

Town on the Mountain
Town of Laurel Park
2016 - 2026 Comprehensive Plan



Photo Credit: Jared Searcy, Laurel Park Public Works

ADOPTED
JULY 26, 2016





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CONTEXT, VISION, ACTION

Like any other comprehensive plan, the Town of Laurel Park's new comprehensive plan covers the basics of good town planning. The following pages contain information pertaining to the town's parks, infrastructure, the police department, and many other topics. Yet before one can dig into the specifics, one must understand the context underpinning this Plan. Laurel Park's continuing viability as a thriving town depends on actions today that prepare for tomorrow.

Context: Creating a Community of Choice

As the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) developed this Plan, the need to evaluate local population trends in the context of national trends became evident. Much attention has been given to the differing needs of age cohorts, or generations, particularly the needs and characteristics of the massive numbers of Baby Boomers and Millennials. The focus on these two generations is greater than the attention given to the Silent Generation, whose population is on the decline, and Generation X, which is sandwiched between and shadowed by the larger cohorts.

Given the high median age of Laurel Park's population, plus the wave of Millennials flooding the US, the question before Laurel Park is, "As silent and baby-boom generations leave or pass away, who are our new citizens and what do they need?"

News headlines and recent research studies uncover as many certainties as they do contradictions:

“Millennials are driving less.”

“Younger drivers are buying their first cars.”

“Boomers are downsizing.”

“Boomers want one-story houses, not necessarily smaller.”

“Millennials prefer to rent.”

“Millennials view home ownership as a good investment.”

“Boomers prefer walkable communities.”

“The 55-to-64-year-old age group has become the cohort most likely to buy a new car.”

Despite the mixed messages, there is a consistent trend throughout the research. Both groups, and Gen Xers too, value choice, quality communities, and opportunity.

We know that most Baby Boomers prefer to age in place rather than move to a facility for seniors. For some, this means exchanging a two-story house on a one-acre lot for a one-story house with a 1/4-acre yard. For others, it means adapting their home through renovation, adding a live-in apartment, or renting out a room. How does Laurel Park accommodate these choices?

Some Boomers choose to downsize while others prefer larger homes; both groups want that home to be in a walkable community. Some Millennials in urban areas drive less than their counterparts in smaller cities and rural areas, where automobile travel is the only reliable choice - alternative modes of transportation are highly desired, but accommodations and infrastructure are

GENERATION DESCRIPTIONS

Forty-two percent (42%) of Laurel Park's population belongs to the Silent Generation (the Silents) – those born before 1945. In their peak years, when most of the generation was between the ages of 18 and 33, there were 35.4 million Silents in the US. There were 26.8 million in 2014 when the youngest of the Silents were 69. About 5% of Laurel Park's population lives in group quarters (nursing homes). While data is not available to support this claim, it is reasonable to assume that a significant portion of the nursing home residents are in this cohort. Future planning efforts need not be tailored to meet the needs of the Silents, as the oldest of the baby boomers will have similar needs.

Thirty percent (30%) of Laurel Park's population belongs to the Baby Boom Generation (the Boomers) – those born between 1946 and 1964. In their peak years, the 60.8 million Boomers were the United State's largest generational group. In 2014, there were 74.3 million Boomers. The youngest of this generation was 50 and the oldest was 68.

Ten percent (10%) of Laurel Park's population belongs to Generation X (Gen Xers) – those born between 1965 and 1980. In their peak years, GenXers comprised 60.2 million US citizens. Today's number is 64.5 million. In 2014, the youngest of this generation was 35 and the oldest was 49.

Only 8% of Laurel Park's population belongs to the Millennial Generation (the Millennials) – those born between 1981 and 1994. Millennials are currently in their peak years. The youngest is 21 and the oldest of the generation is 34. At 68.4 million, the Millennials are slated to surpass the Boomers to become the United State's largest generational cohort by 2018.

Children, teenagers and young adults comprise the remaining 10% of Laurel Park's population. The trends, preferences, and patterns of this population segment, sometimes referred to as Generation Z, will evolve as they age.

Generation Name	% of LP Population	Birth Years	Min/Max Age in 2014
Silent	42%	1945 and before	69+
Baby Boom	30%	1946 - 1964	50 to 68
Gen X	10%	1965 - 1980	35 to 49
Millennials	8%	1981 - 1994	21 to 34
Generation Z	10%	1994 and after	<21

Source: US Census, Pew Research Center

often lacking. Regardless of car ownership, both demographics value the opportunity to walk and bike, whether it be as a means of transportation or recreation. Additionally, Baby Boomers and Millennials value time with family and friends and seek a diversity of community gathering places.

Younger and older folks may continue to drive as their primary form of transportation, yet many would like the option to walk safely to the grocery store or comfortably ride their bicycle to Laurel Green, while some hope for greater access to public transportation. How can Laurel Park ensure that this level of choice is available to as many residents as possible?

Whatever the topic—housing, transportation, healthcare--the need for choice and opportunity is consistent across the generations. In designing a strategy to meet the perceived needs and trends of Laurel Park’s existing citizens and the ones to come, the CPSC agrees that the best strategy is one that promotes community quality through choice.

Fostering choice and opportunity is not without cost. In the report *Investing in Place: Two Generations’ View on the Future of Communities*, the American Planning Association “conducted a national poll aimed at understanding public perceptions of planning.” Findings from their survey of Millennials and Boomers reveal, “When asked what would strengthen their local economy, two-thirds believe that investing in schools, transportation choice, walkability, and key community features are better ways to grow the economy than investing in recruiting companies.” Investing in choice and opportunity meets the needs of today’s older residents and it is also a strategy to attract younger people. As an added bonus, it is also an economic strategy. For example, investing in the Ecusta Trail is not solely a recreation opportunity; it has the potential to spur greater economic investment.

The Plan’s context set the stage for the Town’s Vision and Vision Direction. The Vision is a statement to describe the future community and the vision directions are “mini-visions”. Town decisions should be guided by the Vision and the Vision Directions.

The Laurel Park Vision

“The Town of Laurel Park values its people, its strong sense of community, and its mountain environment. The Town envisions a future where balanced decision-making results in a quality community where people have choices. Our Town is responsive to the needs of residents today and adapts to serve our neighbors of tomorrow.”



Vision Directions

Community:

We are a caring community working together. We have high levels of volunteerism, a strong sense of identity, and pride in our community's story.

Government:

Town officials work to make Laurel Park a great place to live. We spend money carefully and tax the community fairly in order to deliver efficient and effective services, including providing excellent police protection.

Living:

Laurel Park's residential and commercial properties are visually appealing. The renewed town center and commercial areas provide opportunities for us to meet, shop, dine, and relax, with a variety of small shops and restaurants. Our neighbors work from their homes, with reliable access to broadband service. Additionally, nearby medical and professional services and small businesses are accessible to us. The environment supports small business creation and maintenance.

Recreation & Culture:

Laurel Park has adequate recreation facilities for people of all ages, including parks, paths for walking, rail trail access, safe options for bicycling, and neighborhood activities that further build a sense of community.

Development & Infrastructure:

Laurel Park provides water and wastewater treatment services through partnerships with local landowners (private systems) and the City of Hendersonville. Future development is matched with infrastructure availability and capacity. Town roads are in good shape, include safe intersections, and speeding and traffic problems are rare.

Environment:

We protect our environmental resources and scenic views. Programs are in place to protect and preserve water resources, wildlife habitat and woodlands, and scenic views.

Housing Choice:

We have a variety of housing choices and sizes where our neighbors in all stages of life can live in Laurel Park, and we are a desirable place where our children and grandchildren choose to live and raise their families.

Action

The context and the vision drive the action items recommended throughout this Plan. The actions are divided into six action areas rooted in the background data contained in early plan chapters. The action areas and goals are:



Recreation & Cultural Resources

- Ecusta Trail is an economic driver in Laurel Park.
- Laurel Park's recreation resources are connected through story-telling and connections.



Natural & Ecological Resources

- New Development Implements Environmentally Sound Practices
- Laurel Park preserves and restores ecological systems.
- Laurel Park has a natural and rural character.



Public Facilities & Services

- Laurel Park citizens have access to high quality and sustainable water service.
- The US 64 Corridor has the infrastructure to support development.
- Laurel Park Citizens are served by a fully functional police department.
- Laurel Park Citizens are Served by a Fully Functional Town Hall
- Laurel Park provides brush collection at least two times each year.
- Laurel Park residents have reliable broadband access.



Transportation

- Laurel Park has a well-maintained and safe roadway network for all users.
- Laurel Park residents have multi-modal transportation choices.



Existing & Future Land Use

- Laurel Park is financially stable and has a diversity of funding sources for project investment.
- Build Political Support for the Future Land Use Plan (Henderson County, Hendersonville, State Elected Officials)
- Laurel Park has the structure to implement the Future Land Use Plan.



Implementation

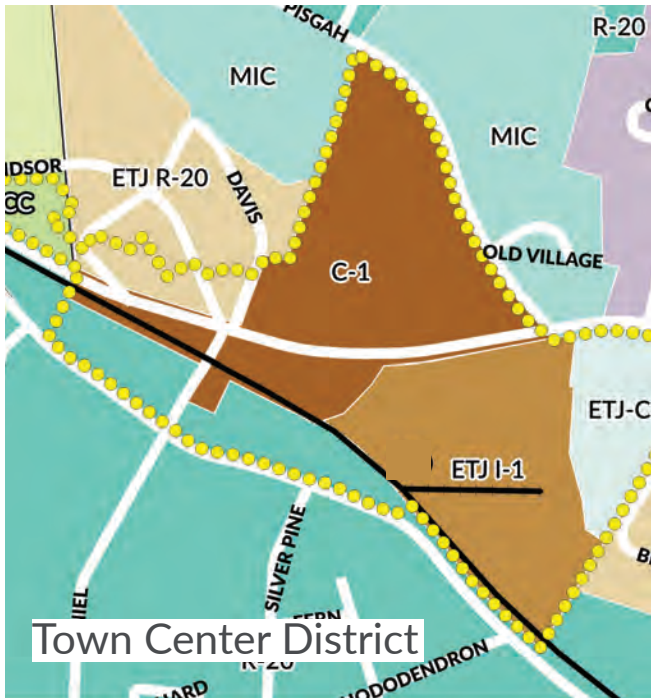
- Laurel Park maintains up-to-date information to monitor and plan for services that match development activity.
- The Implementation chapter also includes the full implementation matrix.

Getting Started

Many of the strategies in this Plan are long term goals - they will take diligent and dogged work to achieve. Yet the CPSC also recognized the need to act quickly. The final section of this Executive Summary highlights Laurel Park's Top Seven Implementation Items - the top actions the Town can and should begin working on as soon as this Plan is adopted.

TOP SEVEN IMPLEMENTATION ITEMS

Create Two New Zoning Districts



Town Center District: The proposed Town Center re-imagines Laurel Park’s existing commercial core to provide what Laurel Park residents want- more places to shop, eat, and gather. The district would increase the amount of land eligible for commercial activity and should encourage mixed-use (commercial and residential together) development. The Town Center would also allow for an anchor activity, such as an urban park, stage, or community gathering feature. There should be a focus on walkability.

Neighborhood Activity Center: The proposed Neighborhood Activity Center extends commercial and residential activity along US 64 using a less dense development pattern. The activity along the corridor would promote the use of small- and medium-sized lots. The activities would complement the future Ecusta Rail Trail. Complementary business might be local stores, small restaurants, or a bike store. Single family residential on small lots or cottage-style development is encouraged.

Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Create the new districts including basic standards for each district, design standards, uses, and the type of zoning tools needed to implement the districts.	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time
Determine the preferred strategy to re-zone areas (incremental, town-initiated, hybrid option).	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time
Implement an intentional community involvement strategy.	Community Engagement	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time
Engage key property owners in the TC and NAC districts.	Community Engagement	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time

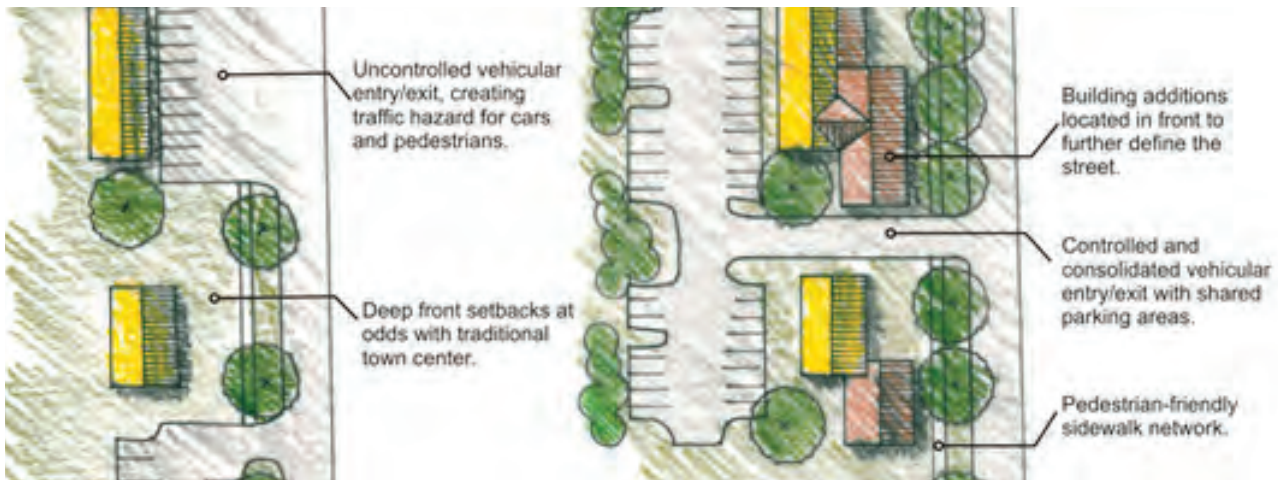
Tree Protection Strategies



Wooded areas provide the additional benefits of open space, recreational opportunities, scenic value and wildlife habitat. They are an important part of Laurel Park’s landscape, contributing to its character and providing buffer zones that allow transitions between incompatible land uses and protect visual quality. Vegetative cover is important for the contribution of organic matter to the soil and mitigating erosion, water runoff, sedimentation of waterways, and decreased water quality. Other than the Town’s Zoning Ordinance standards related to buffers and landscape plans, the Town does not have a means, such as a Tree Protection Ordinance, to maintain vegetation designed to protect environmental quality or land use separation.

Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Direct the Planning Board to develop a tree protection ordinance that protects the existing tree canopy and establishes development tree removal standards, development planting standards (including natives), and ongoing maintenance standards (e.g. trees and plantings that die in a required buffer must be replaced).	New Policy; Resource Investment	Short-Term	Planning Board	Board Time & Planning Staff Time
Direct the Park and Greenways Advisory Board to serve as the Town’s tree commission.	New Program	Mid-Term	Town Board	Board Time

Design Standards



As the town begins the process of creating the new zoning districts (Town Center District and Neighborhood Activity Center), the planning board will be required to develop and recommend district standards that capture the intent of each district. Following is a list of design standards to include in each district – the town may need professional planning assistance to develop the standards:

- dumpster placement and enclosures
- utility/maintenance/rooftop shielding
- exterior lighting
- landscaping
- buffers, including buffer maintenance, fencing and native plantings
- stormwater management
- building material and color
- building height
- building massing
- building facade character
- roof form and articulation
- franchise architecture
- signage
- parking lot design

Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Evaluate and adopt miscellaneous zoning recommendations. Incorporate the following items: -Home Occupations/Home Based Businesses -Emerging uses as appropriate -Accessory Dwelling Units -Vegetative buffer maintenance -Design Standards	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board and Town Manager	Board and Staff Time; Planning Staff Time

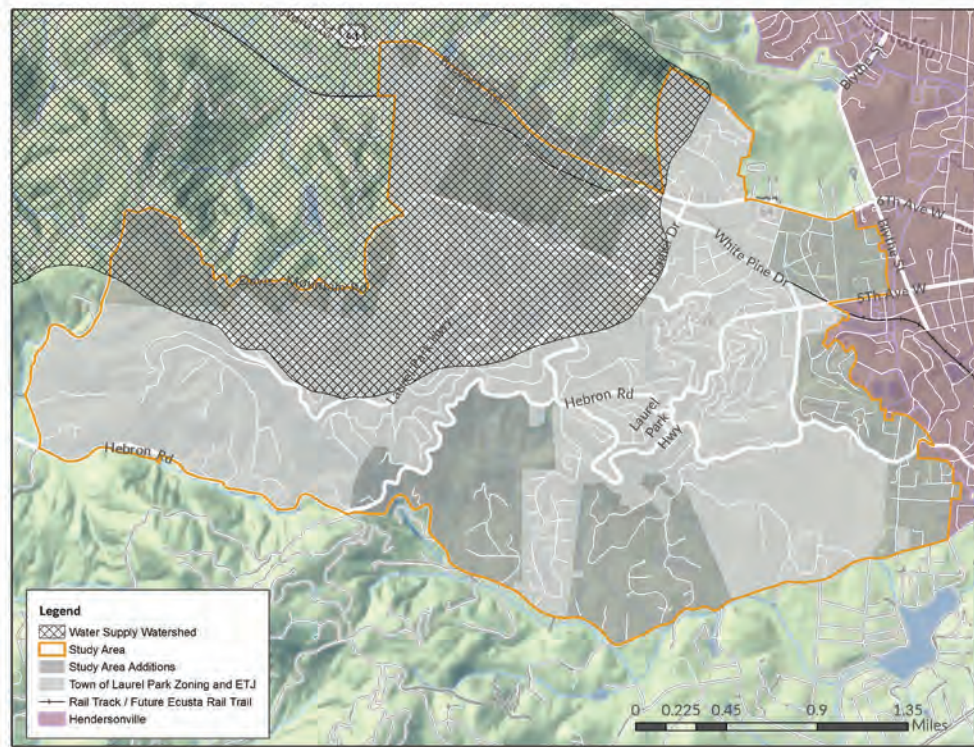
Facility Space & Needs Study



The police department’s most pressing capital need is a facility that meets the modern needs of the community, and the existing police department does not meet the FBI’s Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) minimum standards related to information and record security. Currently sharing space with the town’s administrative office, the police department portion is too small, lacks security features, and does not provide adequate private space for police interviews. The entire building needs modernization to continue to meet town functions. A facility space and needs study should help determine the type and amount of space needed for police department functions.

Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Devote resources for a Police Department Facility Space and Needs Study to determine the amount and type of facilities the town can develop and support, including the technological infrastructure needed to meet CJIS minimum standards.	New Project; Pre-investment	Short-Term	Town Manager and Police Chief	\$15,000 for full study
Devote resources for a Town Hall Facility Space and Needs Study to determine the amount and type of facilities the town can develop and support to meet the town’s changing needs.	New Project; Pre-investment	Short-Term	Town Manager	
Devote a portion of the Facility Space and Needs Study to determine restroom options for Laurel Green visitors during the times Town Hall is not open.	New Project; Pre-investment	Short-Term	Town Manager	

Amend Watershed Overlay District



A water supply watershed (WSWS) is an area that feeds a public water system. The NC Department of Environmental Quality classifies the Upper French Broad River Watershed, partially located in Laurel Park, as a WS-IV watershed. A WS-IV protects waters used as water supply for drinking, culinary, or food processing purposes.

Development in this area is subject to the Watershed Overlay District section of the Laurel Park Zoning Ordinance. The overlay district takes effect when a subdivision or development is proposed in the area. The Ordinance has restrictions and requirements related to density, buffers, and others. To avoid intense land use, the Overlay District sets density restrictions; two dwelling units per acre for single family residential or a maximum of 24% built-upon area for all other residential and non-residential development. A maximum of three dwelling units per acre or 36% built-upon area is allowed for projects without a curb and gutter street system. The Ordinance also allows for cluster development and requires buffer areas.

The Watershed Overlay District does not allow for commercial development. An ordinance amendment would allow for small scale commercial and business opportunities.

Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Amend the town’s zoning ordinance to allow for small-scale commercial development in the Watershed Overlay District, following NC’s Model Watershed Ordinance Standards.	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board and Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time

Explore Sewer Line Extension



The Cane Creek Sewer Study (2009) identified the Shaw’s Creek Pump Station and Interceptor as a long-range project to begin in Horse Shoe, west of Laurel Park, to end near Ingles on US 64 where the sewer line from Hendersonville currently ends. As planned, it could be many years before Laurel Park benefits from the Shaw’s Creek Pump Station project. However, Laurel Park, in partnership with the City of Hendersonville, can coordinate and construct slightly less than half of the Shaw’s Creek project. The line, which would begin at the western end of the town boundary, at the 90-acre parcel, would follow US 64 until it ties in with Hendersonville’s existing line.

Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Explore grant options and allocate funds to conduct a feasibility study that identifies the barriers to sewer line development, potential capacity, types of users needed, and other pertinent factors to determine the sewer line possibility.	Pre-investment; Resource Investment	Short-Term	Town Manager	Staff Time \$15,000 for study
Engage in conversations with the City of Hendersonville to develop an interlocal agreement that details how each municipality benefits from the shared infrastructure investment.	Advocacy Investment	Mid-Term	Town Board	Board Time
As part of the interlocal agreement or a standalone town policy, prepare and adopt a sewer extension policy that requires voluntary annexation in exchange for sewer service.	New Policy; Resource Investment	Long-Term	Town Board	Board Time, \$8,000 for consultant assistance

Marketing & Branding



Laurel Park is a hidden gem - many people are not aware of what the town has to offer, where its boundaries lie, or the town's story. Marketing and branding is a way to help Laurel Park stand out. A complete marketing and branding plan identifies strategies to define the town through logos, signs, promotional materials, and community identification. The images below highlight various town branding efforts.

Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Issue an RFP to receive assistance from a branding and marketing firm to develop a town brand and a how-to guide to integrate the brand in town materials and activities.	New Program, Resource Investment	Mid-Term	Staff Assistance	\$8,000 & Staff Time

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



Laurel Park – The Town on the Mountain

Situated at the southern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains, just west of the City of Hendersonville, lies the Town of Laurel Park. The town, incorporated in 1925, boasts of its magnificent views from Jump Off Rock that overlook the Mills River Valley. This “Town on the Mountain” is a close-knit residential community with parks, the Hendersonville Country Club, opportunities for civic engagement, and a collection of long standing community businesses. Laurel Park also contains a small and concentrated commercial center and a variety of medical-related facilities. These assets and others combine to make Laurel Park an attractive place to live, work, and play.

Laurel Park Development History

From 1888 until the stock market crashed in 1929, one could best describe Laurel Park as a typical North Carolina mountain tourist town. Visitors from South Carolina, Florida, and elsewhere flocked to the mountains seeking relief from the South’s summer heat. Mr. William Smith was the first, and primary, developer to cater to the tourist community. In 1888, Mr. Smith and others purchased approximately 10,000 acres to develop Laurel Park as a resort and recreation community. Over time, Mr. Smith developed a variety of recreation features, including Crystal Spring, Rainbow Lake, a dance pavilion,

Figure 1-1: Laurel Park at a Glance

LAUREL PARK AT A GLANCE



Form of Government

Laurel Park operates under a council-manager form of government. The manager serves as the chief administrator and handles the day-to-day operations of the Town. The mayor and the four-member council establish policies for the Town.



Budget & Tax Rate

Laurel Park’s Fiscal Year 2015-2016 budget is \$2,522,800 supported primarily by the \$0.43 cents per \$1,000 property tax valuation.



People

Laurel Park’s population grew by 10% between 2000 and 2010, from 1,985 to 2,180. As of 2014, 2,218 people live in Laurel Park. It is the 5th most populous of Henderson County’s six towns; it ranks 239th out of NC’s 553 municipalities.



Topography

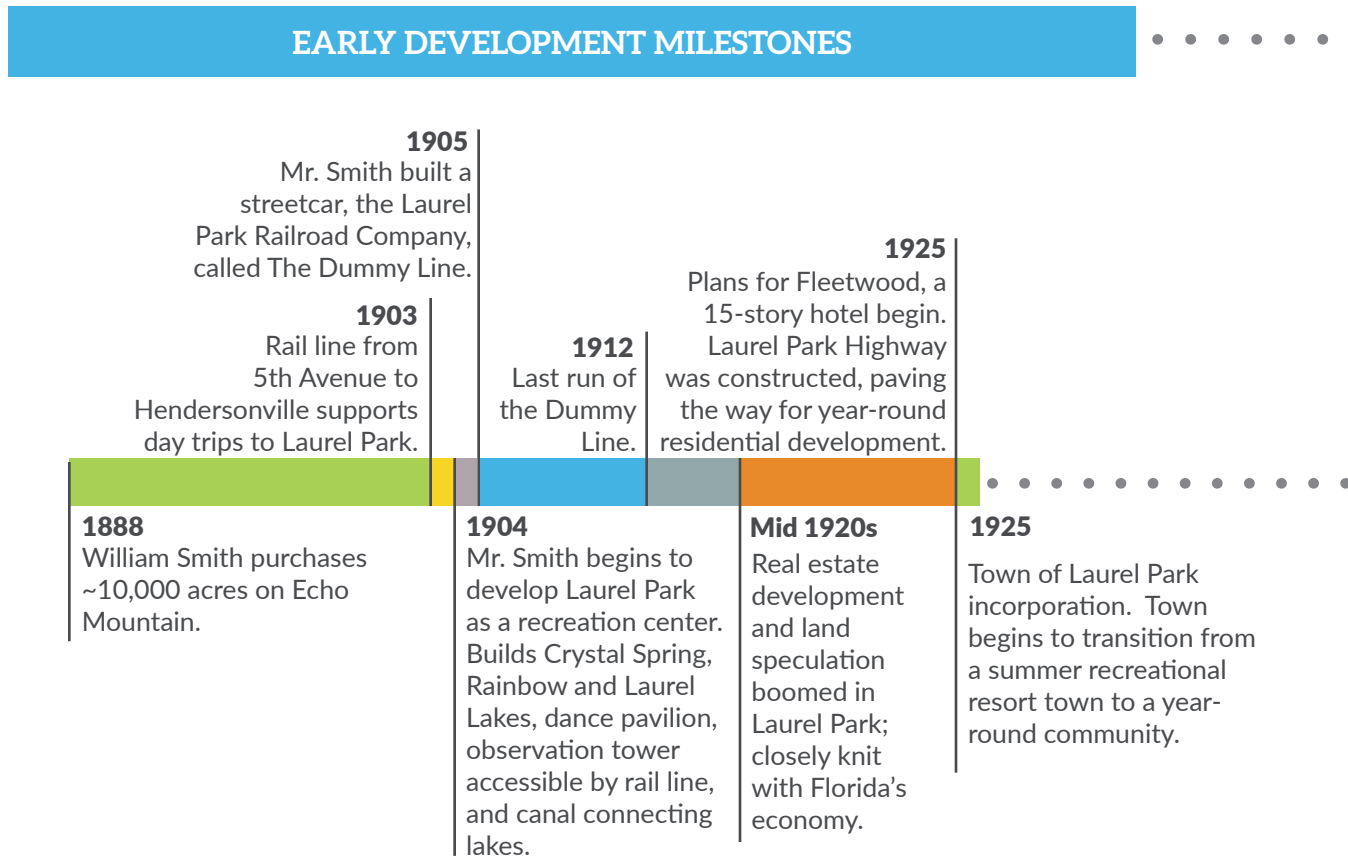
One of the Town’s most distinguishing features is the 954 foot rise in elevation from 2,170 feet at Wash Creek to 3,124 feet near the Fleetwood Development.



In the Middle of it All

Laurel Park is centrally located. It is 1.5 miles from the center of Hendersonville, 20 miles from the Town of Brevard and 26 miles from Asheville, the region’s hub city. Access to I-26 is 4 miles away and the Asheville Regional Airport is 14 miles.

Figure 1-2: Early Development Milestones

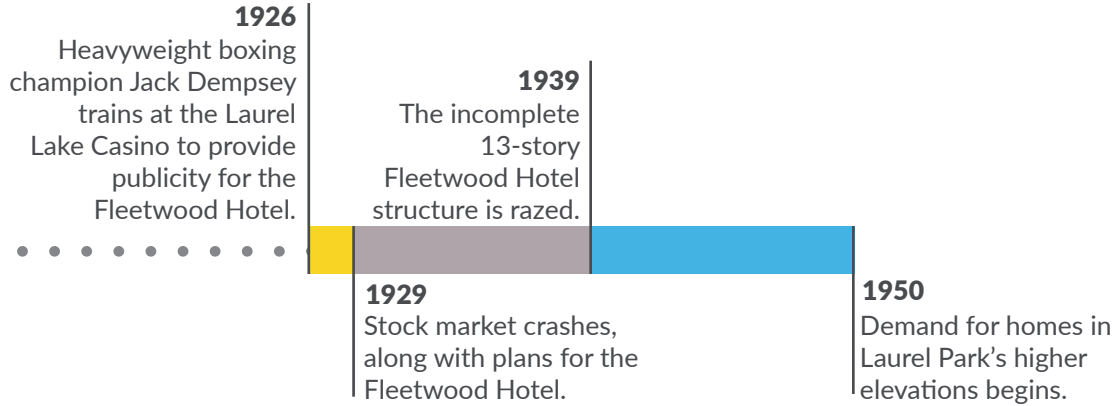


an observation tower accessible by a counter-balanced rail line, and a canal connecting Rainbow Lake with Laurel Lake (now Rhododendron Lake). Other developers built summer camps, hotels, boarding houses, and the Echo Mountain Tea Room (now the Echo Mountain Inn) in Laurel Park's early years. While new roads accompanied the development, the town's expansion was limited to the lower elevations due to Laurel Park's challenging terrain, and automobiles weren't yet as accessible or powerful enough to make it up the mountain.

Development and land speculation in Laurel Park were tied closely to Florida's economy. According to "A Short History of Laurel Park" by Lincoln F. Parker, "By 1924 the Florida real estate boom had become superheated, and the purchase of local [Laurel Park] real estate seemed a sure way to wealth; even though most of the land and buildings were bought on the narrowest of margins. Paper millionaires multiplied and the future seemed to lead only onward and upward. Property along Main Street, as well as in the suburbs, changed hands almost daily, with prices constantly increasing. Credit provided nearly all the money for these inflationary transactions, and the paper profits built a false prosperity the natives and visitors alike thought would never end." The project that illustrates the spirit of prosperity alive at the time was the planned 15-story Fleetwood Hotel partially built at the top of



IN THE TOWN OF LAUREL PARK : 1888 THROUGH 1950



Jump Off Mountain. According to Parker, “Ground was broken on September 8, 1925, at the end of a new concrete highway leading up the mountain to the site.” Financial troubles plagued Fleetwood; once the stock market crashed in 1929, the project was never able to recover.

Even though the Fleetwood project failed and the economy was sluggish for years afterward, its legacy on Laurel Park cannot be overlooked. Without the Fleetwood, there would be no Laurel Park Highway. Nationwide following WWII, people had unprecedented access to single-family residential developments and homeownership opportunities. With Laurel Park Highway already built, combined with new housing options available to more people and the vehicle ownership boom, Laurel Park was primed to transition from a tourist oriented town to one that resembles the year-round residential community known today.

Figure 1-3: The Fleetwood Hotel



A conceptual postcard of the planned Fleetwood Hotel. Construction began in 1925 but never reached completion.

Source: North Carolina Postcard Collection, UNC-CH



Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the *Town on the Mountain: Town of Laurel Park 2016-2026 Comprehensive Plan* is to provide Laurel Park with a guide to direct future change and development in a manner that allows Laurel Park to achieve its vision:

“The Town of Laurel Park values its people, its strong sense of community, and its mountain environment. The Town envisions a future where balanced decision-making results in a quality community of choice that is responsive to the needs of residents today and can adapt to serve our neighbors of tomorrow.”

The Plan:

- Identifies the preferred future development pattern that will begin to take form over the next ten years;
- Identifies recreation, natural resource and ecological, public facility, transportation, and land development services needed to achieve Laurel Park’s vision; and
- Assists the Town of Laurel Park’s elected officials, planning board, staff, developers, and others in making day-to-day development decisions.

The *Town on the Mountain: Town of Laurel Park 2016-2026 Comprehensive Plan (the Plan)* is a 10-year vision for the Town of Laurel Park. Although the Plan is a complete document, the comprehensive planning process is ongoing. Changing conditions may require the town to evaluate various parts of the Plan.

While the Plan covers a ten-year planning horizon, many of the recommendations are long-range initiatives that will take much longer than ten years to implement. Work over the next decade is needed to reach the longer-term goals and objectives.

Introduction to the Plan

Laurel Park’s *2005-2015 Land Use Plan (2015 Plan)* was an update to the town’s first land use plan from 1988. The *Town on the Mountain Plan* replaces all previous plan versions. The 2015 Plan’s purpose was to serve as the “cornerstone of the long range planning process. It addresses population growth, land use patterns and intensity, public services, infrastructure needs, and recommends policies and regulations to implement the plan. A comprehensive plan serves as a policy statement and a guide for future



development.” The policies and programs outlined in the 2015 Plan should have been the guide for community change in Laurel Park for the years between 2005 and 2015. However, town leaders did not regularly make use of the 2015 Plan. Additionally, new trends, plans, and conditions facing Laurel Park today warrant a new plan to ensure the town implements plans, policies, and programs that guide the town toward its vision.

This Plan is Laurel Park’s response to the new trends, plans, and conditions that affect current and future town decisions related to operations, land development, and citizen services. This update is the result of 15 months of meetings, discussion, and research by the Laurel Park Planning Team (LPPT), which was comprised of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC), Town of Laurel Park Staff, and the J.M. Teague Engineering & Planning Consulting Team. The LPPT studied and discussed at length the physical, economic, and social conditions of Laurel Park in projecting what the future of the town should be. The results of their work comprise this Plan’s Vision, Goals, and Actions which are detailed in the following chapters.

History of Planning and Concurrent Planning Efforts

The Town of Laurel Park has a history of conducting citizen-led efforts and planning documents. Located in Henderson County as well as the greater Asheville region, regional plans also influence the town’s development. This Plan reviews local plans and documents as well as a variety of regional plans to determine their relevancy to Laurel Park’s future. Figure 1-5 lists the plans reviewed, many of which are summarized in Appendix 1.

Figure 1-4: The Laurel Park “Dummy Line”



In the early 1900s, the Laurel Park Railroad ran a trolley to carry riders from Laurel Park to Hendersonville and back. Rumors say the “Dummy Line” got its name because it could only run forward to Laurel Park and backwards to Hendersonville.

Source: Henderson County Museum



Figure 1-5: Existing Plan Review

Plan Type	Plan Name & Year Adopted	Summarized or Reviewed
Local Plans		
	2005-2015 Land Use Plan (2005)	S
	2015-2016 Budget & Capital Improvement Plan (2015)	R
	Rhododendron Nature Park Plan (Ongoing)	R
	Parks and Greenways Comp. Long Term Plan (2011)	S
	Zoning Ordinance (Amended 09/2015)	R
	Subdivision Ordinance (01/2001)	R
	Sewer Study (2011)	S
	Roadway Maintenance Plan (2014)	R
Regional Plans		
	French Broad River MPO (FBRMPO) 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2015) and other FBRMPO plans;	S
	NC Department of Transportation State Transportation (STIP) Improvement Plan: 2016-2020 (2015)	S
	City of Hendersonville Comprehensive Plan (2009)	S
	Henderson County Comprehensive Plan (2009)	S
	Henderson County Etowah Horse Shoe Community Plan (2009)	S
	Hend. County Etowah Horse Shoe Community Plan Amended Zoning Changes (2010)	S
	Ecusta Rail Trail Planning & Feasibility Study (2011)	S
	Land of Sky Regional Council's GroWNC Regional Plan (2006)	R
	Economic Assessment of Henderson County (2015)	R
Guiding, Financial, Recreation, Ordinance, Transportation		

Other plans reviewed include:

French Broad River MPO: Congestion Management Process, Blue Ridge Bike Plan, 2012 Long-Range Transportation Demand Management Plan

NC Department of Transportation: WalkBikeNC – Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, Strategic Highway Corridors



Organization of this Plan

This Plan is comprised of eight chapters: demographics and regional trends, recreation and cultural resources, natural and ecological resources, public facilities and resources, transportation, land use and implementation. Chapters One and Two serve as the orienting chapters, whereas Chapters Three through Seven include the heart of the Comprehensive Plan—the guiding plan, policy and project recommendations. Chapter Eight provides guidance as to how Council, staff, boards, and citizens can implement the Plan’s recommendations.

Plan Study Area

Due to some of the anticipated changes that will occur in and around Laurel Park in the coming years, the LPPT selected a study area larger than the existing town boundary and extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The Plan Study Area (PSA) includes the Town of Laurel Park and the ETJ and the areas that fill gaps between the town boundary and/or the ETJ. The areas include:

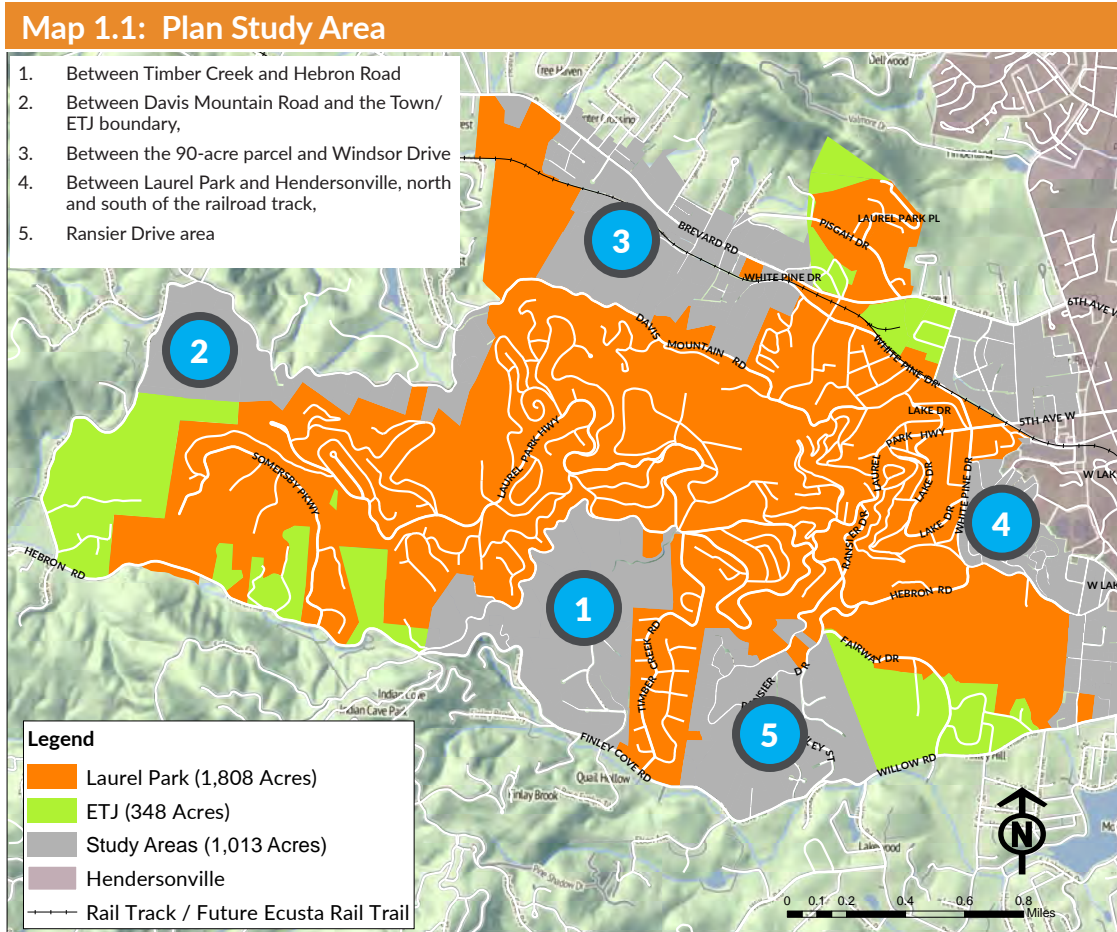
Figure 1-6: Regional Planning Area
The Asheville - Brevard
Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)



Laurel Park, by nature of being in Henderson County, belongs to a number of planning regions. The Asheville-Brevard Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes Henderson, Buncombe, Haywood, and Madison Counties and the urbanized areas of Transylvania County. The Land of Sky Regional Council includes the same counties, except for Haywood. The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization includes the urban areas of the five counties listed above. Henderson County is in NCDOT’s Division 14 Planning Area and NC Dept. of Environmental Quality’s Asheville Region.



1. between Timber Creek and Hebron Road – Henderson County Zoning,
2. between Davis Mountain Road and the Town/ETJ boundary,
3. between the 90-acre parcel and Windsor Drive at the ETJ boundary,
4. between Laurel Park and Hendersonville, north and south of the railroad track, and
5. the Ransier Drive area.



Comparison Towns

This Plan selected and used a set of cities and towns to compare Laurel Park’s status and trends. Proximity to Laurel Park, relationship to the Asheville region, demographic and development patterns, and similar levels of municipal services guided comparison town selection. The comparison areas are Banner Elk, Biltmore Forest, Lake Lure, Tryon, Highlands, and the Towns in Henderson County: Flat Rock, Fletcher, Hendersonville, Mills River, and Saluda. In some cases, the Plan provides comparison data for Henderson County and/or North Carolina.

Figure 1-7: Comparison Towns

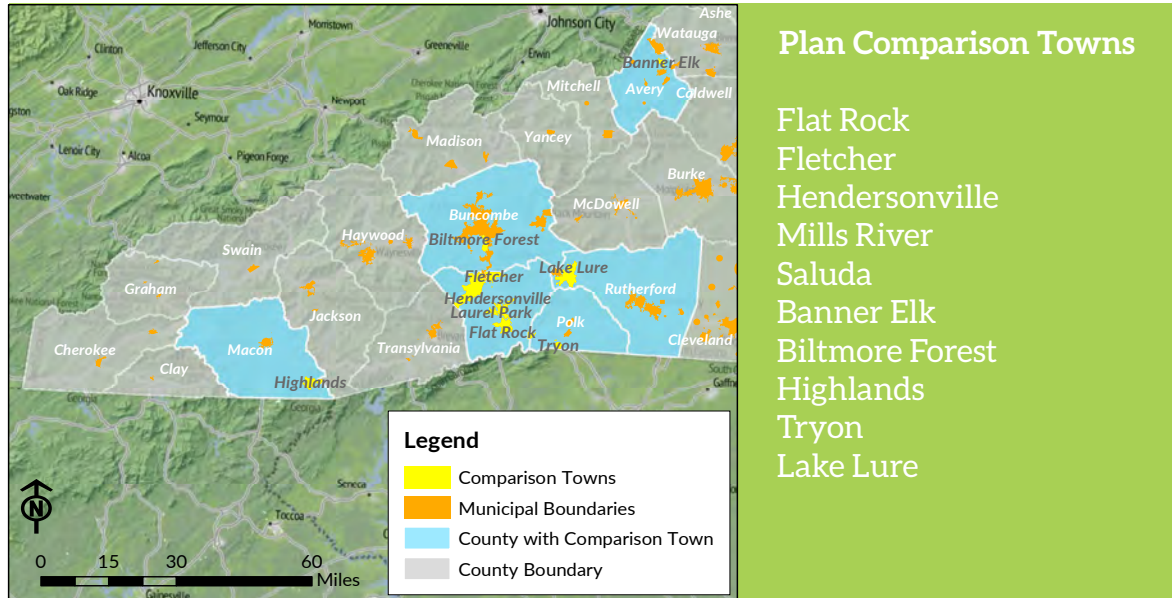


Figure 1-8: Comparison Area Basic Statistics

Place			Population					
Town	Inc.	County	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	00-10 % Change
North Carolina	1789	N/A	5,082,059	5,881,766	6,628,637	8,049,313	9,535,483	18%
Henderson County	1839	N/A	42,804	58,580	69,285	89,173	106,740	20%
Flat Rock	1995	Henderson	No data	No data	No data	2,565	3,114	21%
Fletcher	1989	Henderson	No data	No data	2,787	4,185	7,187	72%
Hendersonville	1847	Henderson	6,443	6,862	7,284	10,420	13,137	26%
Laurel Park	1925	Henderson	581	804	1,343	1,835	2,180	19%
Mills River	2003	Henderson	No data	No data	No data	No data	6,802	N/A
Saluda	1881	Henderson/Polk	546	588	472	575	713	24%
Banner Elk	1911	Avery	754	1,087	886	811	1,028	27%
Biltmore Forest	1923	Buncombe	1,298	1,499	1,327	1,440	1,343	-7%
Highlands	1883	Macon/Jackson	583	715	948	909	924	2%
Tryon	1885	Polk	1,951	1,796	1,700	1,760	1,646	-6%
Lake Lure	1927	Rutherford	456	474	747	1,027	1,192	16%

US Census, NC State Data Center

Town	Utilities		Housing			Age		14-15
	Electric	W/S Fund	Housing Units	Units Per Person	Ave HH Size	% 65+	Median Age	Tax Rate
North Carolina	N/A	N/A	4,327,528	0.45	2.48	12.9	37.4	N/A
Henderson County	N/A	N/A	54,710	0.00	2.32	22.4	45.4	0.5136
Flat Rock	N	N	2,150	0.69	2.06	47.7	64.0	0.0840
Fletcher	N	N	3,208	0.45	2.36	13.9	39.2	0.3250
Hendersonville	N	Y	7,744	0.59	1.96	42.2	48.7	0.4400
Laurel Park	N	Y	1,438	0.66	1.92	42.2	61.6	0.3900
Mills River	N	N	3,108	0.46	2.42	17.4	45.7	0.0974
Saluda	N	Y	493	0.69	2.01	34.9	57.5	0.6050
Banner Elk	N	Y	607	0.59	2.25	11.6	22.0	0.5400
Biltmore Forest	N	Y	689	0.51	2.39	29.2	54.1	0.0358
Highlands	Y	Y	2,099	2.27	2.00	33.2	56.6	0.1500
Tryon	N	N	1,066	0.65	1.91	38.0	56.8	0.5508
Lake Lure	Y	Y	2,211	1.85	1.97	21.4	62.3	0.1910

NC Treasurer's Office

US Census (2010)

NCDOR



CHAPTER TWO: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

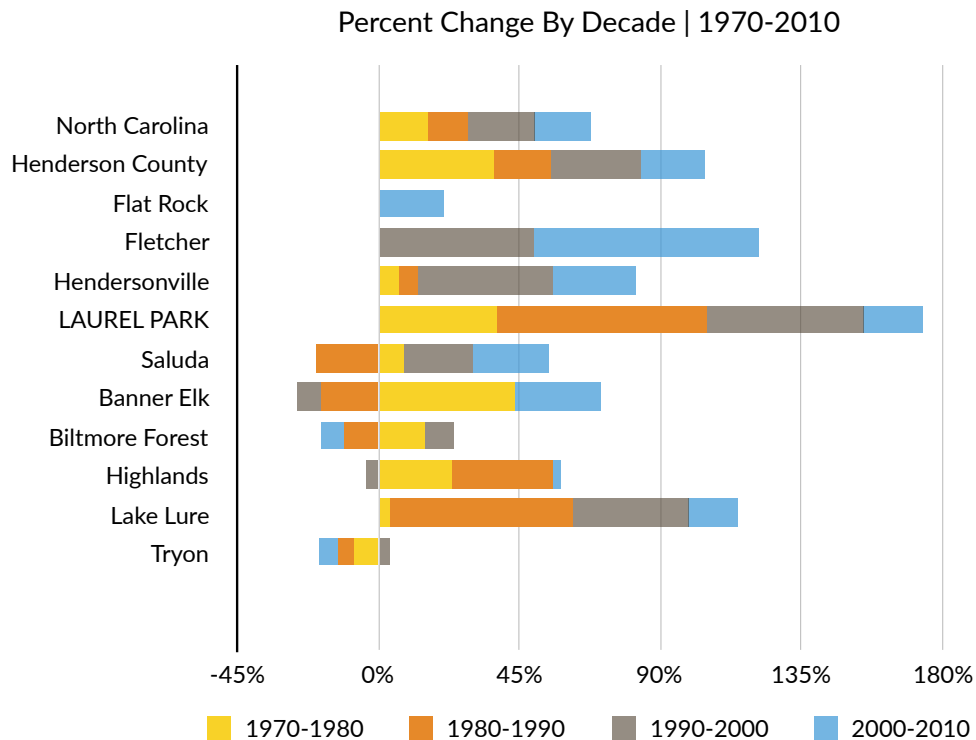
Chapter Two of the Town on the Mountain Plan provides an overview of data that defines trends and changes affecting Laurel Park. The following sections report data about population trends, population projections, demographics (age and gender, race and ethnicity), and generational trends affecting future planning.

Population Trends

Figure 2-1 compares Laurel Park’s population trends since 1970 with the comparison communities. Like other towns in proximity to Asheville and Hendersonville, Laurel Park’s population increased with each passing decade. Latest figures from the 2010 Census report a population of 2,180, a 168% cumulative population increase since 1970 with the greatest growth occurring between 1990 and 2000. Laurel Park’s cumulative growth pattern is significantly greater than the comparison towns, Henderson County, and North Carolina. A small portion of the growth can be attributed to annexation. However, urban growth (development) contributes to the majority of the population increase.



Figure 2-1: Percent Change by Decade



2000 US Census Note: According to the 2005-2015 Land Use Plan, the Laurel Park Town Council and Mayor successfully challenged the original 2000 Census figure of 1,835, and it was revised upwards to 2,017. It was determined that two group quarters with a total of 188 residents were not included in the Town’s jurisdiction. The original housing unit count of 1,115 is still correct, however. Figures such as the number of males and females in the Town, median age, proportion of race and other numbers are not revised or re-released by the Census Bureau, so all percentages and calculations involving those figures are based on the first released count of 1,835.

Population Growth Scenarios

The exercise of predicting the future population of a community is not an exact science. A community's actual future population depends on a number of factors, including local, regional, and global economic trends, changing attitudes about growth, leadership changes, and evolving community values. Yet, a community needs population projections to plan for its long-term needs and services. For example, a town needs to know how much land it will need to accommodate new residents or how to budget for additional town services.

The NC State Demographer's Office does not calculate population projections for municipalities as it does for counties, nor is there a standard formula to calculate municipal projections. This Plan analyzes historic and current population trends contextualized within regional trends to identify realistic population scenarios. This Plan used five types of calculations to determine a range of scenarios:

1. The **straight-line growth rate** is simply the percent growth divided by the number of years in the period, in this case eleven (2014-2025).
2. The **compound growth rate** is similar to the interest on a savings account. The annual growth rate is compounded for the period (eleven years).
3. 3a. and 3b. review the number of **single-family residential building permits** issued for Laurel Park residences. There is a discrepancy between the number of permits issued according to Laurel Park's records compared to Henderson County's. This calculation assumes a similar future trend and multiplies that trend by the 2010 Census average household size (1.92).
4. The fourth calculation evaluates Laurel Park's **population in relation to Henderson County's**. Laurel Park consistently comprises 2% of Henderson County's total population; a trend that has been true since 1980 and one that is projected to remain true until 2030, according to the NC State Data Center.
5. The final calculation is an **average** of the four preceding calculations.

Using the five calculation methods, Laurel Park’s 2025 projected number of new residents in the Plan’s ten year planning horizon ranges from 231 to 264. When the population projections are placed in context with the growth factors that may promote or limit growth, as Figure 2-3 outlines, it is reasonable to assume that Laurel Park’s population will continue to increase in size, although at a moderated pace when compared to the last decade. Therefore, the remainder of the Plan will use the “Average of All” growth scenario resulting in a 2025 population of 2,463 for an increase of 245 people (123 new households at a 1.92 average household size).



Figure 2-2: Population Growth Scenarios

Population Growth Scenarios	New Residents
1. Straight line growth rate	243
2. Compound growth rate	235
3a. Henderson County building permit growth	231
3b. Laurel Park building permit growth	264
4. Laurel Park as 2% of Henderson County population	251
5. Average of all scenarios (Selected Scenario)	245
Projected 2025 Population	2,463
Projected New Households	123

Figure 2-3: Population Growth Promoters & Limiters

GROWTH PROMOTERS



With Asheville as its economic engine, the region will continue to grow; just how much depends on the source. The Land of Sky Regional Council's GroWNC project reports growth from 457,948 people to 634,337 between 2010 and 2030, a 26% increase. The NC State Data Center provides a lower projection at 555,218 for the same counties and time-frame. In 2010, Henderson County was North Carolina's 26th most populous county. The NC State Data Center projects it to remain in that position in 2030, yet it ranks 22nd in terms of population growth for that same year. Henderson County's Etowah and Horse Shoe Community Plan projects a 5.6% annual population increase, for a 111% increase between 2000 and 2020 for the area west of Laurel Park. Regardless of the source, all signs point to regional growth. Some of the growth promoters that are relevant to Laurel Park include:

- Potential for very large developments in the Etowah area, such as the Seven Falls rebirth.
- Wingate University Development Project.
- The US 64 widening project and Balfour Parkway (a proposed new route that would connect US 64 and NC 191, see existing plan review).
- The Ecusta Trail.
- Laurel Park has quick access to Hendersonville, Asheville, Brevard, and upstate South Carolina and offers the "small town feel" that some prefer.
- Regional efforts to improve broadband access.



GROWTH LIMITERS

- Laurel Park does not have the sewer capacity to meet long-term growth projections.
- Laurel Park has an older population. Baby Boomers and members of the Silent Generation will become a smaller segment of the country's population.
- Despite its proximity and ease of access to other cities, there will always be those who prefer to live in a large community.
- The NC General Assembly recently made changes to North Carolina's municipal annexation laws that severely restrict Laurel Park's ability to grow in acreage.
- It is difficult for any community to rely primarily on a residential tax base. Communities need business activity, and not just commercial, to provide a high level of service.



Demographic Trends

The remainder of this chapter provides an overview of basic demographic trends. The topics detailed include age and gender distribution, race and ethnicity, and household characteristics.

Age Distribution

The median age of Laurel Park residents reported in the 2010 Census was 61.6, up from 58.6 in 2000 due to the continued aging of the Silent and Baby Boom generations. **A significant portion of the population, 42.2%, is 65 years and older.** Those living in the nursing homes in Laurel Park represent approximately 5% of that age group; even with this factor at play, Laurel Park still has a high median age compared with other towns, Lake Lure and Flat Rock excepted.

In response to Laurel Park's unusual age patterns, this Plan's Vision and many of its recommendations were formed with the understanding that a future plan for Laurel Park must consider the needs of the current aging population and the new residents who follow.

Racial Diversity

In terms of Racial Diversity, Laurel Park is similar to most towns in the comparison areas. The larger areas, Hendersonville, Asheville and North Carolina have greater diversity. Likewise, all areas had an increase in the Hispanic population, with North Carolina's change being the greatest and Laurel Park's the least.

The Laurel Park Snapshot

The following two pages contain 5 charts that provide a visual overview of Laurel Park's demographic trends compared to other areas.

Figure 2-4: Demographic Charts (A-E)

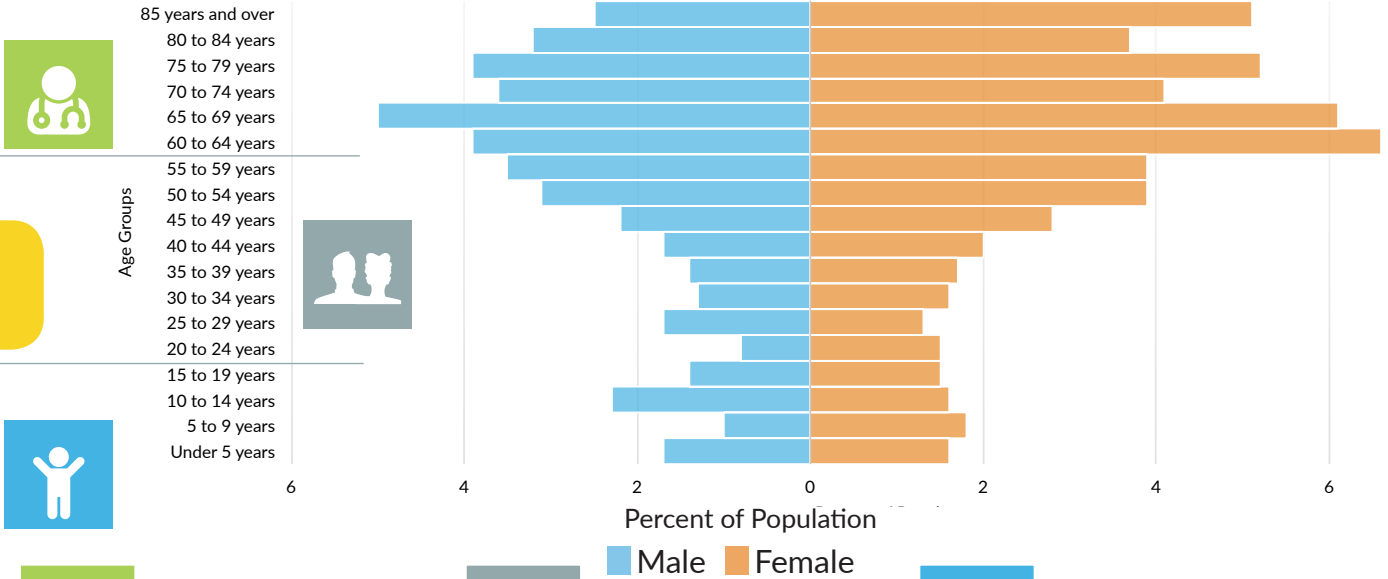
Laurel Park and Comparison Town Demographic Overview

- A. Laurel Park Population Pyramid
- B. Median Age
- C. Percent of Population 65 Years and Older
- D. Percent of Population Hispanic or Latino
- E. Racial Composition



A

Laurel Park - Population Pyramid



Older Adults

Working Population

Youth

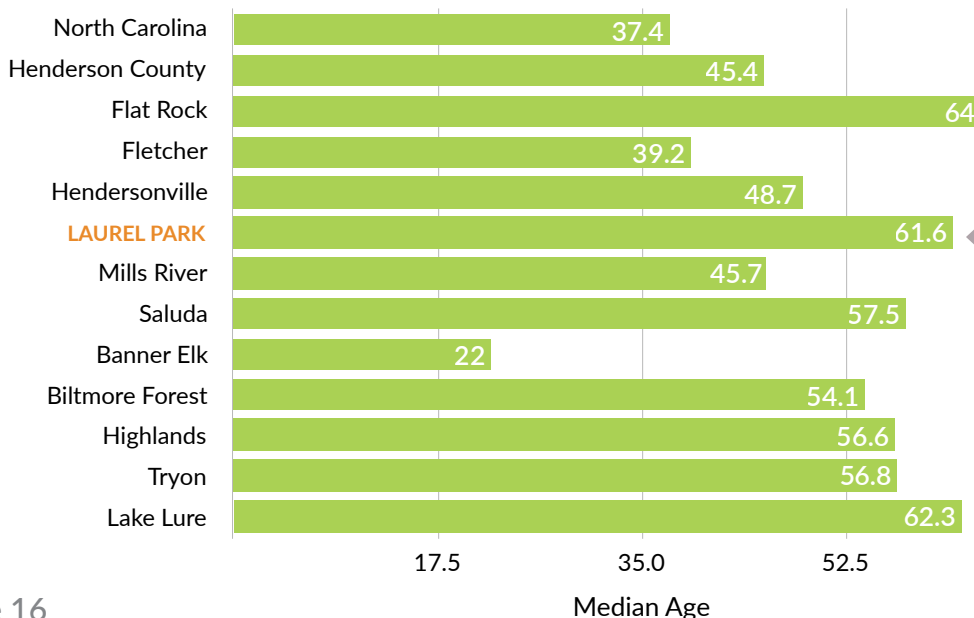
Older adults want an independent lifestyle as they approach retirement and ultimately retire. This is Laurel Park's dominant population and the population grew from 40% to 52% between 2000 and 2010.

The life of the working adult is complicated. They are seeking greater work/life balance while also considering the needs of family, both aging parents and children. This segment of Laurel Park's population decreased from 47% to 34% between 2000 and 2010.

Youth explore the world around them and with increasing demands of family and with most households having both parental units in the workforce, youth are being asked to be more independent. Laurel Park's youth population remained stable at 13%.

B

Median Age of Laurel Park and Comparison Towns



Laurel Park's median age is higher than North Carolina and Henderson County. Flat Rock and Lake Lure also have a high median age. This is a reflection of the region's ability to attract and retain retirees.

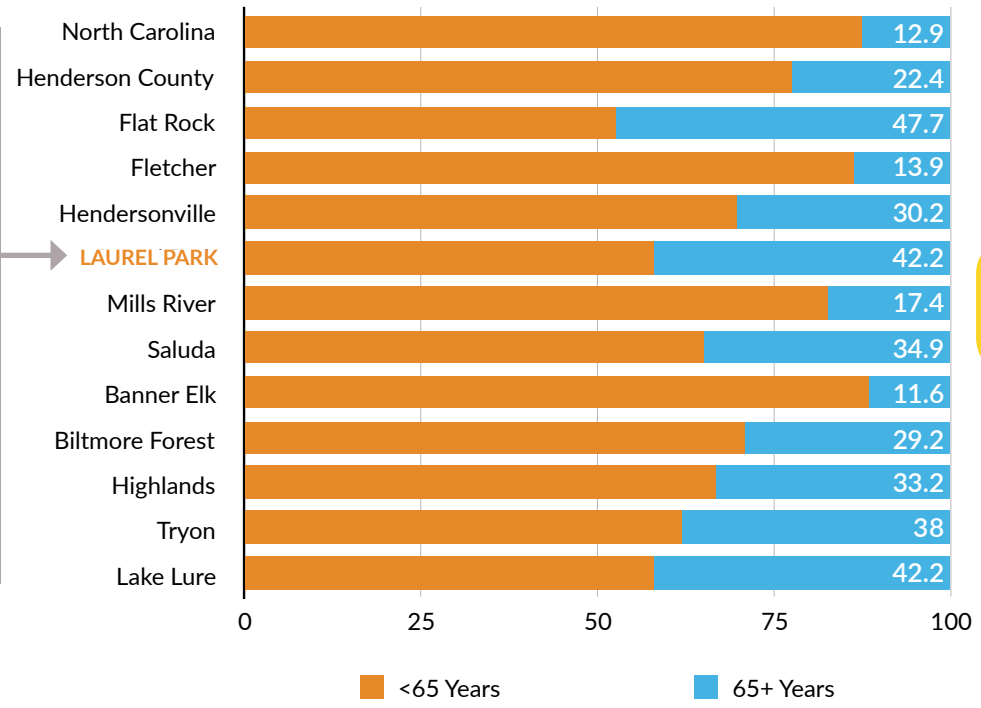
Source: US Census

C

Percent of Population 65 Years and Older

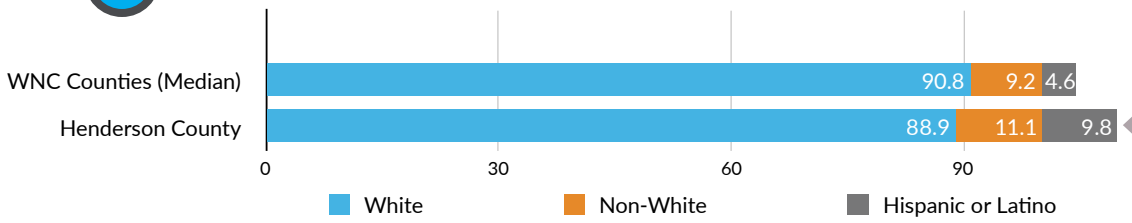
The percent of Laurel Park's population that is 65 years or older is higher than most of the comparison areas. Unlike some mountain towns with a high percentage of older adults, youth flight is not a likely cause.

Source: US Census



D

Percent Hispanic or Latino (May be White or Non-White)

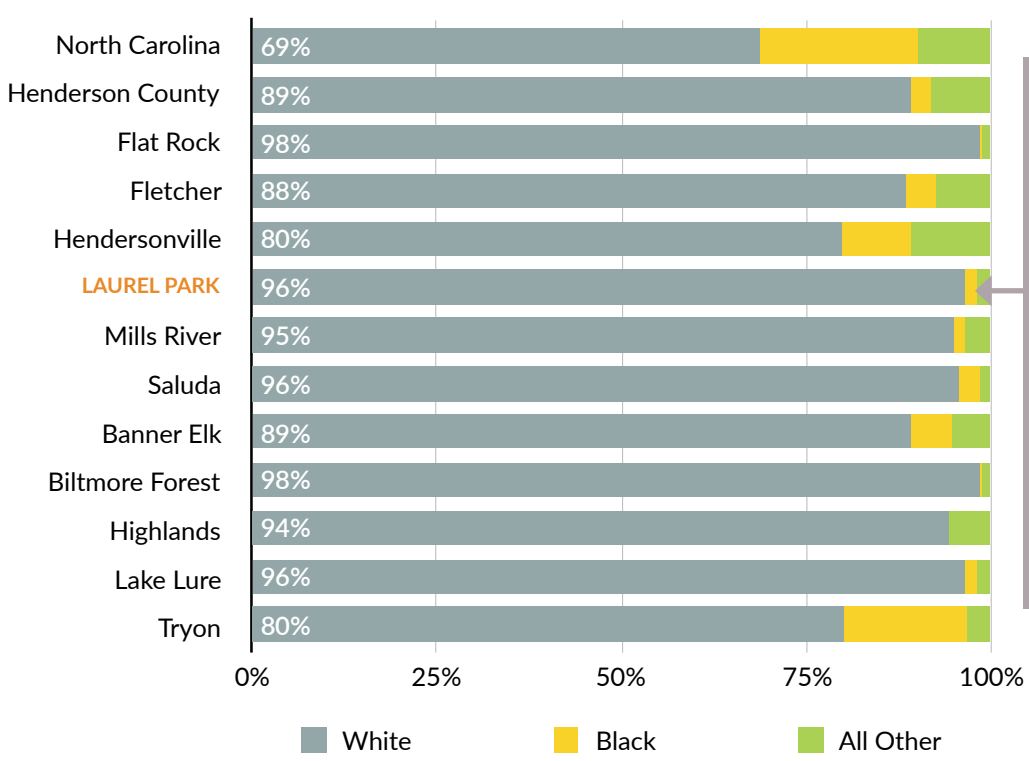


Henderson Co. is more diverse than most WNC counties and it has the highest Hispanic population.

Source: US Census

E

Racial Composition



"Millennials are the biggest generation – and they're surprisingly diverse. The millennial generation is already the largest in the U.S. No new millennials are being born – but the generation continues to grow because of immigration."

Source: BloombergView, Millennials



CHAPTER THREE: RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Recreation and Cultural Resources chapter identifies local resources, describes why they are significant and looks to provide the policies, recommendations, and tools to plan for the preservation, protection, and enhancement of those resources. Laurel Park is a community that preserves its past and values cultural enrichment opportunities for its residents and visitors. The town and its residents recognize that the Laurel Park story is a key component to the town's character and appeal.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. North Carolina's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) evaluates historic sites through a nomination process for list eligibility. Listed in 2010, the Singletary-Reese-Robinson House is Laurel Park's only property on the National Register. According to the nomination submitted to SHPO, this private residence built in 1912 qualified for the Register due to its Rustic Revival architectural style.

According to the Laurel Park Parks and Greenways Comprehensive Long Term Plan, SHPO has related that other historically significant properties in Laurel Park may be eligible for the National Register. The P&G Plan lists these properties as Crystal Spring, Apple House, Mount Crystal Baptist Church, and the Old Hendersonville Reservoir.

Figure 3-1: Singletary-Reese-Robinson House



The Singletary-Reese-Robinson House is Laurel Park's only property on the National Register. Other sites to consider include: Crystal Spring, Apple House, Mount Crystal Baptist Church, and the Old Hendersonville Reservoir.

Source: RSH House Nomination Package



Historical Markers

While there is only one building on the National Register of Historic Places in Laurel Park, there are many historic locations significant to the town's story. The Laurel Park Civic Association (LPCA), working with the town, has an ongoing project to place historic markers at these locations to offer residents and visitors the opportunity to learn about Laurel Park's history. As of spring 2016, LPCA and the town have installed eleven signs and have plans for fifteen additional markers.

Currently, the historical markers lack unity. They are placed throughout the town and one has to happen upon them. The recommendations contain some ideas on low-cost tools LPCA and the Town can implement to further tell Laurel Park's story, unify the Marker system, and make it accessible to more visitors.



Figure 3-2: Jump Off Rock Historic Marker



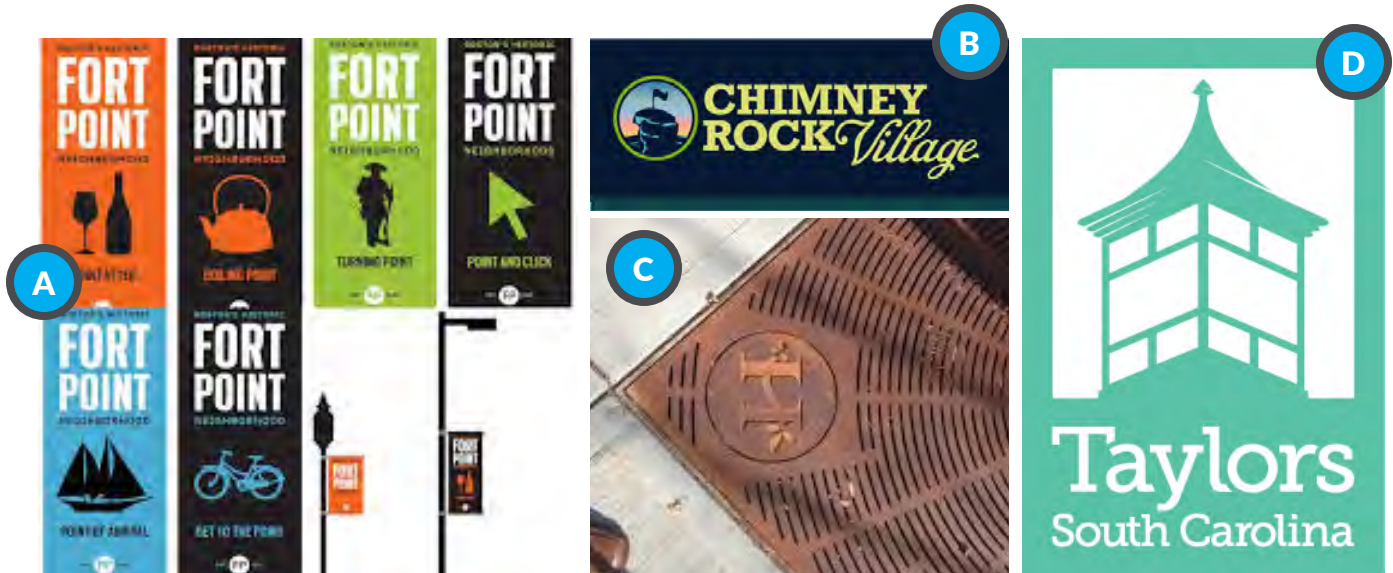
Figure 3-3: Listing of Historic Markers

Laurel Park Civic Association Historical Markers	
Complete	Planned
Woodlawn	Rhododendron Lake Pavilion
Hendersonville Reservoir/Cascades	The Dummy Line
Echo Inn	CCC Rock Wall
Crystal Spring	W.A. Smith's Rock Quarry
Jump Off Rock	Rainbow Lake
The Swiss Railway	High Peak Tower
Rhododendron Lake	Ball Field/Fairgrounds
The Canal	Laurel Park Street Railway
Fleetwood Hotel	"Laurel Park" Lettered Sign
	Town of Laurel Park, Inc.
	W.A. Smith - Founder of Laurel Park
	Hendersonville Country Club
	Ransier Pony Farm
	Poplar Lodge
	Horseshoe Springs



Community Branding

Laurel Park is a hidden gem - many people are not aware of what the town has to offer, where its boundaries lie, or the town's story. Marketing and branding is a way to help Laurel Park stand out. A complete marketing and branding plan identifies strategies to define the town through logos, signs, promotional materials, and community identification. The images below highlight various town branding efforts.



A: Banner themes from Fort Point (Boston), B: Town Logo for Chimney Rock, NC, C: Tree Grate with Hendersonville's logo, D: Town Logo for Taylors, SC.

Recreation Resources

For a town of its size, Laurel Park has a substantial park system; the town’s recreation offerings stand to be one of the its most attractive features. In addition to what exists, there are opportunities to expand Laurel Park’s recreation system. Strategies from the Parks & Greenways (P&G) Plan (see Map 3-1 at the end of this chapter) include:

- Make use of the suitable “unknown owner” and vacant parcels to create additional pocket parks and opportunities for passive recreation. Unknown owner parcels are small parcels that resulted from the chaotic land sales in the mid-1920s. According to the P&G Plan, “The Parks and Greenways Advisory Board has thoroughly studied these properties and recommends that the town consider acquiring some of these unknown parcels.” The P&G plan also recommends adding the small town-owned but vacant parcels to the pocket park system.
- Make use of the unopened platted (shown on a recorded deed) roads to build connections in the planned Laurel Park Walking Trail network.

While not a formal recreation resource, Laurel Park Highway is a popular route for bicyclists, and signing of the route should be considered. Some in the community believe cycling on the town’s curvy roads is unsafe. Many mountain towns struggle with this perceived conflict and have developed solutions through driver and bicyclist education and enforcement strategies or the use of bicyclist awareness signage. Laurel Park can explore options through the NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant received in 2016.

The network of Laurel Park’s recreation resources do not extend to the areas north of Brevard Road. Additionally, according to the P&G Plan recreation map, there are no plans for expanding recreation resources to these areas. Town leaders should evaluate recreation connections and amenities in the outlying areas and areas that may become part of Laurel Park in the future.

Figure 3-4: Recreation Resources

Town of Laurel Park Recreation Resources	
Existing Resources	Planned Resources
Jump Off Rock & Trails	Unknown Owner Parcels
Laurel Green & Little Laurel Green	Unopened Roads
Crystal Springs	Ecusta Trail
Rhododendron Lake Nature Park	Laurel Park Trail System
Lake Drive Pocket Park	Vacant Parcels (Deerwood &
Roberts Drive Pocket Park	Spruce Pine Lane/ Hydrangea Dr.)
LPCA Benches Throughout Town (25)	Rhododendron Lake Nature Park

Map 3-2: Blue Ridge Bicycle Club "Jump Off Rock" Route

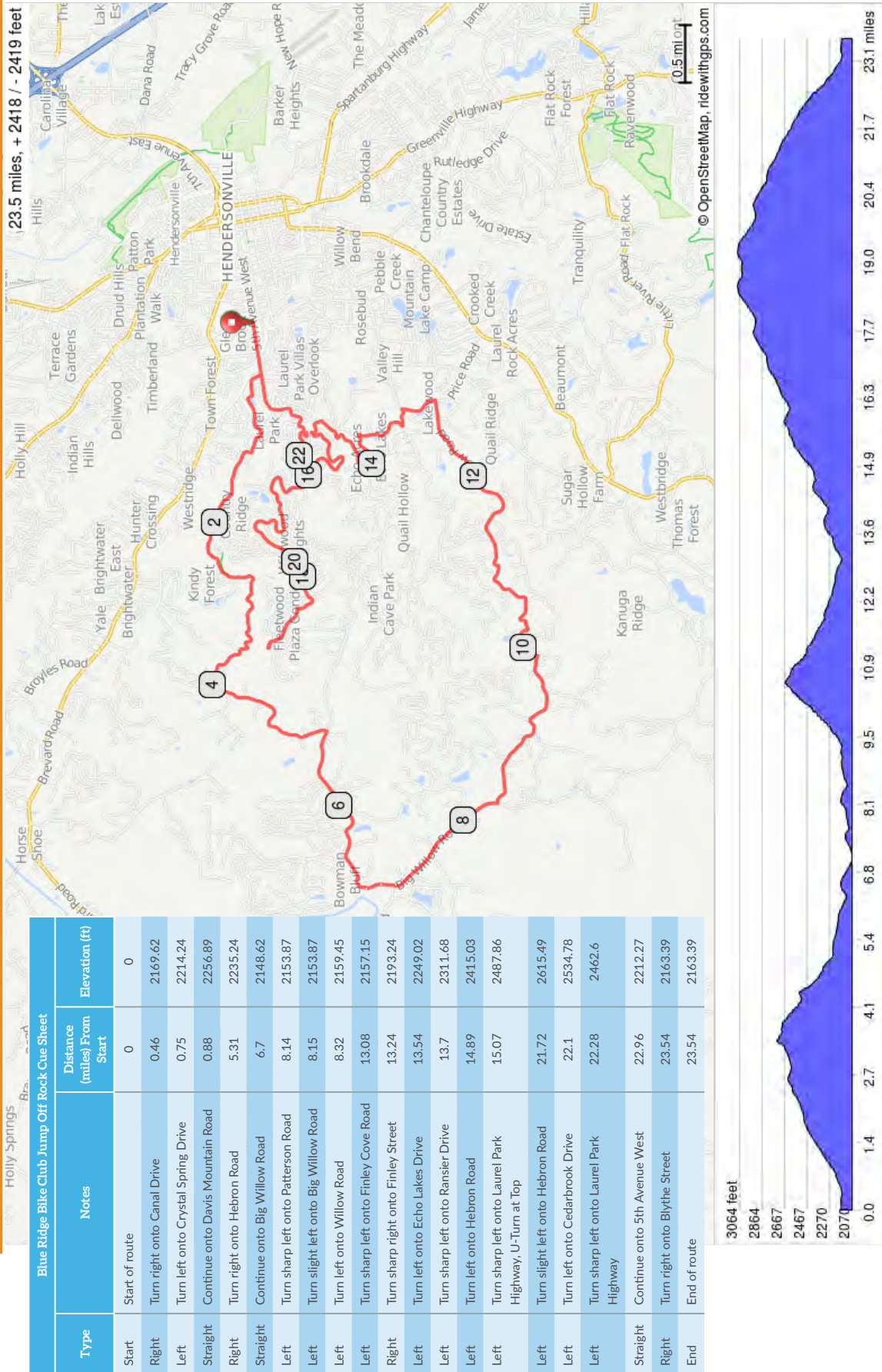
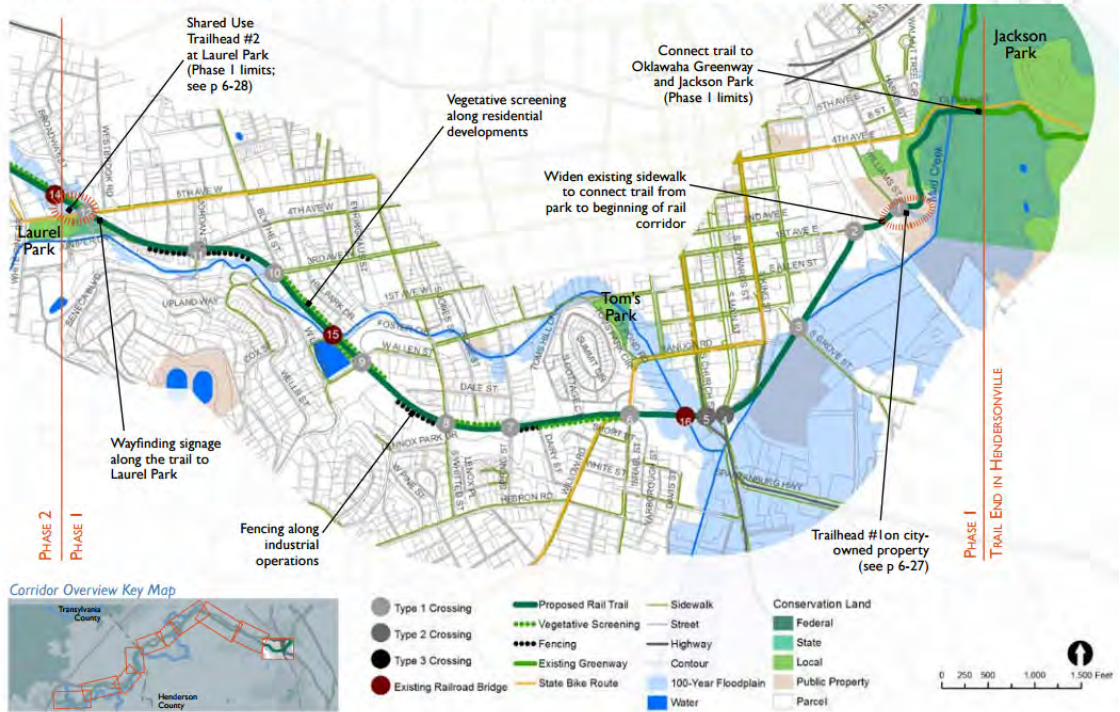


Figure 3-5: Ecusta Trail Phase 1

**Ecusta Rail Trail Planning Study and Economic Impact Analysis
Phase 1 Concept Plan: Jackson Park to Laurel Green**

Figure 6.3 – Henderson County Phase I: Oklawaha Greenway in Jackson Park to Proposed Shared-Use Trailhead at Laurel Park



Section Length: 2.36 Miles 2011 Estimated Cost: \$ 2,451,027

Ecusta Trail

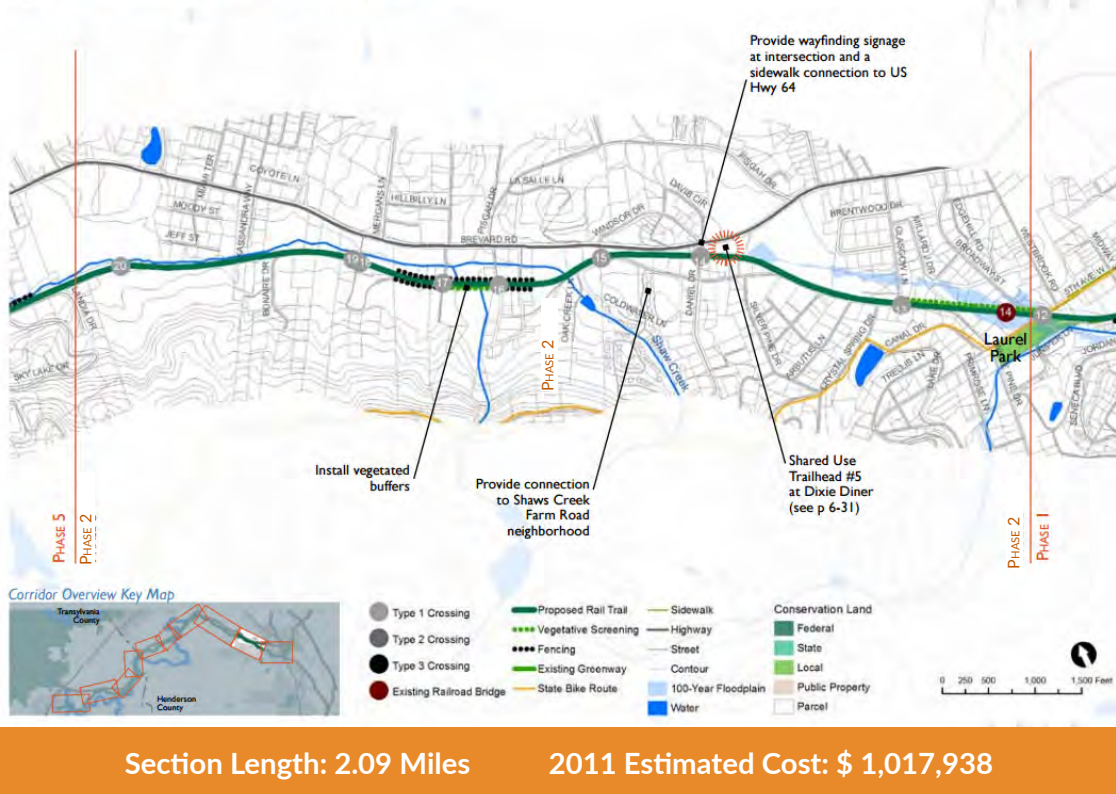
The most significant recreation, and overall town development, project in Laurel Park’s future is the potential Ecusta Rail Trail. In 2011, the City of Hendersonville initiated the Ecusta Rail Trail Planning Study and Economic Impact Analysis (ERTS) to determine the feasibility of converting the existing inactive rail corridor into a paved shared-use trail. NCDOT, the City of Hendersonville, City of Brevard, Town of Laurel Park, Henderson County Travel and Tourism, and Friends of the Ecusta Trail provided funding for the Study, which evaluated options for the 20-mile rail line that begins in Hendersonville and ends in Brevard.

Twelve of the line’s miles are in Henderson County, including the 2.3-mile Phase I section that begins at Jackson Park in Hendersonville and ends at Laurel Green. The Phase 2 section picks up at Laurel Green and follows the rail line for two miles to just east of Sky Lake Drive.

Figure 3-6: Ecusta Trail Phase 2

**Ecusta Rail Trail Planning Study and Economic Impact Analysis
Phase 2 Concept Plan: Laurel Green to East of Sky Lake Drive**

Figure 6.5 – Henderson County Phase 3: Laurel Park to Sky Lake Drive



Section Length: 2.09 Miles 2011 Estimated Cost: \$ 1,017,938

The ERTS projects the Rail Trail will have a \$42 million one-time economic impact (trail construction) followed by a \$9.36 million annual benefit to the Ecusta Trail region. It is not possible to determine what portion of and how the annual economic impact will benefit Laurel Park. However, with Laurel Park’s location in the middle of the Trail’s first 4.5 miles, it is reasonable to believe that it will be noteworthy.

The Future Land Use section of the Town of a Mountain Plan provides options that will prepare the Town for the future Rail Trail. Before land use changes are needed, Laurel Park leaders need to continue working with regional stakeholders for the project to succeed.



Recreation & Culture Goals

Below are the implementation goals for this chapter. The Implementation Matrix in Chapter 8 details each goal's corresponding actions and strategies.

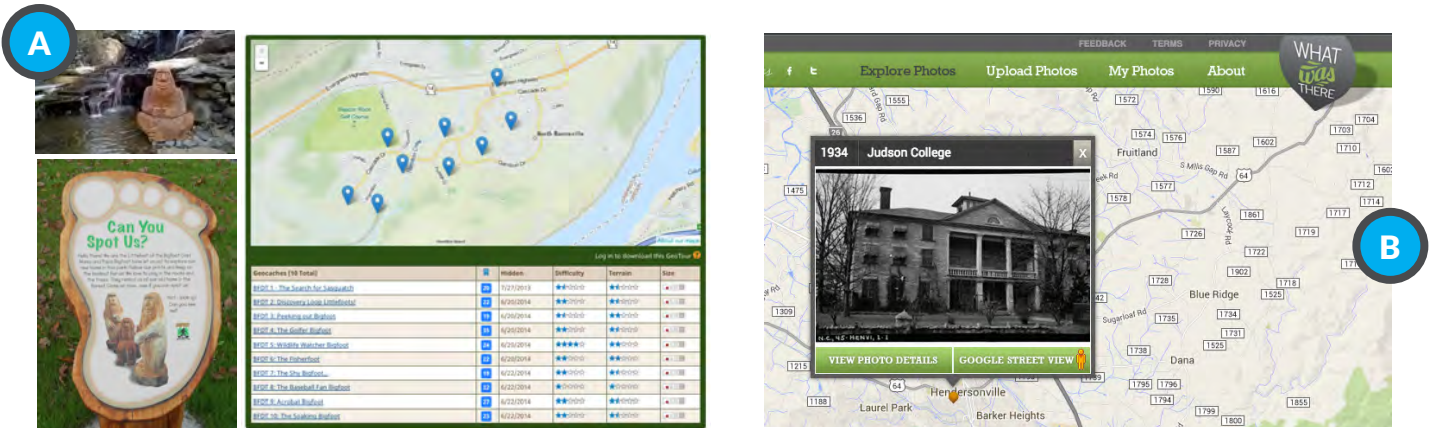


Recreation & Cultural Resources

- Ecusta Trail is an economic driver in Laurel Park.
- Laurel Park's recreation resources are connected through story-telling and connections.
- Laurel Park has a distinct brand and identity.



Figure 3-7: Simple Tools for Storytelling and Connections



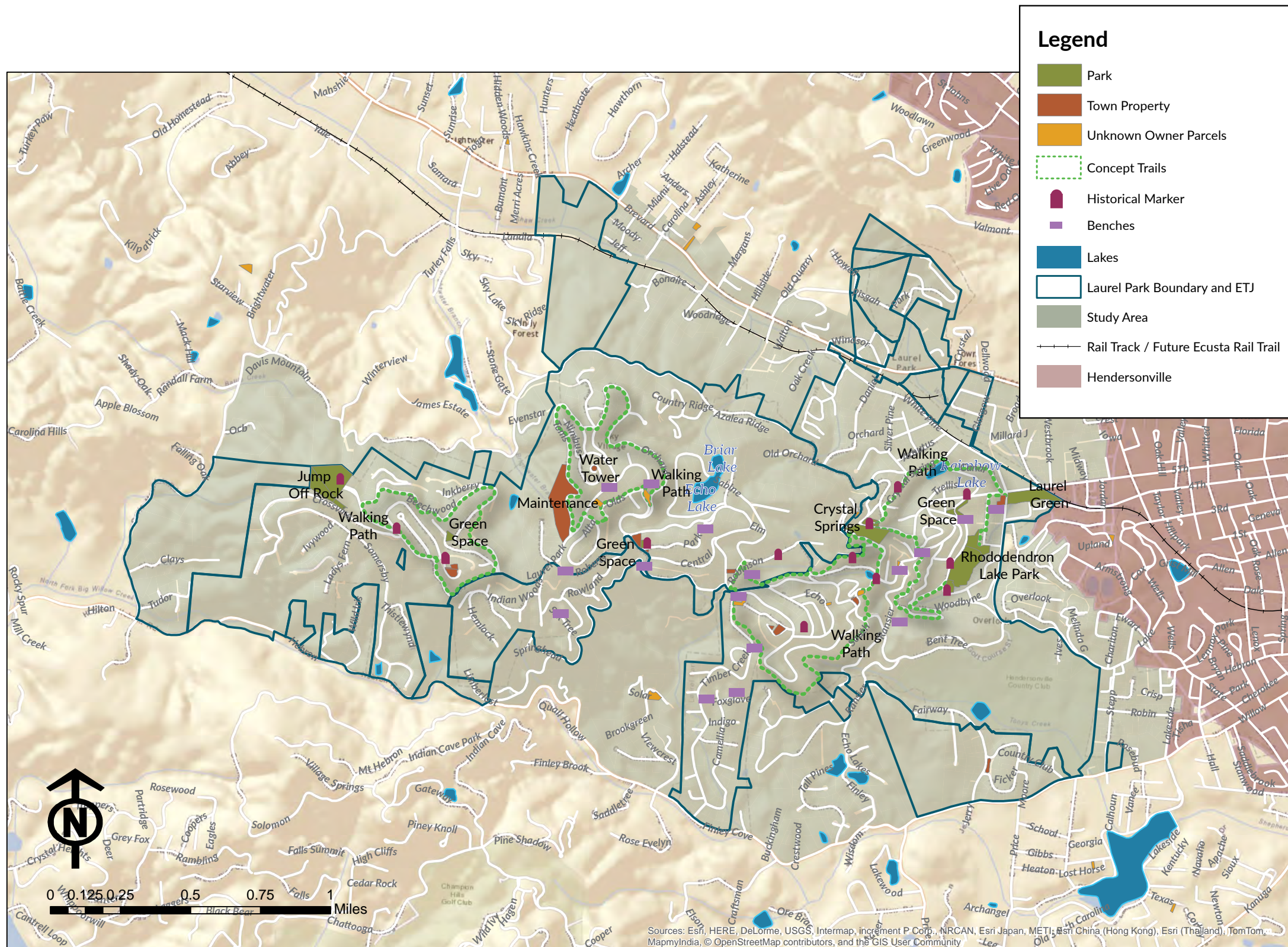
A few low-cost options to tell Laurel Park's story and provide an activity that is relevant to a younger population.

A: Bigfoot Discovery Trail Geocache Tour in North Booneville, Washington.

B: WhatWasThere.com is a way to learn about the buildings or features that were once at a location.

C: A StoryMap, similar to this, could be created to provide walking or driving directions with pictures and information highlighted along the way.

Map 3-1: Parks & Greenway Map from Master Plan



Map Adapted from the April 2015 Town Parks & Greenways Map produced by WGLA



CHAPTER FOUR: NATURAL & ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This chapter provides an inventory of the significant natural resource areas such as water, soils, slopes, flood plains and other natural resources. This chapter relies primarily on maps to summarize Laurel Park’s natural environment and identifies the benefits and constraints of these resources as they relate to development.

Overview & Topography

Laurel Park sits in the French Broad River Basin at the southern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains, on and between Jump Off Mountain and Long John Mountain. Laurel Park truly is a Town on the Mountain; its elevation ranges from 2,150 feet at Wash Creek near the Hendersonville Country Club to 3,131 at its highest point in the Fleetwood development on Jump Off Mountain. Land along the railroad corridor following Shaw’s Creek and Brevard Road (US 64) and Wash Creek is the flattest and is generally most suitable for development, although some areas are prone to flooding and are therefore less suitable for development. Development becomes less suitable the farther up the mountain one goes.



Figure 4-1: Highest Point in Laurel Park



Geology

According to the NC Geological Survey, the rock formation underpinning Laurel Park is Henderson Gneiss, a type of granite that is common throughout Henderson County and Transylvania County. Laurel Park's most prominent geologic landscape feature, Jump Off Rock, is a visible example of Henderson Gneiss. A map illustrating Laurel Park's underlying geologic formation is not provided, nor is it considered in the suitability analysis since there are no significant changes in geology.

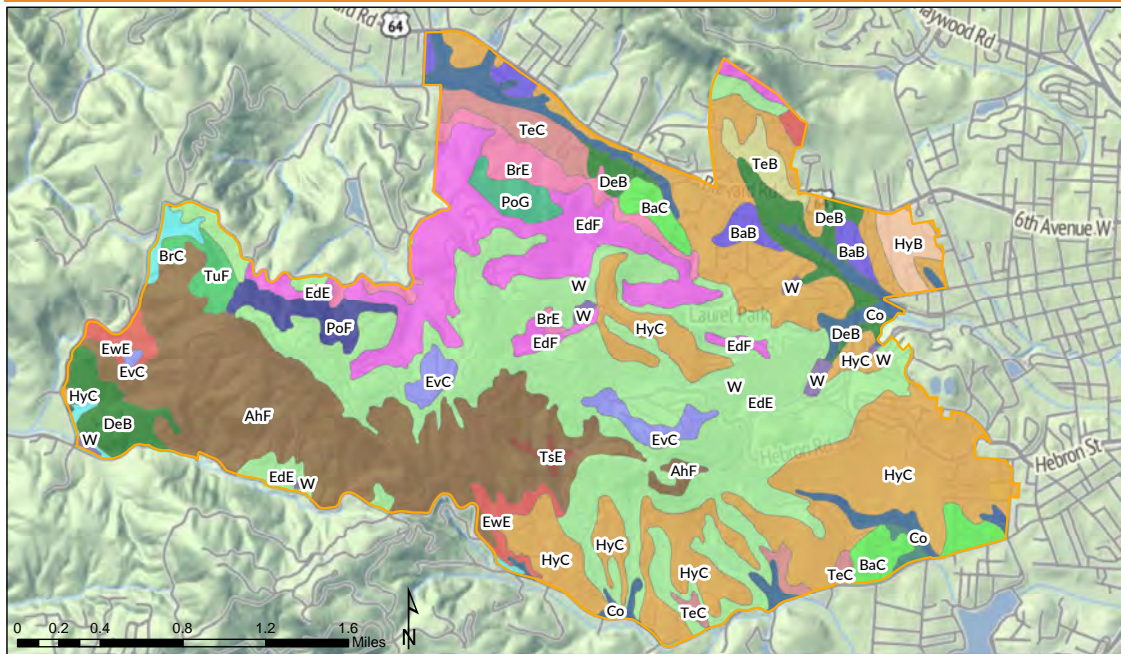
Development Implications: Other than its relationship to soils and slope, Laurel Park's geology does not pose notable development constraints.

Soil Characteristics

A soil survey is a record of the many types of soils in a county. The description for each soil contains information related to the soil's location and suitability for crops and development. The Henderson County soil survey lists 13 soil types with varying degrees of development suitability.

Development Implications. Soil suitability is a key factor in determining the safest and most cost-effective locations for new development. Problems that limit development on certain soils include poor drainage, erosion, thin soils on mountainsides, and soils that fail percolation tests for septic systems.

Map 4-1: Laurel Park Soils



Legend

Study Area	BrC	DeB	EnB	Ha	PoF	To	W
AhF	BrE	EdC	EvC	HyB	PoG	TsC	
BaB	Co	EdE	EwE	HyC	TeB	TsE	
BaC	Cu	EdF	EwF	HyE	TeC	TuF	

Soil Descriptions Included in Appendix

The density of residential development, particularly in areas lacking public sewer, should be closely related to soil characteristics, which is reflected in the suitability analysis.

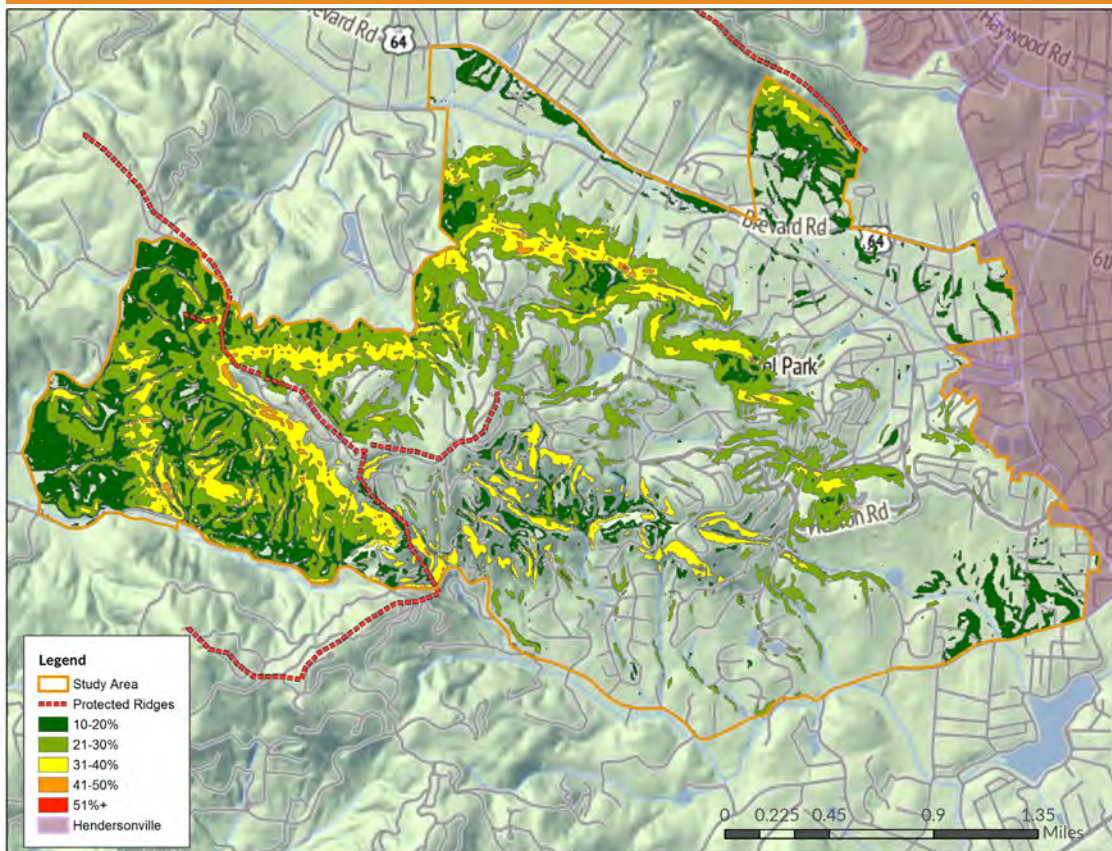
Protected Ridges and Steep Slopes

Across the mountainous region of North Carolina, there is very little mandatory regulation applicable to development on mountain slopes and ridges. The only universally applied regulation is the [Mountain Ridge Protection Act](#) (NC G.S. 113A- 205), which the North Carolina State Legislature passed in 1983 in response to a development built on top of the ridge of Little Sugar Top Mountain in Avery County. The Act protects ridges above 3,000 feet or which are 500 feet above the adjacent valley floor from construction of tall buildings, as defined by the statute. Under the Act's protections, it is unlikely that Fleetwood Hotel would be allowed if it was proposed today. Protected ridges in or near Laurel Park include the Jump Off Mountain ridge and the Hebron Mountain ridge, and the Long John Mountain ridge, the eastern end of which is in the study area.

The Mountain Ridge Protection Act does not address slope or steepness. There is not a universally accepted definition of a steep slope in North Carolina, nor is there a state law or local ordinance in place to regulate steep slope development in Laurel Park. [Henderson County's Land Development Code](#) defines steep slopes as, "A slope greater than 25 percent."



Map 4-2: Protected Ridges and Slopes Greater than 10%



Development Implications: While development challenges can begin on slopes as low as 15% ([Mountain Ridge and Steep Slope Protection Strategies](#)), Henderson County identifies a steep slope as 25% and greater. Development on slopes is problematic due to thin soils and soils that are poorly suited for septic systems, as identified in the soils section of this chapter. Steep slopes are more susceptible to landslides; Henderson County is one of the few counties in NC to have a complete set of [landslide hazard maps](#) produced by the NC Geologic Survey. These maps document slope movement and landslide occurrence -- Laurel Park has evidence of both. The maps also identify hazard areas that are more likely to experience a landslide based on a set of predictive factors; Laurel Park has areas with a moderate to high hazard ranking. The final item to note is access to general services (public water, broadband) and emergency vehicle accessibility and maneuverability (fire, EMS). The Valley Hill Fire Department purchases equipment with an understanding of Laurel Park's challenging terrain. Steep slopes and mountain ridges are considered in the development suitability analysis.

Water Supply Watershed IV-Protected Area

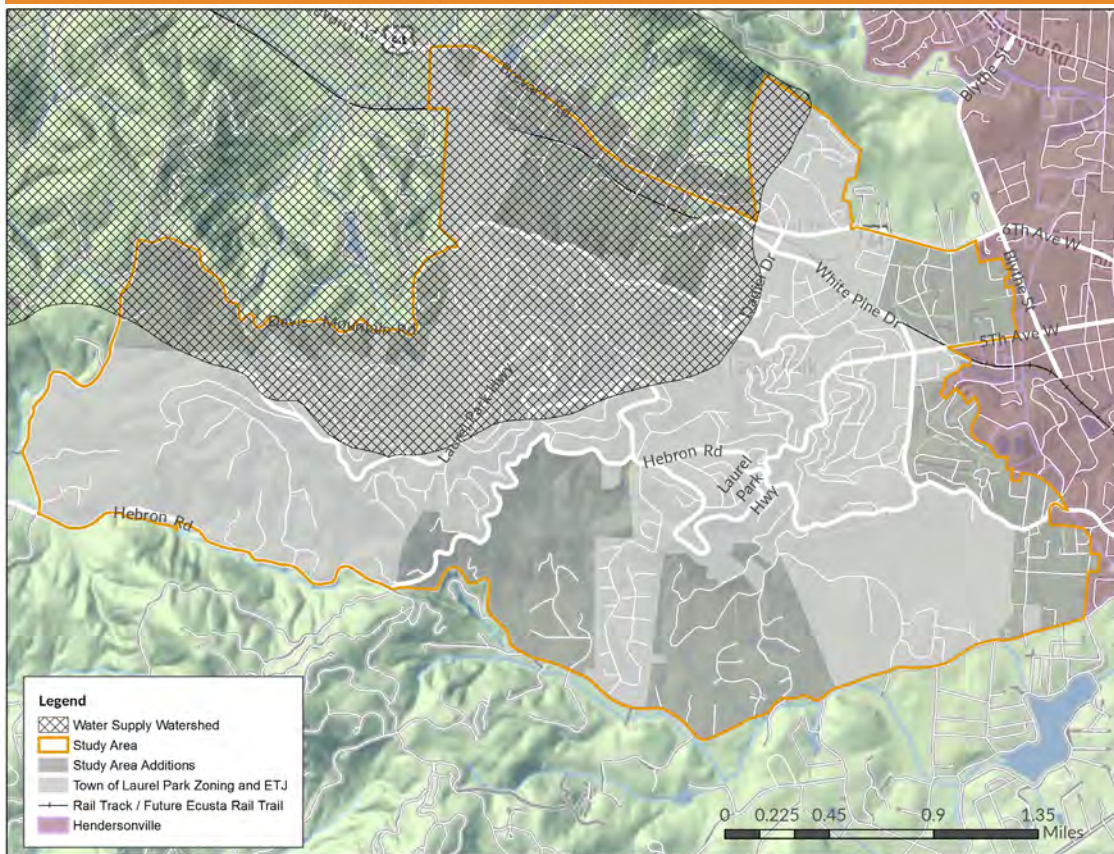
A water supply watershed (WSWS) is an area that feeds a public water system. The NC Department of Environmental Quality classifies the Upper French Broad River Watershed, partially located in Laurel Park, as a WS-IV watershed. A WS-IV protects waters used as water supply for drinking, culinary, or food processing purposes.

Development Implications: Development in this area is subject to the Watershed Overlay District section of the Laurel Park Zoning Ordinance. The overlay district takes effect when a subdivision or development is proposed in the area. The Ordinance has restrictions and requirements related to density, buffers, and others. To avoid intense land use, the Overlay District sets density restrictions; two dwelling units per acre for single family residential or a maximum of 24% built-upon area for all other residential and non-residential development. A maximum of three dwelling units per acre or 36% built-upon area is allowed for projects without a curb and gutter street system. The Ordinance also allows for cluster development and requires buffer areas. The watershed area is considered in the development suitability analysis.

The Watershed Overlay District does not allow for commercial development. After discussions related to Laurel Park's future land use pattern, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) recommended an ordinance amendment to allow for small scale commercial and business opportunity; the recommendation is addressed in the Land Use section of this document.



Map 4-3: Upper French Broad WSWS / LP Watershed Overlay District



Flood Hazard Areas

The Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) designates floodplain areas through its Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) program that is administered by the [NC Division of Emergency Management](#). A FIRM illustrates the extent of flood hazards in a community by depicting areas at risk for flooding and are used to make flood insurance available to property owners in flood prone areas. Henderson County's most recent FIRMs took effect in 2008. A floodplain is any location that has a fairly good chance of flooding. While every water body can flood, FEMA does not consider every water body to have a flooding potential that would risk life or property damage. According to the National Flood Insurance Program, "Some parts of floodplains may experience frequent flooding while others are only affected by severe storms. However, areas directly outside of these high-risk areas may also find themselves at considerable risk." Development within floodplains is strongly discouraged to prevent life and property damage. Following is a summary of floodplain areas:

- 100-Year Floodplain (Also known as Special Flood Hazard Area or SFHA): The 100-year floodplain areas have at least a 1% annual chance of flooding, which equates to a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. All homeowners in these areas with mortgages from federally regulated or insured lenders are required to buy flood insurance.
- 500-Year Floodplain (Also known as moderate-to-low risk areas or Non-Special Flood Hazard Area or NSFHA): In moderate-to-low risk areas, the risk of being flooded is reduced, but not completely removed. These areas are outside the 1% annual flood-risk floodplain areas, so flood insurance isn't required for federally regulated or insured lenders, but it is recommended for all property owners and renters as there is still a 0.2% annual risk.

The low-lying land adjacent to Wash Creek, the Rhododendron Lake Nature Park area, and the Golf Course pond area are the only portions of the study area in a 100-year floodplain. Just outside of town, further west on Brevard Road is a large floodplain following Shaw's Creek. Echo/Briar Lakes and Rainbow Lake are the only areas in the 500-year flood category that are not adjacent to a 100-year floodplain.

Development Implications: Development within floodplains is strongly discouraged to prevent property damage. However, when building in a



Map 4-4: Laurel Park Special Flood Hazard Areas

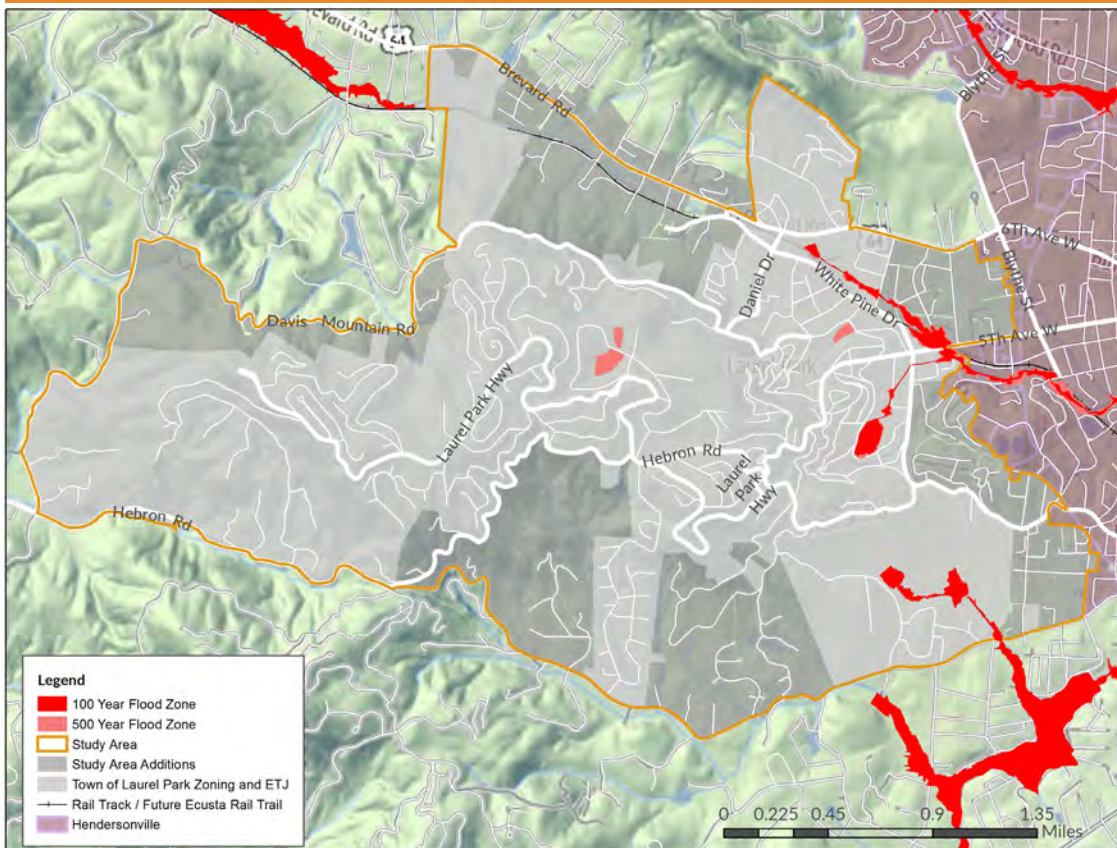
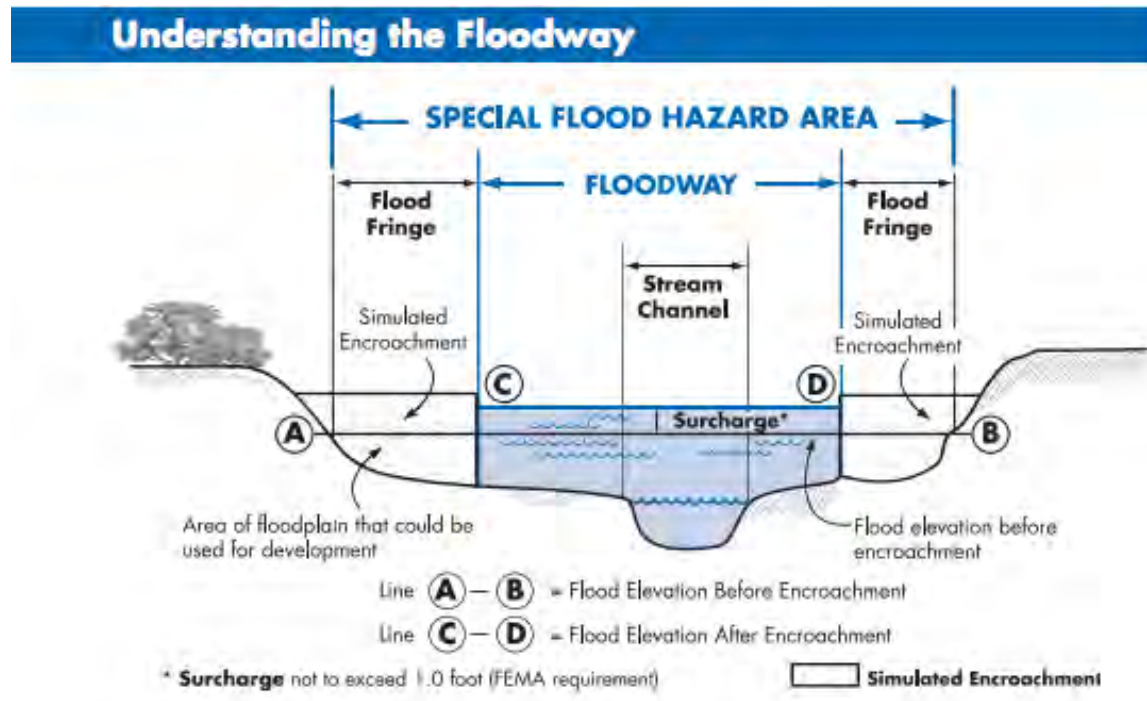


Figure 4-2: Understanding the Floodway



designated Special Flood Hazard Area, the builder must apply for a Floodplain Development Permit and will be required to submit a FEMA Elevation Certificate. Henderson County's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance governs Special Flood Hazard Area development on behalf of Laurel Park. It is important to note that FIRM mapped flood zones are not the only places that can flood. All property owners are advised to proceed with caution when developing near rivers, creeks, and streams. The development suitability analysis considers flood prone areas.

Wooded Areas

Laurel Park's wooded areas are an important natural resource for several reasons. Vegetative cover contributes organic matter to the soils and is an important part of the recycling of nutrients that help hold soils in place. Disturbing vegetative cover can result in an increased water runoff, increased soil erosion and sedimentation of waterways, and decreased water quality.

Wooded areas provide the additional benefits of open space, recreational opportunities, scenic value and wildlife habitat. They are an important part of Laurel Park's landscape, contributing to its character and providing buffer zones that allow transitions between incompatible land uses and protect visual quality.

The [2011 National Land Cover Database](#) (NLCD) is a record of what covers land - the type and intensity of development, natural land (rocks, sand), forest



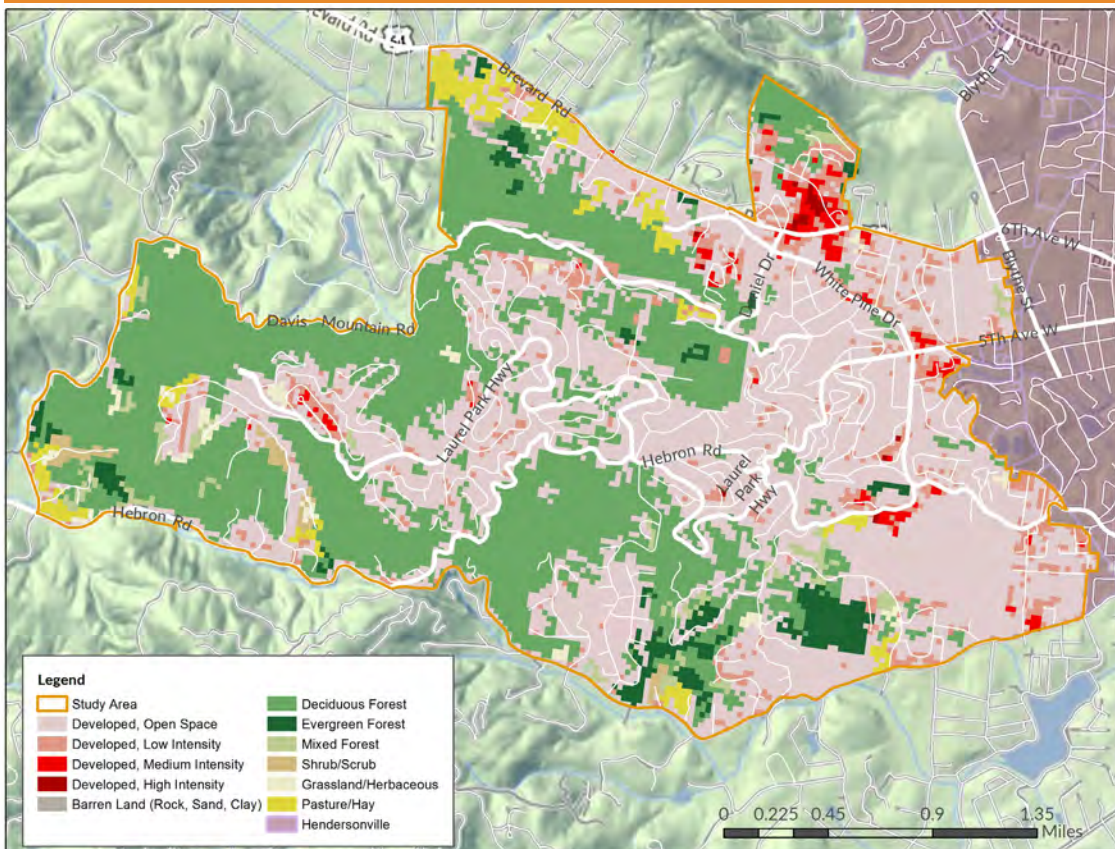
lands, crops, etc. NLCD classifies much of Laurel Park’s land as Developed, Open Space (47%) and Deciduous Forest (36%). Developed, Open Space are areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. This figure is not surprising given the Town’s large lot sizes. This category also captures the Country Club’s golf course. The NLCD defines Deciduous Forests as, “areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species shed foliage simultaneously in response to seasonal change.”

It is important to Laurel Park residents for the town to retain its wooded feel. Other than the Town’s Zoning Ordinance standards related to buffers and landscape plans, the Town does not have a mechanism in place, such as a Tree Protection Ordinance, to replace and maintain vegetation designed to protect environmental quality or land use separation.

Given the important relationships between wooded areas, wildlife, soil erosion, and water quality, Laurel Park should consider ordinance changes related to tree protection and maintenance, planting buffers, and native plant usage. Additionally, a tree protection ordinance dovetails with invasive species management if it requires planting of native trees and plants. [The International Society of Arborists](#) provides a description of three common tree ordinances that Laurel Park may consider:



Map 4-5: Laurel Park Land Use Land Cover



- Street tree ordinances primarily cover the planting and removal of trees within public rights-of-way. They often contain provisions governing maintenance or removal of private trees which pose a hazard to the traveling public. Also included in this category are ordinances with tree planting requirements, such as those requiring tree planting in parking lots.
- Tree protection ordinances are primarily directed at providing protection for native trees or trees with historical significance. They usually require that a permit be obtained before protected trees can be removed, encroached upon, or in some cases, pruned.
- View ordinances are designed to help resolve conflicts between property owners that result when trees block views or sunlight.

Invasive Species

The impact of invasive species on Laurel Park's natural environment is a concern. Oriental bittersweet and kudzu are the most damaging of the species; others include Chinese privet and English ivy. Such species displace native species and impact natural communities. Laurel Park attempts to manage invasive species through projects such as the Rhododendron Lake Nature Park restoration, volunteer Town Park workdays, and coordination with the Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy (CMLC). Additionally, CMLC periodically offers Invasive Species Workshops to landowners. Invasive species management requires monitoring and strong partnerships with private property owners. Some towns, such as Weaverville in Buncombe County, have developed management plans to prevent the spread of existing infestations, and promote the use of native plants within the landscape. The plan also offers a menu of control methods appropriate for each type of invasive species.



Figure 4-3: Invasive Species Management Plan

**Invasive Exotic
Plant Management Plan**
For
The Town of Weaverville, NC



Created by
EQE INOX
Equinox Environmental Consultation & Design, Inc.
February 2014

Sample Strategies from the Weaverville Plant Management Plan:

- Inventory invasive plants on town owned properties
- Hold regular invasive and exotic plant workshops to train private land owners on identification, inventory and control.
- Host town-wide inventories / neighborhood invasive plant tours.

Source: http://www.weavervillenc.org/FS/CO/2973/IE_Plan.pdf

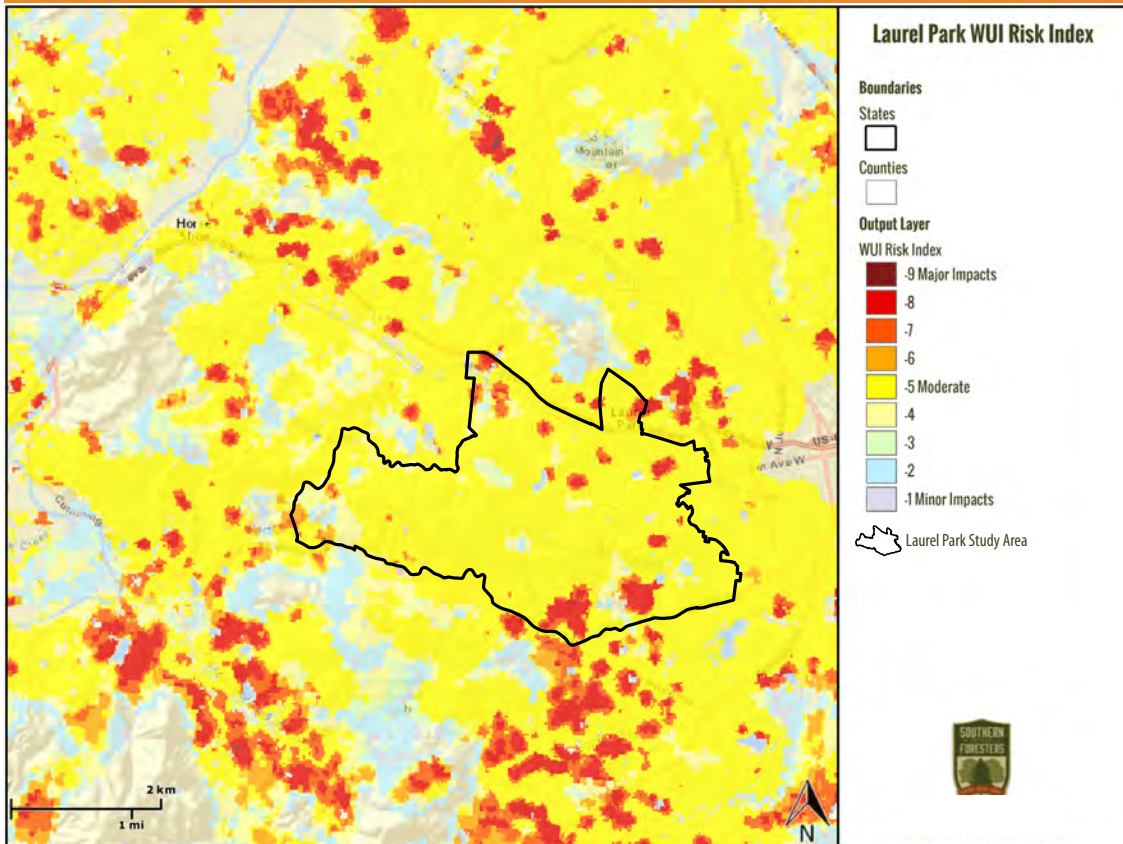
Wildfire Risk

Most mountain communities in Western North Carolina are at some level of wildfire risk. The Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) is the area where human development mixes with or is adjacent to natural areas. The WUI is the area where it is likely that a wildland fire will reach beyond natural fuels, such as trees and brush, to habitated areas and homes.

Laurel Park's proximity to DuPont State Forest makes it eligible for the NC Forest Service's [Firewise Program](#). A Firewise plan is underway at the time of this Plan's development. North Carolina forest rangers surveyed factors in the town such as roads, south facing slopes, hydrants, and the types of homes. Results revealed that the town has a critical ranking, the second highest rating level, and the Rangers identified strategies to mitigate fire hazards. The program also provides fire risk reduction information and tools to private property owners. A sample of the tools available to property owners includes: the use of Firewise landscaping, fire-resistant native vegetation, Firewise construction materials, fire-free space surrounding the structure, stone and/or other non-flammable building components for walkways and driveways, and thinned vegetation near the home.



Map 4-6 Laurel Park WUI Risk Index

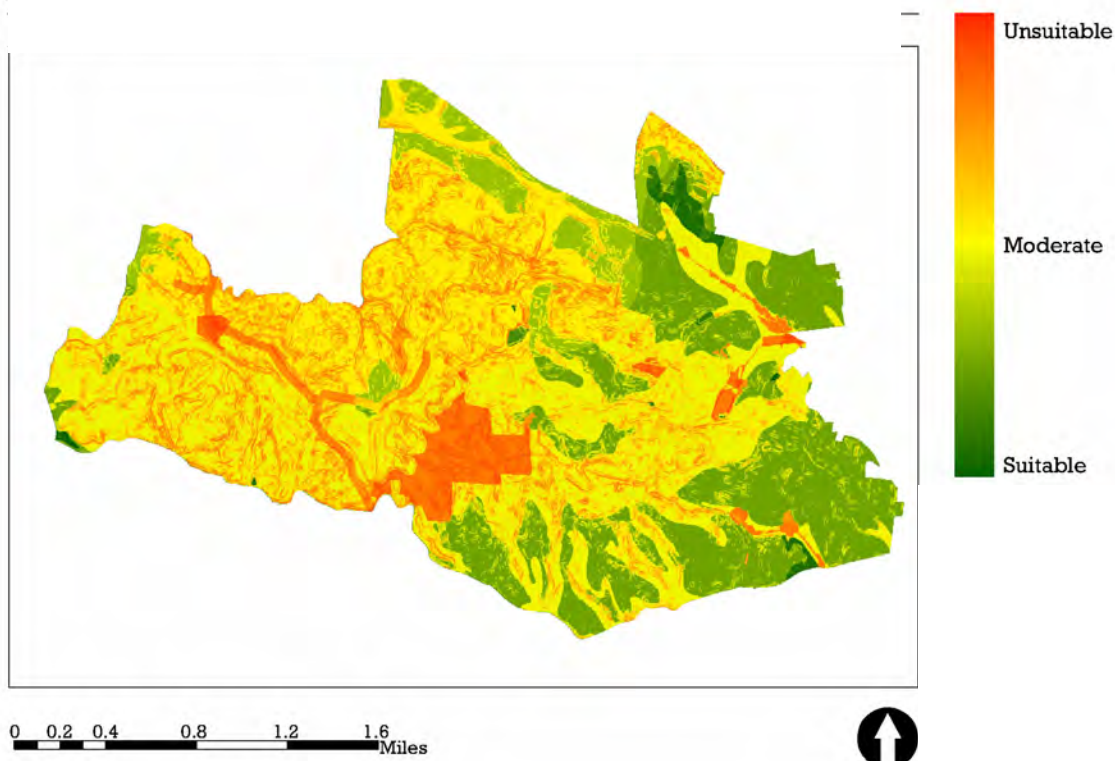


Development Suitability

Laurel Park has a number of natural features that constrain development. The earlier maps in this chapter consider the development constraints of each feature individually. The Development Constraint map overlays (combines) constrained areas that include floodways, slopes, parks and other town owned land, soils, conservation easements, the water supply watershed, protected ridges, and stream buffers.

Additionally, each feature has an associated ranking scale to quantify the level of constraint. For example, when ranking steep slopes, lands with a modest slope received a low score whereas very steep slopes receive the highest ranking. On the map, the lands with the most constraints are shaded red and the least constricted is shaded in green. The map reveals that most land in Laurel Park has some level of constraint. This map guides future land use recommendations in Chapter 7.

Map 4-7: Laurel Park Development Suitability



Natural & Ecological Resources Goals

Below are the implementation goals for this chapter. The Implementation Matrix in Chapter 8 details each goal's corresponding actions and strategies.



Natural & Ecological Resources

- New Development Implements Environmentally Sound Practices
- Laurel Park preserves and restores ecological systems.
- Laurel Park has a natural and rural character.



CHAPTER FIVE: PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

One of town government's roles is to provide quality services and facilities that retain and attract residents and employers. This chapter identifies and describes existing town facilities and their related services. The purpose of this chapter is to lay the groundwork for future decisions related to these public facilities and services.

Drinking Water

Figure 5-1: Comparison Water Rates

Town	Cost per 5,000 Gallons (\$)
Woodfin	12.30
Hendersonville	19.22
Rosman	26.25
Hot Springs	26.40
Mars Hill	30.57
Asheville	33.24
Black Mountain	36.02
Montreat	38.15
Weaverville	39.00
Laurel Park	40.65
Biltmore Forest	41.63
Marshall	42.96
Brevard	46.35
Median	38.15

Source: UNC Environmental Finance Center, NC Water and Wastewater Rates Dashboard. <http://www.efc.sog.unc.edu/reslib/item/north-carolina-water-and-wastewater-rates-dashboard#>

The Town of Laurel Park purchases water from the City of Hendersonville to provide service to approximately 60% of Laurel Park's households and three business customers. Laurel Park's system contains eight tanks holding 1,060,000 gallons of water pumped by six stations through approximately 28 miles of lines. About 40% of Laurel Park's households receive water service from the Town of Hendersonville. Few households rely on groundwater wells.

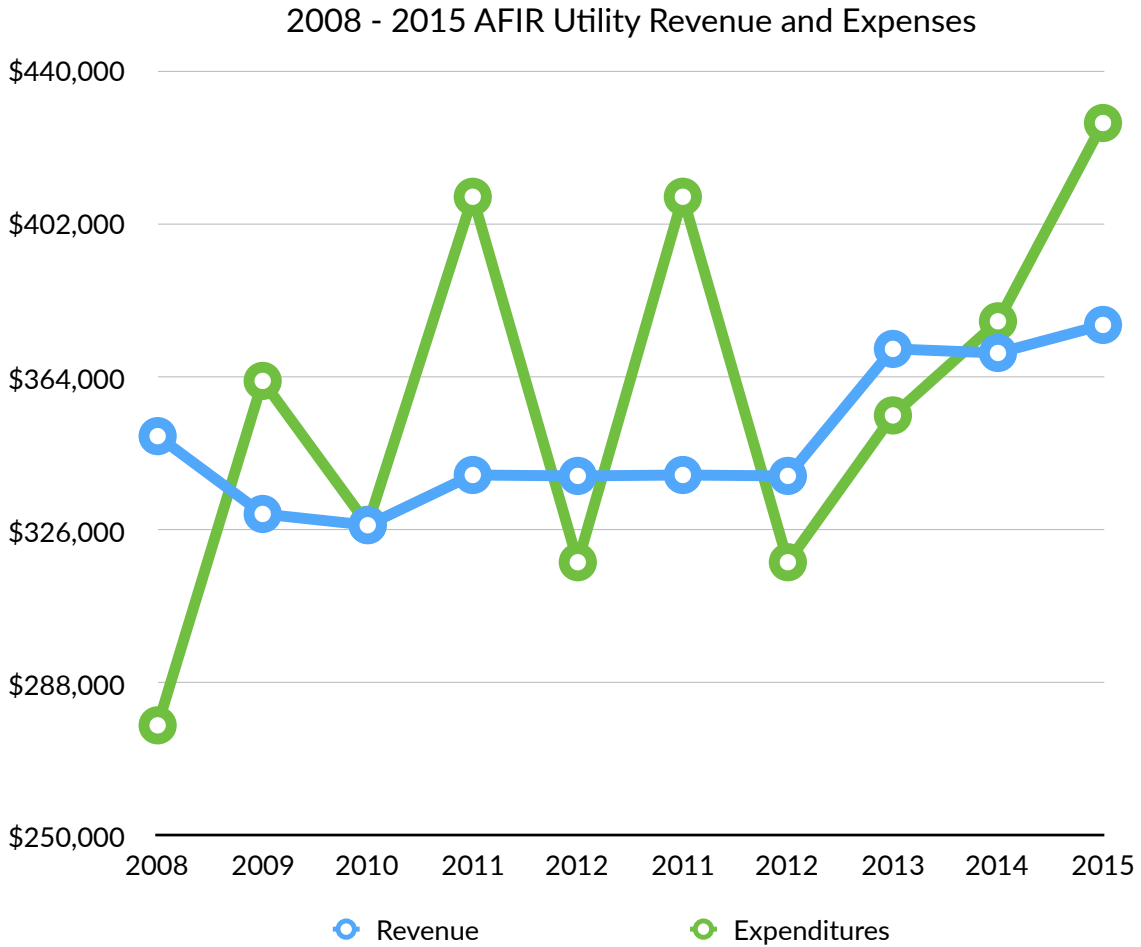
Laurel Park's water system provides quality water – it meets or exceeds NC's basic water quality standards, and the town has not received any recent notices of violation (an indicator of a system fault) from the NC Division of Environmental Quality. Laurel Park does not have system expansion plans, and the available supply is adequate to meet future growth projections and

emergencies. The system's ongoing weakness is water loss through leaking lines, which the Town diligently works to address.

Compared with the 12 other systems in the Upper French Broad Watershed, Laurel Park's water costs are higher than the median of \$38.15 for a water bill at 5,000 gallons. The system's annual expenditures hover around \$350,000 for operations and management (O&M). Like other town expenses, the cost of operating the water system is out-pacing revenues. By 2020 the projected revenues and costs are \$351,235 (revenue) and \$360,144 (expenses).



Figure 5-2: Utility Revenue and Expenses



Local governments in North Carolina are required to submit an Annual Financial Information Report (AFIR) to the NC Treasurer's office. The AFIR collects revenue and expense information that corresponds with a local government's audit report. The data presented in the chart above is from Laurel Park's historical AFIRs. It is important to note that these are audited figures and not actual cash expenditures. The purpose of the chart is to illustrate trends over time.

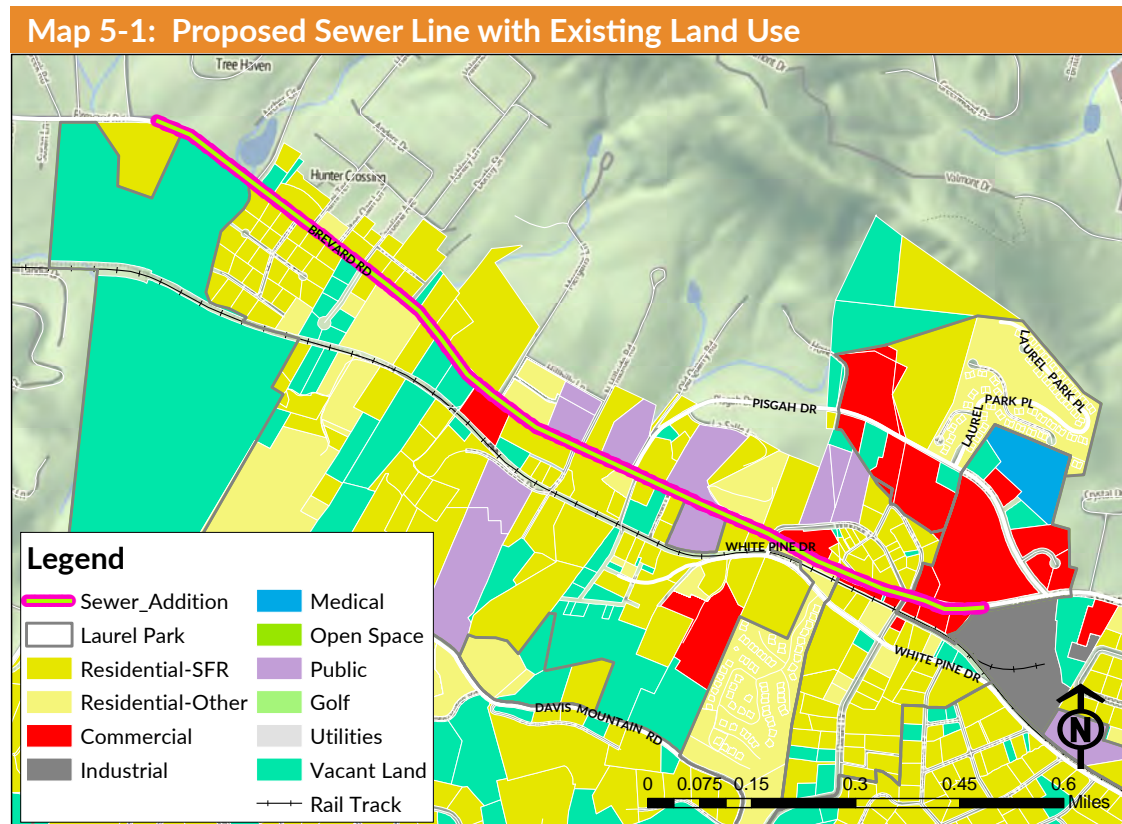
Future Water System Planning

In 2016, Laurel Park applied for a grant for a Merger/Regionalization Feasibility Grant from the NC Division of Environmental Quality. If awarded, the grant will provide funding to explore the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining a stand-alone water system owned and operated by the town compared to consolidation with the City of Hendersonville's water system. In 2015, the City of Hendersonville began a water system study. By the time Hendersonville completes its water study, and Laurel Park completes the Feasibility study, both towns will be in a position to participate in well-informed conversations leading to a water system solution that provides Laurel Park residents with an adequate supply of high-quality water offered at a competitive price through a well-maintained system.

Wastewater

The Town of Laurel Park does not provide wastewater treatment; town residents with public sewer receive service from the City of Hendersonville. Based on past planning efforts, it is not economically feasible for the Town to develop or operate a wastewater treatment system. Additionally, while grants and other incentive-based funding sources to serve residential customers are not readily available, Laurel Park should continue to scan the outside environment as funding sources and priorities change over time.

Funding tied to economic development or job creation, however, is available and may be a financing tool to promote development along Laurel Park’s US 64 corridor. The [Cane Creek Sewer Study](#) (2009) identified the Shaw’s Creek Pump Station and Interceptor as a long-range project to begin in Horse Shoe, west of Laurel Park, to end near Ingles on US 64 where the sewer line from Hendersonville currently ends. As planned, it could be many years before Laurel Park benefits from the Shaw’s Creek Pump Station project as designed. However, Laurel Park, in partnership with the City of Hendersonville, can coordinate and construct slightly less than half of the Shaw’s Creek project. The line, which would begin at the western end of the town boundary, at the 90-acre parcel, would follow US 64 until it ties in with Hendersonville’s existing line. The approximate cost for the entire project in the Cane Creek



Study was \$1 million in 2009. One-half of the project adjusted to 2016 dollars places an approximate \$555,000 price tag on the Laurel Park portion of the line.

The sewer extension should be a partnership between the Town of Laurel Park and the City of Hendersonville. As a first step, Laurel Park and Hendersonville should identify resources to conduct a feasibility study for the sewer line that includes a cost-benefit analysis and determines the numbers and types of users the extension needs for sustainability. After the feasibility details are determined, Laurel Park and Hendersonville should develop an interlocal agreement that identifies how each municipality benefits from the shared infrastructure investment. Whether it is part of the interlocal agreement or a town policy, the Town of Laurel Park should also prepare and adopt a sewer extension policy that requires voluntary annexation in exchange for sewer service.

Stormwater Management

The Town adopted a Stormwater Management Ordinance in 2006. The Ordinance established minimum requirements and procedures to control the adverse impacts associated with increased stormwater drainage. The ordinance requires stormwater management controls that are consistent with the North Carolina Stormwater Permitting System and is intended to minimize effects on water quality. The town's most significant stormwater challenge is managing drainage and its effect on town roads. Managing drainage and repairing the damage is a continuing priority for the town. In the fiscal year 2015-2016, Laurel Park raised its tax rate to increase funds available for road repair and repaving projects and stormwater repair and maintenance projects. With additional funding now available, the town can continue to address stormwater maintenance, repair, and compliance.



Police Protection

Figure 5-3: Comparison Sworn Officers

Sworn Officers Per 1,000 in Population (2013)	
Henderson County	1.6
Fletcher	2.0
Hendersonville	2.9
Laurel Park	3.2
Tryon	4.8
Saluda	5.7
Lake Lure	7.5
Biltmore Forest (BF)	10.3
Highlands (HL)	10.9
Flat Rock	N/A
Mills River	N/A
Median of All	4.8
Median - BF & HL	3.2

Source: NC Department of Justice, Crime in NC 2013 Annual Summary Report. <http://crimereporting.ncdoj.gov/Reports.aspx>

As of this writing, the Laurel Park Police Department employs seven full-time and five part-time reserve officers. Compared to other towns, Laurel Park has fewer sworn officers per capita. However, Biltmore Forest and Highlands have an unusually high number of sworn officers. Minus those two towns, the median is 3.2, which is Laurel Park’s number. As the Town grows, Laurel Park should strive to maintain a police force that is proportional to its population.

The police department’s most pressing capital need is a police department facility that meets the modern needs of the community. The existing police department does not meet the FBI’s Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) minimum standards related

to information and record security. Currently sharing space with town’s administrative office, the police department portion of the office is too small, lacks security features, and does not provide adequate private space for police interviews. A facility and space study should help determine the type and amount of space needed for police department functions.

Fire Protection

Valley Hill Fire & Rescue is composed entirely of paid staff (not volunteers) and provides fire protection for the Town of Laurel Park. Unlike other areas in Henderson County that have a separate volunteer fire department tax, the town funds fire protection service with a property tax pass through to Valley Hill. Since funding for fire protection is proportionate to tax base growth, fire service should expand at a similar rate. Valley Hill provides fire service to the growth areas proposed in the future land use section. The town should routinely involve the fire department with plans for growth through development project review.



Figure 5-4 - Laurel Park Town Hall



Town Hall

The Laurel Park Town Hall, which houses the Administrative offices and Police Department, is located at 441 White Pine Drive. This Plan notes that the building is not suited for the police functions, and the building needs modernization to continue to meet town functions. Town leaders have had preliminary conversations about future space and facilities needs. However, the town should conduct a detailed space and facilities needs study to determine the building size needed to accommodate current and future space needs.

Laurel Park Green, across from Town Hall, does not have restroom facilities. Visitors rely on the facilities at Town Hall, which means access is limited to Town Hall office hours. The space and facilities study should consider Laurel Green restroom access.

Sanitation Services & Yard Waste Removal

The town contracts with a sanitation service provider to deliver weekly sanitation and recycling services to town residents. Residents are satisfied with trash and recycling removal, and the town does not anticipate the need for service expansion in the next ten years.

Yard waste (brush) is collected one time per year, and leaf collection occurs October through December. Residents would like brush removal more than one time per year. Through past analysis, the town has determined that additional collections are cost prohibitive. The town should monitor and evaluate opportunities to increase brush pick up, such as coordinating leaf collection with brush pick up. Additionally, the Firewise program (see Chapter 4) identifies thinning, pruning, tree removal, and brush clearing on private property as a wildfire mitigation strategy. As the town explores wildfire mitigation strategies, it should consider additional brush pick up as an incentive for property owners to reduce the risk of fire-related property damage.

Broadband

Laurel Park recognizes the importance of broadband availability and its ability to attract and retain working-age residents, diversify the town’s economic base, and to stimulate investment along the US 64 Corridor.

An individual municipality has a limited ability to improve broadband access on its own - increased access is a regional advocacy rallying point. A fiber line belonging to the North Carolina Research and Education Network (NCREN) has a line that follows US 64 through Laurel Park. The NCREN line, which is managed and operated by MCNC, provides access to fiber optic services for K-12 schools, community colleges, private and public universities, research and non-profit health care institutions, libraries, public safety offices, and state and local governments. Private broadband providers (AT&T, Morris, ERC, Charter) in Henderson County also have fiber optic lines, yet there is not a coordinated effort or source to accurately map lines and service areas.



Map 5-2: MCNC Broadband Connections



The Land of Sky regional Council (LOSRC) is leading a coalition of municipalities to coordinate an effort to expand high-speed, gigabit service in the region through an RFP process similar to one successfully employed



in NC's Triangle region, the NC Next Generation Network. A similar effort is underway in the Triad. The local network is known as WestNGN.

The goal of the project is to identify a vendor, or coalition of vendors, able to create a gigabit network with flexible retail options for businesses, medical facilities, public institutions, educational institutions, and residences. Municipalities are the primary stakeholders due to the ownership of road right-of-way, potential availability of land or other assets, and ability to coordinate with NCDOT and private businesses. The municipalities will not provide funds for the design, construction, maintenance, or operation of the network. Those municipalities participating in the current Phase 1 are: City of Asheville, Town of Biltmore Forest, Town of Fletcher, City of Hendersonville, Town of Laurel Park and Town of Waynesville.

Participation in WestNGN requires a contribution from the member municipalities to fund a portion of the consultant required to compile the data and information needed for the RFP. The goal is to have the RFP developed within a six-month period, issued in early 2017, and negotiations concluded in late spring 2017. LOSRC will administer the contract with the selected consultant, but the WestNGN Steering Committee will provide oversight and specific direction to the consultant.



Public Facilities & Services Goals

Below are the implementation goals for this chapter. The Implementation Matrix in Chapter 8 details each goal's corresponding actions and strategies.



Public Facilities & Services

- Laurel Park citizens have access to high quality and sustainable water service.
- The US 64 Corridor has the infrastructure to support development.
- Laurel Park Citizens are served by a fully functional police department.
- Laurel Park Citizens are Served by a Fully Functional Town Hall
- Laurel Park provides brush collection at least two times each year.
- Laurel Park residents have reliable broadband access.





CHAPTER SIX: TRANSPORTATION

An adequate and well-maintained transportation system is vital for Laurel Park to remain a desirable place to live. Planning for and making investments in the Town's transportation system is necessary to meet the future needs of the community and goals established in this Plan. In considering transportation policies and strategies, the town recognizes that roadways influence residents' quality of life. There exists a relationship between transportation and land use: regional transportation patterns affect the local transportation system, and local decisions have regional impacts.

Local Road Network

Laurel Park has 32.95 miles in its road network. Compared with other areas, Laurel Park's number of system miles per person, 0.0149, is near the median of 0.0142. Laurel Park's roads are mountain roads, meaning they are narrow, curvy, and steep, and they have more maintenance and travel challenges.

Figure 6-1: Laurel Park Lane Miles Comparison

Local Road System Mile By Miles Per Person (2015)			
Location	2014 Population	System Mileage	Miles Per Person
Fletcher	7,574	23.05	0.003
Hendersonville	13,336	65.83	0.0049
Tryon	1,711	20.66	0.0121
Saluda	726	9.73	0.0134
Laurel Park	2,211	32.95	0.0149
Biltmore Forest	1,387	21.97	0.0158
Lake Lure	1,204	26.88	0.0223
Highlands	926	22.04	0.0238
Flat Rock	N/A	N/A	
Mills River	N/A	N/A	
Median			0.0142

State Street-Aid (Powell Bill) Program, 2015 Report

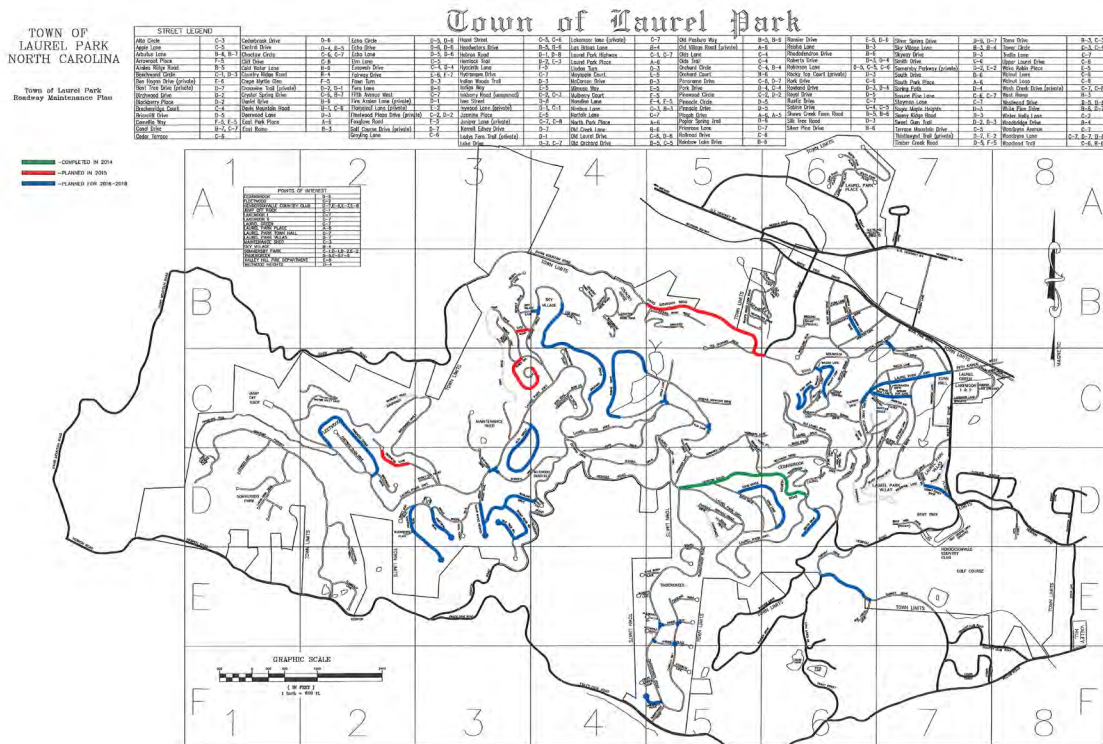
<https://connect.ncdot.gov/municipalities/State-Street-Aid/Pages/default.aspx>

Maintenance Challenges

For many years, the town did not set aside adequate funds for road maintenance, repair, and repaving. As a result, many of Laurel Park's roads fell into disrepair. In response to conditions, Laurel Park completed a road condition survey in 2014 and developed a roadway maintenance plan that outlines the town's paving plans through 2018. To fund this work, along with stormwater drainage repairs, Laurel Park initiated a \$0.03 tax increase beginning in Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Laurel Park should regularly update its roadway maintenance plan.



Figure 6-2: Laurel Park Road Maintenance Plan



Travel Challenges

Travel challenges are among the community’s top concerns. Laurel Park cannot straighten or flatten its roadway network. Therefore, it must implement strategies that improve the comfort and safety for all roadway users, including vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The town should adopt a comprehensive approach to address community travel. The table below summarizes the primary community challenges and presents possible solutions:

Figure 6-3: Transportation Concern Mitigation Strategies

Concern	Strategy
Speeding Crossing yellow lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted police enforcement and safety education campaigns. Add consistent rumble strips. Additional signage is an option but is less effective.
Improve sight distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an option to submit concerns on the town’s website. Regular intersection evaluation and maintenance by public works. Increase number of roads with painted white lines.

Concern	Strategy
Bicyclist/driver conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed enforcement (for all users). • “Share the Road” or “Watch for Bicyclists” signage. • Shared lane markings (sharrows) on some roads. • Bicyclist and driver education (work with Blue Ridge Bike Club). • Explore detailed options through the NCDOT bicycle and pedestrian planning grant.
Pedestrian/driver conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement modeled after the Watch for Me NC campaign, a targeted effort to raise driver awareness about pedestrian safety • Increase the number of high-visibility crosswalks (e.g. Laurel Green to Town Hall). • Explore and implement alternative pedestrian infrastructure in areas without rights-of-way.
Trucks on inappropriate roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement and better signage.
Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop Laurel Park’s walking trail network. Develop materials (print and online) to direct people to the network. • Explore a signed/branded walking and bicycle network along streets with low traffic volume.

Public Transportation

Apple Country Public Transit is Henderson County’s public transportation provider. The system’s Route 1 line serves Laurel Park with a stop in the Laurel Park Village shopping center. According to the former county transportation director, the stop is well used. The system has no plans for expansion or adding additional route stops. While public transportation is not a popular choice in Laurel Park today, town leaders should begin to place a higher priority on public transportation access to serve its aging population (an age in place strategy). Actions include participation in system planning, promoting the system as a reliable and affordable transportation choice on the town’s website and materials at Town Hall.



Regional Transportation

The Existing Plan Review (Appendix 1) summarizes relevant regional transportation plans. The plan with the most relevance is the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) – see the description in the Existing Plan Review. The three items of note from this plan include the MTP’s

goals, the description of the Brevard Road (US 64) widening project, and funding for Phase I of the Ecusta Rail Trail.

With only 3.3 miles of NCDOT roads in the Town, it is not likely that Laurel Park will benefit from a new roadway in the next ten years. However, regional transportation patterns and projects have broad effects. What happens to I-26 effects development in Hendersonville; development in Hendersonville, in turn, impacts Laurel Park. Laurel Park leaders should continue to participate in the regional planning process, and they should be mindful of the MTPs eight broad goals that will guide the region's transportation decisions over the next 40 years.

Brevard Road Widening Project

The only project that may begin in this Plan's 10-year planning horizon is Brevard Road's widening and improvement from Blythe Street to White Pine Drive and Daniel Drive. According to the project's description, the stated need for this project is,

"Large portions of this 2-lane segment of US 64 already carry more traffic than their desirable capacity, and these volumes are forecast to increase from 16,500 vehicles per day (vpd) in 2005 to 19,100 vpd by 2030. Henderson County plans identify three commercial areas along this portion of US 64, near Etowah, Horseshoe, and Laurel Park. Several intersections in the eastern portion of this project have been averaging at least ten crashes per year. Frequent driveways and speed limits that vary from 35 mph to 55 mph already contribute to both crashes and congestion. The ability to widen the cross-section within this corridor is severely constrained by existing development, a rail line, steep slopes, streams, and cultural resources."

The proposed solution is to widen the road from its existing two lanes to two lanes with a center two-way left turn lane and paved shoulders. According to NCDOT Division 14's former Planning Engineer,

2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

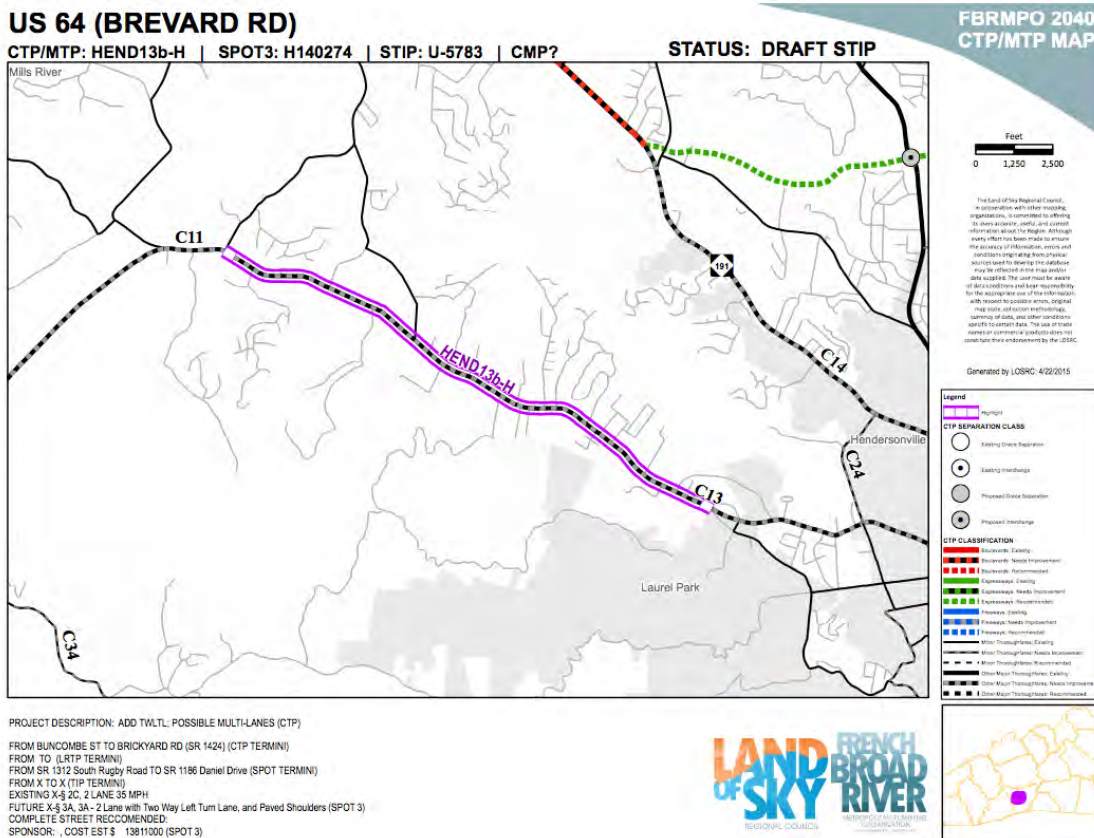
- Improve Multi-Modal and Non-Motorized Transportation Options
- Improve Safety on Surface Streets and Highways
- Address Congestion and Bottlenecks on Surface Streets and Highways
- Improve Public Transit Options
- Improve and Expand Community and Public Involvement
- Ensure Changes Respect Our Unique Places and Environments
- Seek Ways to Maintain and Improve Safe Freight Movement Within and Through the Region
- Improve and Develop Planning Tools



there are two project alternatives. The French Broad River MPO board adopted a complete street design that includes sidewalks and bicycle facilities. NCDOT has an alternate design that is similar to the design used for the US 64 improvements between Buncombe and Blythe Streets. The Planning Engineer reported that the project is scheduled for right-of-way (acquiring the needed land for the project) in June 2020 followed by construction in June of 2022.

It is important that Laurel Park leaders continue their participation and communications with the MPO and NCDOT to understand the impact of the project. NCDOT has reported that White Pine Drive will be the alternate route during construction, and it is likely that other Laurel Park streets will receive additional traffic during construction. The town should continue working with NCDOT to prepare a plan for citizen information and, if needed, a traffic management plan to handle rerouted traffic, including accommodations for safe pedestrian routing during construction.

Map 6-1a: Brevard Road (US 64) Improvement Project



Map 6-1b: Brevard Road (US 64) Improvement Project - Cross Sections

CTP MTP ID HEND13b-H	US 64		SPOTS_ID H090829	TIP_ID U-5783
MTP_FROM SR 1180 (Blythe Street)	TO SR 1173 (White Pine Drive), SR 1186 (Daniel Drive)		SOURCE SPOT 2	
PROJECT DESCRIPTION Blythe St. to Daniel Dr. and White Pine Dr. - Widening and Improvements, Laurel Park				
Miles 5.364	CTPPriority MEDIUM	L RTP_TIER 2	OriginatorSponsor	EST_COST \$7,191,000
				COST_SOURCE 2015-2025 STIP
Current X-Section (based on statewide typical section) TYPICAL SECTION No. 2C 2 LANE UNDIVIDED WITH PAVED SHOULDERS		Future X-Section (based on statewide typical-For SPOT) TYPICAL SECTION No. 3C 2 LANE WITH TWO WAY LEFT TURN LANE, CURB & GUTTER, BIKE LANES, AND SIDEWALKS		
				
Existing Conditions Photo 		Complete Street Recommendation (based on statewide typical section/Local Pla URBAN / SUBURBAN AVENUE ILLUSTRATIVE STREET CROSS-SECTION 		
FBRMPO Complete Street Recommended Cross Section EXISTING CROSS-SECTION 2C		Urban Suburban Ave EXIST_DESC 1LANE PER DIRECTION Undivided, 40MPH		
FUTURE CROSS SECTION 3C		FUTUR_DESC Existing, 1LANE PER DIRECTION Undivided, 40MPH		
FUTUR_SRC SPOT 2		FUTURE X § SOURCE DO SPOT 3		
COMMENTS ORIGINAL ESTIMATE \$7,191,000; FULL COST IN 2015-2025 STIP \$8,770,000; \$1,500,000 IN PREVIOUS YEARS				

Phase 1 Ecusta Rail Trail

The final item to note is the long range planning for the Ecusta Trail. Currently, a plan for Phase I of the Trail is listed in the STIP as a Horizon 2 project scheduled for planning and environmental work between 2021-2025. Placing the project in the transportation project mix at this time means that the MPO and NCDOT know the project is a possibility, but it is not imminent and does not require action at this time. This also means that placing the project in the planning mix carries no real commitment. This plan notes that the Ecusta Trail is one of the community’s top priorities; the project requires continual cooperation and relationship building with regional transportation decision makers. Laurel Park can further Ecusta Trail efforts by continuing to participate in the MPO planning process to ensure the project remains on the list of planned projects.

Transportation Goals

Below are the implementation goals for this chapter. The Implementation Matrix in Chapter 8 details each goal’s corresponding actions and strategies.



Transportation

- Laurel Park has a well-maintained and safe roadway network for all users.
- Laurel Park residents have multi-modal transportation choices.

CHAPTER SEVEN: EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE

The Town of Laurel Park will ensure the community remains a viable place to live by promoting sound growth and quality development that protects the natural environment, landscapes, and neighborhoods while meeting residents' needs for a healthy local economy that attracts new residents.

The purpose of the Land Use chapter is to establish a plan for the future uses of Laurel Park's land and to propose land use control measures and regulations to ensure those future land uses. The chapter presents a description of Laurel Park's current and future land use, based on the interrelationship of development trends, natural constraints, the transportation network and public services and facilities.

Existing Zoning and Existing Land Use

Land use is the general term referring to the actual uses or activities that occur on a parcel of land at any given time, be they residential, commercial, industrial, governmental, or other use. Land use and zoning are not permanent and can change over time. Laurel Park is primarily a residential community, Map 7-1: Existing Land Use (found at the end of this chapter) illustrates that 77% of the town's land is in some type of residential use.

Identifying a parcel's land use is not the same as its zoning. Zoning is the tool Laurel Park uses to regulate what one can build on a parcel of land and how it should be developed or redeveloped. A parcel may be zoned for a type of activity but used differently. For example, the Hendersonville Country Club is zoned R-20, but its classified use is social/cultural. Likewise, parcels currently zoned for commercial uses today may one day be changed to allow for a mix of uses, including residential.

Laurel Park has four zoning districts in the town boundary and the same four districts in the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), plus one additional. The remainder of the study area is in Hendersonville's ETJ zoning district or one of Henderson County's districts. Of the land in Laurel Park, 97.8% is zoned for residential use. In the ETJ, 92% of the land is zoned residential. Laurel Park land zoned R-20 and R-30 is about equal, 48% and 49%, respectively. Fifty-four percent of ETJ land is zoned R-30 and 38% is R-20.



Figure 7-1: Zoning Districts

Summary of Zoning Districts		
District	Use	Intent
R-20 & ETJ R-20	Medium Density Residential (20,000 SF minimum lot size)	The R-20 district is designated primarily for single-family residential development on individual lots with a minimum of 20,000 square feet.
R-30 & ETJ R-30	Low-Density Residential (30,000 SF minimum lot size)	The R-30 district is designated primarily for single-family residential development on individual lots with a minimum of 30,000 square feet. The areas of Laurel Park designated for the R-30 district generally are characterized as areas with steeper slopes, limited access to public sewerage, limited road access, watershed restrictions, and established patterns of lower density development.
C-1 & ETJ C-1	Commercial	The intent of the C-1 Commercial District is to provide the citizens of Laurel Park convenient commercial services. The commercial district is intended to provide for the most frequent daily needs of the residents in a compact area rather than a commercial strip catering to a more regional market. Development within the commercial district is to provide adequate access, off-street parking, and setbacks to maintain traffic flow. The design and arrangement of buildings, structures, facilities, and landscaping should emphasize the compatibility sought between the commercial service areas and adjacent residential areas.
MIC & ETJ MIC	Medical, Institutional, Cultural District	The MIC district is established primarily as a district in which the principal use of land is for medical, institutional, and/or cultural services, together with other compatible uses and services designed to serve the patients, students, professionals, and staffs in the area.
I-1	Industrial District	The I-1 district is established to promote and protect the existing industrial development in Laurel Park and to ensure that the future use and development of the district will safeguard the physical and economic well-being of the industrial district and the adjacent property owners.



Map 7-1: Existing Zoning

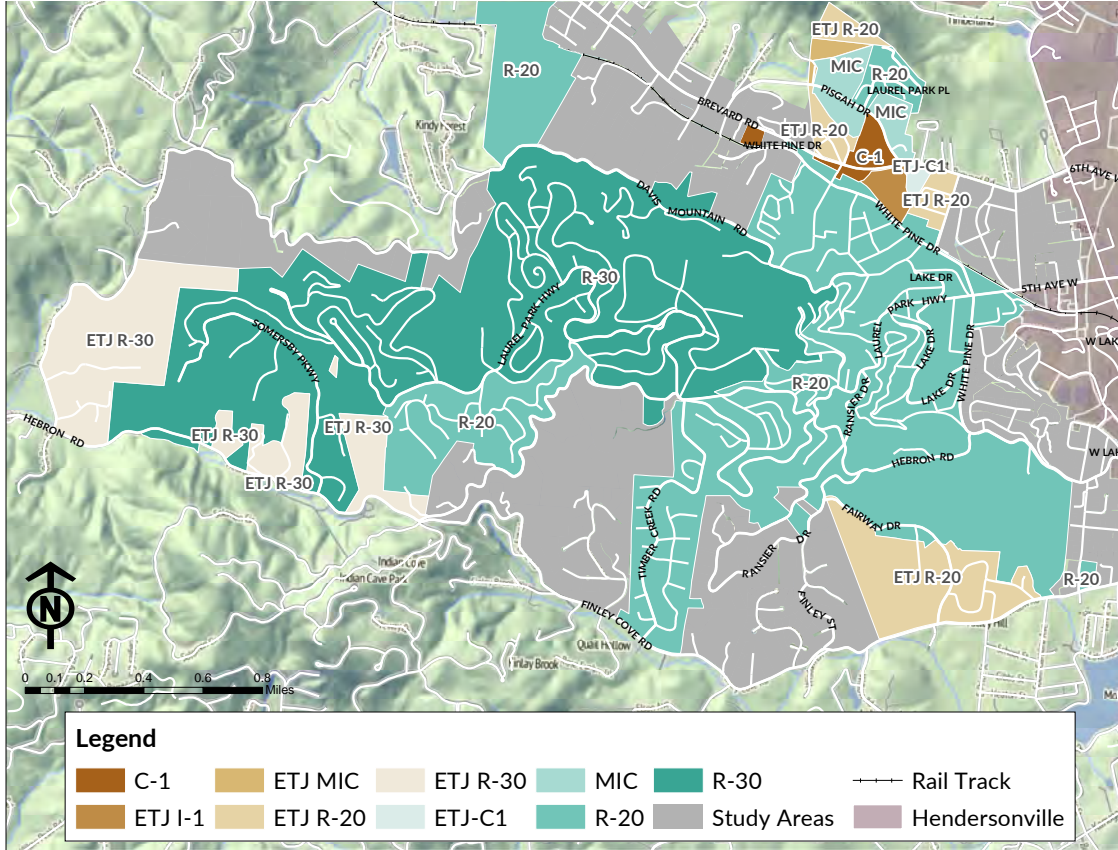
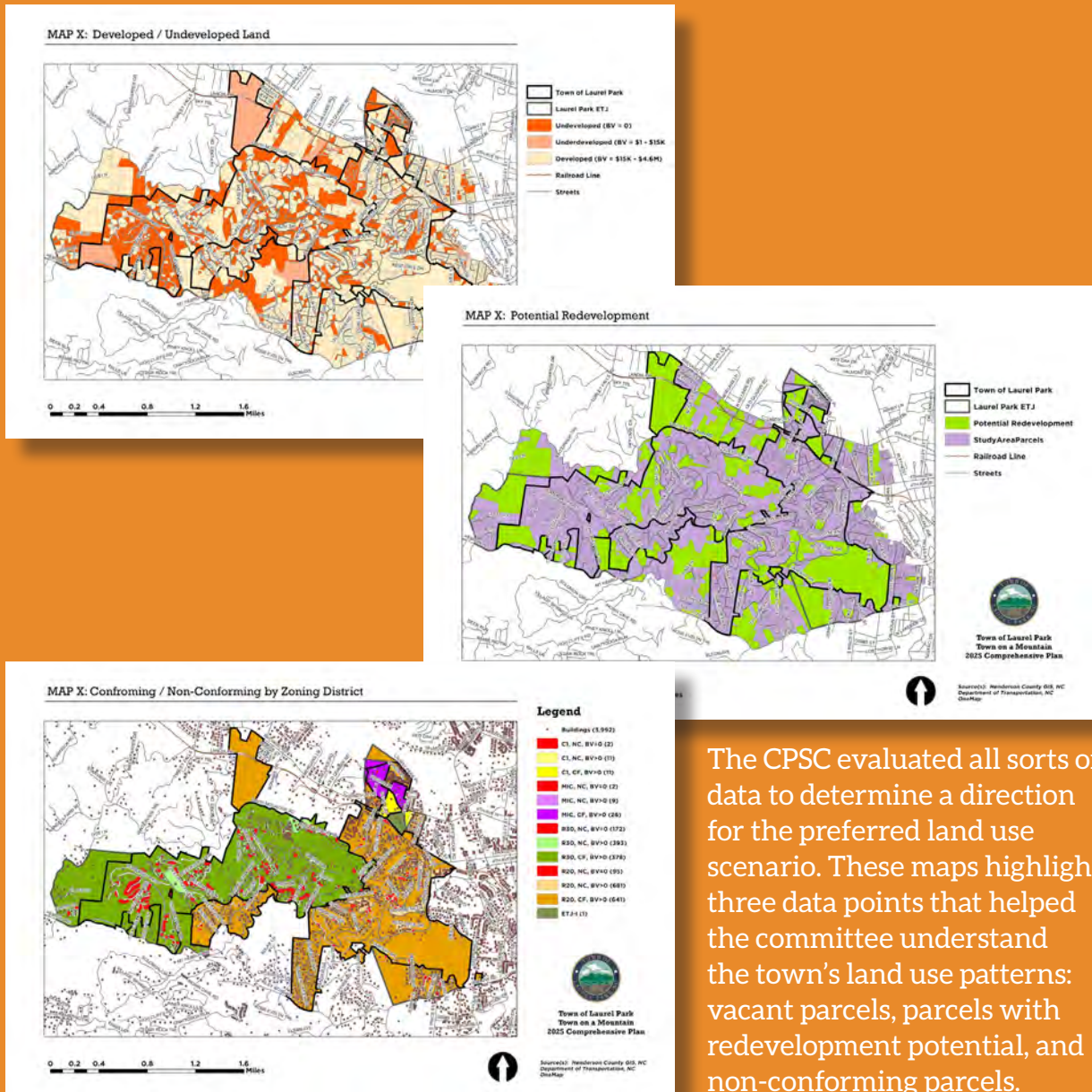


Figure 7-2: Area by Zoning District

District	Acres	% of LP	% of ETJ	% of LP & ETJ
R-20	930	51%		43%
R-30	822	46%		38%
C-1	17	1%		1%
MIC	37	2%		2%
LP Total	1,807	100%		
ETJ R-20	138		40%	6%
ETJ R-30	186		54%	9%
ETJ-C1	5		1%	<1%
ETJ MIC	7		2%	<1%
ETJ I-1	12		3%	1%
ETJ Total	348		100%	
Grand Total	2,155			100%



Figure 7-3: Data Analysis Examples



The CPSC evaluated all sorts of data to determine a direction for the preferred land use scenario. These maps highlight three data points that helped the committee understand the town’s land use patterns: vacant parcels, parcels with redevelopment potential, and non-conforming parcels.



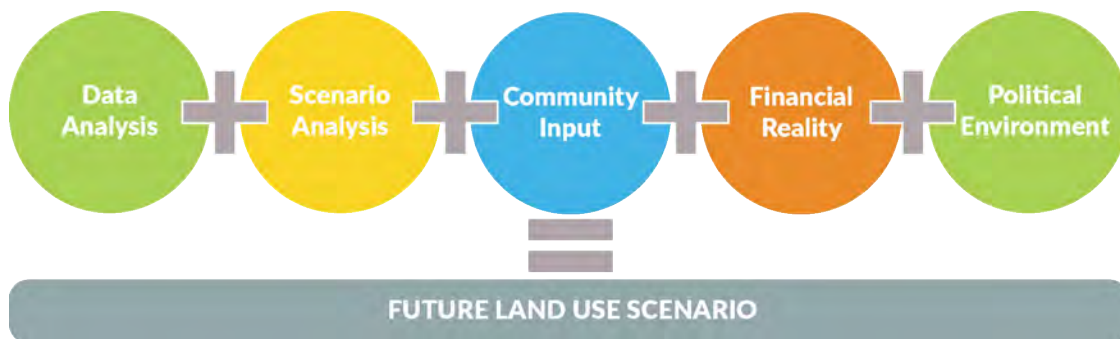
The Future Land Use Plan

A future land use plan is a tool to bridge the difference between an existing land use pattern and the desired future land use pattern. The future land use plan is Laurel Park's opportunity to translate goals identified in the Plan to a map that guides planning board advisory and Town Council legislative zoning decisions. It will also help the planning board and town council develop their zoning statements of consistency as required by NC law. Finally, it is a tool to guide infrastructure, transportation, and municipal service investment.

Is this a Rezoning?

A future land use plan is not the same as a zoning map. An area that is zoned R-20 today will remain R-20 even if the Future Land Use Plan identifies a different future use. The Future Land Use Plan offers policy guidance for land use decisions whereas a zoning ordinance and map delineates Laurel Park's legally binding districts and development standards. The zoning districts and standards cannot change without a formal rezoning or amendment process.

Building to the Recommended Future Land Use Pattern



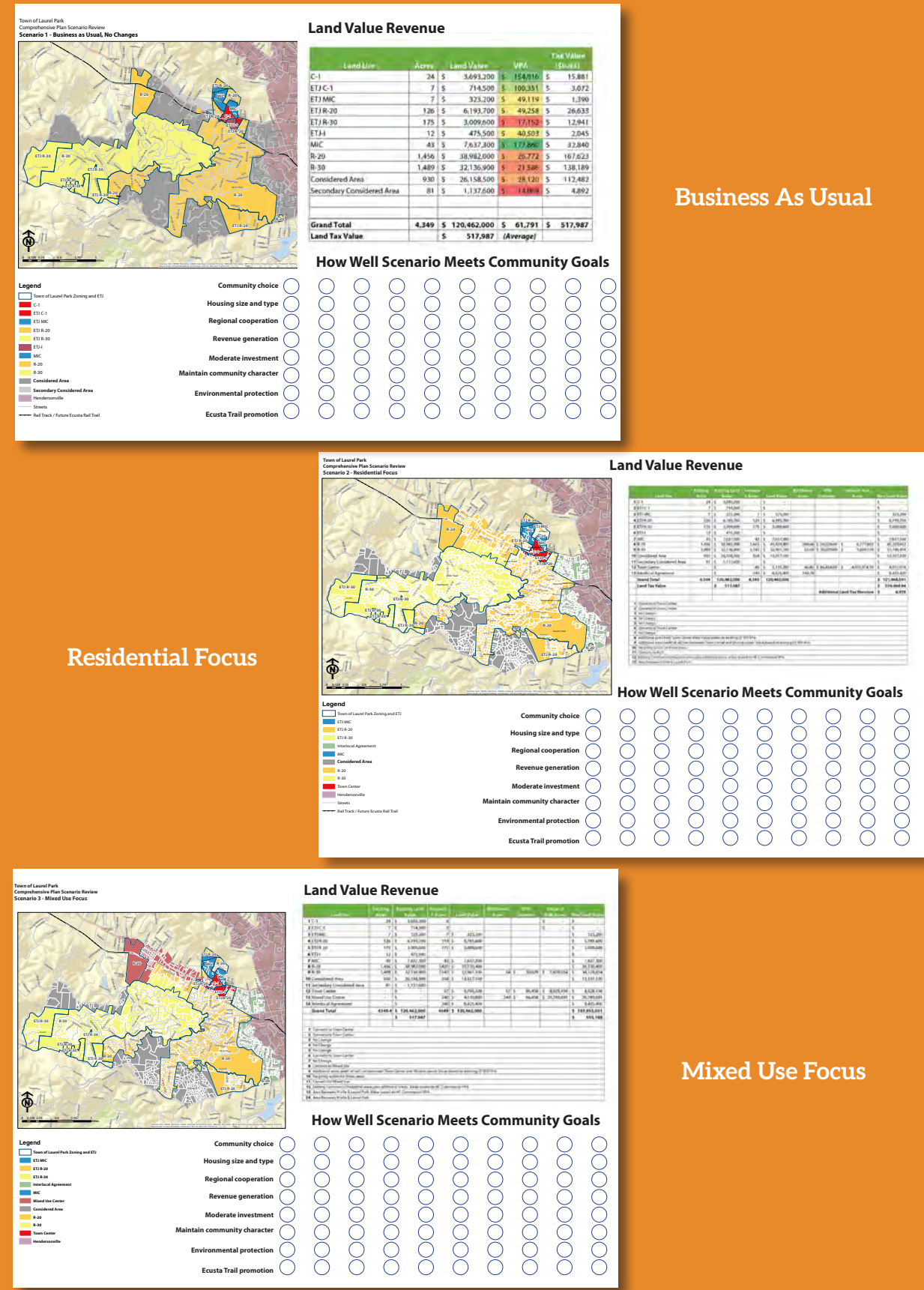
Data Analysis

The Committee worked through a wide variety of data to understand existing and future land use potential. A sample of the data points the committee evaluated include the potential to generate additional property tax revenues by:

- expanding the Laurel Park town boundary;
- changing zoning regulations to transform non-conforming lots to conforming;
- encouraging greater density in all zoning districts (smaller lot sizes, additionally multi-family)



Figure 7-4: Future Land Use Scenarios



- encouraging redevelopment by subdividing large parcels of land; and
- implementing changes to increase acreage zoned for commercial development.

The committee determined that the best options for future growth and increased property tax revenue were to expand the Laurel Park town boundary and implement zoning changes to increase acreage zoned for commercial development.

Future Land Use Scenario Analysis

The Committee next analyzed three future land use scenarios – business as usual, residential focus, and mixed-use focus.

Business as Usual: This scenario identifies the property tax generated from Laurel Park’s land values, which remains the same if Laurel Park makes no changes to its boundary or its level of commercial zoning. This scenario is the baseline to compare the following two.

Residential Focus: This scenario identifies the increase in property taxes generated from Laurel Park’s land values if it expands its boundary and zones most of the identified land areas as R-20 and some as R-30. This scenario also changes the current C-1 district to the new Town Center district and slightly expands the Town Center district.

Mixed Use Focus: This scenario identifies the increase in property taxes generated from Laurel Park’s land values if it expands its boundary, converted existing C-1 land to the new Town Center district, and introduced a new mixed use corridor (later named as the Neighborhood Activity Center).

The committee ranked each scenario based on how well it met the community goals identified through the planning process.

Future Scenario Goals

- provide additional choices for community members
- allow for additional housing sizes and types
- promote regional cooperation
- generate additional property tax revenue
- meet the goal of investing moderately
- maintain community character
- protect the environment
- consider land uses near the Ecusta Trail



The committee selected the Mixed Use focus as the scenario that best met the goals as its preferred scenario to present to the community for review. Of the three, the Mixed Use scenario best met the goal statements and had the most potential to generate the most revenue.

Community Input

In April 2016, the CPSC hosted a two-day open house where community members reviewed the recommended future land plan scenario and other Plan documents. In general, people were supportive of the Mixed Use Future Land Use Plan and community input influenced the final future land use plan and recommendations discussed below. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of those who completed the open house survey responded with a 9 (17%) or a 10 (50%) on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree) when asked how much they agree with the Future Land Use Scenario.



Financial Reality

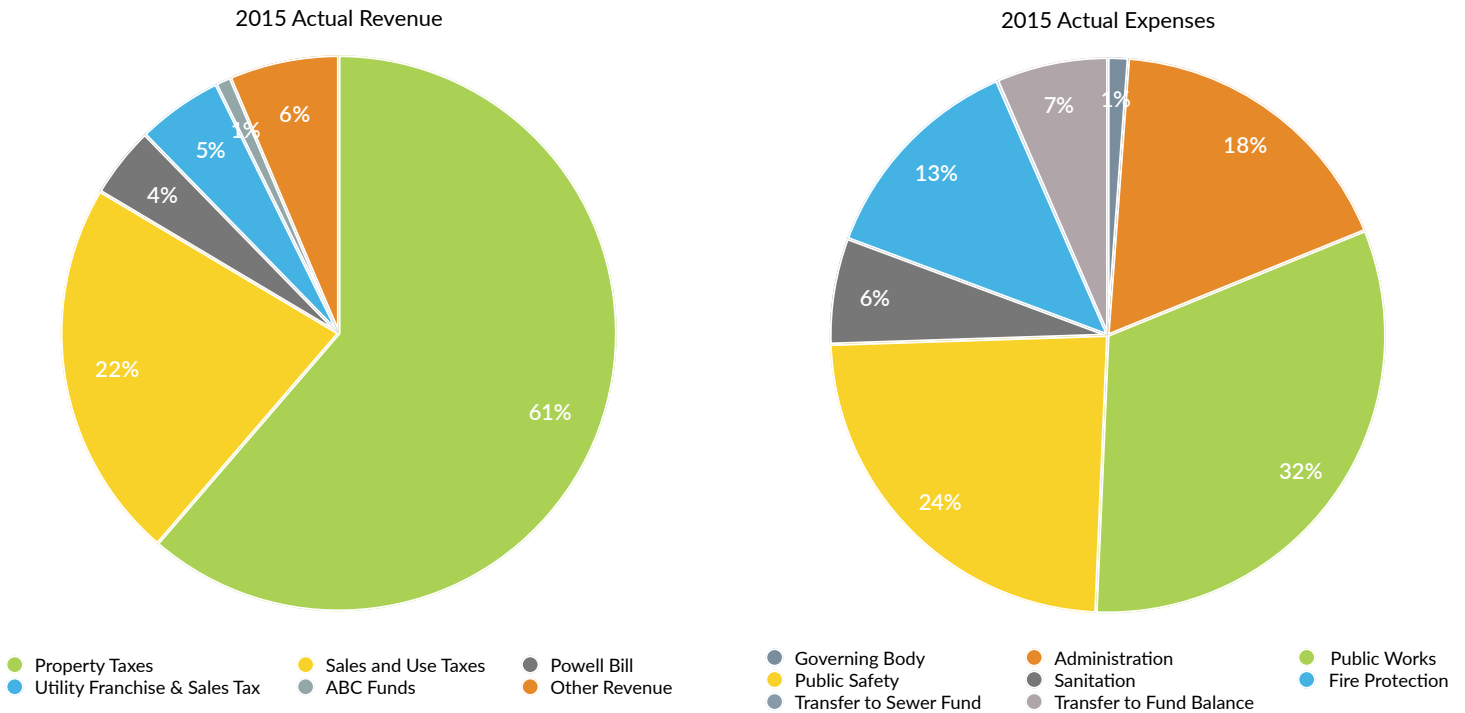
The Town of Laurel Park operates with an approximate \$2.6 million annual budget. Property taxes generate approximately \$1.5 million annually. The remaining \$1.1 million comes from sales and use taxes, which

vary from year-to-year, Powell Bill funds reserved for road maintenance, Utility Franchise & Sales taxes, Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Funds, and other revenues. On the expense side, Laurel Park invests revenues in local government services: the governing body, administration, public works, public safety, sanitation, and fire protection.

For most local governments, Laurel Park included, property taxes are the most consistent source of revenue. While property taxes and other forms of revenue are stable from year-to-year, expenditures are not. Balancing a growing demand for and cost of municipal services with residential property taxes as the primary source of revenue is a challenge. When costs for police and fire protection, road maintenance, or garbage collection rise over time, and town leaders endeavor to hold the property tax rate steady, there is an inevitable gap between the cost of services and the ability to pay for or expand services. The town eventually faces the need to cut services, raise taxes, or both. During plan development, Laurel Park's Town Manager developed a five-year financial projection to guide decisions in the Plan. Without meaningful land use and policy changes, Laurel Park's expenses will exceed revenue to the point where the town will have to raise taxes, cut services, or both.

The financial analysis is about more than numbers; it is about how Laurel Park conducts business and the context in which the town makes decisions:

Figure 7-5: Laurel Park Revenue & Expenses



Approach to services: Laurel Park does not plan to add many new services, nor does it plan to raise the level of existing services significantly. In other words, services will hold steady in future years. However, the town should be mindful that new taxpayers, for example those currently in the ETJ, may expect a higher level of service for their tax dollars.

Grant funding: Laurel Park seeks out alternative funding opportunities, such as grants and partnerships to pay for special projects, like the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grants for Rhododendron Lake Park. Nonetheless, the Town is aware that grant funds are not readily available or consistently dependable.

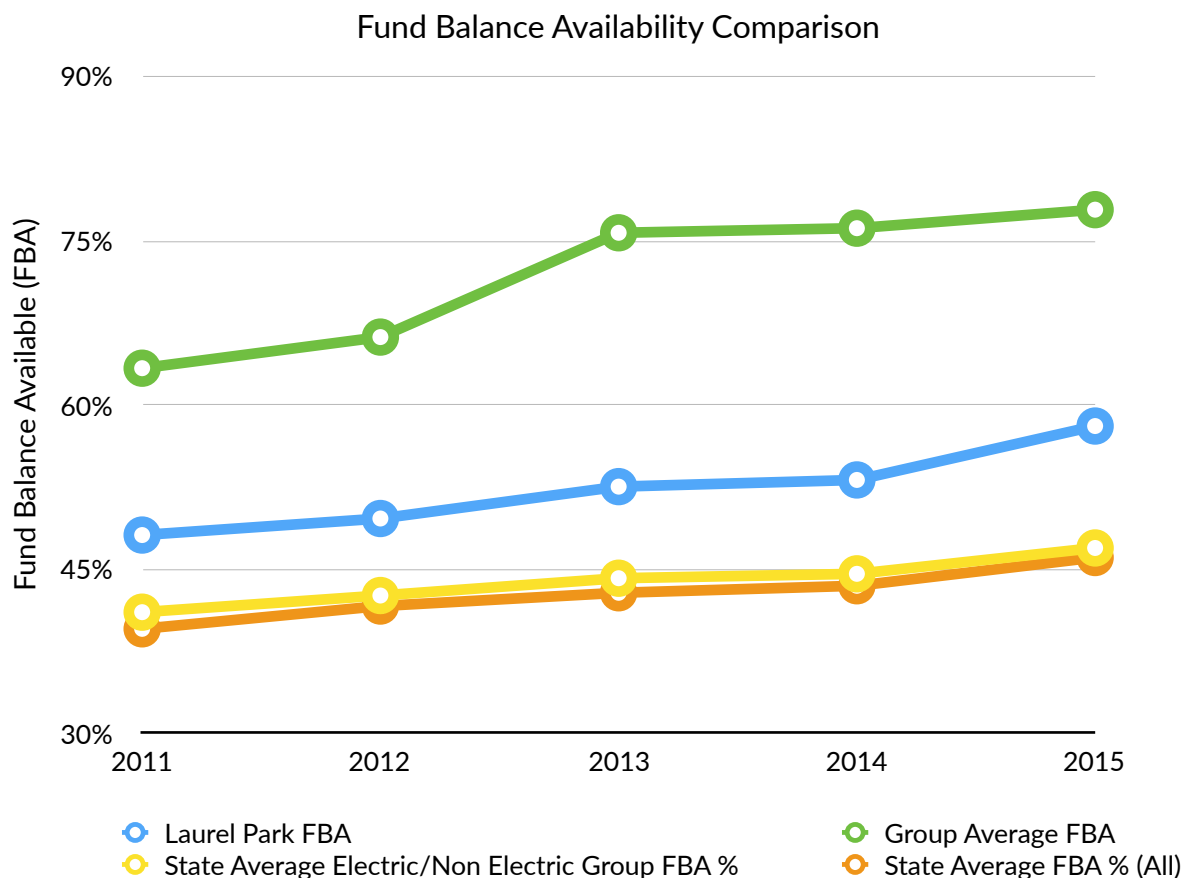
Property taxes: The Town raised taxes by \$0.03 in the 2014-2015 Budget and \$0.04 in the 2015-2016 Budget. The tax rate is now \$0.43 per \$100.00 valuation of taxable property. Henderson County reappraises property every four years; the county completed its most recent reappraisal in 2015. Values in Laurel Park increased 1% overall between 2011 and 2015. Between 2007 and 2011, Laurel Park’s overall property values decreased by 14.4%. There is no way to predict or factor in future property values, but it is reasonable to assume that the total value change in the next valuation will be modest.



Fund balance: The Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act requires local governments (cities and counties) to maintain a minimum reserve balance that equals 8% of the prior year’s expenditures. The following table and chart document that Laurel Park’s fund balance far exceeds the 8% minimum. While Laurel Park has more than the minimum, the NC Treasurer’s Office, which tracks results from local government’s audits, reports that Laurel Park has less in reserves compared to the average amount for cities in its comparison group, those with 1,000 to 2,499 people and no electric service. Laurel Park’s fund balance is strong and growing, however, “one big event” has the potential to damage the town’s reserves. For example, the fund balance dipped to 39% from 51% in 2010 after a damaging ice storm. Laurel Park should continue to build its reserve and protect it by making strategic investments when needed.

Limited as-is development potential: Laurel Park is primarily a residential community and while development potential exists, only 19% of Laurel Park’s land, and 26% of the ETJ, is undeveloped. This includes the 90-acre undeveloped parcel at the town’s northwestern boundary. And, as discussed in Chapter 4, some land is not suitable for development.

Figure 7-6: Fund Balance Comparison



Additionally, commercial land in Laurel Park, which has a higher tax value, is very limited. If Laurel Park cannot expand its boundary or land available for commercial development, residential single-family development or smaller scale planned developments become the default option. The community has resistance to increasing residential density in the existing R-20 and R-30 areas, and land for intense residential development is not readily available. Low density residential development is the least profitable.

Non-residential development: Laurel Park's existing C-1 and MIC areas are developed and are dependent on redevelopment if they are to affect property values. Fortunately, there is a willingness from the Laurel Park Village property owner to redevelop and modernize, which would likely increase property values.

Political Environment

There is no question that expanding a town's boundary is a tough proposition in today's political environment. Involuntary annexation is no longer allowed in North Carolina. To support voluntary annexation, citizens need to believe the services they receive in exchange for additional taxes is equitable.

Many communities incentivize annexation by requiring voluntary annexation in exchange for water and sewer service. Laurel Park's Water Service Policy appears, indirectly, to require annexation in exchange for water service. However, the policy does not directly require voluntary annexation. The policy states, "If the Town receives a voluntary annexation request for an area that is not serviced by water, arrangements for water service and lines will be agreed upon before the Town will favorably consider the annexation." This Plan proposes a new sewer line (see Chapter 5). For future land use reasons, the Plan recommends that Laurel Park's connection policy require voluntary annexation in exchange for service. The sewer line feasibility study should assess mandatory annexation and its effect on system feasibility (i.e. voluntary annexation makes sense from a land use perspective, but the study may uncover reasons a mandatory connection policy would not be beneficial to sewer line development).

Interlocal Agreements and Elected Official Negotiations: As discussed in Chapter 5, Laurel Park has applied for a Merger/Regionalization Feasibility Grant and Hendersonville is completing a water system study. The two studies provide an opportunity for Laurel Park and Hendersonville to engage in discussion with the intent to develop an interlocal water/sewer agreement. An interlocal water/sewer agreement guides service provision in the areas where both towns could or do provide water/sewer service.



Laurel Park's changing land use pattern requires buy-in and support from county and state elected officials. Currently, there is broad support for infrastructure system regionalization in the General Assembly and the proposed sewer extension originated in a Cane Creek Sewer District study. Members of Laurel Park's Town Council should strategically engage with other elected officials to communicate the shared goals and benefits of Laurel Park's growth plans.

The Future Land Use Plan Proposed Actions

The future land use plan assigns a future land use to all land in the study area. To recap, the study area included the Town of Laurel Park and its ETJ, and the following areas:

1. between Timber Creek and Hebron Road – Henderson County Zoning,
2. between Davis Mountain Road and the Town/ETJ boundary,
3. between the 90-acre parcel and Windsor Drive at the ETJ boundary,
4. between Laurel Park and Hendersonville, north and south of the railroad track, and
5. the Ransier Drive area.

Map 7-3: Future Land Use found at the end of this chapter details these study areas.

Areas that Remain the Same (No Change)

The future land use plan does not recommend changes to the area between Timber Creek and Hebron road. A large portion, around 100 acres, is in a conservation easement and land uses are not expected to change over time, nor are changes recommended for the area between Davis Mountain Road and the Town/ETJ boundary. The area is not densely developed and has terrain challenges.

All areas zoned R-30 and MIC in the town and in the ETJ remain the same.

New Districts & Change Areas

The Future Land Use Plan proposes two new zoning districts and proposes changes to other districts.

Town Center District (Map 7-4): The proposed Town Center re-imagines Laurel Park's existing commercial core to provide what Laurel Park residents want- more places to shop, eat, and gather. The district would increase the amount of land eligible for commercial activity and should encourage mixed-use (commercial and residential together) development. The Town Center



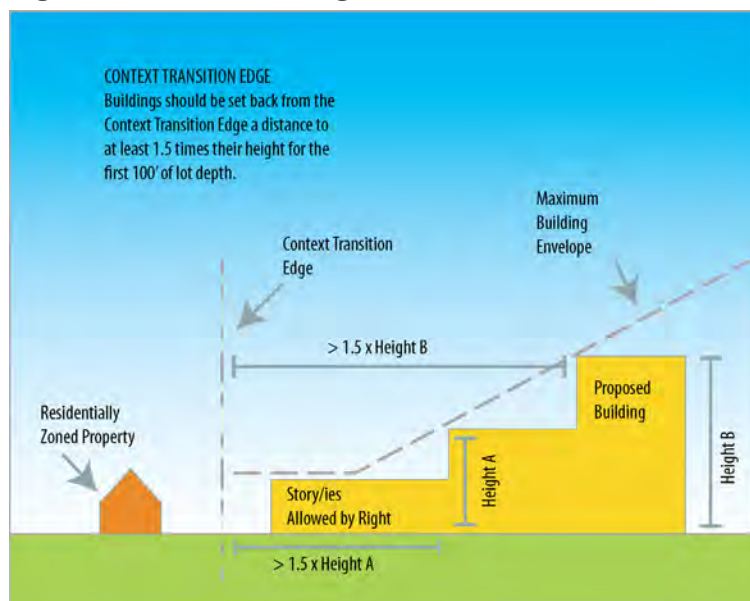
would also allow for an anchor activity, such as an urban park, stage, or community gathering feature. There should be a focus on walkability.

The areas designated for the Town Center District include:

- all areas zoned as C-1 in the town and ETJ,
- the Coats America facility zoned as I-1,
- R-20 parcels in the town and the ETJ fronting US 64 to the west and east of Laurel Park Village, and
- R-20 parcels between US 64 and White Pine Drive.

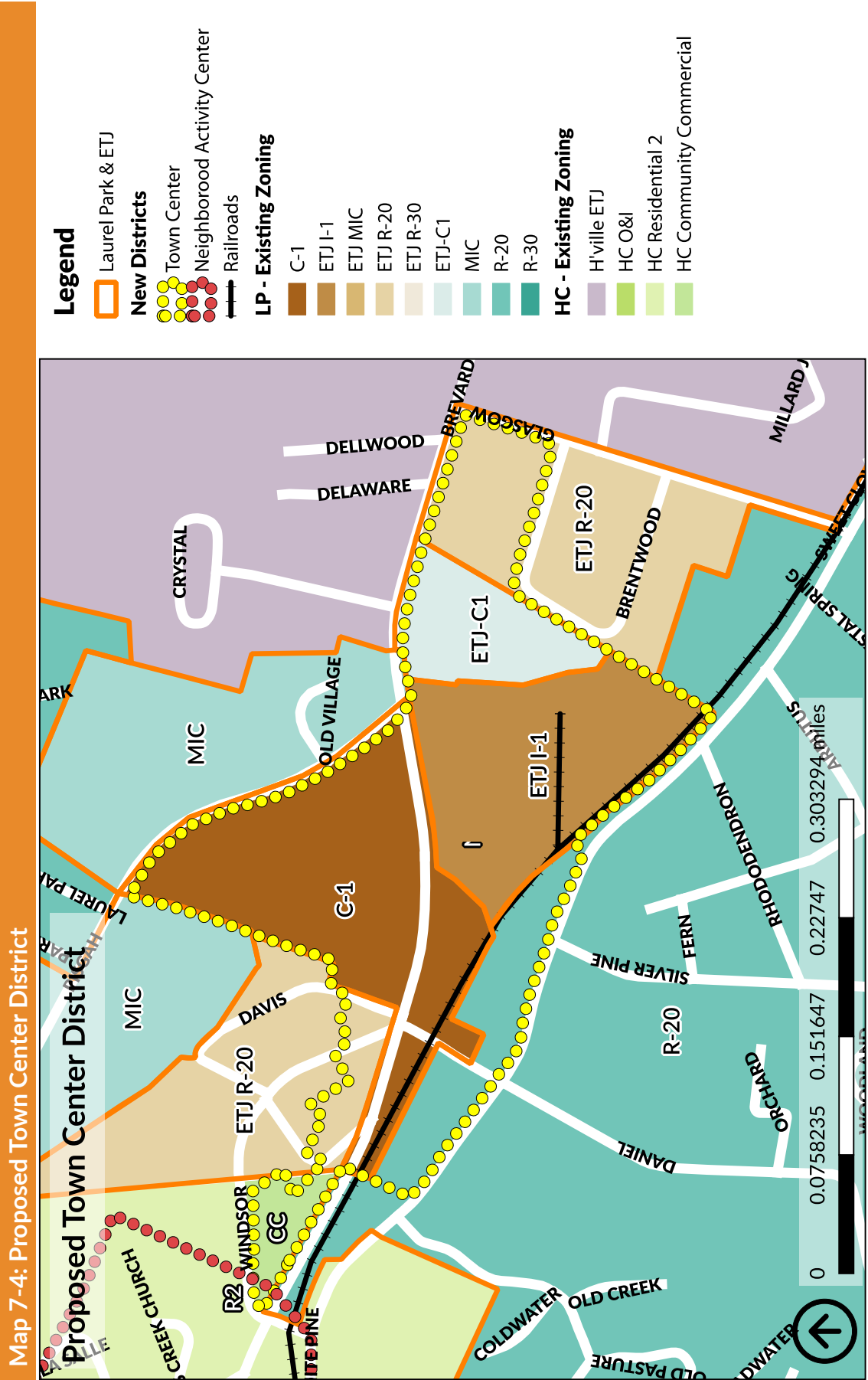
Because the Town Center borders residential land uses, it is important to require a transition edge and vegetative buffer standards to protect neighbors from the adverse effect of commercial development. A context edge standards ensures that the back of commercial buildings nearest to residential uses are one story and the scale of commercial buildings do not over-shadow residences.

Figure 7-7: Context Edge Example



Buildings located within a transition edge (where new non-residential construction borders residential development) have a gradual change in scale. Exhibit 7-7 reflects a 100ft wide area measured from the transition line. Allowable building height is determined by using a formula for height: $H = D/1.5$; (where H is the height of the building and D is the distance from the transition edge). The maximum building envelope (illustrated by the diagonal line) is determined by application of the formula for each proposed story.





Neighborhood Activity Center Intent: The proposed Neighborhood Activity Center extends commercial and residential activity along US 64 using a less dense development pattern. The activity along the corridor would promote the use of small- and medium-sized lots. The activities would complement the future Ecusta Rail Trail. Complementary business might be local stores, small restaurants, or a bike store. Single family residential on small lots or cottage-style development is encouraged.

The areas designated for the Neighborhood Activity Center include:

- The 90-acre parcel currently zoned as R-20, and
- The area between the 90-acre parcel and the new Town Center district between US 64 and the railroad, and one parcel deep on the north side of US 64. Most of this area is zoned Henderson County Residential 2, and a small portion is designated as Henderson County Office and Institutional.

Additional R-20 and R-30

The future land use plan expands R-20 and R-30 to two areas. First is the area between the 90-acre parcel and the existing town/ETJ boundary that is not identified as Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC). The land to the south of the NAC is R-20 where the terrain is less challenging and R-30 in the areas with greater terrain obstacles. This land is currently zoned as Henderson County Residential 2.

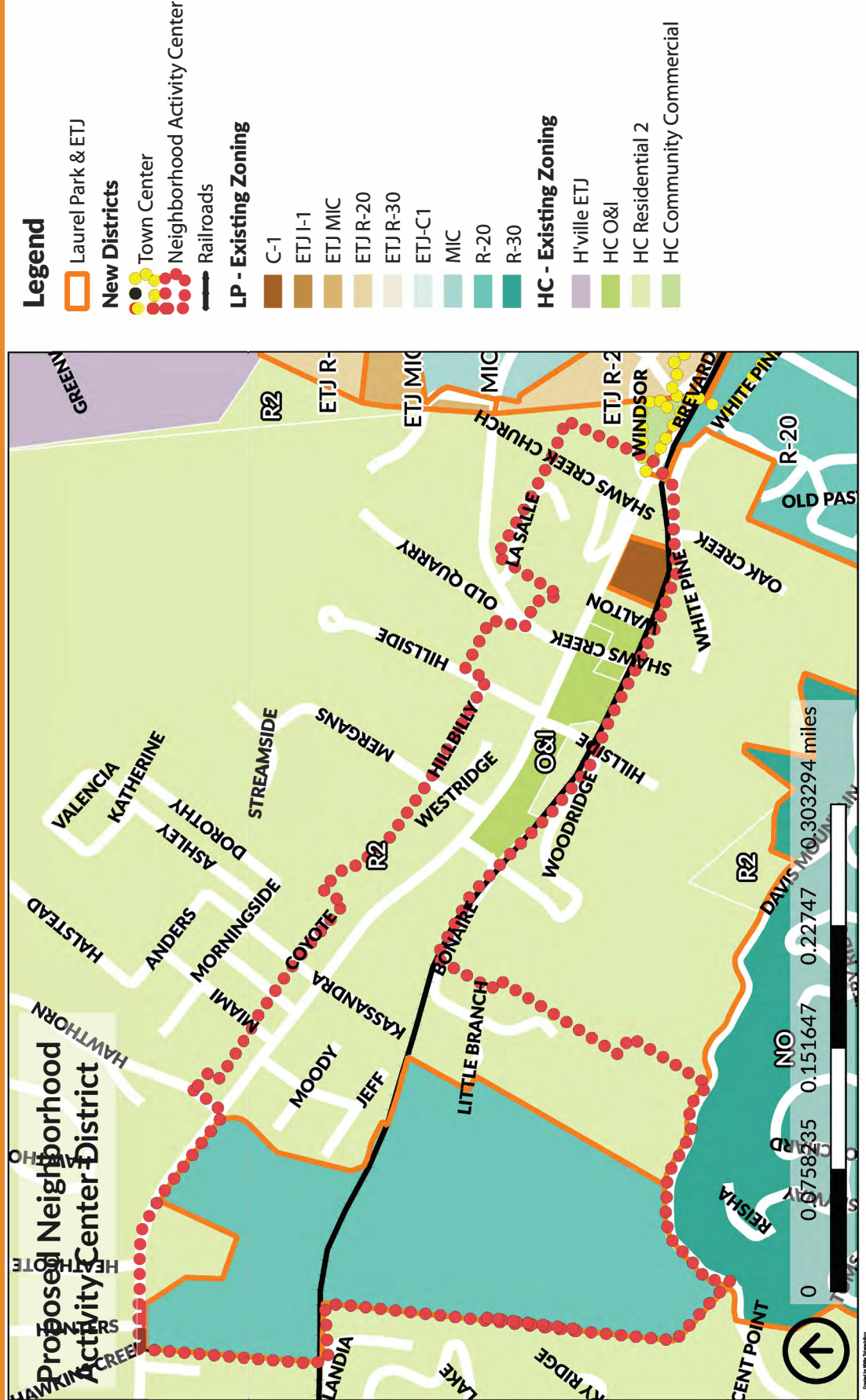
The second new R-20 district that would transition from Henderson County Residential 2 to R-20 is the Ransier Drive area. This area's ground water is high in iron. The town explored the option of providing public water to the neighborhood. In 2013, WGLA estimated the cost to extend water as \$225,250, or \$230,253 in 2016 dollars. The town would gain \$131,330 in property taxes each year as a result of the investment.

Interlocal Study Area

The areas between Laurel Park and Hendersonville, north and south of the railroad tracks are in the Interlocal Study Area (which differs from the water/sewer agreement area). This is not a proposed zoning change – the area is in Hendersonville's ETJ. The intent is to determine which municipality is best suited to provide services and to determine a shared vision with Hendersonville. The Interlocal Study Area is highly developed, and land use patterns are not expected to change greatly.



Map 7-5: Proposed Neighborhood Activity Center District



Making it Happen

The Plan has a ten-year planning horizon; yet it is clear that the Committee’s recommended long-term vision goes well beyond the next ten years.

Create the Districts

The first step is to create the new zoning districts which require the planning board to develop and recommend district standards that capture the intent of each district. Following is a list of standards to include in each district – the town may need professional planning assistance to develop the standards:

New District and Zoning Considerations		
Basic Standards	Design Standards	Uses and Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum lot width and depth • maximum front setback, minimum side and rear setbacks • maximum impervious surface coverage • parking lot placement, maximum parking requirements • building orientation • maximum residential density, maximum floor area ratio (the ratio of a building’s total floor area to the size of the piece of land upon which it is built) • minimum common open space • height minimum and maximum that considers standards to separate residential and commercial uses, including building step backs and planting buffers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dumpster placement and enclosures • utility/maintenance/ rooftop shielding • exterior lighting • landscaping • buffers, including buffer maintenance • fencing • stormwater management • building material and color • building height • building massing • building facade character • roof form and articulation • franchise architecture • signage • parking lot design • native plantings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list of Permitted Uses • list of Conditional Uses • uses allowed by right • uses allowed with a conditional use permit • uses allowed with conditional zoning



Zoning Change Options

The **first option is incremental zoning** where a property owner requests a rezoning from one use to another in conjunction with a development project. This approach can be more palatable to the community because the change is owner-initiated. Of the options presented this is the most passive, and least predictable, approach.

The **second option is a town-initiated rezoning**. In this scenario, Laurel Park identifies the areas to rezone and is the applicant in the rezoning process. For some, this approach can be more controversial as it may be interpreted as an infringement on property rights or as a threat to property values. Others may view changes positively if they perceive the change to add more value to their property, such as zoning from a residential use to commercial. This option is the most aggressive and the most predictable for the town.

The **third option is a combination of options one and two**. The Town Center district's anchor property is Laurel Park Village, the owner of which is open to input from the community. The 90-acre parcel that anchors the Neighborhood Activity Center is bank-owned and has been on the market for years. The property may be more marketable if it allows for commercial uses. In this approach, the town develops the district standards, with input, and then approaches the anchor property owners about rezoning. At the same time, the town could approach other property owners to assess their willingness to rezone to one of the new districts. This approach is the most collaborative of the options.

Planning Assistance

Laurel Park's Town Manager is also the town's planner and zoning administrator. The work ahead needs focused attention by someone who knows how to create new (and complex) zoning districts, who can monitor the land use tasks outlined in this plan, and train and work with the Planning Board. As the town makes zoning changes, it will need assistance from a trained planner or zoning administrator, yet it may not need or have the resources for full-time assistance for some time. Some ideas to increase staff assistance include the option to:

- Hire a part-time town planner or share a position with one of Henderson County's municipalities, such as Flat Rock.
- Contract with the City of Hendersonville or Henderson County Planning Department for planning services.
- Contact with a private consulting company to provide on-call or contracted planning assistance.



Watershed Overlay District

Chapter 3 discusses the land-based development constraints of the portion of Laurel Park that is within the Upper French Broad River Watershed. Currently, Laurel Park’s Watershed Overlay District prohibits commercial development. To meet future land development goals, the CPSC recommends Laurel Park amend its Watershed Overlay District to allow for small-scale commercial development.

The Overlay district’s intent statement reads, “In order to accommodate moderate to high land use intensity, single family residential uses shall develop at a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per acre (2 du/ac). All other residential development shall be allowed at a maximum of twenty-four percent (24%) built-upon area. A maximum of thirty-six (36%) percent built-upon area is allowed for projects without a curb and gutter street system.” In contrast, Henderson County’s Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District (WSWP) allows for commercial development in the Upper French Broad Watershed.

The CPSC unanimously agreed that commercial development should be allowed in Laurel Park’s Watershed Overlay District. Therefore, *Section 1602.1 - Uses Allowed* should have a fourth category for non-residential development. Uses allowed in the underlying base district shall determine the types of non-residential development allowed in the Overlay District. For example, the suggested new Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) zoning district should allow for small scale non-residential activities such as restaurants, small shops, and other service businesses. The NAC’s approved uses are also the approved uses in the Watershed Overlay District.

The Overlay District’s non-residential built-upon limits should follow the recommendations in North Carolina’s Model Watershed Ordinance:

Model Watershed Ordinance Standards	
Low-Density Option	24% Maximum Built-Upon Limit or 36% Maximum Built-Upon Limit with a Drainage and Filtration Bonus or other Best Management Practice
High-Density Option	70% Maximum Built-Upon Limit. The Laurel Park Planning Board should use the High-Density Option Model Ordinance and guidance to determine if and how it should incorporate the High-Density Option.

<https://ncdenr.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Energy%20Mineral%20and%20Land%20Resources/Stormwater/Water%20Supply%20Watershed/WSWP.AppendixC.doc>



Other Zoning Changes

Dimensional Recommendations

The Plan does not recommend dimensional changes to the R-20, R-30, MIC, or I-1 Districts in the town or the ETJ. The New Zoning Districts section addresses changes to the existing C-1 District.

Use Recommendations

The range of uses in R-20 and R-30 is limited. To adjust to changing times and conditions, the planning board should study amendments related to the following:

Home occupations/ Home-based businesses. To accommodate the ability to operate a business from one's home, the zoning ordinance should contain home occupation and/or home-based business standards.

Retirees do work from home, but as access to broadband increases and younger people move to Laurel Park, more people may choose to do so. Allowance for *home occupations* diversifies Laurel Park's economic base.

SUGGESTED DEFINITION - Home Occupation: An occupation, profession, activity or use that is clearly a customary, secondary, and incidental use of a residential dwelling unit which does not alter the exterior of the property or affect the residential character of the neighborhood.

During Planning Committee discussions, the committee discussed the need for greater access to childcare options for families with young children. An allowance for *home-based businesses* is one way to fill this gap.

SUGGESTED DEFINITION - Home-Based Business: A home-based business would consist of service oriented uses and typically be more intense than a home occupation, due to factors such as intensity of use or clients coming to the residence.

Remain Aware of Emerging Uses. The uses allowed in Laurel Park's zoning districts are common to traditional zoning ordinances. Many communities have added standards and definitions for emerging uses to their zoning ordinance. Laurel Park's decision to allow chickens (regulated through the town's code of ordinances) and the addition of a microbrewery definition are good examples of codifying emerging uses. Other zoning-related topics surfacing in communities include food trucks, vacation rentals (VRBO, Airbnb), home garden agriculture stands, and bicycle parking. Laurel Park does not need to add new definitions or standards immediately, but it should be aware that changing conditions call for periodic ordinance updates.



Consider allowance of Accessory Dwelling Units in Residential Districts:

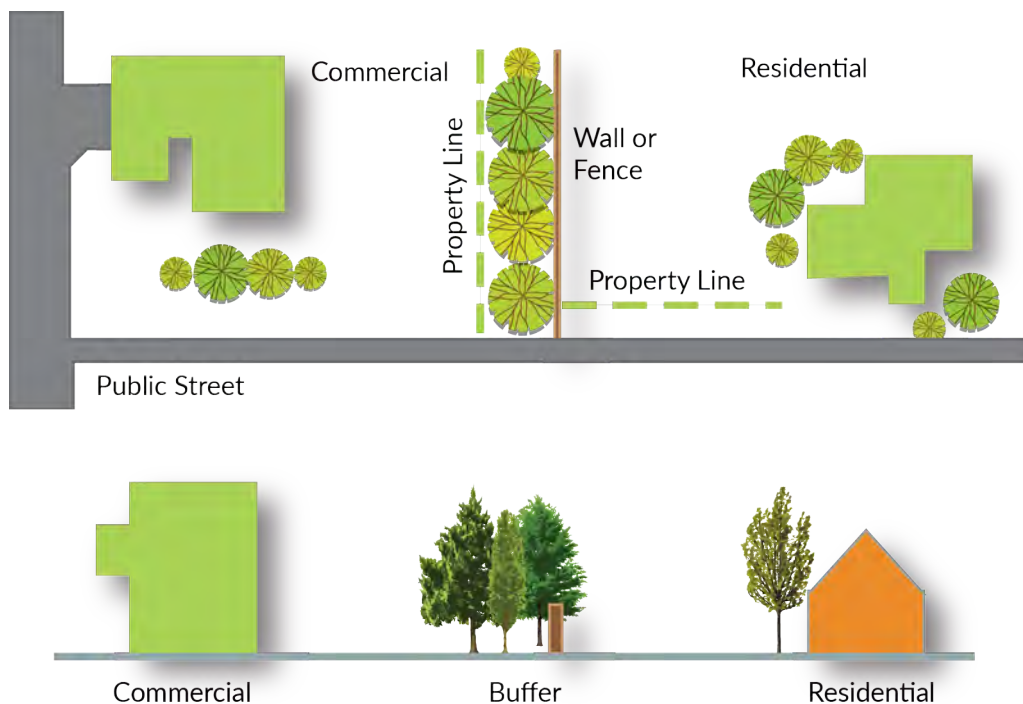
Many communities allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), which are subordinate to the main residential unit on a single parcel. Granny flats, garage apartments, mother-in-law suites, cottages, etc. are common names for ADUs. ADUs provide for a greater range of housing options. For example, many in Laurel Park expressed a desire to age in place. ADUs can generate additional rental income, provide a home for a resident caregiver, or can be a place where family members can stay for an extended visit. While certain older homes in town currently feature ADUs that have been in use for decades new construction is not allowed. Should Laurel Park study ADU standards, it should consider allowable square footage, height, setbacks, and parking.

SUGGESTED DEFINITION - Accessory Dwelling Unit: A separate, complete housekeeping unit with a separate entrance, kitchen, sleeping area, and full bathroom facilities, which is an attached or detached extension to an existing single-family structure.

Table of Uses. Laurel Park should add a Table of Uses to its zoning ordinance.

Buffer. Amend the ordinance to require maintenance of the vegetative buffer and consider increasing the buffer between commercial and residential uses.

Figure 7-8: Vegetative Buffers Between Commercial and Residential



Future Land Use Goals

Below are the implementation goals for this chapter. The Implementation Matrix in Chapter 8 details each goal's corresponding actions and strategies.

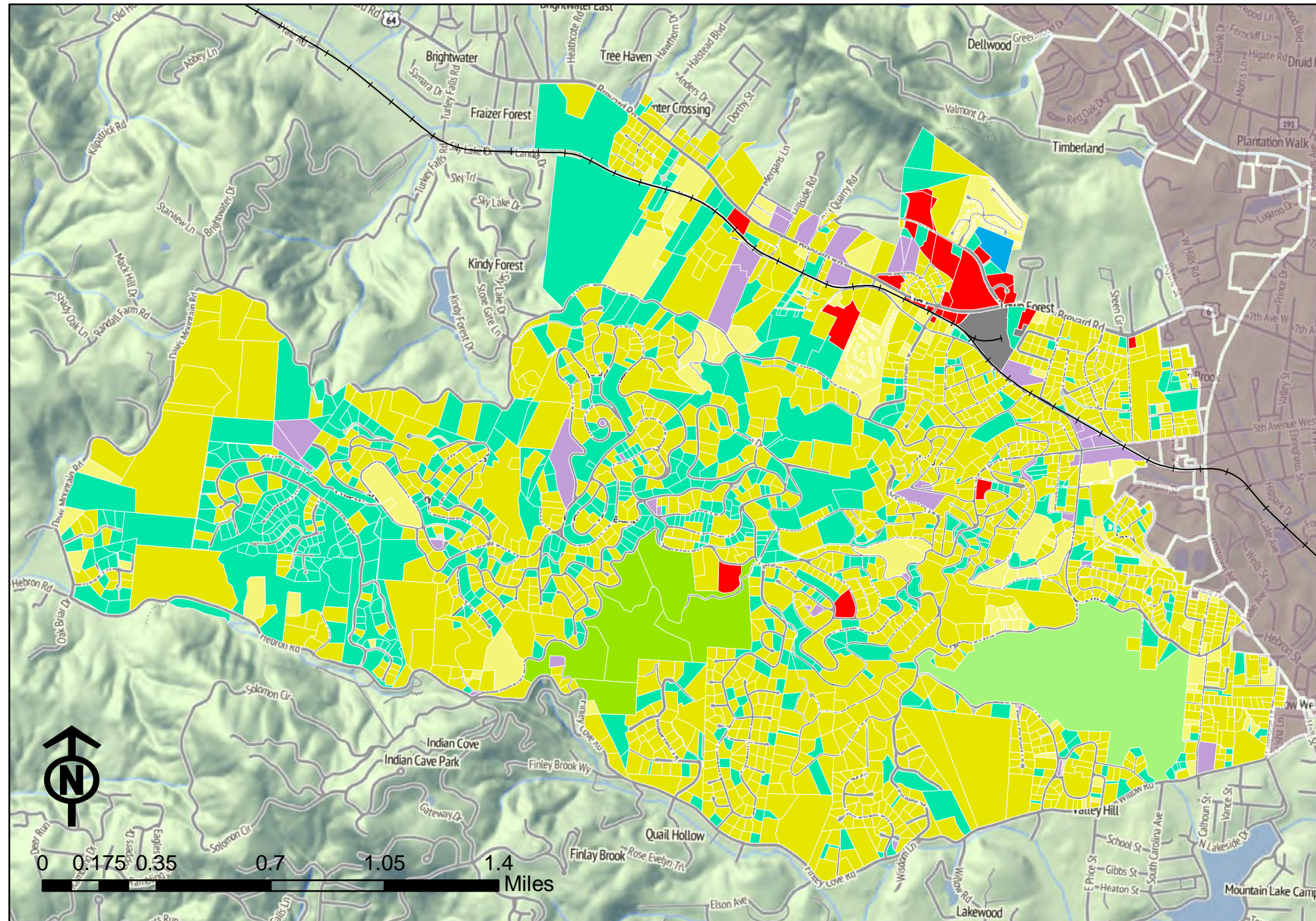


Existing & Future Land Use

- Laurel Park is financially stable and has a diversity of funding sources for project investment.
- Laurel Park builds political support for the Future Land Use Plan (Henderson County, Hendersonville, State Elected Officials).
- Laurel Park has the structure to implement the Future Land Use Plan.



Map 7-2: Existing Land Use



Legend

- Residential-SFR
- Residential-Other
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Medical
- Open Space
- Public
- Golf
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- Hendersonville
- Rail Track

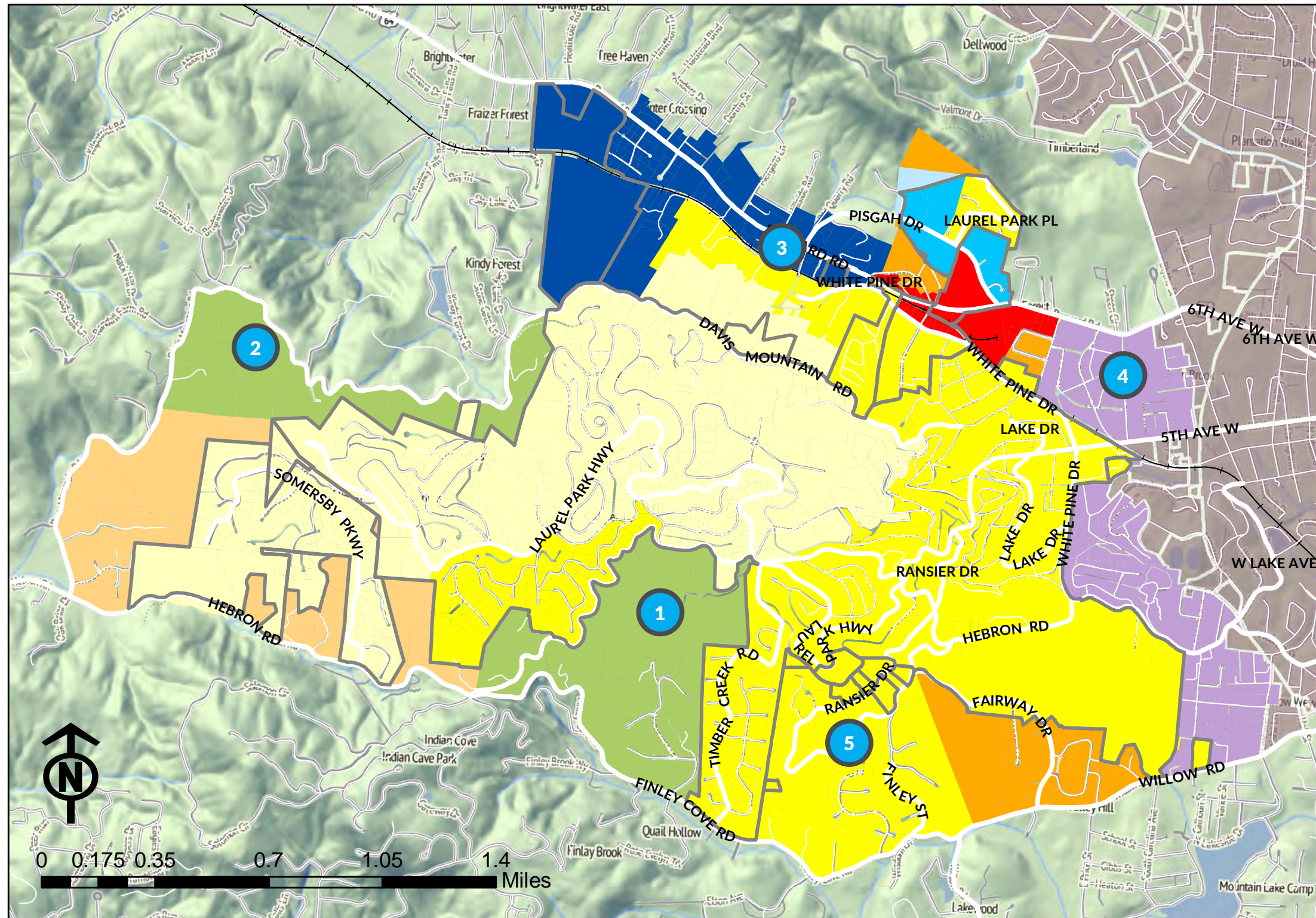
SFR = Single Family Residential

Existing Land Use

Area	Commercial	Golf	Industrial	Medical	Open Space	Public	Recreation	Residential Other	Residential Single Family	Vacant Land	Total
Laurel Park	2%	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	50%	27%	15%	100%
Laurel Park ETJ	3%	<1%	4%	0%	0%	1%	<1%	6%	62%	24%	100%
Henderson County	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	13%	4%	1%	10%	56%	15%	100%
H'Ville ETJ	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	24%	67%	9%	100%



Map 7-3: Future Land Use



Legend

- Laurel Park
- Town Center
- NAC
- R-20
- R-30
- ETJ R-20
- ETJ R-30
- MIC
- ETJ MIC
- Interlocal Area
- HC Zoning
- Hendersonville
- Rail Track

Study Area Sections

1. Between Timber Creek and Hebron Road
2. Between Davis Mountain Road and the Town/ETJ boundary,
3. Between the 90-acre parcel and Windsor Drive
4. Between Laurel Park and Hendersonville, north and south of the railroad track,
5. Ransier Drive area.

NAC = Neighborhood Activity Center
 R=Residential
 ETJ=Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

MIC=Medical, Institutional, Cultural
 HC=Henderson County

Map 7-3: Future Land Use



CHAPTER EIGHT - IMPLEMENTATION

While the Plan covers a ten-year planning horizon, many of the recommendations are long-range initiatives that guide the Town's future. Each chapter provides a set of Goals, Strategies, and Actions that influence successful implementation of the priorities of Laurel Park residents and stakeholders.

Types of Strategies & Recommendations

Advocacy Investment: Investment of elected official resources to build relationships to influence policies and the Town's ability to reach its goals.

Community Engagement: A strategy/recommendation that calls for some type of community involvement or engagement before a new program, policy, or project is implemented.

Continuation: Recommendations that acknowledge Laurel Park's current efforts and ongoing commitment.

Empowerment Investment: Investment of staff or appointed board time to build relationships, identify resources, or develop plans, policies, or projects that accomplish town goals.

New Program/Policy/Project: A strategy/recommendation that results in a new town policy, program, or project.

- *Policy:* Something that identifies a new direction for the town.
- *Program:* Something that requires ongoing work.
- *Project:* Something that has a defined beginning and end.

Partnership: Strategies where community partners share in the investment.

Pre-Investment: Investment of upfront resources to build a foundation for a potentially greater and more beneficial investment later on.

Program/Service Expansion: Recommendations that expand on an existing program or service.

Resource Investment: Monetary investment from town resources, grants, or other funding sources.

Time Frame

- *Ongoing:* Work is currently in progress and will continue.
- *Short-Term:* Years 1-3 of the Comprehensive Plan time horizon.
- *Mid-Term:* Years 4-7 of the Comprehensive Plan time horizon.
- *Long-Term:* Years 8-10 of the Comprehensive Plan time horizon.

The plan should be reviewed annually by the Planning Board and Town Council and updated every five to ten years in response to land use trends, changes in population, or any major events that may affect Laurel Park’s future. This will ensure the plan and its individual recommendations remain relevant.

The primary tools and strategies used to implement the Plan’s recommendations are listed below.

Implementation Strategy	Strategy Action
Ten Year Capital Improvement Plan	Develop a Ten Year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and prioritize public improvements that reflect Plan priorities. Review annually with the town budget and update accordingly.
Laurel Park’s Zoning, Subdivision, and Other Land Use Regulations	The Town Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations and policies will be one of the primary tools used to implement Plan vision, goals, and policies. The information and policies in this plan should guide future revisions to zoning text and map amendments, subdivision regulations, and other development related changes (signs, design standards, etc.)
Statements of Consistency	All proposed land use regulation amendments should be reviewed for consistency with the Vision Statements, Goals, Strategies and Actions found in the Plan.
Development Approvals	The Town of Laurel Park’s Planning Board and governing board should review and approve development activity that is consistent with the Plan’s vision, goals, and policies. Education about Laurel Park’s development goals should be communicated to developers during development approval meetings.

Implementation Strategy	Strategy Action
Town Budgets and Fiscal Planning	One intent of the Plan is to guide town fiscal planning and budgeting decisions, including the Town’s Capital Improvement Plan. The annual budget decisions should support the Vision Statements, Goals, Strategies and Actions found in the Plan.
Planning and Programming	The Plan will also influence decisions about planning and programming activities that Town staff will prioritize over the next ten years. The priorities in the Plan should be reflected in departmental plans.
Education	Education and outreach are necessary to inform residents and stakeholders of plan Vision, Goals, Strategies, and Actions. The Town should use its website, newsletters, Blackboard system, water bill inserts, and printed notices at Town Hall to inform citizens of its decision making, programs, and initiatives. Presentations to civic groups, Town boards, and key stakeholders can be used as an additional means of outreach.
Partnerships	Town staff, elected officials, and/or appointed boards will develop and implement most Plan recommendations and actions. Some implementation items will require partnerships with governmental organizations such as NCDOT and the French Broad River MPO, the City of Hendersonville, and Henderson County. Other partnerships will include private property developers, the LPCA and local businesses to maximize resources and generate buy-in to implement Plan actions.
Monitoring	Plan progress should be reviewed yearly in conjunction with the annual budget process to determine if policies and town decisions are aligned with plan implementation. The Planning Board should work with town staff to develop and publish an annual progress report to the Town Council summarizing key accomplishments, issues, partnerships, and resources.

Implementation Strategy	Strategy Action
Amendments	<p>Along with the Annual Report from the planning board, the Plan may need minor amendments. The planning board should review and consider amendments annually, timed with the annual budget cycle and Annual Progress Report. The Plan should be amended under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant changes have occurred since the adoption of the Plan that necessitates the proposed amendment; • Inconsistencies or conflicts with future rules or laws inhibit the ability of the Town to support the goals of the Plan; • The Town’s ability to support the goals of the Plan will be enhanced by the amendment; and or • The Town’s ability to address community priorities beyond the scope of the Plan is inhibited by the policies in the Plan.
Updates	<p>The town should plan and budget for an extensive update of the Plan every five years to ensure that policies reflect demographic, economic, and public priorities. The next update, scheduled for 2021 should be updated to reflect 2020 Census data.</p>

Project Investment Decisions

During Plan development, the planning team performed a detailed financial analysis to conceptualize Laurel Park’s future financial condition – the projections are highlighted in Chapter Seven. Projections are tricky, particularly when financial conditions are subject to broad and uncontrollable trends. Rather than weighing decisions against the financial scenario current during Plan development, the recommendation to determine the fiscal impact of projects is two-fold.

Financial Values

First, as Laurel Park explores development and investment projects, it should weigh investment decisions against its financial values to determine if and how a project will benefit the town.

Laurel Park Financial Values

Laurel Park strives to maintain a stable tax rate and stable level of service over time to provide competitively priced services (e.g. water rates).

Laurel Park places a high priority on town-led strategies that protect property values.

Laurel Park understands the need to invest in strategies that create a sense of place and promote a high quality of life, and the town understands that the return on this type of investment may be difficult to quantify.

Laurel Park places a high value on providing a quality of life that protects property values and encourage new residents to move to Laurel Park.

Laurel Park embraces the need for high-value lands such as commercial property and land uses that result in a higher value per acre.

Laurel Park strives to maintain a fund balance that is at a level that is similar to the median fund balance of cohort towns, as benchmarked with the NC Treasurer's AFIR Reports.

Laurel Park values regional cooperation and understands the need to develop and invest in regional infrastructure solutions.

Laurel Park has ongoing capital needs; the town values the opportunity to make planned and strategic capital investments.

Development Impact Analysis

Second, for larger investment and development projects--such as the proposed sewer line, large-scale rezonings, or large planned development proposals--Laurel Park should perform a development impact analysis.

A simple four-step fiscal impact analysis examines the costs and benefits associated with a project:

Four-Step Development Impact Analysis

1. Estimate the population generated by the development (e.g., the number of new residents [adults and children], number of new employees)
2. Translate this population into public service costs (e.g., water service, police protection, fire) based on costs used in the local or regional market.
3. Project the tax and other local revenues generated by the growth.
4. Compare the development-induced costs to projected revenues and, if a gap exists, determine how to address the shortfall.

The process outlined presents a simple formula. However, there are variables and trade-offs to consider. The analysis should be performed early in the development process to allow for changes to mitigate overly negative impacts.

While the basic methodology is straightforward, it can also include variables

to compare alternative development scenarios, but only if the impact analysis is performed at a conceptual design stage and developed with the project developer. Variables could include more compact development, larger or smaller lots, or increasing walkability and connectivity if the traffic impact is a concern.

Implementation Goals

Below are the implementation goals for this chapter. The Implementation Matrix in Chapter 8 details each goal's corresponding actions and strategies.



Implementation

- Laurel Park maintains up-to-date information to monitor and plan for services that match development activity.
- The Implementation chapter also includes the full implementation matrix.

TOWN ON THE MOUNTAIN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX



Types of Strategies & Recommendations

Advocacy Investment: Investment of elected official resources to build relationships to influence policies and the Town's ability to reach its goals.

Community Engagement: A strategy/recommendation that calls for some type of community involvement or engagement before a new program, policy, or project is implemented.

Continuation: Recommendations that acknowledge Laurel Park's current efforts and ongoing commitment.

Empowerment Investment: Investment of staff or appointed board time to build relationships, identify resources, or develop plans, policies, or projects that accomplish town goals.

New Program/Policy/Project: A strategy/recommendation that results in a new town policy, program, or project.

- *Policy:* Something that identifies a new direction for the town.
- *Program:* Something that requires ongoing work.
- *Project:* Something that has a defined beginning and end.

Partnership: Strategies where community partners share in the investment.

Pre-Investment: Investment of upfront resources to build a foundation for a potentially greater and more beneficial investment later on.

Program/Service Expansion: Recommendations that expand on an existing program or service.

Resource Investment: Monetary investment from town resources, grants, or other funding sources.

Time Frame

Ongoing: Work is currently in progress and will continue.

Short-Term: Years 1-3 of the Comprehensive Plan time horizon.

Mid-Term: Years 4-7 of the Comprehensive Plan time horizon.

Long-Term: Years 8-10 of the Comprehensive Plan time horizon.

Chapter Three: Recreation & Cultural Resources



Goal 3-1: Ecusta Trail is an economic driver in Laurel Park.					
Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Become a well known Ecusta Trail Town - plan like is going to happen.	Continue to lend town support (e.g. letters of support, help with advertising, logistics planning, use of facilities) to build and maintain community momentum.	Continuation	Ongoing	Town Board & Staff	Staff Time
	Continue to lend town support to the non-profit organizations (Friends of the Ecusta Trail, Laurel Park Civic Association) building local regional support for the Ecusta Trail.	Continuation	Ongoing	Town Board & Staff	Staff Time
	Continue to be an Ecusta Trail advocate through the FBRMPO planning and project prioritization process. (See Transportation Chapter).	Continuation	Ongoing	Town Board & Staff	Staff Time
	Empower the Laurel Park Parks & Greenways Advisory Board to become the Town's Trail Ambassadors. Ensure they receive Trail status updates, know how to talk about the Trail, and are the go-to group to talk with concerned citizens.	Empowerment	Ongoing	Parks & Greenway Advisory Board	Board Time
	Before Laurel Park is ready to adopt the Neighborhood Activity Center zoning district (see Chapter Seven), develop an information sheet to provide to adjoining trail corridor property owners who come to the Town for development permits. Use it as an opportunity to build trail support.	Empowerment	Short-Term	Planning Board	Board Time



Goal 3-2: Laurel Park’s recreation resources are connected through story-telling and connections.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Tell the Laurel Park story and connect with activities.	Continue to tell the Laurel Park story through the historic sign and site marker program by completing the full system of signs.	New Program, Resource Investment	Mid-Term	Parks & Greenways Advisory Board	\$2,000 - \$8,000
	Unify the historic signs and create an experience through a mapped driving or walking trail/path. Identify a no- to low-cost on-line mapping platform (ArcGIS Story Maps, Google Maps, WhatWasThere.com) to tell the story.	New Program, Resource Investment	Mid-Term	Parks & Greenways Advisory Board	\$1,000 - \$1,500
Connect the Recreation and Cultural Resources.	Use Laurel Park’s parks, pocket parks, bench locations, and historic makers sites as an opportunity to engage visitors. Task and support the Parks and Greenways Advisory Board with developing and a low-cost connecting activity such as a geocache and/or letterboxing trail, or a scavenger hunt.	New Program, Resource Investment	Long-Term	Parks & Greenways Advisory Board	\$5,000 (or lower)
Develop and Identify Additional Park and Cultural Resources.	Direct the Parks and Greenways Advisory Board to study the need for and possible locations of additional recreation resources to accommodate the growth areas depicted the Town of Laurel Park’s Future Land Use Map.	New Policy	Mid-Term	Parks & Greenways Advisory Board	Board Time
	Continue to empower and lend support to the Parks & Greenways Advisory Board efforts to implement the Parks and Greenways Plan.	Empowerment	Ongoing	Parks & Greenways Advisory Board	Board Time



Goal 3-3: Laurel Park has a distinct brand and identity.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Conduct a community branding and marketing process.	Issue an RFP to receive assistance from a branding and marketing firm to develop a town brand and a how-to guide to integrate the brand in town materials and activities.	New Program, Resource Investment	Mid-Term	Staff Assistance	\$8,000 & Staff Time

Chapter Four: Natural and Ecological Resources

Goal 4-1: New Development Implements Environmentally Sound Practices

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Protect the community and its residents from the effects of development on unsuitable soils, flood plains, and steep slopes.	Provide the developers, the planning board, and the governing board with access to maps and data pertaining to sensitive areas when reviewing development applications.	New Program, Resource Investment	Long-Term	Planning Board, Planning Staff Assistance	Board Time & Planning Staff Time*
	Direct the Planning Board to research regulatory options for protecting environmentally sensitive areas. Examples include: mimicking Henderson County's slope development standards, minimum open space requirements for new subdivisions, incentives for conservation (or compact) subdivision development.	New Policy, Resource Investment	Long-Term	Planning Board, Planning Staff Assistance	Board Time & Planning Staff Time*

*Cost of staff assistance depends on the type of planning assistance the town selects (see Chapter Seven)



Goal 4-2: Laurel Park preserves and restores ecological systems.					
Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Protect native wildlife and native plant species.	Develop a policy to preserve continuous tracts of open space for wildlife habitat using various methods including easements and conservation style development. Educate developers of the opportunity when reviewing development applications.	New Policy, Resource Investment	Long-Term	Planning Board & Parks and Greenways (PGAB) Advisory Board	Board Time & Planning Staff Time
	Continue to control invasive plant species through town work days and partnerships. Review Weaverville's Invasive Species Management Plan to determine if a formal plan will benefit Laurel Park.	Continuation, New Project	Mid-Term	Planning Board & PGAB	Board Time
	Incorporate a preferred native plant listing in the Zoning Ordinance.	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning PGAB	Board Time
	Adopt a Laurel Park Native Plant Policy that requires the town to use native plants in project the town is part of.	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board & PGAB	Board Time
Preserve and Enhance Laurel Park's Tree Canopy.	Direct the Planning Board to develop a tree protection ordinance that protects the existing tree canopy and establishes development tree removal standards, development planting standards, and ongoing maintenance standards (e.g. trees and plantings that die in a required buffer must be replaced).	New Policy, Resource Investment	Short-Term	Planning Board & PGAB	Board Time & Planning Staff Time
	Direct the Park and Greenways Advisory Board to serve as the Town's tree commission.	New Program	Mid-Term	Town Board	Board Time



Goal 4-3: Laurel Park has a natural and rural character.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Integrate natural and rural protection strategies with other town strategies and activities.	Identify contiguous tracts of open land as potential corridors for walking trails, but also as potential wildlife and wildfire mitigation corridors/fire breaks; including links between utility easements, and un-opened rights-of-way. Communicate the location of the corridors to developers during the development review process.	New Project	Mid-Term	Planning Board, Parks and Greenways Advisory Board	Board Time & Planning Staff Time

Chapter Five: Public Facilities & Services



Goal 5-1: Laurel Park citizens have access to high quality and sustainable water service.					
Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Determine the best long term option for system sustainability.	Apply for and complete the Merger/ Regionalization Feasibility Grant and continue to monitor Hendersonville's Water Study.	Pre-Investment	Short-Term	Town Manager	Staff Time
	Upon completion of studies, engage in formal conversations with the City of Hendersonville to determine options for improved or coordinated service or possibly a system merger.	Advocacy Investment	Short-Term	Town Board	Board & Staff Time



Goal 5-2: The US 64 Corridor has the infrastructure to support development.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Coordinate with the City of Hendersonville to construct a new sewer line.	Explore grant options and allocate funds to conduct a feasibility study that identifies the barriers to sewer line development, potential capacity, types of users needed, and other pertinent factors to determine the sewer line possibility.	Pre-Investment, Resource Investment	Short-Term	Town Manager	Staff Time \$15,000 for study
	Engage in conversations with the City of Hendersonville to develop an interlocal agreement that details how each municipality benefits from the shared infrastructure investment.	Advocacy Investment	Mid-Term	Town Board	Board Time
	As part of the interlocal agreement or a standalone town policy, prepare and adopt a sewer extension policy that requires voluntary annexation in exchange for sewer service.	New Policy, Resource Investment	Long-Term	Town Board	Board Time, \$8,000 Consultant Assistance

Goal 5-3: Laurel Park Citizens are served by a fully functional police department.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Identify long-term Police Department facility needs.	Devote resources for a Facility Space and Needs Study to determine the amount and type of facilities the town can develop and support, including the technological infrastructure needed to meet CJIS minimum standards.	New Project, Pre-Investment	Short-Term	Town Manager & Police Chief	\$15,000 for full study



Goal 5-4: Laurel Park Citizens are Served by a Fully Functional Town Hall

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Identify long-term Town Hall facility needs.	Devote resources for a Facility Space and Needs Study to determine the amount and type of facilities the town can develop and support to meet the town’s changing needs.	New Project, Pre-Investment	Short-Term	Town Manager	\$15,000 for full study
	Devote a portion of the Facility Space and Needs Study to determine restroom options for Laurel Green visitors during the times Town Hall is not open.	New Project, Pre-Investment	Short-Term	Town Manager	\$15,000 for full study

Goal 5-5: Laurel Park provides brush collection at least two times each year.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Coordinate brush pick up bush with leaf collection.	Study the efficiency and costs of adding an additional brush removal option in conjunction with leaf pick up; consider the benefit of reducing wildfire risk (a FireWise strategy). Investigate options to share services with the City of Hendersonville.	Program expansion	Short-Term	Town Manager & Staff	\$



Goal 5-6: Laurel Park residents have reliable broadband access.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Participate in regional broadband development activities.	Support the allocation of staff and elected official time to participate in Henderson County's efforts to replicate NC Next Generation Network (NCNGC) broadband effort or other coordinated broadband efforts.	Partnership	Ongoing	Town Staff, Town Appointee	Staff and Volunteer Time

Chapter Six: Transportation



Goal 6-1: Laurel Park has a well-maintained and safe roadway network for all users.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Systematically improve roads through repaving and repair.	Continue to update the three-year pavement maintenance and repair schedule and continue to allocate funds to support implementation.	Continuation	Ongoing	Town Maintenance Department, WGLA	Costs allocated through roadway improvement plan
Improve level of comfort of roadway users.	Develop a web-based tool that allows users to submit roadway (and other) concerns (pictures and text). Use a variety of strategies (see Figure 6-3) to mitigate concerns.	New Project/ Program	Short-Range	Town Staff	Web Tool = \$5,000 to \$10,000 + annual maintenance (select through an RFP process)
	Empower the police department to increase education and enforcement efforts to decrease speeding and user conflicts. Participate in NCDOT's WatchForMe roadway safety campaign.	Empowerment	Short-Term	Police Department	Staff Time



Goal 6-2: Laurel Park residents have multi-modal transportation choices.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Coordinate with the Apple Country Public transit to serve additional Laurel Park riders.	Prioritize walking connections from points within Laurel Park to the transit stop in Laurel Park Village.	Partnership, General Business	Short-Term	Town Staff	Staff Time
	Develop simple promotional materials such as newsletter ads, social media postings, etc. to promote Apple Country Transit as a transportation choice.	Partnership, General Business	Short-Term	Town Staff	Staff Time
	Ensure that the Apple Country Transit stop remains accessible during Laurel Park Village development projects.	Partnership, Project	Long-Term	Town Staff	Staff Time



Goal 6-2: Laurel Park residents have multi-modal transportation choices.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Continue to be an active participant with the French Broad River MPO to build support for local and regional projects that further multi-modal goals.	Advocate for the NCDOT to implement the FBRMPO’s Complete Streets option for the Brevard Road widening project.	Advocacy	Ongoing	MPO Rep.	MPO Rep, Time
	Work with the NCDOT to refine plans for White Pine Drive to ensure that pedestrian needs are met during Brevard Road construction and to ensure that White Pine Drive becomes a key pedestrian/ bicyclist street after the widening project is completed.	Advocacy	Ongoing	MPO Rep.	MPO Rep. Time
	Continue to be an advocate for Ecusta Trail funding through the FBRMPO prioritization process.	Advocacy	Ongoing	Town Board, MPO Reps	Board & MPO Rep. Time
Keep Laurel Park citizens informed as road projects progress.	Develop a “Project Updates” page on the town’s website to provide project updates for roadway and other town projects.	New Project & Program	Short-Term	Town Staff	Staff Time



Chapter Seven: Future Land Use

Goal 7-1: Laurel Park is financially stable and has a diversity of funding sources for project investment.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Build pool of alternative funding sources.	Seek out grant opportunities for projects.	Pre-Investment	Ongoing	Town Manager	Staff Time
	Continue to build relationships and share in project costs on projects that benefit Laurel Park and other local governments.	Advocacy, Partnership	Ongoing	Town Board	Board Time
	Invest in strategies that protect and enhance property values, including investments that don't have a quantifiable outcome.	Pre-Investment, Resource Investment	Ongoing	Town Board	Depends on Strategy
	Aim for a fund balance that is on par with cohort communities as defined in the AFIR.	Continuation	Ongoing	Town Board	



Goal 7-2: Build Political Support for the Future Land Use Plan (Henderson County, Hendersonville, State Elected Officials)

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Develop and adopt a Laurel Park advocacy strategy	Write/Develop an annual advocacy agenda to guide Town Board's priorities.	Advocacy	Short-Term	Town Board	Town Board Time
Develop an Interlocal agreement with Hendersonville after water studies are complete		Advocacy, Policy	Mid-Term	Town Board & Town Manager	Town Board & Staff Time, Consultant Time, \$5,000



Goal 7-3: Laurel Park has the structure to implement the Future Land Use Plan.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Create two new zoning districts (Neighborhood Activity Center and Town Center)	Create the new districts including basic standards for each district, design standards, uses, and the type of zoning tools needed to implement the districts.	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time
	Determine the preferred strategy to re-zone areas (incremental, town-initiated, hybrid option).	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time
	Implement an intentional community involvement strategy.	Community Engagement	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time
	Engage key property owners in the Town Center and Neighborhood Activity Center districts.	Community Engagement	Short-Term	Planning Board, Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time
Increase the Town's Planning Capacity	Determine and fund the preferred strategy to increase the town's planning capacity by hiring a part-time planner or shared position, contracting with Hendersonville or Henderson County, or contracting with a private planning firm.	Service Expansion	Short-Term	Town Board	\$4,800 (4 hrs per month @\$100/hr) to \$15,000 for part time position.
Evaluate and adopt miscellaneous zoning recommendations	Incorporate the following items: -Home Occupations/Home Based Businesses -Emerging uses as appropriate -Accessory Dwelling Units -Vegetative buffer maintenance	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board & Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time



Goal 7-3: Laurel Park has the structure to implement the Future Land Use Plan.

Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Amend zoning ordinance to allow commercial uses in the Watershed Overlay District	Re-write ordinance to allow for small-scale commercial development follow NC's Model Watershed Ordinance Standards.	New Policy	Short-Term	Planning Board & Town Manager	Board & Staff Time, Planning Staff Time

Chapter Eight: Implementation

Goal 8-1: Laurel Park maintains up-to-date information to monitor and plan for services that match development activity.					
Strategy	Action(s)	Type	Time	Lead	Cost
Maintain adequate and current information on the costs of government services so that basic information for fiscal impact analyses is readily available.	Adopt a requirement for a full fiscal impact analysis for all major projects (and define major projects).	New Policy	Mid-Term	Town Board & Planning Board	Board & Staff Time
	Maintain adequate and current information on the costs of government services so that basic information for fiscal impact analyses is readily available.	New Policy	Short-Term	Town Manager	Staff Time
	Keep capital improvement plans current and include appropriate development projections.	New Program	Ongoing	Town Board & Town Manager	Board & Staff Time

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APPENDIX 1 - GLOSSARY AND LAUREL PARK ADVISORY BOARDS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessible Design: Refers to housing or other dwelling requirements for accessibility found in state, local and model building codes, as well as regulations including the Department of Housing and Urban Development's program 202 and 811, section 504, the Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1988, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards A117.1-1986, 1992, and the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). These laws dictate standards dimensions and characteristics for such features as door widths, clear space for wheelchair mobility, audible and visual signals, grab bars, switch and outlet height, and more.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): A separate and complete dwelling unit that is contained on the same lot as the structure of a single-family dwelling or business. Granny flats, garage apartments, mother-in-law suites, cottages, etc. are common names for ADUs. ADUs provide for a greater range of housing options for residents.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Provides federal civil rights protection to individuals who are physically or mentally disabled. The ADA prohibits discrimination against the disabled in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. Entities that are covered by the ADA must make reasonable accommodation, which involves adapting programs, facilities, or work places to allow disabled individuals to participate in the program of services

Broadband: A high-capacity transmission technique using a wide range of frequencies, which enables a large number of messages to be communicated simultaneously. New Federal Communications Commission standards require a minimum broadband download speed of 25Mbps, up from 4Mbps. Cable and fiber optic services can easily meet those standards. Henderson County does not have a coordinated broadband strategy in place.

Budget: A statement about the financial position

of an entity - especially household, business, or government - based on estimates of anticipated revenues and expenditures. (A budget is balanced if the revenues and expenditures are equal, but if expenditures exceed revenues then there is a budget deficit.) Laurel Park's Fiscal Year 2015-2016 budget is \$2,522,800.

Capital: One of the four basic categories of resources, or factors of production. (Examples of capital include buildings, investment dollars, trucks, tools, and equipment used by the town).

Comprehensive Plan: A plan adopted by town, city, village or county government or by a regional planning commission. A comprehensive plan is the cornerstone of the long range planning process. It addresses population growth and demographic changes, land use patterns and intensity, public services, infrastructure needs, and recommends policies and regulations to implement the plan and provide the services.

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC): A representative body created by the Laurel Park Town Council for the purposes of directing the development of the comprehensive plan for the town.

Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS): This Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agency issues minimum standards related to information and record security for law enforcement organizations.

Dummy Line: In the early 1900s, the Laurel Park Railroad ran a trolley to carry riders from Laurel Park to Hendersonville and back. This was called the "Dummy Line", supposedly because it could only run forward to Laurel Park and backwards to Hendersonville.

EDP: see Henderson County Economic Development Partnership.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ): North Carolina cities have since 1959 had the authority to apply their land development regulations

to a perimeter area around the city. This area is the municipal extraterritorial planning jurisdiction, commonly referred to as the city ETJ. Many North Carolina cities have exercised this authority to apply city planning and development regulations to these perimeter areas.

Fiscal Year: A fiscal year (FY) is a period that a company or government uses for accounting purposes and preparing financial statements. The fiscal year may or may not be the same as a calendar year. For tax purposes, companies can choose to be calendar-year taxpayers or fiscal-year taxpayers. Fiscal years are commonly referred to when discussing budget and are often a convenient period to use when comparing a government's or company's financial performance over time.

Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM):

Administered by the NC Division of Emergency Management, these maps illustrate floodplain areas for insurance purposes. A FIRM illustrates the extent of flood hazards in a community by depicting areas at risk of flooding; property insurance rates will differ between areas in a 100-Year Floodplain and those in a 500-Year Floodplain. Development within floodplains is usually discouraged to prevent life and property damage. Henderson County's most recent FIRMs took effect in 2008.

Henderson County Economic Development Partnership (EDP): The Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development (HCPED) is a public/private partnership that serves as the professional economic development organization for Henderson County. The Partnership works to: attract and retain quality jobs; solicit new business compatible with the assets and values of Henderson County; promote Henderson County's business image; assist expansion and retention of existing companies; and enhance Henderson County's overall quality of life. The EDP serves as a liaison between businesses needing services (such as broadband) and the local providers.

100-Year Floodplain (Special Flood Hazard Area, or SFHA): These are areas with at least a 1% annual chance of flooding, which equates to a

26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. All homeowners in these areas with mortgages from federally regulated or insured lenders are required to buy flood insurance.

500-Year Floodplain (Non-Special Flood Hazard Area, or NSFHA): These areas have a reduced, moderate-to-low risk of flooding. These areas are outside the 1% annual flood-risk floodplain area, so flood insurance is not required, but it is recommended for all property owners and renters.

Laurel Park Planning Team (LPPT): A group comprised of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC), Town of Laurel Park Staff, and the J.M. Teague Engineering & Planning (JMTE) Consulting Team. The LPPT studied and discussed at length the physical, economic, and social conditions of Laurel Park in projecting what the future of the town should be.

MCNC: A technology non-profit that builds, owns, and operates a leading-edge broadband infrastructure for North Carolina's research, education, non-profit healthcare, and other community institutions.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):

These entities are federally mandated and federally funded transportation policy-making organizations in the United States that are made up of representatives from local government and governmental transportation authorities. MPOs vary greatly in terms of capacity and responsibilities. Some MPOs are supported by one or two staff, while others have over 100 staff. While half of MPOs represent populations of less than 200,000, some represent millions. MPOs are typically housed within a regional planning council or a city or county government agency, but also may operate as independent agencies. The French Broad River MPO and the Land of Sky MPO are mentioned in this Plan.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA):

Geographic entities delineated by the Office of Management and Budget for use by federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing federal statistics. A metro area contains a core urban area of 50,000 or more population, with one or more counties that have

a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP): A long-range plan for regional transportation goals. This Plan specifically mentions the 2040 plan designed by the FBRMPO, which outlined eight broad goals: improving multimodal and non-motorized transportation options, improving safety, addressing congestion, improving public transit options, improving and expanding public involvement, ensuring that changes respect our unique places, seeking ways to maintain and improve safe freight movement, and improving/developing planning tools.

National Land Cover Database (NLCD): A record of what covers land – the type and intensity of development, natural land (rocks, sand), forest lands, crops, etc. NLCD classifies much of Laurel Park’s land as Developed, Open Space (47%) and Deciduous Forest (36%).

Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC): One of two proposed new districts in Laurel Park, the NAC extends commercial and residential activity along US64 using a less dense development pattern, promoting the use of small- and medium-sized lots. The activities would accommodate the future Ecusta Trail – local stores, small restaurants, or a bicycle shop. Single family residential on small lots or cottage-style development is encouraged.

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT): The N.C. Department of Transportation is one of North Carolina’s largest state government agencies, with 12,000 employees and operating annually on a \$4.4 billion budget funded by both state and federal sources. NCDOT works hard to provide high-quality transportation for travelers throughout North Carolina, including highways, rail, aviation, ferries, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and public transit. Henderson County is in NCDOT’s Division 14 Planning Area.

North Carolina Next Generation Network (NCNGN): A regional initiative focused on stimulating the deployment of next generation broadband networks in North Carolina. The

coordinated effort is led by six municipalities and four leading research universities and supported by local Chambers of Commerce and businesses in the Research Triangle and Piedmont regions. NCNGN’s goal is to encourage private sector providers to deliver ultra-fast bandwidth at highly affordable prices to ensure our regions and state remain competitive and at the forefront of developing the next-generation applications essential to all sectors of the economy.

North Carolina Research & Education Network (NCREN): NCREN has a broadband line, operated by MCNC, that follows US64 through Laurel Park. It provides access to fiber optic services for K-12 schools, community colleges, private and public universities, research and non-profit health care institutions, libraries, public safety offices, and state and local governments.

Plan Study Area (PSA): The geographic and jurisdictional boundary of a plan’s focus. The study area for this plan includes the Town of Laurel Park, the ETJ, and the areas that fill gaps between the town boundary and the ETJ.

Steep Slopes: There is not a universally accepted definition of a steep slope in North Carolina, nor is there a state law or local ordinance in place to regulate steep slope development in Laurel Park. Henderson County’s Land Development Code defines steep slopes as “a slope with a greater than 25% percent incline.” Development challenges can begin on slopes as low as 15%, with thin soils, erosion, and even landslides. Many jurisdictions have stipulations against steep slope development and/or conditional allowances.

State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP): The North Carolina Department of Transportation’s (NCDOT) 10-year construction schedule for projects. The schedule is updated every two years based on a data-driven process called Prioritization, as well as the latest state and federal financial situation, and the status of preconstruction activities. Schedule development must adhere to the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI)

law, which mandates ongoing evaluation and improvement to ensure the process continues to be responsive to North Carolina’s diverse needs. Developing a STIP is accomplished through ongoing collaboration with our regional planning partners—metropolitan and rural planning organizations—and public input is a key component. Phase I of the Ecusta Trail is listed in the STIP as a Horizon 2 project scheduled for planning and environmental work between 2021-2025.

Water Supply Watershed Protected Area: A water supply watershed (WSWS) is an area that feeds a public water system. The NC Department of Environmental Quality classifies the Upper French Broad River Watershed, partially located in Laurel Park, as a WS-IV watershed. This designation means protections are in place for water sources that supply drinking, culinary, or food processing purposes.

Watershed Overlay District: An area with restrictions and requirements for development as related to the WSWS protected area. To avoid intense land use, the Overlay District sets density restrictions. As per the 2015 Laurel Park Zoning Ordinance, that means maximum dwelling unit allowances per acre and maximum built-upon area for residential parcels, with no commercial development.

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI): The area where human development mixes with or is adjacent to natural areas. The WUI is the area where it is likely that a wildland fire will reach beyond natural fuels, such as trees and brush, to habituated areas and homes.

William G. Lapsley & Associates Engineering, PLLC (WGLA): A firm of professional civil engineers originally established in 1986, located in downtown Hendersonville, North Carolina. Staff includes engineers licensed in multiple states, providing a wide array of civil engineering and land planning services for private developers, industry as well as municipal and state government.

LAUREL PARK ADVISORY BOARDS

The **Planning Board** makes studies of areas, prepares plans, develops policies, ordinances

and administrative procedures, making recommendations to the Town Council regarding these issues

The **Board of Adjustment** is a quasi-judicial board. Some powers and duties include interpretation, administrative review, conditional uses and variances.

The Members of the **Recreation and Parks Advisory Commission** are appointed to provide guidance and advice on proposed and existing parks.

The Laurel Park **ABC Board** is appointed by the City Council and serves at their pleasure. The Board has authority over administration, real estate, personnel and retail sales of liquor inside Laurel Park’s corporate limits. It is an independent unit of government than assures the responsible operation of the system within the boundaries of the laws and rules of North Carolina.

Laurel Park has one appointment to the **Henderson County Historical Resources Commission**. Through the Commission, Henderson County seeks: (1) to safeguard heritage by preserving districts and landmarks, and (2) to promote the use and conservation of such districts and landmarks for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of the residents of the County and beyond.

The **Laurel Park Civic Association (LPCA)** works to foster a spirit of cooperation between Laurel Park and the Ton’s Administrators. LPCA hosts a number of activities and have led many projects that serve to enhance the community. The LPCA is, “Dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the charming small town atmosphere, natural beauty, and exceptional quality of life in our town on the mountain.”

APPENDIX 2 – EXISTING PLAN REVIEW

Town of Laurel Park 2005 – 2015 Land Use Plan

Laurel Park’s 2005-2015 Land Use Plan was an update to the Town’s first land use plan from 1988. The 2015 Land Use Plan’s purpose was to serve as the “cornerstone of the long range-planning process. It addresses population growth, land use patterns and intensity, public services, infrastructure needs, and recommends policies and regulations to implement the plan.” The stated intent of the 2015 Land Use Plan was to serve as a policy statement and a guide for future development. The policies and programs set forth in the 2015 Plan should have been the guide for community change in Laurel Park between 2005 and 2015; yet town leaders found the plan to be lacking in usability and effectiveness. The table below details the implementation items and, to the extent possible, provides an overview of implementation progress.

Link: http://www.laurelpark.org/index.asp?SEC=C4A46313-0D1F-4B23-BD8A-C9A4D3D26BDA&Type=B_LIST

Implementation Area	2005-2015 Implementation Recommendation	Progress Since 2005 and/or Most Recent Action
Zoning Ordinance	Review the Highway 64 corridor for the potential of mixed-use zoning.	The Zoning Ordinance has had multiple amendments and additions, but no significant overhaul. Record of changes: http://bit.ly/1XD3Wn4 . The ordinance has not been updated to accommodate mixed-use zoning along the US 64 Corridor.
Zoning Ordinance	Continue to allocate funds to send the Zoning Administrator, members of the Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, and Town Council to the Zoning Administrators' Course at the School of Government, as needed.	Continue as a practice but this does not need to be an implementation item in the updated Comprehensive Plan.
Subdivision Ordinance	The Subdivision Ordinance should be continually monitored for adherence to the goals and policies of the Town.	The Subdivision Ordinance was last updated in January 2001.
Water Extension	Water extension policies should be continually monitored for adherence	The Town of Laurel Park continually monitors all water system policies.

Implementation Area	2005-2015 Implementation Recommendation	Progress Since 2005 and/or Most Recent Action
Policy	to the goals and policies of the Town.	
Sewer Extension Policy	<p>The Town Council of Laurel Park Developed a Wastewater Collection Master Plan assisted by McGill Associates and formally accepted the plan in November 2004. As stated in Section VII, near term planning may not indicate a critical need or decision to construct a complete sewerage system, but future growth demands, federal or state regulations, or local environmental issues will likely necessitate a complete system in the future. Growth rates, environmental criteria, and the economics of a Town system are key factors in this decision making process.</p>	<p>The Town of Laurel Park last evaluated its sewer system when it worked with WGLA, Inc. to develop the 2008-2009 Sewer Study Update (May 2011). Study results are discussed in Chapter 5 of the Plan.</p>
Transportation	<p>The 1988 Land Use Plan recommended several areas for review within Laurel Park. It addressed the need for a long-range plan for street improvements, establishing annual priorities and budgets for identified needs. In June 2000, the Town Council contracted for a Pavement Condition Survey to be completed that analyzed the maintenance needs for the Town's street system. The Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) from North Carolina State University conducted the study. The study established resurfacing priorities and maintenance needs for the 32.09 miles of Town roadway. Each budget cycle, the Town uses the survey coupled with state provided Powell Bill funds to set road maintenance</p>	<p>Laurel Park continually tries to address paving and road maintenance concerns. The town took significant action in fiscal year 2016 when Council dedicated 3 cents of the property tax to road repair and storm drainage maintenance, increasing repair and maintenance fund by 108%. Additionally, the Town has developed a three year paving schedule.</p>

Implementation Area	2005-2015 Implementation Recommendation	Progress Since 2005 and/or Most Recent Action
	<p>priorities. The Pavement Condition Survey was updated by ITRE in January 2005. Also, in August 2000, the Council adopted a long-range program to pave the 4.62 miles of unpaved roads within the community. Since adopted, 2.13 miles of the unpaved roads within the Town had been paved; this program is also reviewed during the budget process.</p>	
Transportation	<p>This Plan reinforces the need to maintain a comprehensive transportation program addressing both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. In order to enhance current goals and policies, it is recommended the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study intersections within the Town to improve sight distances. • Review warning signs and devices for placement, appropriate use, and/or improvement. • Enhance and expand the walking trail system within the community. 	<p>The Town monitors intersections within the town.</p> <p>According to the 2015 Land Use Plan, “The alignment of existing roads and the community's topography is neither conducive nor practical for creation of new thoroughfares. Emphasis should be placed on improvements to critical intersections and roadways.” The plan does not specify which intersections are of concern and therefore progress cannot be evaluated.</p> <p>In 2011, the Town of Laurel Park developed a Parks and Greenway Map that outlines existing and future parks and greenway resources. The Town has consistently supported, through an adopted resolution and financial support of the Planning & Economic Impact Study, efforts to develop the Ecusta Trail.</p> <p>As of report writing, the Town plans to apply for an NCDOT Pedestrian Grant in 2016.</p>

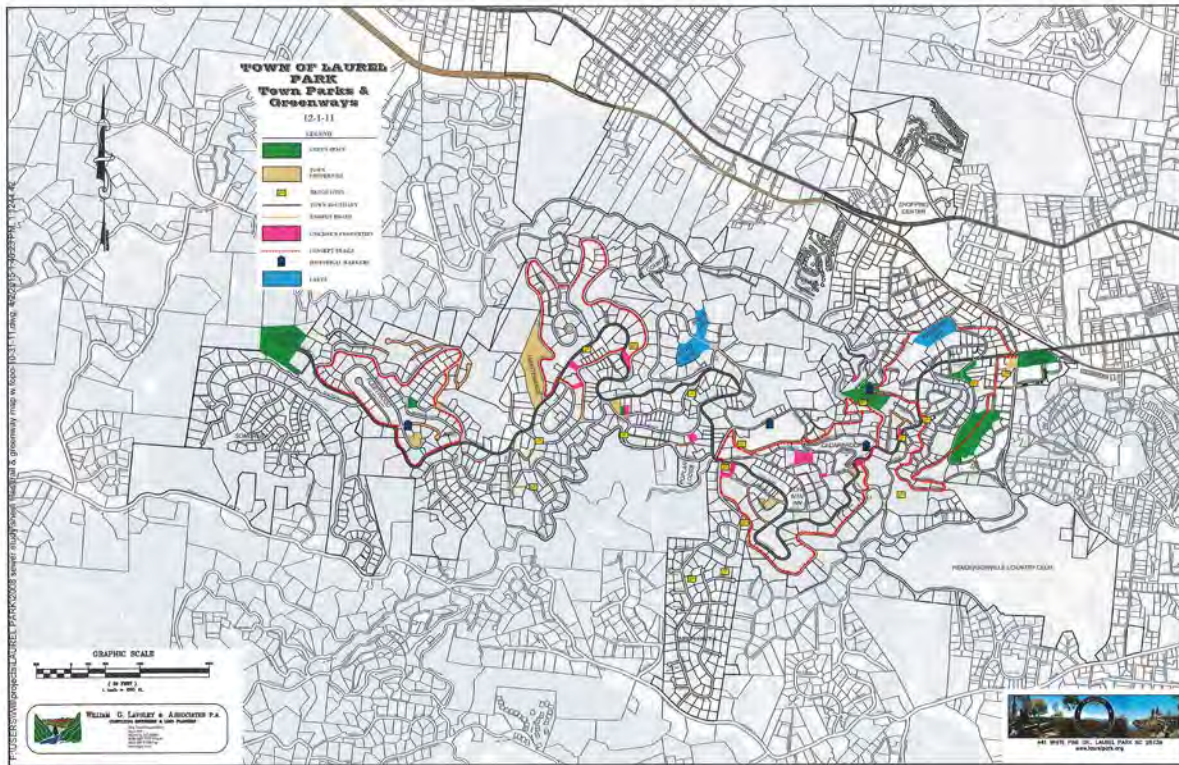
Implementation Area	2005-2015 Implementation Recommendation	Progress Since 2005 and/or Most Recent Action
Annexation	<p>The Town Council's current philosophy on annexation is to consider only voluntary annexation requests. This policy is consistent with one of the goals of this Plan, which is to maintain a small town atmosphere. Areas considered for voluntary annexation should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Town's policies.</p>	<p>The Town has maintained its policy toward annexation. Since 2005, the Town annexed Somersby Park and the Laurel Park Medical Center parcels in 2006 and the ~90 acre parcel described as 641 and 665 Ransier Drive in 2009.</p> <p>NOTE: Valley Hill Fire Department annexation is not recorded with the Secretary of State. Happened in 2009 according to Henderson County GIS.</p>
Open Space	<p>It is recommended the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a recreation and open space study during the planning period to identify the types of facilities desired, needed, and appropriate for Laurel Park. • Review entranceways to Laurel Park, ensuring an attractive open area, signage, and landscaping to define the entrances. • Protect the scenic vistas and natural beauty of the Town by improving maintenance and landscaping of public rights-of-way, acquiring scenic easements, developing maintenance arrangements with private landowners, and obtaining additional open space. • Utilize all opportunities available to increase open space within the community for both natural beauty and environmental stability. • Enhance and expand the Town's current park system. 	<p>The Town completed a Parks & Greenways Comprehensive Plan in 2011. The Parks & Greenway plan contains the Town's current plans for open space and recreation, and is discussed in further detail in this Appendix and in Chapter 3.</p> <p>Other items of significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhododendron Park (Phase I and II) • Jump Off Rock Improvements • Pocket Parks, Benches
Stormwater Management	<p>During this planning period, Laurel Park is required under the federal Clean Water Act "Phase II rules" to develop and implement</p>	<p>Laurel Park obtained its initial Stormwater Discharge Permit in November 2005. The Town received its current permit in 2011 and it</p>

Implementation Area	2005-2015 Implementation Recommendation	Progress Since 2005 and/or Most Recent Action
	comprehensive stormwater management programs. The draft plan has been submitted to the state for review and permitting...This program should be monitored closely within the community. The management of stormwater may be one of the most critical issues facing the community during this planning period.	expires in 2016. In fiscal year 2016, Laurel Park began to set aside additional dollars for road repair and storm drainage maintenance. NOTE: SW (other than effect on road degradation) has not been named as an issue.
Water Supply Watershed Management and Protection	The current ordinance should do well to provide protection within the water supply watershed.	No changes have been made or needed.

Parks and Greenways Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

Laurel Park’s Parks and Greenways Board developed the Parks and Greenways Comprehensive Long Term Plan (P&G Plan) in 2011. The P&G Plan functions “as the foundation for a long range planning process within the community. Additionally, the comprehensive plan will serve as a stand-alone document for use in the procurement of various State, Federal, and private grant opportunities.” The P&G Plan contains a detailed record of Community Demographics, Natural Features, Land Use, and Laurel Park Properties. The table below summarizes the implementation items included in the plan.

Link: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vw3audkg0e2a6bt/AAD1Tl8uiRvaeE16J4rBXY3ka/Maps from Existing Plans/PG Comprehensive Plan Draft MasterIII.doc?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vw3audkg0e2a6bt/AAD1Tl8uiRvaeE16J4rBXY3ka/Maps%20from%20Existing%20Plans/PG%20Comprehensive%20Plan%20Draft%20MasterIII.doc?dl=0)



Implementation Area	Parks & Greenway Plan Recommendations	Progress Since 2011 and/or Most Recent Action
Parks and Open Spaces	<p>Rhododendron Lake Park would be focused toward a natural type setting with walking paths surrounding a meandering stream.</p> <p>The town also has a vast opportunity to acquire additional parcels of property... Consideration should be given to the acquisition of selected unknown owner properties that are currently not on the tax rolls...properties could provide a significant opportunity for the Town to acquire land at a very affordable price.</p>	<p>Phase I and Phase II are complete. Planning for Phase III is underway.</p> <p>Town continues to explore ownership of the unknown owner properties.</p>
Walking Trails	<p>The P&G Plan envisions a viable trail system that “may be used by walkers and runners as well as bikers when properly designed and</p>	<p>Laurel Park has been approved for an NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant with the Village of Flat Rock.</p>

Implementation Area	Parks & Greenway Plan Recommendations	Progress Since 2011 and/or Most Recent Action
	laid out through the Town.” The P&G Plan outlines goals for the Walking Trail that it provides a map detailing potential trail locations.	
Rails to Trails	The acquisition of a property adjacent to the Shaw’s Creek development, on Hwy 64 could act as an important waypoint and parking area for the Laurel Park portion of the Rails to Trail system.	The Town of Laurel Park adopted a resolution in support of the Ecusta Trail in 2009, it helped fund the Ecusta study, and it continues to advocate for the Trail.
Historical Markers	The Laurel Park Civic Association has undertaken a project to selectively place tasteful, high-quality historical markers in several significant locations in Laurel Park...It is the intent of the Civic Association to complete one to two markers per year depending on budget constraints.	The Laurel Park Civic Association continues to make progress with its historical marker program.
Implementation Strategy	<p>For the most part, the Implementation Strategy is a listing of funding options that may support the Town’s Parks and Greenways efforts. The specific implementation items include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town will have to establish annual budgets for Parks and Greenways based on projected capital improvement costs, staffing needs, operational, and maintenance expenditures. • The identification of sufficient funding is a critical component required for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. 	Laurel Park’s leaders diligently seek funds and partnerships, such as with the LPCA, to support recreation projects. The 2016 budget contains funds for Jump of Rock Improvements and Rhododendron Nature Park Phase II completion.

2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO)

Federal law requires regions with a population greater than 50,000 to form a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to conduct regional transportation planning. Laurel Park is in the French Broad River MPO (FBRMPO), which is housed within the Land of Sky Regional Council in Asheville. The FBRMPO adopted the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) in September 2015. According to the MTP, “the 2040 MTP is the guiding document for future investments in transportation related activities and services – roads, transit services, aviation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities – to match anticipated growth in the Land of Sky region of Western North Carolina. It plans for the next 25 years of transportation projects, from 2015 to 2040.”

The MTP has eight broad goals to guide the region’s transportation decisions. As the Town of Laurel Park plans transportation improvements, leaders should be mindful of the region’s goals.

MTP Goals

1. Improve Multi-Modal and Non-Motorized Transportation Options
2. Improve Safety on Surface Streets and Highways
3. Address Congestion and Bottlenecks on Surface Streets and Highways
4. Improve Public Transit Options
5. Improve and Expand Community and Public Involvement
6. Ensure Changes Respect Our Unique Places and Environments
7. Seek Ways to Maintain and Improve Safe Freight Movement Within and Through the Region
8. Improve and Develop Planning Tools

The MTP categorizes projects by planning horizons based on funding availability. **Table XX** below details the Henderson County MTP project. All Henderson County projects are included because larger projects often influence local and regional traffic flow.

Link: <http://www.fbrmpo.org/metropolitan-transportation-plan-mtp/>

Category & Horizon Description	Planning Horizon	Horizon Description	Projects: (Find detailed descriptions here: http://www.landofsky.org/mtp)
10 Year Transportation Improvement Plan	HORIZON 1 Years 1-5: (2016-2020)	Projects slated for construction	<p>Highway Projects</p> <p>HEND 1c-H: 1-26. Widen from US 25 Business (Exit 44) to NC 280 (Exit 40).</p> <p>HEND13b-H: US-64 Brevard Road. Widening and Improvements from Blythe Street to White Pine Drive and Daniel Drive.</p>

Category & Horizon Description	Planning Horizon	Horizon Description	Projects: (Find detailed descriptions here: http://www.landofsky.org/mtp)
			<p>HEND32a-H: Old Airport Road. Widening and Improvements from US 25 to Hooper’s Creek Road.</p> <p>HEND42-H: US 25. Construct roadway improvements from Cane Creek Road to Howard Gap Road.</p> <p>Non-Highway Projects Blythe Street Sidewalks. Construct sidewalks on one side of Blythe Street from US 64 to NC 191.</p> <p>Meritor Greenway in Fletcher from US 25 South of Bride over Cane Creek to Western terminus of Meritor property.</p> <p>Oklawaha Greenway Extension to Blue Ridge Community College. Construct greenway along existing sewer easement.</p> <p>North Main Street Sidewalks. Construct sidewalks on both sides of N. Main Street from Signal Hill Road to O’Cain Court.</p> <p>Transit Projects HENDACT1-T: Transit capital and operating for Apple Country Transit and Henderson County.</p>
Developmental TIP	HORIZON 2 Years 6-10: (2021-2025)	Developmental projects in the study and environmental assessment phase	<p>Highway Projects: None.</p> <p>Non Highway Projects: Construct multi-use path in Flat Rock from the Flat Rock Village Center to the Park at Flat Rock.</p> <p>Ecusta Rail Trail Phase I. Construct rail-to-trail Oklawaha Greenway in Jackson Park to proposed trailhead in Laurel Park.</p>

Category & Horizon Description	Planning Horizon	Horizon Description	Projects: (Find detailed descriptions here: http://www.landofsky.org/mtp)
			<p>Transit Projects HENDACT2-T: Transit capital and operating for Apple Country Transit and Henderson County.</p>
Longer Term Developmental Projects	HORIZON 3 Years 11-15: (2026-2030)	Funds from this Horizon are available for projects that started in the developmental TIP but remain unfinished.	<p>Highway Projects HEND 3-H: Balfour Parkway. Construct new 4-lane expressway from NC 191 to US 64 (East of I-26) or from NC 191 (Brevard Road) to US 64</p> <p>HEND 5-H: NC 191. Widen to 4 lanes with median from US 25 in Hendersonville to NC 280 South of Mills River.</p> <p>HEND28-H: Kanuga Road. Add turn lanes, widen and improve geometrics from US 25 Business (Church Street) to Little River Road.</p> <p>Non-Highway Projects None</p> <p>Transit Projects HENDACT3-T: Transit capital and operating for Apple Country Transit and Henderson County.</p>
Sibling Projects	HORIZON 4 (2031-2035)	Projects that are funded as part of the parallel federal permitting process, and are expected to advance toward completion.	<p>Highway Projects HEND14-H NC 191. Widen to multi-lanes from US 25 in Hendersonville to NC 280 South of Mills River.</p> <p>HEND 1a-H: 1-26. Widen from 4 to 6 lanes from US 25 to US 64.</p> <p>HEND 1b-H: 1-26. Widen from 4 to 6 lanes from US 64 (Exit 49) to US 25 Business (Exit 44).</p>

Category & Horizon Description	Planning Horizon	Horizon Description	Projects: (Find detailed descriptions here: http://www.landofsky.org/mtp)
			<p>Non-Highway Projects None</p> <p>Transit Projects HENDACT4-T: Transit capital and operating for Apple Country Transit and Henderson County.</p>
	HORIZON 5 (2036-2040)	Projects similar to Sibling Projects described in Horizon 4.	<p>Highway Projects None</p> <p>Non-Highway Projects None</p> <p>Transit Projects HENDACT5-T: Transit capital and operating for Apple Country Transit and Henderson County.</p>

Land of Sky Regional Council GroWNC (2013)

GroWNC was a 3-year regional planning initiative led by Land -of-Sky Regional Council for the Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, Transylvania, and Haywood County region. The plan developed a framework of strategies to foster growth and economic prosperity while preserving the quality of life and the assets of the region that make it possible. The regional plan weaves together existing local and regional plans with extensive public input from meetings held throughout the region to develop a vision of preferred growth scenarios. GroWNC contains a wealth of regional information and strategies that may benefit Laurel Park.

Link: <http://www.gro-wnc.org/>

Henderson County Comprehensive Plan

Adopted in 2009, the Henderson County Comprehensive Plan has little to say about the relationship between Henderson County and Laurel Park. Recommendation SW-01 found in the Sewer and Water Element states, “Henderson County should take a leadership role in sewer and water planning and work towards the regionalization of water and sewer policy making and operations.” The discussion acknowledges that towns in Henderson County, including Laurel Park, “have had little input or involvement in water and sewer decisions which have

substantial impact on these communities.” The recommended steps to improve coordination and communication include:

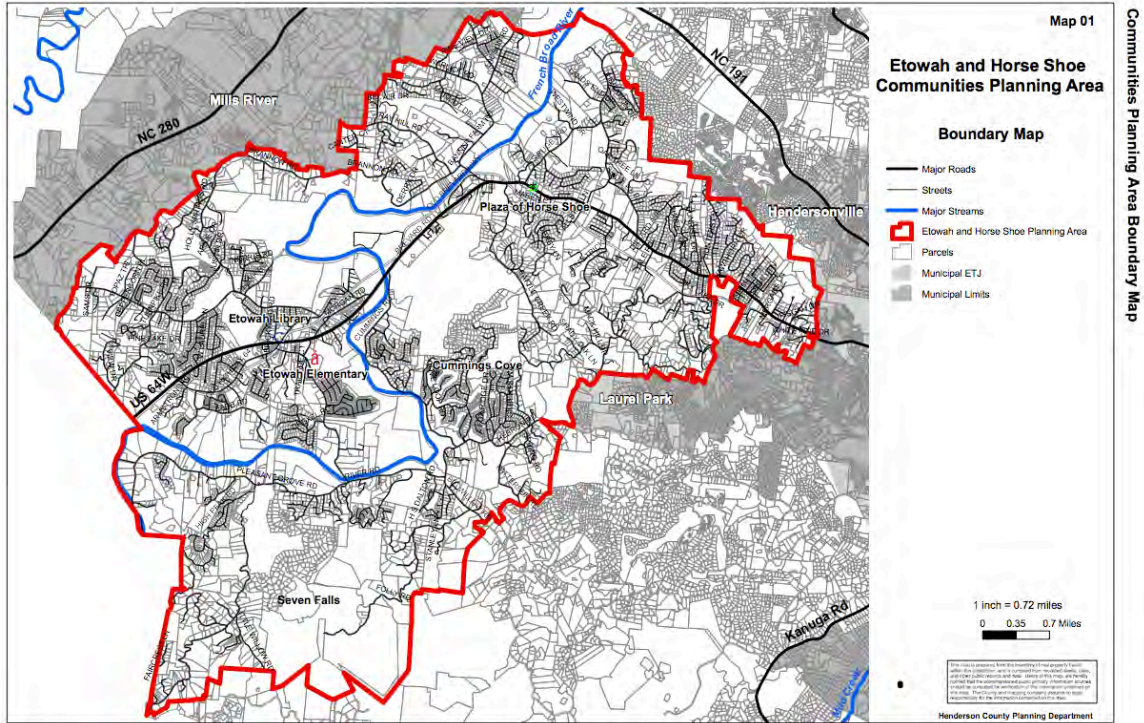
- Support the development of a countywide sewer and water master plan.
- Formalize and solidify the role of the LGCCA Joint Sewer & Water Advisory Council.
- Consider forming an inter-local sewer and water agreement.
- Consider expanding the scope of the inter-local agreement to provide for the creation of a sewer and water joint management agency (JMA).
- Integrate schools and sewer / water planning.
- Prioritize extensions to economic development sites.
- Establish and fund a 10-year capital improvement program and capital reserve fund, which is adequate to implement planned investments in sewer and water infrastructure.

To date, the County has not implemented the above items.

Link: <http://www.hendersoncountync.org/planning/ccp/>

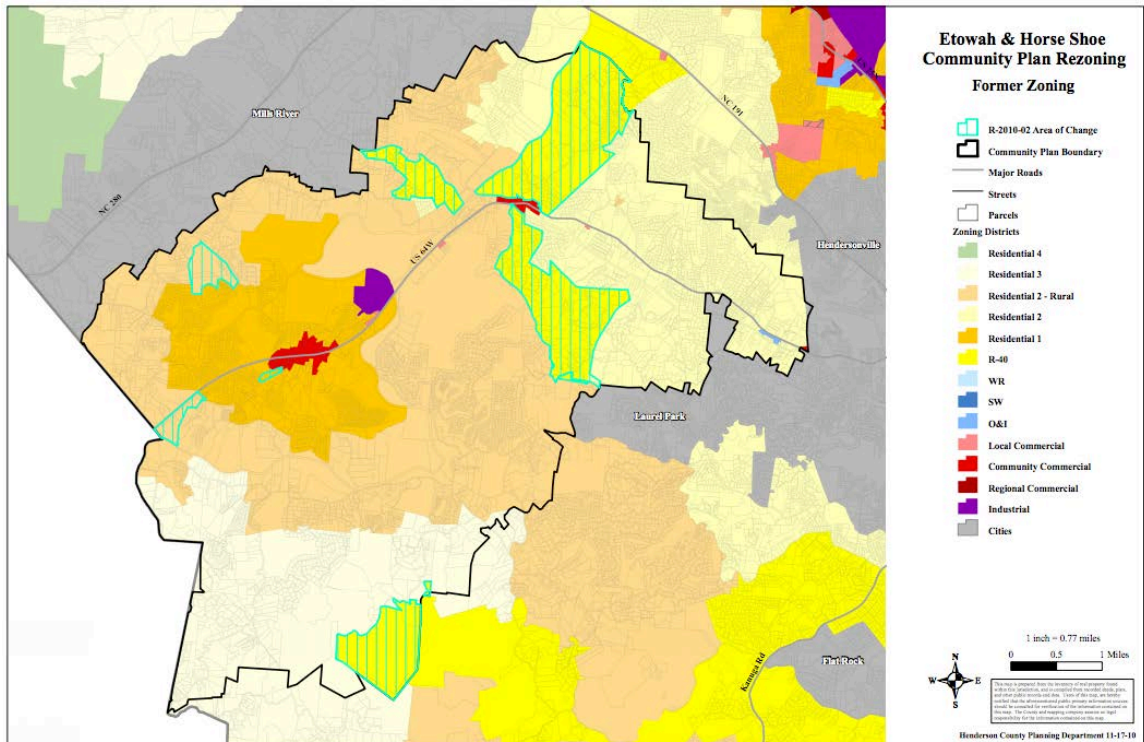
Etowah and Horse Shoe Community Plan

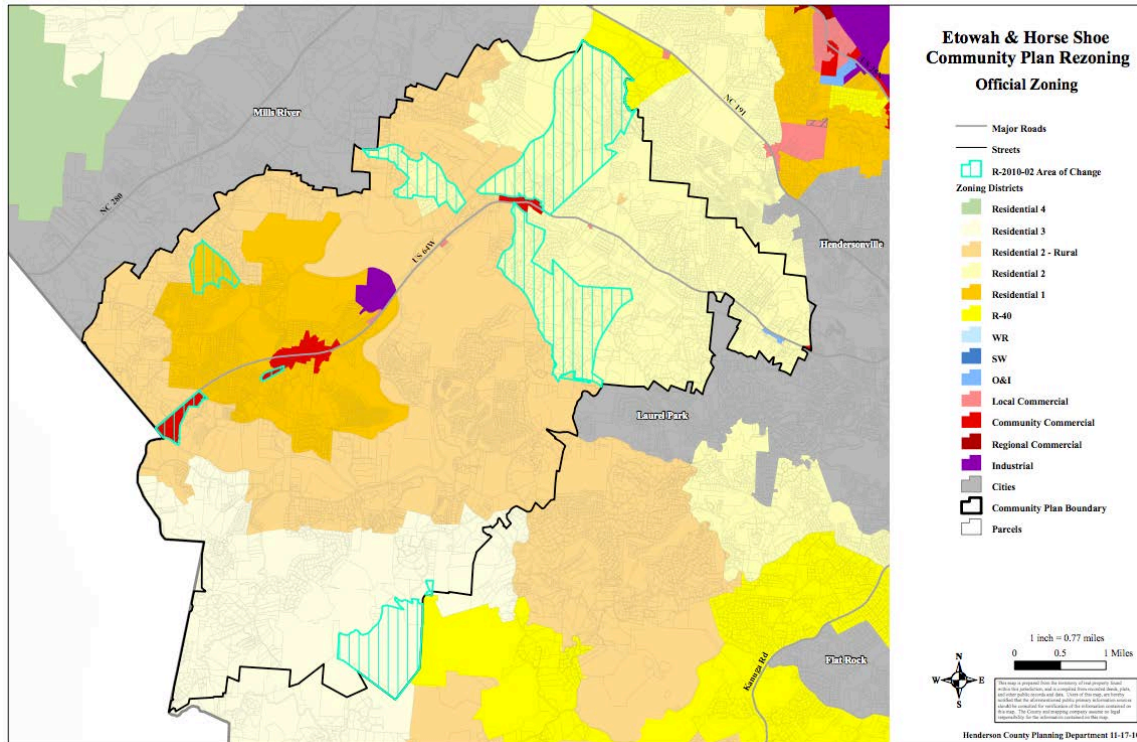
The Henderson County Comprehensive Plan recommended a series of small area plans to, “address a range of issues including, but not limited to, zoning.” The Etowah and Horse Shoe Community Plan (EHSCP) was the County’s first plan completed due to “marked residential and nonresidential growth in the area.” This plan is relevant to Laurel Park in that it is the guiding plan for the land bordering Laurel Park that is in Henderson County’s jurisdiction and the Plan is the guiding document for the Henderson County portions of the Brevard Road (US 64) that connects Hendersonville, through Laurel Park, to EHSCP Planning Area.



Communities Planning Area Boundary Map

The EHSCP provided a map for the Planning Area’s future zoning pattern, which Henderson County Commissioners implemented through a County-led rezoning request in November 2010. According to a conversation with Henderson County Senior Planner Autumn Radcliff, the County has no other plans for land use changes in the area.

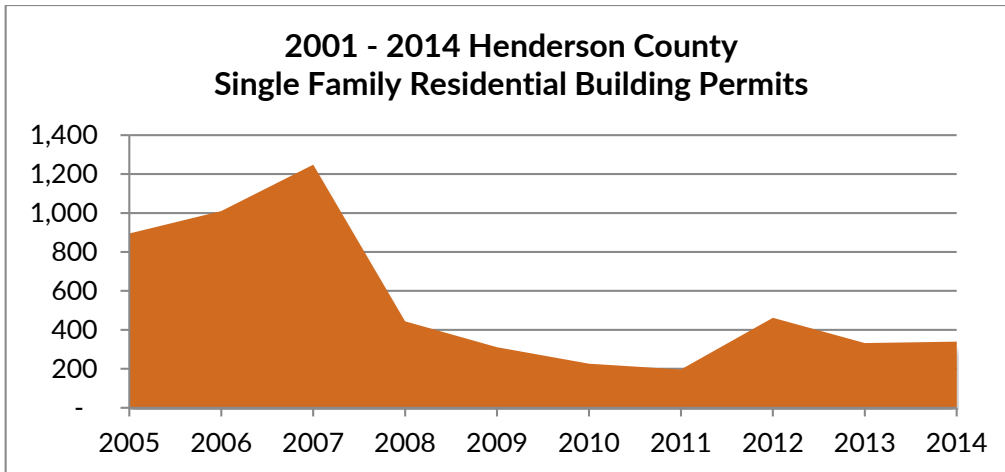




It is important to note that the motivation for this plan was the area’s rapid growth between 2000 and 2007. According to the EHSCP:

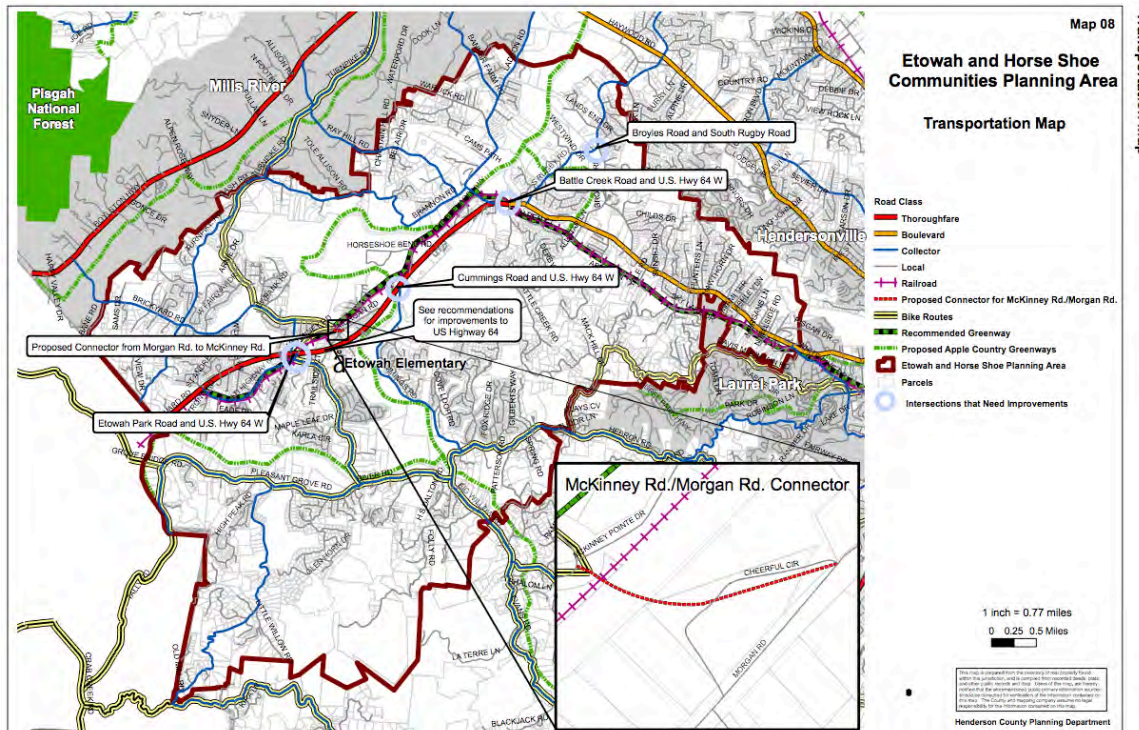
“Undeveloped parcels of land are located throughout the Planning Area with some of the largest tracts of land remaining undeveloped. Some of these tracts, situated to the north and south of US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road), have recently been approved for development as part of subdivisions. In 2007 a total of 1,690 lots were preliminarily approved by the County for development within the Planning Area by the County.”

County Planners noted EHSCP trends prior to the 2008 economic downturn that stymied the pace of the Planning Area’s overall development and ended plans for some large-scale developments, such as Seven Falls. As the economy has strengthened in recent years, the pace of development also has improved, even though it is nowhere near pre-recession levels. The Etowah-Horse Shore area has an abundant supply of land available for development. It is in Laurel Park’s interest to remain up-to-date with the area’s development plans and progress; and to also look for commercial growth opportunities to capture new revenue from the area’s growing population.



A final item of note from the EHSCP is the map and text pertaining to Greenways, specifically the proposed Ecusta Trail. The plan states,

“One important benefit of a greenway is to serve as an alternate link between communities, recreational areas, commercial centers and open space. The sites for the proposed greenways in the Comprehensive Plan are generally found along railroad lines and streams. For example, one proposed greenway in the Planning Area follows the French Broad River and its floodplain. Another greenway follows the Norfolk-Southern railroad line (not currently in use). This railroad line connects Hendersonville to Brevard and was used to serve the Ecusta paper mill plant in Brevard before it closed in 2002.”



Link: <http://www.hendersoncountync.org/planning/communityplans/eths/index.html>

Town of Laurel Park 2008/2009 Sewer Study Update

The purpose of the 2008/2009 Sewer Study Update (SSU) developed by William G. Lapsley & Associates (now known as WGLA) was, "...to prepare an updated study for providing sewer service throughout the Town." The study looked at the alternatives for providing sewer service and considered a variety of options, including extensions of gravity sewer, pressure sewer systems, and hybrid systems. The study evaluated the funding environment and funding options as well as a phasing plan.

During the course of plan development, the SSU states, "The Sewer Committee determined that it was unreasonable to consider the town of Laurel Park operating and maintaining the sewer system." The reasons provided include the length of time it would take to develop a system, staff, equipment and maintenance costs, and a reluctance to require mandatory connections. The Committee decided that any proposed system would have to be acceptable to Hendersonville who would become the system's owner and operator; the SSU outlines a system that would be acceptable to Hendersonville if Laurel Park were able to secure the funds. Given the high cost of system development, the Town of Laurel Park has not aggressively pursued funding for the sewer system. Discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Ecusta Rail Trail Planning Study & Economic Analysis

In 2011, the City of Hendersonville initiated the Ecusta Rail Trail Planning Study and Economic Impact Analysis (the Study) to determine the feasibility of converting the existing inactive rail corridor into a paved shared-use trail. NCDOT, the City of Hendersonville, City of Brevard, Town of Laurel Park, Henderson County Travel and Tourism, and Friends of the Ecusta Trail provided funding for the Study, which evaluated options for the 20-mile rail line that begins in Hendersonville and ends in Brevard. Twelve of the line's miles are in Henderson County, including the 2.3 mile Phase I section that begins at Jackson Park in Hendersonville and ends at Laurel Green. The Phase 3 section (the suggested phases are not linear) picks up at Laurel Green and follows the rail line for two miles to just east of Sky Lake Drive. The Ecusta Trail is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Link: <http://www.cityofhendersonville.org/index.aspx?page=428>

Figure 6.3 – Henderson County Phase 1: Oklawaha Greenway in Jackson Park to Proposed Shared-Use Trailhead at Laurel Park

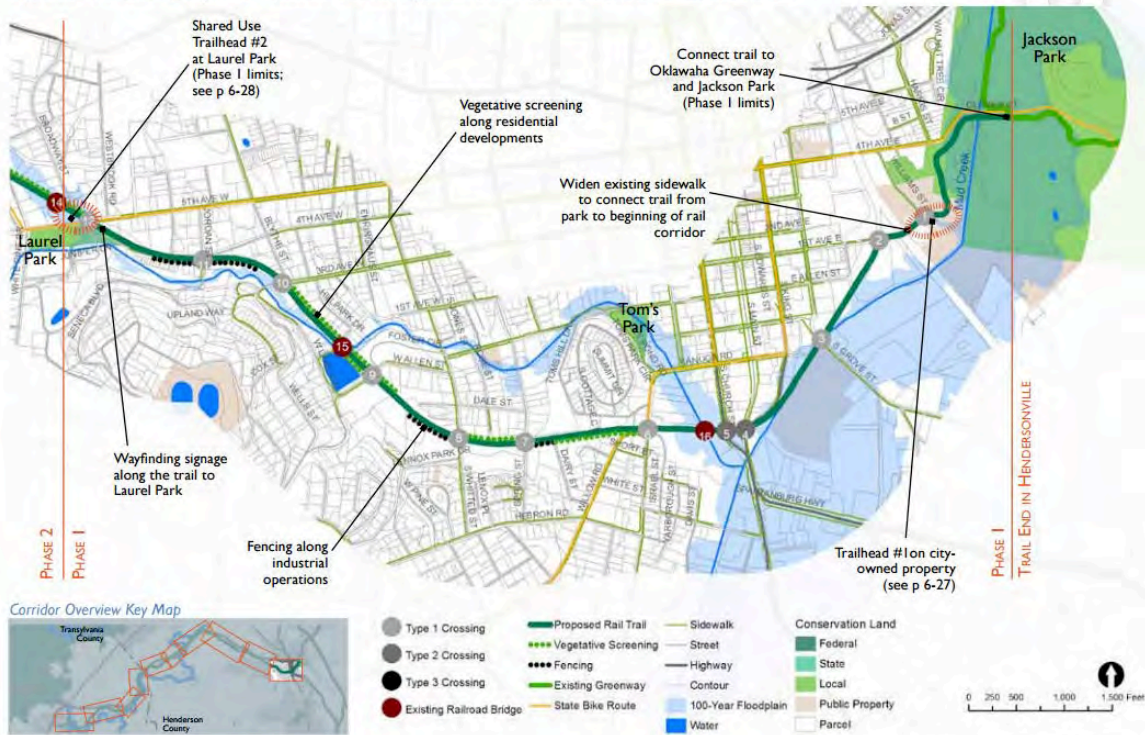


Figure 6.5 – Henderson County Phase 3: Laurel Park to Sky Lake Drive



Hendersonville Comprehensive Plan (2009)

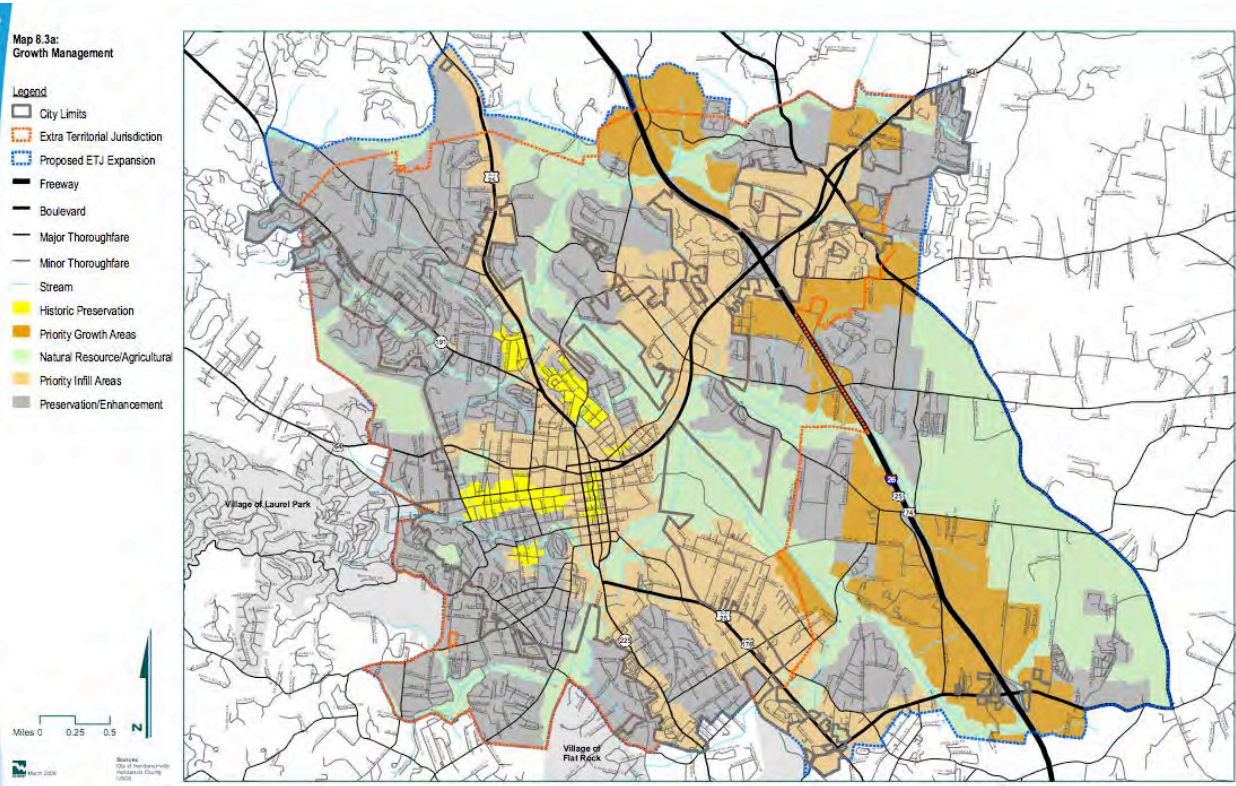
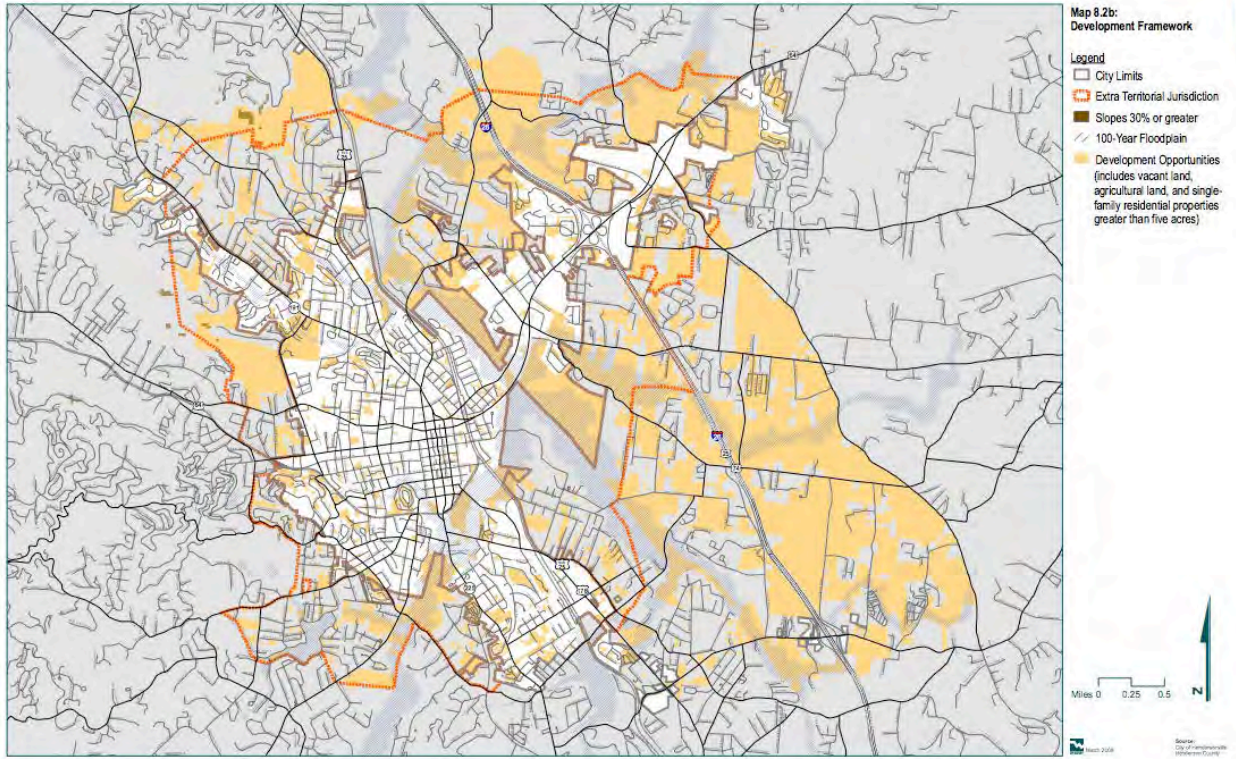
While it had earlier guiding plans, the City of Hendersonville adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 2009 as “its vision for future growth and development that is grounded in a solid understanding of community conditions, trends and citizen expectations. This Plan articulates a vision of what Hendersonville wants to become over the next twenty years and describes how to achieve that vision.” Hendersonville’s Comprehensive Plan addresses Natural and Environmental Resources, Cultural and Historic Resources, Community Facilities, Water Resources, Transportation and Circulation, Land Use Development, and Implementation.

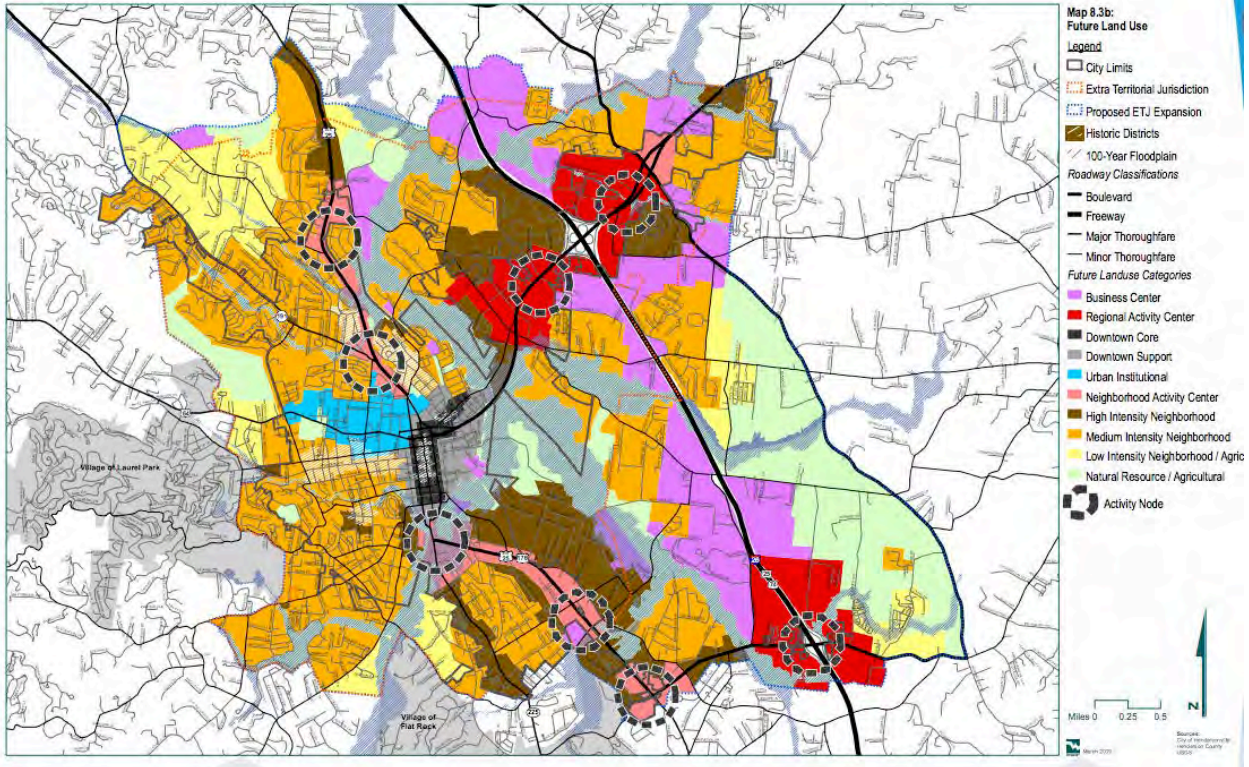
The Water Resources chapter mentions that Laurel Park purchases water from the City.

While the Development Framework Map contained in the Land Use chapter identifies Development Opportunities (vacant land, agriculture land, and single family residential properties greater than five acres), some of which abut with Laurel Park’s ETJ, the Growth Management Map indicates the area between Laurel Park and Hendersonville is designated for Preservation/Enhancement, described as, “Developed areas in which few significant changes are expected, or undeveloped areas that are not considered a high priority for growth. The City should respond to development or redevelopment in these areas by maintaining and enhancing existing neighborhood character and maintaining consistency with Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies.”

The Plan’s Future Land use map identifies the area between Laurel Park and Hendersonville as medium density residential, which is similar to today’s land use pattern. This land use pattern “provides a transition between High- and Low-Intensity Neighborhood areas while providing a wide range of housing formats and price points. Promote walkable neighborhood design and compatible infill development in new neighborhoods and as a means of preserving and enhancing existing neighborhoods.”

While not specific to Laurel Park, the Goals, Strategies, and Actions contained in the Land Use Chapter outline Hendersonville’s approach to ETJ management and annexation. With only a narrow corridor of ETJ between Laurel Park and Hendersonville, it is important for Laurel Park leaders to be aware of the Hendersonville’s approach.





Link: <http://www.cityofhendersonville.org/index.aspx?page=98>

Henderson County Bike Map

The Henderson County Bike Map has routes that following the Town's north and south boundary.

Bicycling Henderson County



About the Map

Whether you take a leisurely bicycle ride, an all-day trip, or a longer overnight tour, this map provides all the information you need for planning your ride along the 180-mile system of highlighted bicycle routes. Four special routes totaling 75 miles and an additional 23 miles of unimproved connectors provide an endless number of route options.

In addition to showing the bike routes, the map presents a wealth of other information. The location of all services such as bicycle shops, campsgrounds, and restaurants are pinpointed with symbols, defined in the legend. Towns that provide overnight accommodations, restaurants, and other amenities are marked with a star. Points of interest are indicated with a flag icon.

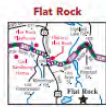
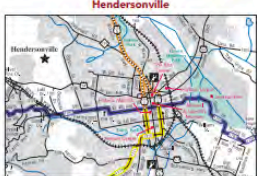
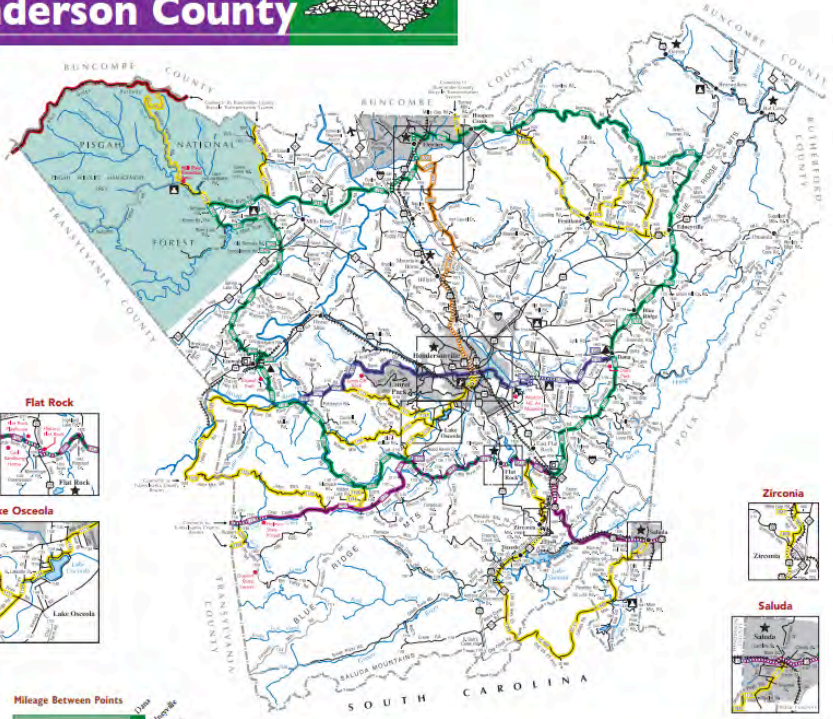
All roads that are part of the route system or which cross a route are marked. Also clearly marked are those sections of the route where additional caution is recommended. On the map, these sections are marked with "Share the Road" signs like the one shown here.

Enlarged area maps of Hendersonville, Lake Ocoola, Flat Rock, Zirconia, Saluda, and Fletcher are included to help you navigate these areas and locate points of interest.

Have a safe and enjoyable ride. Please remember to be courteous to other road users.

A Note of Caution

The highlighted routes shown on this map follow roads of the North Carolina Highway system and local streets. These routes do not indicate any special accommodations for bicycling, such as paved shoulders or bike lanes. Careful drivers taking to safety more highly marked roads in a low-traffic, however, segments of more heavily traveled roads are used for these connections where no driver assistance. These areas are marked with "Share the Road" signs to alert motorists to the presence of cyclists. The Henderson County bike routes are not designed to be used by children as their ability to judge traffic conditions and other factors is not well-developed.



	Union	Eden	Flat Rock	Fletcher	Hendersonville	Saluda	Zirconia
Eden	0						
Eden	54	0					
Eden	97	43	0				
Flat Rock	73	19	157	0			
Flat Rock	88	20	168	12	0		
Hendersonville	42	118	118	43	0		
Hendersonville	128	128	128	72	24	0	
Saluda	163	163	163	57	24	116	0
Saluda	163	163	163	57	24	116	116
Zirconia	163	163	163	57	24	116	116



Miscellaneous Plans

The following plans were reviewed for relevance—nothing specific to Laurel Park was noted.

- French Broad River MPO: Congestion Management Process
- French Broad River MPO: Blue Ridge Bike Plan
- French Broad River MPO: 2012 Long-Range Transportation Demand Management Plan
- French Broad River MPO: 2012 Long-Range Transportation Demand Management Plan
- NC Department of Transportation: WalkBikeNC – Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and State Bike Routes
- Land of Sky Regional Council 2013-2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

APPENDIX 3: SOIL DESCRIPTIONS

Classes	Name	% Slope of Location	Depth to Water Table (feet)	Depth to Bed Rock (inches)	Flooding Frequency	Building Sites/Roads	Septic Absorption Fields
AhF	Ashe stony sandy loam	25% to 45%	>6'	20 to 40"	None	Severe	Severe
BaB	Bradson gravelly loam	2 to 7%	>5'	>60"	None	Moderate	Slight
BaC	Bradson gravelly loam	7% to 15%	>6'	>60"	None	Moderate	Moderate
BrE	Brevard loam	15 to 25%	>6'	>60"	None	Severe	Severe
Co	Cordous loam	Nearly level	1 to 2'	>60"	Common	Severe	Severe
DeB	Delanco loam	2 to 7%	2.5 to 3.5"	>72"	Occasional	Severe	Severe
EdE	Edneyville fine sandy loam	15 to 25%	>6'	>40"	None	Severe	Severe
EdF	Edneyville loam	25% to 45%	>6'	>40"	None	Severe	Severe
EnB	Elsinboro loam	0 to 3%	>6'	>72"	None	Slight	Slight
EvC	Evard fine sandy loam	7% to 15%	>6'	>48"	None	Moderate	Moderate
HvC	Hayesville loam	7% to 15%	>6'	>60"	None	Moderate	Moderate
Pof	Porters stony loam	25% to 45%	>6'	40 to 72"	None	Severe	Severe
TeB	Tate fine sandy loam	2 to 7%	>6'	>60"	None	Slight	Slight

Soil Characteristics

The Soil Survey of Henderson County identifies the soil types or associations in the Laurel Park area and classifies them in accordance with their limitations or suitability for various types of activity. For the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, the soils in Laurel Park are evaluated on the basis of their suitability for building site development and septic tank absorption fields. The above table lists the soil associations in Laurel Park and describes some of their characteristics and limitations.

The first three soil classifications shown in the table include the greatest percentage of the Laurel Park soil groups. The remaining soil groups shown on the table are listed in approximate order of their area of occurrence in Laurel Park. With the exception of the Ashe stony sandy loam (AhF) and the Evard fine sandy loam (EvC) classifications, the remaining soil groups are quite small and represent less than five percent of the total land area of Laurel Park.

With the exception of the Codorus loam (Co) soils in the flood prone areas, the soils with the most severe limitations are directly related to the percent of slope. With a few exceptions in the eastern part of Laurel Park and a few areas with less severe slopes, the majority of the community is classified as having soils with severe limitations for building sites and septic absorption fields.

Although the soils are classified as having severe limitations, these restrictions should not be considered an absolute or singular justification for restricting development. The soil limitations are a contributing factor in establishing an overall strategy for land capability in the community. However, with the largest percentage of the community classified as having soils with severe limitations, there is ample reason to pursue a low-density environment.

Representatives from the Soil Conservation Service and the Henderson County Health Department have cited the common occurrence of saprolite soils in Laurel Park

and throughout Henderson County. Saprolite soils are characterized by the existence of deteriorated parent rock. Saprolitic soils are frequently associated with soil groups that do not provide suitable mediums for effective septic absorption fields. Septic field failures are becoming more frequent as urban development intensifies and encroaches on soils and slopes that pose development limitations.

Although engineering and new technology can overcome many of the limitations, the costs and the requisite regulatory measures to implement the required techniques may not be desirable. Since the majority of soils in Laurel Park are classified as having severe limitations for building sites and septic absorption fields, maintenance of low-density development is a policy consistent with the physical characteristics of the area soils.

Source: 2005 - 2015 Land Use Plan, Henderson County Soil Survey