

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Planning Board helped craft a Vision Statement to guide the planning process. Setting the vision for the future of Bryson City helps to establish a direction and guide decision-making for town leaders.

VISION 2045: The people who know and love Bryson City envision a thriving, walkable, business-friendly town with abundant outdoor recreation opportunities. The vision of Bryson City acknowledges and respects the culture and natural resources while encouraging positive changes that will improve the quality of life for current and future residents and visitors.

The results of the first round of community input were used to develop seven overarching goals for the plan. More specific objectives were then created to help achieve each of the identified goals. The following goals and objectives are designed to move Bryson City towards Vision 2045.

Goal 1: Protect and enhance the unique features that give Bryson City its character and make it a desirable place to live, work, and play.

Objectives to achieve this goal:

- Preserve natural beauty of the river and the mountains.
- Preserve the sense of community, history, and culture.
- Maintain the vibrant, walkable, business-friendly downtown.
- Preserve the unique historic buildings downtown.
- Enhance the connection between the Town and the Tuckasegee River to capitalize on this unique asset. Provide improved access to the river and views of the river.
- Enhance Island Park and add amenities to maximize access to recreational opportunities within Town.
- Enhance outdoor recreation opportunities.

Goal 2: Balance the benefits of a thriving tourism economy with the associated demands on local resources.

Objectives to achieve this goal:

- Work with Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Development Authority on funding infrastructure improvements to support the demands from tourism.
- Work with Swain County, Great Smoky Mountains Railroad, and other downtown businesses to develop solutions to traffic and parking issues.
- Promote and strengthen small, family-owned businesses.
- Expand recreational opportunities and activities for local youth and families.

Goal 3: Encourage land development and/or redevelopment that provides a balance in land uses and promotes a sense of community and overall quality of life.

Objectives to achieve this goal:

General:

- Promote development patterns that allow safe and convenient access between residential areas, shopping, services, recreation, and public facilities.
- Encourage the development of the most appropriate land and target the most suitable locations for development, such as residential areas, industrial parks, and commercial corridors.
- Protect available residential and commercial land from inappropriate types of development.
- Consider adopting development standards to ensure new development is compatible with the character of Bryson City.
- Ensure best practices for erosion, sediment control, and stormwater management are utilized to protect the natural resources and prevent damaging impacts to properties downslope.
- Protect existing residential neighborhoods from non-residential uses that would impact quality of life or harm property values.

High-Impact Land Uses:

- Protect the safety, health, and general welfare of all citizens from inappropriate and disorderly development.
- Establish standards for industrial, unsavory, or disruptive land uses that would detract from the character of the town and the quality of life of nearby residents and businesses.
- Require buffers and setbacks between incompatible or conflicting land uses.

- Establish standards for abandoned or neglected properties that may create a nuisance, public health hazard, or harm neighboring property values.

Downtown:

- Consider establishing a downtown historic district to protect the unique character of the historic downtown and deter demolition.
- Encourage multi-use development in the downtown area, combining retail stores, offices, and restaurants with higher-density residential to enhance walkability and vibrancy.

Commercial Corridors:

- Consider establishing commercial development standards for the highway corridors, ensuring safe and convenient access is maintained as these corridors continue to develop.
- Provide multi-modal access on commercial corridors to provide safe access for people walking, biking, or using public transit.
- Promote quality commercial development along the highways entering Bryson City, promoting a sense of arrival and gradual transition to the downtown center.
 - As the primary gateway into Bryson City, encourage the Veteran's Blvd commercial corridor to continue developing in a way that is consistent with the character of Bryson City.
 - US Hwy 19 Business to the west will likely continue to develop with commercial and light industrial land uses. Development standards can ensure that new development is consistent with the character of Bryson City and does not overburden the capacity of infrastructure.
 - US Hwy 19 Business to the east has limited undeveloped land and is more constrained due to the topography and the river. Development standards can help ensure that any redevelopment opportunities are consistent with the character of Bryson City.

Administrative:

- Consider establishing a Unified Development Ordinance so that all ordinances are clear, consistent, equitable, and enforceable.
- Modernize the Code of Ordinances online to maximize transparency and accessibility for the public.

- Consider hiring a code enforcement officer to ensure development standards are enforced appropriately and fairly.

Goal 4: Align land development with the capacity of existing and planned infrastructure.

Objectives to achieve this goal:

- Encourage well-planned development that is coordinated with necessary services such as water, sewer, electric, solid waste, and transportation.
- Encourage development in locations where public services such as police, fire, schools, and parks are available.
- Consider development standards that encourage infill development utilizing existing infrastructure.
- Establish appropriate water and sewer fees to provide adequate maintenance and operations and ensure consistent and reliable service.
- Discourage development in floodplains to minimize risk to public health and property damage.
- Develop a plan to manage stormwater runoff within the town, including an inventory of stormwater infrastructure conditions and a capital improvement plan.
- Consider development standards requiring new developments to provide supportive infrastructure (i.e., sidewalks, turn lanes, stormwater retention) so that these costs are not borne by local taxpayers.
- Pursue partnerships to install public restroom facilities downtown.

Goal 5: Develop a transportation system that provides safe and convenient access for all users to places of work, shopping, and services.

Objectives to achieve this goal:

- Improve pedestrian safety and access to workplaces, shopping, and services through the development of a connected sidewalk network extending from downtown and out along the three commercial corridors. Provide safe crosswalks at appropriate locations.

- Encourage commercial and industrial land uses with high freight volumes to locate near highways and major thoroughfares to minimize the impact of large trucks on other roads in the community.
- Partner with Swain County government and the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad to alleviate parking and traffic concerns associated with train departure/arrival times.
- Partner with Swain County Schools to alleviate traffic concerns associated with school drop off/pick up times.
- Protect the functionality of the two river crossings and avoid bottlenecks on the Slope Street Bridge and Everett Street Bridge by discouraging any large-scale developments that would generate high volumes of traffic to locate on the north side of the river. Given the size of the river, it would likely be cost-prohibitive to construct an additional bridge in the foreseeable future.
- Continue participation in the Southwestern Rural Planning Organization to plan, prioritize, and fund transportation improvement projects in the North Carolina Department of Transportation's State Transportation Improvement Program.
 - Modernizing US 19 (R-4751) remains a top priority – this project was previously funded and preliminary design was started, but it was later defunded due to NCDOT budget issues.
 - Constructing a multi-use path on Fontana Rd to connect downtown to the high school is also a priority.

Goal 6: Increase the diversity of housing options and opportunities for residents with varying levels of density, price, and style.

Objectives to achieve this goal:

- Collaborate on efforts to educate the public about the importance of affordable housing and the individuals who benefit from it.
- Consider adopting development standards to promote additional medium- and high-density housing in appropriate locations.
- Maintain the existing housing stock by seeking opportunities and partnerships to improve substandard housing.
- Consider opportunities to incentivize long-term rentals for residents vs. short-term rentals to tourists.

- Consider opportunities to preserve land for the development of mixed income housing (multi-family, townhomes, duplexes, etc.).

Goal 7: Strengthen partnerships to foster collaboration on achieving common goals.

Objectives to achieve this goal:

- Collaborate with other community groups to accomplish common goals and provide more effective and efficient use of the Town's financial resources.
 - Swain County Government
 - Swain County Schools
 - Swain County Library
 - Swain Community Hospital
 - State of Franklin Health Council
 - Tennessee Valley Authority
 - Duke Energy
 - Great Smoky Mountains National Park
 - Southwestern Commission Council of Government
 - Southwestern HOME Consortium
 - Southwestern Rural Planning Organization
 - Mountain West Partnership
 - NCDOT
 - Great Smoky Mountains Railroad and other local businesses
 - Tourism Development Authority
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Local and regional nonprofit organizations