notify travelers of gas, food, and lodging establishments are only permitted along highways with grade-separated, fully-controlled interchanges (Exit 64 on US74 at Bryson City is the last such interchange). An alternative to consider would be a public-private effort between the Town, a local business organization such as the Andrews Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, and a private sign company to create a local, Andrews-specific ‘Logo Billboard’ program. The content could be designed on an existing billboard to resemble the blue logo panels used by NCDOT, with local businesses participating through a fee structure similar to the state program. This initiative would provide local enterprises with a prime advertising opportunity to display their logos. Priority should be given to locally-owned establishments, but all downtown businesses would benefit from the

diverted traffic the exposure. *Also see section 6.8.2.1 of this document for additional information.*

Strategy 2: Explore eligibility of Andrew’s tourist-oriented businesses for participation in the [NCDOT TODS Program](#). NCDOT provides tourist oriented directional signing (TODS) on roads that are not fully-controlled access highways. The program allows NCDOT to install signs to which individual attraction names, distances, and directional arrows are attached. These signs are paid for by the attractions, and NCDOT constructs and maintains the signs in a consistent style and specification for participating attractions. *Also see section 6.8.2.2 of this document for additional information.*

Strategy 3: Support an ongoing Public Relations initiative. Unique opportunities such as the [total solar eclipse](#) occurring on August 21, 2017 present opportunities to promote Andrews. A committee consisting of Town staff, Chamber leaders and volunteers, should plan and execute coordinated public relations outreach through conventional and social media to publicize Andrews’ to regional and national markets. *Also see sections 5.1.3, 6.8.1.2 and 6.8.1.3 of this document for additional information.*

5.2.1.3 Objective 3: Establish Town of Andrews as the entrepreneurial and commercial hub for tourism and outdoor recreation in the region.

Strategy 1: Increase commercial development by targeting ‘niche’ strategies to grow the tourism market. The Town of Andrews’ unparalleled scenic beauty and proximity to world-class recreational facilities such as the nearby [Nantahala Outdoor Center](#) can be the foundation for durable growth and development. The economic impacts of outdoor recreational resources such as the Nantahala Gorge [are well-documented](#). Furthermore, the Town has sufficient water treatment capacity and ‘infill’ land supply for refreshing and revitalizing new growth within existing commercial areas that can avoid further encroachment into natural resource lands. Andrews’ adjacency to the Western Carolina Regional Airport and the existence of rail infrastructure could provide opportunities for new businesses that provide logistical support and services to the tourism industry such as an outdoor outfitters store.

Strategy 2: Repurpose the vacant flea market/mall building into a ‘service depot’ for outdoor recreation. Through partnerships with existing outfitters and other outdoor recreational equipment suppliers and services, including the Nantahala Outdoor Center, The Town should study the feasibility of creating a facility for equipment servicing, storage, and other logistics, including use as a starting location for guided tours to trails and water sports, with parking and other amenities available. Such a facility would have numerous advantages and environmental benefits – lower traffic volume in the scenic gorge area, making more space available for tourist amenities, less pavement and fewer hard structures near the river, etc. Such a facility could benefit new start-up businesses as well – they would require a smaller ‘footprint’ by having an accessible location for rolling stock, providing shuttles, etc. The repurposed facility could also provide incubator space for start-ups related to the industry.

Strategy 3: Establish Andrews as a leader in the development of ADA-compliant outdoor recreational facilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that

recreational facilities be made accessible to people with disabilities of all types. Many people experience physical limitations requiring alternative facilities to participate in activities most people take for granted. From the aging of the Baby Boomer generation to returning war veterans, there is a growing, unmet need for outdoor facilities that can accommodate people with disabilities. The Town with its ideal location, majestic vistas, close proximity to organized activities, and relatively flat central topography is well-positioned to establish a niche to serve this need. Town staff, Chamber leaders, entrepreneurs, and volunteers working together can seek available federal funding to plan and develop a pilot project for barrier-free adventure, trail, and whitewater access. Such an endeavor could involve a diverse partnership, including [NOC](#), trail enthusiasts, the hospitality industry, and advocates for accessibility. The Town's current ambitions to create a link connecting the Andrews Trail to the Rim Trail could be bolstered through this effort. *Also see sections 6.8.1.2, 6.8.3.1, and 6.8.3.2 of this document for additional information.*

Strategy 4: Revitalize efforts to re-establish Great Smoky Mountains Railroad service to Andrews. In 2014, The NCDOT Rail Division commissioned a study (summary appearing in section 7.2 of this document) on the [reactivation of the railroad](#) from Andrews to Murphy, which included an evaluation of the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (GSMR) corridor from Nantahala Gorge (the current terminus) to Andrews. This study evaluated the feasibility of reopening the rail line and included technical studies of infrastructure needs, projections for costs and repairs, and an examination of the return on investment (ROI). The study found that this segment of the railroad is still in relatively good shape. The GSMR segment would require repairs and upgrades costing approximately \$4.4 million, with an additional \$2 million in total capital costs for the reestablishing the Andrews Depot. (The total costs for repairs and improvements to the entire Andrews to Murphy line, still owned by NCDOT, are projected to be \$17.4 million). For the entire line, the study estimated a potential regional economic impact of \$60 million and the creation of 1900 jobs over a 15-year period. Rail service to Andrews has the potential to further grow the tourism industry as well as cost-effectively ship goods and materials to markets in North Carolina and beyond, and the aforementioned study provided a compelling case for reestablishing the service. However, the financial obstacles are daunting, and the study did not provide a funding strategy to achieve it. Nonetheless, the Town should continue in a leadership role in reviving the necessary partnerships (and fostering new ones) that could create a 'path forward' on raising the financial resources to achieve this important goal, much like the partnerships that helped defeat efforts to remove the rail infrastructure during the 2016 legislative session in Raleigh.

5.2.1.4 Objective 4: Support existing businesses and encourage additional businesses that will attract customers to Andrews.

Strategy 1: Ensure Town regulations encourage growth and expansion of businesses that will attract visitors as well as residents. The Town should provide flexibility within its zoning ordinance to support business expansion within both commercial business and mixed use areas. Local businesses interviewed summer of 2016 expressed strong support for similar businesses close to each other to attract more customers. Restaurants, artisan specialty shops, and entrepreneurs producing products high in

craftsmanship within close proximity to each other will generate interest and establish Andrews' destination value.

Additional businesses could include agricultural elements such as vineyards, beehives, and local roadside farm stands. Growth of the local foods movement, already established in Andrews, can also increase interest in Andrews through temporary and seasonal commerce such as a farmers market. The Center for Environmental Farming Systems can provide resources to [assist local governments](#) in benefitting from a local food economy. The [Cherokee County Cooperative Extension Center](#) can provide guidance on these and other activities within community and even neighborhood settings.

Strategy 2: Improve coordination with Cherokee County leadership to establish mutually beneficial inter-local agreement for the provision of infrastructure to the airport and surrounding sites for business growth and expansion. Establish relationship with Cherokee County leadership to seek an inter-local agreement for municipal water and sewer services to the airport and adjacent business properties and locations. This inter-local agreement should include the preparation of a conceptual development plan for the subject study area and establish criteria for municipal services and incentive offerings. (see section 5.2.10.1 of this document.)

5.2.2 Goal 2: WORK TOGETHER!

5.2.2.1 Objective 1: Improve working relationships among elected officials serving on the Board of Aldermen.

Strategy 1: Mayor and Board of Aldermen pledge to improve awareness of demeanor during public meetings and strive to exhibit respect for one another when expressing opposing viewpoints. During the public stakeholder interview process this was the most common concern expressed by citizens until just before the end of the process when this subject was overtaken by “jobs” described in section 5.2.1 of this document. This category of survey interview result highlighted the opinion that leadership was not focused on moving forward and spent too much time bickering over issues. This observation led the interviewer to prioritize the topic for immediate attention during the August 12, 2016 presentation of the survey results. Because this priority is essentially a no-cost item resting fully in the hands of local leadership, each member of the Board, including the mayor, was asked to recognize this issue and make a public statement of commitment to address the behavior beginning immediately. The Mayor and three of the four Aldermen's commitment during the meeting to overwhelming applause and support from the standing room only crowd in attendance. Since that time, all Board of Aldermen meetings have been much more civil and efficiently address the order of business at hand.

This strategy will remain an ongoing commitment of Andrews' leadership to its businesses and citizens.

5.2.3 **Goal 3: MORE BUSINESS!**

5.2.3.1 **Objective 1: Support efforts to stimulate new and expanding businesses in Andrews.**

Strategy 1: Strengthen the core business community by updating zoning and other policies that encourage investment in Andrews. During stakeholder interviews of individual businesses throughout Andrews numerous proprietors voiced their feelings that Andrews' leadership could do more to encourage both new businesses and expansion of existing businesses. Proprietors of multiple businesses stated the need for consistent and fair administration and enforcement of the rules such that everyone was treated equally. Their primary concern centered on zoning rules that make sense and are not administered with favoritism. One proprietor stated *"Mayor and Aldermen need to get on the same level and agree on what to do, they need to come together, they need to make decisions and then do it, the zoning rules need to be enforced so we don't continue to look like we are going downhill."* The initiative to update Andrews' ordinances is underway at the time of adoption of this plan with scheduled adoption in Spring 2017. Also see section 8.5.1 of this document for additional information.

Strategy 2: Create an automobile service and repair district to allow for clustering of such services. During stakeholder interviews involving the vehicle service and repair businesses, the clear message to the Town's leadership was not to target them for being a problem, but to establish clear rules for their businesses and allow them to succeed under these new rules when applied fairly.

The new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this plan will establish a unique district concentrated on one part of Main Street to the east of downtown. The proposed "Vehicle Service & Repair District" or VSR, will establish standards and specifications for addressing the concerns experienced with delivery, storage and repair of disabled motor vehicles. This district could also be used in strategic locations as these existing or new businesses serving these needs seek additional space. This strategy is intended to turn a perceived problem into an opportunity for Andrews' businesses serving both the growing tourism and local citizen needs.

Strategy 3: Improve the appearances and building conditions. During stakeholder interviews several proprietors voiced concerns about the condition of vacant buildings in Andrews. One proprietor stated *"Main Street building owners need to keep them looking good even if they are vacant, to cleanup Main Street."* The significance of this consensus among business proprietors indicates a high level of pride in the community and the need to ensure that business investments are protected from decline by property owners neglecting their properties.

As part of the project to prepare a new unified development ordinance, the consultant was also required to provide contemporary nuisance abatement ordinances compliant with current North Carolina enabling legislation. These draft ordinances were provided to the Planning Board on September 7, 2016 and Board of Aldermen on September 8, 2016 for review.

On September 27, 2016 the Andrews Planning Board voted unanimously on five (5) separate ordinances addressing various nuisance related topics. These ordinances were then forwarded for the Mayor and Board of Aldermen to consider. On October 11, 2016 the Board of Aldermen adopted three ordinances (Public Nuisance, Junked Motor Vehicle, and General Penalties) by unanimous vote. Additionally, the Board of Aldermen approved two resolutions calling for the public hearing on the other two (Minimum Housing Code and Non-residential property Maintenance Code) held November 1, 2016. On November 1, 2016, the Board of Aldermen conducted public hearings and voted to adopt these latter two ordinances specifically establishing standards for the maintenance of buildings in Andrews. The adoption of these new standards, along with the Town's execution of a contract for professional code enforcement services on August 23, 2016, initiates a formal response to address this objective immediately.

Strategy 4: Improve way-finding throughout the Town to enhance the tourist and shopper experience. Local directional signage will help guide the visitor to the concentration of shopping, automotive/motor-cycle services, accommodations, and food/beverage businesses in Andrews. *(Also see section 6.8.2.2 of this document.)*

Strategy 5: Attract motorist from the US Highway 74, the 4-lane, into Andrews' business districts. Establish a relationship with local chamber of Commerce or equivalent business group to secure strategic billboards on the 4-lane (US 19 & 74) for Logo billboard advertising to attract travelers to local businesses. Provide clear concise information on special signage designed specifically to capture attention of non-local travelers. Logo billboards will get the message out about choices and where to immediately exit the 4-lane (US 19 & 74). *(Also see sections 6.8.2.1 of this document for additional information.)*

5.2.4 Goal 4: INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITY UPGRADES!

5.2.4.1 Objective 1: Enhance public services to allow for their efficient delivery to all residents.

Strategy 1: Management of existing utility systems to emphasize quality control and return on investment. Achieving low utility rates always begins with proper maintenance and operations of utilities to eliminate leaks, account for water and wastewater usage and avoid contamination while carefully managing the expansion of such systems. Placing an emphasis on these important factors will provide one way of improving the return on the investment by the Town and its rate payers.

Another important approach to improving the return on investment is to carefully manage the growth and expansion of the system. Extensions should be prudently studied and examined to determine the effective advantages to the current rate payers of such expansion and ensure sound decision making. Extensions without annexation may increase utility revenue, but at the same time may expose the in-town rate payer, and tax payer, to financial obligations while the benefactor of the extension shares little or no risk in the cost of the extension. Exceptions should only be considered when public health is at risk and annexation is not eligible; therefore, obtaining a voluntary

petition for annexation to be held until eligibility is attained can protect the Town, its rate payers and taxpayers.

A third important factor in increasing the return on investment of the utility enterprises is to encourage infill development and redevelopment. Under-developed and under-utilized areas of existing development within the Town can increase the return on investment in existing infrastructure and contribute greatly to reducing utility and property tax rates.

Strategy 2: Management of streets and street infrastructure to emphasize safety, durability and efficiency. New streets and reconstructed streets must be constructed using up-to-date standards and specifications. Establishing a technical standards and specifications manual will ensure the proper guidance is in place for developers and municipal department personnel when determining best practices for construction. Immediately upon completion of new streets, the Town should update its Powell Bill information during the next reporting cycle so the Town begins bringing that revenue, already paid by the taxpayer, back to Andrews to increase the funding available for maintenance. A new street may retrieve significant revenues over time before any repair cost are experienced. The new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this plan will reference a new Technical Standards and Specifications Manual completed as part of the consultant's contract. The manual will apply under the direction of the Town's Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator, the Town's Public Works Engineer, and the Town's Public Works Director within their respective areas of responsibility.

Strategy 3: Management of public health and safety departments to enhance efficiency of rolling service delivery in the most effective means. Public health and safety services, including police, fire, and sanitation services rely heavily on trained personnel to be on the street in both routine service area coverage and emergency on-call response modes. Both human resources and equipment to provide these vital services are essential to effective, yet efficient service delivery. Determining achievable levels of service and methods of service establishes the foundation that leads to effective management and service delivery.

Strategy 4: Management of data to ensure fair and equitable revenue recovery from taxes paid on consumption. Equally as important to efficient cost effective service is the collection of revenues due and payable to the Town. The following summary of revenue sources describes how to maximize fiscal resources to allow for the adequacy of human resources and their requisite equipment. The maintenance of low property (ad valorem) tax rates always begins with the prudent and effective management of reporting and collecting the other revenue sources towns receive in order to reduce reliance on property taxes. Emphasis on effective data reporting enables the retrieval of several types of taxes already paid by our citizens and businesses every day that can easily be overlooked in the absence of effective reporting practices.

The Utility Franchise Tax is a 3.09 percent tax on utility billings collected by electric, gas, telecommunications and cable television companies that is distributed back to the Town by the respective utility. If the utility companies do not have current information

reflecting the Town’s boundaries, then inaccurate reporting to the state by the utility company results in reduced distributions to the Town by the State.

Another tax already paid by the taxpayer daily is the state tax on motor vehicle fuels, commonly known as the Powell Bill. The state distributes this tax to towns based upon a combination of population and street mileage maintained by the town. As towns grow their street networks by accepting new subdivision streets for town maintenance, the Powell Bill data reporting must keep pace.

State sales tax distributions to the Town are controlled by the County. The sales taxes collected and redistributed within a county may return to the Town by either population or property valuation based formulas - determined by the County Commissioners. This system is a counter-productive system in that counties often compete with towns for growth so they may keep a larger share of sales tax distributions to be shared locally. The only effective role a town may have in successfully growing its recovery of the sales tax collected by local businesses, is through the careful management of the utility enterprises. Provision of water and sewer has a profound effect on the location of businesses and towns that manage their systems with an emphasis on return on investment can improve their share of local sales tax recovered by supporting growth within the boundaries of the town.

Property taxes are the major source of local discretionary funding for routine services such as recreation, sanitation, public safety and administration. Maximizing the recovery of the taxes already collected by the state can reduce the level of taxation required of property owners.

5.2.4.2 Objective 2: Establish service area priorities, examining policies and rates affecting these areas.

Strategy 1: Identify locations within Andrews’ infrastructure service area where rural growth is either occurring or expected to occur. Identify these locations on a map. Study the location(s) to determine development potential and estimate utility service demand to determine feasible levels of service. By taking proactive steps to prepare for future voluntary annexations and the benefits versus cost of supporting development in these strategic areas Andrews’ can avoid costly mistakes and enhance the return on investment for Andrews’ tax and utility rate payers. *(See sections 6.1.1, 8.3.1 & 8.5.4 of this document.)*

5.2.5 Goal 5: **GROWTH!**

5.2.5.1 Objective 1: Enhance the gateways into Andrews.

Strategy 1: ***Establish gateway designations to encourage a welcome feeling at different access points into Andrews.*** Plan and protect the aesthetic value of gateway locations. Establish clear expectations, including design concepts, standards and specifications, for projects located within gateway corridors. *(See section 8.5.1.13 of this document.)*

Strategy 2: *Conduct a “corridor study” of US 74 through the Andrews Study Area.* Performing a study of the entire corridor in cooperation with Cherokee County to stimulate Andrews as a destination will identify opportunities for public and private investment. Such a “*Destination Andrews: Plan for Corridor 74*” initiative will expand upon the scope of this Town Plan 2035 in numerous beneficial ways and provide the guidance to both public and private decision makers seeking to identify golden opportunities and beneficial return on investments.

5.2.5.2 Objective 2: Stimulate growth within specific areas of Andrews where capacity and compatibility are paired.

Strategy 1: *Improve existing developed areas to a level and character reminiscent of when they once thrived.* Establish standards and specifications for new opportunities in infill development and internal growth utilizing existing properties and neighborhoods such as Happy Top and Mud Town. Refreshing and revitalizing growth will repurpose older/underutilized sites.

Strategy 2: *Encourage development in areas where existing infrastructure and other criteria for development will add value to new development.* Supporting new and expanding businesses and offering more housing choices, not just quantity, but quality and variety, will enhance the Andrews quality of life. Efforts to avoid monotony and encourage exciting design to address the senses of the citizen and tourist alike will create an interesting and vibrant community. These opportunities can raise Andrews to become a destination for those seeking innovative designs such as the [Manor House Townhouse](#) concept.



5.2.6 Goal 6: GOOD PLAN & ORDINANCES!

5.2.6.1 Objective 1: Have a good plan and ordinances so projects achieve the mission of the plan.

Strategy 1: *Adopt Town Plan 2035 to change Andrews into a successful partner in the future growth and re-development of the Town.* Establishing a clear vision and the action steps to achieve the goals established by the Town is the first task toward a bright future. (See section 8.5 of this document.)

Strategy 2: *Adopt new ordinances establishing the standards and specifications for ensuring that new development and re-development are consistent with the Town Plan.* The replacement of antiquated ordinances with relevant modern development standards will establish Andrews as a leader in western North Carolina in proactively seeking to refresh its self into a 21st century community. (See section 8.5 of this document.)

5.2.7 Goal 7: REBUILD & REDEFINE THE TOWN!

5.2.7.1 Objective 1: Restore civic and community pride.

Strategy 1: *Improve Andrews' presence in the travel and tourism industry by expanding the number of destination functions sponsored locally.* Town should unify for Town events, major travel weekends, etc., including all of the hospitality businesses. Local zoning regulations should establish feasible standards and specifications for bed and breakfast establishments and on-line networks such as [AirBnB](#) that accommodate the growing number of hospitality seekers.

Strategy 2: *Open Andrews to new possibilities with non-traditional housing.* Andrews is ideally situated in a location that offers many non-traditional lifestyle options. From tree-house development to Tiny Houses, Andrews could accommodate numerous options in the right location, such as Lazy Bear, with the right standards and specifications. These alternatives to affordable housing could entice citizens to support replacing dilapidated housing stock with better housing choices at affordable rates. The extensive use of manufactured housing in vulnerable locations has oversupplied the market with low cost housing that offers little in terms of long-term stability. Offering a program for replacement housing to the manufactured home operators with established criteria to ensure an improved standard of living for those in need will elevate Andrews' public image.

5.2.8 Goal 8: BEAUTIFICATION!

5.2.8.1 Objective 1: Focus on streetscape improvements to help unify the Town façade within the core Main Street area downtown.

Strategy 1: *Encourage reinvestment in existing buildings and underutilized commercial areas.* Adopt and administer comprehensive set of standards and specifications including a non-residential property maintenance ordinance and a new zoning ordinance. The non-residential property maintenance ordinance establishes standards and specifications for the maintenance of commercial buildings in Andrews. The primary objective of this ordinance should be to prevent the abandonment of vacant or dilapidated buildings that often spread their blight upon surrounding properties when substandard conditions prevent investors from acquiring properties due to nearby conditions. (See section 5.2.3.1 strategies 1 & 3 of this document.)

As part of the project to prepare a new unified development ordinance, the consultant is also required to provide contemporary nuisance abatement ordinances compliant with current North Carolina enabling legislation. These draft ordinances were provided to the Planning Board on September 7, 2016 and Board of Aldermen on September 8, 2016 for review.

On September 27, 2016 the Andrews Planning Board voted unanimously on five (5) separate ordinances addressing various nuisance related topics. These ordinances were then forwarded for the Mayor and Board of Aldermen to consider. On October 11, 2016 the Board of Aldermen adopted three ordinances (Public Nuisance, Junked Motor Vehicle, and General Penalties) by unanimous vote. Additionally, the Board of Aldermen

approved two resolutions calling for the public hearing on the other two (Minimum Housing Code and Non-residential property Maintenance Code) to be held November 1, 2016. On November 1, 2016, the Board of Aldermen conducted public hearings and voted to adopt these latter two ordinances specifically establishing standards for the maintenance of buildings in Andrews. The adoption of these new standards, along with the Town's execution of a contract for professional code enforcement services on August 23, 2016, initiates a formal response to address this objective.

The zoning ordinance establishes standards for the development and redevelopment of property. Proprietors of multiple businesses stated during the interviews of the summer of 2016 the need for consistent and fair administration and enforcement of the rules such that everyone was treated equally. Their primary concern centered on zoning rules that make sense and are not administered with favoritism. One proprietor stated *"Mayor and Aldermen need to get on the same level and agree on what to do, they need to come together, they need to make decisions and then do it, the zoning rules need to be enforced so we don't continue to look like we are going downhill."* The initiative to update Andrews' ordinances is underway at the time of adoption of this plan with scheduled adoption in spring 2017. Also see section 8.5.1 of this document for additional information.

Strategy 2: Improve existing building facades. The Town should consider participation in the North Carolina Main Street program. This program offers assistance organizing and funding façade improvements through low or no interest loans to proprietors. These loans are typically setup as a loan pool to repeat the process as the loans are repaid.

Strategy 3: Remove the curb obstruction on Main Street between Cherry Street and Chestnut Street. The Town should explore the feasibility of removing the raised curbing that separates Main Street from the adjacent sidewalk on the south side of the two blocks between Chestnut and Cherry Streets. The option of lowering the paved surface several inches needs to be evaluated to determine if excessive pavement in the past has elevated the street surface. Inclusive designs that eliminate barriers to all persons are being implemented in other cities and towns as a way to make their core downtown areas more flexible for both pedestrians and motor vehicles.

Strategy 4: Install bump-out curbing at intersections to calm traffic, reduce length of pedestrian crossings, and provide shade and landscape opportunities. Main Street is still the primary route of US 19 through Andrews. Due to this designation, the NCDOT maintains this facility as a standard two-lane primary highway cross-section. To improve pedestrian safety and facilitate other improvements such as those described in Strategy 3 above, the Town should explore the realignment of this designation to the US 74 4-lane highway facility. Changing the classification of Main Street to a local arterial will enable the town to coordinate local projects to improve pedestrian safety. Realigning the edge of the roadway to narrow pedestrian crossings at the intersections and to improve streetscape enhancements such as plantings and landscaping will improve the pedestrian environment along the four core downtown blocks between Oak Street and Walnut Street.

Strategy 5: ***Improve tree planter boxes in sidewalk along Main Street.*** Remove and replace tree planter boxes to reduce potential for damage and/or injury.

Strategy 6: ***Improve existing alleyways to provide a permeable low maintenance surface suitable for inclusive access by pedestrians.*** Install permeable pavers in the alley between Chestnut and Cherry Streets running parallel to and lying between Main and First Streets. Improving the alley surface along with other visual enhancements will create an intimate pedestrian oriented corridor experience that interconnects with the traditional street network yet establishes a pedestrian experience unique to the region. (See *Main Street Catalyst Area 1 Plan* in section 8.4.2.1 of this document.)



Strategy 7: ***Create and “Umbrella Street” environment in selected locations in the core downtown area to establish a colorful shaded outdoor environment limited to pedestrian and essential vehicular traffic only.*** Install cable mounted umbrellas to define an intimate cozy “complete street” with access to Andrews’ Main Street restaurants, bars and specialty shops. Add appropriate lighting and this ‘off-street’ venue comes alive for entertaining both day and night. The Main Street Concept Plan for Catalyst Area 1 suggest the alley between Chestnut and Cherry Streets running parallel to and lying between Main and First Streets as a highly suitable candidate for consideration as Andrews’ ‘Umbrella Street’ or ‘Umbrella Alley’ due to its unique character and charm. This alley already boasts numerous entryways into the Main Street restaurants, bars and shops as well as access to second story residential units. (See *Main Street Catalyst Area 1 Plan* in section 8.4.2.1 of this document.)

5.2.8.2 Objective 2: Increase emphasis on beautification along our commercially focused routes.

Strategy 1: ***Support civic groups such as Garden Club to ensure citizens are motivated to participate in the cumulative effort to beautify Andrews’ business and neighborhood districts.*** Harnessing the energy and enthusiasm of volunteers is often the most productive and cost effective means for beautification initiatives. Civic groups often represent the passion of a community and often only need financial and technical resources. Allocations for project initiatives based upon criteria can be a low cost approach to achieving the desired results. Resources that are not earmarked for specific projects should be limited to small amounts, while project based financial and/or in-kind support can be greater depending on each specific project’s scope. Criteria for allocations must be established to ensure public accountability from funding sources established for this purpose. A loan and/or grant pool to leverage matching investments by businesses and non-profits will enhance appearances and provide funds vital to the community’s overall appeal.

5.2.9 **Goal 9: DRUGS!**

5.2.9.1 **Objective 1: Do something about the drug problem.**

Strategy 1: *Improve aesthetics of Andrews to reflect a community that cares.* Clean-up Andrews' neighborhoods through a combination of nuisance ordinance enforcement and community appearance initiatives that will improve the overall appeal of Andrews. Studies have shown that projecting a positive image contributes to improved self awareness and enhanced levels of community pride that leads to improved self esteem and reduced self degradation.

Strategy 2: *Reduce demand for illicit drugs in Andrews.* Drug traffic passes through the Andrews area along the highway corridor as is evidenced by police investigations. So, while some degree of the drug problem is solely local demand, our location in the regional transportation networks increases the presence of illicit drugs due to trafficking routes. Continuing cooperation among local law enforcement agencies with the state and federal counterparts could ultimately reduce activity along the route through Andrews.

Strategy 3: *Assist Andrews' citizens with alternatives to the influences that lead to drug abuse.* Increases in opportunities for employment and financial security will deter many from experimenting with and exploring the perils of the drug based enterprise and culture. While clearly this is not the only cause, it is one of the causes that a proactive growth strategy will impact.

Strategy 4: *Enhance Andrews' Police Department enforcement role in reducing drug activity.* The current staffing of the Andrews Police Department (APD) only allows one (1) patrol officer to be deployed at any given time so 24-hour coverage can be provided within established budget limitations. The current demands on existing staff restrict officers from performing dedicated investigations, including narcotics, due to their responsibility to be available for "calls for service" and patrol functions. APD officers arrest both drug users and dealers, but only through *Criminal Interdiction Through Traffic Enforcement (CITLE)* tactics. The time, resources, and personnel necessary to conduct major narcotic investigations that result in getting dealers and traffickers off the streets can take months or even years. In the State of North Carolina it takes a "Trafficking" amount of narcotics to secure mandatory prison time. Therefore, efforts by the APD to arrest addicts and low level dealers are undermined by a criminal justice system that returns these offenders to the streets quickly with little or no punishment. In order to have a meaningful effect in curtailing drug abuse, Andrews must take responsibility for the causes of drug related issues. There are socio-economical factors that must be considered such as: males ages 15-18, unemployment, school drop-out rate, single parent households, and poverty rates. When we factor these numbers together they make up what is called the crime measurement index (CMI) and the CMI for Andrews is currently higher than most large urban areas such as Raleigh and Greensboro. It is going to take the community and law enforcement together to bring meaningful change in Andrews.

5.2.10 Goal 10: RAILROAD & AIRPORT EXPANSION & IMPROVEMENTS!

5.2.10.1 Objective 1: Utilize Western Carolina Regional Airport as Economic Development asset.

Strategy 1: *Improve coordination with Cherokee County leadership to establish mutually beneficial inter-local agreement for the provision of infrastructure to the airport and surrounding sites for business growth and expansion.* Establish relationship with Cherokee County leadership to seek an inter-local agreement for municipal water and sewer services to the airport and adjacent business properties and locations. This inter-local agreement should include the preparation of a conceptual development plan for the subject study area and establish criteria for municipal services and incentive offerings. (See section 5.2.1.4 of this document.)

5.2.10.2 Objective 1: Utilize Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (GSMR) as Economic Development asset.

Strategy 1: *Establish communication and coordination with the GSMR and the City of Bryson City to expand the function of the GSMR.* Collaboration between the GSMR, Town of Andrews and City of Bryson City to explore the feasibility of expanding services to Andrews should begin. Actively supporting the Nantahala Gorge adventure tourism industry offers opportunities to reduce automobile traffic through the Gorge, enabling greater numbers of travelers to visit the scenic river, while expanding the services available to travelers in tourism hospitality. Andrews can join Bryson City to serve as a base camp for adventure travelers. (See section 4.3.1.2 of this document.)

Strategy 2: *Preserve the area surrounding the existing railway station in Andrews' downtown area for continued viability as a travel and tourism asset.* Incorporate the functionality of a railroad passenger station into the Main Street Concept Plan for Catalyst Area 1 to preserve the asset for use at a later date. Consideration that railroad assets may become increasingly important to travel and tourism in the future will ensure that Andrews does not make inconsiderate and uninformed decisions about such important assets in the future. Communication with the GSMR and the City of Bryson city will offer important insight as to how best to protect the asset from unintended consequences in the future.

5.2.11 Goal 11: CONTROL GROWTH!

5.2.11.1 Objective 1: Preserve and maintain a desired quality of life defined by the community in this plan.

Strategy 1: *When establishing standards and specifications, carefully balance quality of development with quantity of development.* Often local governments will establish standards and specifications based upon construction of public and private infrastructure and assets to address density, drainage, traffic, etc. What is needed in Andrews is an emphasis on standards and specifications that create opportunity for refreshing existing underutilized developed areas. Today's most vibrant community's have learned that strengthening the core of the community and refreshing the

underutilized existing development, while increasing the return on investment in existing infrastructure first, adds value to a community. Doing the tough part first, the refreshing of a community's core areas enhances values and brings clarity to those very important priorities. Once Andrews is revitalized, then carefully explore the growth potential taking into account the long term obligations and implications of growth. (See section 8 of this document.)

5.2.12 Goal 12: KEEP EVERYBODY HAPPY!

5.2.12.1 Objective 1: Strive for inclusivity in the decisions made by Andrews' leadership.

Strategy 1: ***When establishing standards and specifications, carefully balance inclusivity with functionality.*** Often local governments will establish standards and specifications based upon drainage, traffic, etc. Today's inclusive community will balance those very important priorities with the needs of persons who might have difficulty navigating infrastructure improvements of the built environment. Identify alternatives when functionality and performance are clearly un-necessary. An example might be to reconsider use of conventional curbing with gutter at the highest part of a development site, such as a parking area. Functional alternatives may still require a curb of concrete, but the gutter may be unnecessary allowing for a flat curb along a pavement's edge.

Strategy 2: ***Increase the supply of new and existing housing stock that is accessible to everyone, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.*** Replace antiquated zoning rules with standards and specifications that encourage refreshing dilapidated and redeveloping underutilized properties. The adoption of modern standards and specifications Andrews can increase both new and replacement housing stock that is designed for numerous preferences. Whether its work force housing, tiny house living, apartments, condominiums, retirement housing, or main stream market housing the potential to expand the offerings to be more inclusive can be opened to a broader demographic seeking greater housing choices in Andrews. Establishing mixed use districts where both attached and detached housing opportunities come together with convenient proximity to goods and services such as groceries, restaurants, entertainment and employment opportunities will heighten enthusiasm for living in Andrews. Opportunities for persons seeking lower maintenance lifestyles, whether retiring or just setting out on their own, having diverse housing choices creates interest, and interest creates investment. Andrews' future truly depends upon its approach to standards and specifications for housing in a rapidly changing real estate market of the future. Finding the right balance among these new opportunities will be the remaining task. (See section 5.2.14 of this document.)

Strategy 3: ***Emphasize quality of development over quantity of development in balance with needs and demand.*** In determining parking and other traditional site improvements, continually analyze trends and realistic needs. This approach will allow for quality to overshadow the quantity within the built environment. Reducing parking requirements to modest levels will improve the return on investment for both the public sector and the private sector in Andrews by increasing private development values.

Millennials today drive less, but make more trips through alternative modes (walking, bicycle, ride sharing, etc.) so housing and other forms of new development need not devote as much space to the individual motor vehicle as once was considered the norm. Andrews' current zoning standards require about 1.3 spaces per table for indoor dining, a parking space for every 2 seats in a church, and 1.5 times the parking lot area as floor area for general retail stores. These excessive parking areas are seldom fully utilized and should actually be limited in size with interconnections between new businesses established to allow for a parking space to be used while customers visit multiple adjacent businesses. This approach pays dividends by reducing the number of vehicle trips between destinations, a policy that will entice businesses to shop locally while improving Andrews' eligibility for obtaining funding from state and federal transportation agencies to help bring home fuel taxes collected by those agencies as described in section 6.1.2 of this document. Common sense development standards and specifications are addressed in section 8.5 of this document.

5.2.13 Goal 13: MARKETING!

5.2.13.1 Objective 1: Andrews markets itself, just by being Andrews!

Strategy 1: Establish Andrews' purpose and adopt gateway development standards and specifications to establish a welcome feeling at different access points.

The best way to become relevant in today's rapidly changing environment is to 'be who we are' and to look good doing it. The opportunity for Andrews is to recognize what Andrews represents as a community and to identify the actions required to be great at what we are. Since Andrews is a small mountain community located on a major thoroughfare into the Smoky Mountains region, Andrews' best move is to be a great gateway community that provides its businesses with the supportive policies and initiatives necessary to thrive in this setting. Replacing antiquated zoning rules with relevant standards and specifications in a balanced and fair administrative environment will provide the type of support many proprietors requested during the interviews of summer 2016. These new standards and specifications must address appearances the traveler encounters. Distinctive standards for these important gateway locations can be applied through overlay districts regardless of the underlying zoning of property along the US 74 corridor. Numerous strategies appearing elsewhere in this plan are designed to improve the functionality of these gateways and include special signage to promote local businesses as well as way-finding to direct travelers to specific services in Andrews. Whether its dining or automotive repair, these are all opportunities for the betterment of our community and for defining who we are and how well we do these things.

[Andrews Internal Medicine](#) is located at the eastern gateway into Andrews. This highly attractive facility is an example of how well-designed development can improve the appearance of the Andrews community as a whole and serve as a landmark beacon for the traveling public. Establishing standards, which ensure investments like this are not undermined by poorly developed properties that reduce the value of surrounding investment, are vital to the future of Andrews.

5.2.14 Goal 14: PLANNING FOR ALL AGE GROUPS!

5.2.14.1 Objective 1: Create an age-friendly community that allows for residents to age-in-place and achieve AARP designation.

Strategy 1: *Expand healthcare facilities in the Andrews-Murphy region to accommodate the aging Baby Boomer population.* Presently, the Town has a County-managed health clinic with limited services and hours of availability. An expanded medical presence, particularly for services catering to older adults, could attract more retirees to the Town.

Strategy 2: *Increase the supply of new and existing housing stock that is accessible to everyone, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.* Replace antiquated zoning rules with standards and specifications that encourage refreshing dilapidated and redeveloping underutilized properties. The adoption of modern standards and specifications Andrews can increase both new and replacement housing stock that is designed for numerous preferences. Whether its work force housing, tiny house living, apartments, condominiums, retirement housing, or main stream market housing the potential to expand the offerings to be more inclusive serves those seeking greater housing choices. Establishing mixed use districts where both attached and detached housing opportunities come together with convenient proximity to goods and services such as groceries, restaurants, entertainment and employment opportunities will heighten enthusiasm for living in Andrews. Opportunities for persons seeking lower maintenance lifestyles, whether retiring or just setting out on their own, having diverse housing choices creates interest, and interest creates investment. Andrews' future truly depends upon its approach to standards and specifications for housing in a rapidly changing real estate market of the future. Finding the right balance among these new opportunities will be the remaining task. (See section 5.2.12 of this document.)

5.2.15 Goal 15: MORE MANUFACTURING!

5.2.15.1 Objective 1: Expand the economic base.

Strategy 1: *Create opportunities for reuse of existing manufacturing space.* The economic base of Andrews has dispersed into numerous smaller sectors that in many cases extend beyond the borders of the Town. In order for Andrews to thrive once again it must reestablish an economic base. As described in section 6.1.3 of this document, establishing a solid economic base is very important and the best way to accomplish this is to diversify between manufacturing, tourism and commercial services. Seeking new opportunities, as described in sections 6.5 and 6.6 of this document, are vitally important; however, support to help retain businesses we already have is even more important. Agricultural production and related businesses such as the trout processing, are vital to establishing a base that can be expanded.

5.2.16 Goal 16: CREATING COMMUNITY AMONGST BUSINESS!

5.2.16.1 Objective 1: Businesses supporting other businesses in Andrews.

Strategy 1: ***Local businesses supporting and referring other local businesses in Andrews to “keep it local!”*** The local chamber of commerce encourages local businesses to support and encourage support for other local businesses by seeking local resources when they make purchases or by referring other local businesses when they cannot serve the needs of a customer. Both of these are mutually beneficial and lead to a win-win for Andrews’s business proprietors. However, not all businesses are members of organizations like the chamber of commerce, so promoting this type of local support for other proprietors can be challenging.

Strategy 2: ***Leadership, both elected and self appointed among the business and civic community must reinforce the self promotion message continuously.*** The “shop local” signs appearing in several Andrews’ business location windows are the perfect reminder for local proprietors to support each other for the benefit of Andrews. Encouraging this behavior is more of a challenge. The Town can set this tone in the promotion of Andrews by reinforcing this important message in its media outlets and during community events and promotions. Putting Andrews first is only sensible when it comes to the success of the local business community.

Strategy 3: ***Participating in civic events whenever possible.*** Participation in civic events can help each proprietor reduce their respective cost by increasing participation in events like the cruise-in, annual Christmas parade, Harvest Festival, Christmas on Main, and other community events held throughout the year. Greater levels of local business participation lower the cost per proprietor and improve the benefit for the participants.

5.2.17 Goal 17: INVESTMENT IN YOUTH!

5.2.17.1 Objective 1: Provide healthy opportunities and facilities for recreational, educational and interesting experiences to support a happy and safe childhood.

Strategy 1: ***Partner with Cherokee County to replace the swimming pool facility with an inclusive innovative facility to excite and invite all ages and abilities to participate in swimming for both recreation and exercise.*** Replace the existing swimming pool with a new facility providing zero-entry access, water features, lap pool lanes, and social space within the pool.

Strategy 2: ***Provide a safe environment where students gather to pursue information, perform research, education, recreation and development of creative development.*** Expand library space to provide adequate facilities that include community gathering space.

Strategy 3: ***Refresh Ferebee Park.*** Secure funding and designs for refreshing the park with new facilities. Design must be inclusive of multi-generational and persons with mobility challenges.

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6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Historically, the Town of Andrews has developed due to the railroad, in relation to the tanning, logging, and agricultural industry. During the mid-20th century, manufacturing became a major employer and economic driver for the Andrews economy. Once the shift away from tanning, logging, and manufacturing occurred, Andrews' biggest industry was based upon agriculture and trout processing.

The local commercial service sector remains intact following the departure of many jobs due to off-shore incentives. Since the Great Recession the local commercial services economy has not fully rebounded; however, it does show signs of improvement. Cross-over industry, such as beer and wine making has created some vibrancy due to the local context of these businesses. As home to two wineries and two breweries, Andrews is far ahead of most towns our size.

The strategic location of Andrews, however, remains strong with transportation and utility infrastructure to support refreshing and revitalizing growth within the Southwestern North Carolina region in the commercial services, eco-tourism and manufacturing sectors.

In the future economies Andrews must position itself to become relevant once again. Andrews' leadership should learn from the neighboring communities to avoid making costly mistakes. Stated succinctly by an Andrews Planning Board member "Well the wealth creators and those that follow and serve them are tiring of the mega-mess they live in and are heading our way; first as tourists, then as second-home builders, and finally as internet commuters and re-locators." *Bob Ferreira 2016*

6.1 Why focus on Economic Development

Economic Development is critical to a community for two reasons. First to provide an employment and income base for the community and second to enable a community's leadership to maintain the lowest reasonable rates for its utility rate payers and tax payers.

Effective Economic Development starts with the latter. Prudent management of processes and procedures for the efficient and effective operations of both utility enterprises and tax revenue systems will ensure that all money due to the Town is collected. Effective collection allows leadership to establish and maintain the lowest responsible rates for all rate payers and taxpayers.

6.1.1 Utility Rates

Achieving low utility rates always begins with proper maintenance and operations of utilities while carefully managing the expansion of such systems. Maintenance of existing systems should emphasize quality control to eliminate leaks, account for water and wastewater usage and avoid contamination. Placing an emphasis on these important factors will provide one way of improving the return on the investment by the Town and its rate payers.

Another important approach to improving the return on investment is to carefully manage the growth and expansion of the system. Extensions should be prudently studied and examined to determine the effective advantages to the current rate payers

of such expansion and ensure sound decision making. Extensions without annexation may increase utility revenue, but at the same time may expose the in-town rate payer, and tax payer, to financial obligations while the benefactor of the extension shares little or no risk in the cost of the extension. Exceptions should only be considered when public health is at risk and annexation is not eligible; therefore, obtaining a voluntary petition for annexation to be held until eligibility is attained can protect the Town, its rate payers and taxpayers.

A third important factor in increasing the return on investment of the utility enterprises is to encourage infill development and redevelopment. Under-developed and under-utilized areas of existing development within the Town can increase the return on investment in existing infrastructure and contribute greatly to reducing utility and property tax rates.

6.1.2 Property Tax Strategy and Other Taxes Collected

The maintenance of low property (ad valorem) tax rates always begins with the prudent and effective management of reporting and collecting the other revenue sources towns receive in order to reduce reliance on property taxes. Emphasis on effective data reporting enables the retrieval of several types of taxes already paid by our citizens and businesses every day that can easily be overlooked in the absence of effective reporting practices.

The Utility Franchise Tax is a 3.09 percent tax on utility billings collected by electric, gas, telecommunications and cable television companies that is distributed back to the Town by the respective utility. If the utility companies do not have current information reflecting the Town's boundaries, then inaccurate reporting to the state by the utility company results in reduced distributions to the Town by the State.

Another tax already paid by the taxpayer daily is the state tax on motor vehicle fuels, commonly known as the Powell Bill. The state distributes this tax to towns based upon a combination of population and street mileage maintained by the town. As towns grow their street networks by accepting new subdivision streets for town maintenance, the Powell Bill data reporting must keep pace. Immediately upon completion of new streets, the Town should update its Powell Bill information during the next reporting cycle so the Town begins bringing that revenue, already paid by the taxpayer, back to Andrews to increase the funding available for maintenance. A new street may retrieve significant revenues over time before any repair cost are experienced.

State sales tax distributions to the Town are controlled by the County. The sales taxes collected and redistributed within a county may return to the Town by either population or property valuation based formulas - determined by the County Commissioners. This system is a counter-productive system in that counties often compete with towns for growth so they may keep a larger share of sales tax distributions to be shared locally. The only effective role a town may have in successfully growing its recovery of the sales tax collected by local businesses, is through the careful management of the utility enterprises. Provision of water and sewer has a profound effect on the location of businesses and towns that manage their systems with an emphasis on return on

investment can improve their share of local sales tax recovered by supporting growth within the boundaries of the town.

Property taxes are the major source of local discretionary funding for routine services such as recreation, sanitation, public safety and administration. Maximizing the recovery of the taxes already collected by the state can reduce the level of taxation required of property owners.

6.1.3 Jobs and Economic Base

The Economic Base of a community is the collective group of business activities that bring money into the Town by providing a product or service. Corporate manufacturing and tourism have traditionally been the top sectors bringing money into Andrews. The non-basic sectors are typically that part of the local economy providing services and products sought by the basic sector workers and others, such as the dry cleaners, pharmacy, grocery store and repair service businesses. When tourism is part of the economic base, many businesses serve both purposes; restaurants are a good example because they serve both local and non-local customers routinely. Hotels and other hospitality businesses serve both the tourism and corporate sector of our economic base.

The economic base establishes a true purpose for the community. The jobs created by the basic sector businesses are the obvious direct benefit of the economic base. Jobs are critical because much of the impact of the economic base depends on how well money is distributed throughout the community, and jobs are the primary method of distribution. Automation tends to allow economic activity to skim over the surface of a community and not have as deep an impact. One way to maximize a positive economic impact of the local economic base sector business community is to establish local relationships with companies and enterprises to provide as much local support and local resources as possible to increase distributions of wealth locally. A great example of this approach is the reliance on local talent and resources by the Hawkesdene resort located in the mountains nearby but reliant on Andrews' people for the services provided up there.

Increases in the value of local properties by infill development and redevelopment of under-utilized areas help lower property taxes for all taxpayers further improving the local return on the investments made in existing infrastructure (*see Section 6.1.2 of this document*).

6.2 Current Economic Profile - Conventional Sectors

6.2.1 Agriculture

The agricultural sector of Andrews' area economy has remained relatively strong, making up about seven percent of industry. (*See Table 3.5.1 in section 3 of this document*)

Green infrastructure industry includes greenway development, working farms and forests, as well as wild/scenic waterways. These industries relate directly to the recent Andrews Valley Initiative branding vision for the Town as the 'Living Laboratory for

Sustainable Agriculture,' also included in a 2009 design process for the Gateway Project. With continued investment and strength in these industries, this sector will likely grow to support Andrews as a unique and 'green' Town. The proposed re-write of the Town's zoning ordinance will exempt "bona fide farms" as defined in NCGS 153A-340 from regulation.

Additional agriculture based business sectors include numerous ventures such as the trout production, vineyard and micro-brewery enterprises active in and around Andrews. Micro-breweries such as **Andrews Brewing Company**, and **Hoppy Trout**; or, vintners (wine producers) such as **Calaboose Cellars** and **Fern Crest Winery** source local ingredients either from their own land or from other local growers.

Carolina Mountain Rainbow Trout Processing sources live trout from surrounding trout hatcheries. North Carolina ranks 2nd in the nation in the total value of farm-raised trout sold and distributed ([NASS, 2015](#)), with the vast majority produced in Western North Carolina. While several trout farming operations exist in the immediate vicinity and Carolina Mountain Rainbow Trout Processing located in Andrews has established its self as the leader in quality fresh trout products distributed widely, there are additional opportunities for growth in this sector. Growth opportunities in processing beyond traditional products such as fillets, butterfly, head-on and other popular fresh trout products include jerky, cake, dips, and nuggets which utilize both larger and smaller fish to maximize yield and minimize waste. These value-added and vertical integrations of the industry offer opportunities to expand the trout industry.

6.2.2 Commercial Services & Tourism (Hospitality)

The top two occupation groups are "service occupations" and the "management, business, science, and arts occupations", making up about 60 percent of the total employment in Andrews. The top industries are the "arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation, and food services"; and the "retail trade", making up 34 percent of the total industry. (See Table 3.5.1 in section 3 of this document)

These occupation groups and industries are all commercial in nature and show that the commercial sector is not only the key to Andrews' success, but these sectors will flourish when given the proper business climate and innovative options to attract attention. The updating of local zoning regulations, as discussed in section 8, will improve the business community's options for innovative development.

A healthy commercial services sector is critical to supporting a strong tourism industry; therefore, practical standards and specifications such as zoning rules and non-residential property maintenance codes must be updated to support the sector. Standards and specifications must be updated to protect property rights while establishing reasonable standards for enhancing the appearance of all new development and redevelopment. Equally important to updating the Andrews' ordinances is the establishment of professional administration to ensure equal and fair treatment to all Andrews' businesses and citizens. Proper implementation will enhance these industries and occupations, allowing them to become more prosperous.

6.2.3 Manufacturing

Manufacturing has been a large industry for Andrews' historic growth. While the tanning and logging industries have faded, manufacturing remains a steady sector in Andrews' area economy at 13 percent. *(See Table 3.5.1 in section 3 of this document)*

A challenge has been encouraging new manufacturing sectors to locate and grow in this area. However, with the connection to regional highway, rail and airport transportation while supported by local utility systems, Andrews presents a great opportunity for the environmentally sensitive manufacturing companies, especially in the emerging 'green', 3-D, food products, and advanced manufacturing sub-sectors.

6.3 Importance of the Infrastructure Networks

Infrastructure, including water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, high-speed internet, roads, railroads, and airports make up the core infrastructure for a community. These networks often seem unrelated; however, without careful coordination between these unique systems can result in poor decisions regarding land use development.

Municipal utilities such as water, stormwater, sewer, streets, sidewalks and greenways generally represent the majority of hard structure utilities. These utilities generally are based upon the network of streets and roads.

Non-municipal services such as electric, telecommunications, natural gas and broad-band fiber (existing 80 GB to be expanded to 100GB in downtown area in 2017) generally utilize flexible conduits for their conveyances. These service providers are typically located within or adjacent to public street and road right-of-way; therefore, utilizing much of the same network for distribution.

Coordination among these various service providers, as well as other municipal counterparts such as the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Town of Murphy and the Marble Community Water Systems, is also vital to efficient operations of Andrews' utilities and public works functions. Conducting periodic meetings to review planned improvements and proposed developments by private development interests can often improve the level of service to all Andrews' businesses and citizens by identifying opportunities for cost savings through coordination. Inclusion of representatives of these various agencies on a local technical review committee coordinated by the Town's professional planning department meeting at least quarterly will reduce cost to Andrews' rate and tax payers.

Examples of cooperative initiatives may include provision of services for manufacturing facilities where dual feed electrical supply, water, sewer and a host of other functions can be coordinated ahead of time to ensure appropriate capacity and corridor limitations are foreseen. Projects to consider should be evaluated on the basis of merit to the Town's utility rate and tax payers.

Projects considered for participation should require annexation to obtain services provided by the Town. The exception may be water services to rural residential housing; however, these properties are subject to out-of-town rates.

6.4 Existing Business Retention & Expansion

The local commercial service sector remains intact following the departure of many manufacturing jobs due to off-shore incentives such as the NAFTA. Since the Great Recession the local economy has not fully rebounded; however, does show signs of improvement.

As home to two wineries and two breweries, Andrews is far ahead of most towns our size. These cross-over businesses function in both the manufacturing and hospitality arena of the commercial services sectors. Based upon interviews with the proprietors of these local businesses, these entrepreneurs are distributing regionally and serving locally through restaurants, tap rooms, and tasting rooms. The traffic counts along US 19 & 74 along with Andrews' role as a local hub in Southwestern North Carolina account for these disproportionately higher than normal business activities.

Commercial retail and service activity appears to be a popular accompaniment to the hospitality businesses described above. Specialty shops, salons, and services are active along the core four-block section of Main Street between Walnut and Oak streets. These blocks are relatively stable with only one block of depressed occupancy and building conditions.

Andrews is ideally located to be a commercial services hub for Western North Carolina. Proximity to vast public lands and natural features may attract tourism outside of town, but the provision of services within easy access of these tourists will provide a purpose. Diverse businesses including resilient job creators and rural markets, supplemented by small industry, craftsmanship, and artistic endeavors (both for-profit and non-profit) will be required if Andrews is to refresh its local purpose in the region.

6.5 Tourism, Travel & Hospitality

As can be seen from the stakeholder interviews, there is a broad support for both a tourism based and non-tourism based economy. This division among members of the community actually can be very beneficial. Division leads to cautious approaches and cautious approaches to economic development leads us to a diverse economic base drawing upon both a traditional (manufacturing, research & development, etc.) and non-traditional (tourism, liberal arts, entertainment, etc.) economic base.

A traditional economic base derives income from the export of goods to other regions in exchange for income that will be distributed into the local economy through wages, supply purchases, taxes and other means. A non-traditional economic base, such as tourism, relies upon income from visitors to the area that will spend money in many of the same businesses skipping the primary employer and going directly to the commercial service sector. This form of economic base is considered more vulnerable to a wider variety of factors such as weather, emotions, politics, and fluctuations in the overall basic manufacturing sector in general. This does make the non-basic sector somewhat more un-predictable and vulnerable than the basic sector.

Projects that enhance the tourism experience in the downtown or other local attractions should be considered and programmed into capital budgets over time to stimulate a continuation of new investment (both public and private) for the ever-changing tourism based industry.

Examples of projects include enhancements to the alley between Cherry and Chestnut streets to entice occupancy of existing and potentially renovated buildings in the downtown that have been underutilized in recent years. These enhancements should include improved alley surface with brick or paver materials, relocation of overhead power lines to underground service, installation of overhead themes to create vibrancy and limit sun-light in pedestrian areas, and the installation of residential street lights to effectively light the corridor at night while limiting excessive lighting of the valley floor.

6.5.1 Heritage Tourism

Heritage Tourism is defined by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as “traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources.” It is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism and hospitality industry overall, and a major focus of the [State of North Carolina’s tourism promotion](#) efforts.

The Town of Andrews is located within the [Blue Ridge National Heritage Area](#) (BRNHA), a 25-county region in western North Carolina. The BRNHA was designated by Congress in 2003 to recognize the unique character, culture, and natural beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the region’s significance to the nation’s history. The BRNHA commissioned a [2014 study](#) that concluded heritage tourism’s contribution to the regional economy totals \$2.39 billion annually, supporting more than 30,000 jobs and generating \$176.5 million in state and local tax revenue. Heritage tourism also supports the conservation and sustainability of the region’s parks, forests, waterways, historic sites, and cultural traditions. The “Homegrown, Home Spun, & Handmade” initiative is an example of how integrating local initiatives with established resources such as the [John C. Campbell Folk School](#) is impacting the growth of Heritage Tourism locally.

Opportunities for growth in the Heritage Tourism segment include businesses that provide support services for artists and craftspeople ranging from tool and musical instrument repair, wholesale, retail, and distribution of specialty materials used in the creative arts (weaving, basket-making, blacksmithing, pottery, woodworking, etc.), and services provided to residents and tourists such as demonstrations, guided tours, private lessons, and programming for public institutions and private and non-profit entities.

6.5.2 Recreation and Parks/Eco-Tourism

Andrews is conveniently located in close proximity to recreational amenities in Western North Carolina, Southeastern Tennessee, and Northeastern Georgia. Local attractions, appearing in alphabetical order, include:

- Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness Area
- Lake Hiwassee
- Lake Nantahala
- Lake Santeetlah
- Nantahala River
- Tail of the Dragon
- Tsali Equestrian and Mountain Biking

6.5.2.1 Automobile Touring (Motoring/Automobiling)

The region is already known for its sports car travelers enjoying beautiful back road byways. The Cherohala Skyway [NC route 143 & TN route 165] offers 43 miles of scenic byway across the Unicoi Mountains to Tennessee, and the infamous “Tail of the Dragon” [US 129] features 311 curves in only 11 miles are within 45 minutes making Andrews well suited to host and entertain visitors to these iconic touring routes.

Opportunities include support for growth and expansion of existing business serving the motoring tourist with overnight and seasonal housing accommodations, base camp facilities, extended vehicle parking, outfitters, outpatient medical services, automotive services/repairs, and food/beverage services located within close proximity to one another.

6.5.2.2 Bicycling

The Andrews community provides numerous alternatives to both the [recreational and serious cyclist](#). The [recreational and lifestyle cyclist](#) will find Andrews very accommodating due to its relatively flat valley floor location. Bicycle use for local in-town transportation is easily accommodated on the local streets. The recreational cyclist will find the “Tale of the Newt” route easy to moderately challenging and wonderfully scenic. The serious on-road cyclist will find the numerous secondary routes offering a wide variety of routes to satisfy the enthusiast. Off road cyclists will find the designated trails located within a 30 minute drive east to Tsali very rewarding with trails for all skill levels.

North Carolina State Bike Route 2, the [Mountains to Sea](#) route, begins in downtown Murphy. This on-road bike route connects Murphy to Macon County via US Highway 64, NC Highway 141, US Highway 19 passing through Andrews along Main Street, and Junaluska Road. The route does not include bike paths or lanes; it is simply a designated route.

Promotion of Andrews as a host community and base camp for individuals and groups seeking access to a variety of food/beverage choices clearly sets Andrews apart from other communities catering to these visitors.

Opportunities include business serving the bicycle tourist with overnight and seasonal housing accommodations, base camp facilities, extended vehicle parking, outfitters/service/repair, outpatient medical services, automotive services/repairs, and food/beverage services located within close proximity to one another.

6.5.2.3 Camping

Camp grounds are currently available within 20-30 minutes of Andrews and vary from primitive to fully-supported with convenience and sanitary hook-ups.

Current public locations include the Appletree, Cheoah Point, Horse Cove, Rattler Ford, and Tsali. Private campgrounds are also located within the Nantahala Gorge area to the east and in both Murphy and Haysville to the southwest.

Opportunities include the development of local commercial campgrounds to full-fill the need to locate facilities close to other support services desired by the adventure tourist.

6.5.2.4 Equestrian Trails (Horseback Riding)

The Rim Trail, in conjunction with the Bald springs [Forest Service Trail 78], Huskins Branch [Forest Service Trail 385], Little fires Creek [Forest Service Trail 386], Rockhouse Creek [Forest Service Trail 387], Phillips Ridge [Forest Service Trail 388], Far Bald Springs [Forest Service Trail 389], Shortoff [Forest Service Trail 631], Carroll Knob [Forest Service Trail 632], and Ammon Knob [Forest Service Trail 633] trails offer horseback riding opportunities with majestic views of Valley River Mountains and the Tusquitee Mountains, Snowbird Mountains, Andrews Valley and beyond. This network provides approximately 30 miles of loop trails when combined with equestrian friendly roads.

Opportunities to offer amenities to support equestrian visitors may include a local campground, extended parking, outfitter/tack, and a food market.

6.5.2.5 Angling (Fishing)

Seven area lakes offer 30,000 acres of water to fish by boat with hundreds of miles of trout streams for wading surround Andrews. The Valley River running through Andrews is proposed for designation as a “catch & release” stream. [Trout Unlimited](#) has recognized the Valley River within the Andrews Valley Service Area for its out-standing conditions from October-March and general year-round enjoyment.

Opportunity for Andrews centers on establishing collaboration with regional, national and international guide services to establish Andrews as a base camp for outdoor adventurers. Additional opportunities may include overnight and seasonal housing accommodations, base camp facilities, shuttles, overflow parking, outfitters, outpatient medical services, automotive services/repairs, and food/beverage services located within close proximity to one another.

6.5.2.6 Great Smoky Mountains Railroad

Currently excursions of varying lengths on one of the most scenic railways in the U.S. offer stunning views and a one of a kind rail travel experience from the Bryson City station to points west. This railroad attraction runs along the rail corridor once serving the Town of Andrews and connecting both Murphy and Andrews to points east including Bryson City, Sylva and Asheville.

The viability of this railroad service connecting Bryson City to Andrews must be considered when evaluating local projects and their impact on infrastructure. Increasing the opportunities to host tourism oriented services including campgrounds, scenic views and adventure activities will improve the [viability and potential](#) for a return of rail service. *Also see sections 4.3.1.2, 5.2.1.3 and 7.2.2 appearing in this document.*

6.5.2.7 Hiking

The Nantahala National Forest, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and other nearby natural areas offer hundreds, even thousands of miles of trails, from easy to extremely challenging.

Immediately south of Andrews is the Rim Trail [Forest Service Trail 72] connecting to the Chunky Gal Trail [Forest Service Trail 77] which connects to the famed Appalachian Trail in less than 22 miles. The Appalachian Trail connects to the Bartram Trail [Forest Service Trail 67 Section 7] leading to nearby parking and access at the launch site for the Nantahala River on US 19 & 74. Opportunities to create access directly from Andrews to

the Rim Trail, and its connecting network of trails, should be identified in the vicinity of Phillips Creek Road. Acquisition of a site and construction of a trail head parking area should be undertaken to establish Andrews as a destination for hikers.

Other amenities may include a local hostel, extended parking, outfitter, and a food market.

6.5.2.8 Motorcycling

The region is already known for its motorcycling quality by the hundreds of thousands of riders enjoying beautiful back roads and byways annually. The [Cherohala Skyway](#) [NC route 143 & TN route 165] offers 43 miles of scenic byway across the Unicoi Mountains to Tennessee, and the infamous [“Tail of the Dragon”](#) [US 129] features 318 curves in only 11 miles are within 40-45 minutes making Andrews well suited to host and entertain visitors to these iconic motorcycle routes. Adventure Cyclist and Overlanders will find the area ripe with opportunity as local un-paved routes such as Tatham Gap connects to Robbinsville and the nearby [Trans-America Trail \(TAT\)](#) reaching coast to coast for over 5,000 miles using dirt roads, gravel roads, jeep roads, forest roads and farm roads. The TAT is an overland route including dried-up creek beds, abandoned railroad grades, and sections of mud, sand, snow and rocks.

Opportunities include support for growth and expansion of existing business serving the motorcycle and adventure tourist with overnight and seasonal housing accommodations, base camp facilities, extended vehicle parking, outfitters, outpatient medical services, automotive services/repairs, and food/beverage services located within close proximity to one another.

6.5.2.9 National Forests and Parks

The magnificent Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness and Joyce Kilmer Memorial virgin forest is one of the nation’s most impressive remnants of old growth forest. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park offers over 500,000 acres of protected lands to explore and enjoy. These nearby destinations attract significant numbers of visitors annually and help drive the Eco-tourism economy of western north Carolina.

Opportunities include support for growth of the tourism based businesses whose presence in communities such as Andrews supports the quality of the experience tourists enjoy when traveling to and from these destinations.

6.5.2.10 Whitewater Sports

The nearby Nantahala River offers world class kayaking and rafting, while other nearby rivers and creeks, such as Deep Creek, offer opportunities for canoeing or tubing.



Opportunities for Andrews include collaboration with river adventure outfitters such as the nation’s largest whitewater rafting company [Nantahala Outdoor Center](#) (NOC) located at the intersection of the Nantahala River and the Appalachian Trail in the Wesser community along US 19 & 74 eighteen (18) miles east of Andrews, and the numerous other river

Photo by Knewt downloaded from Google Earth

adventure outfitters based within a few miles of the NOC. Collaborations may include overnight and seasonal housing accommodations, base camp facilities, shuttles, overflow parking, outfitters, outpatient medical services, automotive services/repairs, and food/beverage services located within close proximity to one another.

6.6 Manufacturing

Local government, both municipal and county, leadership boards traditionally feel an obligation to emphasize traditional manufacturing; however, traditional manufacturing may only be a small part of the future economy of Andrews and most other small towns.

Technological innovation and globalism are fueling transformational change in both our cultural and business environments. An increasingly mobile workforce is utilizing digital, web-based technology – the ubiquitous ‘mobile app’ – that enables a business owner or employee to work from anywhere. Many jobs are no longer tied to a specific location. Anyone with a Smartphone and an idea can become an entrepreneur.

Opportunities for Andrews in this new economic realm are directly related to the ‘quality of place’ issues that are explored throughout this Town Plan, while remaining focused on tourism, crafts, and other natural resource-based sectors described elsewhere in this Plan. When employers, innovators and entrepreneurs can choose to live and work anywhere, it is quality of place – in addition to the basics of infrastructure and support services – that is often the deciding factor.

Andrews has the attributes to successfully compete in this age of global commerce. The Town can glean from other proven economic development strategies and build its foundation by retaining young talent and attracting innovators from the greater region and around the country.

Traditional manufacturing such as woven yarns, as produced by Andrew’s own Morning Star Fiber, blends traditional manufacturing with forward thinking values of naturally sourced and locally produced materials to produce tangible goods for a value added industry.

While these traditional opportunities do exist, Andrews must recognize there are also pit falls to placing all hope on ‘traditional industry’ – a sector that may inevitably employ humans to manage facilities that are designed for a specific level and duration of productivity. The reality is that smaller facilities are often the disposable ones. Larger facilities require a larger investment and typically are considered long-term commitments.

In this context, Andrews must recognize its place in the region, the country and the globe. The reality for Andrews will require support for a “rural community plan”. Recognizing these realities and our need to look at new kinds of economies, such as the GIG Economy, the app-based economy and the share economy Andrews can and will meet the future. In the words of one Planning Board member *“We don’t need to bow to traditional manufacturing; after all, it only came to rural America for cheap labor and government incentives. It left us looking for cheaper labor and cheap ocean transportation. If it does come back, this time it will be looking for a sane environment to house its high paid computer geeks that will be writing programs for*

their robots who will be their laborers. We will have the plan and we will be ready for them.”
Bob Ferreira 2016

6.6.1 Economic Transformation

As stated above, technological innovation and globalism are fueling transformational change in the cultural and business environment. An increasingly mobile workforce is utilizing digital, web-based technology – the ubiquitous ‘mobile app’ – that enables a business owner or employee to work from anywhere. Jobs are no longer tied to a specific location. Anyone with a Smartphone and an idea can become an entrepreneur.

Opportunities for Andrews in this new economic realm are directly related to the ‘quality of place’ issues that are explored throughout this Plan, while remaining focused on tourism, crafts, and other natural resource-based sectors described elsewhere in this Plan. When employers, innovators and entrepreneurs can choose to live and work anywhere, it is quality of place – in addition to the basics of infrastructure and support services – that is often the deciding factor.

Andrews has the attributes to successfully compete in this age of global commerce. The Town can glean from other proven economic development strategies and build its foundation by retaining young talent and attracting innovators from the greater region and around the country.

6.6.1.1 APP Based Economy

The ‘app-based’ economy isn’t just creating a new digital platform for freelance work. It is spawning a host of new economic activity. For example, more than a million ‘makers’ sell jewelry, clothing, craft supplies and tools, and all manner of home goods and accessories through the online marketplace [Etsy](#).

6.6.1.2 SHARING (or SHARE) Economy

The well-known lodging website [AirBnB](#) and similar accommodation platforms such as [Love Home Swap](#) and [onefinestay](#) have close to a million ‘hosts’ in nearly 200 countries. [Uber](#) & [Lyft](#), two other mainstays in the emergent realm of ‘crowd-based capitalism’, are transforming how we think about transportation. Uber, which started with four people around a desk and two cars on the streets of San Francisco, is a global phenomenon, serving over 300 cities on six continents with well over 1,000,000 drivers.

6.6.1.3 GIG Economy

The GIG economy is part of a shifting cultural and business environment fueled by technological innovation and globalism. An increasingly mobile workforce is utilizing digital, web-based technology that enables employees to work from anywhere, so that jobs are no longer tied to a specific location. Companies such as Uber, Lyft, and AirBnB are examples of this emergent realm.

The workforce of this new ‘gig’ economy largely consists of freelance ‘independent contractors’ who can select among temporary jobs, referred to as ‘gigs’ (hence the term), and short-term projects from anywhere in the world. Likewise, employers can select the best individuals for specific projects from a ‘global’ labor pool and are no longer confined to any given area.

Opportunities for Andrews in the GIG Economy are directly related to the ‘quality of place’ issues that are explored throughout this Plan.

6.7 Economic Development Opportunities

Several opportunities exist for Andrews to re-establish a strong economic base. The following topics focus on first steps for advancing in the ‘21st Century’.

6.7.1 Innovation Districts

Innovation Districts are an outgrowth of the culture and technology driving today’s economic transformation. Instead of focusing economic development efforts on isolated campuses or business parks, Innovation Districts focus on clustering start-ups and incubators in compact, amenity-rich areas (i.e., walkable downtowns, mixed use districts, etc.) where a mix of entrepreneurs work in collaborative spaces and share knowledge and resources (a staple of the ‘Shared Economy’). Existing incentive programs would be paired with a partnership of ‘innovation cultivators’ – the companies, organizations, and other groups that support the growth of individuals, firms, and their ideas. They include incubators, small business and technology development centers, community colleges, local high schools, job training firms and others advancing specific skill sets for the innovation-driven economy. Such a District for the Town of Andrews would focus on two areas of Andrews. The first and initial focus should be a downtown ‘cluster’ of existing businesses utilizing available properties, beginning with development of a single ‘innovation space’, or business incubator. Another ‘cluster’ opportunity resides in the west end commercial district in the vicinity of the former hospital location at Main Street and Whitaker Lane where infill development in the form of unique and varied housing choices in close proximity to available manufacturing space and antiquated commercial properties await re-purposing and redevelopment. A third opportunity north of the 4-lane in the former Bear Ridge Mall property offers additional capacity for a ‘cluster’ of unique and interesting housing with new construction to complement the downtown and west-end ‘clusters’.

6.7.2 Home-based Businesses

Technological innovations make it imperative to re-examine and update zoning provisions that limit or prohibit work at home. The Town should analyze the content and impact of existing regulations with an attitude toward implementation and enforcement that encourages entrepreneurship, creativity, and individual expression while protecting neighborhood residential character.

6.7.3 Small Business Incubator

The Town should explore the necessary public and private partnerships (Southwestern Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Tri-County Community College, downtown property owners, etc.) and funding sources to plan and develop business incubators in both the downtown and available manufacturing space. The incubator’s mission would be to recruit, develop, and stimulate entrepreneurial talent in the Valley region in order to foster economic growth, strengthen and diversify the local economy, and create new jobs. For example, a partnership-funded non-profit organization would lease (or own) and renovate a downtown building that provides support services such as high speed

internet, utilities, reception, and security, along with amenities like audio-visual equipment, conference rooms, and distance-learning capability. A collaborative effort with the community college could offer support systems such as business plan and marketing strategy development, technical assistance, funding proposal preparation, and more.

6.7.4 Collaboration & Regional Partners

Economic development has been a major element of regional initiatives in recent years. The *Region A Toolbox – A Pilot of the Mountain Landscapes Initiative* was completed in 2008 and included an overview of regional economic sectors and their influencing factors. The Southwestern Commission’s *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* (CEDS) was updated in September 2012, and its federal and state-funded initiative *Opt-In – Regional Vision* concluded in November 2014. All contain a host of economic development strategies to achieve the goals of job creation, talent retention, and entrepreneurship. The Town should take a leadership role in implementing those strategies that will help the community benefit from its world-class natural and cultural resources by tapping the technological potential of the 21st century economy, opening Andrews and the region to the global marketplace.

6.8 Economic Development *ACTION ITEMS!*

The economic development opportunities Andrews enjoys clearly fit into three categories. These are described as “Immediate”, “Programmable” and “Opportunity”.

6.8.1 Immediate Action Items:

The following immediate action items should be prioritized to accomplish in earnest. These items are intended to begin producing immediate results and improve the personality of Andrews as a community addressing its goals.

6.8.1.1 Eliminate obstacles to the goals set by the Town in this plan.

Clearly identify opportunities and obstacles within new local zoning policies to encourage an adventure tourism destination area located within the core Main Street district. Ensure walkable options for adventure tourist requiring flexible alternatives. Establish clear signage standards to alleviate clutter and establish fairness among businesses. Establish opportunistic standards for business types in manufacturing, commercial service and home based business sectors to stimulate opportunity while establishing specifications for development to protect these investments, neighborhoods and the environment as mutual benefactors. Regulations must be evaluated to support additional action items below.

6.8.1.2 Promote Andrews as a “base camp” for adventure travelers.

Promotion of Andrews as a host community and base camp for individuals and groups seeking access to a variety of food/beverage choices clearly sets Andrews apart from other communities catering to these visitors.

6.8.1.3 Promote Andrews as a location for modern manufacturing mated with a rural adventure lifestyle.

Promote Andrews as a community for entrepreneurs of forward thinking business enterprises seeking both a rural community and adventure lifestyle setting. Locations

for manufacturing within the “proving grounds” essential to validating products should also be promoted when marketing Andrews. “Certified sites” listed with the [NC Department of Commerce](#) and [Economic Development Partnership of NC](#) will increase our visibility within the market-place.

6.8.2 Programmable Action items:

The following programmable action items should be assigned to specific teams or departments to develop the ways and means to accomplish the tasks.

6.8.2.1 Establish a relationship with local chamber of Commerce or equivalent business group to secure strategic billboards on the 4-lane (US 19 & 74) for Logo billboard advertising to attract travelers to local businesses.

Provide clear concise information on special signage designed specifically to capture attention of non-local travelers. Logo billboards will get the message out about choices and where to immediately exit the 4-lane (US 19 & 74). *(Also see section 5.2.1.2 of this document for additional information.)*

6.8.2.2 Install local way-finding signage.

Local directional signage will help guide the visitor to the concentration of automotive services, motor cycle services, accommodations, and food/beverage businesses in Andrews.

6.8.2.3 Establish Partnerships

Resources for collaboration and support of economic development initiatives are not always consolidated into one neat package. The resources in North Carolina flow into communities and regions through multiple agencies. Organizing strategic interagency partnerships and participating in effective ways often becomes cumbersome; therefore, identifying the best partnerships and managing effective relationships among those partnerships should be a defined responsibility of either the Town Administrator or Planning Director.

The Town should explore the necessary public and private partnerships (Southwestern Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Tri-County Community College, downtown property owners, etc.) and funding sources to plan and develop business incubators in both the downtown and available manufacturing space. *(Also see sections 6.7.3 and 6.7.4 of this document for additional information.)*

6.8.3 Opportunity Based Action items:

The following opportunity based action items will require continuous planning and forethought to recognize opportunities to act.

6.8.3.1 Develop facilities for the traveler and tourist desiring an adventure experience augmented by majestic views and scenic vistas.

Emphasis should be placed upon the traveler and tourist requiring barrier-free accommodations to enhance these life-style experiences typically not available to all citizens. Andrews’ location features a flat terrain surrounded by mountains and with extensive out-reach has potential to capture this niche in destination tourism. Local adventure facilities and accommodations should include barrier-free overnight and

seasonal housing accommodations to attract both physically challenged persons and those accompanying them.

6.8.3.2 Support growth and expansion of eco-tourism businesses.

Support for growth and expansion of both existing and new business serving the motoring tourist with overnight and seasonal housing accommodations, RV camping, base camp facilities, extended vehicle parking, outfitters, outpatient medical services, automotive services/repairs, and food/beverage services located within close proximity to one another.

6.8.3.3 Establish criteria for financial participation in opportunities to expand the job and property tax base through strategic expansion of municipal infrastructure.

Establish clear criteria for expansion of municipal infrastructure (water and sewer systems) based upon measurable benefits and a “return on investment” business model. Criteria should also include contingency factors for public health and welfare needs when potable water and sanitary sewer needs are critical.

6.8.3.4 Promote occupancy of the existing 330,000 s.f. building available.

Obtain information of the existing 330,000 square foot manufacturing building located on Kent Street and identify potential incentives for employers to occupy the facility.

6.8.3.5 Inventory existing manufacturing facilities and post on local, county and state websites.

Compiling an existing building inventory for manufacturing facilities will enable the Town to become involved in the economic development conversation when opportunities arise. Maintaining information can often make the difference between meeting prospective employers and being passed over without ever knowing.

6.8.3.6 Identify water and wastewater capacity.

Monitor the consumption of capacity for economic development purposes. Know the availability and capacity of relevant water and sewer infrastructure including plants, trunk systems, pumping stations, and water courses relative to their purpose (supply vs. discharge) and remain diligent as capacity is consumed by non-basic sector development activity.

6.8.3.7 Establish Business Incubators

Establish a small incubator space in the downtown core area. This initiative should be initiated by the Town, in cooperation with potential regional partnerships and private sector partners. Services typically provided by an incubator include shared clerical, meeting, copier, storage, shipping & receiving, and janitorial services to reduce cost to the up-start business tenant. Ongoing support for the incubator should be limited to encourage a growth and exit strategy for the start-ups to avoid dependency or subsidies. *(Also see sections 6.7.1 & 6.7.3 of this document for additional information.)*

6.8.3.8 Promote existing industrial park co-owned by the town of Andrews and Cherokee county.

The existing 11 acre site is partially occupied leaving about 5 acres for growth and expansion of manufacturing type businesses. This site could potentially be sold and the proceeds used to acquire additional property suitable for economic development purposes. The future land use plan, appearing in section 8 of this document, identifies nearby properties that are best suited for manufacturing, warehouse and distribution type facilities.

6.8.3.9 Acquire a 6-10 acre site for contribution to manufacturing prospect based on performance criteria.

Identify land located either within the Town limits or within an eligible proximity to voluntarily annex into the Town of Andrews where full utilities and adequate access can be established for manufacturing prospect(s) sufficient to create a cumulative employment base on-site of at least 3.5 percent of the Town's population and one building of at least 60,000 square feet and a second building of at least 100,000 square feet. Acquire the financially feasible property and extend critical infrastructure to the site. Grade, stabilize and pave the entry into the site. Install signage with a temporary copy of "Free site for good company, based upon performance criteria" and promote its availability in the appropriate manner through state, county and local means. The future land use plan, appearing in section 8 of this document, identifies areas that are suited for manufacturing, warehouse and distribution type facilities.

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7. INFRASTRUCTURE

7.1 Water & Sewer Utility Systems

The Town of Andrews owns and operates both municipal water and sewer systems, including treatment facilities in both categories. The Town serves customers throughout the Town Limits and some areas outside of its boundaries. Water supply is interconnected with the Town of Murphy to the west for emergency backup for mutual benefit. Sewer facilities located outside of the Town Limits feature facilities strategically located to the west as far as Marble community.

The Town is currently developing digital maps of all system facilities. Information regarding the current availability of these services may be obtained by contacting the Town's Public Works Director.

Services to unincorporated areas within the Andrews Valley Service Area does not require annexation petitions running with the land at the time of adoption of this plan; however, future utility service and extension policy changes are recommended. *(Also see sections 6.1.1, 8.3.1 & 8.5.4 of this document for additional information.)*

7.1.1 Water Supply

The Town of Andrews owns two mountain-side impoundments, the Dan Holland Reservoir and Beaver Creek watershed. These watersheds extend into the US Forest Service lands north of the Town.

Water treatment is accomplished in a municipal water treatment facility (WTP) facility located near the supply source watershed impoundment. Treatment capacity is 2.0 MGD; average yield is approximately 0.7-0.8 MGD on average.

Storage facilities include a 500,000 gallon clear-well located at the treatment facility plus three ground storage tanks totaling 1.25 million gallons.

Distribution throughout the system is accomplished through gravity fed pressurization without reliance on pumping.

Emergency back-up water supply from the Town of Murphy requires pump pressurization in Murphy and is governed by an Inter-local agreement enacted August, 2002. Additional capacity for water treated for consumption is available through an interconnection of the municipal systems of the towns of both Andrews and Murphy. This interconnection is for the mutual benefit of each in the event of emergency. *Also see section 4.1.1 of this document for additional information on utility infrastructure.*

7.1.1.1 Water Supply Action Steps

The Town is presently studying water supply capacity needs for year 2035 and beyond and feasible sources for acquisition and protection from encroachment.

Acquisition(s) for future fresh water supply should be made in close proximity to the US Forest Service lands in order to ensure greater protection from development within the water supply watershed.

Water treatment capacity for potable water should also be examined in detail to determine the needs of Andrews' service area and the anticipated demand from new growth. Cooperation with Cherokee County, Eastern Band Cherokee Indians, and the Marble Community Water District to ensure inter-local cooperation regarding the future goals and objectives of all public service entities affecting growth within the Andrews' infrastructure service area is critical to the mutual benefit and success of Andrews as the premier supplier of potable water in the Andrews Valley Service Area.

Adoption of a new utility extension and connection policy should accompany the adoption of the new Andrews Development Ordinance. This policy should require petitions for voluntary annexation for consideration by the Board of Aldermen as part of the application process. Properties not eligible for annexation under the North Carolina General Statutes (N.C.G.S. 160A-58.1) should be required in this policy to submit a petition to be held until eligibility is established. This petition should be made part of the service agreement with the property owner and should survive transfers in ownership as long as the potable water service connections exist.

7.1.2 Sewer Service

The Town of Andrews discharges treated wastewater into the Valley River. The Town's waste-water treatment plant (WWTP) provides up to 2.0 million gallons per day (MGD) of treatment capacity. Daily average treatment is approximately 0.350 MGD.

The Town's sewer trunk, interceptor and collection system is gravity served throughout the Town of Andrews. Waste-water collection and pumping facilities serving areas west of the Town transfer waste-water to a trunk line entering the WWTP.

7.1.2.1 Waste-water Treatment Action Steps

The Town should study waste-water capacity needs for year 2035 and beyond and feasible locations for acquisition and protection from encroachment by sensitive land use such as neighborhood development. Acquisition(s) for a future waste-water treatment facility location should be made based upon the potential for growth to the west of the current Town Limits.

Andrews should match the planned capacity of the water treatment facility, recognizing freeboard requirements for peak flow, including allowances for inflow and infiltration, when determining location and facility needs. Cooperation with Cherokee County, Eastern Band Cherokee Indians, and the Marble Community Water District to ensure inter-local cooperation regarding the future goals and objectives of all public service entities affecting growth within the Andrews' infrastructure service area is critical to the mutual benefit and success of Andrews as the premier provider of waste-water collection, transport, and treatment in the Andrews Valley Service Area.

Adoption of a new utility extension and connection policy should accompany the adoption of the new Andrews Development Ordinance. This policy should require

petitions for voluntary annexation for consideration by the Board of Aldermen as part of the application process. Properties not eligible for annexation under the North Carolina General Statutes (N.C.G.S. 160A-58.1) should be required in this policy to submit a petition to be held until eligibility is established. This petition should be made part of the service agreement with the property owner and should survive transfers in ownership as long as the sewer service connections exist.

7.2 Transportation Network

Recognizing trends and how peoples preferences can and do change will enable Andrews to position itself as a welcoming community for multiple generations. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A community where both the new and existing communities are attractive to future generations and allow for aging members of the community to remain in the community by offering safe environments for all ages.

One of the most common components of the transportation network and most visible characteristics of a neighborhood is the *street*, often taken for granted even though it can change everything about a neighborhood. The street actually establishes very much about how people behave in their community. The following questions are presented to stimulate thoughts about neighborhood streets as an example of how important this simple concept actually is.

- Does the street have room to pass another car?
- Does the street have room for a visitor or emergency vehicle to park in front of a home or business?
- Does the street feature ditches or curbing for drainage?
- Does the street include sidewalks along its route?

The answers to these questions clearly define the character of the neighborhood, *for example*: neighborhood streets lined with ditches for storm-water will cause people to walk in the street just to visit a neighbor, or they may even give cause for residents to choose to drive a block away to visit that neighbor. By contrast, curbing with sidewalks set back from the curb encourage people to spend time outside to walk or play together. Streets designed properly provide a place to learn to skate or ride a bike. The street with sidewalks becomes the neighborhood's central gathering place, where multiple generations of citizens associate in many ways. The properly designed street will change the characteristics of human behavior and contribute to improved and healthy lifestyles. How many times have you heard concerns about kids not getting enough exercise? Well, maybe our streets have not helped much with that problem. We can do better. We can improve the quality of neighborhoods in many ways.

Beyond the neighborhood street is a network of collector streets, often called arterials. These collector streets and arterials connect to the thoroughfares and highways that bring us all together. Streets also provide our principal connections to other modes such as airports and railroads. The following information about our transportation network and the actions we can take locally to improve how this network serves Andrews' citizens and businesses will provide the foundation for many decisions facing the Town.

7.2.1 Roads and Highways

The transportation network serving the Town of Andrews consists mainly of automobile-focused roadways. US Highway 19/74/129 north of Andrews splits into US Highway 19/74 through the Nantahala Gorge and US Highway 129 at the Graham County/Macon County border.

Improvements to add lanes around and west of Andrews in the highway system have reduced transportation cost, opened scenic routes to tourists, and increased the mobility of the residents. However, US Highway 19/74/129 is designed as a “controlled access” 4-lane facility with “at-grade” intersections. This design under-serves the Town of Andrews by establishing freeway levels of functionality for the highway motorist, yet without the benefit of the NCDOT Logo Program for informing motorist of the services provided along the various local commercial corridors. Furthermore, signalized intersections along the 4-lane routinely halt the flow of traffic for the convenience of limited numbers of side street motorist. Conceptual proposals to replace these signalized designs with alternative round-a-bout improvements to keep traffic flowing freely, yet calm speeds when navigating cross street intersections has been debated locally as an alternative to improve functionality overall while reducing air quality impacts in the Andrews Valley Service Area.

Cherokee, Clay, and Graham Counties are not accessible in any direction via a four-lane road. Cherokee and Clay, however, are within close proximity to four-lane access southward towards Atlanta.

Highway access eastward towards Asheville/Charlotte and eastern seaboard markets is via I-40. I-40 is also the western route to Knoxville/Nashville, Tennessee, and the Ohio Valley. Chattanooga, Tennessee, and the Mississippi Valley are accessed via US Highway 64 from Murphy in Cherokee County. Atlanta and the cities to the south are accessed via US Highway 441 that runs south from Franklin in Macon County. Except for short sections, all these routes are interstate grade and quality.

7.2.1.1 Road & Highway Specific Action Items

Support for NCDOT STIP project R-5803 described as “**US 74**”, to “**Modernize Roadway**” and includes “**Construct 5 Foot Paved Shoulders Throughout, Construct Truck Climbing Lane at Steep Grade near Mm 48, Construct Auxiliary Lanes As Needed at the Cherokee/Macon County Line.**” The cost estimate for this project is \$19,326,000 with an anticipated construction date beginning October 2024. This STIP project is subject to final ranking and approval by the Board of Transportation. The project is consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.

7.2.2 Railways

Norfolk-Southern Railway and the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (GSMR) provide rail transportation that together bisects the District from Canton west to Andrews. Norfolk-Southern Railroad freight stops are located at Canton, Clyde, Waynesville, and Sylva. The GSMR currently has stops at Dillsboro, Bryson City, and Nantahala Gorge. The GSMR railroad from Dillsboro to Andrews is primarily an excursion route for tourism with on-demand freight runs. It should be noted that both these rail lines are aging and will need on-going [repairs to meet basic standards](#) of transport and safety.

7.2.2.1 Railway Specific Action Items

Following the adoption of the town Plan 2035, Andrews' leadership should designate a staff liaison to establish communication with GSMR and the Town of Bryson City to establish both Andrews and Bryson City as mutual beneficiaries of the GSMR line.

7.2.3 Aviation

The Western Carolina Regional Airport is a Cherokee County-owned public-use airport located two miles west of the central business district of Andrews. The types of operations for this airport include: 14,000 (local), 1,000 (taxi), 5,000 (itinerant) and 500 operations (military).

7.2.3.1 Airport Specific Action Items

Because the airport is an important regional asset benefitting Andrews and much of western North Carolina, the success of the airport is critical to Andrews' success. During the stakeholder interview process the airport was cited by numerous businesses as being vital to their success. Several businesses described the airport as their link to customers and clients as well as their internal corporate structure. Whether it's a local business or global franchise, the Western Carolina Regional Airport plays an important role in our link to the rest of the world. One example of how the airport is responsible for Andrews' success occurred during the process of preparing this plan when the author was contacted by an investor that while waiting for a flight learned from overheard conversation about the new Andrews Town plan. This investor's telephone call opened communication for a potential investment in the area.

Include coordination with Cherokee County leadership in decisions affecting the airport area. First on the list of topics to discuss should be how Andrews can improve infrastructure services to serve both the airport and strategic sites nearby for economic development purposes. Such sites include those serving persons passing through the airport, corporate facilities adjacent or near the airport, and the airport itself to accommodate adequate growth needs for passengers, crew and personnel.

7.2.4 Bicycle and Pedestrian

7.2.4.1 Bicycle Facilities

The Valley River valley provides numerous alternatives to both the recreational and serious cyclist. The recreational and lifestyle cyclist will find Andrews very accommodating due to its relatively flat valley floor location. Bicycle use for local in-town transportation is easily accommodated on the local streets. The recreational cyclist will find the "Tale of the Newt" route easy to moderately challenging and wonderfully scenic. The serious on-road cyclist will find the numerous secondary routes offering a wide variety of routes to satisfy the enthusiast.

North Carolina State Bike Route 2, the [Mountains to Sea](#) route, begins in downtown Murphy. This on-road bike route connects Murphy to Macon County via US Highway 64, NC Highway 141, US Highway 19 passing through Andrews along Main Street, and Junaluska Road. The route does not include bike paths or lanes; it is simply a designated route. Bicycle routes should be posted with "Share the Road" signage to caution motorists of the potential presence of cyclist frequenting the route. Coordinate with

NCDOT Division and district office staff to promote use of smoother surface material on designated routes and to avoid use of loose materials that are potential hazards to cyclists.

More information about bicycling and bicycle facilities in Andrews appear in section 6.5.2.2 this document for additional information..

7.2.4.2 Pedestrian Facilities

The Town of Andrews in cooperation with the NCDOT has established a comprehensive network of sidewalks along many existing local collector street and 2-lane thoroughfares. Additional sidewalk installations appear in sections 7.2.4.3 below and Table 9.2 at the end of this document.

In order to complete a comprehensive network of pedestrian improvements throughout the Town, adequate street cross-sections must be included in all future land development projects. Adequate facilities should take into account the need for safe streets for pedestrians by placement of sidewalks in new development a minimum of 6-8 feet behind the back of street curbing or immediately behind the curbing when designated on-street parking is provided to establish a buffer between vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

7.2.4.3 Bicycle & Pedestrian Specific Action Items

Submit official request to NCDOT to post bicycle routes with “Share the Road” signage.

Meet with NCDOT Division 14 and District 3 staff to coordinate safer roads for bicycle transportation.

1. When roads are reconditioned and widened, coordinate the placement of travel lane striping at current locations marking lane width and allow the additional paving to serve as a paved shoulder supporting both vehicle run-off and bicycle traffic needs, and
2. The use of asphalt on designated bicycle routes rather than chip mix (tar and gravel) surface material.

Establish specifications for adequate street construction by developers for both bicycle and pedestrian safety. (See sections 7.2.4.1, 7.2.4.2 & 8.5.1 of this document.)

Designating a network of greenways to serve the Andrews community will improve Andrews’ image nationally as we strive toward national recognition as an age-friendly and inclusive community for all ages seeking barrier free environments.

Determine access alternatives for local trails, with parking and restroom facilities, to attract tourism and visitors to Andrews. While most trails are located outside the Town of Andrews, we can and should partner with others such as the US Forest Service and Cherokee County to establish locations and faculties to benefit our local community.

8. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Analysis of Existing Land Use and Development Patterns – *Where to Begin!*

Andrews is not unlike many other small towns in the Carolinas in that it experienced most of its transformation during the post World War II era when the industrial expansion led to better paying jobs and increased automobile ownership increased individual mobility. The dramatic impact of this combination on American cities and towns was not foreseen and the problems associated with rapidly changing communities that followed led to long periods of decline in their once-vibrant core downtown areas. Andrews' own challenges result from the rapid expansion along Main Street from its intersection with US 19 & 74 on the west end, to the bridge over Tatham Creek emerged over the past half-century.

The core downtown portion of this street lies between Oak Street and Walnut Street and boasts the public library, post office, police department, Town Hall, two micro-breweries, a local wine tasting room, and various other businesses. This core area is the heart of Andrews and represents both commercial and aesthetic traditions fondly remembered by long-time residents and newcomers alike. This area is also the definitive centerpiece of the community's relationship to the original/traditional neighborhoods surrounding the downtown. Civic areas are important trip generators for downtowns and should remain so in the future, clustering civic uses in close proximity for ease of access.

There are two other major commercial strips along Main Street to the east and west of the downtown area, separated by turns in the road and buffered from the downtown area by residential structures where landscaping and large trees define the edges of the heart of Andrews' downtown.

Main Street's east-end commercial strip is smaller in scale and houses numerous auto-oriented uses that may seem unsightly to some, yet provide the clustering essential to a vibrant auto-service district. The clustering of these businesses creates an opportunity for the establishment of a district specifically designed to foster success in serving the region's automotive service needs. However, the presence of some unrelated businesses highlights the need for a mixed use district similar in scope to the west-end of Main Street discussed below.

Main Street's west-end commercial strip is much larger than any other commercial area of the Town. This area provides groceries, two pharmacies, furniture, restaurants, specialty shops, general mercantile, shoes/clothing and other services. There is a significant amount of vacant commercial space available; therefore, opportunities for refreshing and revitalizing redevelopment are abundant. This business area reflects its own identity and will benefit from revised development standards and specifications to optimize the existing sites. This district has the high level of carrying capacity for large scale and mixed use development. In fact, much of the area could host a mix of residential opportunities to offer housing alternatives to attract multiple housing product markets including work-force, young adult, senior, and seasonal housing choices.

Otherwise, the Town has a large, compact residential area surrounding Main Street, but lying mainly to the south of the railroad. This area represents typical neighborhoods found around the 1950s and 1960s, when housing construction began to increase rapidly and continued into

the 1990s. Neighborhoods contributing to Andrews' community character include East Andrews, Happy Top, Long Town, and Mud Town. The look and feel of this area is very much 'Small Town America.' Adjacent to the Downtown, there is opportunity for small scale projects that offer a mix of housing opportunities for current and future residents needing access to lower maintenance options, such as elderly, retired, young adults, single member households, and two member households. This housing stock will also serve as beneficial tourist housing options, for those that want to stay in a small town, while venturing out to explore the vast natural scenery in Cherokee County.

On the outskirts of these neighborhoods and frequently co-existing within them, there are numerous manufactured homes, and even a few mobile homes as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. These mobile homes are constructed without any form of building safety specification and present potential hazards when confronted with severe storms, fire and need for medical response. Further outward from the heart of town, and predominantly in the low lying areas near creeks and streams, mobile home parks have emerged proving high concentrations of dilapidated housing in the form of both manufactured and mobile homes. Initiatives to improve housing quality while maintaining affordability are paramount to the future of Andrews. *Also see Tables 3.2.1.A & 3.2.1.B of this document for additional information on existing housing.*

Development falls away closer to US Highway 19 & 74 (4-lane highway) on the north side of town. Along the 4-lane highway there are significant stretches of greenbelt along the low-lying corridor where it approaches and crosses the Valley River and its tributaries. Commercial pockets or nodes can be found at the cross street intersections throughout the Andrews section of the 4-lane highway.

North of the 4-lane highway mostly lower density home-sites and a few medium density neighborhoods exist. Many of these medium density neighborhoods could benefit from sanitary sewer extensions strategically designed to serve areas in between.

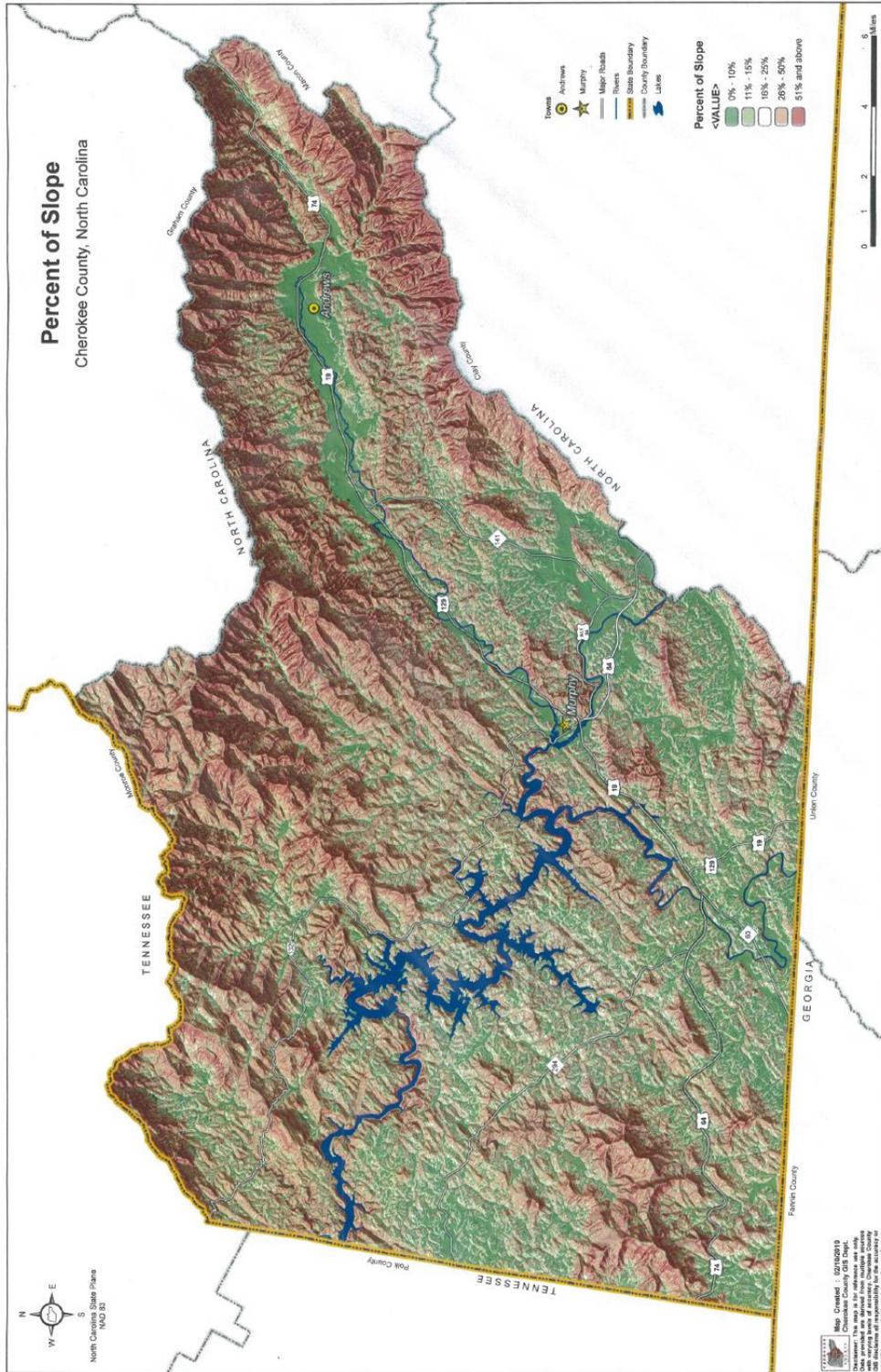
Given the location of Andrews in a large, flat area between the mountains, the Town has room to grow, when the need arises. Growth into the outlying areas and along the 4-lane has likely taken more away than it has contributed in terms of local economic activity and vibrancy. Determining strategies to support these existing out-lying pockets/nodes while strengthening the three primary Main Street districts will be essential to eliminate the conflicting growth

patterns that have weakened Andrews. Controlling the extension of the utilities provided by the Town of Andrews will be the most effective tool in refreshing and revitalizing all business districts over time. *Also see Figure 8.1.1 of this document.*



Photo by D. A. Alan downloaded from Google Earth 2016

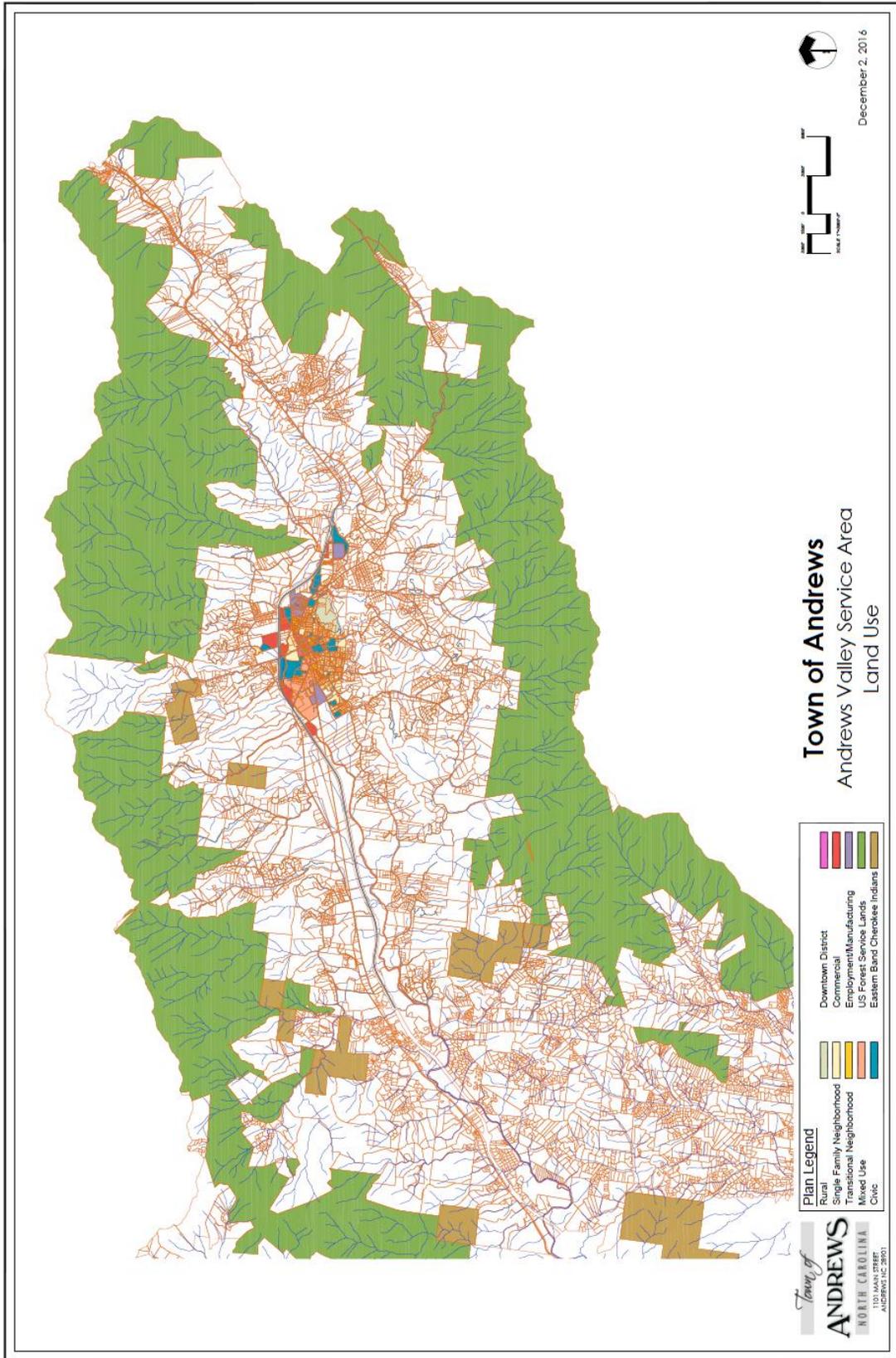
Figure 8.1.1 *Slope Map of Cherokee County*



Beyond the valley floor and its immediate rolling countryside the Andrews community is bounded by steep mountainous ridges with extensive public lands owned by the US Forest Service. Bordering much of the public land are large tracts of land owned by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indian nation. Downhill of much of these public and tribal lands and extending into the upper valley floor are forested and agricultural lands. These areas are outside of the Town limits; however, are vital to the community as a whole. These border areas are dotted with homes sited on mountain sides and knolls creating views for their inhabitants and contributing to a new type of rural development among the traditional agricultural lands settling in the valley for over a century. *See Figure 8.1.2 of this document.*

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Figure 8.1.2 Andrews Valley Service Area



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8.2 The Plan - *What do we want our community to be? How do we get there?*

8.2.1 Housing Growth

Recognizing trends and how market dynamics can and do change will enable Andrews to position itself as a welcoming community for multiple generations looking at buying or renting a home. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A community where both the new and existing home markets are attractive to future generations and allow for aging members of the community to remain in the community by offering variety of housing products.

According to contemporary real estate experts, the "50+" real estate market is changing. In these next few years, Generation X will be joining the Boomers and Matures, making serving the 50+ market a challenging puzzle for both communities and the real estate industry itself.

Recent online posting states: "For the **Mature** buyers, those born between the years 1927 and 1945, the decision to move can be an emotional and complicated process. The sense of obligation to the family home may be a burden and a comfort at the same time." The posting goes on to state: "**Baby Boomers** are savvy home buyers. They approach the transaction with high expectations and confidence. They consider the home a reflection of their lifestyle, so image and status are important. Whether they are downsizing, upsizing, or purchasing a second home, vacation home, or investment property, they know what they want and how to tell you about it." And finally, the post states: "Newbies to the 50+ group, **Generation X** stands out because of their strong need for independence and practical yet cautious approach. They take on the responsibility of gathering information and rely strongly on facts and documentation. They ask a lot of questions and don't want to get burned. They expect their home to complement their lifestyle and not the other way around." *Source:* http://rismedia.com/2016/08/31/education-insider-breaking-down-the-50-market/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eNews

Preparations to embrace current and projected trends are a partnership of land development and real estate industries with local government leadership. New housing construction should address gaps in the market product offering; therefore, land development specifications appearing in the Town's ordinances must be adequate to accommodate these trends. Replacing the town's antiquated zoning ordinance, adding specifications for land development which creates new streets and supporting infrastructure, and maintaining quality control over the implementation of these standards must be prioritized to protect property rights of all parties while creating common-sense opportunities that don't setup for failures in the future.

8.2.2 Commercial/non-residential Growth

As with the housing markets, ever changing trends in consumption, product development, technology and generational shifts in personal choices/values must be considered when making decisions about commercial and other non-residential growth. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A

community, where traditional values accompany craftsmanship must embrace the presence of technology in everyday life, commerce, and business.

In order to grow commercial and non-residential offerings a community must create opportunity for success. The first step is to promote both residential and tourism interest. By increasing the presence of people to a commercial setting, the critical mass necessary for businesses to sustain themselves will ensure vibrancy as the tourism visitors flow into and through the community. To accomplish this, the local zoning ordinance in existence at the time of this plan adoption, must be repealed and replaced with development standards and specifications to promote refreshing internal growth.

8.3 Existing Land Use Issues – *Recognizing the Problems of our Past*

A plan, any plan, is only as good as the community's commitment to implement. While implementation strategies vary widely depending on the specific goals and objectives, many strategies will often include some form of incentive, motivation, criteria, or specifications for new growth, development and construction. Throughout various sections of this document there are descriptions of incentives and motivations offering opportunities for success; however, a plan can fail when the criteria and specifications are inconsistent with the plan. The following subsections describe the challenges Andrews faces with policies in effect at the time of adoption of this plan. The discussion continues in the sections 8.4 and 8.5 of this document with insight on recommended new approaches to refreshing Andrews' economy and stimulating investment in Andrews' future. These recommended policy changes are designed to achieve the goals, objectives and successes noted and illustrated in this plan.

As a prelude to the discussion, Jonathan Copping, a visiting senior fellow at the 'R Street Institute' researching urbanism and civil society posted an article challenging leadership to re-think how we administer and regulate development. The following excerpts are from his article posted by the American Planning Association October 20, 2016.

“Establishing by-right development and streamlining local permitting processes will allow developers to respond nimbly to market demands and will relieve the “guilty until proven innocent” status of new building development, which depresses construction starts across the country by [delaying and inhibiting](#) housing projects. What’s more, adopting leaner codes would remove obstacles to the countless smaller developers and would-be builders who want to invest in strengthening their local communities, but currently can’t afford to navigate the vast regulatory burdens and uncertain futures awaiting anyone who tries to build in America today. Trulia economist Ralph McLaughlin [found](#) that these regulatory delays may have an even bigger impact on housing production than zoning restrictions.”

“Main Street-style development — the “storefront on the first floor, apartments rented out above” style that forms the core of any older town’s historic center — is a residential building form that uses first-floor commercial space to serve community members and enliven a neighborhood. This low-rise density helps prop up the balance sheets of towns responsible for running utilities all the way out to suburban developments, as former city planner and engineer Charles Marohn [has repeatedly demonstrated](#). It also keeps a constant set of the “eyes on the street” that Jane Jacobs identified as necessary for safe streets; renters keep an ear out for burglars after business hours and shopkeepers keep

the same at bay during the day. It is, in other words, the core of any successful town-building.”

8.3.1 Utility Policies at the Time of Plan Adoption

Traditionally, the Town of Andrews has been willing to extend water and sewer to properties outside of its municipal limits and applied a higher “out-of-town” rate for the service. This policy can increase utility revenues; however, without requiring the subject properties to be annexed it becomes counter-productive to existing property owners within the corporate limits by creating an unbalanced taxation and level of public service. This is an important aspect of land use policy because public water and sewer systems often provide the stimulus or “plant the seeds” for growth. Growth that is simply chasing utilities will result in higher rates for all rate payers and the resulting inefficiencies in other services will drive up taxes. The most effective way to keep tax and utility rates lower, increase the return on investment of the existing systems, and provide adequate revenue for the operations and maintenance of these systems is to be very deliberate in the extension of utilities.

8.3.2 Land Development and Construction Ordinances at the Time of Plan Adoption

“Land development” includes the installation of infrastructure as the first step toward new building construction. This phase of a project involves land planning that leads to civil engineering to establish the layout of roads and buildings. The criteria or specifications included in these ordinances should accomplish some basic objectives including:

Ensuring the purchaser or owner receives a safe and reliable building product,

- Ensuring the state and federal mandates are satisfied to avoid penalties, and
- Ensuring the end result does not increase the burden on other tax and utility rate payers without deliberate determination that such increases are for the overall benefit of the community.

The following sections describe how ordinances in effect at the time of plan adoption are counter-productive to the objects set forth in this document. A recommended approach to replace these policies and ordinances is described in section 8.5 of this document.

8.3.2.1 Zoning Code

The current zoning code, establishing criteria and specifications for new and existing development, evolved over time from an early state model ordinance. The State encouraged the adoption of their model to help communities begin their introduction into managing growth for the long term benefit of the community. The intention was that local governments would continue to modernize these policies and this would yield desired results from state shared funding (grants and loans) the State was providing to local governments. The State’s mistake was to accept zoning as a substitute for a town plan.

These ordinances were flawed from the onset because of some basic assumptions about important issues. In short, these policies did little to manage growth, but in fact actually has led many communities to “paint by numbers” in administering growth, development and construction. Local governments began to lead new growth with zoning rather than

preparing a plan based upon what a community actually desired to become as it matured. This approach is the cause of animosity toward zoning. The role of the zoning ordinance should have been to ensure consistent criteria and specifications as new growth and development occurred.

The existing **Andrews Zoning Ordinance** establishes a pyramid of uses in the districts moving upward toward the presumed greatest use - the single family home. This approach watered down business investments and lead to sporadic patterns where businesses are not in the least protected from the pressures of the single family homeowner.

Mixed-use development as it is commonly referred to today can be and often is very beneficial when the location works and the criteria and specifications are deliberate. However, the mixes of uses in the mid-twentieth century zoning pyramid to be effective in improving many towns when they omitted a critical step - the preparation of a master or area plan. And, failing to plan is planning to fail as many communities can now attest.

The symptoms of this condition in Andrews are evident in areas where extensive commercial zoning was applied without regard for the consequences of over-supplying the market. When this occurs, typically as a result of the attitude that commercial zoning allows for residential uses to continue, areas suffer when those homes now find themselves trapped amongst the commercial energy surrounding them. This condition in the market usually leads to the “domino effect” impacting otherwise stable properties, a cause of many former homes occupied by businesses that may struggle over time to remain relevant as trends change. This can be seen on the edges of the downtown where there are several converted homes shifting in and out of fashion with owners.

Additionally, commercial buildings extending almost the entire length of the town leads to depressed values. Today’s businesses seek “hot spots” for business location. This clustering of complementary businesses (i.e. shopping, dining, etc.) draws potential customers to locations where there interest or needs can be met. Location economists call this agglomeration. The benefit of agglomeration benefits the customer in both improved choices and typically better pricing of goods and services. The price of gas is typically lower where there is more than one store to choose from.

The best remedy for these existing commercialized areas is to encourage re-use and re-development through new zoning criteria and specifications. ***This approach can work well provided there is a commitment to areas where the investment in infrastructure has already been made. Growth beyond these areas only encourages abandonment while increasing cost to Andrews’ tax and utility rate payers.***

Policies that promote success of neighborhoods, businesses and civic uses alike are far more desirable to all persons involved who care about the future of the community and the preservation of the investments made by property owners in the community. This approach respects property rights in balance. The rights of the subject property owner, and the rights of the adjacent or nearby property owner such that all parties are treated respectfully. When some property owners lose for another one to gain, the

development decision must not be particularly beneficial to the community. *(Also see section 8.5.1 of this document for additional information.)*

8.3.2.2 Subdivision Ordinance

As of the time this plan was prepared, specifications for the extension of streets and utilities to serve newly created lots does not exist; however, a new unified development ordinance, described in section 8.5 below, will be completed following plan adoption. The adoption of these standards will establish cost saving measures for the tax and utility rate payer for all new subdivisions. When new streets are built properly they last longer and are far less costly to maintain. These new streets must also be reported to the NCDOT upon completion to ensure the local share of the fuel tax collected from every motorist when they purchase fuel, will be returned to the Town. When these fuel taxes are returned each year, they can do more for the older streets where repairs may be warranted.

Subdivision criteria and specifications also improve utility performance and reduce cost to serve all rate payers. By establishing specific criteria for the location of lines we can reduce confusion and improve the effectiveness of future maintenance and repairs. Each utility is designated into a specific location in or near the street.

8.3.2.3 Building Code

The Town of Andrews has an inter-local agreement with Cherokee County for the administration of the Cherokee County State Building Code developed and mandated within the Town Limits at the time of adoption of this plan.

8.3.2.4 Floodplain Management

Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance regulates development that would occur within a floodplain. While this ordinance is in place, it mainly covers building specifications like elevation, and public infrastructure, such as sewers. The existing ordinance does not address land use in floodplains. This ordinance is mandatory in order to be eligible for the National Flood Insurance Program administered by the federal government.

8.3.2.5 Storm-water Management & Watershed Protection

The Andrews Watershed Protection Ordinance applies to particular areas established by mandate of the State of North Carolina. It was adopted to address land uses and use specifications, i.e. lot size, coverage, etc., and stream buffers within these sensitive areas.

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8.4 Future Land Use – *Where We’re Going Next!*

The exciting aspects of this plan are not captured by the issues we’ve faced or the problems we believe we have, but the opportunities we have before us. The opportunities to build upon our previous successes are the greatest asset the businesses and citizens of Andrews possess. This plan recognizes those attributes, identifies the community stake-holders goals, and crafts a vision of our future. Along with the actions we must undertake, to achieve the goals stated in this document, this plan provides the foundation for systematic decision making by businesses, citizens, prospective investors in our community, and leadership at various levels.

Simply stated, the key to our success is to increase the population of the community by reasonable numbers in order to increase the economic activity to a level that will support the services we desire. The three groups to focus our energy on are as follows:

- Retain our young adults by creating the home-town they dream about.
- Attract newcomers by offering the small-town feel they seek.
- Attract seasonal and vacationing populations by providing that special place to visit.

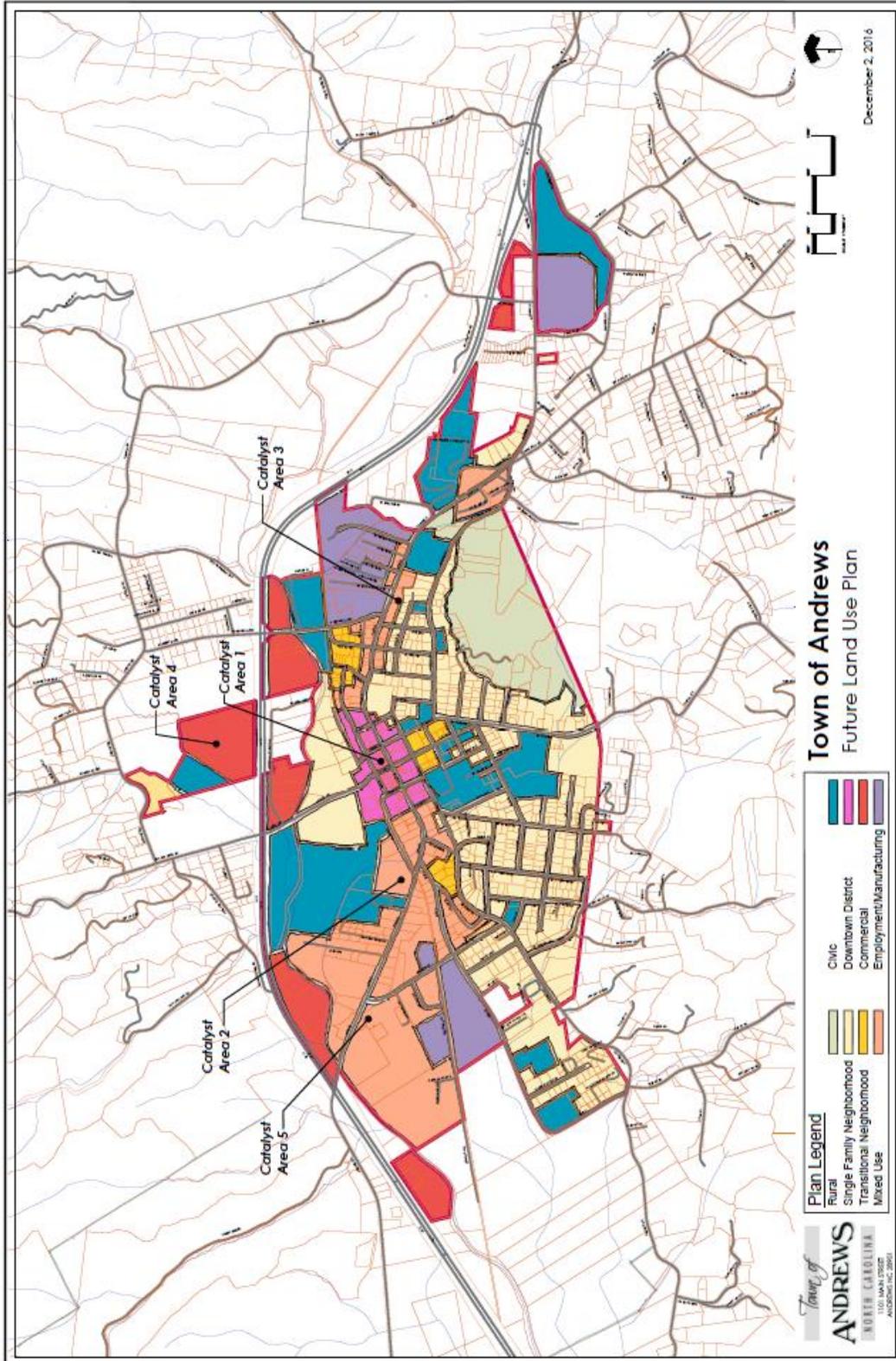
Creating an attractive atmosphere in Andrews will contribute toward our ability to attract young adults to return, to come home, when they seek that long-term location to settle into. These same investments will attract the newcomers seeking a special small-town atmosphere. When a community, when Andrews, feels good about itself it shows and that will become our greatest attribute in attracting visitors who just want to be a part of it all. That’s what successful towns do, they become special by taking deliberate steps toward that goal and they reap the rewards when they do it well.

The following “steps” provide guidance for implementing the recommendations of this plan. While they are not rigid in their order, their importance is unwavering to the future success of Andrews in the 21st century.

8.4.1 **Step 1: Refresh Andrews by Redeveloping Underutilized Areas First**

Andrews suffered from oversupply of commercial land during previous decades of erratic and spontaneous development. Focusing attention on strategic locations to reignite interest within the core downtown, west end and parts of the east Main and US 19/74 corridors can boost investment by re-thinking development in the corridor. Incentives to refresh and redevelop strategic sites in existing underutilized locations where existing infrastructure and location dynamics combine to support successful new investments will reinforce property values within approximately 1/5th mile of the project. The ***Future Land Use Plan*** appearing in figure 8.4.1 depicts a pattern of development to accommodate residential, non-residential and mixed-use growth and redevelopment. The map serves as the overall plan to guide decisions about future infrastructure investments and other public services for Andrews’ future growth. ***Zoning changes are required by North Carolina statute to be made based upon both reasonableness and consistency with this plan.***

Figure 8.4.1 ***Future Land Use Plan***



8.4.2 Step 2: Strengthening our Core and Existing Commercial Centers

There are five identifiable catalyst areas to focus refreshing redevelopment that will invigorate Andrews' with purpose, human presence and economic vitality. These five areas, shown in Figure 8.4.4 ***Andrews Valley Service Area Growth Opportunities***, are vital to jump-starting the local economy in various ways. All five of these catalyst areas should be the subject of development concept planning, as performed for areas 1 & 2 appearing below. The remaining three concept area plans should be prepared as soon as possible to provide site specific ideas and guidance to property owners, developers, businesses, citizens and leadership. The catalyst areas appear in order of priority and significance for overall benefit to revitalizing Andrews.

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8.4.2.1 Downtown Core - Catalyst Area 1

The downtown core area is the heart of Andrews. As with most living things the heart is the most vital organ and communities are no different, their vitality often depends on the strength of the heart or core area.

This area emerged very early in the lifespan of the Town and incorporates existing buildings within surrounding neighborhoods with a balance of pedestrian and vehicular oriented infrastructure into a wonderfully situated rise above the Valley River but lying below the steeper slopes of the nearby mountains.

This characteristic offers ease of dense development without substantially altering the landscape, while overlooking the valley floor from an elevation safely out of harm's way when impending flood waters rise.

Thoughtful planning to identify opportunities and illustrate concepts citizens and property owners' may find feasible will provide a foundation for creative projects that will benefit the community as a whole while meeting the goals of growing the business community and improving the offerings in Andrews.



The design ideas represented in the Catalyst Area 1 - Conceptual Master Plan - Downtown Core Area in figure 8.4.2.1 will increase the return on investment in current infrastructure and reduce the cost to service. This catalyst area plan will:

- Increase the number of people living in and around the core to create a lively atmosphere.
- Encourage multi-story development to take advantage of the views into/or the mountains surrounding the valley floor.
- Remove raised curbing on Main street between Chestnut and Cherry Streets; install new curb bump-outs & crosswalks; plant streetscape trees; install new street lights
- Balance parking facilities to avoid overkill of supply. Incentivize with bicycle storage lockers.
- Focus on key infill refresh/redevelopment projects such as the old A&P parking lot, the vacant tract on the east end of Main Street at the corner of Oak Street, the vacant lot on corner of Locust and First Street, the parking lot adjacent to the current town hall, and the vacant lot at the railroad and Locust/Cover Avenue.

Figure 8.4.2.1 **Catalyst Area 1 - Conceptual Master Plan - Downtown Core Area**



Town of Andrews
 Catalyst Area 1 - Conceptual Master Plan
 Downtown Core Area

Plan Legend
 Conceptual Buildings
 Existing Buildings
 Pedestrian Enhancements

Town of ANDREWS
 NORTH CAROLINA
 ANDREWS, NC 28521

Vertical Garden Locations

December 2, 2016

8.4.2.2 West Main Street - Catalyst Area 2

The Main Street corridor west of the downtown core area extending from Wilson Street to US 74 is a vast mix of development types and quality reflecting the symptoms described in section 8.1 of this document. The area also represents the majority of the non-residential development in Andrews. However, the pattern of development also reflects an era of development and consumer preferences which have fallen from favor among many age groups. While a comprehensive master planning initiative will need to be performed to identify concepts and opportunities for redevelopment in this entire area, it is paramount that initial opportunities for near term reinvestment supportive of the Main Street core downtown area, be identified and pursued as a priority.

Main Street’s west-end commercial strip is much larger than any other commercial area of the Town. This area provides groceries, pharmacies, furniture, restaurants, specialty shops, general mercantile, shoes/clothing and other services. There is a significant amount of vacant commercial space available; therefore, opportunities for refreshing and revitalizing redevelopment are abundant. This area reflects its own identity and will benefit from revised development standards and specifications to optimize the existing sites. This corridor could be one distinct district featuring a high level of carrying capacity for large scale and mixed use development. In fact, much of the area could host a mix of residential opportunities to offer housing alternatives to attract multiple housing product markets including work-force, young adult, senior, and seasonal housing choices.



Thoughtful planning to identify opportunities and illustrate concepts citizens and property owners' may find feasible will provide a foundation for creative projects that will benefit the community as a whole while meeting the goals of growing the business community and improving the offerings in Andrews. ***The two Catalyst Area 2 - Conceptual Master Plan – West Main Street options appearing in figures 8.4.2.2A and 8.4.2.2B of this document will increase the return on investment in current infrastructure and reduce the cost to service.*** This catalyst area plan will:

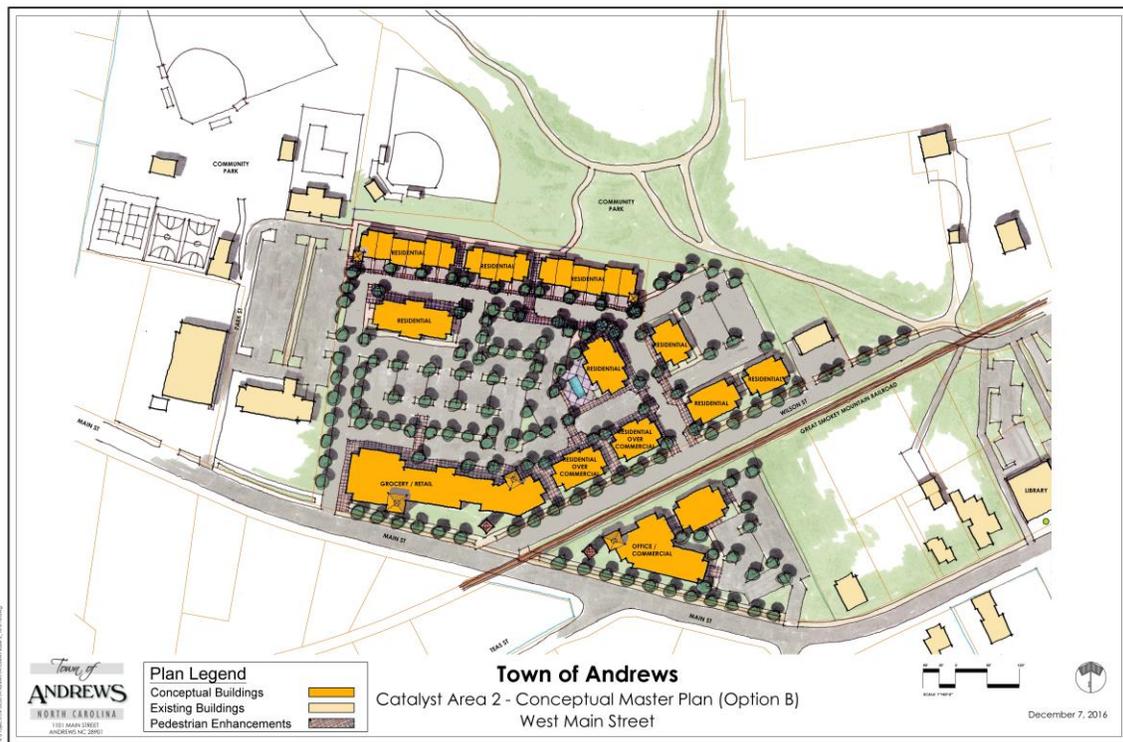
- Increase the number of people living in and around the core to create a lively atmosphere.
- Encourage multi-story development to take advantage of the views into/or the mountains surrounding the valley floor.
- Balance parking facilities to avoid overkill of supply. Incentivize with bicycle storage lockers.
- Focus on key infill refresh/redevelopment projects such as the old Food Lion shopping center where opportunities for multi-family residential units adjacent to parks and recreation facilitates will reinvent Wilson Street and help invigorate the downtown.



Figure 8.4.2.2A **Catalyst Area 2 - Conceptual Master Plan – West Main Street OPTION A**



Figure 8.4.2.2B **Catalyst Area 2 - Conceptual Master Plan – West Main Street OPTION B**



8.4.2.3 East Main Street - Catalyst Area 3

The Main Street corridor east of the downtown core area extending from Macon Street to east of Robbinsville Road is a compact commercial area with numerous underutilized properties that could benefit from reinvestment and redevelopment. New development or redevelopment in this corridor will vary in type, but limited in size to approximately ½ blocks in depth to transition into the adjacent neighborhood. ***The concept area plan should be prepared as soon as possible to provide site specific ideas and guidance to property owners, developers, businesses, citizens and leadership.***

8.4.2.4 Beaver Creek Mall/Raceway Site - Catalyst Area 4

The location of the Beaver Creek Mall/Raceway situated along US 74 between Robbinsville Road and Beaver Creek Road (Cover Avenue) is ideally situated in a flat expanse of land within close proximity to all necessary utilities offered by the Town. This site has significant potential for mixed use development such as an all-inclusive barrier free destination community with incredible mountain views. Such a destination community should serve a niche consumer desiring barrier free accommodations meeting numerous life style and adventure needs. Opportunities to attract persons seeking this type of design would find ease of mobility and incredible scenery and adventure activities highly desirable giving Andrews a new purpose within the mountainous western North Carolina region. Easy access to both highway and airport service makes this location a strong candidate for all age groups and a concentration of many diverse activities.

Residential and extended stay opportunities supported by services including travel accommodations, restaurants, entertainment, shopping and performances could attract persons with mobility limitations world-wide establishing Andrews as an adventure Mecca for both the active and passive wheelchair adventurer. ***The concept area plan should be prepared as soon as possible to provide site specific ideas and guidance to property owners, developers, businesses, citizens and leadership.***

8.4.2.5 West End Main Street - Catalyst Area 5

The largest existing commercial area consumes approximately twenty (20%) percent of the total incorporated land mass of Andrews. This opportunity for improvement also occupies the area between the Andrews' downtown core and wastewater treatment facility near the junction of the 4-lane (US 74) highway and Main Street (US 19). This 1960's-1980's era growth area is typical of patterns many towns experienced, where by-pass type roadways and sewer infrastructure combined to produce growth opportunities. Many once thriving shopping centers in Andrews located here are virtually vacant or utilized to a much lesser degree by commercial enterprises. The most obvious component missing from these centers today are the so-called anchor stores.

Today this area is underutilized due to changing market conditions. To overcome some of the challenges faced by these centers (large commercial spaces, large parking lots, auto-oriented site designs, aging buildings, singular commercial uses, etc.) a complete revamping of the purpose of these areas should take place. Accommodating a mixture of uses with a variety of residential offerings incorporated into re-development plans increases the viability for local business growth. This large area has the capacity to add hundreds of new housing units and the resulting non-residential growth with limited

investment by the Town of Andrews in infrastructure. Careful site planning to ensure functional efficiency, interconnections for both pedestrians and vehicles and enhancing the relationship to the natural mountain views, nearby parks and public open spaces, as well as compatibility with surrounding established neighborhoods will be of utmost importance to a successful redevelopment plan for this area. ***The concept area plan should be prepared as soon as possible to provide site specific ideas and guidance to property owners, developers, businesses, citizens and leadership.***

8.4.3 Preservation and Conservation Areas

The natural setting of the valley between mountain ridges under public land management and control of the US forest Service provides vast areas of conservation. The map appearing in figure 8.1.2 highlights these important areas. Assuming these land masses will be forever protected by the US government, Andrews' emphasis on local preservation and conservation measures may be focused lower into the valley.

Given Andrews' role in local governance in the valley, our most effective tools for preservation and conservation are the moderation of growth and expansion of our municipal services and the policies governing expansion of the systems we operate. By working together with our counterparts at the county level we can stimulate investments where warranted and discourage investments in areas that will not be good for Andrews. This approach leaves these lands completely under the control of their elected Cherokee County officials. The only time Andrews officials will be involved is when the topic of municipal service levels is explored.

Beyond these measures, we may also explore acquisitions of land for the purposes of establishing and protecting surface water supplies. Acquisition of watersheds by municipalities is the best protection of water quality for supplying potable water systems. Watersheds owned by a municipality are eligible for consideration as "class 1" water supply watersheds where preservation of natural conditions prevails. This is the highest quality rating attainable in North Carolina and there are very few in existence.

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8.4.4 Future Growth beyond the Town Limits

The outward expansion and growth of Andrews must be guided by a combination of this plan and the information gathered when examining specific development plans and proposals in the future. This plan identifies known and projected growth areas on figure 8.4.4 **Andrews Valley Service Area Growth Opportunities** to provide guidance to the businesses, citizens, Andrews leadership, and others seeking to make important financial and/or policy decisions.

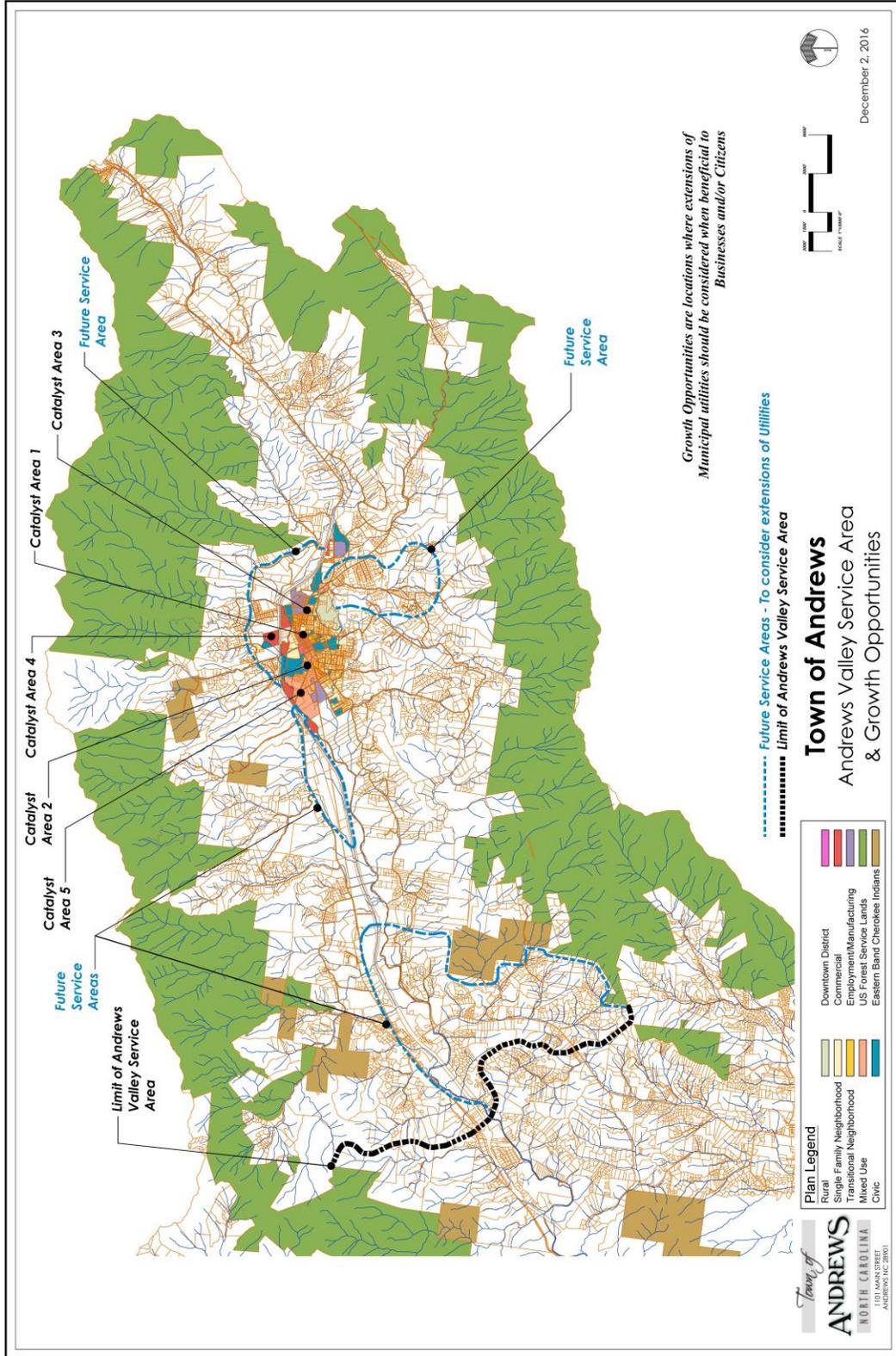
When considering growth and development proposals outside Andrews' municipal limits, priority must first be given to the existing businesses and citizens, utility rate payers and property tax payers. The following questions should be made a part of the formal consideration of request for annexation and extension of services, whether publicly or privately funded:

- Will the project contribute to the overall wellbeing of Andrews' business and citizen well-being?
- Will the project contribute to the reduction of cost overall for services to current rate payers on the system?
- Will the project avoid the obligation of debt by the rate payer or taxpayer generated revenues in order to serve the project?

When these questions are answered by a resounding “yes”, the project is likely worthy of further consideration; however, if not, the project should be avoided.

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Figure 8.4.4 **Andrews Valley Service Area Growth Opportunities**



8.5 Re-thinking Andrews' Zoning - A Common Sense Approach!

8.5.1 Planning, Zoning and Development – The Town 'Plans & Specs'

The traditional approach to land development ordinances in North Carolina was to adopt several different ordinances with individual topics based in the enabling legislation of the State. However, today provisions have been made to combine these varied ordinances into a single or unified development ordinance or UDO as they are commonly known. The UDO approach not only brings everything into one, albeit lengthy, ordinance the benefits of consolidation eliminate the confusion over administration and procedural process for the business or citizen undertaking a project. No longer would the applicant need to research separate ordinances to compile the criteria and specifications for their project. The exceptions to this consolidation or unification remain the building code governing structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical standards and certain state and federal mandates governing the environment.

Given the status of the Town's existing ordinances relating to growth and development, particularly following the 2013 and 2015 legislative sessions in North Carolina, the Town has contracted to prepare a new UDO consistent with this plan. The new UDO, to be known as the '**Andrews Development Ordinance**', or ADO, is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2017.

Adoption of the new ADO will accomplish two primary objectives: to modernize the Town's criteria and specifications to meet current statutory requirements, and to make certain the criteria and specifications are designed to help Andrews thrive once again.

This approach emphasizes the adopted plan and then seeks to achieve the goals of the plan. Tying the Town Plan to the ADO not only achieves statutory compliance, but transforms the role of zoning from regulatory in nature into more of a set of criteria and specifications.

This 'plans & specs' approach to town building improves the relationship of the Town with its businesses and citizens by establishing objectives, then administering the ADO to simply achieve those objectives. By using common sense policies to encourage re-use and reinvestment in Andrews, the Town can reduce tax and utility rates as the plan is implemented. This approach benefits all Andrews' businesses and citizens.

An article posted online at [RISMedia Daily e-News written by Suzanne De Vita](#) on November 3, 2016 discussing a report from the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) and PwC's, "[Emerging Trends in Real Estate® 2017](#)," which analyzes trends-to-come in both the U.S and Canada housing markets. Ten "gateway" markets, as defined in the report—those with both a diverse economy and "niche" neighborhoods—will stand above the rest. The report highlights the importance of practical zoning standards and specifications to meet the needs in today's real estate market. Ms. Vita writes: *"Both on the investor side and the user side of the market, optionality—not just one use, not just one user, not just one user profile—may be gaining favor as a way to navigate the cross-currents of volatile markets," the report's authors state. "Optionality from a user standpoint allows*

for the adjustment of space needs to vary in terms of size, location, and use on an as-needed basis.”

The trends discussed in the report point to a need for communities to be very deliberate in how they establish development related standards and specifications, including how they implement such non-conventional approaches to stimulating investment in the community.

As described in section 8.3.1.1 of this document, today’s businesses seek “hot spots” for business location. This clustering of complementary businesses (i.e. shopping, dining, etc.) draws potential customers to locations where their interest or needs can be met. Location economists call this agglomeration. The benefit of agglomeration to the customer is both improved choices and typically better pricing of goods and services.

The best remedy for the largest of Andrews’ existing underutilized commercial areas is to encourage re-use and re-development through new zoning criteria and specifications. This approach can work well provided there is a commitment to areas where the investment in infrastructure has already been made. Once the Town has reinvigorated these core areas, then growth beyond the current Town Limits should be studied to determine benefits for the Town’s businesses and citizens.

Policies that promote success of neighborhoods, businesses and civic uses alike are far more desirable to all persons involved who care about the future of the community and the preservation of the investments made by property owners in the community. This approach respects property rights in balance: the rights of one property owner, and the rights of the adjacent or nearby property owner(s) such that all parties are treated respectfully.

Black’s Law Dictionary defines ‘property rights’ as ***“The rights given to the person or persons who have a right to own the property through purchase or bequest. These are basic rights in any society though absolute right for a property is rare in any society.”***
Law Dictionary: [What is PROPERTY RIGHTS? Definition of PROPERTY RIGHTS \(Black's Law Dictionary\)](#)

In North Carolina, and most states’, municipalities are created for the provision of services to the benefit of its businesses, citizens and property owners. The decision to reside in close proximity with others and to share in the provision of beneficial services provided by an organized local government defines the purpose of municipalities: ‘to facilitate mutual benefits to those choosing to reside within a municipality’. Therefore, municipalities inherently seek to balance property rights for the mutual benefit of those affected by the actions of the individual. This compromise on the absoluteness of property rights is therefore an understanding that rules may be enacted for the benefit of the greater community. Simply stated, when adjacent property owners must lose something of value to them for another property owner to gain, then an action or decision by that individual must not be particularly beneficial to the community. These assumptions of mutual benefit, the foundation of a municipality or community, are the basis for the establishment of rules governing development and the up-keep of properties within a municipality.

The challenge becomes how well a community balances those rules with the protections of individual property rights, rather than to unreasonably suppress them.

A balanced and fair approach to the establishment of rules, standards and specifications must be the norm, not the exception. Focusing on the goals of the community rather than restricting a community out of fear or unwarranted bias must become the established culture and philosophy when making policy. The replacement of the current ordinances governing land development with professionally administered innovative policies instills trust and support for the municipality while creating greater opportunity.

First and foremost in the effort to invigorate Andrews is the approach to new housing construction. This plan, and our ADO, should address gaps in housing market product offerings and land development specifications appearing in the Town's ordinances must be adequate to accommodate these trends. Replacing the town's antiquated zoning ordinance, adding specifications for land development which creates new streets and supporting infrastructure, and maintaining quality control over the implementation of these standards must be prioritized to protect property rights of all parties while creating common-sense opportunities that avoid growth and development failures in the future. *(Also see section 8.2.1 of this document for additional information.)*

The Town's current water and sewer utility service areas that already extend beyond the Town Limits will require clear policies on connections to avoid falling victim to decisions that do not benefit the Town's tax and utility rate payers. While the ADO will not apply to any property outside the Town Limits, it will apply to property voluntarily annexed into the Town to gain access to those utilities. In areas where voluntary annexation petitions would not be eligible at the time a request for connection is made, the Town should still obtain a petition by the property owner, binding on future owners, allowing the Town to proceed with annexation when the statutory criteria is met. *(See sections 8.3.1 and 8.5.4 of this document.)*

The following descriptions of districts or zones the new ADO should establish describe the character of the various neighborhoods and non-residential parts of Andrews. These new districts should replace all existing districts and be accompanied by opportunity driven district standards.

Careful consideration must be given when crafting the criteria and specifications for development to avoid as much non-conformity or "grandfathering" as possible. While some properties may not avoid a non-conforming (grandfather clause) status, it is very important to make as much existing development compliant as reasonably possible. This attempt should not be misguided into making fundamentally poor choices in drafting the ADO, nor should it fail to recognize the role of property maintenance rules adopted in October and November of 2016.

8.5.1.1 Single Family Residential Districts

Three Single Family Residential Districts (SFR-1, SFR-2 and SFR-3) provide for the completion of existing residential neighborhoods and the development of new residential neighborhoods. Allowed building/lot types in the Single Family Districts are Detached Houses. Permitted uses in all three are restricted to single family homes and

their accessory uses. Neighborhoods in these districts are the dominant land use in Andrews and are a major element in defining the character of the community. Standards for the Single Family Residential Districts ensure that new development maintains the character of the community. The Single Family Residential Districts permit the completion and conformity of conventional residential subdivisions already existing or approved in sketch plan form by the Town of Andrews prior to the effective date of these regulations.

8.5.1.2 Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District

The Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District (TNDO) provides for the development of new neighborhoods and the revitalization or extension of existing neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are structured upon a fine network of interconnecting pedestrian oriented streets and other public spaces. Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND's) provide a mixture of housing types and prices, prominently sited civic or community building(s), stores/offices/workplaces, and churches to provide a balanced mix of activities. A Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) has a recognizable center and clearly defined edges; optimum size is a quarter mile from center to edge. A TND is urban in form, is typically an extension of the existing developed area of the Town, and has an overall residential density of up to 16 dwelling units per acre. TND districts should have a significant portion of land dedicated to open spaces.

8.5.1.3 Residential/Main Street Transitional District

The Residential/Main Street Transitional District (R/MST) provides for the completion of existing residential neighborhoods in the residential area(s) surrounding the Main Street and contiguous Civic Districts through in-fill development. The intent of this district is to recognize that most of the area surrounding the core of the downtown developed prior to the adoption of standards such as zoning and subdivision regulations. The gradual transformation of existing development to high quality mixed density residential development is needed to support the central core of the Town. Higher density residential development allows a greater number of households to walk or bike, thus reducing the parking demand and providing environmental and health benefits. Allowed building/lot types in these districts are the Detached House, Attached House, and Multi-family Building. Streets in the Residential/Main Street Transitional District should be interconnected, with streets and sidewalks providing a connection from Andrews's downtown to the Single Family Residential districts surrounding these neighborhoods. A range of housing types is encouraged. Criteria for the mix of building types establishes compatibility.

8.5.1.4 Main Street District

The Main Street District (MS) provides for new development, revitalization, reuse, and infill development in Andrews's core downtown. A broad array of uses is permitted to enable the needs of residents and visitors to be met. Allowed building/lot types in this district are Urban Workplace, Shop-front, Detached House, Attached House, Multi-family Building, and Civic Building. The development pattern seeks to integrate shops, restaurants, services, work places, civic, educational, and religious facilities, and higher density housing in a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment. The Main Street District serves as the hub of the surrounding neighborhoods and of the broader

community. The Main Street District may be expanded over time to meet the needs of the growing community for downtown facilities and services. Expansion of the Main Street District shall be contiguous and not separated from the primary district area.

8.5.1.5 Civic District

The Civic District (CIV) provides a location for educational, medical, religious and public uses. Large developments in the Civic District are encouraged to provide a master plan to the Town. Institutional uses in the Civic District are required to provide pedestrian connections on their campuses and, to the extent possible, develop an internal street system with structures fronting on the streets. Parking should not be the dominant visible element of the campuses developed for institutional uses. Providing a unique district for civic and institutional uses will establish uniform standards.

8.5.1.6 Mixed Use District

The Mixed Use District (MU) is established to provide opportunities for compatible and sustainable re-development where underutilized commercial properties already exist. The existing auto-oriented street, lot, and building designs can create uncomfortable pedestrian environments; however, with careful site planning these areas will allow a greater number of residents to walk or bike to businesses and services with an interconnected network of streets and sidewalks. Allowed building/lot types are Highway Commercial, Urban Workplace, Shop-front, Detached House, Attached House, and Multi-family. Dominant uses in this district are residential, retail and office. The Mixed Use District is expected to serve Andrews residents as well as persons who travel from surrounding communities. The development pattern in this district acknowledges the role of the automobile, with parking and access provided to ensure safety for the motoring public. Development standards in the Mixed Use District ensure the creation of a pleasant auto-oriented environment while enabling a compatible transition to uses in adjacent districts.

8.5.1.7 US 74 Commercial District

The US 74 Commercial District (C 74) is established to provide opportunities for compatible and sustainable development along the US 74 corridor. Development standards in the US 74 Commercial District acknowledge that the automobile is the primary mode of transportation. Development and design standards encourage pedestrian scale development along a secondary street network serving larger projects. Goals of the US 74 Commercial District include providing a pleasant environment for motorists, a safe environment for pedestrians along the secondary network of streets and pedestrian facilities; ensuring the safety of motorists and pedestrians; and preserving the capacity of the Bypass to accommodate high traffic volumes at higher speeds outside the core area as shown in the adopted Town Plan. Uses in this district include commercial goods & services, employment, and some limited industrial. Allowed building/lot types include Highway Commercial, Urban Workplace, and Shop-front.

8.5.1.8 Vehicle Services & Repair District

The Vehicle Service and Repair District (VSR) is established to provide locations for specific uses that, due to their unique characteristics and importance to the community, and the traveling public, require different criteria and specifications than typical

commercial development. Development standards in the Vehicle Service and Repair District acknowledge that the automobile is the primary mode of transportation in rural communities and there is a vital need for such businesses to be located in close proximity to one another. Uses within the Vehicle Service and Repair District are buffered from adjacent uses. The dominant use in this district is the vehicle repair shop and disabled vehicle storage area. The Vehicle Service and Repair District is reserved for uses which require broad maneuvering spaces and avoid pedestrian interaction with potentially hazardous conditions. Goals of the Vehicle Service and Repair District include providing a pleasant environment for motorists, a safe environment for pedestrians along the network of streets and pedestrian facilities; ensuring the safety of motorists and pedestrians; and preserving the capacity of Main Street and its interconnecting network of streets outside the core area as shown in the adopted Town Plan. Uses in this district include heavy commercial goods and services for motor vehicles, and some limited industrial. Allowed building/lot type is Highway Commercial.

8.5.1.9 Industrial District

The Industrial District (IND) is established to provide locations for industrial uses that, due to the scale of the buildings and/or the nature of the use, cannot be integrated into the community. Uses within the Industrial District are buffered from adjacent uses. The dominant uses in this district are manufacturing and warehouse storage. Small scale manufacturing and storage that is compatible with less intensive uses can and should be located in other non-residential or mixed use districts. The Industrial District is reserved for uses which require very large buildings and/or large parking and loading facilities.

8.5.1.10 Heavy Industry Overlay District

The Heavy Industry Overlay District (HIO) is established to protect all environments from the negative impacts of certain activities and types of development. It is the intent of this section to provide and permit certain public and private heavy industrial uses and facilities that incorporate hazardous materials and/or scientific technology, including: wholesale, distribution, storage, processing, manufacturing and production. However, it is required that industries in this district take all necessary actions including but not limited to installation of apparatus and technological equipment available to prevent negative impacts on the environment and the community from the emissions of smoke, dust, fumes, noise and vibrations and other activities and/or products resulting from such hazardous industrial activities in accordance with federal, state and local regulations.

8.5.1.11 Agricultural District

The Agriculture District (AG) is established to protect lands used for agricultural production, agricultural based businesses and related activities. Farm land is a defining element of Andrews's identity and the protection of these lands aids in preserving the character of the Town. Permitted uses are limited, with an emphasis on uses that are agricultural in nature. Development density is very low to encourage preservation of agricultural lands while discouraging residential subdivision development. The Agriculture District can also be used to protect open spaces.

8.5.1.12 Mini Farm Overlay District

The Mini Farm Overlay District (MFO) permits buildings to be grouped on a site, parcel, or property in order to optimize the use of land and resources for both residential and agricultural purposes. By clustering development at a density no greater than one unit per developed acre, projects developed in accordance with these standards can obtain density bonuses while preserving unique natural features for agricultural use. The Mini Farm Overlay District mandates the dedication of both agricultural land and open space with density bonuses provided as an incentive for adhering to the standards. It is the intent of this district to be used for new development in undeveloped outlying areas of the Town and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. Allowed building/lot type is Detached House.

8.5.1.13 Scenic Corridor Overlay District

The Scenic Corridor Overlay District (SCO) is established to protect the pastoral scenes and open spaces that provide a sense of arrival for residents and visitors traveling the major entrance roads and gateways to the Town. The pastoral scenes and undeveloped property along the entrance roads and gateways contribute significantly to Andrews's community character and sense of place. The Scenic Corridor Overlay District provides development options for the owners of the property abutting the entrance roads and gateways. The goal of this district is to protect the scenic value of the corridors through a mix of incentives and development standards. These standards will preserve the rural character of the Town by maintaining the sense of a rural corridor in an urban environment; provide an aesthetically appealing experience for those traveling the corridor; provide multi-modal transportation options for travel; and ensure a safe transportation corridor for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The Detached House lot/building type is allowed in this district.

8.5.1.14 Manufactured Home Park Overlay District

The Manufactured Home Park Overlay District (MHP) is established to protect the standard of living and neighborhood conditions within manufactured home parks. Established standards that will enable the use of innovative manufactured homes with a higher aesthetic standard will invigorate these communities. Non-conforming manufactured home parks that have not received approval for continuation would be amortized over a period of time to allow the owner/operator to meet reasonable financial payback expectations in accordance with accepted practices in North Carolina. Existing parks could be limited to a lesser degree of fundamental standards and specifications, while new parks could be required to meet a higher standard. These parks may be ideally suited for alternative designs such as Tiny House, Park Model and other styles of housing where installation standards are considered temporary. The overlay could be expanded to apply to permanent installations of innovative manufactured housing in cluster style subdivisions or parks.

8.5.2 Development Agreements

Preparations to embrace current and projected trends are a partnership of both land development and real estate industries with local government leadership. Shifts in social values, particularly among different age groups, indicate a strong propensity to consume goods and services in vastly different ways than prior years. In order to meet the expectations of what consumers' desire, land development will need to change the way it has been functioning since the 1970's. No longer do people rely solely upon the personal automobile for their daily needs. Today, generations young and old are finding new means of sharing within their daily lives as described in sections 3.6, 6.4 and 8.2 of this document. Local governments must find new ways to manage growth that is inclusive of a diverse and expectant population.

Development agreements are a relatively new addition to the local government tool-box that has been recently modified to improve the way development specifications are established for a property. Having been authorized by the North Carolina legislature over a decade ago for the purpose of addressing larger phased developments and the need to hold entitlement to land development approvals for extended periods of time, the development agreement has opened a new avenue to creative design and town building. Section 19 of Session Law 2015-246 amended the statutes to remove the minimum size and maximum term of agreements. The changes effectively opened the window of opportunity just in time to create enormous flexibility in how new land development projects could be structured.

Today, development agreements offer a developer, land owner and the Town the ability to structure common sense approaches to projects that protect property rights and enable effective approvals and administration of projects when all sides agree. Ideally, the development agreement will not be used unwisely by local governments, but will be utilized to offer higher degrees of trust. Trust in the form of stability eliminates concern that changes in elected local leadership will impact how a project progresses from start to finish.

The development agreement cannot substitute standards and specifications for development, but can offer two substantial benefits: establish opportunities for participation by the local government and freeze zoning standards in place for the life of the agreement.

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8.5.3 Ordinance Administration

The administration of a unified development ordinance, the new Andrews Development Ordinance (ADO) consistent with this plan must be performed by experienced professionals to ensure protection of the rights of businesses and citizens. Such fair and unbiased administration must be proactive and seek to help these businesses and citizens achieve the successes they may seek that are consistent with both the adopted Town Plan and the ADO.

Proactive administration includes:

- Assisting businesses and citizens inquiring about their proposal and how their ideas fit into the comprehensive plan.
- Ensuring all inquiries enjoy all of the privileges of the ADO.
- Providing accurate and prompt information to enable the business or citizen to rely on the information in making very important decisions.
- Identify invalid permits and determine how to administer.
- Identify non-conforming uses, show on map, send letter to describe how property rights will be preserved and limits on changes to the non-conforming use.
- Meet with Cherokee County Building Inspections department to establish protocol for future projects.
- Prepare a guide on the “Table of Permitted Uses” to 1) describe why so extensive, 2) why include unwanted uses, & 3) how to use.
- Customer service functions to include Town of Andrews Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator administering final Certificate of Occupancy (CO) following all inspections by appropriate Town staff and County Building Inspections.

8.5.4 Water and Sewer Utility Extension and Service Policy

The Town’s current infrastructure service areas that already extend beyond the Town Limits will require clear policies on connections to avoid falling victim to decisions that do not benefit the Town’s tax and utility rate payers. Updating these extension and service policies should clarify both requirements and incentives for property owners. *(See section 8.3.1 and 8.5.1 of this document.)*

While the Andrews’ Development Ordinance (ADO) will not apply to any property outside the Town Limits, it will apply to property annexed into the Town to gain access to those utilities. In areas where voluntary annexation petitions would not be eligible at the time a request for connection is made, the Town should still require a petition by the property owner that is binding on future owners allowing the Town to proceed with annexation when the statutory criteria is met.

8.5.5 Stormwater Utility – *An Innovative Alternative to Reduce Development Costs*

Another way to improve the financial attractiveness of Andrews for new investment seizes an opportunity still in its infancy among municipalities. This approach should be considered when and if the need is deemed either beneficial to the community or mandated by the state and/or federal agencies responsible for water quality. Under state and federal stormwater rules emerging across North Carolina, local governments

are often tasked with either requiring new development to install stormwater facilities (BMPs) or requiring existing property owners of larger development to begin retrofitting stormwater BMPs in areas that were developed prior to certain years, or both. These rules promulgated by the state and federal agencies mandate local governments to restore natural pre-development flow conditions measured in both quality and quantity when new development is approved. These requirements are very costly and often impact development feasibility in significant ways.

An innovative new alternative to these expansive (and expensive) development requirements is to approach this mandate with a new municipal utility service created in part to finance the installation and maintenance of the required retrofits and to meet the needs of both new development and re-development with common-sense solutions. Through the use of a public utility developers can not only enjoy reduced cost up front, but localities can enjoy enhanced tax base resulting in lower taxes throughout the jurisdiction when compared to the impact upon the pattern of development the traditional alternative of individual on-site BMPs create.

A Municipal Stormwater Management Utility comprehensively addresses the stormwater management needs for local governments by providing such services as a municipal function. If new development projects can utilize a municipal system, the cost of development can be reduced dramatically. Traditional on-site stormwater facilities are costly and consume a certain amount of land area that may be better suited for something other than a basin, constructed wetland or rain garden. By centralizing the treatment of municipal non-point source pollution, the taxpayers risk and exposure can be reduced, while offering reduced up-front cost to the developer. This logical approach stems from the fact that the ultimate responsibility for all new development resides with the local government issuing the permits for the new construction.

A MSMD in Andrews' could ultimately collect a fee from owners within the service area of an MSMD on an annual basis to address the ongoing any debt service, operations and maintenance. The fee funds both local and regional programs designed to protect and manage water quality and quantity by controlling the level of pollutants in stormwater runoff, and the quantity and rate of stormwater received and conveyed by structural and natural stormwater and drainage systems of all types. Properties not located within the MSMD would not be subjected to the fee.

The activities funded by the utility's collections include repair and replacement of BMPs, drainage improvements in various neighborhoods, and as a portion of the funding mechanism for "complete streets" renovations relating to City-owned streets and roadways.

The improvements in the Municipal Stormwater Management District will reduce upland flooding events, improve drainage in the Main Street core, and address density-related corridor concerns. Targeting site-specific projects with an eye toward containing costs, addressing overall drainage improvements in a regional manner, these devices will replace outdated or malfunctioning engineered devices associated with Main Street businesses. Replacing them with regional BMP's will holistically addresses the

stormwater-related nutrient management goals set forth in state and federal rules while creating new opportunities to develop infill projects in the core area.

Relocation of BMP facilities away from the built-environment and creating regional, efficient public amenities reduces cost by concentrating the facilities into centralized single locations in each sub-basin. Maintenance expenses are decreased by reducing the number of sites the Town staff will have to monitor. BMP performance is enhanced during low-flow conditions, and the actual sites where the devices are installed can anchor parks as a water amenity.

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9. BLUEPRINT FOR ANDREWS - SUMMARY AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Summary

The responsibility of implementation of this plan lies with the town of Andrews' Board of Aldermen. Through their leadership this plan will serve as the blueprint for refreshing revitalizing growth beginning with strengthening the core areas of Andrews, establishing opportunity for economic success, and providing the foundation for decision making.

The task associated with implementation will require a steady long-term focus on achieving goals. To provide guidance on prioritization the following table illustrates which steps to take when, and who should be responsible. These tasks are accompanied by a range of cost for overall budgeting. Seeking partnerships to share in the risk and the reward of joint ventures will improve the success and reduce the cost to the businesses and citizens of Andrews.

9.2 Actions to Implement Town Plan 2035

The information appearing in the Action Items table 9.2 ***Blueprint for Andrews: Actions to Implement Town Plan 2035*** provides a quick reference guide format for the ultimate prioritization of the actions and recommendations of this plan.