

# MACON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

## Vision Statement 2045

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The Vision Statement for the Macon County CTP should capture the community's vision for how the transportation system should function, look, and feel in the future.

- Written in present tense with a powerful phrase
- Describe the best outcome achievable
- Does not specify a timeframe or provide numeric measures of success
- Evokes emotion and helps build a picture

1. The following words and phrases were generated by the Steering Committee during the visioning exercise on March 26, 2019. They are organized into common themes expressed by the group.

### Rural Character/Natural Beauty

- Gateway corridor, front door to Macon County and NC
- Rural character and beauty balanced with safety
- Working in partnership with national forest
- Maintain some roads of scenic and natural beauty importance
- Small-town feel
- Community friendly for tourists, teen drivers, elderly
- Preserve natural beauty
- Quality of life for residents
- Family friendly
- Green – trees and landscaping aesthetics. Don't turn our county grey.
- Scenic roads
- Community friendly roads

### Multi-Modal

- Multi-modal: Inclusive of all users, including people who can't afford a car
- Less auto-centric
- Walkable with wide sidewalks and crosswalks
- Bicycle-friendly
- Pedestrian-friendly
- Greenway connectivity
- Overpasses for pedestrian crossings
- Bus shelter at transit stops

- Wide walks with green areas
- Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks in town connecting to new apartment building
- Motorcycle-friendly

## Technology

- Electric vehicles
- Technology is closer than we think
- Autonomous vehicles take the emotion out of driver behavior, therefore safer
- Electric technology – better air quality
- Transit regional coordination module; mobile apps and e-fare cards
- Fiber connectivity
- Drones for medical deliveries in an emergency

## Vulnerable Users/Equity

- Access for disabled persons
- Medical and shopping and work trips
- Desert areas for food/medicine
- New apartments non-drivers
- Handicap accessible
- Inclusive of all users, young, old, poor, disabled, etc.

## Efficient

- Passing lanes
- Limit congestion
- Gatlinburg – congestion and growth not planned for
- Connector for travel from one part of town to another

## Safe

- Risky passing on narrow roads
- Safety for large vehicles and bicycles
- Safe for teens and seniors, locals and tourists
- Roads not necessarily just curvy but unsafe

## Economic Development

- Economy – transportation to work puts money back into the county
- Motorcycle tourism
- Family friendly – attract younger workforce
- Outdoor recreation economy
- Economic development (getting people to work and tourists)
- Outdoor recreation with economic benefit from the outdoor sector
- Importance of tourism dollars

## Health

- Connection to recreational opportunities
- Active transportation options

- Health benefit for users

### Resilient

- Resilient to natural disasters – flooding, landslides, wildfires
- Need more than one way in and out in case of road closures

### Other

- Modern, convenient, scenic, accessible and welcoming

## 2. Draft Elements. The future transportation system will....

- ❖ Maintain the rural character and natural scenic beauty of Macon County.
- ❖ Provide a welcoming gateway for travelers entering Macon County.
- ❖ Create a unique “sense of place” in our towns and communities.
- ❖ Provide safe access for travelers without personal automobiles (bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit).
- ❖ Provide a safe and intuitive transportation system that is comfortable for all travelers to navigate, including teens, elderly, disabled, locals, tourists, or freight providers.
- ❖ Maintain mobility and efficiency of higher-speed routes into and out of the county.
- ❖ Manage access to property while maintaining mobility and minimizing congestion.
- ❖ Support growth in the local economy by building communities that are attractive to young families and entrepreneurs while enhancing outdoor recreation tourism opportunities.
- ❖ Improve health outcomes by providing active transportation options.
- ❖ Promote resiliency by improving road segments that are vulnerable to flooding and landslides; also provide adequate detour routes in the event of road closures.
- ❖ Incorporate flexibility to embrace emerging technologies such as autonomous vehicles, drones, and ride-hailing applications.
- ❖ Eliminate fatal crashes (adopt Vision Zero principles).

### 3. Draft Vision Statements

1. Macon County's transportation network is safe, efficient, reliable, and accessible - effectively serving the mobility needs of local residents, visitors, and freight providers. Our transportation system supports economic development opportunities, promotes healthy and active communities, adapts to emerging technologies, and preserves the natural beauty and rural character of our county.
2. Macon County's transportation network is safe, efficient, reliable, and accessible - effectively serving the mobility needs of all populations – connecting residents and visitors alike with goods and services necessary to thrive. Our transportation system incorporates multiple modes, supports economic development opportunities, promotes healthy and active communities, adapts to emerging technologies, and preserves the natural beauty and rural character of our county.
3. Macon County's transportation network connects all populations with the goods and services they need to thrive. Our transportation system include a variety of modes and choices for all populations, supports economic development opportunities, promotes healthy and active communities, adapts to emerging technologies, and preserves the natural beauty and rural character of our county.
4. Macon County has a safe and reliable multi-modal transportation network that accommodates all local communities and visitors while preserving our natural beauty and mountain heritage. This transportation system supports economic development opportunities and increases transportation flexibility by embracing emerging technology.
5. Macon County's multi-modal transportation system accommodates all populations who live in or visit Macon County. This system preserves the natural beauty and rural character of the County, prioritizes the health and safety of our community, promotes economic development opportunities, while also planning for new and emerging technologies.
6. Notes from 5/2/19 meeting:
  - Multiple modes
  - All populations
  - Keep technology reference
  - Freight providers – change to “move goods and people” or “connecting people with goods and services”
  - Recreation? Too specific

## 5. Refined Vision Statements for Steering Committee Feedback

The following two refined Draft Vision Statements were sent to the Steering Committee for feedback via a Google Form:

*VISION 1: Macon County's transportation network is safe, efficient, reliable, and accessible - effectively serving the mobility needs of local residents, visitors, and freight providers. Our transportation system supports economic development opportunities, promotes healthy and active communities, adapts to emerging technologies, and preserves the natural beauty and rural character of our county.*

*VISION 2: Macon County has a safe and reliable multi-modal transportation network that accommodates all users and connects our people with goods and services. This transportation system supports economic development opportunities while also preserving the natural beauty and rural character of our county.*

Overall, five committee members preferred Vision 2 and three preferred Vision 1. The following comments were collected:

- I like Vision 2 because it is concise :)
- I like Vision 2 because it is more compact. The only thing I think that would be good to add is "promotes healthy and active communities" or similar verbiage.
- I like version 1 but my issue with both as they imply that our road system has no flaws and is perfect. Which I don't believe is the mission of the plan. I think we should add to beginning of which ever one is picked this statement "This plan is striving for a". Or something in that realm.
- Prefer Vision 1 but add "is becoming safer through engineering".

## 5. Final Draft Vision Statement

*Macon County envisions a safe and reliable multi-modal transportation network that accommodates all users and connects our people with the goods and services they need to thrive.*

*This transportation system supports economic development opportunities, promotes healthy communities, and adapts to changing technologies while also preserving the natural beauty and rural character of our county.*

## 6. Other Vision Statements for Reference

### **Macon County Comprehensive Plan:**

*To preserve the integrity of our mountain heritage, welfare of the citizens will be maximized, and our natural environments will continue to flourish, and economic vitality will be sustained for current and future generations.*

### **Macon County CTP 2012**

*Produce and maintain a Comprehensive Transportation Plan to preserve the integrity of our mountain heritage, the beauty and tranquility of our communities, as well as our natural environment for the benefit of current populations as well as future generations while sustaining economic vitality and the social welfare of our citizens.*

*This will be accomplished by creating a multi-modal transportation system that satisfies the needs of the individual communities and towns within Macon County, by providing a safe, accessible, and environmentally responsible long-range comprehensive transportation plan.*

### **Bike Walk Franklin:**

*The Town of Franklin's transportation system connects people to places through a well-connected system of greenway, bicycle, and pedestrian networks; making them as or more convenient as driving a car.*

- *Provide access to schools, parks, food, and jobs.*
- *Accessing populations in need*
- *Filling the gaps in the existing system*
- *Providing a high level of safety*

### **Southern Blue Ridge Bicycle Plan:**

*To develop a plan that balances the diverse needs of the mountain counties that promotes health, economic development, and community cohesion.*

- *Emphasizing an interconnected network of biking facilities*
- *Identifying safe and convenient connections between destinations*
- *Developing strategies for towns and agencies to promote the area's bicycling assets to residents, tourists and companies*
- *Coordinating recommendations with NCDOT Division 14 officials to build support for investments in the state's ranking methods*

### **Jackson County CTP:**

*Jackson County provides a safe, efficient, accessible, cost-effective, multi-modal transportation system that is sustainable, preserves the character of the area, promotes healthy lifestyles, and connects to regional and broader transportation systems using all modes of transportation.*

Clay County CTP:

*Clay County is committed to a reliable multi-modal transportation system which is environmentally sensitive, offers connectivity and accessibility, while maintaining the flexibility required to address the economic needs of the community.*