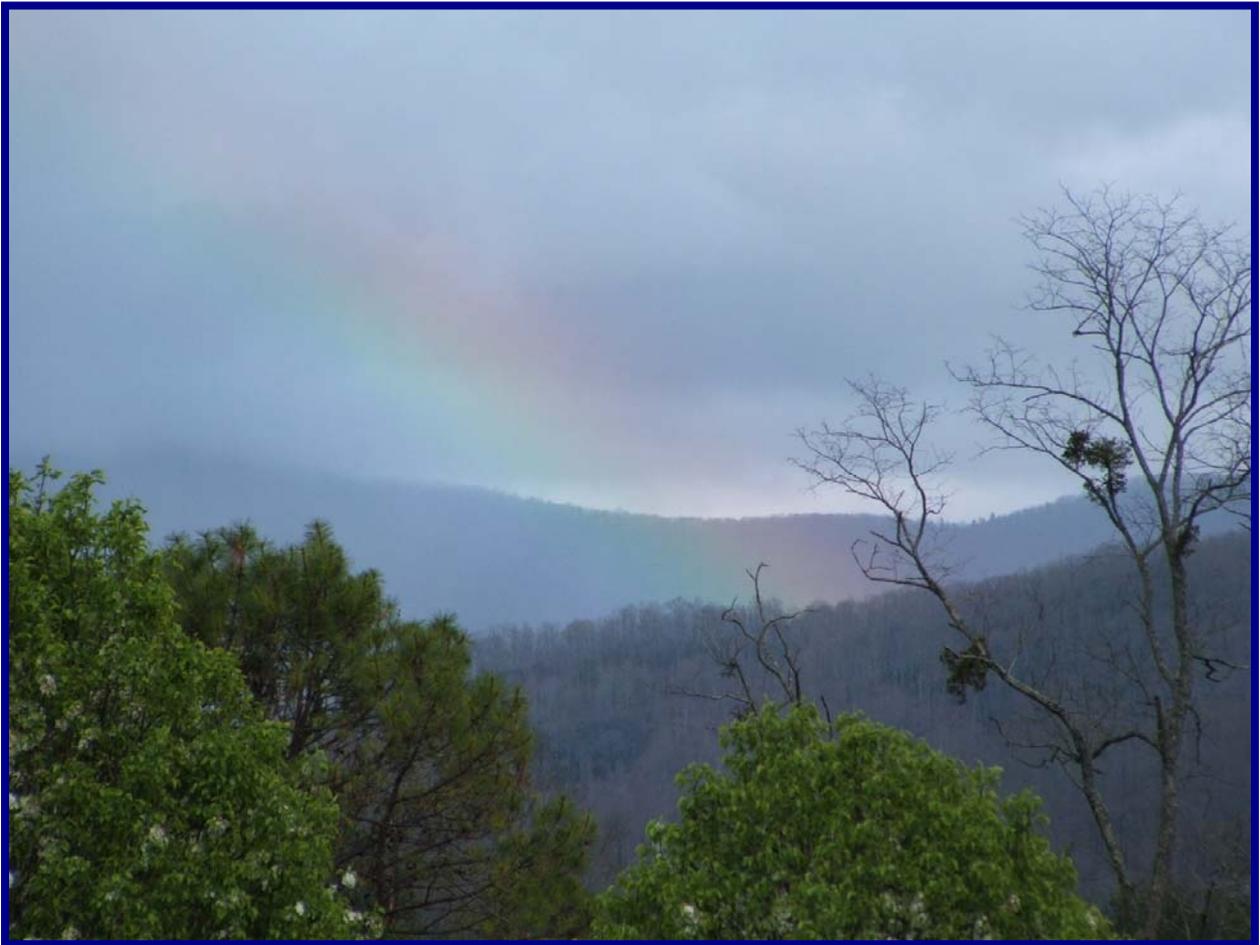


JACKSON COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN



*Communities Uniting to Preserve & Strengthen
Jackson County's Unique Mountain Identity*

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INTRODUCTION

Due to the recent upsurge in growth and development, Jackson County faces new opportunities resulting from a growing and changing economy and new challenges in maintaining its unique mountain identity. As this document will indicate, growth in health care and education sectors are having a positive effect on the county's economy, providing additional job opportunities for residents and adding to the quality of life. However, as residential development encroaches into scenic farmlands and up mountain slopes, it



has become evident that steps must be taken to protect our small, rural communities, our unique heritage, and most importantly, our beautiful mountain views. Anticipating future expansion and inevitable change, Jackson County leaders in cooperation with local townships have requested the preparation of a Land Development Plan to gain an understanding of where the county is now in regards to growth and where the county will be in the future given current trends. As the county's population grows and development activity increases, new opportunities become available to residents of the county. With this growth and increased level of opportunities comes a dramatic increase in the pressure on Jackson County's natural resources and manmade infrastructure. Mountain ridges are being developed. Traffic is multiplying on all roads within the county. Development and growth-related conflicts are becoming more prevalent, and the county's ability to provide services is being strained. In order to fully understand the impact of growth and development and its effect on the Jackson County, the rate and type of development must be reviewed. Once the current status of the county is assessed, a strategy can be prepared to address the impacts of development and to identify ways to manage growth.

IN THIS PLAN

■ CURRENT STATUS ■ DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ■ ECONOMIC TRENDS ■ GROWTH LIMITATIONS ■ EXISTING TOWNSHIPS ■ EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ■ PUBLIC UTILITY SYSTEM ■ GROWTH DEMOGRAPHICS ■ GROWTH ISSUES ■ RURAL GROWTH ■ GROWTH CORRIDOR MAPS ■ GROWTH PATTERNS & MAPS ■ VISION STATEMENT ■ GOALS

The extent of development and its escalating pace is reflected in part by recent population growth. Between 1990 and 2000, Jackson County's population increased by over 24 percent. Building permit activity and other measures of growth and development indicate that the pace of development is escalating. Table 1 (below) provides an example of the rate at which some tracts of land are being converted to residential subdivisions in the county. During the past 5 years, over 5,000 residential lots have been created. Assuming an average of two persons per household, the construction of homes with both full- and part-time residents on each of the lots

created in the past 5 years would add over 10,000 people to the county's population.

Table 1
Jackson County Subdivision Development 2000 – 2005

Subdivision Name	Number of Lots
Trillium	550
Chinquapin	200
Mountain Top	325
Bear Lake	675
Balsam Mountain Preserve	354
Lonesome Valley	200
Pinchot	46
The Divide (Bald Rock)	67
Water Dance	94
River Rock, Phase 1	40
River Rock, Phase 2	200
River Rock, Phase 3	1760
Smoke Rise	100
Bear Pen	95
Black Bear Falls	99
Black Rock	32
Dills Cove	70
Bridge Creek	80
Garnet Ridge	100
Mountain River of Cullowhee	31
Cedar Hill	150
Stone Creek Estates	38
Beachwood	76
Whiteside Cliffs	30
Bakers Creek Preserve	42
Total Lots	5454

The preparation of the Jackson County Land Development Plan is a cooperative effort among Jackson County, the incorporated and unincorporated communities in the county, Western Carolina University, Southwestern Community College, the Tuckasegee Water and Sewer Authority, and local and regional planning agencies with a goal to identify and assess the impacts of the current and predicted growth and development in the county. The Jackson County Land Development Plan will provide data on population growth, building permits issued, and other various indicators of growth and development. Areas in which growth has occurred will be identified and the rates of growth will be provided. Following the description of recent growth and development, the Plan will provide information regarding projected growth as well as identifying estimated locations of future growth. As part of the forecast of future growth and development, the Land Development Plan will identify the obstacles to development in Jackson County, including infrastructure restrictions such as limited road capacity and lack of sewer service in certain areas and natural constraints such as steep slopes

and flood plains. Additionally, the Plan will identify existing and proposed programs, policies, and tools to manage and accommodate the anticipated growth and development, and it provide a vision statement to guide future decisions concerning growth.

CURRENT STATUS



Located in western North Carolina approximately 40 miles southwest of Asheville, Jackson County is blessed with one of the most beautiful natural settings in the country. The area's scenic quality attracts thousands of visitors and new residents to the county. The Great Smoky Mountains form the backdrop for the small towns and communities that provide services and employment centers for county residents. The Tuckasegee River and its tributaries provide scenic and recreational opportunities for residents of and visitors to Jackson County. Small

dams on the Tuckasegee create recreational lakes and also generate power. In the southern portion of the county, Lake Glenville is a significant recreational amenity that is attracting a considerable amount of primarily residential development. The county encompasses 491 square miles and had a population density in 2000 of 67.5 persons per square mile, compared to a population density of 165.2 persons per square mile for the state of North Carolina.

A good highway network connects Jackson County to other counties and to larger service and employment centers. US highway 74 connects the county to Waynesville and to I-40, which in turn directly and indirectly connects Jackson County to Greensboro, Charlotte, Raleigh, and other major cities to the east and to Knoxville and other points to the west. This heavily traveled highway serves not only local residents but also the thousands of visitors of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. NC 107 is a major connector highway, connecting Sylva in the northern section of the county with Cashiers in the south, while passing through Webster and Cullowhee. Other major highways in the county include US 441 in the western section of the county, US 64 in the southern section, and NC 281 in the eastern part of the county.



Four incorporated municipalities - Dillsboro, Forest Hills, Sylva, and Webster - and a portion of the Town of Highlands are located in Jackson County. These municipalities contain the vast majority residential development, services, retail centers, and employment in the county. Also providing amenities and services are the unincorporated communities located in the county. Among these, the Village of Cashiers, traditionally a resort community, and Cullowhee, home to Western Carolina University, are the largest.

As the leading university in western North Carolina, Western Carolina University offers a variety of bachelor, master, and select doctoral degree programs to individuals of residential or non-residential status. Southwestern Community College, located in Webster on NC 116, provides a variety of two-year and continuing education programs to residents of Jackson and surrounding counties. Both institutions contribute to the development, economy, and quality of life in Jackson County.

Steps have been taken by some of the communities to address and manage the growth and development occurring within them. Sylva, Dillsboro, Forest Hills, and Webster have adopted ordinances, subdivision regulations, and related regulations to guide and direct growth and development. County Commissioners adopted a limited development ordinance that establishes standards for new commercial development and for expansions of existing commercial enterprises in the Village of Cashiers. Additionally, Jackson County and the State of North Carolina have adopted a number of ordinances and standards to manage and regulate growth and development. These include an erosion control ordinance, a cellular communications tower ordinance, watershed protection programs that establish standards for development in areas identified as watersheds, a flood protection ordinance, and a ridge top development ordinance. Upholding established mandates, Jackson County's leaders and planners have addressed the impacts of growth and development to date.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The review and comparison of demographic characteristics is a valuable tool in updating or developing any land use plan. Demographic characteristics also can be informative when comparing municipalities and regions with one another. For example, by comparing the percentage of population in differing age groups within Dillsboro with the same data for Jackson County, the State of North Carolina, and the United States, inferences can be made about the current and future needs of Dillsboro with regard to the labor force, social service, health care, transportation, etc.

The demographic characteristics have been divided into the sections of population growth (Tables 2 and 3); population and age characteristics (Tables 4 through 7); and housing characteristics (Tables 8 and 9).

Population Growth

Table 2 indicates that Jackson County has grown by greater percentages than both the State of North Carolina and the United States between 1990 and 2000.

Table 2
Population Growth: Municipal, County and National Total Population and Percent Change 1970-2000

	1980	% Change From 1970	1990	% Change From 1980	2000	% Change From 1990	2004 Est.	% Change From 2000
Dillsboro	174	-19.1	121	-30.5	205	69.4	236	15.1
Forest Hills¹	--	--	--	--	330	--	340	3.0
Sylva	1,711	9.6	1,809	5.7	2,435	34.6	2,508	3.0
Webster	197	8.8	410	108.1	486	18.5	572	17.7
Jackson County	25,811	19.5	26,835	4.0	33,121	23.4	35,629	7.6
State of NC	5,880,095	15.6	6,632,448	12.8	8,046,813	21.3	8,541,263	6.1
United States	226,546,000	11.4	248,709,873	9.8	281,424,603	13.2	293,655,404	4.3

Source: Census 1980, 1990 2000, Summary File 1, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>); the N.C. State Data Center, State Demographics unit (www.demog.state.nc.us) provided the corrected 1990 Census count for Jackson County and Dillsboro and the corrected 2000 count for North Carolina. The State Demographics unit also provides the annual provisional population updates.

Note: 1. The Village of Forest Hills was incorporated in 1997, so Census data for 1980 and 1990 are not available (indicated by "--").

There are two factors that account for population increase or decrease: natural growth (the number of births minus deaths) and net migration (the number of people moving in minus the number moving out). The most recent census shows that almost all of the growth in Jackson County, over 91 percent, is due to a 2,400 percent increase in in-migration, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Natural Growth and Net Migration in Jackson County, 1980-2000

Year	Population	Growth	% Growth	Births	Deaths	Natural Growth	Net Migration	Migration as % of Growth
1980	25,811							
1990	26,835	1,024	4.0	2,914	2,111	803	232	22.4
2000	33,121	6,286	23.4	3,198	2,663	535	5,751	91.5

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

Population and Age Characteristics

Tables 4 through 6 look at age groups and median age in the incorporated towns, county, state, and country for census years 1990 (Table 4) and 2000 (Table 5). In 2000, Jackson County had a significantly higher percentage of people in the 45 to 64 and 65 to 84 age groups when compared to North Carolina and the United States, as indicated in Table 5. Table 6 shows that the age group that accounted for the largest share of growth in Jackson County between 1990 and 2000 was the 45-64 age groups, followed by the 18-44 age group.

Table 4
Population Characteristics- Age Groups, Median Age¹ 1990

Age Groups	< 18 Years		18 to 44		45 to 64		65 to 84		85 +		
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
Dillsboro	14	14.7	35	36.9	25	26.3	18	18.9	3	3.2	48.8
Forest Hills²	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sylva	310	17.1	650	36.0	420	23.2	365	20.2	64	3.5	43.0
Webster	102	24.9	157	38.3	91	22.2	49	11.9	11	2.7	39.0
Jackson County	5,412	20.2	12,350	46	5,392	20	3,325	12.4	367	1.4	33.2
State of NC	1,606,149	24.2	2,932,539	44.3	1,285,608	19.4	638,535	9.6	165,806	2.5	33.2
United States	63,604,432	25.6	107,492,601	43.2	46,371,009	18.7	24,227,927	9.7	7,013,904	2.8	32.8

Source: Census 1990, Summary File 1, General Profile 1, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>). Produced by the N.C. State Data Center (www.census.state.nc.us).

Notes:

1. The “median” is defined as the middle value when data is arranged from lowest to highest, with half the population being older and half being younger than the median age.
2. Forest Hills was incorporated in 1997, so 1990 Census data are not available.

Table 5
Population Characteristics—Age Groups, Median Age¹ 2000

Age Groups	< 18 Years		18 to 44		45 to 64		65 to 84		85 +		
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
Dillsboro	34	16.6	63	30.7	43	21.0	59	28.8	6	2.9	47.8
Forest Hills	46	14.0	140	42.4	100	30.3	43	13.0	1	0.3	34.8
Sylva	447	18.4	943	38.7	550	22.5	430	17.7	65	2.7	39.0
Webster	119	24.5	127	26.1	151	31.1	76	15.6	13	2.7	44.6
Jackson County	6,297	19.0	13,993	42.3	8,271	25.0	4,092	12.3	468	1.4	36.2
State of NC	1,964,047	24.4	3,307,356	41.1	1,808,862	22.5	735,221	9.1	233,827	2.9	35.3
United States	72,142,757	25.6	112,550,338	40.0	61,749,839	22.0	25,886,932	9.2	9,092,040	3.2	35.3

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 1, General Profile 1, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>). Produced by the N.C. State Data Center (www.census.state.nc.us).

Note: 1. The “median” is defined as the middle value when data is arranged from lowest to highest. In other words, half the population is older and half is younger than the median age.

Table 6
Jackson County Population Change between 1990 and 2000 by Age Groups

Age Group	Population Change	Percentage of Total Change
18 years and younger	885	14.1%
18-44	1643	26.2%
45-64	2879	45.9%
65-84	767	12.2%
85+	101	1.6%

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 1, General Profile 1, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>). Produced by the N.C. State Data Center (www.census.state.nc.us).

Table 7 contains actual populations from 1990 and 2000 as well as projections for the county in 2010, 2020, and 2030. The State Demographics Unit updates these projections annually each summer. The Demographics Unit estimates projections only at the county level.

The projections for the County indicate a slowing of the rate of growth from the 23.4 percent between 1990 and 2000 to 9.5 percent for the decade 2020 to 2030. By 2030, it is expected that there will be more deaths than births, which will lead to negative natural growth and that immigration of new residents will continue to account for practically all of the anticipated growth.

Table 7
Actual/Projected Jackson County Population to 2030

Year	Population	Pop. Increase	% Pop. Increase	Births	Deaths	Net Natural Growth	Pop. Increase from In-Migration	In-Migration As % of Growth	Median Age
1990	26,835	1,035	4	2,914	2,111	803	232	22.4	33.2
2000	33,121	6,286	23.4	3,200	2,659	541	5,745	91.4	36.2
2010	38,920	5,799	17.5	3,714	3,157	557	5,242	90.4	38.3
2020	43,630	4,710	12.1	3,935	3,706	229	4,481	95.1	40.4
2030	47,766	4,136	9.5	4,281	4,389	-108	4,244	1.026	41.3

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

Housing Characteristics

Table 8 gives information regarding housing units and tenure. The 2000 Census indicates that while all the municipalities' percentage of seasonal units is close to North Carolina's total at 3.8 percent, and the United States' total at 3.1 percent, Jackson County's percentage is much higher at almost 24 percent. This would seem to indicate that the county is very popular as a place to vacation or to live part-time.

Table 8
General Housing Characteristics—Housing Units, Households, Tenure 2000

	Total Housing Units				Occupied				
	Total	Vacant	Seasonal	Percent Seasonal	Total	Owner Number	Owner %	Renter Number	Renter %
Dillsboro	126	15	1	0.8	111	51	45.9	60	54.1
Forest Hills	182	26	9	4.9	156	92	59.0	64	41.0
Sylva	1,283	146	23	1.8	1,137	613	53.9	524	46.1
Webster	227	27	9	3.9	200	140	70.0	60	30.0
Jackson County	19,291	6,100	4,609	23.9	13,191	9,566	72.5	3,625	27.5
North Carolina	3,523,944	391,931	134,870	3.8	3,132,013	2,172,355	69.4	959,658	30.6
US	115,904,641	10,424,540	3,578,718	3.1	105,480,101	69,815,753	66.2	35,664,348	33.8

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>).

When the category of owner occupied housing units is examined, the county's percentage total (72.5) is higher than both North Carolina's total (69.4) and the United States' (66.2).

The average value of owner-occupied homes increased by 41 percent between 1980 and 2000, as indicated by Table 9.

Table 9
Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units 1980, 1990 and 2000 Adjusted for Inflation to 2000 and Average Household Size¹

	Owner Occupied Median Value					Average Household Size		
	1980	1980 Adjusted ²	1990	1990 Adjusted ³	2000	1980	1990	2000
Dillsboro	29,000	60,610	55,000	72,600	97,500	2.26	1.9	1.85
Forest Hills ⁴	--	--	--	--	131,300	--	--	2.12
Sylva	33,800	70,640	55,900	73,790	91,700	2.42	2.12	2.04
Webster	45,300	94,680	88,000	116,160	142,300	2.53	2.43	2.28
Jackson County	36,200	75,660	63,000	83,160	106,700	2.68	2.46	2.30
State of NC	36,000	75,240	65,800	86,860	108,300	2.78	2.54	2.49
United States	47,100	98,440	79,100	104,410	119,600		2.63	2.59

Source: Census 1980, 1990, 2000, Summary Tape File 3, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>) for owner occupied median value. For average household size data, see Summary Tape File 1.

Notes:

1. "Average household size" was called "Persons per household" in the 1990 Census and it is defined as the average number of persons per household for the area. Only occupied housing units are considered to be households.
2. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov), the consumer price index multiplier for 1980 figures is 2.09. To calculate what a 1980 figure is in 2000, multiply the 1980 amount by 2.09.
3. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the consumer price index multiplier for 1990 figures is 1.32.
4. Forest Hills was incorporated in 1997, so 1990 Census data are not available.

ECONOMIC TRENDS



Jackson County has traditionally had four legs on which to balance its economy: manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, and education. This diversity has been a tremendous advantage through the years because, in general, when one sector has slowed or declined, the others have compensated for the lack of growth. The county's economy is now relying heavily on tourism and education as manufacturing and agriculture are declining in relative importance.

In discussing economic trends within the land development plan, it is necessary to focus mainly on data as it applies to Jackson County and the surrounding area as most data is not available at the municipal level.

Manufacturing

Numerous manufacturing jobs have been lost in the county and region since 1990. As noted in Table 10, the number of manufacturing jobs decreased by over 31 percent between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, slightly over 12 percent of the labor force was employed in manufacturing jobs. This percentage had decreased to 8.4 percent by 2000.

Table 10
Employment Trends

Economic Sector	1990 Census (Total Employment 12,346)		2000 Census (Total Employment 15,688)	
	Number Jobs	%	Number Jobs	%
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries,¹ mining²	288	2.3	281	1.8
Construction	1,266	10.3	1,591	10.1
Manufacturing	1,507	12.2	1,321	8.4
Educational, health services³ social services	2,411	19.5	4,586	29.2
Retail trade	2,277	18.4	1,920	12.2
Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services⁴			1,089	6.9
Other professional and related services	804	6.5		
Other services (except public administration)			723	4.6
Business and repair services⁵	313	2.5		
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services⁶	324	2.6	2,133	13.6
Personal services⁷	582	4.7		
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing⁸	371	3.0	568	3.6
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities⁹	355	2.9	473	3.0
Communications and other public utilities	283	2.3		
Public administration	553	4.5	571	3.6
Information¹⁰			226	1.4
Wholesale trade	111	0.9	206	1.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Notes:

1. In the 2000 Census, the language was changed from “fisheries” to “fishing and hunting.”
2. The 2000 Census data category includes mining with the category of Agriculture; in 1990, mining was a separate category.
3. The 1990 Census data category lists educational and health services separately--there is no mention of “social services--” while the 2000 Census lists them all together.
4. The 2000 Census lists “Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services” and “Other services (except public administration)” while the 1990 Census data category states “Other professional and related services,” so the three groupings are kept separately in this Table.
5. There is no category listed in the 2000 Census for “Business and repair services.”
6. In the 1990 Census the category was listed as only “Entertainment and recreation services.”
7. There is no category listed in the 2000 Census for “Personal services.”
8. The 1990 Census category did not specifically list “rental and leasing” in the “Finance” category; this was added in the 2000 Census.
9. The 1990 Census category only listed “Transportation” with no mention of “warehousing and utilities.”
10. There was no category for “Information” in the 1990 Census.

It is not possible to directly compare 1990 Census regarding employment with the 2000 Census because the categories changed in the interim. Quoting from the U.S. Census Bureau website (<http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html>), “The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) has replaced the U.S. Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. NAICS was developed jointly by the U.S., Canada, and Mexico to provide new comparability in statistics about business activity across North America.” Given the constraints resulting from the changes in the employment categories, Table 10 gives a very rough comparison of the county’s economic mix between 1990 and 2000. In particular, the “services” category changed from 1990 to 2000. In order to reflect the data as accurately as possible, when there were significant differences in the groupings, the categories have been kept separate with the language as given in the particular Census year. However, some categories seemed close enough to be compared directly, and any differences in the Census language are given in the footnotes.

Agriculture

Table 11 (below), Land in Farms in Jackson County, shows that acreage devoted to agriculture is diminishing within the county. It is important to note that the National Agricultural Statistics Service of USDA modified the way it collects data between 1997 and 2002 to more accurately reflect the number of smaller farms. This means that the figures originally released in the 1997 Census of Agriculture for the number of farms and land in farms have been revised upward in an effort to reflect this new methodology.

Table 11
Land in Farms in Jackson County

	1974	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	% Change 1997-2002
Number of Farms	324	256	175	234	187	280	248	-11.4
Land in Farms	21,341	20,847	18,576	18,069	13,310	20,707	16,399	-20.8
Average Size	66	81	68	77	71	87	66	-24.1
Proportion of Farms to Total Area	6.8%	6.6%	5.9%	5.8%	4.2%	6.6%	5.2%	-21.2

Source: Census of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture (for the years including 1992 and afterwards, see their website at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census>).

In addition to losing income generated by agricultural crops, the decreasing number of farms and acreage in farmland means that there is less open space and fewer rural roads and scenic vistas. One of the primary reasons for farmland loss is conversion to another use, whether it is residential, commercial, or industrial. The same characteristics that make the best farmland, including level topography and well-drained soil, also make it good for development. It is usually more profitable for a farmer to sell land than continue to farm it unless a very high-value crop is grown. As the County’s population continues to increase, more farmland will be converted to other uses. Part of the reason people have been attracted to relocate to the



mountains of western North Carolina has been its agricultural heritage, above and beyond the lovely scenery that land in agricultural production provides. It is a special experience to stop at roadside stands where it is possible to talk to the people who grow the food; it provides a connection to the land in a way that goes beyond just seeing a pretty landscape. Land in active agricultural production makes a contribution to the “quality of life” that attracts people to visit and live. If farmland and open space continue to be converted to other uses at the rate they

have been in the previous 5 years—an average of 1,000 acres per year—most agricultural land will be gone in the next 15 to 20 years, and with it a big reason why people want to visit and live in this area.

Educational and Income Characteristics

Table 12 shows the educational attainment of persons 25 years and older. Jackson County has similar percentages of people who have graduated from both high school and with four or more years of college when compared to North Carolina and the United States. However, for Jackson County the rate of increase among people who have their high school and college diplomas is significantly higher than the rate of increase for the United States and is comparable to the rate of increase for North Carolina. This shows that Jackson County has had excellent strategies for increasing the levels of education for its current residents, and/or it has done an excellent job attracting people with higher educations. Given the high percentage of in-migration experienced by the County, it may be that persons moving to the area have high levels of educational attainment. If Jackson County is able to sustain this trend, it will be in a strong position to attract quality employers that require an educated populace from which to draw employees, customers, and clients.

Table 12
Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older—2000

	% High School Graduates or Higher	% Increase from 1980 Census	% Four or More Years of College	% Increase from 1980 Census
Dillsboro	70.9	-0.7	20.9	-3.7
Forest Hills	95.4	--	71.4	--
Sylva	72.4	25.3	23.8	15.0
Webster	92.9	5.1	44.0	46.7
Jackson County	78.8	49.5	25.5	64.5
State of NC	78.1	42.5	22.5	70.5
United States	80.4	17.2	24.4	42.5

Source: Census 1980, 1990, 2000, Summary Tape File 3, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>).

Table 13 shows the median household and per capita income adjusted to 1999 levels for municipalities, Jackson County, North Carolina, and the United States.

Table 13
Adjusted Median Household Income and Per Capita Income
1979, 1989 and 1999

	Median Household Income ¹			Per Capita Income ²		
	1979	1989		1979	1989	
	Adjusted ³	Adjusted ⁴	1999	Adjusted ³	Adjusted ⁴	1999
Dillsboro	26,677	26,870	18,750	14,850	21,016	14,365
Forest Hills⁵			45,000			25,949
Sylva	24,676	23,151	26,432	12,435	14,392	17,348
Webster	41,593	34,987	40,313	17,883	18,567	21,019
Jackson County	26,130	28,912	32,552	11,444	13,873	17,582
State of NC	33,231	35,800	39,184	14,320	17,311	20,307
United States	38,647	40,380	41,994	16,747	19,373	21,587

Source: Census 1980, 1990, 2000, Summary Tape File 3, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau

(<http://factfinder.census.gov>).

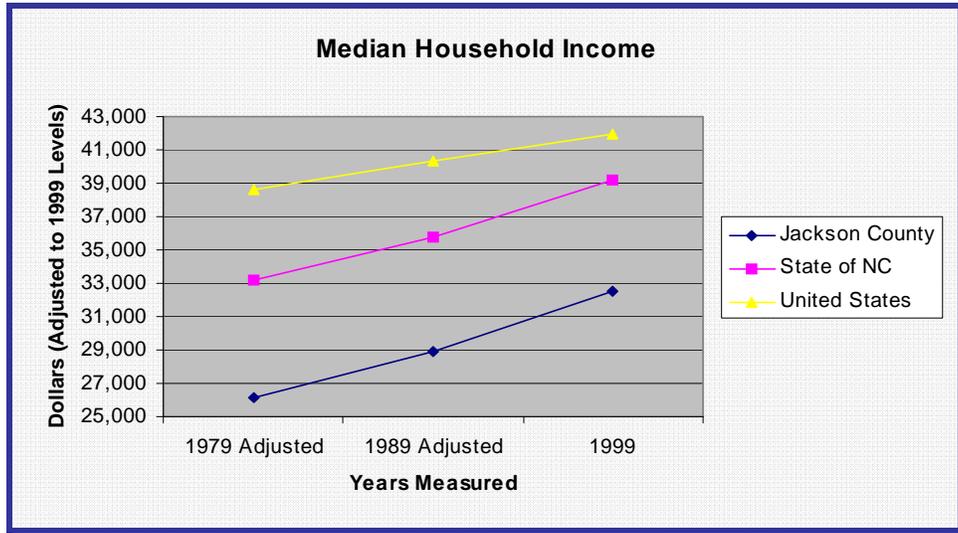
Notes:

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.
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 1979 figures is 2.29.
4. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the consumer price index multiplier for 1989 figures is 1.34.
5. Forest Hills was incorporated in 1997 so 1979 and 1989 Census data are not available.

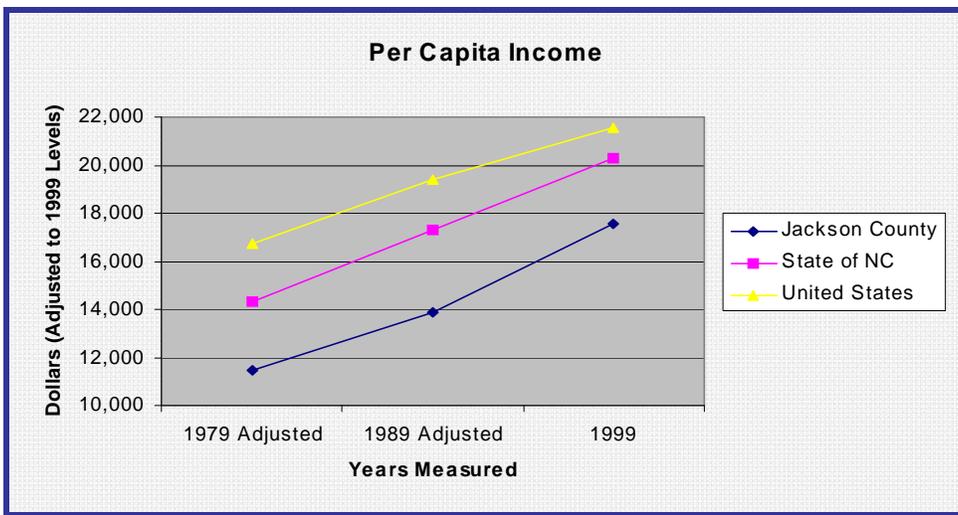
Graphs 1 and 2 (below) show the same data listed in Table 8 for Jackson County, North Carolina, and the United States in a line-graph format for easier analysis and comparison. Graph 1 shows that while the median household income has increased for all groups, Jackson County and North Carolina have lessened the gap between themselves and the United States. Graph 2 compares per capita income between groups and shows a similar trend to Graph 1, with Jackson County and North Carolina closing the gap between themselves and the United States.

Both Graphs 1 and 2 show positive movement for Jackson County. The purchasing power of households and individuals appears to be increasing. However, caution should be taken when interpreting the results, as the cost of living in Jackson County could be increasing at a faster pace than the rise in income. Cost of living data that is specific to Jackson County is needed before conclusive results can be reached.

Graph 1



Graph 2



Employment and Labor Force Characteristics

Table 14 (below) gives information regarding the population sixteen-years-old and older and the percentage in this age group based on the total population for the years 1990 and 2000. The table also depicts the total number of people and civilians in the labor force, the unemployment rate, and the percent of those not in the labor force. The table shows that the unemployment rate in Jackson County rose between 1990 and 2000. Further, the unemployment rate in Jackson County in 2000 was almost double the unemployment rate for North Carolina and the United States. The most recent unemployment figure available, August 2005, indicates the unemployment rate has fallen to 3.4 percent, lower than the rate for the State at 5.5 percent. The County's unemployment rate is ranked at 97, which makes it the fourth best in the State. This significant change in the county's unemployment rate is indicative of an improving

economy. The economic condition of Jackson County is further reflected in the income and poverty statistics also contained in the Department of Commerce profile. The percent of people in poverty in 2000 was 15.1, giving it a ranking of 41st in the state and higher than the state average of 12.3 percent. The North Carolina Department of Commerce (NCDOC) ranks counties' economic vitality on a tier system ranging from 1 (most distressed) to 5 (least distressed). NCDOC has classified Jackson County as a Tier 4 in 2006, moving it up the scale from a 3 in the 2005 ranking.

Table 14
Labor Force Characteristics for Persons 16 Years and Over, 1990 and 2000

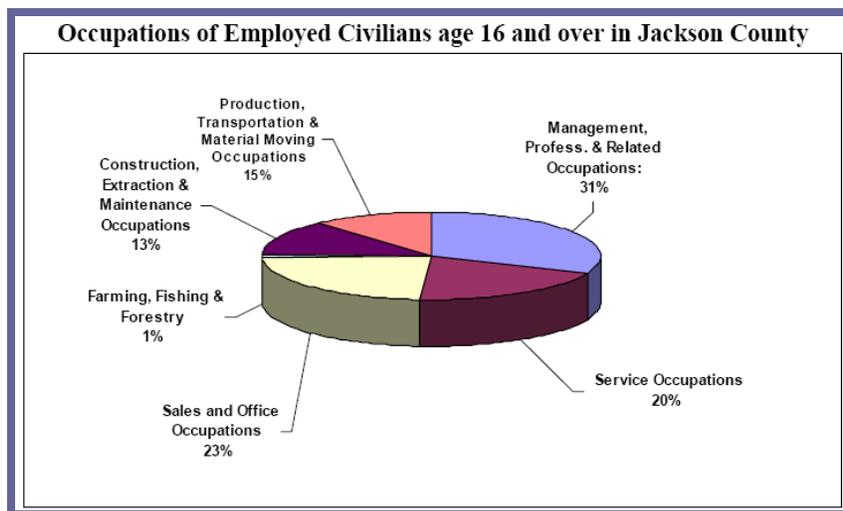
	Pop. 16 Years & Up 1990	Pop. 16 Years & Up 2000	% of Pop. 16 Years & Up 1990	% of Pop. 16 Years & Up 2000	Total # of People in Labor Force 1990	Total # of People in Labor Force 2000	# of Civilians in Labor Force 1990	# of Civilians in Labor Force 2000	Unemployment Rate 1990	Unemployment Rate 2000	% of Pop Not in Labor Force 1990	% of Pop Not in Labor Force 2000
Dillsboro	76	193	80	94.1	40	100	40	100	0	5	37.9	48.2
Forest Hills ¹	--	275	--	83.3	--	162	--	162	--	12.3	--	41.1
Sylva	1,543	2,088	85.3	85.7	852	1,184	852	1,182	5.3	6.6	38.2	43.3
Webster	334	354	81.5	72.8	237	209	237	209	1.2	4.8	23.7	41
Jackson Co.	22,129	27,591	82.4	83.3	13,312	17,493	13,269	17,479	7	10.2	32.8	36.6
NC	5,203,230	6,290,618	78.4	78.2	3,519,927	4,130,579	3,401,495	4,039,732	4.8	5.3	32.3	34.3
US	191,829,271	217,168,077	77.1	77.2	125,182,378	138,820,935	123,473,450	137,668,798	6.3	5.8	34.7	36.1

Source: Census 1990 and 2000, Summary File 3, prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau <http://factfinder.census.gov>.

Note 1. There is no data for the Village of Forest Hills since it was not incorporated until 1997.

As noted in Chart A, 15 percent of the county's workforce was employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations in 1999.

Chart A

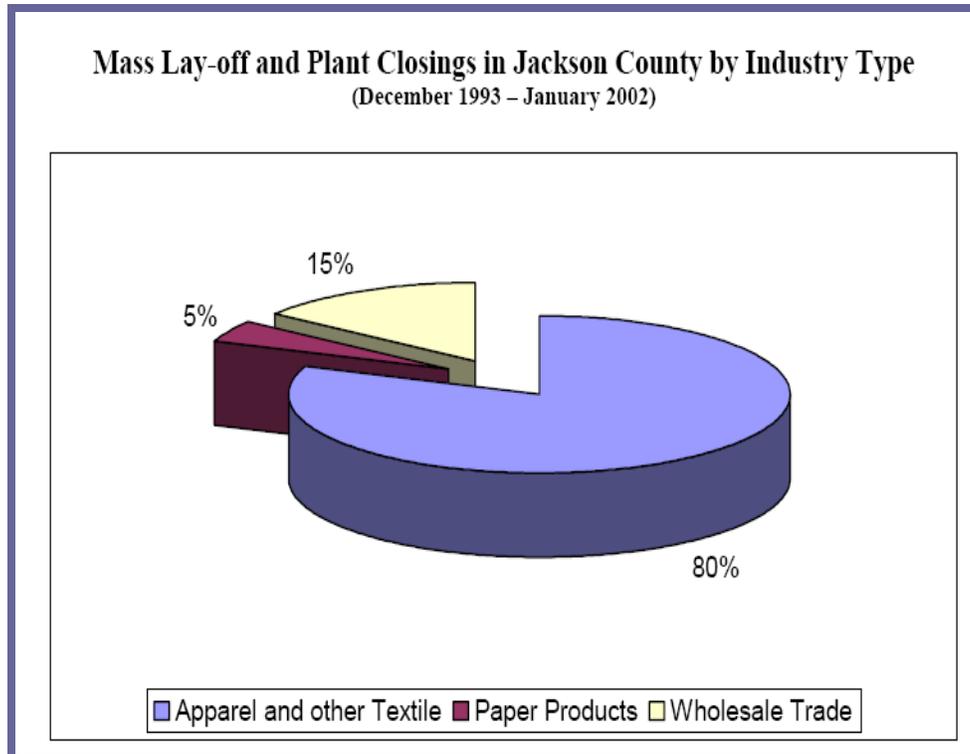


Source: *State of the Workforce 2003 for Jackson County*. Prepared by Southwestern Workforce Development Board along with the Southwestern Commission. P.12.

The breakdown of this category provided in Table 15 indicates that less than 7% of the workforce was employed in production (manufacturing) occupations.

Chart B (below) indicates the impact of the changing national textile industry on the economy of Jackson County. Of the mass lay-offs and plant closings in the county between 1993 and 2002, eighty percent were in the apparel industry.

Chart B



Source: *State of the Workforce 2003 for Jackson County*. Prepared by Southwestern Workforce Development Board along with the Southwestern Commission. P. 20.

Changes in the manufacturing sector of the county economy are balanced by growth in other sectors. The importance of the role of the county's educational institutions in providing employment opportunities is noted in Table 15 (below). More than 8% of the county's workforce was employed in education, training, and library occupations in 1999. The employment data also indicates the growing significance of the health care industry in Jackson County, with approximately 5% of the workforce employed in health care related occupations. Many of the health care industry related jobs in Jackson County are attributable to WestCare, a regional health care provider created by the merger of Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva and Swain County Hospital in Bryson City. WestCare employs approximately 1000 full and part time workers and approximately 80 physicians. WestCare facilities in Jackson County include the 86-bed Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva and Mountain Trace Nursing Center, a 100-bed skilled nursing center and day respite program located in Webster.

Table 15
Total Employed Civilians Age 16 and Over – 2000

Employment Category	Total #	% of Total
	15688 ¹	100% ¹
Management, Profess. & Related Occupations:	4904	31.26%
Management, Business, Financial Operations:	1565	9.98%
Management (except Farmers/Farm Mgrs.)	1169	7.45%
Farmers and Farm Managers	101	0.64%
Business & Financial Operations:	295	1.88%
Business Operations Specialists	171	1.09%
Financial Specialists	124	0.79%
Professional and Related Occupations:	3339	21.28%
Computer & Mathematical Occupations	164	1.05%
Architecture & Engineering Occupations	131	0.84%
Life, Physical & Social Science Occupations	95	0.61%
Community and Social Services	370	2.36%
Legal Occupations	129	0.82%
Education, Training and Library Occupations	1312	8.36%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media Occupations	350	2.23%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations:	788	5.02%
Service Occupations	3102	19.77%
Healthcare Support Occupations	440	2.80%
Protective Service Occupations	266	1.70%
Food Preparation & Serving	939	5.99%
Building & Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	892	5.69%
Personal Care & Service	565	3.60%
Sales and Office Occupations	3675	23.43%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	136	0.87%
Construction, Extraction & Maintenance Occupations	2049	13.06%
Construction & Extraction Occupations	1450	9.24%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair Occupations	599	3.82%
Production, Transportation & Material Moving Occupations	1822	11.61%
Production Occupations	1009	6.43%
Transportation & Material Moving	813	5.18%

Source: 2000 US Census

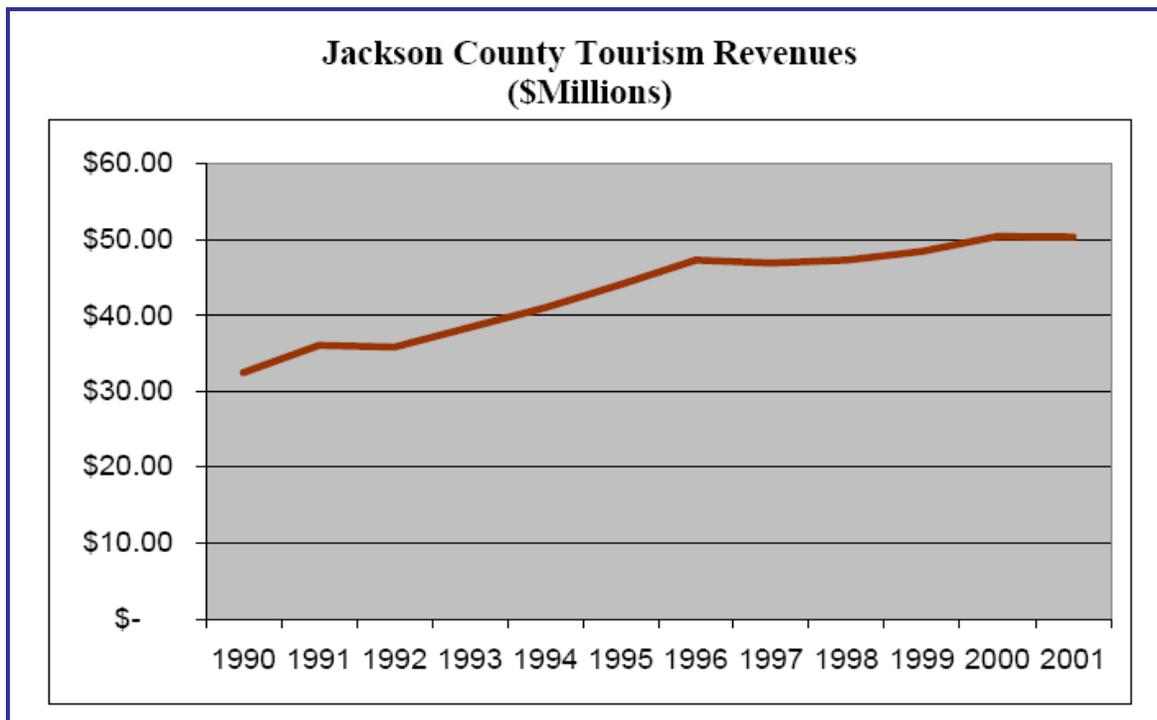
Note 1: The numbers and percentages may not total due to the omission of certain individual categories.

Tourism

Jackson County has benefited from tourism for a number of years as visitors came to enjoy the scenic beauty, mild climate, and the clean, biologically diverse natural environment. Major tourist attractions in the area include the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Mountain Heritage Center at Cullowhee, rock climbing near Cashiers, the Cherokee Indian reservation at Qualla Boundary, the Nantahala National Forest, and golfing in the Cashiers area.

According to the Southwestern Planning Commission in their *State of the Workforce 2003 for Jackson County* on compact disc, tourism contributes significantly to the county's economy, with an estimated economic impact of \$50.36 million in 2001 (a decrease of 0.3 percent from 2000). In 2001, Jackson County ranked 44th in travel impact among North Carolina's 100 counties. Jobs in Jackson County directly attributable to travel and tourism in 2001 numbered 660, with travel and tourism generating an \$11 million payroll in the county during 2001. State and local tax revenues generated by travel to Jackson County amounted to \$6.81 million dollars in 2001(p. 21). Graph 3 provides information regarding Jackson County tourism revenues between 1990 and 2001. The leveling of tourism revenues during the late 1990's and early 2000's indicates a need to bolster this segment of the local economy.

Graph 3



Source: NC Department of Commerce. *State of the Workforce 2003 for Jackson County*. Prepared by Southwestern Workforce Development Board along with the Southwestern Commission. P. 21.

SUMMARY

Growth can have differing implications for a region, with the rate and type of growth dictating whether or not the growth has a net positive or negative effect. Jackson County appears to have had positive growth trends between 1990 and 2000. Table 6 shows that the largest increase in population was in age groups that generally contribute more to the local treasury than they take from it. People who are between 18 and 64 generally do not burden the public educational and health care systems that local governments subsidize. These age groups usually work and contribute to the overall health of the local economy. As these people age and retire, however, they can strain the health care system by demanding more medical care and treatment; in addition, the labor force can be expected to decrease.

Much of Jackson County's recent population growth has been the result of in-migration with a significant amount in the age groups of 44 and above. This in-migration has some positive implications, as people in this demographic place fewer demands on public services. In addition, they typically have larger disposable incomes that enable them to contribute to the community through volunteer activities, donations to local causes, and purchasing power.

On the other hand, population growth that is dependent upon in-migration, particularly of the older age groups, can have adverse impacts for the county. Persons migrating to Jackson County typically have more disposable income than natives, thus they can spend more for housing. This can drive up the price of housing, as shown in Table 9. Table 8 indicates that almost 25 percent of Jackson County's housing stock is occupied seasonally. The demand for seasonal housing can increase the cost of housing due to the amount of housing that is removed from the available stock. The average household income in Jackson County increased by 25 percent between 1979 and 1999 (Table 13), while the average value of owner occupied homes increased by 41 percent between 1980 and 2000 (Table 9). The faster pace in the increase in the cost of homes as compared to the increase in incomes in the county makes it much more difficult for working persons—particularly younger persons—to afford homes in the county.

Population growth will require additional housing, and this demand will result in added pressure for land development. The development must be done carefully in order to protect the attributes that attract people to Jackson County, including unscarred mountains, clear streams and rivers, and a rural small-town atmosphere. If development adversely impacts these attributes, the positive growth trends that Jackson County has experienced in the recent past could change.

The current unemployment rate for the county is among the lowest in the state, an indicator that employment opportunities are available for county residents. A decrease in the number of manufacturing jobs, which typically are higher-paying, and a corresponding increase in service sector jobs, typically lower-paying, is indicated by Table 10. Jackson County could use its impressive education statistics (discussed in Economic Trends section) to attract higher-paying jobs that will enable incomes to keep pace with the increasing cost of housing shown in Table 9. Higher-paying jobs and the availability of affordable housing will keep younger people in the county as well as attract younger people of working age to the county.

As noted in Table 7, in-migration is projected to account for all of the county's growth by the year 2030. Given that most of the population growth—and thus the in-migration as indicated in Table 5—is of persons in the older age groups (44+), it can be predicted that the number of persons moving to the county will decrease as the number of persons in the baby boom generation begins to taper off. With this trend, Jackson County could begin to lose population as the number of persons moving into the county decreases and current projections for birth-death ratios continue. This makes it more important for the county to take steps to assure that population growth is balanced so that natural increases and in-migration both account for population growth. The provision of good employment opportunities, the availability of affordable housing, and the protection of the quality of life offered in Jackson County are important if the county desires to keep in and attract to the county persons in the 18 - 44 age group. Quality of life issues such as a strong public school system, maintenance of the scenic environment, and provision of good health care should be protected and strengthened to assure that population growth is balanced.

The projected population increase in Jackson County has repercussions for the governmental agencies that provide services to the residents and maintain infrastructure. An increase in population results in an increase in the number of buildings that are erected, which will put direct pressure on the county offices of Building Inspections, Planning, Land Records, Register of Deeds, Housing, and Tax Assessors to regulate and provide services for this sector. A population increase also directly affects the workload for virtually every agency that interfaces with the public in Jackson County, including, but not limited to, the Sheriff's Department, Emergency Management, the Health Department, Parks and Recreation, Solid Waste Services, and the Department of Transportation. In order to effectively cope with the influx of residents to Jackson County, a departmental survey could be conducted to assess the level of capacity within each department and the ability of each department to absorb the increasing workload. Further, each department could prepare a position paper stating what, if any, increase in hard costs there would be due to an increased work load (i.e. more fire trucks, an expanded GIS system, more computers, etc). The Administration and the Office of Management and Budget could use this study to prepare for increased costs that the county would incur in the future resulting from an increasing population.

LIMITATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT



As growth and development occur at an increasing rate in the County, the natural and manmade limitations to development become more apparent. Topography—primarily steep slopes—has been one of the more significant limitations to development. Map 1 [See Appendix] categorizes the development potential of land in the county based upon its slope, with land having a slope in excess of 30 percent considered to have severe limitations to development and lands with a slope in excess of 40 percent considered not suitable for development. Given these parameters, almost half the land in the county either has severe limitations on development or is considered not suitable for development. This creates pressure for development on land with gentler slopes.

Another natural impediment to development of land in the county is the presence of identified flood hazard areas along rivers, creeks, and other water bodies. Map 2 [See Appendix] identifies areas that are subject to frequent, occasional, and rare occurrences of flooding. It is important to note that only the highest risk rivers and streams were mapped as part of the flood hazard area designation process. A stream that was not identified as a flood risk is still capable of flooding. Development on land that is subject to flooding not only endangers the inhabitants of the buildings located within the floodplain, but it also diminishes the capability of land that is adjacent to the waterways to receive and store floodwaters. This further exacerbates the flood levels, increasing the risk of loss of life and property of nearby inhabitants downstream and upstream if flood channels are blocked. Although far less extensive than the areas identified as having steep slopes, the areas subject to flooding further limit the land within Jackson County that is appropriate for development.

There are also important manmade limitations to development in Jackson County. Most significant of these is the presence of a large percentage of public lands in the county. Public lands, which include national forests, state owned property, and land owned by public utilities, account for approximately 25 percent of the total land area of the county, as shown on Map 2 [See Appendix]. While the public lands provide many benefits to the county such as recreational opportunities, scenic value, and protection of natural resources, they also remove land from potential development and thereby concentrate development pressures elsewhere.

Approximately one-third of Jackson County is identified as a protected watershed, as shown on Map 2 [see appendix]. While designation of a region as a protected watershed does not prohibit development, watershed protection standards do place limitations on the intensity of development that may occur within the specified areas, including stream buffers and density restrictions.

Natural and manmade limitations on development place more pressure upon the land that can reasonably be developed to accommodate the growth that Jackson County is projected to experience in the next 10 to 20 years. The management and direction of this growth will take careful thought, continued cooperation, and involvement of county and municipal governments with public utility and infrastructure providers, regional planning agencies, educational institutions, and, most importantly, the citizens of Jackson County.



TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Village of Cashiers

Located at the intersection of US 64 and NC 107, Cashiers is a beautiful village in the Blue Ridge Mountains on the southern most plateau of the Appalachians Mountain chain. With its tall trees, waterfalls and scenic peaks, Cashiers is at the center of western North Carolina's resort district. From here you can go in any direction and find extraordinary beauty. Once just a corner stop for gasoline, the Cashiers Crossroads now has a two-acre park, an outdoors/hiking store, a gas station, and a convenience store, surrounded by many small shops, offices, and restaurants. The year-round population averages 1,700 people, with an influx of summer residents and tourists that brings the summer population to approximately 10,000 to 12,000 people.

In the early 1900s, several inns were established in the Cashiers area to serve Southern gentry who visited the mountains in the summer to escape the heat of the lowlands. Many of these families built summer homes, and their descendants still return with others to enjoy the excellent golf courses, tennis facilities, and a multitude of natural resources. Civil War hero General Wade Hampton III summered here on his 2500-acre family estate, which later became the venerable High Hampton Inn.



The area is known for its fine private clubs and summer home communities that offer a variety of amenities. Golf clubs designed by such masters as Tom Fazio, Donald Ross, Arnold Palmer, and George Cobb are helping Cashiers become a nationally recognized golf mecca. The village is in the middle of a twenty-mile stretch of highway between Lake Toxaway and Highlands, along which are located 17 golf courses.

In an attempt to preserve the character and beauty of this charming village, local residents requested that they be allowed to vote on the issue of incorporation. This effort failed to pass in November 2002. On August 19, 2003 the Jackson County Board of Commissioners passed an ordinance to create the Cashiers Commercial Development District. This ordinance establishes a planning council and a design review board to assist with enforcement of the regulations and imposes construction standards for commercial development within the designated area as well as multi-family residential development.

The Cashiers' community has identified the following goals to direct growth and development:

- To promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the community;
- To provide for sound and orderly development;
- To facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, and parks;
- To promote the economic prosperity of the community;
- To preserve the community's unique scenic quality;
- To conserve the natural resources and environmental quality of the community; and
- To protect and conserve the heritage of the community.

Since the adoption of the ordinance, a few small businesses have been established and some existing businesses have expanded. Just outside the district a new hotel is being constructed. Currently, the local library is under expansion as well as a branch of the community college. In addition, Jackson County has allocated \$6 million toward recreation center expansion plans. County offices are also opening branches for the convenience of the residents in this community.

There have been several inquiries regarding large developments within the district; however, to date no applications have been submitted. Inquiries received so far have included retail, grocery, restaurants, and housing (condominiums) projects. This indicates there is a great deal of interest in building in the area and seems to guarantee that substantial growth will occur.

As the Cashiers District is a relatively small area with limited available land, the most critical constraint to development is space. Another crucial factor is the steep slopes that exist on most tracts of land in this area. The sewer service—now provided by TWSA—is also very close to capacity. Currently, there are plans to expand the treatment capacity. While the new expansion will bring new growth to the business district, most of the new capacity will be allocated to proposed developments that are awaiting the expansion.

The Village of Cashiers is affected more by the tremendous uncontrolled growth occurring

outside the district boundaries rather than growth within the district itself. For example, many of the new subdivisions are within five miles of Cashiers' Commercial District, and new property owners will likely travel Hwy 64 or NC 107 through the crossroads of Cashiers to reach their destinations. An increase in population and road congestion will strain the community's ability to provide services.

Town of Dillsboro

The Town of Dillsboro was incorporated in 1889, but started out being called "New Webster." The development of the town has been closely related to the railroad that came to Dillsboro in 1882. The first visitors came by rail in 1886 and stayed at the home of William Dills, who owned most of the land now making up the town. Through the years, the railroad and associated development have turned the community into a visitor's paradise. The town, which is elevated approximately 2,000 feet above sea level, is located at the junction of U.S. Highways 441 and 74, about 45 miles west of Asheville. It is a short trip into the Great Smoky Mountains National Park at Cherokee. Dillsboro welcomes thousands of visitors each year. Until recently it housed the headquarters of the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad, but due to lack of space to expand it has relocated to Bryson City.

Many of the historic Dillsboro homes have been converted to commercial uses within the past 20 years, and as a result, the population of the town declined between 1970 and 1990. More recently, however, the population has increased to its current total of 236, and the number of businesses has risen from five or six in the late 1970's to over 85 today. Business owners have a following of regular visitors who return season after season.

The Town Board of Aldermen has developed ordinances including a zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and sign standards to manage both residential and commercial growth. Town leaders recently adopted a statement that expresses their vision for the community:



Dillsboro is a small-town jewel nestled in the mountains of western North Carolina, where historic treasures are preserved, visitors are welcomed, residents are appreciated, and life is celebrated at a relaxed pace.

It is their hope to maintain the town's character in keeping with what residents and visitors have come to cherish. Toward that end, the following goals and objectives were developed in two visionary meetings held in the fall of 2005:

Preserve Historic Treasures

- Retain current attitudes and architecture
- Display photos of Dillsboro's oldest residents
- Leave the dam
- Historic buildings; walk on cobblestone streets closed to traffic
- Picturesque historic downtown
- A charmingly historic village
- Complete Monteith Park and arts center

Community Curb Appeal

- An amazing blending of commerce and nature!
- Install new lights
- Improve infrastructure, i.e. roads, lighting
- The charm of tree-lined streets
- Nature-lovers' paradise
- Outdoor everything

Things to Do

- Faulk's Folly
- Lots to do... steps are few
- Theater at Monteith Park
- Outside café, with benches, flowers—shop keepers, train traffic
- Unique shops
- Riverscape, powerhouse park - boating area
- Greenways, trams, from parks to town to renewed landfill crafty greenhouse center
- Bigger and better Luminary
- Theater, gardens, museums, amphitheater—a welcoming feeling to Dillsboro!
- Old-fashioned family fun!

Visitor friendly

Community development

- Affordable homes for the average wage-earner

Challenges

- Traffic, speed, trucks
- Limited financial resources
- Limited land to develop
- Directional signage outside town needed
- Failure to preserve historic structures
- Need more sidewalks

Solutions

- Preserve Powerhouse as a museum*
- Work with N.C. state officials (NC DOT):*
- Traffic circle at 441
- Work with DOT and state legislators on signs
- Jake Brake Law
- Designate historic district*
- Citizen involvement; citizens council
- Municipal district tax
- Room and restaurant tax

* In top three when a vote was taken to prioritize the solutions generated by the group

The topography will dictate the growth of the town and future expansion will most likely follow the highway corridors both south and west. Growth will also be determined by the availability of water and sewer services along these corridors and the developable land adjacent to them.

Village of Forest Hills



Incorporated in 1997, the Village of Forest Hills is the newest town in Jackson County. Its governing body consists of a mayor, who is elected for a two-year term, and four council members who are elected in staggered non-partisan elections for four-year terms.

A portion of the Village of Forest Hills occupies the Cherokee town of Gullawi or "the Valley of the Buzzard," which is considered to be one of the oldest communities in western North Carolina. A section of the town was situated at the

lower end of the valley of Cox's Creek (formerly Andy Bryson Branch), which stretched along Cullowhee Creek for over a mile. Gullawi was one of the "out towns" that formed a portion of the Middle Towns located in the valley of the Little Tennessee River. The valley was subsequently settled by the Bryson and Rogers families along with other pioneer families. In the later 1800's a businessman named David Davies and his son-in-law Thomas Cox moved to the area to develop copper mines in the area. Davies built a magnificent home (now destroyed) and both he and Cox served as founding members of the first Board of Trustees for the small school that has grown into Western Carolina University. Davies was the first president of the Board.

Forest Hills is located directly across NC Highway 107 from the campus of Western Carolina University. It is a completely residential community whose residents include Western faculty and staff as well as retirees, many of whom made the community their home before the village was incorporated. The community is composed of fine homes and open spaces, a pattern that is

strongly supported by the majority of the residents. The Village Council has developed ordinances to manage the residential character of the community, including zoning and sign ordinances and subdivision regulations.

Among the accomplishments of the village since its incorporation are:

- The two principal roads, North and South Country Club Drives, in the village have been partially paved and maintained.
- A connector road has been constructed between these two main thoroughfares.

Items identified by the village to be accomplished include:

- Ordinances have been drafted to introduce leash laws, parking restrictions, and property maintenance.
- Plans are being formulated for the construction of a new entrance into the community.
- Efforts are underway to transfer control and maintenance of North Country Club Drive to the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

Growth will be dependent upon the availability of water and sewer connections as well as upon the availability of land upon which to build. As is the case with other communities in Jackson County, the topography of area, particularly the steep slopes that border the valley, will dictate future growth of the Village of Forest Hills.

Town of Sylva



Sylva is the most populous incorporated municipality in Jackson County and serves as the county seat. The town functions as the primary commercial, governmental, and service center for the county residents. With a thriving, renovated downtown and outlying commercial area, Sylva meets many of the day-to-day needs of the county's residents. A hospital is located in Sylva, as are many governmental offices. Chartered in 1889 with a jurisdiction of 1.5 square miles, the town now encompasses an area of approximately 3.2 square miles. Sylva's population growth

has increased with the expanding land area, with the town's population standing at 2,435 in the 2000 Census. The increasing popularity of all of western North Carolina has contributed to Sylva's growth, as has the growth and expansion of Western Carolina University and Southwestern Community College. Some of the town's growth has been due to the annexation of adjacent developed areas and some from infill development and redevelopment within the corporate limits. According to the Town of Sylva's Master Plan, during the past five years, 57 percent of Sylva's development/redevelopment has been in the commercial/business category, 36 percent residential, and 7 percent institutional/governmental. As the community increases in population, Sylva remains committed to its mission of "serving its citizens by providing quality services through visionary leadership for a safe, clean community." The town's vision is to

"develop long range plans that expand opportunities for viable commercial and residential growth while keeping environmental and aesthetic issues in mind. The long range plans will address job creation to fit Sylva's small town profile and encourage affordable housing and pedestrian-friendly urban villages."

The citizens of Sylva have identified goals for accommodating the growth that is occurring at an increasing pace. These goals are:

- Encourage mixed-use developments and buildings;
- Encourage compatible, higher density commercial and residential infill development;
- New development should promote sustainable land development patterns;
- Areas with steep slopes and environmentally sensitive areas should be identified and preserved while allowing alternatives to development that protect private property rights;
- Existing neighborhoods should be strengthened through infill development, housing rehabilitation, proactive enforcement of zoning and building standards, and housing code enforcement;
- Ensure that the design of new development connects to the existing street network at multiple points, providing alternate routes to destinations;
- Encourage multi-modal transportation interconnectivity between neighborhoods and to destination areas such as parks and neighborhood shopping locations;
- New developments should incorporate mass transit features where appropriate;
- The traffic carrying capacity of existing arterial highways should be carefully monitored and maintained at acceptable levels of service;
- Develop new land use tools to complement existing tools in promoting compatible land use projects, protecting environmentally sensitive land, meeting infrastructure needs, and allowing flexibility in site design to achieve the above guidelines; and
- Ensure capital projects and economic development incentives that support and encourage sustainable development patterns.

In an effort to assure attainment of these goals, Sylva has adopted a number of new development standards during the past 5 years. These include:

- Planned Unit Development Overlay District
- Professional Business District
- R-1B Residential District
- B-2 and B-3 Business Districts
- NC DOT Traditional Neighborhood Development Standards
- NC DOT Subdivision Roads Minimum Construction Standards
- Standards for Sexually Oriented Businesses

In the coming years the Town of Sylva will encourage new development to reflect a pedestrian-friendly village pattern that maximizes the use of existing infrastructure with interconnectivity and higher densities. The new development concepts are promoted by the town to encourage developers to incorporate Sylva's small-town atmosphere, aesthetics, and culture into the design of new developments. As the town strives to achieve its goals and to encourage new development and redevelopment to reflect the desired pattern, certain steps will have to be

taken. These steps include:

- Annexation of areas meeting criteria for annexation and considered a logical extension of the town;
- Extension of extra-territorial jurisdiction to areas located proximate to the town and where development affects the town;
- Application of appropriate zoning standards and development of new zoning standards, where needed, to ensure that new development and redevelopment reflect the desired development patterns of the town; and
- Adoption of new development concepts to guide future development and redevelopment in the desired direction.

Current development patterns and the anticipated growth have directed the Town's immediate attention to Sylva's two primary transportation corridors, NC Highway 107 and US 23. Recent development along these corridors reflects the strip commercial model (auto-oriented uses with large parking lots in front of single use buildings, multiple curb cuts, and large signs) that the town hopes to avoid in the future. Due to the pace of recent construction, the major area of concern is the NC Highway 107 corridor. The US 23 corridor is of secondary concern due to its more moderate pace of development. Recent construction along these corridors does not reflect the small-town, pedestrian-friendly environment that Sylva wants to promote. Traffic has increased along these important transportation routes. The citizens of Sylva have identified the extension of extra-territorial jurisdiction as the tool of choice for the management of growth.

The future growth and development of Sylva and the associated challenges are reflective of what will occur in Jackson County in the coming years. The decisions made in Sylva, in turn, will affect the county and its ability to accommodate growth and development. A coordinated approach to these issues will ensure that the desires and needs of the town and the county are addressed. Communication, coordination of efforts, and sharing of information and ideas will be the key to successfully dealing with what lies ahead for the citizens of Jackson County.

Town of Webster

Built on a ridge overlooking the Tuckasegee, the town of Webster is surrounded by natural beauty on all sides. When Jackson County was first formed from parts of Macon and Haywood Counties in 1853, Webster was designated as the county seat. In its heyday, Webster was a bustling town, boasting a local newspaper, a school, a post office, several churches, stores, two hotels, a courthouse and jail. By the turn of the 20th century, Webster's population was over 1,000. As the railroad was extended west from Asheville, increased prosperity came to the area. However, the railroad was built through nearby Sylva instead of Webster, which when combined with a devastating fire in 1910 resulted in Sylva being designated as the county seat in 1913. This change, while affecting Webster's economic growth, did much to preserve for the future its charm and small-town atmosphere.

Located off NC 107 on Highway 116, between Cullowhee and Sylva, Webster is within one mile of the local elementary school and the high school, within 5 miles of Western Carolina University, and is home to Southwestern Community College. The Tuckasegee River flows through the middle of this community providing fishing and other water-related activities. Local groups perform during the summer months at the Historic Methodist Church located in

the center of Webster. The beautiful, peaceful rural setting of Webster and its residential community contributes to a quality of life desired by many.

Elected officials have made a conscious effort to retain the peaceful quality of life that now exists in Webster by adopting regulations limiting development to single-family residential homes. On most days you can see children and families walking along the sidewalks visiting with one another with a sense of security, a pleasant offering not found in many communities.



Webster is home to 486 residents according to the 2000 census. Population projections for 2004 were 572. Approximately 120 of those are youth aged sixteen and under.

In order to help maintain the town's unique character, Webster has adopted the following guiding principles on which to manage future growth:

An Attractive Community with a Strong Sense of Place

We desire to maintain and create a high quality environment that reflects the unique character of our community. To accomplish this goal:

- we should be sure that future development is encouraged to employ good principles of design.
- we should encourage pedestrian interaction, where appropriate, and the use of such things as landscaping, vistas, art and other landmarks to build unique character for the Town of Webster.
- we should care for historic properties by encouraging the establishment of National Register and local historic districts, where appropriate, to preserve the unique character of Webster.
- we should also encourage good stewardship of our natural resources that have always been a treasured part of our town

Broad-based Community Participation

We desire to have Webster be the kind of community where the residents want to be involved and participate in "their" community.

- we should facilitate the creation of community organizations
- we should conduct periodic public information meetings
- we should foster a sense of community among residents

Enhanced Public Places

The term "public places" includes all those environments where citizens are invited to travel, congregate and conduct public business. Thus, public places include streets, sidewalks, public parking lots, parks and civic buildings.

- we desire that Webster should provide ample public places that are attractive and conducive to personal interaction.
- we also encourage green spaces that preserve the river and the mountains that define our town.

Integrated Transportation Choices

We believe that our citizens should have multiple modes of transportation choices (automobile travel, walking, bicycling and public transit), which serve multiple users and work together to achieve maximum efficiency, safety and mobility.

- we believe transportation planning should be integrated with land use planning.
- to ensure safety for all motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians, when roadway expansion or widening projects are being considered, we should encourage roadway designs other than 3 and 5-lane undivided highways
- to ensure a safer environment for all citizens, Webster should encourage the utilization of good access management techniques for roadways, where feasible and appropriate.

Maximize Use of Existing Infrastructure and Ensure Proper Maintenance

We desire to be good stewards of the limited infrastructure that our town oversees, including but not limited to our roads, sidewalks, lighting and signage. Any infrastructure developed in the future should receive like attention.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Western Carolina University



Western Carolina University, the largest institution of higher education in southwestern North Carolina, is located in Cullowhee, six miles south of Sylva. Founded in 1889 as a semi-public school and chartered as Cullowhee High School in 1891, it served the Cullowhee community and boarding students from neighboring counties and other states. The school's original aims were education and teacher training, and in 1905, it became the Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School. In 1925 the name was changed to Cullowhee State

Normal School to reflect its change to a two-year normal school and the discontinuance of secondary education. A new charter in 1929 authorized the development of four-year degree programs, and the name was changed to Western Carolina Teachers College. In 1953 it became Western Carolina College, and in 1967, Western Carolina University. On July 1, 1972 Western became a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina.

Western's campus currently contains approximately 680 contiguous acres, with 344 acres of this total acquired in the spring of 2005.

Offering programs at the baccalaureate, master's, intermediate, and doctoral (in education) levels, Western Carolina University is a regional comprehensive university. Western is committed to increasing access to its programs for more students during the next decade while enhancing its efforts to meet the state's needs for teachers, engineers, and nurses and expanding its support for the region's economic development efforts. Courses are offered on the main campus at Cullowhee, off-campus in Asheville and Cherokee, and online. Western is committed to maintaining small class sizes and personal attention for all students as it grows.

The General Assembly authorized the constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina to create Millennial Campuses to enhance their research, teaching, and service missions, and to stimulate regional economic development. The recent acquisition of the additional 344 acres adjacent to the existing campus was acquired for this purpose. In connection with its redesign of the Facilities Master Plan, to be completed in the spring of 2006, the University has acquired the services of a nationally recognized university development firm to lead in the planning efforts for the Millennial Initiative. It is envisioned that the additional acreage will become an integral part of the existing campus, and not a "separate" campus. It will be planned in such a way as to provide for mixed land use, integrating academic communities, public-private partnership ventures, and possible commercial and residential facilities. Identifying developable plots will permit their location among preserved green areas and vistas in an aesthetically pleasing fashion.

This "Communities of Interest" vision of the Millennial Initiative will take the dated and single-focus concept of "Research Parks" near other universities to a new level of community sense and interest among a variety of collaborative partners, permitting the University to enhance its fulfilling the core missions of education, research, and service while expanding its economic development role and contributing more actively in the infusion of the sciences, arts, and culture in the region.

The recent acquisition of additional acreage presents an unprecedented opportunity for the University to expand its facilities and service to the region, and to continue the transformation of the campus. Planning for and implementation of the development/use of the recently acquired property will be done thoughtfully to encourage the creation of a more pedestrian-friendly campus where open spaces are conserved for future generations. Wise planning and use of the expanding campus can provide students, Jackson County residents, and visitors with a sense of the mountain environment in which the campus is located as well as to serve as an example of sensitive development that enhances Jackson County and the region.

Since its inclusion in the University of North Carolina system in 1972, Western's student enrollment has grown from 5,640 students at all sites to 8,665 in the fall of 2005. Almost 54 percent of this 33-year enrollment growth has occurred in the past three years, when the enrollment grew by 1,632 students. The number of students enrolled on the Cullowhee campus has grown from 6,216 in fall 2001 to 6,953 in fall 2005. The increase in student population is reflected by the growth in faculty and staff employed at Western. The number of total faculty (all persons with faculty rank, including full- and part-time) increased from 513 in 2001 to 663 in 2005. During this same period the total number of employees, including both full-time and part-time staff, grew from 1275 to 1519.

Western's total student enrollment is projected to increase to 14,065 by fall 2015. As some of this growth is projected to be at remote sites or via online instruction, the Cullowhee campus enrollment is projected to be 10,140 in fall 2015. Reaching this projection will add approximately 3,200 students taking at least one class on the Cullowhee campus. If current trends continue, this would require on-campus housing accommodations for the addition of approximately 1,725 students. Following traditional student-to-faculty and other staffing ratios, WCU can expect these additional 3,200 students to generate an additional 200 faculty positions and an estimated 300 staff positions. If one assumes that current vehicle registrations among Cullowhee-based students continues (77.3 permits per 100 students), and that each faculty and staff member would bring one vehicle, this enrollment increase would produce an additional approximately 3,000 vehicles coming to the WCU campus by the fall of 2015. This does not represent the daily number of additional vehicles coming to the campus. Some of these vehicles would be present only once a week (and then perhaps at night, after peak traffic hours), some would be present each week, and largely remaining parked in one place, but many others would, of course, represent daily vehicular activity. This projected figure does not include multiple vehicle registrations (through "transferable" parking permits), permits given to retirees who remain located in the area and may drive to the campus, or temporary parking passes given to campus visitors.

The staffing and vehicle figures provided above are taken without any consideration of the impact of the recently acquired property that will house the developing Millennial Campus Initiative. If one assumes that by 2015 the collective initiatives of the Millennial Campus would attract only an additional 50 faculty or "associated professionals," (perhaps not actually University employees), and they in turn would attract an additional 75 support staff, the vehicular impact on the campus would increase by an additional 125 cars by 2015.

It is important to recognize that WCU has been designated by the UNC Board of Governors as one of seven focused-growth institutions, and is therefore expected to help accommodate the continuing enrollment boom in North Carolina higher education. Increased funding to the University is largely contingent upon its enrollment growth.

Western Carolina University is a major contributor to the economy of Jackson County, as indicated by the following table. Western's FY 2004-05 operating budget was \$128 million, with salaries and benefits totaling \$77.2 million. In addition, \$15.6 million were spent on capital additions.

Table 16
Western Carolina University Operating and Capital Budget

Fiscal Year	Operating Budget	Salaries & Benefits	Capital Additions
FY 01-02	\$97.0 M	\$62.6 M	\$14.1 M
FY 02-03	\$102.5 M	\$64.4 M	\$29.7 M
FY 03-04	\$116.6 M	\$69.3 M	\$40.4 M
FY 04-05	\$128.0 M	\$77.2 M	\$15.6 M

A number of construction and capital improvement projects have been completed or initiated by

Western in the past few years, including the following:

- Field House Addition—accepted July 2003
- Whitmire Football Stadium—addition of West Side Grandstands—completed September 2003
- Baseball Field Lighting and Field Improvements—completed October 2003
- Center for Applied Technology – accepted April 2004
- University Center Addition—accepted June 2004
- McKee Building Comprehensive Renovation—accepted July 2004
- Conversion of Bird Building to New Student Health Services—accepted July 2004
- Central Drive Residence Hall—opened August 2004
- Greek Village – opened August 2004
- Breese Gymnasium Renovation—accepted August 2004
- Chiller Replacements across Campus—completed August 2004
- One Stop Student Support Center—located in the renovated Killian Annex, became operational April 2005
- Soccer/tennis/track and field complex—part of a \$14 M athletic facilities upgrade—completed July 2005
- Fine and Performing Arts Center—a \$30 M, 122,000 square foot showcase for the arts that includes a 1,000 seat auditorium and four separate art galleries—occupied August 2005
- Softball Field and Grandstands—accepted September 2005
- Norton Road Residence Hall—opened September 2005
- Infrastructure Improvements to Steam and Condensate Lines—completed October 2005
- Infrastructure Improvements to Underground Electric Distribution System—completed November 2005
- Centennial Drive—relocated to go around the central campus to improve traffic flow and student safety—completed December 2005
- Renovation of Stillwell Science Building—in progress
- Student Recreation Center—groundbreaking held October 2005

Funds are being sought for future construction of a new Health Sciences Building, Education Building, and Science Building. The addition of these complexes in the near future will be necessary to accommodate the expected student growth at WCU, will enhance the status and attractiveness of the University in the educational community, and will deliver millions of dollars into the local economy.

A 2005 study of the economic impact of Western Carolina University conservatively indicated that the combined primary and secondary impacts of WCU's operational expenditures, capital expenditures, employee payroll expenditures, and student and visitor expenditures amounted to a \$321 million annual contribution to the seven-county region centered around Jackson County. In Jackson County alone, this impact was estimated to be \$213 million, resulting in the creation of 2,094 jobs.

The future of Western Carolina University as a major and growing provider of educational

services, a contributor to the economy, an economic development catalyst, and a source of scientific, technological, artistic, and cultural growth in the region is indeed promising, and integrally tied with the necessary supporting regional infrastructure.

Southwestern Community College



Southwestern Community College's 70.6 acre Jackson Campus is located on Highway 116 in Webster. The campus consists of seven buildings totaling 194,728 square feet. Having celebrated its 40th anniversary this year, Southwestern Community College takes pride in a history characterized by community involvement and collaboration. Southwestern's commitment to provide excellent educational opportunities for the people of Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties, the Qualla Boundary, and beyond has brought economic, personal, and cultural

benefits to the region and its people. For 40 years, SCC has responded to and anticipated the educational needs of the community and region, offering an ever-widening range of programs through which students prepare for the job market, transfer to senior institutions, and achieve professional and personal goals. Since 1964, when the first class graduated, Southwestern has awarded more than 7,000 degrees, diplomas, and certificates and has offered more than 5,000 different classes. During this time, the college has also served as a community gathering place and center for cultural events.

The institution was founded to help residents of the region maximize their employment potential, and that same goal is at the very core of what the college strives to do today. To keep up with the evolving working world, Southwestern is constantly changing and adapting its programs and services. Today SCC is a leader in bringing the latest technology and training to the rural region in which it is located.

Over the years, SCC evolved from an industrial education center to a technical institute, to a technical college, and finally, to a full-fledged community college. During its history, the college has experienced steady growth in its physical facilities, in the number of students it serves, and in its role in the region. Today the Jackson Campus includes seven buildings that house classrooms/laboratories, administrative offices, an auditorium, and a library. Other college facilities in Jackson County include the Cashiers Center, located near the Cashiers Public Library, and a firing range located between Webster and Dillsboro. A new Macon campus is being developed in Macon County, where the college also owns and operates the Public Safety Training Complex and has a presence in the Courthouse Annex. The college also operates the Swain County Center at Almond and offers classes through its Cherokee Center on the Qualla Boundary.

The college is a major employer in the county and annually pays over \$4 million in salaries to those employees residing in the county. Conducted in 2004, a study of the college's economic impact on its service area concluded that Southwestern is a major contributor to the economic vitality of its three-county service area: Jackson, Macon and Swain counties. The study also concluded that the monetary benefits of the college to its service area represented a 19.9 percent return on investment to taxpayers.

SCC offers more than 60 curriculum programs. In addition, the college offers a variety of Continuing Education courses at various locations throughout Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties. Most of these courses are designed to prepare students for entry into an occupation, upgrade skills of employed individuals, and provide opportunities for self-improvement. Southwestern also became the regional GED testing center in 1969. Annually, the college enrolls over 2,600 students—almost 40 percent are Jackson County residents—in its curriculum programs. In addition, the college enrolls over 5,500 students annually in its continuing education programs. The college has experienced moderate but steady growth in its curriculum programs during the past decade, with a 2003-04 curriculum enrollment of 2,672. Enrollment in continuing education programs was 5,436 in 2003-04. The college anticipates a three to five percent increase in student enrollment over the next five years. SCC does not plan to cap the number of students enrolled in the college.

Table 17 projects future curriculum and continuing education enrollment over the next five years. Continuing education classes are conducted at a wide variety of off-campus locations such as fire departments, community centers, business locations, etc.

Table 17
Projected Curriculum Unduplicated Enrollment
Southwestern Community College

School Year	Jackson Campus	Other Campuses/Centers	Total Curriculum Enrollment	Continuing Education Enrollment Not Assigned to Specific Campus
2003-04	2,519	153	2,672	5,436
2004-05	2,649	156	2,805	5,707
2005-06	2,727	218	2,945	5,993
2006-07	2,667	626	3,093	6,292
2007-08	2,205	1,042	3,247	6,607
2008-09	2,287	1,123	3,410	6,937

The number of full-time faculty and staff employed by the college has increased from 124 in 1995 to 181 in 2004, representing an average annual increase of 5.7 percent. Some of the increase during this period is a result of the initiation of several grant-funded programs. It is unlikely the college will experience a similar increase in grant-funded programs during the next ten years. Consequently, the annual percentage increase in the number of full-time faculty/staff should be in the more modest range of two to three percent as depicted in Table 18.

Table 18
Faculty and Staff Employment
Southwestern Community College

School Year	Jackson Campus	Other Campuses/Centers	Total Full-Time Employees
2003-04	145	39	184
2004-05	144	37	181
2005-06	143	31	174
2006-07	139	40	179
2007-08	142	42	184
2008-09	146	43	189

A major physical limitation to the expansion of the college's Jackson Campus is the steep topography of the site. In addition, the campus is landlocked on the west by the North Carolina National Guard Armory and on the east by both the Jackson County school bus garage and the North Carolina Forest Service Office. The college has held extensive discussions with the North Carolina Forest Service to acquire their property that adjoins the Jackson Campus. In fact, the college has purchased nine acres of property off U.S. 441 South that will be transferred to the Forest Service if the college eventually acquires the current Forest Service site. In addition, the college has held discussions with the Jackson County Public School System concerning SCC's interest in acquiring the current school bus garage site, which also borders the Jackson Campus. Acquisition of both of these sites is critical to the growth of the Jackson Campus. These sites are suitable for development and, if obtained, would enable the college to utilize its bond dollars to build the much needed library/classroom building. In addition, the acquisition of these properties would enable the college to complete a loop road through the campus, greatly enhancing the traffic flow. At this time, the college has only one access road, off NC Highway 116. The college borders Highway 107 on the northeast corner of its property. Access to Highway 107 would improve accessibility to the campus and help mitigate much of the future traffic congestion likely to occur along Highway 116. Funds are needed to finalize the relocation of the North Carolina Forest Service operation to the property on Highway 441 and to acquire the Jackson County school bus garage property. Finally, the college needs \$50,000 to \$75,000 to fund the preparation of an updated, comprehensive Master Plan for the Jackson Campus. The most recent campus master plan was prepared in 1999 and is now somewhat dated.

HEALTH-CARE INSTITUTIONS

WestCare

WestCare Health System is a growing, well-respected, non-profit health care provider that delivers a full spectrum of health care for over 80,000 people living in four counties. WestCare is comprised of two hospitals: Harris Regional Hospital, an 86-bed acute care facility located in Sylva, NC and Swain County Hospital, a 48-bed facility located in Bryson City. The System also owns three medical centers: WestCare Medical Park of Franklin, located in Macon County; WestCare Medical Park of Bryson City, located in Swain County; and WestCare Medical Park

of Sylva, located in Jackson County. In addition, WestCare owns and operates Mountain Trace Nursing Center, a 106-bed skilled nursing center and day respite program located in the town of Webster. WestCare also operates Mountain Regional Cancer Centers, two state of the art radiation therapy facilities providing all aspects of comprehensive radiation therapy services. Mountain Regional Cancer Center is a partnership with Mission Hospitals and Murphy Medical Center.

WestCare Health System spans four counties in western North Carolina, covering Jackson, Swain, Graham and Macon counties. WestCare Health System was formed in February 1997 with the establishment of a business combination agreement between Harris Regional Hospital and Swain County Hospital to develop a full spectrum of health services for Western North Carolina. WestCare employs almost 1000 full and part time employees and has a medical staff of over 80 physicians



representing 22 specialties. WestCare is governed by a Board of Trustees, which is drawn from community leaders in each of the four primary counties it serves. WestCare is managed and operated by the people of Western North Carolina . . . for the people of Western North Carolina.

Specialties found at WestCare include Anesthesiology, Cardiology, Critical Care, Emergency Medicine, Family Practice, Gastroenterology, General Surgery, Medical Oncology, Internal Medicine, Neuro Surgery, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Ophthalmology, Oral/Maxillofacial Surgery, Orthopedics, Otolaryngology, Pathology, Pediatrics, Pulmonology, Radiation Oncology, Radiology, and Urology.

Harris Regional Hospital dates back to 1925 when two community physicians established a small hospital to serve their patients on Court House Hill overlooking the town of Sylva. The hospital was purchased from these two physicians by the Duke Endowment and Colonel C.J. Harris and donated to the community. In recognition of the support provided by Harris, it was named C.J. Harris Community Hospital and became a private, not-for-profit, community-owned facility.

In November of 1959, a new 50-bed facility constructed with Hill-Burton funds—donations received through a fundraising campaign and sale of stock contributed by Colonel Harris—was opened at its present site. The hospital has gone through major expansions in 1970, 1986, 1989, 1994 and 2004, bringing it to a bed complement of 86. In 1994, the hospital changed its name from C.J. Harris Community Hospital to Harris Regional Hospital to more properly reflect the hospital's growing importance in the region.

In the past two years WestCare has completed projects that were outlined in its 2003 Master Facilities Plan. WestCare saw major expansion on all three of its Campuses. WestCare Medical Park of Franklin added 11,000 square feet, doubling the size of its building. Swain County Hospital added 12,000 square feet of medical office space to house permanent and visiting

physician practices. Harris Regional Hospital added a 22,000 square foot Ambulatory Services Building in front of existing hospital to house Orthopedic and Cardiac physicians as well as Rehabilitation Services, Cardiopulmonary Services, Carolina West Sports medicine, and other outpatient services.

Harris Regional also experienced renovations and upgrades in the areas of surgery, Radiology, HVAC systems, emergency generators, flooring, and women's services. In 2005 a fixed MRI unit was purchased and placed in Harris Regional to serve the growing numbers of patients.

In 2006, WestCare Health System is now beginning another Strategic Planning and Master Facilities Planning process. Areas that will need to be addressed is the growing need for Medical Office Building space. With the influx of new residents to Western North Carolina comes the need for more physicians to adequately serve the population, as seen by the recently completed Physician Manpower Study that shows a need for almost 25 physicians for WestCare Health System.

WestCare Health System is also a strong economic partner to Jackson County. It employs almost 1,100 full- and part-time employees with the majority living in Jackson County.

Table 19
WestCare Operating & Capital Budget

Year	Discharges	Outpatient	Emergency	Operating Expenses	Salaries/Benefits
2002	5,726	81,515	22,112	55,446,294	37,415,145
2003	5,634	85,272	23,318	58,759,868	40,079,753
2004	5,237	84,067	23,449	62,437,195	42,844,250
2005	4,824	86,819	24,766	67,275,080	45,640,074

PUBLIC UTILITY SYSTEM

Tuckasegee Water and Sewer Authority

The Tuckasegee Water and Sewer Authority (TWSA) was formed in 1992 when existing water and wastewater utilities were consolidated to provide public water and sewer service in the Towns of Sylva, Dillsboro, and Webster, the Village of Forest Hills, the unincorporated areas of Cashiers and Cullowhee, Western Carolina University, and limited areas outside the jurisdictions of these entities. The availability of water and sewer service permits greatly increased density of development as well as provided for greater environmental protection. Dense development dependent upon individual septic systems for wastewater treatment can result in contamination of ground water, contamination of surface waters, and leeching of pollutants into soil.

In an effort to accomplish its mission of delivering water and wastewater services to the citizens of Jackson County in the most efficient manner possible while protecting water quality and preparing for the future, TWSA operates a system that consists of water treatment, storage, and distribution facilities and wastewater collections and treatment facilities. The water system

consists of a 1.5 MGD (million gallons daily) treatment plant, water storage capacity of 1,952,000 gallons, and a distribution system consisting primarily of 6-inch pipe. The wastewater treatment system consists of three treatment plants:

- 1.5 MGD plant located on the Tuckasegee River
- 0.5 MGD plant located in Sylva
- 0.1 MGD plant located in Cashiers

The wastewater collection system consists of over 230,000 lineal feet of collection lines ranging in size from 6 inch to 24 inch. Due to the topography within its service area, the collection system also includes 17 pump stations, with 7 of these in Cashiers.



TWSA has undertaken or has planned system expansions, improvements, and upgrades to meet the increasing demand for public water and wastewater services. An expansion of the water treatment plant, which will increase its treatment capacity by 800,000 GPD (gallons per day), will be completed by September 2006. The increased capacity of the treatment plant is projected to meet the system's needs for potable water until 2015. As part of this expansion, the plant will have the capability of adding another 700,000 GPD of treatment capacity. Other improvements

to the water system include a new 500,000-gallon water storage tank to be located at Jackson Plaza, on Grindstaff Road near US 74. TWSA is currently advertising for bids for the tank, and construction should be completed in June 2006. Private developers who have extended distribution lines to serve their developments have completed most of the expansion of the water distribution system. No improvements to the distribution system are planned other than a new 12 inch water main from Cullowhee to Sylva, which should be completed by July 2006.

No expansion or improvements have been made to the 1.5 MGD wastewater treatment plant since it was constructed. A preliminary engineering study examining the feasibility of expanding the treatment plant by 1.5 MGD of treatment capacity is currently being prepared. Current wastewater flows at this plant are 1.1 MGD, making the expansion of the plant a critical need. It is estimated that the current plant can meet the needs of the system for an additional five years. The 0.5 MGD wastewater treatment plant located in Sylva was rehabbed in 2004 and is currently in excellent condition. No further work is anticipated at the plant at this time. A major rehabilitation of the 0.1 MGD wastewater treatment plant in Cashiers was recently completed. Also, plans are being prepared to expand the capacity of the Cashiers wastewater treatment plant by 0.1 MGD by the spring of 2007. In addition to the improvements of the wastewater treatment plants, a \$1 million wastewater collection system project is currently being undertaken by TWSA. The goal of this project is to reduce inflow and infiltration into the collection system. TWSA recently completed replacement of the wastewater collection line in the Dix Gap area. There are no plans to expand the wastewater collection system, with expansions of the collection system typically left to private developers who extend lines to serve their developments.

Although expansions of the water and wastewater lines in recent years have been undertaken primarily by private developers and TWSA has no plans for immediate improvements/expansions, WASP (the Water & Sewer Planning Committee) has been reformed to examine the need for system expansions. The primary task of the WASP committee is to work with governmental entities in Jackson County to identify future infrastructure expansion projects for TWSA to pursue.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE



As Jackson County citizens and government prepare to address the challenges and opportunities that anticipated growth and development will bring to the county, community leaders have found it necessary to formulate a vision along with goals and objectives to provide direction. With this in mind, the Land Development Plan Steering Committee reviewed the vision and the goals identified by the Jackson County Smart Growth Task Force in 2003. The vision

and goals developed by the Smart Growth Task Force have been incorporated into the Land Development Plan vision statement and goals to guide the actions of Jackson County governments and citizens in addressing the growth-related challenges and opportunities that will confront the county in the coming years. The purpose of the goals and objectives that follow is not to mandate actions but to provide direction for citizens and governments as they prepare for the future.

VISION STATEMENT

Assure that Jackson County preserves and strengthens its position as a balanced community with a broad mix of housing and economic opportunities to meet the needs of its citizens. In ten years, Jackson County will have provided for growth management through proactive long-range planning enacted by the Board of Commissioners that has effectively addressed commercial and residential development, community aesthetics, infrastructure development, and community services.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Explore strategies to create an environment for sustainable economic growth, especially expanded employment opportunities in high-tech industries

- Continue efforts to recruit new businesses to Jackson County, including high-tech enterprises
- Identify locations for new and expanding businesses
- Promote twenty-first century infrastructure (broadband, etc) to meet the needs of high-tech businesses
- Identify methods to reserve appropriate land for the location of business enterprises
- Assist initiatives to expand WestCare and Harris Regional Hospital
- Support the expansion of programs and facilities at Western Carolina University and Southwestern Community College

Support efforts to ensure that infrastructure is adequate and placed to guide development

- Local governments will work with TWSA to identify where and when to extend and/or upgrade water and sewer service
- Local governments and other agencies will explore opportunities to identify appropriate locations for development
- Consider the preparation of a county land use plan

Promote a safe and efficient transportation system

- Local governments will work with NC DOT to identify the location and type of transportation system improvements needed
- Roads are safe and attractive for visitors and residents, with county officials and residents actively involved in the design of new and upgraded roads to ensure that their design is compatible with the mountain topography and beauty of Jackson County
- Provide alternate means of transportation (sidewalks, bike paths, etc) for county residents
- Provide right-of-way protection for future roads
- Support the continued relationship between Western Carolina University and NC DOT to design and construct transportation system improvements on the campus
- Work with NC DOT to improve the transportation system between Sylva and Cullowhee
- Work with NC DOT to implement access management along US 441, US 23/74, NC 107, and NC 116 and incorporate access management into the review of new development along these highways

Support efforts to preserve the county's rural character while protecting private property rights

- Provide information regarding conservation easements to interested landowners
- Explore options to assist interested farmers in protecting farmland

Investigate options to provide safe, attractive, and affordable housing to all county residents

- Work with non-profit and faith-based agencies to expand affordable housing opportunities

- Support efforts to make mobile home parks safe and attractive places to live for children and adults
- Identify areas for higher density residential development, and work towards providing infrastructure to these areas

Assist efforts to ensure that Jackson County is safe, healthy, and clean

- Protect the safety and welfare of county residents when development occurs on steep slopes
- Develop guidelines for building on steep terrain and on ridgetops
- Promote efforts to educate all citizens regarding the difficulty in providing fire protection and emergency services to development located on steep terrain
- Support initiatives to assure the social and economic needs of the county are being met
- Evaluate the current status of community services including fire protection, EMS, schools and libraries to assure their adequacy
- Research opportunities to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Encourage the creation of a civics education component addressing local government for all high school students
- Develop guidelines and examples for the screening of unsightly community elements
- Provide education regarding the impact of litter on the county's economy

CONCLUSION

During the latter half of the twentieth century, Jackson County experienced growth and development unprecedented in its entire history. With growth escalating and the population increasing, new opportunities for county residents will become available, including opportunities in employment, economic endeavors, educational programs and facilities, and advanced health care. New growth, however, will also result in increased strains on the county's manmade infrastructure and natural resources. Even now, roadways are becoming congested.



Health and governmental services are struggling to keep pace with demand. Pasture lands are disappearing and once uninhabited mountain slopes and ridgetops are being developed. Growth-related conflicts will continue to evolve as more people make their home in the county. Using this development plan as a tool, community and county leaders can understand the impact of growth, optimize opportunities, anticipate future problems, and identify ways to manage new development.

In this plan, age, population, and housing demographics have been outlined supporting the county's need to provide its resident with affordable housing, higher-paying jobs, and improved services. Additionally, this plan has illuminated changes in the county's economic base. Manufacturing and agriculture no longer play the important role in Jackson County's economy

that they once did. Influenced by such institutions as Southwestern Community College, Western Carolina University, and WestCare Health Systems, educational and service occupations are on the rise. It is also evident that tourism revenues have leveled in recent years, a trend that will only worsen if the county's character is negatively impacted by new growth and development. In coming years, county officials will be challenged to maintain the quality standard of living that Jackson County residents have become accustomed to.

Townships throughout Jackson County have created their own guidelines to protect the beauty and appeal of their communities. Goals, principles, and solutions have been outlined to improve traffic and development patterns; preserve historic landmarks; encourage cleaner, safer neighborhoods; improve curb appeal and community attractiveness; create unique shops and attractions for visitors; enhance community participation; and support integrated transportation choices. Additionally, municipalities have adopted ordinances, subdivision regulations, and related rules addressing development. Likewise, Jackson County and the State of North Carolina have adopted ordinances and regulations concerning cell towers, erosion control, and watershed and flood-prone areas. Future cooperation between county, state, and local townships will be necessary to direct growth and development and to preserve each community's unique rural character.

Participants in the creation of this land development plan were pleased to be working together for the future good of the county. Many positive discussions arose during the process, and everyone expressed their desire to continue making efforts to preserve and strengthen Jackson County's unique mountain identity. The Land Development Plan Committee should continue to meet on a regular basis to assess and make recommendations regarding development issues, establish priorities, and promote quality of life. As Jackson County faces the inevitable opportunities and challenges created by growth and development, county and community leaders must continue coordinated and cooperative efforts to optimize opportunities and to produce workable solutions to challenges.



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APPENDIX

Map 1 Jackson County Slopes

Map 2 Jackson County Protected Areas with Watershed

Map 3 Population Density by Census Tracts

Map 4 Primary Homes vs. Secondary Homes

Map 5 Potential Commercial Growth Areas

| **Map 6 Public Service Facilities**

| **Map 7 Developments**

TWASA Sylva and Dillsboro

TWASA Webster, Forest Hills, and NC 107

TWASA Cashiers Commercial District

TWASA Town of Highlands