



BRYSON CITY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks are extended to the Bryson City Planning Board and the Planning Advisory Committee for their dedication and effort in preparing this plan.

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***“Change should be a friend. It should happen
by plan, not by accident.”***

***-Phil Crosby
Quality Guru***

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Introduction

During approximately 125 years of existence, the Town of Bryson City has experienced a succession of rather good and bad conditions both economically and physically. This cycle has often been closely related to the use of land in the Town and its surrounding areas. Naturally abundant resources such as agricultural and timber lands and other amenities including a pleasing environment, have contributed greatly to the Town's development. The Cherokee hold the land here in great reverence and it is the location of one of their ancient settlements. According to Tyler Howe, the Tribal Historic Preservation Specialist for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, "Man has inhabited this valley for about 14,000 years. Protected by the Smokies, nourished by the Tuckasegee River and home to temperate weather patterns, the land was an ideal site for a village." (Beadle, 2006). After European settlement, the State of North Carolina created Swain County in 1871 out of portions of Macon and Jackson counties; Charleston was established as the county seat. In 1889 the name of the county seat was changed to Bryson City in honor of one of the Town's earliest leaders, Colonel Thaddeus Dillard Bryson. The Town prospered and became the center of commerce and government in the area.

In the Town's more recent history, there have been many changes that are attributable to sustained growth in the tourism industry and increased development of residential land. In the past, the Town of Bryson City and Swain County have imposed very little, if any, land use regulation. Now that local services are more in demand and quality of life concerns are elevated, the Town has begun to take steps towards managing its future growth. *(See Appendix A)*

The Planning Process

In December, 2006 the Bryson City Board of Aldermen appointed a Planning Advisory Committee to oversee preparation of a Land Development Plan. Consisting of the members of the Bryson City Planning Board, an Alderman, Town Manager, Superintendent of Swain County Schools and three additional citizens from various walks of life, the committee held their first meeting in January, 2007. The Planning Advisory Committee's challenge would be to create a long range land development plan, taking into consideration existing land use patterns and present growth areas, and determining potential future land use in projected growth areas. The long range planning process takes in other important local issues such as transportation, housing, and the various public services required to accommodate future development.

The Planning Advisory Committee began meeting monthly in January 2007. Brad Walker agreed to serve as chair and act as liaison between the Committee and the Town. The Advisory Committee received a great deal of information over the following months from local and regional professionals, including Swain County Economic Development Director Ken Mills, Southwestern Commission Transportation Planner Ryan Sherby and NC Department of Commerce, Division of Community Assistance Planners Ron Hancock, Kristy Carter, and Karen Smith.



Figure 1: *The Planning Process*

In an effort to promote public participation in the planning process, a public involvement meeting was held in May, 2007. The meeting could be characterized as an information gathering session, as attendees were able to come and go freely. Upon arrival they were asked to participate in several activities. These activities were designed to gather information and gauge community sentiment regarding important land use issues faced by the Town. The results from the meeting could then be used by the Planning Committee to help formulate a vision of how Bryson City should grow in the future. Activities included two “Map Your Community” stations where participants were asked to identify areas they considered community assets, liabilities, or needs. A survey was available for citizens to rank a variety of pertinent issues. Planners conducted a visioning activity which allowed attendees the opportunity to express their concerns on how the Town would appear in the future. The Committee was able to use the results from this meeting and the accompanying survey to synthesize and add structure to the *Land Development Plan*. More detail about these activities and the public input collected at the meeting, as well as results from the survey, are presented in the Appendices.

Purpose

The *Bryson City Land Development Plan* will serve as an official policy document used to help guide the Town’s physical growth and development during the next 20-25 years. The development

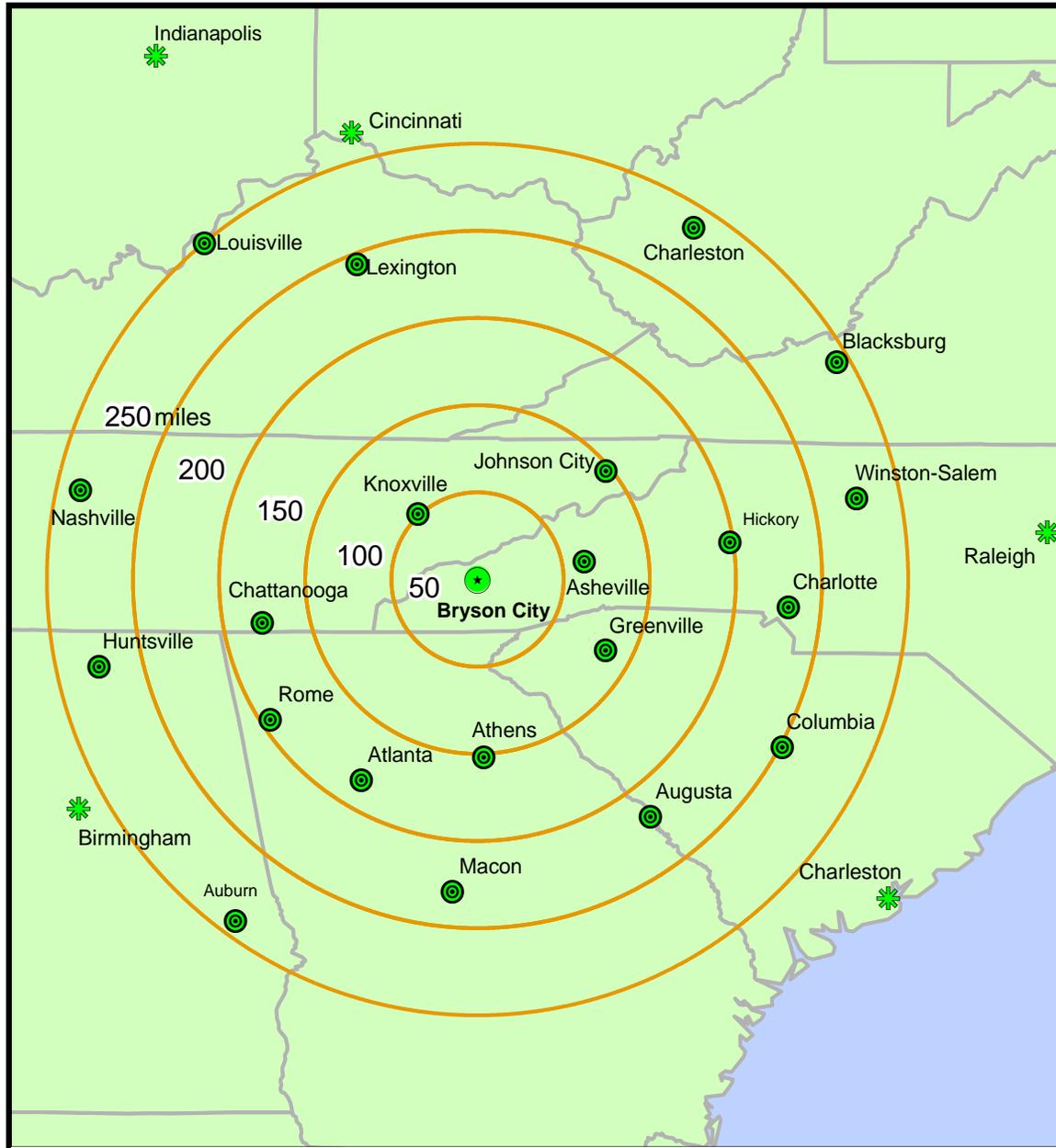
goals and growth strategies that were identified during the planning process will serve as a reference source and become the guiding principles for the Town's elected and appointed officials during the land use decision-making process. Crafting the *Land Development Plan* should serve as an opportune process for the Town, considering that the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation effective January 1, 2006 which strengthens the role of development plans in local land use regulation.

For several decades North Carolina law required that land use "...regulations be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan." (NCGS § 160A-383) Amendments to state planning statutes in 2006 now require that prior to adopting or rejecting any application for a zoning amendment, a Town's governing board must adopt a statement explaining its action, and whether or not that action is consistent with an adopted plan. The new laws also require that a Town's planning board advises their governing board regarding any proposed zoning changes and their consistency with the comprehensive, or any other adopted plan. The planning process followed by the Planning Advisory Committee and the resultant *Land Development Plan* helps assure that any future land development and land use regulations are designed to best promote the public interest and are not carried out in an arbitrary manner.

Setting and Situation

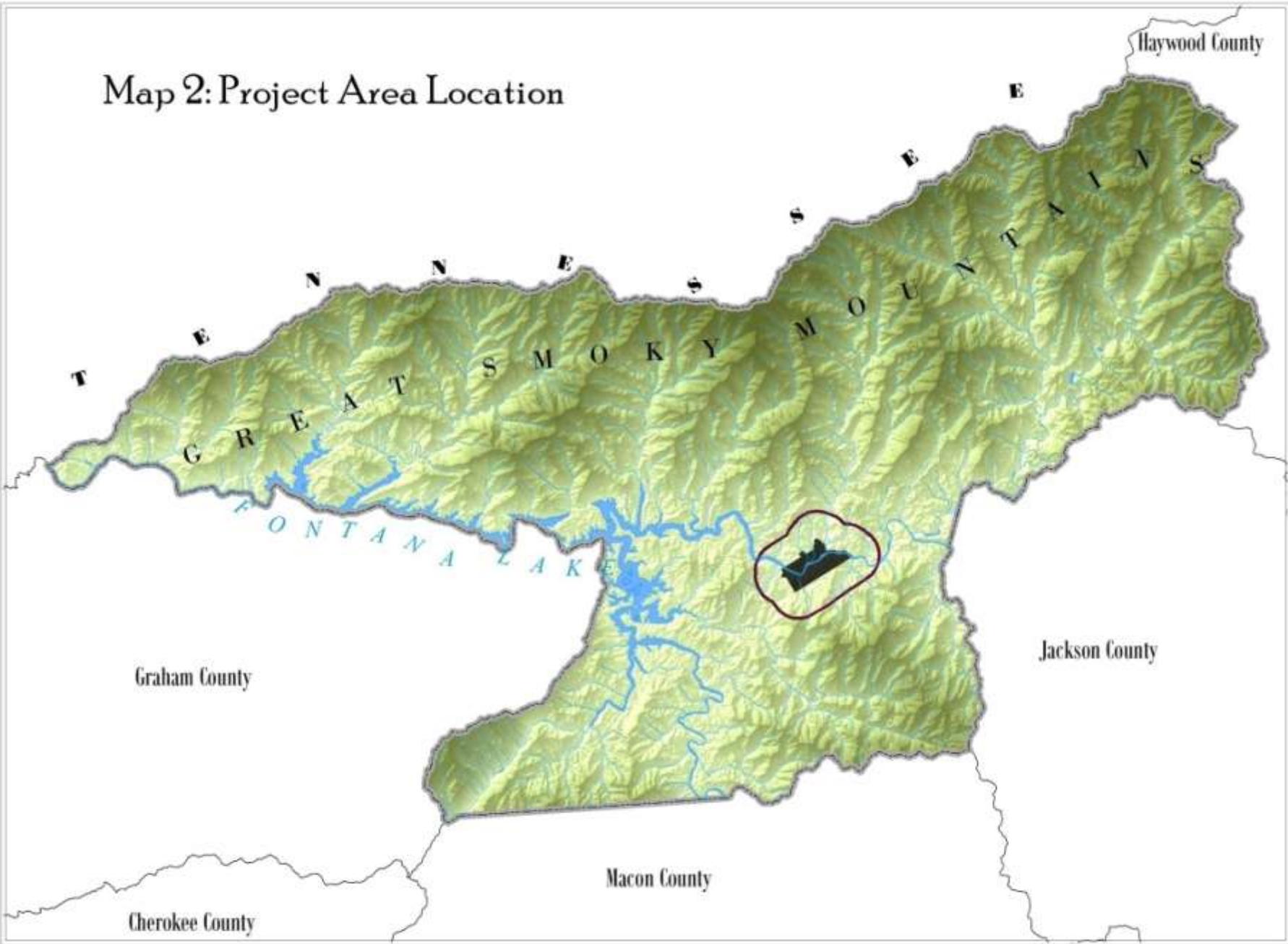
The Town of Bryson City is located in Swain County in western North Carolina. The Town's setting is its most distinguishing quality. It is situated in the Tuckasegee River Valley, surrounded by the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to the north, Fontana Lake and the Nantahala National Forest to the west, and the Qualla Boundary of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indian, as well as the Blue Ridge Parkway to the east. The nearest towns include Cherokee, Sylva, Franklin, and Waynesville. The major metropolitan areas of Asheville, Atlanta, and Knoxville are within easy driving distances (Map 1). The Bryson City town limits include approximately 2.3 square miles, or 1462 acres. The Planning Committee determined that the study area for this plan should include the town limits and the one mile area adjacent to town limits in all directions. This area includes approximately 12.5 square miles, or 8000 acres (Map 2).

It is important that the Town and County not be considered entirely separate during the planning process. Because such a large quantity of land in the county is federal land or otherwise (Qualla, land trusts, etc.), the Town and County should coordinate their planning efforts carefully to ensure that the most appropriate use of the remaining land is assured. Likewise, the County owns



Map 1:
*Bryson City
 in Relation to
 the Region*

Map 2: Project Area Location



land within the Town's boundaries and the Town owns land outside the Town limits in the County's jurisdiction. The Town and County are also dependent on each other for a variety of public services and community assets. The situation and future vitality of Bryson City and Swain County are not mutually exclusive in terms of the economy, growth, and physical development; as goes one, so goes the other.

The Town of Bryson City, like much of the surrounding region, faces a complex transition from a traditional economy based on natural resource extraction, manufacturing and agriculture, to a new post-industrial economy based primarily on information and services. Bryson City is perhaps better suited to deal with this transition than many of its neighbors considering its unique situation. The Smoky Mountains National Park is the most heavily visited national park in the U.S., the demand for retirement homes in the area by baby boomers is unprecedented, eco-tourism is experiencing increased popularity, the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad continues to draw large numbers of tourists, and Harrah's Casino in nearby Cherokee has contributed to greater prosperity in the area. This "perfect storm" of growth conditions contributes to and helps explain the intensified development pressure being experienced in the area.

Demographics

According to official estimates by the North Carolina State Demographer the population of the Town of Bryson City was 1492 in 2006. This figure represents approximately eleven percent of the entire population of Swain County. The population of Bryson City is similar in size to that of many other towns and county seats throughout rural western North Carolina; it is a small town (Table 1).

Population 2000-2005 in Similar Communities throughout WNC

Location	Pop2000	Pop2005	Growth	%Growth
Clay	8,775	9,876	1,101	12.5
Hayesville	458	489	31	6.8
Yancey	17,774	18,152	378	2.1
Burnsville	1623	1638	15	1
Allegheny	10,677	10,912	235	2.2
Sparta	1817	1778	-39	-2.1
Madison	19,635	20,296	661	3.4
Marshall	840	847	7	1
Alexander	33,603	35,898	2,295	6.8
Taylorsville	1813	1930	117	6.5
Cherokee	24,298	26,180	1,882	7.7
Murphy	1568	1613	45	3
Haywood	54,033	56,595	2,562	4.7
Maggie Valley	607	1198	591	97
Swain	12,968	13,585	617	4.8
Bryson City	1411	1462	51	3.6

Table 1. Source: NC Rural Economic Development Center, Rural Data Bank (<http://www.ncruralcenter.org/databank/>)

For comparison purposes and analysis of population change over time, this study relies largely upon the figures compiled during decennial censuses of the US Census Bureau. The 1990 and 2000 Censuses show that during the last decade of the 20th Century, percentage population increase in the Town was slightly lower than that of Swain County, as well as for the State of NC, and the nation as a whole.

According to the Census Bureau, the United States population has increased nearly a hundredfold since 1790 from just over 3.5 million residents to more than 300 million in 2007 (Fig. 2).

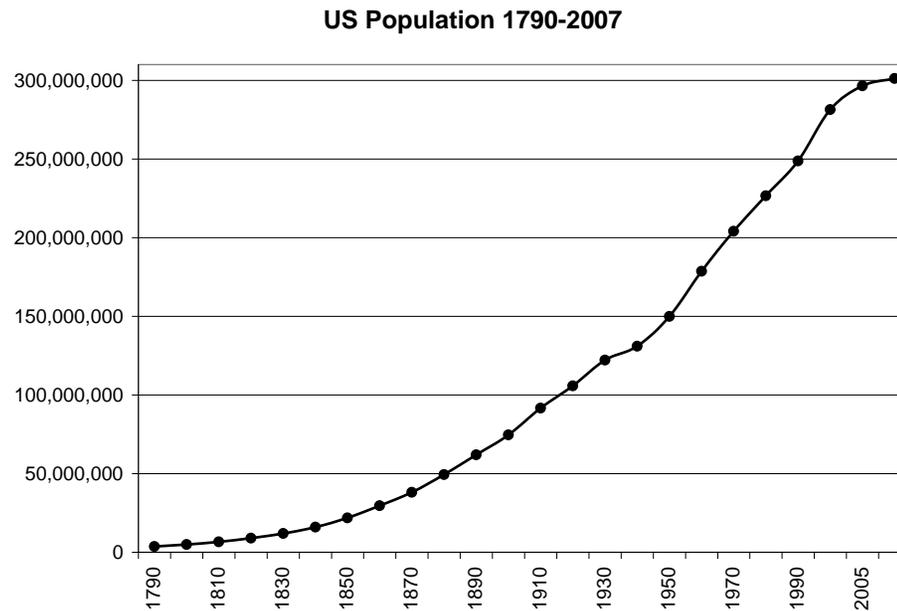


Figure 2. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

NC Population 1790-2005

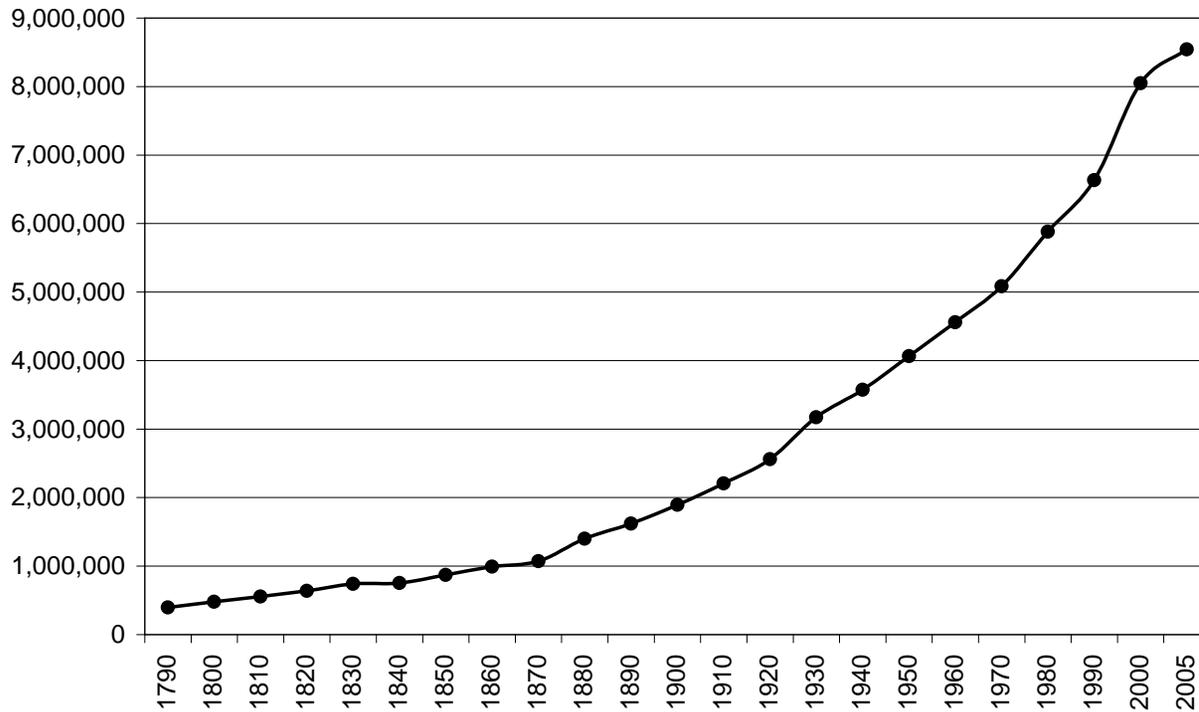


Figure 3. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The population of North Carolina has also seen tremendous growth over the years, from just fewer than 400,000 in 1790 to nearly nine million in 2007. The state recently became the tenth most populous state in the nation, displacing New Jersey, and is expected to experience continued rapid growth throughout the next several decades (Fig. 3).

Although the population of Swain County exhibited drastically different population trends than the state and the nation since 1900, the county's population has grown steadily since 1970 and is expected to exceed 15,000 by the year 2020 (Fig. 4).

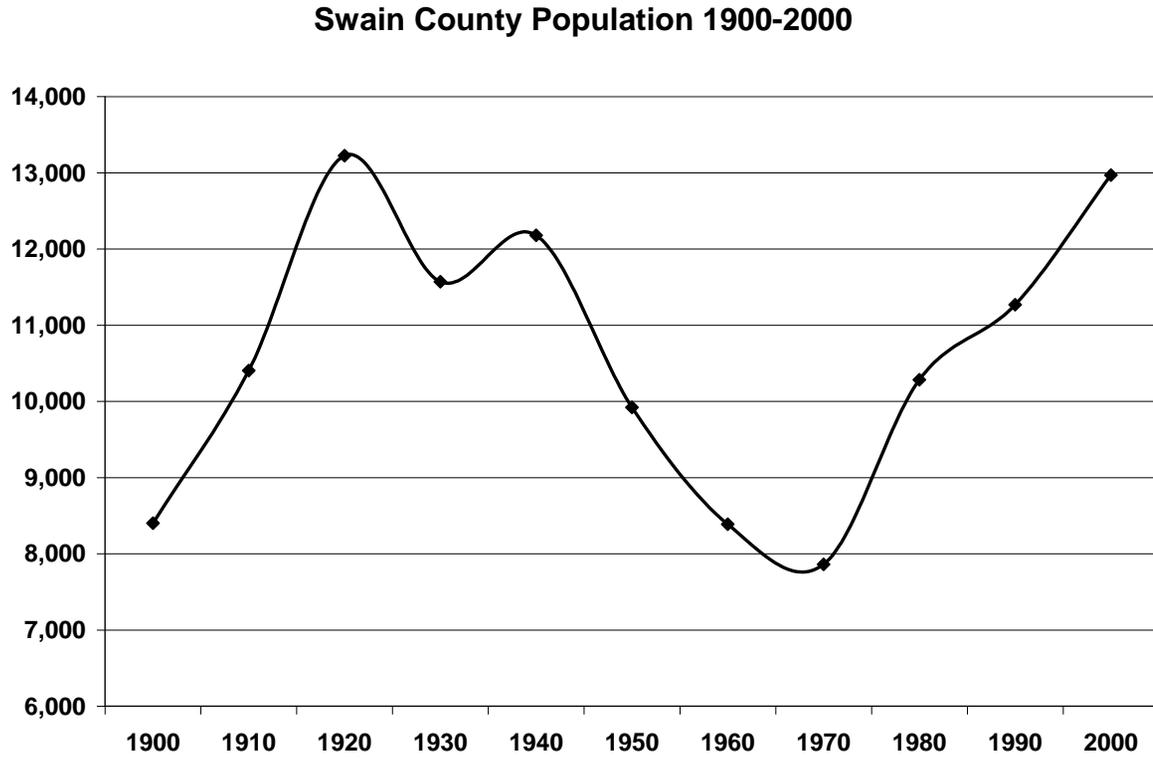


Figure 4. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The population of Bryson City has had its ups and downs during the past several decades as well. During the 1960s and 1970s the population had steady growth, but during the 1980s the population fell by over twenty-five percent. This could be explained by out-migration related to the larger national economic downturn and recession that occurred at the time. In more recent years there has been a renaissance of sorts in Bryson City and the population has begun to climb once again. From 2000 to 2006, the Town has had a growth rate of 5.74 percent, from 1411 to 1492. If this rate continues the Town's population should exceed 1600 residents by 2020 (Fig. 5).

Bryson City Population 1960-2006

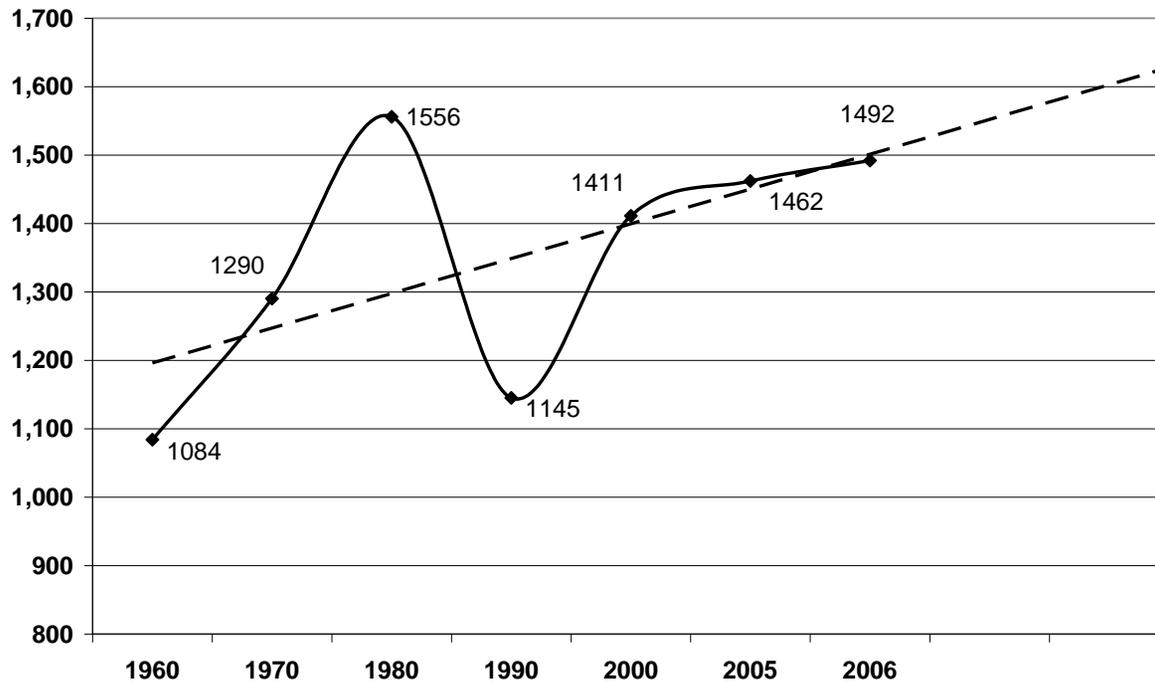


Figure 5.
Source: NC State
Demographer

There are limitations as to how much the population of Bryson City will grow in the future. The majority of residential development is likely to occur in the county, on the outskirts of town, due to a finite amount of developable land within the town boundaries. Without significant redevelopment projects, infill, or multi-unit residential construction, the town's population is likely to peak in the not so distant future.

An aging population and a slower birth rate is another contributor to the inevitable peak in the number of inhabitants. Family sizes are decreasing as women give birth to fewer children, evidenced by an average family size in 2000 of less than three in North Carolina, Swain County and Bryson City (2.98, 2.91, and 2.78 respectively). The median age of Bryson City residents is increasing; in 2000 the median age was around 46 years old, an increase in eight years since 1970, and more than ten years higher than the national and state medians (Fig. 6).

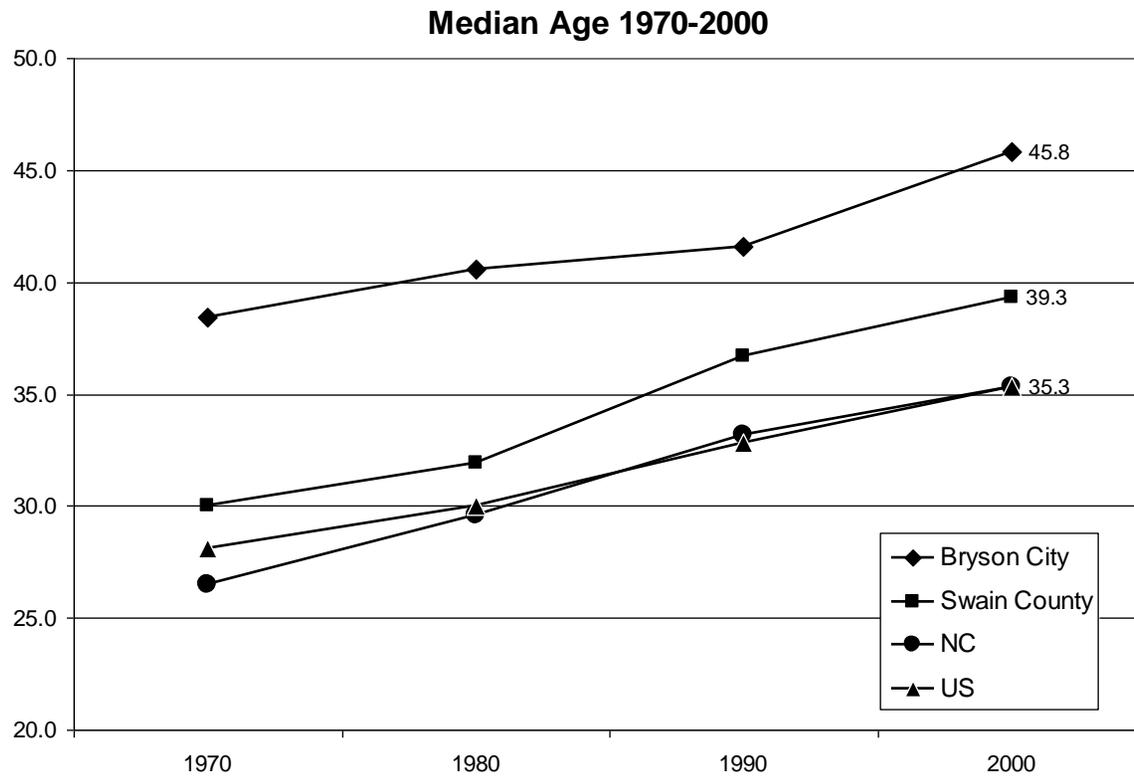


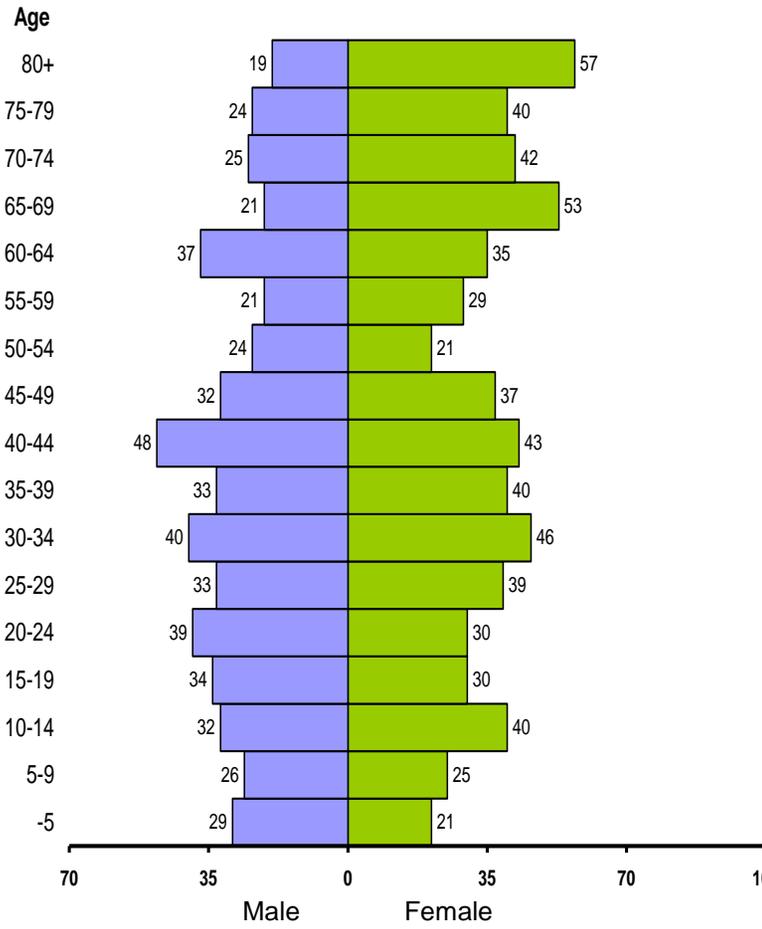
Figure 6. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

A population pyramid is a tool used by demographers to represent the age and sex distribution of a population at a specific point in time. Analysis of the distribution gives an indication of future trends in population due to natural increases (or decreases) in population. A classic pyramid shape

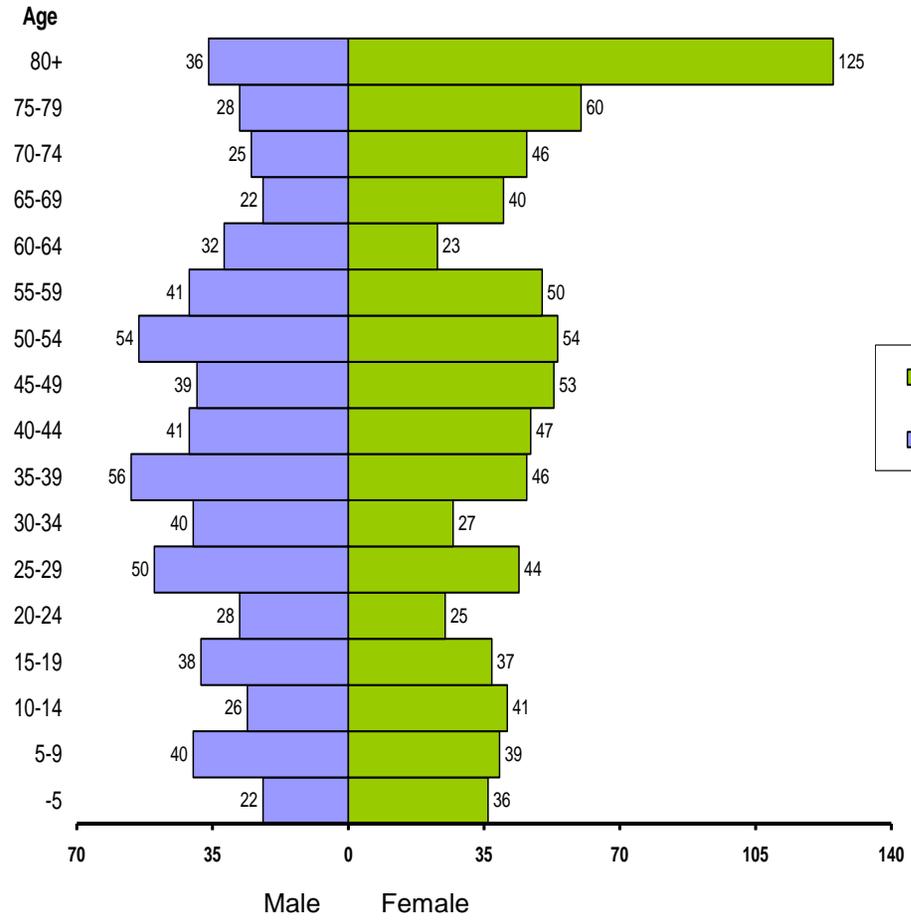
indicates rapid growth and high fertility; an inverted pyramid indicates negative growth due to an elderly population.

The following graphs show that people aged 30-39 made up approximately 14 percent of the population of Bryson City in 1990 and 12 percent in 2000; those aged 5-14 made up approximately 15 percent of residents in 1990 and 14 percent in 2000. This shows that Bryson City still has several fairly young families, but there is also likely to be a significant increase in the older population over the next few decades due to normal aging and in-migration. In 1990, 24 percent of the population was over sixty-four; by 2000 the number of elderly had risen to 27 percent (Fig. 7). Whether the Town retains its younger generation is still to be determined and will most likely be based on the availability of educational and employment opportunities.

Population Pyramid of Bryson City, NC 1990



Population Pyramid of Bryson City, NC 2000



Female
Male

Figure 7. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and Census 2000

Income and Earning Potential

The income level and educational attainment of a community's residents are often used as measures of how robust and dynamic the community has become. These are also good indicators of what the community may become in the future. In 2000, over sixty-six percent of Bryson City residents were high school graduates, compared with seventy-one percent in Swain County. Conversely, seventeen percent of the residents in Bryson City hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher, compared with fourteen percent in the County (Fig. 8).

Bryson City Educational Attainment: 2000

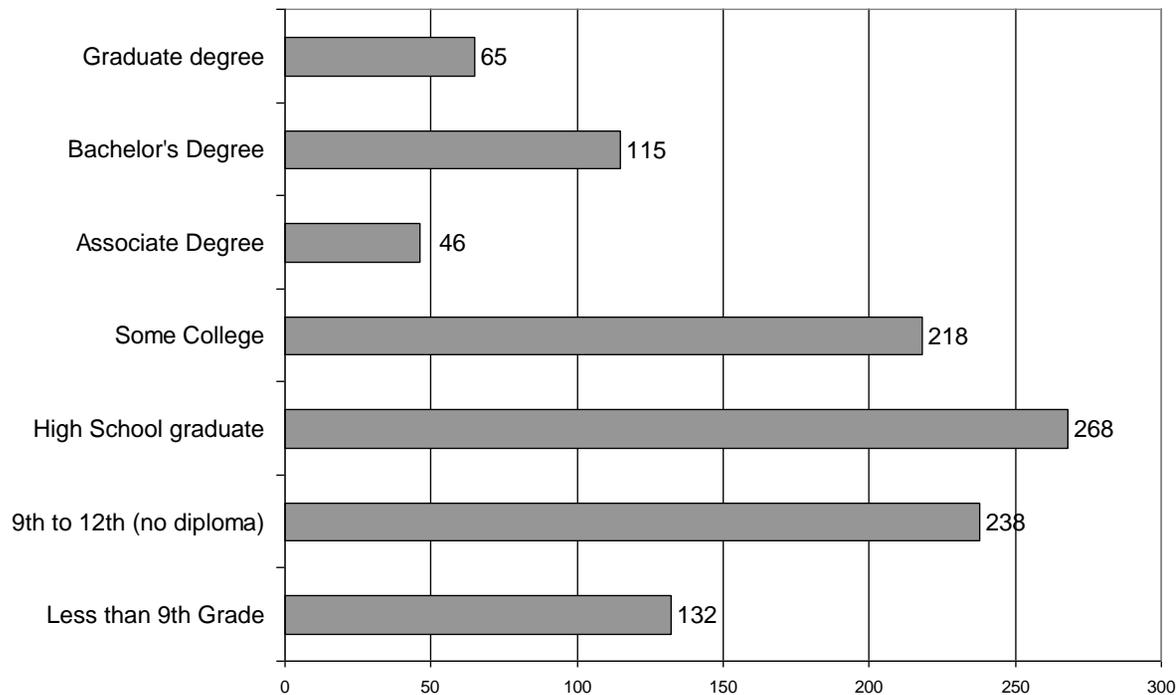


Figure 8. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Bryson City School Enrollment: 2000

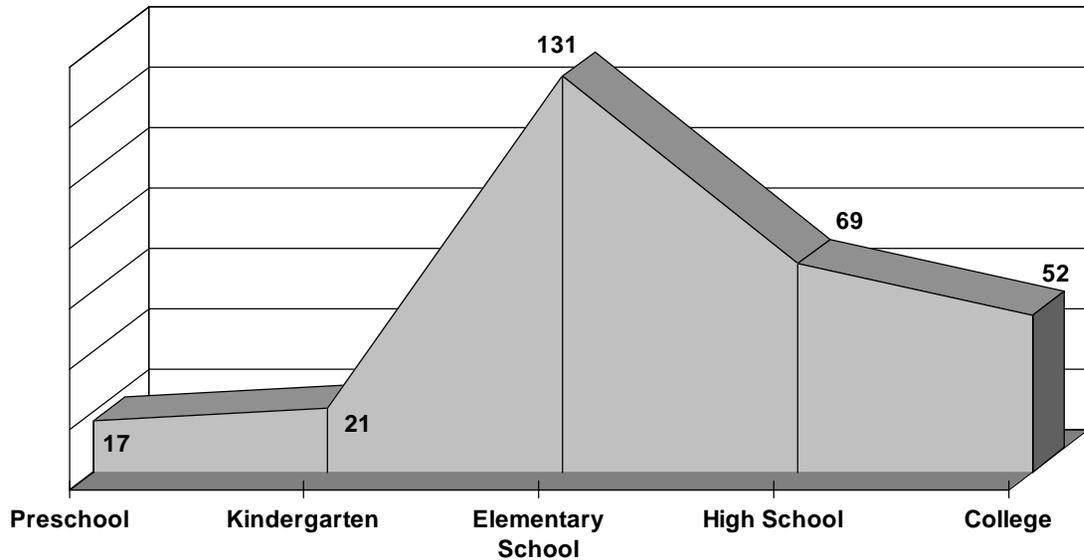


Figure 9. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

The number of students enrolled in area schools can also be used as a good measurement of how development is likely to occur in the future. Most recent Census data show that Bryson City typically has around twenty percent of its population enrolled in school at some level (Fig. 9).

The 2000 Census estimated that the median family income in Bryson City at the time was \$31,875 annually. Approximately thirty percent of families had a combined annual income of \$50,000 or more; however, there were also 46 families and 234 individuals living below the poverty level in Bryson City during 2000. The per capita annual income in 1999 was \$14,446, compared with \$11,955 per year as reported in 1989 (Table 2).

**Median Household Income and Per Capita Income, 1979, 1989 and 1999;
(Adjusted for Inflation to 1999)**

	Median Household Income¹				
	1979	1979 ³	1989	1989 ⁴	1999
Bryson City	9,877	22,618	18,750	25,125	31,875
Swain County	9,866	22,593	16,068	21,531	28,608
North Carolina	14,481	33,231	26,647	35,800	39,184
United States	16,841	38,647	30,056	40,380	41,994

	Per Capita Income²				
	1979	1979 ³	1989	1989 ⁴	1999
Bryson City	5,052	11,569	9,753	13,069	14,446
Swain County	4,123	9,442	8,922	11,955	14,647
North Carolina	6,133	14,045	12,885	17,311	20,307
United States	7,298	16,747	14,420	19,373	21,587

Table 2. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1980, 1990, 2000.

Notes:

1. "Household Income" is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as total money income received in the prior calendar year by all household members 15 years and over, tabulated for all households; median household income figures are derived from the entire distribution of household incomes. "Median" is defined as the middle value, which means that one-half the population earns less and one-half earns more than the figure given.
2. "Per Capita Income" is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as total money income per resident of the area, including young children, elderly, and others who may not be earning money, for the calendar year prior to census day.
3. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov), the consumer price index multiplier for converting 1979 figures into comparable dollars in 1999 is 2.29. In other words, to calculate what a 1979 figure is in 1999, multiply the 1979 amount by 2.29.
4. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the consumer price index multiplier for converting 1989 figures into comparable dollars in 1999 is 1.34.

Employment and Economic Outlook

In order to have a strong economy, a community must be able to provide ample employment for its workforce. Without adequate jobs the economy declines and growth is limited. The western counties in North Carolina have historically had some of the highest unemployment rates in the state and in the Appalachian region as a whole; Swain County and Bryson City are no exception. Fortunately, the unemployment rate in the area has shown considerable improvement in recent times; in 2005 the annual average unemployment rate was 6.6 percent in Swain County, down from 13 percent in 2000. The 2000 Census shows that Bryson City had an unemployment rate of 4.8 percent at the time and that only 57 residents were unemployed (Table 3).

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has classified Swain County as being “At-Risk” of becoming economically distressed. The ARC has given the County this designation because it ranks between the worst 10 percent and worst 25 percent of all the nation's counties in an index based on three important economic indicators: three-year average unemployment rate, per capita market income, and poverty rate (Map 3).

Western NC Unemployment Rates: 1970-2005

Area Name	2005	2000	1990	1980	1970
Alexander County	5.5	2.3	3.7	7.5	3.6
Avery County	5.3	3.3	6.2	8.9	6.6
Buncombe County	4.3	2.6	3.1	5.9	4.5
Burke County	6.4	3.1	4.0	6.8	4.8
Cherokee County	5.9	7.2	9.3	8.5	7.9
Clay County	4.0	4.1	5.8	9.1	9.6
Cleveland County	7.1	6.0	4.5	9.3	3.8
Gaston County	6.1	6.3	4.1	5.8	3.4
Graham County	7.1	7.0	15.3	11.4	16.3
Haywood County	4.3	3.8	4.9	9.1	4.0
Henderson County	4.0	2.1	2.6	4.6	3.6
Jackson County	3.7	3.5	5.7	8.4	5.3
Lincoln County	5.7	4.0	4.2	8.8	4.2
Macon County	4.5	3.4	3.6	7.0	6.4
Madison County	5.1	3.3	4.4	6.7	5.5
McDowell County	7.2	4.7	6.1	6.2	4.3
Mitchell County	7.4	4.7	6.7	6.7	7.2
Polk County	4.0	3.2	2.2	4.4	4.0
Rutherford County	8.8	7.3	5.3	7.0	3.8
Swain County	6.6	13.0	12.7	11.8	9.1
Transylvania County	5.2	2.6	3.6	4.9	3.8
Watauga County	3.5	1.5	4.5	7.5	5.3
Yancey County	7.2	3.9	7.9	8.3	6.5
North Carolina	5.2	3.6	4.2	6.5	4.3

Table 3. Source: N.C. Department of Commerce (<http://data.osbm.state.nc.us>)

Map 3: ARC Economic Status, FY 2007

Economic Status

- Not ARC
- At-Risk
- Competitive
- Distressed
- Transition



February, 2007

The North Carolina Department of Commerce ranks each of the state's one hundred counties based on their economic well-being and assigns a ranking, or tier designation to each one. Under the William S. Lee Quality Jobs and Business Expansion Act, Swain County was ranked in the lowest of five tiers and was thus eligible for large state tax credits for growing businesses investing in the area and creating new jobs. Under the latest adaptation of the program, the county is ranked in the mid-level of three tiers. (NC Dept. of Commerce, 2007)

During 2004, 238 businesses employed 1,978 people in the 28713 ZIP code. Of these businesses, sixty-five percent had between one and four employees. Only one manufacturing business in the area, Consolidated MetCo, had more than 250 employees (Fig. 10).

**Percentage of Business Establishments in ZIP Code 28713
by Number of Employees**

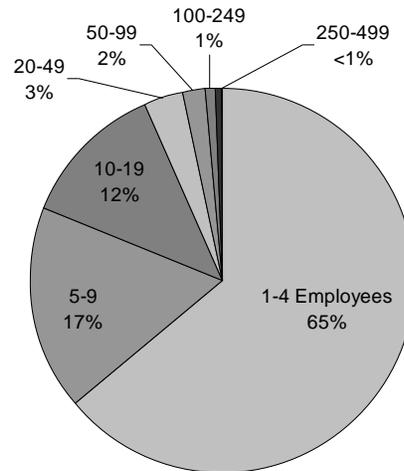
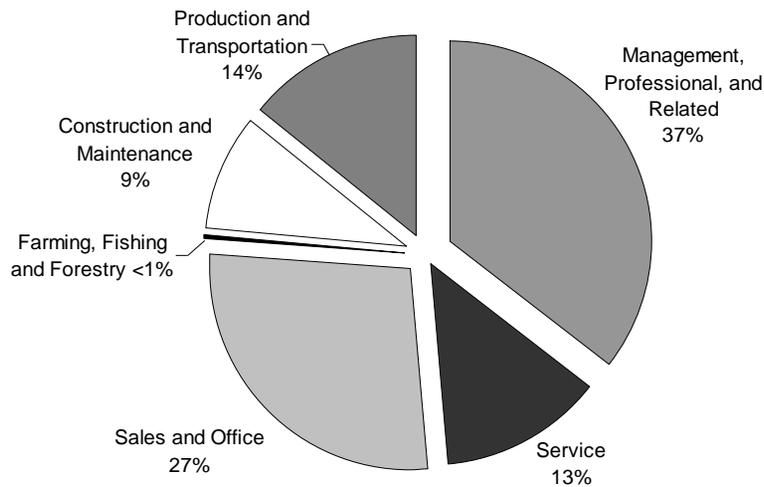


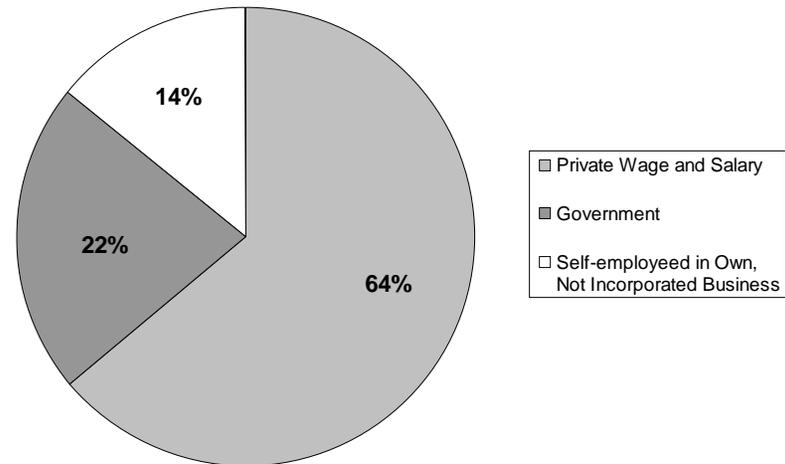
Figure 10. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns, 2004

Employment data for the Town by occupation, class, and industrial sector provides further support to the notion that the future economy of Bryson City cannot depend solely upon traditional economic development initiatives (Figs. 11, 12, & 13). Within a supremely competitive market, “chasing smokestacks” becomes a less viable option for future economic stability. Economic development should be concentrated on building upon assets already in place.

Bryson City Employment 2000: Occupation



Bryson City Employment: Class of Workers



Figures 11 and 12. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Bryson City Employment 2000: Industrial Sectors

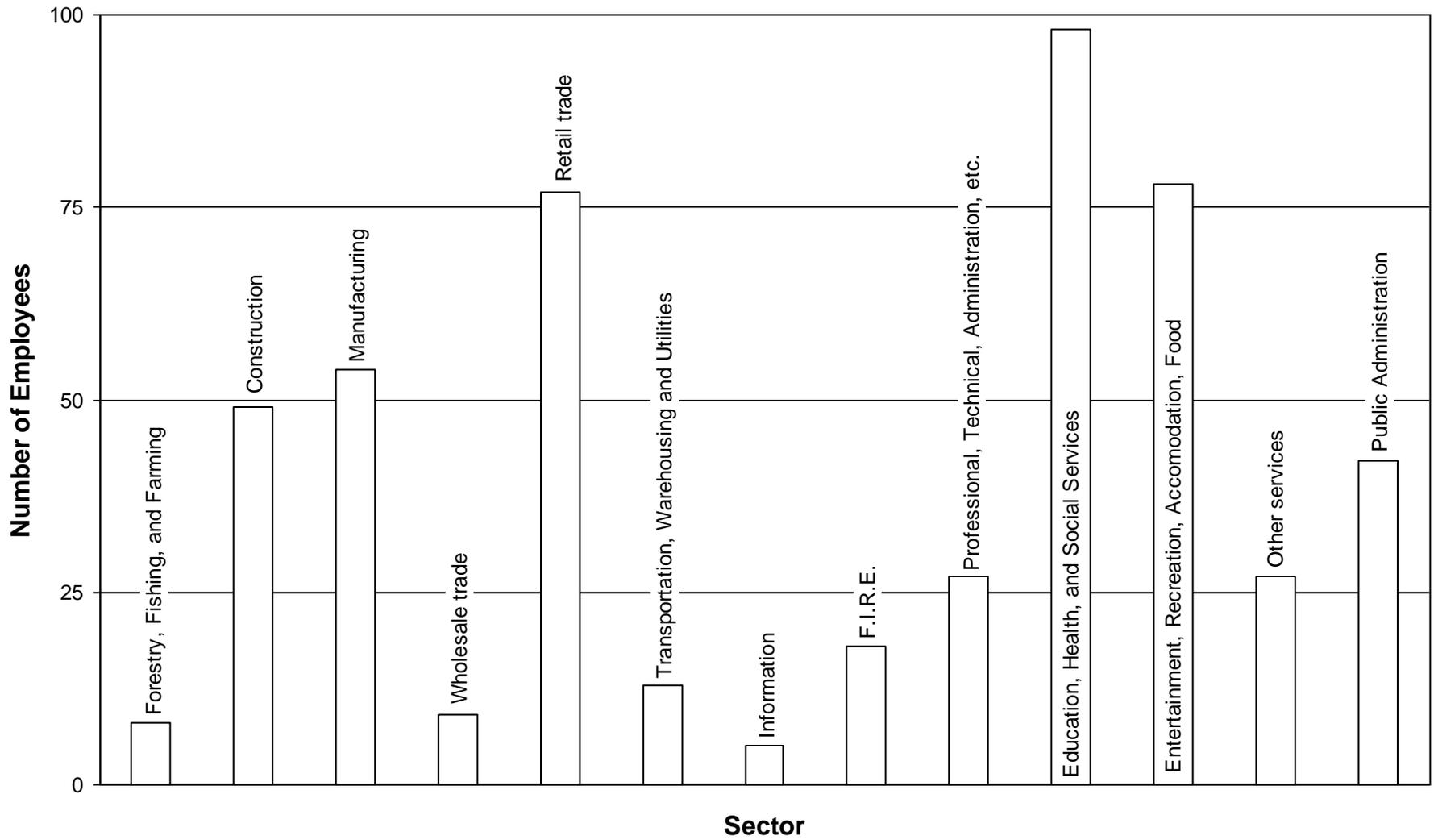


Figure 13. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

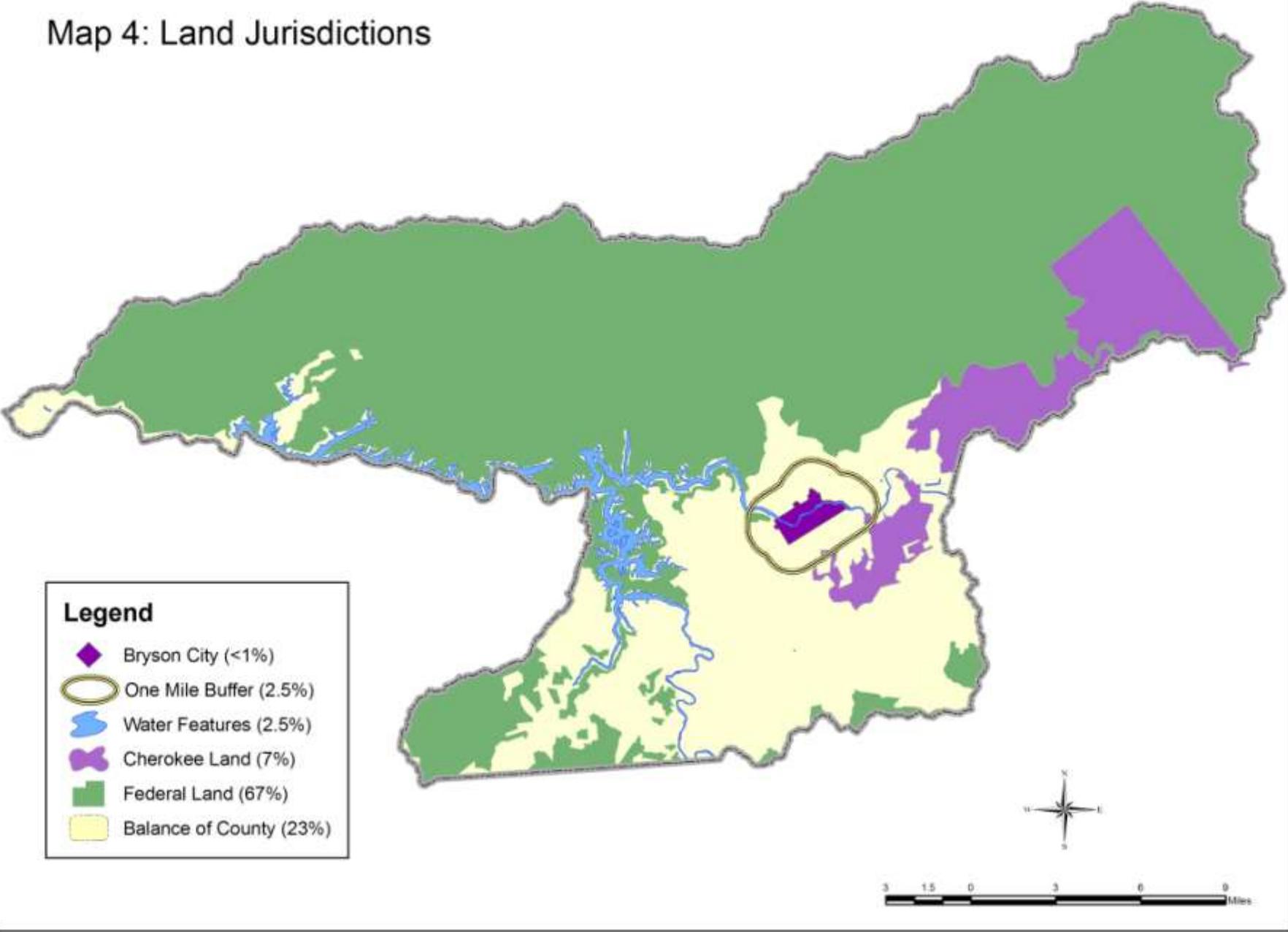
In-Migration, Seasonality, Land Use and Land Ownership

Land ownership, arguably more than all other factors, is the driving force behind land use; this is especially true in Swain County and Bryson City where land use regulations are limited. The federal government and other entities own or otherwise control approximately 75 percent of the 528 square miles of land area in Swain County. This is primarily divided among the National Park Service, the United States Forest Service, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation. Bryson City covers less than one percent of the land and the study area takes in about 2.5 percent of the county's land area (Map 4). These numbers become especially noteworthy when coupled with the environmental constraints to development. These figures are also significant when considering population density and retaining the small town "look and feel" and rural character of Bryson City and its surrounds.

Table Four shows the change in population density for western North Carolina counties from 1980 to 2000. Swain County's population density in 2000 was reportedly 24.6 persons per square mile. When land under federal jurisdiction in the County is taken out of consideration, the population density figures change noticeably. Using the State Demographer's 2006 population estimate of 13,743, the population density of Swain County, one of the larger counties in the region by area, yet

also one of the smallest in terms of population, becomes 83 persons per square mile, much greater than the official number of 24.6. A population density of 1000 persons per square mile is generally considered to be urban so it is not assumed that the County is rapidly urbanizing, but it is becoming more crowded. For comparison, in 2006 the population density of Bryson City was 690 persons per square mile; in Buncombe County it was 334; in Asheville it was 1705. The point is that the County's population is concentrated in a much smaller area than the entire 528 square miles it occupies due to extensive public land holdings. For this reason the population density is actually much higher than generally accepted.

Map 4: Land Jurisdictions



WNC Region Population Density in 1980 and 2000

County	Land Area (Sq. Mi.)	Persons/ Sq. Mile 1980	Persons/ Sq. Mile 2000	Percent Change
Avery	247.00	58.3	69.5	19.2
Buncombe	655.99	244.2	314.5	28.9
Cherokee	455.19	41.9	53.4	27.4
Clay	214.70	30.9	40.9	32.3
Cleveland	464.63	178.3	207.2	16.2
Graham	292.07	25.0	27.4	9.6
Haywood	553.66	83.8	97.6	16.5
Henderson	374.00	156.2	238.4	52.6
Jackson	490.71	52.7	67.5	28.1
McDowell	441.68	80.4	95.4	18.7
Macon	516.47	39.0	57.7	47.9
Madison	449.42	37.3	43.7	17.2
Mitchell	221.43	65.0	70.8	8.9
Polk	237.85	54.6	77.0	41.0
Rutherford	564.12	94.7	111.5	17.7
Swain	528.10	19.5	24.6	26.2
Swain adj.¹	166	10283/166=62	12968/166=78	26
Transylvania	378.39	61.9	77.5	25.2
Watauga	312.51	100.8	136.6	35.5
Yancey	312.45	47.6	56.9	19.5
State of NC	48,710.88	120.4	165.2	37.2

Table 4. Source: N.C. State Data Center, State Demographics unit
(www.demog.state.nc.us)

¹ Adjusted for U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service areas.

The ownership and land use patterns in the study area also reveal that not only is the area becoming more crowded, but the bulk of the growth results from migration. From 2000 to 2005, Swain County grew by 616 persons; of this number, 88 percent was from migration. Bryson City census data shows that of the Town's 1411 residents in 2000, 27 percent (384) lived outside of Swain County in 1995. Tables Five and Six further express the migration and mobility of Bryson City residents.

Natural Increase and Migration: 2000-2005

	2005 Population	2000 Population	Growth	% Growth	Births	Deaths	Natural Growth	Net Migration	% Net Migr.
NC	8,682,066	8,046,813	635,253	7.89	623,559	377,833	245,726	389,527	4.8
Swain County	13,584	12,968	616	4.8	944	869	75	541	4.2

Table 5. Source: NC State Data Center, Population and Migration

Bryson City Residents 2000: Residence in 1995

	Number	Percent
Population 5 years old and over	1358	100
Reside in Same House in 1995	721	53.1
Reside in Different House in 1995	622	45.8
Same County	253	18.6
Different County	369	27.2
Same State	234	17.2
Different State	135	9.9

Table 6. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

As in other tourist destinations, the population and a corresponding need for services swells during peak times. The permanent population of the Town is easy to estimate from census records; however it becomes more difficult to estimate how many folks are in the area at any given time. The 2000 Census reports the existence of twenty-eight seasonal homes in Bryson City, but seasonal housing units in the surrounding area obviously contribute to an upsurge of activity in town. Swain County had 1,281 seasonal housing units in 2000, a number which has substantially increased in the past few years. During 2006 for example, 216 building permits were issued, mostly for single family residences.

The impact of vacationers and other tourists on seasonal population can be difficult to track. Many people visit the area to experience the amenities and attractions on day trips; some stay for a weekend or a few days in hotels, inns, cabins, campgrounds, and cottages. Others may stay weeks or even months in retirement or second homes, often with additional friends and family members. All things considered, it would be safe to assume that the “population” of the Town swells into the several thousand range during peak travel and tourism times.

Another way to get an idea of how the land in the area will likely be used in the future is by examining the property records from the county’s tax mapping system. All counties are required to keep exact records about parcel dimensions and ownership. These records are very helpful in

planning for future development. A ZIP code analysis of addresses of the owners of 11,818 taxable parcels in Swain County reveals that:

- Sixty-two percent are owned by those listing a North Carolina address.
- Thirty-eight percent are owned by people with out of state addresses. In fact, forty-seven different states and six foreign nations are represented in the tax records. Only Hawaii, Utah, and Montana are not listed.
- Forty-four percent have listed the ZIP code for Bryson City, 28713, as their primary address.
- Fifty-three percent of parcels are represented by seven ZIP codes in western North Carolina, while the remaining 47 percent are from a variety of 2,142 other places (Tables 7, 8 & 9).

This is an extremely large percentage of absentee owners and is a good barometer for continued second home residential development throughout the county in the coming years. Whereas only four percent of the housing units in Bryson City were reported as seasonal during the 2000 census, 18 percent of the housing units in the county were reported as seasonal at that time. During the past several years that figure has likely increased considering the area's recent strong real estate market.

The absentee ownership situation is similar in Bryson City but not to the extent as witnessed in the county. Seventy-six percent of the parcels have owners with western North Carolina ZIP codes, 1,897 of which are from Bryson City. Of the 2,641 tax parcels examined (200 parcels did not have a ZIP code listed) 96 percent are from four states: North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. The remaining four percent of owners are from 27 various others states. This still demonstrates an extensive variation of the primary residences among landowners in town; 312 different ZIP codes are represented in the tax records for Bryson City.

ZIP Code Analysis of Swain County Tax Parcels

State	Number Parcels	Percent
NC	7277	0.62
FL	2479	0.21
GA	778	0.07
SC	269	0.02
AL	144	0.01
TN	124	0.01
VA	103	0.01

ZIP	Number Parcels	Percent	Community
28713	5238	0.443	Bryson City
28789	542	0.046	Whittier
28719	177	0.015	Cherokee
28779	109	0.009	Sylva
28702	89	0.008	Almond
28786	75	0.006	Waynesville
28716	56	0.005	Canton

Percent	Comment
0.53	6286 from 7 ZIP codes
0.47	5531 from 2,142 other ZIPs

Tables 7, 8, & 9. Source: Swain County Tax Dept.

Existing Land Use

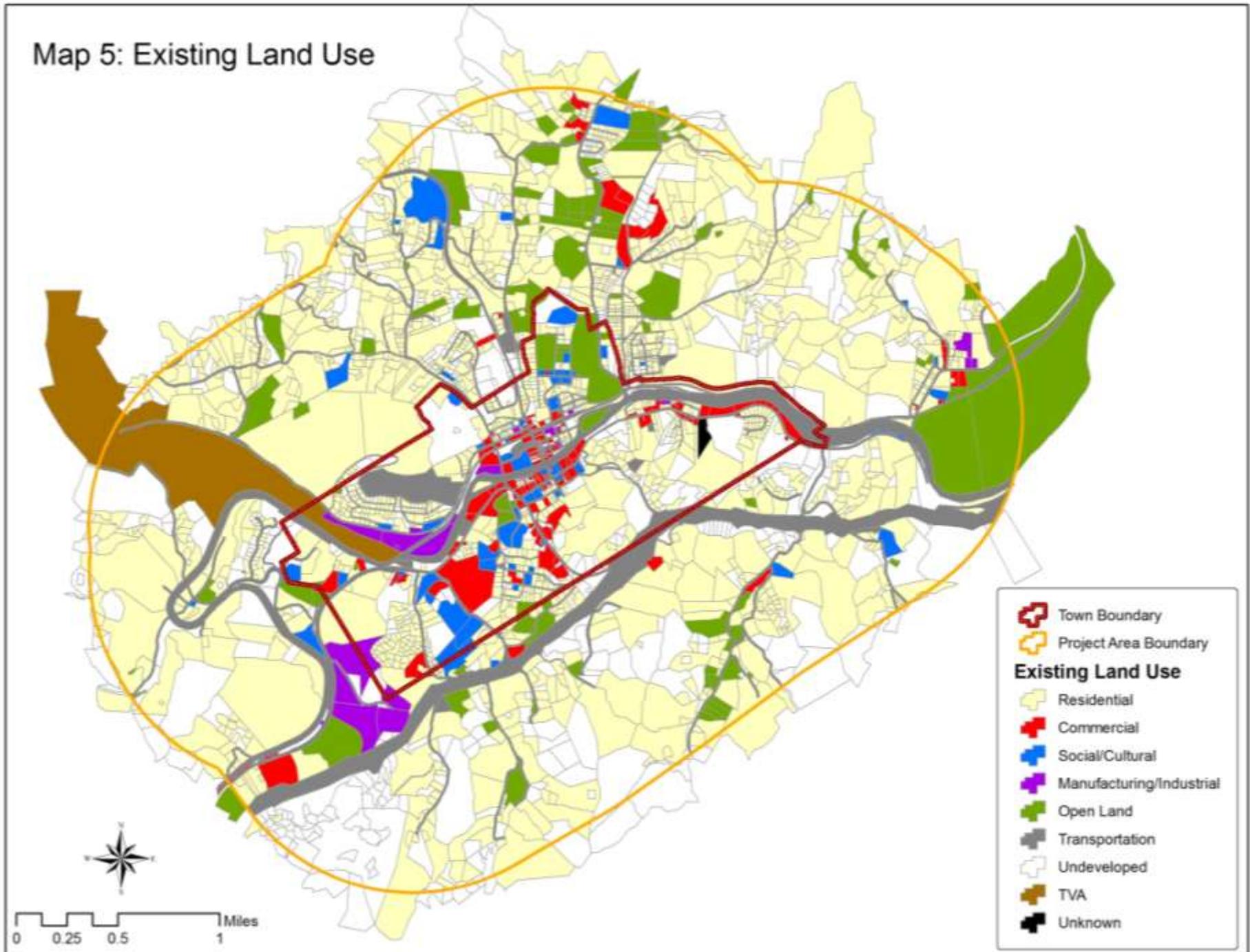
A thorough analysis of future land development in and around Bryson City cannot be made without first taking a baseline inventory of existing land uses in the study area. An existing land use survey is a “snapshot” of conditions in the study area at a particular point in time. In this case, the land use survey was conducted during spring of 2007. All of the parcels within the municipal boundary and all parcels within one mile of the boundary were assigned a land use code representing eight major classes: residential, commercial, social/cultural, production, open land, transportation, and undeveloped. Each major class was further categorized based on more specific uses. This classification system is a modified version of the Land-Based Classification System developed by the American Planning Association (Table 10) (APA, 2007).

In the entire survey area 2,845 parcels were classified, including 1000 parcels within the town boundaries. The survey revealed that within the study area, the majority of the land, 4,170 acres, is residential. Undeveloped land corresponds to 2,203 acres. These two categories alone combine to equal almost seventy percent of the area (Table 11). In Bryson City the residential uses account for 46 percent of the land while 20 percent is still undeveloped. The remaining 34 percent of the land within the town limits is characterized by a healthy mix of commercial, social, recreational, and other productive uses (Table 12 & Map 5).

Major Code	Minor Code	Major Group	Minor Group	Included Uses
10	10	Residential	SF-L	Single-family homes on lots greater than 5 acres
10	11	Residential	SF-M-L	Single-family Manufactured homes on lots greater than 5 acres
10	12	Residential	SF-X-L	Single-family residential with more than one dwelling unit on same parcel greater than 5 acres
10	13	Residential	SF-B-L	Single-family residential with more than one dwelling unit on same parcel > 5 acres and Manufactured home site
10	20	Residential	SF-M	Single-family residential on lots less than 5 acres and greater than 1 acre
10	21	Residential	SF-M-M	Single-family manufactured homes on lots less than 5 acres and greater than 1 acre
10	22	Residential	SF-X-M	Single-family residential with more than one dwelling unit on same parcel < than 5 acres and > 1 acre
10	23	Residential	SF-B-M	Single-family residential with more than one dwelling unit on same parcel < than 5 acres and > 1 acre and Manufactured home site
10	30	Residential	SF-S	Single-family detached on lots less than than 1 acre
10	31	Residential	SF-M-S	Single-family manufactured on lots less than than 1 acre
10	32	Residential	SF-X-S	Single-family residential with more than one dwelling unit on same parcel < 1 acres
10	33	Residential	SF-B-S	Single-family residential with more than one dwelling unit on same parcel < 1 acres and Manufactured home site
10	40	Residential	MHP	Mobile home parks (3 or more trailers on one parcel)
10	50	Residential	MF	Multi-Family: Two-Family Attached, Three/Fourplex, Apartment/Condo, Group quarters, Retirement homes
20	10	Commercial	GB	General Business: Retail and general merchandise, Apparel and accessories, Furniture and home furnishings, Grocery and food sales, Eating and drinking, Auto related, Entertainment, Personal Services, Lodging, Building Services
20	20	Commercial	OFF	Administrative offices, Financial services (banks), Medical offices, Research and Development
30	10	Social/Cultural	CIV	Education, public administration, health care, and other institutions
40	10	Production	GM	General Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Warehousing, Equipment sales and service, Recycling and scrap, Animal handling, Construction related
40	20	Production	IND	Heavy Industrial: Mining, Resource extraction, Quarries, etc.
50	10	Open Land	REC	Parks, Recreational facilities, Golf courses, Preserves, Protected Areas
50	20	Open Land	AG	Agriculture, Horticulture, Forest Land
60	10	Transportation	VEH	Railroad facilities, Transportation terminal, Aviation facilities, Parking facilities, Right-of-way and traffic islands
60	20	Transportation	UT	Utility services, Radio towers, Communication service facilities, Water/Wastewater facilities
70	0	Undeveloped	VAC	No Activity, Vacant land, land under construction, unclassifiable
80	0	Undeveloped	HY	Surface Water
90	90	Unknown	UNK	Parcel requiring further information to determine its use

Table10: Modified Land-Based Classification System

Map 5: Existing Land Use



Land Use	COUNT	MIN (acres)	MAX (acres)	SUM (acres)	MEAN (acres)	% of Area
Residential	1667	0.01	124	4170	2.5	52
Commercial	185	0.02	29.5	205	1.05	3
Social/Cultural	77	0.05	22.6	165	2.15	2
Production/Industry	25	0.17	23.2	109	4.37	1
Open Land	108	0.03	204	780	7.2	10
Transportation	27	0.06	38.5	83	3.16	1
Undeveloped	754	0.01	89.41	2203	2.9	27
Surface Water	1			337		4
Unknown	1			6		0

Table 11: Existing Land Use (ELU) Analysis of Study Area.

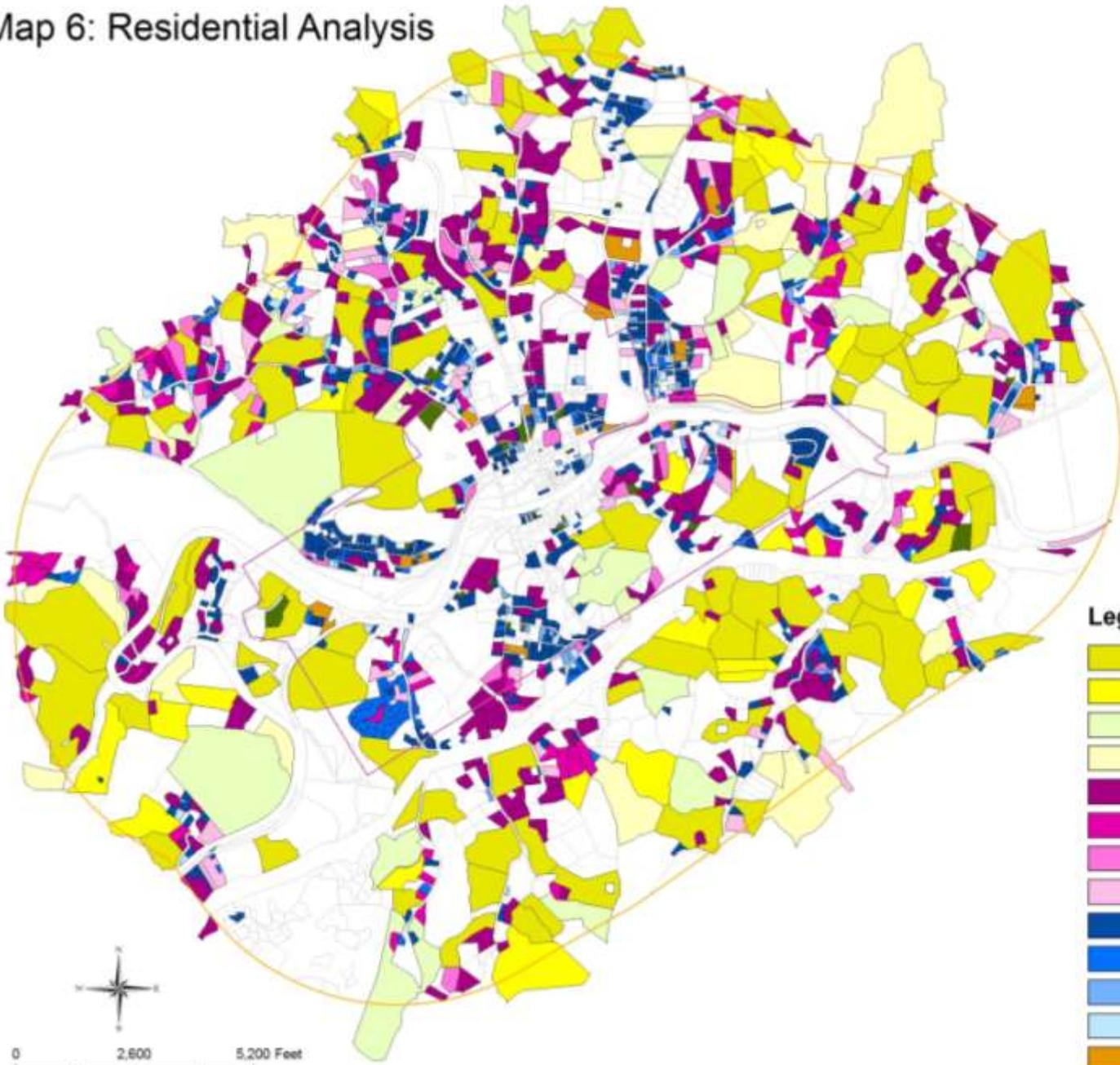
Land Use	COUNT	MIN (acres)	MAX (acres)	SUM (acres)	MEAN (acres)	% of Area
Residential	557	0.01	30	556	1	46
Commercial	157	0.02	29.5	135	0.84	11
Social/Cultural	58	0.01	10.1	91	1.7	8
Production/Industry	17	0.17	8.72	42	3.5	3
Open Land	16	0.09	34.78	68	4.2	6
Transportation	14	0.06	38.5	53	3.78	4
Undeveloped	183	0.01	40.4	243	1.62	20
Surface Water	1			26		2
Unknown	1			6		0

Table 12: Land Use Analysis of Bryson City

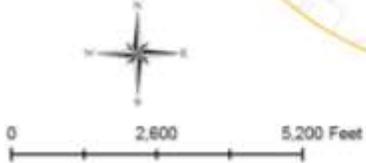
Due to the large amounts of residential and vacant land in the survey area relative to the other categories, a further analysis of these categories based on parcel size was necessary. Parcel size is a good sign as to whether land is likely to be further subdivided in the future; e.g. a one hundred acre parcel is much more likely to be subdivided than a one half acre parcel. A close look at parcel sizes, along with their locations, can help determine where land development is most likely to take place, especially in regards to vacant, underdeveloped, agricultural, and large residential tracts (Map 6).

Each residential land use, i.e. single family houses, multi-family units, and manufactured homes, were categorized based on their particular characteristics, including lot size. This classification demonstrated that 2,685 acres of the study area is compiled of merely 174 residential parcels five acres or larger. It is likely that a great deal of these parcels will be subdivided and developed as residential tracts in the not too distant future. Other residential tracts also likely to be subdivided and developed are those with an area between one and five acres. Those 459 parcels between one and five acres make up an additional 957 acres of the survey area. When the areas of the large and mid-size tracts are combined with the area of the vacant lots, it becomes obvious that nearly three-fourths of the land within the study area (5,845 acres) will come under consideration for development at some point (Table 13).

Map 6: Residential Analysis



- Legend**
- 10 - Single Family Large
 - 11 - SF-L Manufactured
 - 12 - SF-L More than one DU
 - 13 - SF-L Multiple DU and Manuf.
 - 20 - Single Family Medium
 - 21 - SF-M Manufactured
 - 22 - SF-M More than one DU
 - 23 - SF-M Multiple DU and Manuf.
 - 30 - Single Family Small
 - 31 - SF-S Manufactured
 - 32 - SF-S More than one DU
 - 33 - SF-S Multiple DU and Manuf.
 - 40 - Mobile Home Park
 - 50 - Multi-Family



CODE	COUNT	MIN (acres)	MAX (acres)	SUM (acres)	MEAN (acres)	% Residential (Sum Area)	% Residential (# Parcels)
RES	1667	0.01	124	4170	2.5		
1010	102	5.03	66.87	1397	13.6		
1011	22	5.22	44.66	282	12.85		
1012	24	5.08	124	529	22.04		
1013	26	5	75	477	18.36		
Total	174	5	124	2685	15.4	64	10
1020	310	1	5	643	2.08		
1021	66	1	4.11	129	1.95		
1022	30	1	4.9	70	2.35		
1023	53	1	4.94	115	2.17		
Total	459			957		23	28
1030	680	0.01	0.99	314	0.46		
1031	200	0.05	0.98	89	0.44		
1032	48	0.11	0.99	26	0.54		
1033	55	0.17	0.98	32	0.57		
Total	983			461		11	59
1040	19	0.2	7.5	36	1.9	1	1
1050	29	0.07	5.06	26	0.905	1	2

Table 13: Residential Land Use Analysis in the Study Area

Housing Conditions and Building Values

Considering that a large majority of the imminent development in the Bryson City area will be residential, it is appropriate to examine the existing housing stock to try and help identify housing needs. Using a combination of census data, information from the existing land use survey and county tax records, one can expect to get a reasonable idea of the current housing conditions in the area.

As evidenced by the survey of existing land uses, residential development has been the primary type of growth in the past and it is likely this trend will continue. When the 2000 US Census was taken, 713 housing units were located in the Town of Bryson City. Occupied housing units totaled 588 or 83 percent of the housing stock. Eighteen percent, or 125, of the housing units were vacant. Most homes (63 percent) were built prior to 1980. From 1980 to 1989 there were 139 new residential structures built in Bryson City. During the 1990s there was a slight decline in new home construction with 120 homes being built during that decade.

The residences in Bryson City are primarily single-family site-built homes (57 percent), with the rest made up by 154 mobile homes and 144 multi-family housing units, 45 of which are duplexes. Fifty-eight percent of the housing units were owner-occupied, while 246, or nearly 42 percent, were rental units. In a robust housing market it is difficult to gauge the current value of all owner-occupied homes, but in 2000, the median home price in Bryson City was \$84,400. Approximately 53 percent of

homes were in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range. Fifty-eight percent of the owner-occupied homes did not carry a mortgage in 2000 and the remaining 42 percent had a median mortgage around \$760 per month. A rental unit at that time could be found for around \$350 per month. Family households make up a slight majority of homes in Bryson City (55 percent) and the remaining 264 homes were non-family households. Of those non-family households there were approximately 122 residents over the age of 65 living alone.

There are 1,383 residential structures in the study area with a median tax value of approximately \$45,000 and a total value of \$61,817,860 (Map 7). There are 19 mobile home parks, 289 mobile homes on individual lots, and 134 parcels with more than one residence that contain at least one manufactured home. There are approximately 450 mobile homes within the study area and twenty-nine multi-family properties. Table 14 categorizes the structures according to their tax values. As shown in Table 15, there are 186 commercial buildings in the study area with a total tax value of \$21,937,344.

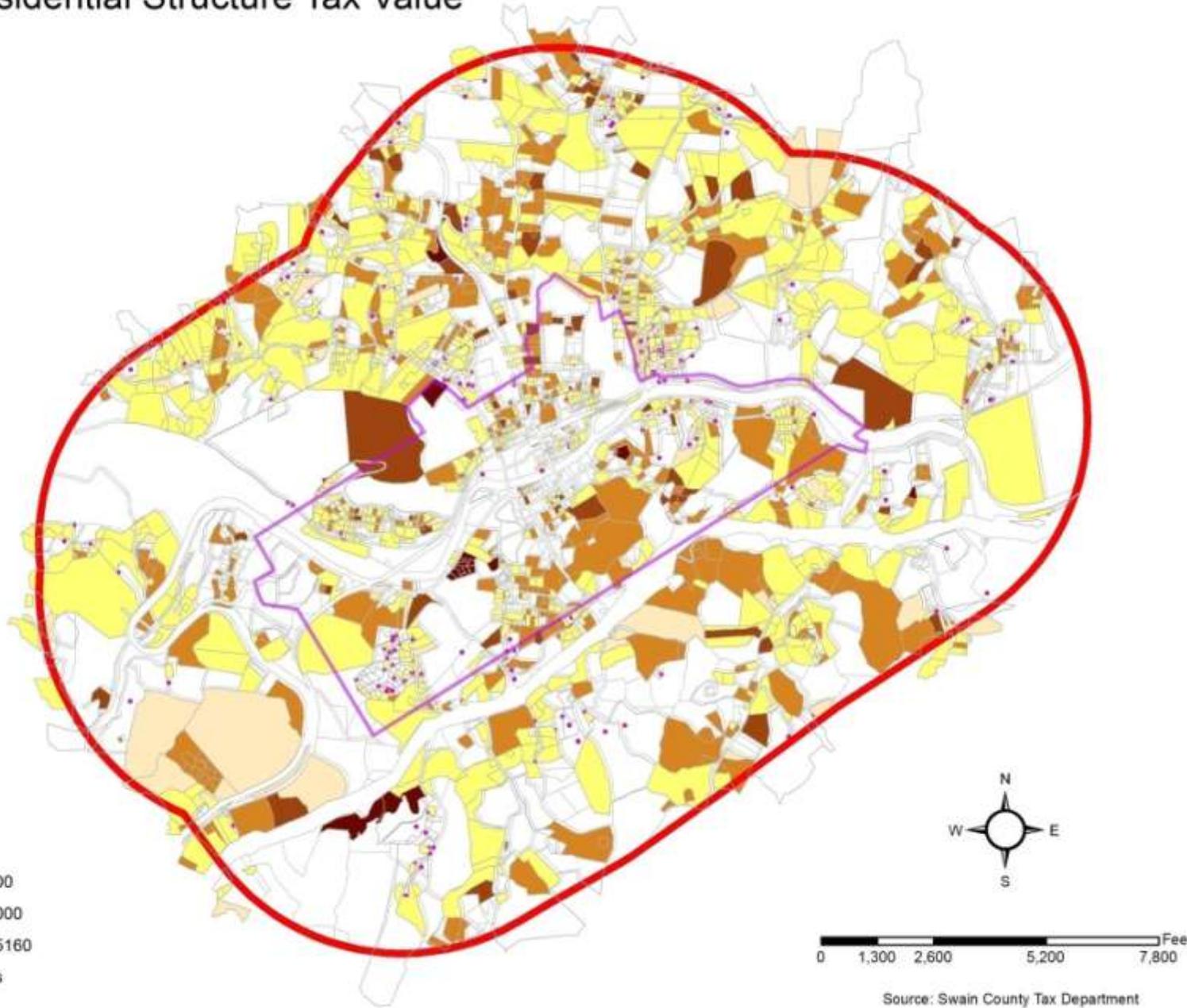
Value	Count
< \$5000	71
\$5001-50,000	871
\$50,001-100,000	369
\$100,001-200,000	65
> \$200,000	7

Table14: Housing Values. Source: Swain County Tax Dept

Value	Count
< \$5000	18
\$5001-50,000	70
\$50,001-100,000	42
\$100,001-300,000	40
> \$300,000	16

Table 15: Commercial Building Values. Source: Swain County Tax Dept

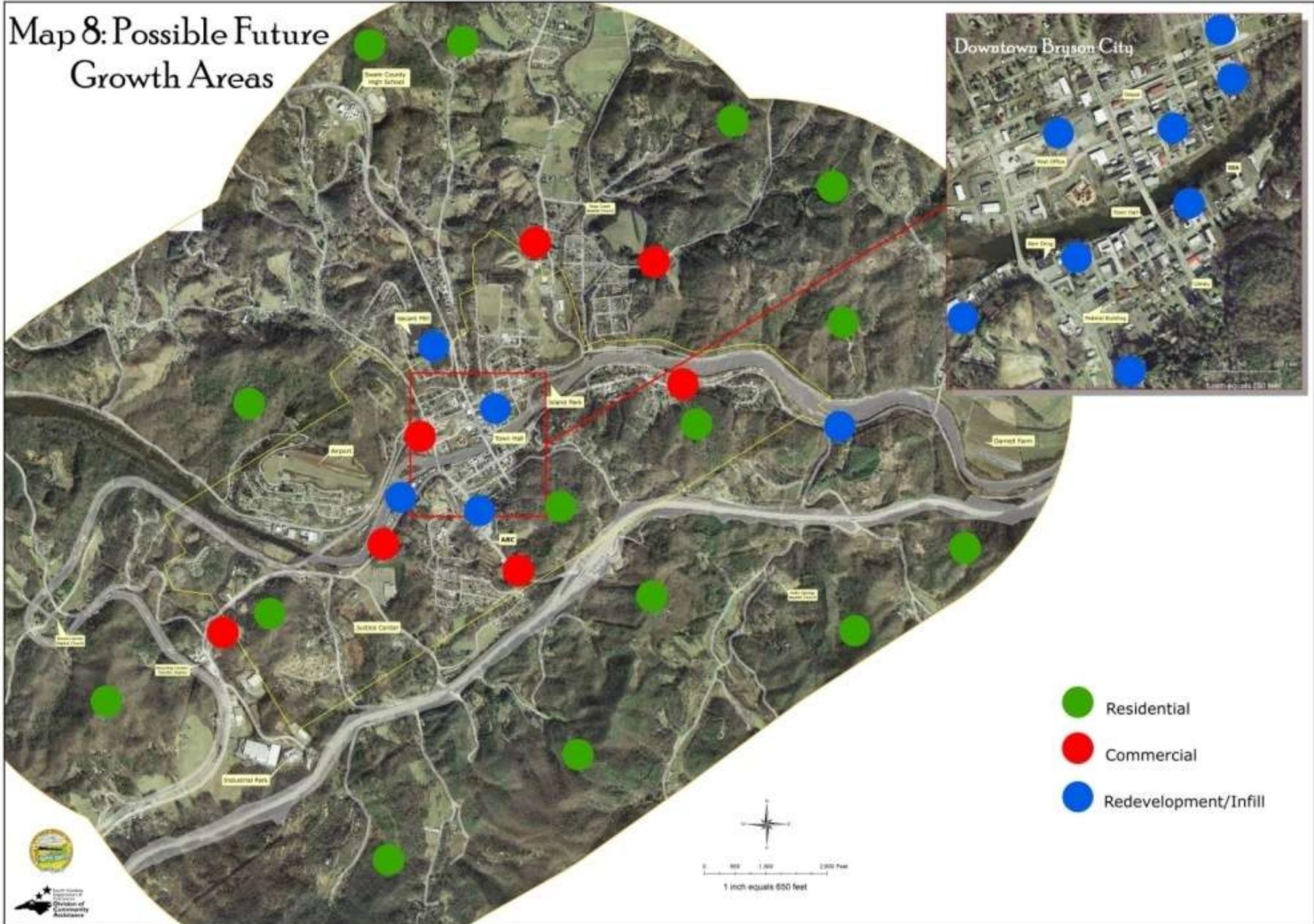
Map 7: Residential Structure Tax Value



Future Land Use

Based on the existing land use survey and prior development patterns, the Planning Advisory Committee established a future land use map. This map attempts to anticipate the future growth areas and provides a conceptual design for future land development activities. It is not intended to specify exactly where new development or redevelopment will occur, but to paint the Town with broad strokes as to where growth is likely to take place. As pointed out previously, the majority of the growth that will take place in the Town and its surrounding areas is likely to be residential in nature. Considering this, those parts of the study area with large undeveloped or underdeveloped tracts are well-poised for future residential development. Regarding commercial development, the existing commercial areas along Highway 19 both east and west of town have great potential for both development and redevelopment, as does the Veterans' Boulevard entrance corridor. Downtown also has a great deal of potential for infill and redevelopment. The Great Smoky Mountain Railroad has been a catalyst for recent development on many lots downtown and the company has plans for future expansion along the railroad tracks downtown. There are also great opportunities for increased development activity in the three block area bounded by Island Street, Everett Street, and Bryson Street. (Map 8)

Map 8: Possible Future Growth Areas



A full-size version of this map is available for viewing at the Bryson City Town Hall.

Transportation

A road network determines where travel can take place, but how much travel actually occurs depends on land use, population, and economic conditions. These contributors to growth and traffic conditions in Bryson City are unique compared with larger urban areas. It has been shown that the population of Swain County and Bryson City was at its greatest during the 1920s, before the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. However, population decline and stagnation are not indicative of the traffic conditions seen in Town over the past few decades. Tourism and second home ownership continues to increase dramatically in the region and Bryson City's role as county seat and center of commerce has contributed many additional vehicles to the roadways and this has resulted in increased traffic congestion.

Severe topography and a limited supply of arable lands directed most early land development and transportation networks in the Bryson City area into the valleys and bottomlands surrounding the Tuckasegee River and its tributaries. The railroad was also an early influence on the physical form of Bryson City and the manner in which land has been developed. Before the railroad, most commercial establishments existed on the south side of the Tuckasegee; with the arrival of the railroad in 1884 much economic and commercial activity shifted to the northern side of town. The separation of the Town into these two distinct areas underscores the weight that both natural features and

transportation systems can have on land use and the physical and social development of a community. Simultaneous with the decline in passenger rail service, which ended in 1949, Bryson City began to rely more heavily on trucks and automobiles for its transportation needs. Not unlike the railroad and other modes of early transportation (canoe, coach, etc.), modern transportation networks most often followed the path of least resistance, such as upon the more level lands adjacent to streams.

The establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the 1940s had a profound effect on Bryson City's transportation system; it has also had an immense impact on the community as a whole. Construction of the Slope Street Bridge in the 1970s is another important transportation milestone in the Town's history. It provided a much needed alternative river crossing other than the single Everett Street Bridge. Along with these developments the area continued the shift away from its traditional economy based largely on the extraction of natural resources, and more towards the developing tourist industry, one which is enormously dependent on the preservation of the natural environment. Tourism and real estate, each centered on the area's unique natural amenities, have emerged as the dominant commercial enterprises in Town. The return of passenger rail service in the form of the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad excursion train has also helped make the Town an attractive destination for visitors. However, the increase in tourism and visitors to the Town has

brought its own unique set of transportation issues that must be addressed. Limited automobile parking downtown and more pedestrian traffic in the vicinity of the historic depot and train embarkation area contributes to increased congestion. During peak visitation times this problem can be annoying to area merchants, guests, employees, and residents.

Parking is continually identified as a significant problem in the Town of Bryson City, especially during periods of increased tourist activity. In 1989, the Traffic Engineering Branch of the NC Department of Transportation prepared the *Bryson City Traffic Study*. This process recommended several solutions to help improve the parking problem and optimize traffic flow. Physical modifications, operational improvements, and altering travel demand were some examples given in the study of how to enable the system to carry more vehicles and their occupants efficiently. Signal synchronization, access control, and parking removal are all options that have been identified that could be used to help improve operational efficiency in Bryson City. Another significant problem that has been identified relates to reduced traffic flow and increased congestion due to uncontrolled access and the intense use of property adjacent to the road network. Controlling vehicle access along the Town's major thoroughfares using less curb cuts and driveways could help lessen traffic in these areas.

Roads are designed to carry out two primary functions: traffic service and providing direct access to developed land. Because of topographic, environmental, and economic constraints, many of the roads in Bryson City must serve both functions. Improvements to system efficiency can be achieved by applying the principles of functional classification in the development and coordination of the street network. *Major thoroughfares* are the primary traffic arteries that serve an area. In Bryson City, U.S. Highways 19 and 74 are both major thoroughfares. The primary purpose of major thoroughfares is to move large volumes of traffic between and within cities. *Minor thoroughfares* should collect traffic from local access streets and carry it to the major thoroughfares. *Local access streets* are not intended to carry heavy volumes of traffic; they should be used for direct access to commercial, residential, or industrial land uses. U.S. Highway 19 is a good example of a major thoroughfare that serves the conflicting role for both through-traffic and land access, often resulting in decreased system efficiency.

The Highway 74 Bypass has helped relieve much of the congestion due to through-traffic, but the northern approaches into Town still rely heavily on this major thoroughfare. Highway 19, commonly referred to as Main Street, is another example of a major thoroughfare that serves multiple purposes within the functional classification system. In Bryson City, most local traffic is directed towards the downtown area through a series of *radial streets* including Veterans Boulevard, Slope

Street, Everett Street, Deep Creek Road and Bryson Walk. This causes most of the vehicular traffic to converge on a small downtown area and street network that is often filled to capacity. State transportation engineers have been working to address these issues in Bryson City for several years.

The first DOT Thoroughfare Plan for Bryson City was adopted in 1967. This plan included the alternate alignment of U.S. 19 (now Hwy. 74) and the Slope Street Extension (Veteran's Boulevard). Construction of U.S. Highway 74 in the 1970s has served its purpose of helping to improve access to Bryson City from other areas while alleviating traffic congestion in town. This four lane, limited access, divided highway is a typical example of a *bypass* road, designed to expedite the movement of thru-traffic and improve traffic conditions in an area. This thoroughfare serves its two major purposes in the Town's transportation network well; it acts as a bypass that removes thru-traffic out of the central business district, allowing U.S. 19 to function more efficiently, and it has improved access to the Town from other regions. It has effectively improved the Town's position as a recreation and retirement destination. In combination with the Slope Street Bridge and Veteran's Boulevard the bypass now serves as the main approach to downtown Bryson City for many vacationers and visitors.

Recently Highway 74 was identified by the NCDOT as one of the state's Strategic Highway Corridors. Construction of an expressway between the Bryson City bypass and the Town of Andrews has been recommended by state transportation planners to increase connectivity and level of service

throughout the state's system. This project is currently in the planning and design stages and will include a new twenty-seven mile alignment through Swain, Graham, and Cherokee counties to help accommodate the ever increasing number of travelers in the region.

Annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts from Bryson City area roads, not surprisingly, demonstrate the large seasonal and day-of-week variations in the use of the road network. July average daily traffic (ADT) on US Highway 441 near Smokemont is twice the AADT and seven times more than the February ADT. Weekend volumes are more than 50 percent greater than the average weekday for the same location. On U.S. Highway 74 west of Bryson City, traffic counts are typically one-third higher during the summer and fall months and two-thirds higher during the peak travel period in July. The main traffic impacts from these seasonal distinctions become evident from increased parking shortages and delays at major intersections in the downtown area. Understandably, heavy-duty truck and RV traffic also increases during the peak season. This is significant because a truck in mountainous terrain can be equivalent to twelve or more cars and a recreational vehicle can be equivalent to five or more cars.

ADT counts and traffic volume projections for thirty-one locations throughout the study area demonstrated that AADT were essentially expected to double between 1991 and 2015. From 2005 to 2015 traffic is predicted to increase by approximately 35 percent, or 3.5 percent per year. The 2015

AADT projections for Main Street west of Everett (18,900), at the Everett Street Bridge (17,300), on Highway 19 east of Everett (16,600) and west of Slope (14,800) point out the importance of maintaining acceptable levels of service for increased demands on the transportation system (Table 15).

Facility & Section	Existing X-Section			Capacity	Volume	
	DIST	RDWY	ROW	Existing	AADT	AADT
	Miles	Feet	Feet	(Future)	1991	2015
Bryson St. Everett- Ramseyer	0.17	20	NA	6,500	NA	2000
Mitchell St. Slope – Everett	0.19	24	NA	10,000	1,500	2,300
Ramseyer St. Bryson – Locust	0.10	20	NA	6,500	NA	2,000
Hughes Br. Rd. Jenkins Br. – US 19	0.55	18	60	3,500	850	1,700
Spring St. US 74 – Main	0.72	52	80-100	21,500	4,500	9,100
SR 1168 US 19 – 0.4 mi East	0.40	20	80	6,500	1,400	2,500
0.4 mi East – E. Cordon	0.52	24	80	8,500	1,400	2,500
SR 1321 (Gibson) Everett – Slope	0.18	24	60	10,000	2,500	5,100
Slope – Pine	0.43	16	60	4,000	1,300	2,400
Pine – Elmore	0.66	16	60	4,000	800	1,400
Elmore – SR 1322	0.51	16	60	4,000	400	700
SR 1322 SR 1321 – Slope	0.50	16	60	3,000	350	600
Slope St. US 19 – Mitchell	0.15	24	60	10,000	3,400	6,900
Mitchell – Gibson	0.08	24	60	10,000	3,400	6,900
Gibson – SR 1328	0.63	16	60	4,000	1,600	3,300
SR 1328 – SR 1322	0.77	16	60	4,000	800	1,400
SR 1328 Slope – SR 1365	0.51	16	60	2,500	400	700
SR 1365 – Fontana	0.43	16	60	2,500	500	900
Fontana – Toot Hollow	0.39	16	60	2,500	500	900
SR 1333 (Water) SR 1366 – SR 1328	1.41	16	60	4,000	1,100	2,000
SR 1336 (Depot) Fontana – Ramseyer	0.19	16	60	4,500	2,000	4,100
Ramseyer – SR 1337	0.52	16	60	4,000	1,600	3,000
SR 1337 – SR 1339	0.04	16	60	4,000	300	600

Table 16: Road network Capacity and Projected Traffic Counts. Source: NCDOT

Facility & Section	Existing X-Section			Capacity	Volume	
	DIST	RDWY	ROW	Existing	AADT	AADT
	Miles	Feet	Feet	(Future)	1991	2015
SR 1339						
Locust – SR 1340	0.58	16	60	4,000	1,000	2,000
SR 1340 – SR 1333	0.67	16	60	4,000	500	1,000
SR 1340						
SR 1337 – SR 1339	0.20	16	60	4,500	250	500
SR 1364 (Everett)						
Main – 0.13 mi. N	0.13	44	100	10,000	8,500	17,300
0.13 – 0.23 mi. N	0.10	35	100	10,000	8,500	17,300
0.23 – Gibson	0.05	40	100	10,000	8,500	17,300
Gibson – SR 1328	1.04	22	100	8,000	1,100	2,000
SR 1366						
SR 1333 – SR 1364	0.04	20	60	6,500	700	1,300
US 19/Main						
W. Cordon – SR 1320	1.14	24	100	8,500	4,300	8,700
SR 1320 – Jenkins Br.	0.68	24	100-60	6,500	5,800	11,800
Jenkins Br. – Hughes Br.	0.08	24	60	6,500	6,700	13,300
Hughes Br. – Slope	0.55	24	60	8,000	7,300	14,800
Slope – School	0.08	40	60	7,500	8,300	16,800
School Dr. – Everett	0.17	42	60	7,500	9,300	18,900
Everett – Carringer	0.49	42-20	60	6,500	9,000	17,000
Carringer – SR 1166	1.08	20	60	7,000	9,200	16,600
SR 1166 – SR 1168	0.45	20	60	7,000	5,200	9,400
SR 1168 – SR 1350	0.41	20	60	7,000	4,600	8,300
SR 1350 – E. Cordon	0.38	21	60	6,500	4,600	8,300
US 74						
W. Cordon – Hughes Br.	0.91	48	360	35,000	5,200	10,600
Hughes Br. – Spring St.	0.70	48	360	35,000	5,200	10,600
Spring St. – SR 1166	1.22	48	360	35,000	6,600	13,400
SR 1166 – E. Cordon	1.03	48	360	35,000	6,600	13,400
Frontage Rd						
Spring St. – Hughes Br.	0.7	--	--	(12,000)	--	1,000

Table 16 (Cont.): Road network Capacity and Projected Traffic Counts. Source: NCDOT

The North Carolina Department of Transportation prepared The 1993 Thoroughfare Plan for Bryson City. This plan identified four categories of critical needs in the Town:

- 1) Confusing and inefficient traffic flow in the Central Business District, especially due to pedestrian conflicts near the Depot;
- 2) Undesirable design and operating conditions which become more hazardous with increased traffic;
- 3) Inadequate access in some areas which limits development potential;
- 4) Lack of sufficient capacity on major thoroughfares, radials, and cross-town streets including Main Street, Everett Street, all of Highway 19, and Slope Street;

The 1989 DOT Traffic Study and the 1993 Thoroughfare Plan analyzed parking and circulation problems within the Town and recommended improvements in 6 areas. These include:

1. Parking Management
2. Physical and Operational Improvements
3. Driveway Regulations
4. Traffic Control and Signage
5. Alleyway System and Parking Lot Circulation
6. Pedestrian Improvements

Many of these identified improvement areas have been addressed in the past are in the process of being addressed currently. Two common land use and growth management tools, subdivision regulations and zoning, were recommended in the thoroughfare plan as simple options to help guide and control traffic in town. Urban renewal and capital improvement programs are also listed as implementation tools. The recommendations from the plan are numerous and costly, ranging from the additional lanes on US 19 and several other smaller widening projects, to a realignment of Depot Street and the construction of a new Frontage Road along Hwy. 74. Some of these recommendations have been completed, including those that involved re-striping and operational improvements to state maintained roads (Everett Street). In 2005, the NCDOT awarded the Town of Bryson City a planning grant to develop a pedestrian plan. The Louis Berger Group prepared the plan with assistance from a local stakeholder committee (LBG, Inc., 2007).

The Southwestern RPO

The NCDOT prioritizes its activities through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Bryson City plays an important role in NCDOT decision-making through its membership and participation in the activities of the Southwestern Commission, a regional planning organization. The Southwestern Commission serves as the Lead Planning Agency (LPA) for the area's Rural

Transportation Planning Organization (RPO). The Southwestern RPO serves Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon, Jackson, and Swain Counties. As LPA, the Southwestern Commission provides staff and GIS support to the RPO. The RPO system was formed to involve rural county and local governments and the public in planning transportation systems for their area. These systems include highways, bikeways, pedestrian walkways, rail systems, seaports and ferry systems. The twenty RPOs in North Carolina include all areas of the state that are not covered by a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). An MPO exists for all urban areas with a population of at least 50,000 people.

The Southwestern RPO consists of a Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) and a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TCC makes staff-level recommendations to the TAC. The TCC consists of local planners, county and town managers, NCDOT staff, economic development professionals, and local transportation committee members. Bryson City is represented on the TCC by the Town Manager. The TAC is the policy-making body of the RPO. The TAC consists of county and municipal elected officials and members from the NCDOT Board of Transportation. Bryson City is represented on the TAC by Kate Welch, Town Alderman. The RPO serves as a forum for local officials and citizens to interact with NCDOT staff on a regular basis and for NCDOT to obtain more local input for transportation planning and projects.

The primary functions of the Rural Transportation Planning Organizations include:

- To provide a forum for public participation in the rural transportation planning process and serve as a local link for residents of the region to communicate with the State Department of Transportation
- To develop, prioritize, and promote proposed transportation projects that the Rural Transportation Planning Organization believes should be included in the State Transportation Improvement Program.
- To assist the North Carolina Department of Transportation in publicizing its programs and services and providing additional transportation-related information to local governments and other interested organizations and persons.
- To conduct transportation-related studies and surveys for local governments and other interested entities and organizations.
- To promote transportation as a regional issue requiring regional solutions.

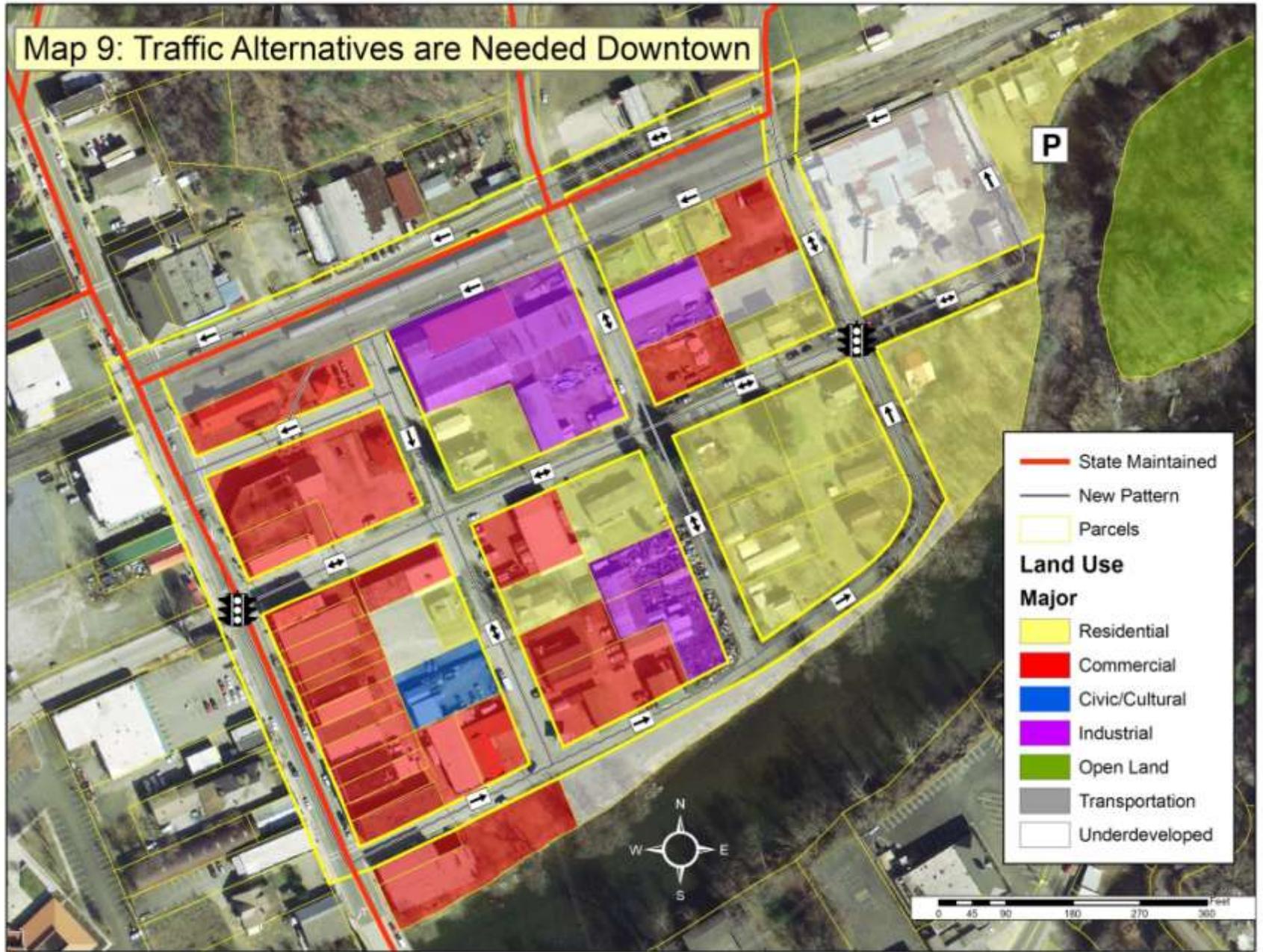
Under advisement from the SWRPO, transportation engineers at NCDOT have included several projects on the 2007-2013 STIP that are expected to have an impact on the Town of Bryson City directly or indirectly in coming years. A partial list is included in Table 16.

State Transportation Improvement Program 2007-2013

Route	ID	Description	Work Type	Cost Est. (1000s)	Schedule
Rural Projects					
US 19 (Hughes-Cherokee)	R-4751	Upgrade	ROW/Const	93,100	Unfunded
US 74 (Corridor K)	A-0009	New Facility	Planning/Design	807,804	In Progress
New	R-4908	N. Shore Road	-----	-----	-----
GSMNP	R-4730	Newfound Gap Rd.	Construction	16,600	In Progress
Bridges					
US 19-441	B-4696	Oconaluftee R.	Construction	6,500	FY 07
US 19-74	B-4286	Nantahala R.	ROW/Const	1,365	FY 09-10
SR 1100	B-4287	Nantahala R.	ROW/Const	945	FY 09-10
SR 1309	B-3701	Alarka Cr.	Construction	3,279	In Progress
Mitigation					
Various	EE-4914	Ecosystem Enhancement	Mitigation	12,975	In Progress
CMAQ					
Cherokee	C-4947	TN Shuttle Service	Implement	216	In Progress
Enhancement					
Bryson City	E-4972	Streetscaping	Construction	186	FY 07
Various	E-4975	BRNHA Sites	Construction	586	FY 07
Hazard Elim.					
US 19	SI-4815	Hughes Br. L turn lane	ROW/Const	140	In Progress
Slope Street	SI-4816	Traffic Signal	Construction	125	In Progress
Public Trans.					
Swain County	T*-4986	Rural Trans. System	Operations	128	FY 07-08

Table 17. Source: NCDOT State Transportation Improvement Plan, Division 14, 2007.

Map 9: Traffic Alternatives are Needed Downtown



The Natural Environment and Development Constraints

The southern Appalachian Mountain range contains one of the most revered natural environments in the world. In the Great Smoky Mountains National Park alone there are more than 3,500 species of plants, including as many tree species as in all of Europe, and numerous animal species (UNESCO, 2007). This environment of abundant flora and fauna is largely the result of ancient mountain-building periods and prehistoric glaciations, combined with a temperate climate. These conditions have made the Blue Ridge Mountains the ideal location for incredibly diverse ecosystems and natural scenic beauty and terrain.

Climate

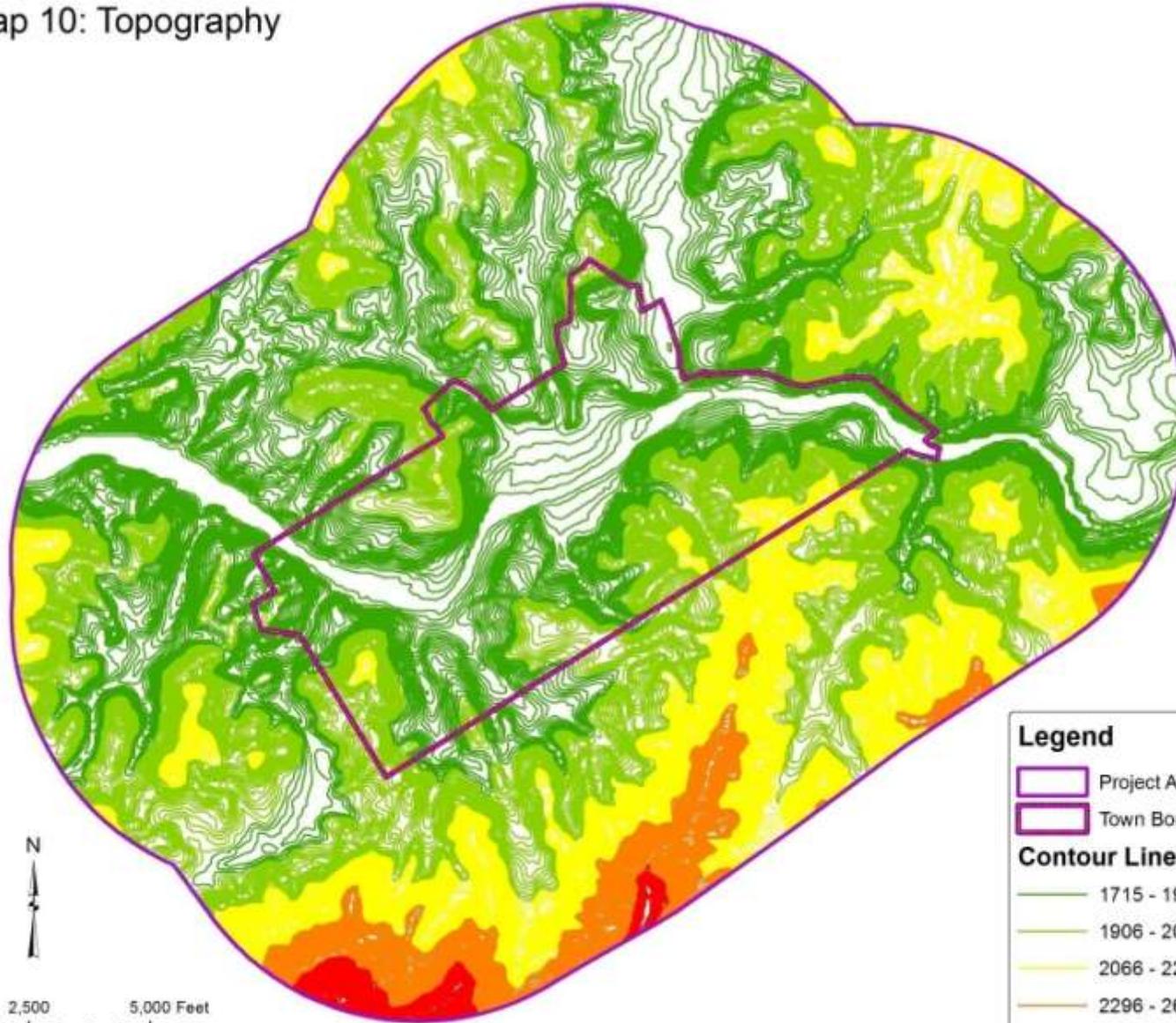
The climate of Bryson City is mild with an average annual temperature of around 55°F. Average temperatures tend to be in the 70's during the warm humid summers and in the 30's during winter. The record high is 100°F (1983) and the record low is -23°F (1985). The warmest month of the year is usually July with an average maximum temperature of 85.5, while the coldest time of the year usually occurs in January with an average minimum temperature of 21.3. Temperature variations between night and day tend to be moderate during both summer and winter although temperature ranges can often reach thirty degrees or more. Temperatures at higher elevations are regularly 15-

20°F cooler than at lower elevations. The annual average precipitation at Bryson City is 58.38 inches. Rainfall is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year. The wettest month of the year is typically March, with an average of 6.13 inches of rainfall during this time of year. Snowfall accumulations of more than thirty-six inches are not uncommon at elevations above 3500 feet; at lower elevations the snowfall accumulations are generally negligible (The Weather Underground, 2007).

Topography

Topography and the natural terrain play a major role in how land in and around Bryson City may be developed. The highest elevations within the study area reach just above 3000 feet. These areas are found in the Jenkins Branch and Rocky Face Mountain areas. Approximately 2,420 acres or 30 percent of the entire study area is above 2000 feet. The lowest elevation, 1715 feet, is at the beginning of Fontana Lake near the Old 288 Park and boat ramp (Map 10). Approximately 60 percent of the study area has a slope less than 18 percent; 30 percent of the land within the study area has a slope greater than 18 percent and ten percent of the study area is characterized as severely sloping (Map 11).

Map 10: Topography



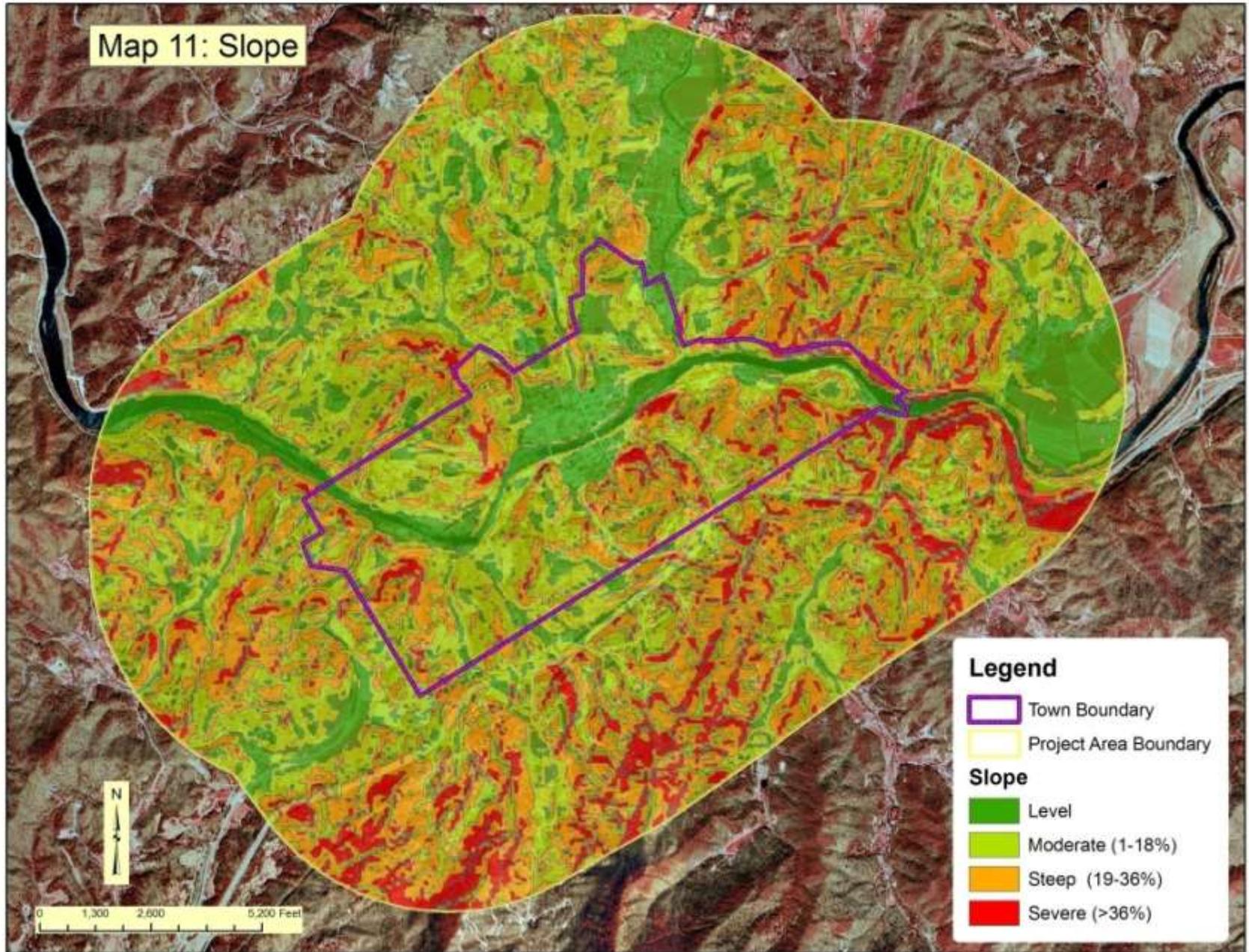
Legend

- Project Area Boundary
- Town Boundary

Contour Lines (10')

- 1715 - 1905
- 1906 - 2065
- 2066 - 2295
- 2296 - 2625
- 2626 - 3025

Map 11: Slope



Soils

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a soil survey of Swain County in July, 1947. Early maps demonstrate that much of the study area is made up of high quality soils with good to excellent properties for agriculture. Governors Island, Deep Creek, and all the bottom lands, especially along the Tuckasegee River, Toot Hollow, Bryson, Hughes, Betts and Jenkins Branches are alluvial and silt loams with no “prominent adverse soil conditions.” Terrace soils including the Hiawassee loams and Hayesville loams, along with Talladega and Ramsey loams in more hilly terrain are predominant throughout the area. These soil types are described as less desirable than those in the bottom lands but more desirable than the steeper mountain soils. It is interesting to note that this early report from USDA identifies “properly adjusted land use and soil management” as basic problems in Swain County. Land use at this time referred mainly to uses in the context of rural farming, e.g. tilled crops, pasture, and forested land (USDA, 1947).

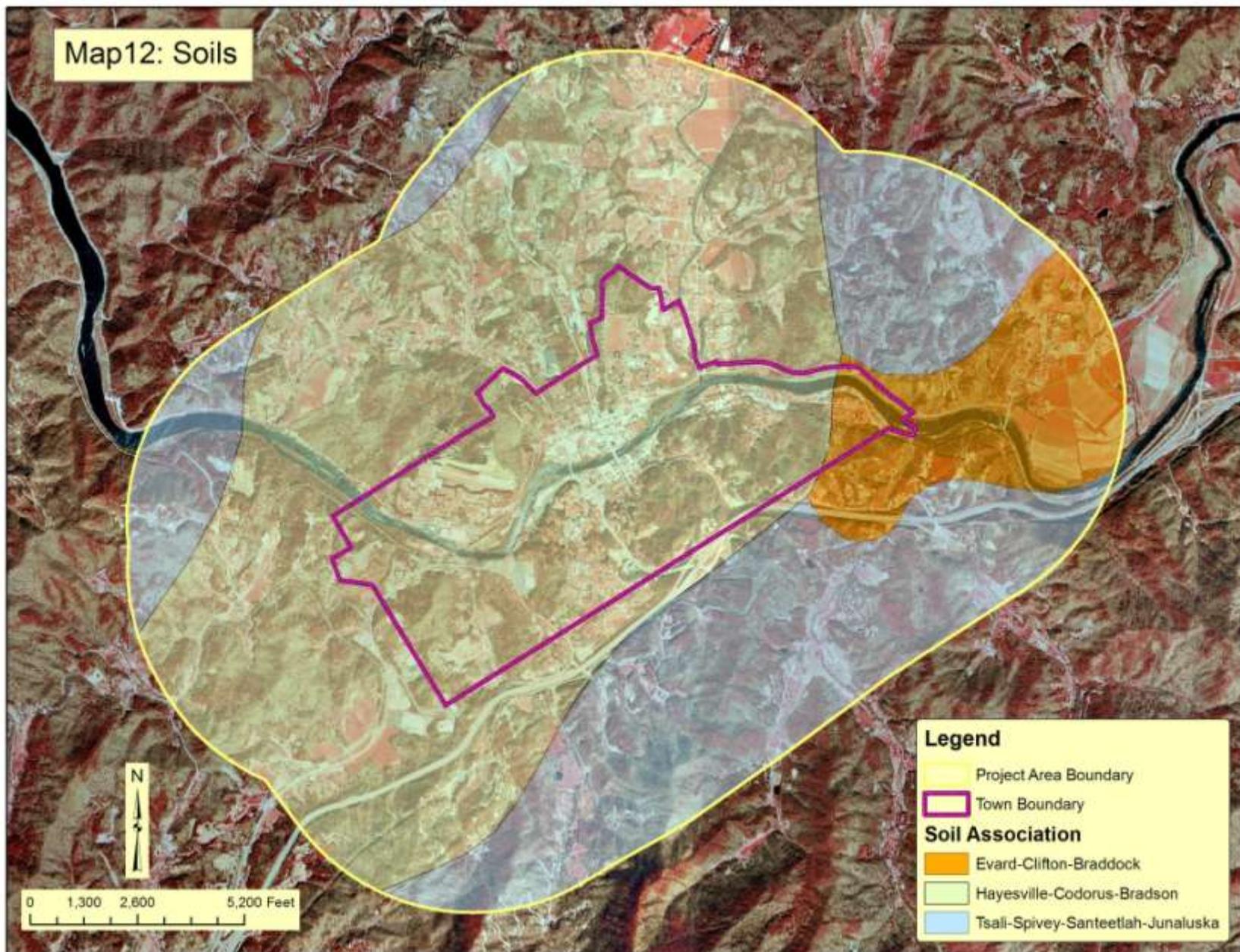
A detailed soil survey is not available for the study area. In the 1970s a general soil survey was completed in Swain County. This survey, or map, provides general soils data needed to plan the efficient use and orderly development of the county’s land resources. A general soil map is useful to get a better understanding and general idea about the soils in the area and to locate large areas suitable for certain types of farming or other broad categories of land use. General maps are not

intended for site planning or displaying specific soil types on individual tracts of land. There are three broad soil associations in the study area: Evard-Clifton- Braddock (s4660), Hayesville-Cordorus-Bradson (s4702), and Tsali-Spivey-Santeetlah-Junaluska (s4713) (Map 12).

Selected physical, chemical, and engineering properties of each of the three soil associations can have serious implications for land use planning. The K-factor is an index of how susceptible cultivated soil is to erosion by rainfall. Soil pH is a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of the soil and is especially important in agricultural areas. Prime farmlands with balanced nutrients should be preserved where possible for both their aesthetics and productivity. Soil permeability refers to the ease with which air and water move through the soil. This is important for many reasons including public health concerns over private septic system drain fields, agriculture drainage and potential boggy conditions. The plasticity index is a measure of moisture content within soil that remains plastic, or malleable. Some soils are capable of changing from semisolid to plastic, and eventually into a liquid state. This index is exceedingly important in steep and mountainous areas because of potential slope failures and landslides of soils that readily change from semisolid to liquid form.

Overall, the soils in the study area should be characterized as good, however specific land use constraints may be found throughout the area, most probably related to steep relief or thick layers of rocky, unconsolidated materials with low quality engineering properties.

Map12: Soils



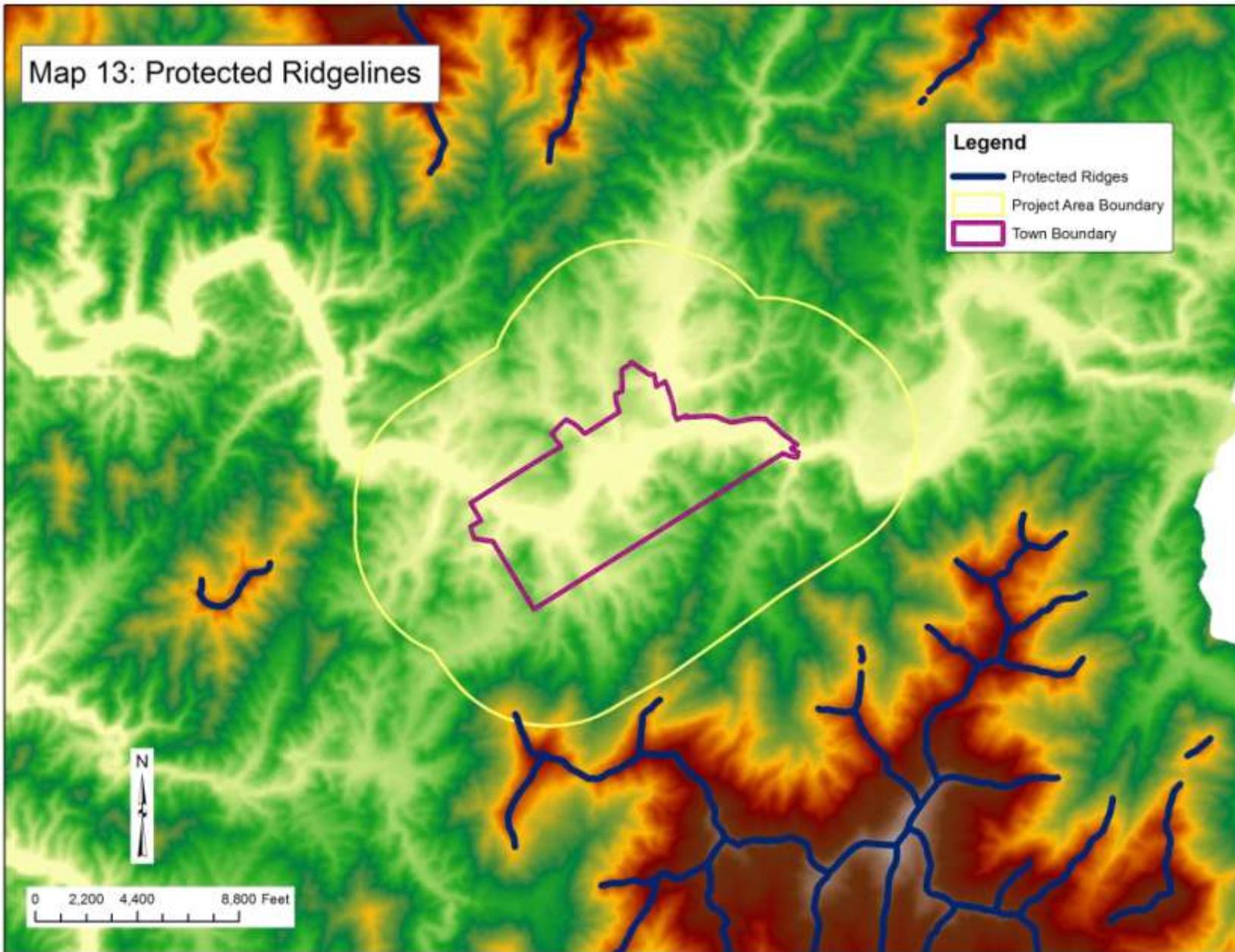
Mountain Ridges

In 1983, the State of North Carolina passed the Mountain Ridge Protection Act. This legislation was intended to prevent the inappropriate construction of tall buildings on high mountain ridges. The State of NC has regulatory power within Swain County and Bryson City regarding construction of buildings over 40 feet on ridges over 3000 feet in elevation and whose elevation is 500 or more feet above the elevation of an adjacent valley floor. Within the study area there is only one area that fits the criteria for ridge-top regulation. In surrounding areas within the county, there are many more areas subject to this law (Map 13).

Air Quality

The air quality in Swain County is monitored by the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Division of Air Quality (NCDAQ). NCDAQ has an ambient air quality monitor at the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department located off Deep Creek Rd. This monitor has consistently measured the air quality in the study area and shown ground-level ozone conditions to be superior to all other locations throughout the state. NCDAQ also monitors the ambient air quality for concentrations of fine particulate matter. Swain County has also received consistently lower readings for this pollutant than most other areas of the state, except for the coastal region where more breezy conditions prevail due to the proximity to the Atlantic Ocean.

Map 13: Protected Ridgelines



Water Quality

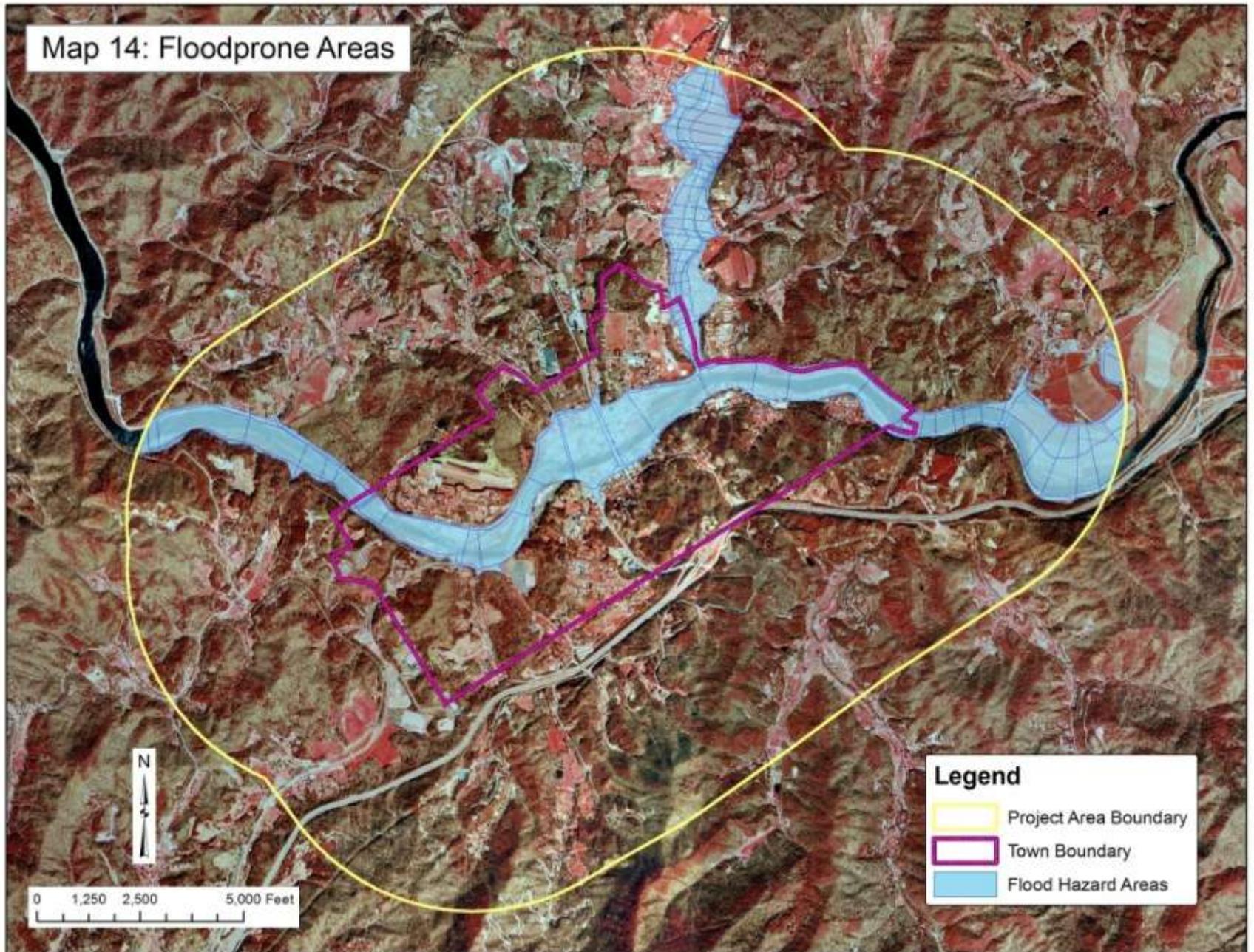
Water quality within the study area is also very good. The entire area lies within the Little Tennessee River basin, more specifically, within the Tuckasegee River subbasin. There are very few industrial or other pollution point sources. Runoff and sedimentation, or nonpoint source pollution is the most common form of pollution and threat to surface waters in the area. There are no water supply watersheds in the study area that are subject to the state's watershed rules, and many of the streams are rated as high quality, outstanding resource waters, or designated trout streams. The North Carolina Division of Water Quality has developed a basinwide plan for the Little Tennessee that identifies the area as, "...containing some of the most pristine and some of the highest quality waters in the State." (NCDWQ, 2006)

Flood Hazard

The greatest constraint to development within the study area, and the topic for most concern in natural hazard planning, concerns the floodprone areas adjacent to the Tuckasegee River and Deep Creek. Approximately twenty-five percent of Bryson City and ten percent of the entire study area exists within a floodprone area (Map 14). Bryson City has adopted a flood damage prevention ordinance and is a participant in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood

Insurance Program; however, the maps the system is based upon have become outdated. New maps are now in the production phase by the State's flood mapping program and will be made available once completed. Currently the Town takes precautions that no new development occurs within any flood hazard area without appropriate measures being taken to help mitigate damages from flooding. The issuances of proper permits are required in accordance with the Town's flood damage prevention ordinance.

Map 14: Floodprone Areas



Public Services and Infrastructure

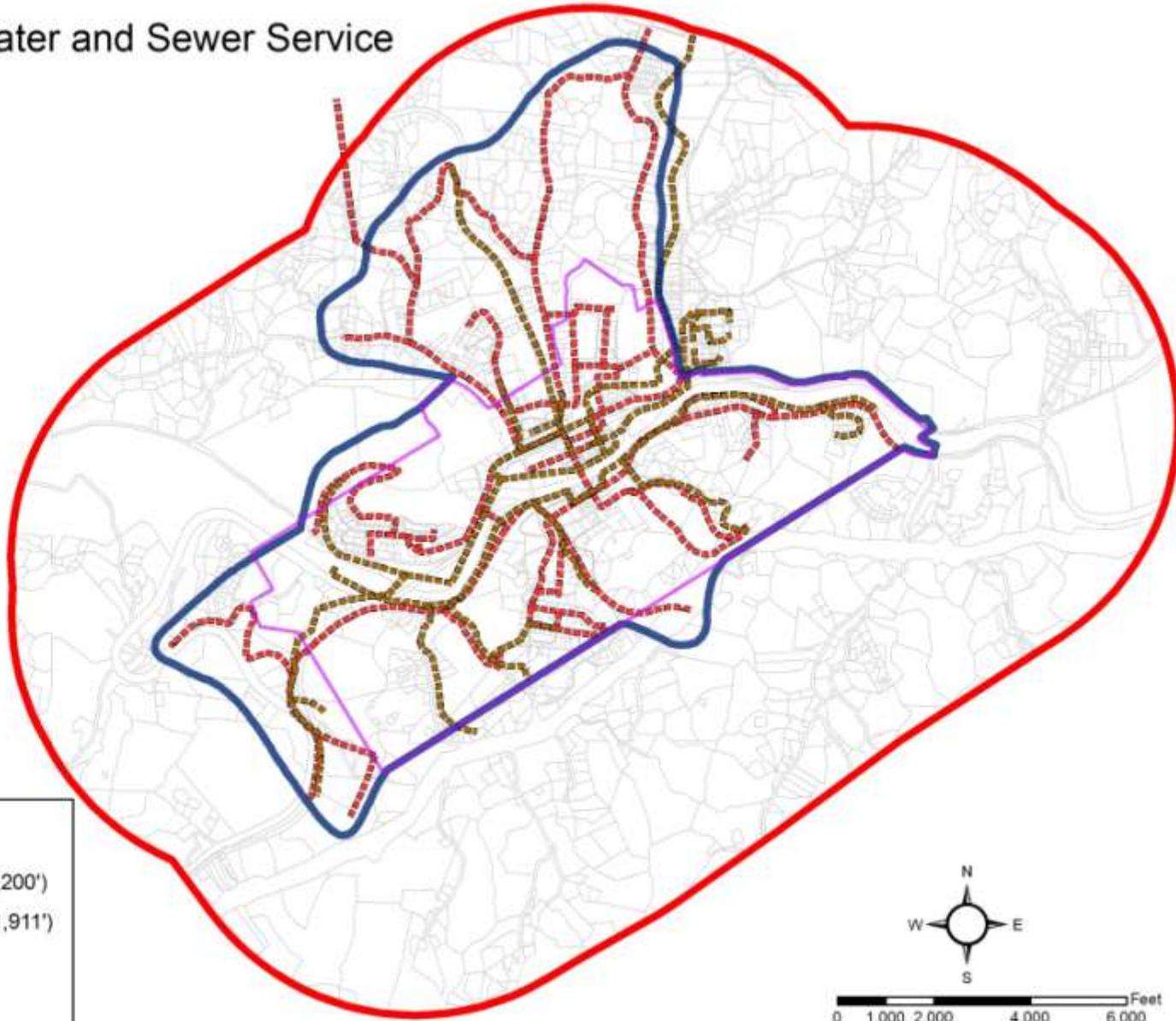
The Town of Bryson City provides its residents with a comprehensive set of municipal services. The Town has a well-established public safety department including professional police and fire departments and owns the buildings where they are headquartered downtown. The municipal building houses the Town's administrative offices and public works department. The water and wastewater systems are extensive and the streets and parks department are impressive for a town this size. These services and assets are important from a planning perspective because they affect the overall quality of life in the community and can affect the likelihood of future growth and development.

Adequate water and sewer systems are some of the major concerns faced by both local governments and developers. These utilities are expensive to construct, operate, and maintain and often account for large portions of the expenses associated with development projects by both private and public entities. For fiscal year (FY) 2006, the water/wastewater system in Bryson City accounted for 22 percent of the Town's revenue, and water/wastewater expenditures equaled 43 percent of the entire town budget. In December 2006, an assessment of these utilities by an independent consultant indicated that the customer base for both water and sewer is anticipated to increase in the future,

enough to raise real "... concern about the capacity of the system to handle the increase." (Klein, 2006)

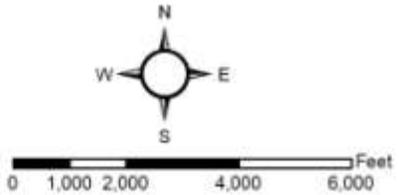
During FY 2004 the Town's water system served 1130 residential connections and 247 non-residential connections. The sewer system had 752 residential connections and 234 commercial and industrial connections. The source of the drinking water is Deep Creek and the receiving stream for the wastewater system is the Tuckasegee River. The Town's water system is capable of producing 1,000,000 gallons per day and the permitted daily capacity at the wastewater treatment plant is 600,000 gallons per day (gpd). The average daily use of water is 700,000 gallons and the average flow at the sewage plant is 280,000 gallons. The 2006 study identifies significant line replacements are needed to rectify problems related to efficiency in both systems. Capacity expansion of both systems was also recommended. In 2004 capital wastewater needs through 2030 were estimated to total \$5.7 million. Capital needs for the water system were estimated to be \$5.8 million. Currently, the Town's utilities serve customers both inside and outside the corporate limits. Those customers outside town limits are required to pay a premium to receive these services (Map 15).

Map 15: Water and Sewer Service



Legend

- Sewer Lines (78,200')
- Water Lines (121,911')
- Service Area
- Town Boundary
- Planning Area



Source: NC Rural Center

Community Assets

It has been discussed how Bryson City developed over the years into the hub of commerce and government activity for Swain County and much of the surrounding region. It now also serves as the center of civic activity, health, and education. Within the study area there are several community assets that complete the social fabric of this Southern Appalachian community and contribute to its importance as a remarkable destination ripe for future development.

There are several schools located in the study area including the public high school, middle schools and elementary schools, as well as a private academy and public charter school. The Marianna Black Library is located here. Civic organizations and churches are prominent throughout the area, whether downtown or on the outskirts of town. The Town maintains Island Park for picnickers, paddlers, and pedestrians. The County has started to develop a greenway along the river behind the County offices. The County Recreation Department also has excellent facilities in the area offering youth and adult programs and recreation opportunities including basketball, soccer, football, tennis, free weights, playground, swimming, skateboarding and baseball. The Fryemont Inn, Calhoun House, and the old county courthouse are all registered historic sites found in the study area. The Swain County Health Department and the WestCare Medical Park are also located in this that is vital to the future economic, physical, and social development of the region.

Policy Guidelines and Recommendations

Guiding Principles for Land Use

- 1. Encourage high-quality and efficient development that enhances the Town's sense of community and overall quality of life.***
- 2. Foster new and existing residential and commercial development while promoting quality design standards.***
- 3. Establish a cohesive commercial center in Town.***
- 4. Provide stewardship for the Town's abundant natural resources.***

Recommendations that Promote these Principles

Residential

- A. Encourage the construction of appreciable affordable housing units.
- B. Develop a program to identify and address residential areas in need of rehabilitation and enforce minimum housing codes, with special emphasis on older vacant homes and areas of blight.
- C. Retain the Town's small, rural character and atmosphere by encouraging low-density development, as well as allowing high-density and multi-family residential developments where appropriate.

Commercial and Office/Institutional

- A. Develop and maintain Town Hall at a high standard to serve as a model for the Town's future growth.
- B. Require adequate transportation access to all developments in order to provide orderly and efficient traffic flow.
- C. Explore design-related guidelines and minimum standards regulating the aesthetic quality of new and existing development.

Agriculture and Open Space

- A. Protect Bryson City's natural environment through orderly growth management techniques that preserve the rural character of the Town and safeguard its natural resources.
- B. Identify and acquire land in strategic locations to encourage appropriate development including open space preservation, greenways, parks and other passive recreation opportunities.
- C. Encourage development that is sensitive to the natural environment and protects open space, natural vegetation, and flood plain and watershed areas.

Industry and Manufacturing

- A. Identify strategic locations throughout Town that are appropriate for industry in order to help encourage future economic development and employment opportunities.
- B. Strive to expand public infrastructure such as sewer service to all new and existing industrial developments within the Town.

Guiding Principles for Transportation

- 1. Maintain good working relationship with transportation planners at NCDOT and the Southwestern Commission.***
- 2. Alleviate traffic safety problems and congestion on major and minor thoroughfares.***
- 3. Facilitate communication between residents and transportation officials.***
- 4. Coordinate transportation policies with land use policies***

Recommendations that Promote these Principles

- A. Promote road improvements on unimproved streets in town and continue to seek dedication of private streets to the public to help improve residential and emergency vehicle access.
- B. Require adequate transportation access to all developments in order to provide orderly and efficient traffic flow and maintain current minimum design standards for new subdivision road construction.
- C. Continued use of Powell Bill funds for road improvements in systematic manner.

Guiding Principles for Public Services

- 1. Provide adequate leisure and recreational activities for all segments of the population.***
- 2. Provide water and sewer service to residential neighborhood where feasible.***
- 3. Continued Town support of fire, police and EMS departments.***
- 4. Maintain intergovernmental agreements with Swain County in order to provide town citizens with essential services.***
- 5. Maintain level of service for garbage collection..***

Recommendations that Promote these Principles

- A. Continue to work with the Swain County and other local governments on future public water and sewer projects.
- B. Ensure that adequate infrastructure and services are available concurrently with new development.
- C. Explore financing alternatives for public water and sewer system.

Guiding Principles for Housing

- 1. Encourage aesthetically-pleasing subdivision design and new residential development.***
- 2. Encourage the use of multi-family housing as an affordable housing option.***
- 3. Provide equitable locations for manufactured housing and manufactured home parks.***
- 4. Preserve and protect Bryson City's established neighborhoods.***

Recommendations that Promote these Principles

- A. Develop a program to address residential areas in need of rehabilitation and enforce minimum housing code and identify structures appropriate for enforcement.
- B. Explore design-related guidelines and minimum standards regulations within the Town to ensure the aesthetic quality of new and existing development.
- C. Work to rehabilitate substandard residential areas, with special emphasis on older vacant homes in Town and areas of blight.
- D. Retain the small hometown atmosphere by encouraging low-density development as well as allowing high density developments.
- E. Ensure that codes and ordinances are enforced and applied uniformly throughout the Town.

Guiding Principles for Economic Development

- 1. Encourage economic development that enhances the Town's amenities and overall quality of life.**
- 2. Promote economic development opportunities with high potential for job creation and community stability.**
- 3. Foster new and existing commercial development through appropriate land use regulations.**
- 4. Facilitate and encourage local, community-based economic development opportunities.**
- 5. Provide stewardship of the Town's built environment, especially along major corridors to attract commercial activity.**

Recommendations that Promote these Principles

- A. Promote development in and around town through higher densities, mixed uses, quality design and other means.
- B. The Planning Board should study ways of encouraging service facilities and commercial development within appropriate zoning classifications.
- C. Evaluate available properties throughout the Town and encourage commercial development projects in appropriate areas.
- D. In conjunction with property owners, prepare an inventory of vacant land and land available for commercial development.
- E. Address code enforcement issues along main thoroughfares that negatively affect economic development potential.
- F. Maintain a close relationship with the Swain County Economic Development Commission to keep Bryson City actively involved in economic development activity.
- G. Provide economic development information and assistance to help recruit viable businesses and service industry activities.

“I cannot foresee what changes the future will bring to my beloved mountains. I can only hope that my generation will preserve and protect these precious hills for our children’s children.”

*-Lacy Hunter Nix, Editor
The Foxfire 40th Anniversary Book: 2006
Faith, Family, and the Land*

Implementation, Evaluation, and Amendment Process

In order to assure that the *Land Development Plan* is serving its purpose and meeting its intended goals, the Plan should be monitored and evaluated regularly. Each year staff should re-evaluate the status of the plan and associated policies and develop a plan of work necessary to achieve the Town's land use and growth management goals. Performance measures, or "benchmarks," should be identified for each recommendation to serve as progress indicators for plan implementation. These measures should be quantifiable and have shorter time horizons than the long range plan. This process will help ensure that the *Land Development Plan* is implemented effectively and in a timely manner while remaining relevant to current conditions.

The Town of Bryson City Land Development Plan is intended to be an ever-changing document. When necessary, amendments must be made that help the plan adapt to meet new challenges and changing conditions that may be prevalent in the future. The *Land Development Plan* should be responsive to these changes; therefore, it will be necessary to evaluate the *Land Development Plan* periodically. The *Land Development Plan's* essential guiding principles, goals and policies, should remain largely unchanged to prevent undermining the overall intentions and integrity of the long range planning process. Any changes to the *Land Development Plan* should be facilitated through the Planning Board and recommended to the Board of Aldermen in the same manner established for amendments to other policy documents approved by the Board of Aldermen.

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APPENDIX A: Newspaper Articles

Bryson City developing first zoning plan

By Becky Johnson • Staff Writer, Smoky Mountain News – Week of June 14, 2006

An influx of growth has prompted Bryson City leaders to address land-use planning with hopes of drafting the town's first development ordinance by January 2007.

Bryson City is the only town out of Haywood, Jackson, Macon and Swain counties that does not have some kind of zoning. The recent increase in growth means the town can no longer rely on developers to build appropriately and in keeping with the town's character, according to Brad Walker, a member of the town planning board and local businessman.

"Without zoning anyone can build anything, anytime, anywhere," Walker said.

Bryson City is a tiny town in a county largely consumed by the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Nantahala National Forest, leaving little territory for development. That makes good land-use planning even more important, said Dennis White, a planning board member.

"We have to be careful with what we do with what's left," White said. "It is very fragile."

Several shops and building owners downtown have recently improved their property. The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad renovated a dilapidated three-story historic building downtown into an attractive downtown anchor. A streetscaping project has bestowed Everett Street with lampposts, street trees and brick in-lays on the sidewalks, with plans to expand the look throughout downtown.

The upshot of the renewed investment in downtown is a new-found desire to keep it that way. Business owners who have made

investments want to ensure a developer doesn't come along and do something to spoil the town's character, Walker said.

"No one I have talked to has been against it. Everyone wants to protect their investment," Walker said. "It is the right time." In the recent Swain County commissioners primary, several county commissioner candidates cited the influx of growth and development in their platform and the need to protect what is special about Swain County. Some candidates advocated for countywide land-use planning or a subdivision ordinance that would regulate development on steep slopes.

"I don't think we will have as much resistance to this idea as we would have 10 years ago," said White.

The plan would also address the creation of a historic district downtown and a master parking plan. Bryson City is plagued by a lack of parking, more so than other downtowns in the region.

The land-use plan would apply to more than downtown, however. It would address development within the entire town limits, including the commercial corridors leading into town and residential areas.

The town board of aldermen has the final say on whether to adopt the land-use plan. The town board gave the planning board its blessing to work on the ordinance, indicating its members would be amenable to adopting a land-use plan. There will be at least two public hearings on the zoning ordinance.

"We don't want to stymie growth. We want to control growth and make sure it is done in a proper manner," Walker said.

Bryson City seeks public opinion at land-use workshop May 29

Smoky Mountain News – Week of May 16, 2007

Bryson City residents are being invited to participate in a land-use planning workshop between the hours of 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 29, at Bryson City town hall.

The ideas gathered from the public will help shape a comprehensive land-use plan for the town. **It is the town's first foray into planning.** Bryson is one of the only towns left in the region that has zero regulations for development.

The meeting will provide Bryson City residents with an opportunity to offer their insights and opinions on how they feel Bryson City should develop in coming years. Bryson City and Swain County have experienced steady growth in tourism and commercial and residential development during the past several years; this growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

In anticipation of changing conditions in the area, the Planning **Advisory Committee, consisting of members from the Town's** Planning Board and citizens appointed by the Board of Aldermen, is **in the process of preparing the town's first land use plan.**

Committee members and town staff will be in attendance to provide information about the planning process and to exchange information and ideas with residents. Interested persons are invited to visit the Bryson City Town Hall on Everett Street. For more information contact Ron Hancock of the North Carolina Division of Community Assistance at 828.251.6914. In addition, residents can take a survey on-line to **share their values and ideas about the town's** future. The survey is at tinyurl.com/2edm8y.

Bryson City seeks citizen input in land-use plan

By Quintin Ellison, Smoky Mountain News -- Week of June 6, 2007

Want to build anything you want in a downtown location that receives a ton of visitors each summer? Then Bryson City, with its total lack of rules governing development, is just the place for you.

Better hurry, though, because town leaders want this wide open, anything-goes situation to end.

"We're going to fix Bryson City up the way people want it," said Alderman Kate Welch, who has served on the town board since 1995. **"And, not just for today, but down the road."**

To that end, the town aldermen appointed a planning advisory committee in November 2006 made up of planning board members and various citizens. The advisory committee has been tasked with preparing Bryson City's first land-use plan.

"This is something that is really important to all of us," said Planning Board Chairman Brad Walker. **"With the tremendous growth that is taking place, we have realized we need land-use management."**

As part of that process, town leaders held an informal session at Town Hall on Tuesday, May 29. Residents, business owners and others were asked what they wanted to see included in the plan.

The list is long, at least based on the number of Post-It Notes containing suggestions that were tacked on the walls. But there were commonalities.

These included the need for more **downtown parking** ("need parking," "more parking downtown, enlarge parking spots"), **objections to any suggestion of closing Frye Street to motorists** ("do not close for pedestrians"), and a general agreement among those

attending the meeting that they want Bryson City to keep its small-town feeling ("not Gatlinburg or Helen, Ga.," "No Helena, Montana or Tuscon, Arizona.").

Other comments included a wish for grants to pay for business façade improvements and better utilization of the Tuckasegee River, which cuts through the center of Bryson City.

"This is good. It gives us stuff to sift through and prioritize," said Wally Treadway, a planning board member, as he watched people writing down suggestions.

There's still time to do something, said Murphy Hunting, owner of Smoky Mountain Computers.

"I don't think it's overdue yet, but if they don't do something soon, the town we know and love will be gone," she said.

Carolyn Allison, incoming Swain County Chamber of Commerce president, agreed.

"It does seem people are coming in, and in my personal opinion, are pushing too fast into development," she said.

Kristy Carter, a state community development planner, said a draft land-use plan should be completed by fall for town board review.

The state, through the Division of Community Assistance, advises communities that lack the resources to go it alone on how to prepare land-use management plans.

Carter said the plan could contain appearance standards for buildings, environmental protections, and there is the possibility of creating a one-mile buffer zone around the 1,460-acre town, called an extra-territorial zone, or ETJ.

It will contain the following five components:

- **Executive summary.**
- **Issues and vision statement.**
- **Information base (existing conditions and projections).**
- **Goals, objectives and policies relevant to each subject area.**
- **Intended course of action consisting of future land-use plan, development management program, plan implementation schedule and monitoring and adjustment program.**

By the numbers

Population of Bryson City

2000 — 1,411 2005 — 1,462

Population of Swain County

2000 — 12,968 2005 — 13,585

Growth of Bryson City

1990-2000 — 23 percent

2000-2005 — 3.6 percent

1990-2005 — 27 percent

Housing units in Swain County

1990 — 5,664

2005 — 7,823

Housing units growth in Swain County

1990-2000 — 25 percent

2000-2005 — 10 percent

Source: N.C. Division of Community Assistance

Appendix B: News Release and Public Meeting Announcement

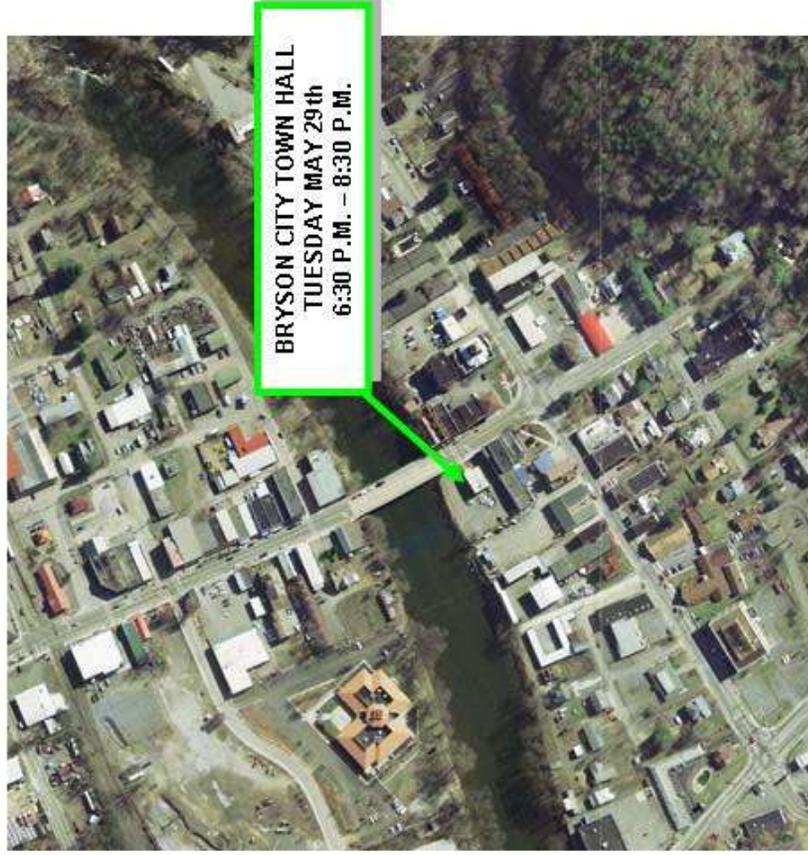


COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PLANNING SESSION SCHEDULED FOR BRYSON CITY

The Bryson City Planning Advisory Committee has scheduled a community involvement session for Tuesday, May 29, 2007 at the Bryson City Town Hall. The meeting will provide Bryson City residents with an opportunity to offer their insights and opinions on how they feel Bryson City should develop in coming years. Bryson City and Swain County have experienced steady growth in tourism, commercial and residential development during the past several years; this growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. In anticipation of changing conditions in the area, the Planning Advisory Committee, consisting of members from the Town's Planning Board and citizens appointed by the Board of Aldermen, is in the process of preparing the Town's first land use plan. Committee members and Town staff will be in attendance to provide information about the planning process and to exchange information and ideas with residents. Interested persons are invited to visit the Bryson City Town Hall on Everett Street between the hours of 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. For more information contact Ron Hancock of the North Carolina Division of Community Assistance at 828-251-6914.

###

DO YOU LIVE IN BRYSON CITY AND HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE TOWN'S FUTURE?



Participate in a community based planning process that will reflect your ideas about the future development of Bryson City.

Public Involvement Session
Tuesday, May 29 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Bryson City Town Hall

Sponsored by the Town of Bryson City Planning Advisory Committee and the NC
Division of Community Assistance

For more information please contact Ron Hancock of the
Division of Community Assistance at 828-251-6914

APPENDIX C: SURVEY INSTRUMENT and RESULTS



BRYSON CITY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

As part of its ongoing mission to provide necessary services and to help improve the quality of life in our area, The Town of Bryson City is preparing a Land Development Plan. This plan will help guide public policy regarding growth, development, and commerce in the upcoming years. Because community participation is extremely important in determining the town's values and goals, please offer guidance in this process by completing the following questionnaire.

Part I: Important Town Issues. Please check the answer that, in your opinion, best describes the level of importance in addressing each of the following issues affecting you and your community:

	Most	High	Average	Low	None
1. Sewer service	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. Water service	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. Garbage collection	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. Solid Waste (brush) pickup	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. Curbside recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. Police service	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. Road improvements	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. Environmental conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 9. Code enforcement
(junk cars, minimum
housing standards, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Overall appearance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Small business/industrial development | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Parks and recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Affordable housing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Historic preservation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Land preservation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Commercial development
(shops, restaurants, markets, bank, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Part II: SWOT— Please describe any Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, or Threats that you believe exist for future development in the Town of Bryson City.

Strengths: (Good things about the Town of Bryson City)

Weaknesses: (Things about the Town of Bryson City that could be improved)

Opportunities: (Political, economic, social, technological, forces and trends on the horizon that will make the Town of Bryson City a better place)

Threats: (Political, economic, social, technological, forces and trends on the horizon that have the potential to harm the Town of Bryson City. These are external forces that the Town does not control.)

Part III: Tell us about where you live.

Do you live in Swain County? Yes No

If you answered "No" to question number 6, what county do you live in? _____

Do you live within the town limits of Bryson City? Yes No

Do you own property inside the town limits of Bryson City? Yes No

Do you own property in Swain County (outside of the Town Limits of Bryson City)? Yes No

Are you a full time resident of Bryson City or Swain County? Yes No

Part IV: Tell us about yourself.

Sex _____ Age _____

What county do you work in? _____

Part V: Additional Comments. Feel free to provide additional information in the space below.

1. Important Town Issues

	High	Average	Low	None
1. Sewer Service	54% (15)	25% (7)	11% (3)	11% (3)
2. Water Service	57% (16)	29% (8)	4% (1)	11% (3)
3. Garbage Collection	32% (9)	39% (11)	21% (6)	7% (2)
4. Solid Waste (Brush) Pickup	29% (8)	36% (10)	18% (5)	18% (5)
5. Curbside Recycling	32% (9)	32% (9)	18% (5)	18% (5)
6. Police Services	54% (15)	39% (11)	7% (2)	0% (0)
7. Road Improvements	39% (11)	54% (15)	7% (2)	0% (0)
8. Environmental Conservation	68% (19)	18% (5)	7% (2)	7% (2)
9. Code Enforcement (Junk Cars, Minimum Housing Standards)	57% (16)	21% (6)	14% (4)	7% (2)
10. Overall Appearance	75% (21)	14% (4)	4% (1)	7% (2)
11. Small Business/Industrial Development	29% (8)	50% (14)	18% (5)	4% (1)
12. Parks and Recreation	57% (16)	36% (10)	4% (1)	4% (1)
13. Affordable Housing	39% (11)	43% (12)	14% (4)	4% (1)
14. Historic Preservation	50% (14)	32% (9)	7% (2)	11% (3)
15. Land Preservation	68% (19)	14% (4)	14% (4)	4% (1)
16. Commercial Development (shops, restaurants, markets, banks, etc.)	32% (9)	43% (12)	25% (7)	0% (0)

2. Strengths (Good things about the Town of Bryson City) Please See Specific SWOT Responses

Total Respondents 16

(skipped this question) 12

3. Weaknesses (Things about the Town of Bryson City that could be improved) Please See Specific SWOT Responses

Total Respondents 16

(skipped this question) 12

4. Opportunities (Political, economic, social, technological, forces and trends on the horizon that will make the Town of Bryson City a better place) Please See Specific SWOT Responses

Total Respondents 15

(skipped this question) 13

5. Threats (Political, economic, social, technological, forces and trends on the horizon that have the potential to harm the Town of Bryson City. These are external forces that the Town does not control.)

Total Respondents 16

(skipped this question) 12

6. Do you live in Swain County

	Response Total	Response Percent
Yes	19	86%
No	3	14%
Total Respondents	22	
(skipped this question)		6

7. If you answered "No" to question number 6, what county do you live in?

	Response Total	Response Percent
Qualla Boundary	1	33%
Out of State	1	33%
Other	2	67%
Total Respondents	3	
(skipped this question)		25

8. Do you live within the town limits of Bryson City?

	Response Total	Response Percent
Yes	6	29%
No	15	71%
Total Respondents	21	

9. Do you own property inside the town limits of Bryson City?

	Response Total	Response Percent
Yes	7	33%
No	14	67%
Total Respondents	21	
(skipped this question)		7

10. Do you own property in Swain County (outside of the Town Limits of Bryson City)?

	Response Total	Response Percent
Yes	18	86%
No	3	14%
Total Respondents	21	
(skipped this question)		7

11. Are you a full time resident of Bryson City or Swain County?

	Response Total	Response Percent
Yes	12	57%
No	9	43%
Total Respondents	21	

12. Sex

	Response Total	Response Percent
Male	13	59%
Female	10	45%
Total Respondents	22	
(skipped this question)		6

13. Age

	Response Average
Total Respondents	51.5
(skipped this question)	7

Additional Comments

Total Respondents	13
(skipped this question)	15

Additional Comments

We need better roads, better paying jobs, more affordable housing.

Would like to know how to see the results of this survey.

I would like to see a more controlled effort to stop the sub-division of mountain property in the County. Parcels of land smaller than 3-5 acres should not be allowed to be divided into smaller lots and resold or developed for homes. We need to make Swain County a model for limited but planned development to preserve or natural resouces and its beauty.

Water is becoming an issue we should become more aware of. Too many homes in too small an area can and has hurt the higher elevations water availability. That means water issues will move as water moves - downslope and downstream. Please pass this along to the Counry commisioners, if they will not be part of the review team for these comments and your survey.

Thanks...

Downtown is beautiful, great job, wonderful chamber, someone has gone against the grain and come up with a glorious vision

I love this place, and can't wait to move here permanently. Please continue to ensure that we build with respect to the land and our neighbors to maintain this wonderful way of life.

I would like to see a city effort to nrenegotiate with the Railroad for free parking in trhe RR's parking area. This could be accomplished with a \$1.00 added cost to each ticket. The probable result is relief on city parking by the tourist unwilling to spend \$3.00 to park.

We've been coming to Bryson City for quite a few years. A few years back we finally bought some property. Back then it was quiet, peaceful and charming. Lately there's been a flurry of development seemingly **unrestricted. People are selling off the children's inheritance and gutting the very mountains that draw** people to your area. You have tremendous potential to make your area a showcase if you'll just get some planning help before its too late. Whoever allowed that tacky metal building downtown between the two historic brick buildings should be shot. This shows your lack of planning and small town mentality. Yeah you have more property on the tax roles but at what cost. Realize the potential in your downtown area and expand on it carefully. How many real estate shops do you need? You have a wonderful small town charm

with a few rough edges. You need to do some cleanup of some key, highly visible properties. With so many outdoor activities around and so many people coming to your area to enjoy them, try promoting them more and work on providing services to that clientele. I've found first hand that your building inspection program is a farce. Still seems like a good Ol boy mentality and who you know to get things done. I can't believe some of the things I've seen done, approved and let go.

You need to get someone in who can develop a long term plan for your area. Head over to Waynesville and look at the mountains. In some areas you can't even see the trees from all the "Cabins" being built. Wakeup and smell the roses before you bury them all for that almighty quick buck!

Your downtown area and beyond actually has great potention from a scenic point. Cleanup the river, do we really need to see junk cars on the shore? Look to some big cities that have done some great City Walks and shoreline renovation. You have such a natural potential here but for god's sake don't turn Bryson City into another Gatlinburg or Cherokee!
Think QUALITY, not quantity

Since coming here 10 years ago i knew this was a special place. as excited as i am to see positive growth and interest in this town and area i worry that it may be happening too fast and without deep thought. i think there can be a benefit from laws and ordinances that are passed to ensure folks build and live responsibly with nature and one another. a balance must be maintained before growth happens too fast and cannot be turned back.

Land use and zoning issues are necessary evils in todays day and age. In a rather short amount of time, the population of this area will increase dramatically. I saw first hand what happened in areas of Florida that used to be populated as we are here now. Roads such as Hyway 74 turned into 6 lane highways with traffic lights all over. Over developed land, businesses and strip store centers built as fast as contractors could buy material. All in the name of Tax base and progress. If things are not done today, mountain tops in this area will all be developed, natural beauty destroyed, and the way of life in this area destroyed forever. Keep it clean, keep it simple, keep it growing in a controlled way.

Bryson City was never a TRAIN/Railroad Town and I am very allarmed at the current trend of newcomers and others of embracing the Railroad for local economics!! Move the crap out of town and restrict Zoning county wide (limited). We need to invest in local interest/buisnesses to attract and keep our children here! There are very limited employment oppertunities and housing / land available to our children, I forsee a decimated and broken community within 50 years if something isn't done now to protect our heritage!! For over 300 years my families have been here and here is where I want to stay!!(as a 20 year veteran of the armed services I have already given much of my life to protect American interests now lets protect Swain

Counties!!!!Bryson City needs and must grow,.but we can direct it's growth potential!

I think that the use of Meth is growing and alarming issue, that needs to be addressed by a coordinated effort between city police, county sheriff, and whatever state and federal resources are available. For that to work, we need to be more realistic about compensation for law enforcement - the frontline officer not management- and funds to provide these departments with resources to attract and keep good officers who still want to make a difference. Has anyone compared our law enforcement salaries with other counties further east?

The uncrowded aspect of Bryson is no longer the case during the tourism season. We need more walking paths, bike lanes along roads, and strong educational programs to encourage people to park and walk. I ride my bike to work and home two or three days a week - and it is scary- roads are narrow and the drivers hate me. I get cursed and crowded. Bike lanes would help. Educating folks to be more accepting would help. I don't ride my bike to make people mad- but to save money on gas, save money on wear-and-tear on my car, for fitness and to lower my carbon footprint on the planet. Our current infrastructure is struggling to handle the mass volume of car traffic in the summer, so please include bike lanes in any road work plans that are put into place.

There is land for sale coming off the 74 exit- could a city parking area be put into place with a "tram" system like they have at Lake Junaluska, to encourage more foot traffic vs car traffic from our tourists?

Put in more sidewalks- educate people to walk to the Post Office or up to fast food row. When putting in new sidewalks, use pourous concrete. Protect our skyline with ordinances such as Hendersonville has to limit building heights, and with planned development. I am not against development, but I believe in steep slope protection and planning ordinances.

We need to be careful that we don't forget our base residents- we need some sort of homesteading protection. Gangbuster 2nd home development is driving up land values so high that long time residents can't afford to pay taxes and have to sell their land. And there are almost no homes available for starter families and low to middle income families.

I don't think the GSMRR brings as much money into our economy as we would like to think. they are adept at creating circular markets, the profits stay in their pervue instead of spreading out into the surrounding local businesses, and the vast majority of their profits are going back to their Colorado corporate office, and not fueling our tax base. It is short-sighted to "put too many eggs" in the SMRR basket.

Thank you allowing input through this survey process! We have a great community, where your postman says hello to you in the bank parking lot, and I don't want us to lose that small-town feel as we grow and develop.

I own property just like others do in Bryson City yet even in this survey, you have decided to discount me because I don't live there full time. I am there about 6 months of the year. If I own property and pay taxes, then my opinion should count as much as anyone else's.

I purchased a house in Bryson City 6 years ago for two reasons. One, it's proximity to outdoor activities (hiking, boating, fishing, etc) and two, it's a charming town and the residents I've met and know make me wish I was there all the time. I am for improvements, but I hate to see the character of the town diminished by eyesores like the junky aluminum building next door to Clampett's Hardware, and the horrible abandoned trailers on Depot Street on the way to Deep Creek. I've also witnessed the ravaging effects of drugs on several young people I know, and feel the county and city should be more pro-active in drug prevention and curing addicts. I also feel the county should take the money from the road to nowhere settlement and invest it in things that will serve the entire population.

SWOT Analysis

2. Strengths (Good things about the Town of Bryson City)

- Sherriff Cochran
- Beauty
- DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT
- Up till now has kept small town appeal
- Local businesses
- Beauty of area
- The kindness of the people
- River
- Size - small
- Natural beauty-natl park, natl forest
- Community
- Small town size!
- Curbside appeal has been improving over the last couple of years
- Recent street appearance improvements
- Ambiance
- Neighbors
- Schools
- Friendly
- LOCATION
- Historic past
- Low traffic
- Natural beauty
- Traffic pattern
- Location - close to other cities/towns
- Friendly, small town appeal
- Schools that still have Christmas Vacation
- Schools
- Library system
- Small businesses
- People
- Location
- Small
- IT IS A QUAIN TOWN - NO BIG BOX STORES
- Friendly
- Lots of outdoor activities
- Lack of congestion
- Downtown charm, certain new remodel jobs
- Opportunity for kids-playground, pool, etc
- People
- No tall buildings
- Rec park & kids programs
- River
- Character
- Everett street improvements
- Low trash on street
- The climate
- Rescue Squads
- Close to the park
- Activities-heritage festival, music in the park
- Location to Park
- Street lights and decorative street Lamps!

- Geography -location & views bring people (& \$\$) to our community (we need to preserve our views)
- Kid's playground
- County seat
- Anthony's pizza
- Great vistas of uninhabited mountains
- Emergency Response
- Natural features, river, park, mountains
- Historic beauty in downtown
- Lifestyle
- Emergency Response/EMS/Fire-Great!
- The river, river walk & Governor's Island
- Halloween
- Proximity to National Park
- Deep creek
- The 2 remodeled storefronts downtown
- Railroad
- Solid school system
- Size of town
- Community events - 4th of July run, music on the lawn at the admin building
- River runs through it
- --that look very much like you'd hope to find in a mountain town (Treyburn)
- Recreational activities in area
- We have people who care, and we are trying to stay un-spoiled-like the sign says
- Access to interstate
- Family first attitudes to events
- Old buildings and history
- Look of most parts of town
- Medical services
- No Wal-Mart
- Train station

3. Weaknesses (Things about the Town of Bryson City that could be improved)

- Print board minutes in SMT newspaper
- Traffic
- PLANNING
- No building regulations
- Lack of building codes
- More \$ library
- Junk cars and crap on the roadside
- Parking
- Lack of downtown planning, I hope that god awful metal building was a wakeup call
- Bike trails
- Lack of zoning
- Too many realty offices/businesses

- Bike paths especially for access/coming in to town. We are losing that
- uncrowded feel due to volume of cars/traffic
- Lack of zoning
- Water pressure to home
- Crappy trailers on depot street
- Schools
- Traffic
- CODES
- Need to maintain historic buildings
- Downtown zoning
- Junky trailer homes within 10 ft of the road
- Zoning
- Needs cleaning up
- More restaurants for evening dining
- Lack of enforcement ie: trash, junk cars etc
- Traffic congestion at peak hours
- More sidewalks& walking paths - and a strong encouragement program
- increase pedestrians- walk to post office/lunch instead of drive for example
- Lack of control of appearance of new building
- Zoning so trailers can't be next to houses
- Zoning in town
- Traffic
- CITY WEB SITE
- Couldn't we have a 30 ft setback with
- Lack of many small business services
- Some housing areas (mobile homes) look terrible and you have to drive right by them all the time
- Outskirts cleaned of trash (stronger enforcement)
- Town closes too early
- Not enough parking for downtown area

- Sidewalks on BOTH sides of road up to fast food row- still on that walk vs. drive-
- Junked cars/trash in and along the river
- The trailer park at the base of Hospital hill
- Construction in town not architecturally appropriate
- Traffic
- Landscape screening?
- Lack of proper building inspections, Good Ol Boy mentality still seems to be rampant
- Ordinance for houses in downtown (ie. not have metal trash in yard)
- Road conditions
- No river access within town limits
- Wish we had a medium-upscale restaurant in town- along the lines of Lulus in
- Sylva or Nantahala Village
- Old courthouse looks sad
- Traffic management in summer
- No alcohol/beer till 12 on Sundays
- Scores of abandoned, rusted cars festooning
- Small town mentality, wake up or your small town will be gone as will all the
- charms that attract people to Bryson City and the area

- Cleanliness of some areas
- Sewage treatment too close to residents
- Curbside recycling in city limits (since there is garbage pick up, most don't go the extra step to carry to recycle center)
- No family friendly activities, bowling, putt-putt, golf
- Alcohol/beer sales end at 6 on Sunday
- The front lawns
- Middle school performance
- Many state violations for septic systems mainly in county!
- Politics- sometimes seems petty & personal instead of professional
- Substance abuse services are lacking and too many users
- The only jobs are Service(Burger king) and Real estate sales
- Building codes and enforcement
- Railroad in town should be moved out of.
- No local store like home depot or target
- Needs limited zoning control/vice none
- limited road infrastructure to support increasing traffic
- Meth problem
- Appliances on sidewalk of Everett St.
- Keep motorcycles out of town!!!
- Quality of education and drop out rate
- Good jobs
- No automobile-tire services on Sunday
- Availability of trades in town
- Meth shacks

4. Opportunities (Political, economic, social, technological, forces and trends on the horizon that will make the Town of Bryson City a better place)

- Prosecute vote buyers
- None
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- More small businesses
- More diverse small businesses
- Need strict signage ordinances
- People are starting to think about zoning
- Tourism
- Railroad brings in a lot of money & people. People want to stay,
- shop and eat in nice comfortable places.
- DSL or cable to more locations in and out of town
- Need more Republicans(GOP)
- Global warming- go green - use porous concrete for sidewalks,
- seek alt energy solutions, biodiesel in county vehicles?, incentives
- to lower co2 impact
- Create walking trails/river walk

- Engage with Home Depot or Target
 - Take the money, leave the road to nowhere alone
 - Schools
-
- Chance to move toward a common development process
 - Need underground power lines
 - and restricting over development
 - Business Growth
 - National Park is a big draw, Cater to the Naturalist more.
 - Take the lead in teaching, not political correctness
 - Network services/ DSL etc.
 - Support local food/farmers- Bring local food into schools system
 - (www.asapconnections.org offers help to get this kind of program going)
 - Add shade/trees
 - Embrace the arts so that pottery or painting or music flourish
 - Preserve & improve what you have before it's all gone
 - Create codes and enforce to make businesses and home/landowners clean
 - up their properties
 - Finish road to no-where for tourist trade!
 - Have a public parking area outside of city limits with a tram service- goal being
 - less cars in town/preserve the uncrowded feel
 - Create parking
 - Zoning so that trailers can't be next to homes and prefab buildings can't
 - go up in the middle of historic district
 - New tax money can improve the "Core" downtown area then move outward.
 - Set proper land usage and zoning guidelines
 - Build road for Business opportunities!
-
- Improving internet access to outlying community (for education for kids as well as appeal for business) We have lots of areas that cannot get DSL serv
 - Preserve open spaces
 - Improved policing
 - Central to a lot of outdoor activities. Build upon that.
 - Cleanup the Tuckaseegee, remove cars at bridge
 - Relocate / Upgrade sewage treatment plant
 - Plan bike paths & bike routes into any road widening programs or new roads
 - clean up the river banks
 - Improved recreation for families like bowling or putt putt or golf
 - Pave River Rd
 - Build new Library/make more available Technology services!
 - Tennis leagues like women's doubles every Thursday night, bridge (cards)
 - regularly for young and old
 - Bring back Rural Farming for local economy!
 - Trust fund for town from the Road to nowhere fund?
 - County wide zoning to protect the land and people!
 - Historic walk for visitors re: the flood, the dates buildings were built etc.

- Strengthen relations with Cherokee!
- Improved community education events like drug identification or use identification;
- parenting skills
- Bring back limited airfield services!

- Town services for hire like yard maintenance or other services would provide
- employment opportunities

5. Threats (Political, economic, social, and technological forces, and trends on the horizon that have the potential to harm the Town of Bryson City.

- Drugs
- Trashy littered roads
- DEVELOPMENT-- IF NOT PLANNED AND CONTROLLED
- Drugs
- Allowing uncontrolled growth
- Development from outside
- When the large, national builders discover this area like they did central Fla, they will mow down the forests (like our orange groves) build hundreds of look alike houses and clog the streets. DONT LET THEM GET A TOEHOLD!!
- Railroad growth
- Greed
- Extreme high percentage of expensive second homes may increase cost of housing making it unbearable for many to buy homes and reside.
- Mountain top development
- County zoning is nil!!!
- Gangbuster development - our geography makes us precious.
- Planned Development with slope protection important.
- Short-sighted development
- Lack of preservation of current appeal including historic areas
- Methamphetamines
- Schools

- Vote buying
- Young people moving away to other jobs
- Illegal drugs
- High gas prices threatening tourist visits
- Entrepreneurial self interests
- Clear cutting property to build more "Cabins" is destroying the area and the whole reason people want to move there.
- Polluted watershed
- Development along 74 corridor which will make traffic lights necessary
- Outsiders buying all available land no-local can afford to live here now!!!
- The Meth problem - eventually it will start to impact businesses & the
- perception of our area if crime rate goes up
- Development out of character

- Prefab buildings (eye doctors office and mall in town ugh) ugly
- City and county have no drug treatment services
- Road conditions
- The obvious attitude that Floridians are Floridiots. You hate where we came from but you love our money
- Increase level of trash
- Over development, density issues
- Realty prices are out of reach for most locals!!
- The GSMRR - don't let them pave the parking lot (or require porous concrete)
- & no multilevel garage or hotel
- No open space left
- Lack of job creation so that youth do not return to Bryson City
- Help for the old and poor
- Unrestricted, over development
- Stream water cleanliness, runoff issues
- Duke Power!! 95% of our power is locally generated yet we pay nominal state wide prices!!!
- Protect our skyline - Hendersonville has a limit on the tallest buildings to
- protect the feel of the city/views- should we do the same
- Lack of parking
- Inability to get services for home maintenance, roofing, painting, yard work etc.
- Lack of planning for the future.
- Schools teaching in more than one language
- Verizon!! No-DSL services to Jackson Line Mountain/Round Hill area!!
- 2nd home market driving up land values so that locals cannot afford (taxes) to keep their land- sometimes even if no mortgage. Homestead protection?
- River pollution
- Diversity at all costs
- Most residents in County won't participate in area politics!

- Development & land values- no low to middle income home available/being built
- Education of leadership
- In your rush for a quick buck, YOUR people are selling off every bit of property around
- Not Zoning or planning for future land use
- Too many local voters vote Dem vice Republican!
- Tourism- not all decisions can be around supporting tourism- need to keep
- & care for our year-round & working residents
- Lack of Women in political circles or appointees by Alderman or sexist attitudes
- Building "the road"
- Special interest groups!! Sierra Club/Environmentalists override local interests and Developments!!
- No planning to save the historic Bank where the Nantahala Outdoor ctr. used to be
- The ACLU
- Mid east!
- Job opportunities are not available for nurses or teachers or educated folk
- National Parks Service not enough interaction with Locals!!
- The Road to Nowhere fight

Appendix D: Results from Visioning and Mapping Exercises at Public Meeting

MAP 1			
Comment/Location	Asset	Liability	Need
Recycling Center (2)	X		
Justice Center	X		
Clean Up [Vacant buildings on 19 (66 station)]		X	
Airport (Renovate)			X
Island Park	X		X
Island Park (Improve)			
Youth park (2)	X		
Train	X		
Downtown (Real Estate Opportunity)	X		
Clean up Hwy 19 E of Town		X	
Clean up Hwy 19 E of Town (2)			X
Darnell Farm	X		
Old Cars in River		X	
Trailer Parks Downtown (2)		X	
River (Downtown)	X		
RR Parking	X		
Downtown Parking (5)			X
Junkyard downtown		X	
Old mill downtown (potential for redevelopment)	X		

MAP 2			
Comment/Location	Asset	Liability	Need
Airport	X		
Old Mill(Black Hill)	X		
Intersection by Depot		X	
Island Park (2)	X		
High School	X		
Intersection at Ingles		X	
Trailer Parks downtown (2)		X	
Train	X		
Old Courthouse	X		
Museum	X		
Downtown Parking			X
Junkyard downtown		X	

Results/Comments from Visioning Exercise

1. Hanging baskets/ Beautification
2. Clean Up! There is too much trash and junk along the roads. Make Bryson City
3. LOVE Everett Street
4. NOT Gatlinburg, TN or Helen, GA
5. No Helena, MT or Tucson AZ
6. NEED PARKING
7. More parking downtown- enlarge parking spots. The Cottage Craftsman
8. Once County opens new jail, tear old jail down & use space for <u>controlled</u>
9. Use jail for parking once torn down.
10. Parking downtown.
11. Pedestrian friendly.
12. Don't close Frye Street for pedestrians-- Cottage Craftsman
13. Don't close Frye Street for pedestrians—Gil's Book Sales
14. Do not close off Frye St. for pedestrians- the Cottage Wine Shop
15. Don't close Frye Street
16. Frye St. along the tracks could become similar to Front St. in Dillsboro (160,000+
17. If you close Frye St., what is the plan for parking? Please provide parking.
18. Close Frye Street
19. Would like to see speed limit in town enforced before someone loses [sic] their
20. Speed limit enforced in front of W. Elementary.
21. Need a light on Hwy. 19 at Ingles
22. Better/More mass transportation!
23. Consistent look for buildings.
24. Façade grants for buildings.
25. Preserve old/historic buildings.
26. Develop a consistent façade plan for Everett/Main Street
27. Youth friendly. I didn't see any youth here!
28. Children are our future!
29. Can we get a gathering place for youth in town? (skating/bowling/sodas/coffee)

30. What is the zoning plan/ordinance in Bryson City?
31. Develop an orderly and reasonable zoning ordinance.
32. Zoning Code and Code enforcement
33. Sign ordinance/consistency
34. How do we pass a moratorium on “developing” until our plan is developed?
35. Can we profit on the fact that all these people come through Bryson City to get to
36. Please look at annexing where we are already providing services. More money.
37. Develop incentives to attract services
38. We plan for Babies. Can we plan how we develop before any more development
39. Provide more diversified attraction (time-frame) i.e. attractions for winter and
40. [Allow] city resident’s input into park/recreation/leisure planning
41. Affordable Housing
42. Take more advantage of river scenes for tourism.
43. Better utilize the river.
44. Maintain unique natural environment.

Other Comments (from Suggestion Box):

Parking:

Approach Railroad Leadership

- 1) Suggest RR add \$1.00 to ticket price
- 2) Free parking for RR clientele

Will relieve pressure on limited city spaces, tourists don’t need to pay an additional \$3.00 to park Possible that Bryson City and Chamber of Commerce could subsidize RR [difference in parking fees].

Visitors come to Town with two things; a T-shirt and a \$10 bill, and they don’t change either the whole time they’re here!