

**Town of Boone
Town Council/Planning Commission Special Public Hearing
6:00 PM, June 23, 2025
Town Council Chambers
1500 Blowing Rock Rd.**

The public may attend the meeting in person at Town Council Chambers at 1500 Blowing Rock Road or online via WebEx, a video conferencing software.

Public Comment: To give public comment, you should appear in person at the physical location of this meeting. Persons who attend the meeting remotely via WebEx may be permitted to speak during public comment but are not assured of that opportunity.

WebEx Participation: To join online or by phone, email Planning and Inspections at planning@townofboone.net or call 828-268-6960, and you will receive an email invitation. Requests must be submitted no later than one hour before the meeting begins.

I. Call to Order of Town Council and Planning Commission

II. Moment of Silence

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. May 19, Public Hearing/Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Presentation of Case by Staff/Applicant
- B. Discussion/Questions by Town Council and Planning Commission
- C. Public Comment
- D. Discussion/Questions by Town Council and Planning Commission

IV. Case A25-0426 Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future

Boone Next is both the process to update the current comprehensive plan and the plan itself. Upon adoption, Boone Next, will establish a shared vision for the town's long-term growth, outlining key goals, strategies, and action steps to inform policy decisions and town initiatives. Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future is being presented for adoption in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. §160D-501.

1. Case A25-0426 Boone Next: Our Town Our Future

V. Adjournment of Town Council

PLANNING COMMISSION

VI. Discussion and Recommendation of Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future

VII. Other Matters

1. Chair and Vice-Chair Application

VIII. Adjournment

**TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 19, 2025, 6:00 PM
1500 BLOWING ROCK ROAD AND VIA WEBEX SOFTWARE**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Pro Tem Dalton George, Todd Carter, Eric Plaag, Virginia Roseman, and Edie Tugman (arrived at 6:54 pm)

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Tim Futrelle

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Adrian Tait-Chair, Frank Veno-Vice-Chair, Chris Behrend, Garrett Kight, and Anne Pruitt

PLANNING STAFF PRESENT: Jane Shook-Director of Planning & Inspections, Brandon Wise-Deputy Director of Planning & Inspections, Amy Snider-Commercial Zoning Administrator, and Brenda Henson-Board Clerk

Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem George called the Town Council to order at 6:01 pm. Chair Tait called the Planning Commission to order at the same time. The meeting was held in the Town Council Chambers at 1500 Blowing Rock Road and via WebEx.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Council Member Plaag moved to approve the March 24, 2025, Public Hearing minutes as written. Council Member Carter seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Tugman)

The motion passed.

Commission Member Behrend moved to approve the March 24, 2025, Public Hearing and Planning Commission meeting minutes as written. Vice Chair Veno wished to correct the first sentence in the fifth paragraph on page 2 to add the word “be” so that the sentence would read “Ms. Lindemanis stated that the green space would be preserved as a livability space...” Commission Member Behrend accepted the amendment. Commission Member Pruitt seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Pro Tem George stated that a request had been made to hear The Summit Pickleball case first. Council and Commission members agreed to amend the agenda.

Case A25-0118 The Summit Pickleball – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

The Summit Pickleball, LLC submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map application to rezone a portion of 278 Industrial Park Drive and the adjacent lot from M1 Manufacturing to a Conditional District B3 General Business with a site-specific plan for use 12.11 Recreation Facility, Category 2. As proposed, the site would expand the indoor-only recreation activities to include outdoor activities with the addition of one sand volleyball court, two mini-soccer fields, and two outdoor pickleball courts.

Brandon Wise, Deputy Director of Planning & Inspections, explained that this request, if approved, would create a split zoning on the property of M1 and CDB3. He noted that no zoning district currently allowed both the manufacturing and outdoor recreation use. Mr. Wise added that the conditional district process did not allow the flexibility to modify the base zoning of a property. Allison Meade, Town Attorney, stated that a text amendment to modify the conditional district regulations would soon be presented to the Town Council. She asked if that text amendment would provide more flexibility for such situations. Mr. Wise replied that it would.

Chelsea Garrett, attorney representing The Summit Pickleball, introduced Crystal Smith and Grant Williams, the founders and owners of The Summit Pickleball. She stated that the request would conditionally rezone most of the back side of the Carroll Leather Goods property from M1 to CDB3. Ms. Garrett noted that the Carroll Leather Goods business was still operating and manufacturing in a portion of the building, while the indoor Summit Pickleball was operating in another portion. The business owners would like to add one sand volleyball court and, two mini soccer fields in the grassy area behind the building, and an additional two outdoor pickleball courts in the old asphalt loading zone area. Ms. Garrett stated ample parking was on site, with parking in the front and side of the building. She noted that they were not seeking approval for outdoor lighting because they would rely on daylight for the seasonal use of the outdoor areas.

Amy Snider, Commercial Zoning Administrator, noted that lighting was not allowed under the Recreational 2 use, but was allowed under Recreational 3. Ms. Garrett stated they requested a B3 zoning with a Recreational 2 use, an allowed use under B3. She said the owners hoped to start the project as soon as possible and open next spring.

Ms. Garrett realized that the industrial district had been protected, and they understood its importance. However, she felt that this site-specific use could easily revert to manufacturing, if necessary, as none of the outdoor improvements were permanent.

Council Member Plaag referred to packet page 71 that showed a deed restriction stating "Ancillary and accessory uses which are hereby permitted shall include parking areas, landscaping, walking paths, recreational uses and sales, either wholesale or retail; provided, however that any recreational area or sales area shall each be no longer than 10% of the total square feet in the building on the lot or site.". He asked if this was something they needed to discuss or if it was something between the applicant and the property owner to resolve. Ms. Meade replied that it was a matter between the applicant and the property owner.

Council Member Plaag asked why there was no bicycle parking. Ms. Snider explained that the project's estimated cost of \$20,000 did not trigger Tier 1 improvements, which would have required compliance with the bicycle parking standards. Council Member Plaag asked if the applicant would agree to a condition to add bicycle parking spaces at the property. Ms. Garrett stated that the applicant would agree to that condition.

Council Member Plaag noted that music was often played on loudspeakers at outdoor events and asked the applicant if there was an intention to play outdoor music. Ms. Garrett replied that they had no plans to play music outside. Council Member Plaag asked if the applicant would agree to a condition that The

Summit Pickleball would not use outdoor speakers to play music. He expressed concern for the R3 properties across the street. Ms. Garrett stated that the applicant would agree to that condition.

Council Member Carter stated that he visited the property and felt the proposal was thoughtful, creative, and would encourage recreation.

Council Member Roseman asked about access to the courts and if they would be open for public use. She wondered if patrons would come around or go through the building. Grant Williams, one of the business owners, replied that the courts would be available only to members and those with guest passes, much like Deer Valley or Yonahlossee. He anticipated they would install some fencing to help keep the balls in. Council Member Plaag suggested installing signage that made it clear the courts were for member use only.

There was no public comment for this case.

Commission Member Pruitt stated that the courts would be placed in a currently unused area on the property and would be a great asset.

With nothing further, Mayor Pro Tem George closed the public hearing for this case at 6:20 p.m.

Case A25-0115 Jeremiah's Ice – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

JSeventeen7, LLC, submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application to rezone the property at 1095 East King Street from B3 General Business to Conditional District B3 General Business to add a drive-through as an accessory use. The applicant has submitted zoning and building plans to convert the current building into an Italian ice restaurant.

Ms. Snider presented the request. She noted that a zoning permit for the change of use from office space to restaurant had been issued and work on the development is underway. She noted the accessory use of the drive-through triggered the conditional district process.

Chelsea Garrett stated she was the applicant and was part of JSeventeen7, LLC. She introduced her husband, Rob Garrett, her 10-year-old son, Frank James, and the property owner and contractor, Sid Greene. Ms. Garrett stated she learned last week that their traffic impact analysis would not be completed in time for tonight's meeting. Davenport Engineering should complete the report in the next two weeks. Ms. Garrett wished to introduce the project tonight and bring the full case back to the July Public Hearing.

Ms. Meade asked Ms. Garrett for clarification that she wanted the Town Council and Planning Commission to hear her initial presentation and then table the matter. Ms. Garrett stated that was correct.

Ms. Garrett commented that the property was located at a busy intersection, and they did not take that lightly. She stated they were using the existing structure and adding a large deck to provide a place for kids to hang out after school. They plan to have picnic tables underneath a portion of the proposed deck to the left of the two potential drive-through lanes, and possibly corn hole boards.

Ms. Garrett noted that Jeremiah's Ice was a chain, and they were excited to work with young people because they employ about 80% high school-age kids. She indicated they would like to partner with the school on internships, the DECA program, and the EC program, if possible.

Ms. Garrett stated that the site was designed for the drive-throughs to go under the deck, however they would have the deck regardless of whether or not the drive-through lanes were allowed. She noted that a neighborhood meeting was held, and Dillon Waschenbach, who lives on Perkinsville Drive, was the only person to attend. Ms. Garrett provided Council members with a copy of her email correspondence with Mr. Waschenbach outlining his concern about morning traffic. She stated that Jeremiah's Ice would not

open until 11 or 12. She noted that they would, at some point in the future, like a coffee truck on site, but those details had not been resolved and were not part of the current plans. Ms. Garrett explained that the TIA would not include the coffee truck. Ms. Garrett noted that the TIA would include traffic data from 3:30 to 6:30 pm to encompass the high school traffic. The hours of operation for Jeremiah's Ice would be from 11 am or 12 pm until 9 or 10 pm.

To prevent cars from stacking on Grove Street into the intersection, Ms. Garrett stated that they designed the site to accommodate two lanes of good width that would stack 12-15 cars and not create pinch points. She noted that the menu board would be at the window so people would not be stopping halfway down the drive-through to read the menu, which should help with traffic flow, and snow curbs would be added to assist with the turns of the drive-through.

Mr. Sid Greene, the property owner and contractor spoke and noted he helped build the building and felt the proposed design would set a precedent for the entrance to Boone and offer a quaint mountain feel.

Ms. Garrett stated that having the drive-through would supplement the business in the wintertime when people were less likely to want to order ice cream and sit out on the deck.

Council Member Carter stated he was excited about the ice cream shop because he could walk there from where he lived. He asked if the entrance and exits would be on Grove Street only. Ms. Garrett replied that was correct. Council Member Carter felt that the area needed revitalizing. He expressed concern about traffic backing up at the intersection and the parking lot filling up with parents waiting for their kids to get out of school. He stated that the drive-through hours might create traffic issues when kids come and go from school. However, he felt it was a great concept and liked the idea of employing high school kids. Council Member Carter stated he was not as excited about the coffee truck because it would add a tremendous amount of morning traffic that the area could not handle. He asked if Jeremiah's Ice was Italian ice, gelato, shaved ice, or ice cream. Ms. Garrett replied that it was known for Jelati, which was a swirl of soft ice cream and Italian ice with toppings.

Ms. Garrett stated they were open to exploring ways not to cause additional traffic stress between 3:30 and 6 pm, such as limiting the drive-through hours. However, they would like to have the drive-through open in the winter, because people would not want to get out of their cars.

Mayor Pro Tem George appreciated the cooperative nature of the applicant, noting that this was the first discussion they had had related to a drive-through since amending the ordinance to require drive-throughs to acquire a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment.

Council Member Roseman appreciated that the applicant had considered the youth by trying to create a place for them to go and hang out. However, being a mom who took three kids to the high school and had a child who lived in the apartments on the other side of Grove Street, she did not believe it would be feasible to have a drive-through. She stated that the main clientele at Jeremiah's Ice would be 16- to 18-year-old new drivers. Ms. Garrett respected Council Member Roseman's comments and asked that consideration be given to limited drive-through hours.

Council Member Plaag shared the concerns expressed by Council members Carter and Roseman and also expressed concern for pedestrian safety if there was an overlap in hours of operation for Jeremiah's Ice and the coffee truck. Ms. Garrett stated that if the drive-through for the coffee truck were approved, there would be no overlapping hours of operation. Council Member Plaag felt that young people liked coffee and ice cream, and he suggested orienting the coffee truck so that it faced the drive-through window for Jeremiah's Ice. This would allow people to gather at the truck if they wanted coffee or at the ice cream window if they wanted ice cream, while still providing a drive aisle around the building. Council

Member Plaag stated that the project was a great idea and was in the right location. However, the drive-through seemed dangerous.

Council Member Plaag commented that a traffic impact analysis should always be required when any portion of a driveway is located that close to the intersection because that is a safety concern. He asked if a Special Use Permit was required for a business to add a food truck to their property, and whether the food truck would trigger a TIA based on the estimated traffic.

Council Member Tugman arrived at the meeting at 6:54 pm.

Ms. Snider replied that food trucks were not considered permanently established and were considered a temporary use/itinerant merchant, which did not require a TIA. Council Member Plaag asked if cars stacking up on the road due to the food truck would trigger a response from Planning & Inspections. Mr. Wise stated that this would not currently trigger a response from P&I. He noted that food trucks were on the staff's list of items to research for a possible text amendment.

Ms. Garrett mentioned possibly installing an arm, not a latched gate, at the southwest corner of the front deck to deter small children from going down the stairs.

Commission Member Pruitt stated she looked up the franchise, and the colors were bright. Ms. Garrett replied that the building would not be painted and the roof would not be changed from the existing colors. The building would remain a wood color with a green roof.

Vice-Chair Veno expressed concern about traffic in that area. He noted a meme that depicted a coffee shop in France where people were sitting together in a group, and then a coffee shop in the United States, where the traffic was backed up through the drive-through.

Chair Tait felt this could be a cool spot for kids, even without a drive-through.

Council Member Carter asked if there had been any conversation with DOT about changing the timing of the light for better safety in the crosswalk. Ms. Garrett replied that they would like to see improvements at the intersection, but did not think they had a lot of control over that.

Council Member Tugman asked if this project would affect the Grove Street greenway connector. Mr. Wise replied that it would not.

Jane Shook, Director of Planning & Inspections, stated that Planning and Public Works staff were meeting with the local DOT office this week in their new space to introduce the Town's new staff and their new staff and work out some permitting details. She added that they could bring the concerns about the intersection and crosswalk to DOT's attention at this meeting. Council Member Plaag suggested that designating the area as a school zone might help slow traffic.

With nothing further, Mayor Pro Tem George closed the public hearing for this case at 7:07 p.m.

Adjournment of Town Council

Council Member Roseman moved to adjourn the Public Hearing at 7:07 p.m. Council Member Plaag seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Dalton George, Mayor Pro Tem

Brenda Henson, Board Clerk

Adrian Tait, Planning Commission Chair

PLANNING COMMISSION

Chair Tait called a break in the meeting from 7:07 pm until 7:14 pm.

Case A25-0118 The Summit Pickleball – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

The Summit Pickleball, LLC submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map application to rezone a portion of 278 Industrial Park Drive and the adjacent lot from M1 Manufacturing to a Conditional District B3 General Business with a site-specific plan for use 12.11 Recreation Facility, Category 2. As proposed, the site would expand the indoor-only recreation activities to include outdoor activities with the addition of one sand volleyball court, two mini-soccer fields, and two outdoor pickleball courts.

Commission Member Pruitt felt this was an outstanding use of the grassy space that could easily be converted back to an industrial use if necessary. She stated that the owners of the business hosted fundraisers and seemed community-oriented.

Chair Tait stated that, according to the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Commission, not many people were knocking on the doors to bring industrial facilities to the area. He added that using this location to help people be healthier and provide a recreation opportunity seemed to be a good fit.

Mr. Wise reminded Commission members about the two suggested conditions of approval related to bicycle parking and outdoor speakers. He noted that the Town Code provided some regulations regarding noise that were managed by the police. Commission Member Pruitt stated that other places in town had outdoor music, and she did not see it as a problem at this location. Mr. Wise said that Council Member Plaag's concern was that, due to the topography, sound would carry to the residential properties across Hwy 421. Commission Member Kight and Chair Tait agreed that they did not favor the condition to ban outdoor speakers at this location.

First Motion and Vote: Chair Tait made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town's zoning map is consistent with the Town's comprehensive plan and any other adopted plans of the Town that are applicable because of:

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.1.1 Economic Development

A. The Town shall protect and enhance a high quality of life, image, cultural amenities, and natural beauty as the most effective, long term component of an economic development strategy.

C. The Town shall encourage the development of a well-balanced tourism trade as a primary element of the area's economic future. Investments in services, facilities, and proper growth management shall be employed in furtherance of this objective.

D. Economic development efforts shall encourage the revitalization and reuse of currently unused or underutilized structures, sites and infrastructure in appropriately located areas.

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.3.2 Community Character

E. New development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of structures and sites shall occur in a manner which is consistent with the neighborhood and architectural context of the immediate area, and supportive, whenever possible, of Boone's original community character as a High Country small town.

Commission Member Kight seconded the motion. Chair Tait wished to amend the motion to include the following conditions:

1. Where there is a conflict between the application information and the plans (dated received on April 15, 2025), the plans shall control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO.
2. Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed development made by the applicant or her representatives at the public hearing shall also become a condition of the permit, and a basis for a stop work order and/or permit revocation if violated.
3. The applicant shall submit the necessary applications, plans, details and specifications which meet the requirements of the Town Code, UDO, Building Code and any other applicable codes for review and approval necessary to issue Zoning and Building Permits.
4. Bicycle parking shall be installed.

Commission Member Kight accepted the amendment.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Second Motion and Vote: Chair Tait made a motion that the Planning Commission recommends approval of Ordinance A25-0118 within Exhibit A and believes approval is reasonable and in the public interest because enhancing recreational facilities as part of local businesses and utilizing otherwise unused portions of business properties is helping to grow and expand both the recreational opportunities and the businesses in the area. Commission Member Behrend seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Other Matters

Ms. Shook stated that the Town was almost ready to conclude Boone Next. She noted that all final work had been turned over to the consultant, and they expected changes in the next week or so. A Special Public Hearing had been scheduled for June 23 to consider adoption of the plan. Ms. Shook explained that changes had been made to the future land use map and other changes. She stated she would ensure the Planning Commission received an itemized list of the changes and the final draft when available. Ms. Shook expressed gratitude to everyone who had been part of the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan. She felt that once the Comprehensive Plan update/Boone Next was complete, more work would be coming to the Planning Commission to address issues in the Unified Development Ordinance.

Ms. Shook noted that Commission Member Behrend's term on the Planning Commission would expire on June 30, 2025, and she would not be eligible to be reappointed for one year. Ms. Shook stated that Commission Member Behrend could continue to serve on the Commission until her position was refilled. Commission Member Behrend indicated a willingness to continue to serve until her position was refilled.

Adjournment

Commission Member Kight motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m. Chair Tait seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Adrian Tait, Planning Commission Chair

Brenda Henson, Board Clerk

DRAFT



Staff Report
Special Public Hearing
June 23, 2025

Case A25-0426 Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future – Comprehensive Plan Adoption

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Request

Boone Next is the Town of Boone’s initiative to update its comprehensive plan, serving as both the process and the final document for guiding future growth and development. Upon adoption, Boone Next, will establish a shared vision for the town’s long-term growth, outlining key goals, strategies, and action steps to inform policy decisions and town initiatives.

Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future is being presented for adoption in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. §160D-501.

Statutory Guidance

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-501.

As a condition of adopting and applying zoning regulations, a local government shall adopt and reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan or land-use plan. A comprehensive plan sets forth goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development of the jurisdiction. A land-use plan uses text and maps to designate the future use or reuse of land. A comprehensive or land-use plan is intended to guide coordinated, efficient, and orderly development within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction based on an analysis of present and future needs. Planning analysis may address inventories of existing conditions and assess future trends regarding demographics and economic, environmental, and cultural factors. The planning process shall include opportunities for citizen engagement in plan preparation and adoption.

Comprehensive Plan Contents

A comprehensive plan may, among other topics, address any of the following as determined by the local government:

1. Issues and opportunities facing the local government, including consideration of trends, values expressed by citizens, community vision, and guiding principles for growth and development.
2. The pattern of desired growth and development and civic design, including the location, distribution, and characteristics of future land uses, urban form, utilities, and transportation networks.
3. Employment opportunities, economic development, and community development.
4. Acceptable levels of public services and infrastructure to support development, including water, waste disposal, utilities, emergency services, transportation, education, recreation, community

facilities, and other public services, including plans and policies for provision of and financing for public infrastructure.

5. Housing with a range of types and affordability to accommodate persons and households of all types and income levels.
6. Recreation and open spaces.
7. Mitigation of natural hazards such as flooding, winds, wildfires, and unstable lands.
8. Protection of the environment and natural resources, including agricultural resources, mineral resources, and water and air quality.
9. Protection of significant architectural, scenic, cultural, historical, or archaeological resources.
10. Analysis and evaluation of implementation measures, including regulations, public investments, and educational programs.

Adoption and Effect of Plans

Plans shall be adopted by the governing board with the advice and consultation of the planning board. Adoption and amendment of a comprehensive or land-use plan is a legislative decision and shall follow the process mandated for zoning text amendments set by G.S. 160D-601. Plans shall be advisory in nature without independent regulatory effect. Plans do not expand, diminish, or alter the scope of authority for development regulations. Plans shall be considered by the planning board and governing board when considering proposed amendments to zoning regulations as required by G.S. 160D-604 and G.S. 160D-605.

History

Initiation & Early Planning (2022-2023)

- September 2022: Initial Staff-led comprehensive plan work began with conceptualization, plans for data gathering, RFP process, and overall planning with Town Council.
- November 2022: Town Council began holding small stakeholder meetings on a variety of topics to assist in understanding and assessing current conditions and to engage in preliminary visioning for the Comprehensive Plan update.
- May 2023: The Town released an RFP for a comprehensive plan update.
- August 2023: Consultants selected and initial internal planning and research with consultant team began.

Public Engagement & Drafting (2023-2024)

- October 2023: The public process began with consultant-led stakeholder meetings with various representatives of Boone's business, education, healthcare, transportation, and community groups and included Town boards and commissions, and Town Staff.
- January 2024: The first community workshop, Workshop for Our Future, was held at Hardin Park School. This workshop, allowed those who call Boone Home to share their ideas, concerns, and hopes for Boone's future. Through a charette-style format, participants were able to explore topics such as housing, transportation, environmental sustainability, and economic prosperity. An online survey was offered after the workshop to gain additional insight from those who were not able to attend.
- April-May 2024: On April 29 and 30 the Town hosted a series of events, Guide for Our Future, to engage property owners and people living in one of *Boone Next's* four focus areas (East

Boone/Highway 421 Gateway, Blowing Rock Road Gateway, Hwy 105 Gateway, and West Boone/Highway 421 Gateway). On the evening of April 30, everyone was invited to learn the conclusion of the focus area work. And finally, on the evening of May 1, the Town hosted a second *Boone Next* community meeting. Each meeting started with a presentation to allow attendees to receive the same foundational information about Boone Next. Following each presentation, interactive stations offered participants a deeper dive into specific areas of interest based upon the feedback from the first community forum. An online survey was offered after the workshop to gain additional insight from those who were not able to attend.

Finalization & Adoption (2024-2025)

- December 2024: Confirm the Plan: The Town hosted an open house charrette-style meeting which detailed each chapter of the draft Boone Next plan, plan progress, and community input received.
- January 2025: A public work session was held with the Town Council and the Planning Commission to review the draft Boone Next plan, implementation actions, and focus area plans.
- March – April 2025: Work sessions were held with Town Council and Staff to discuss the Land Use chapter and Future Land Use Map.
- June 2025: Anticipated Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future adoption.

Boone Next Plan Contents

Introduction: A New Community – Chartered Path Forward

This chapter introduces the Town of Boone and Boone Next, outlining the history, planning context, and future vision for the Town. It highlights key challenges such as growth pressures, transportation concerns, housing affordability, and climate resilience, emphasizing the importance of long-term planning. The chapter sets for the Boone Community Vision, which focuses on prosperity, livability, sustainability, and equity.

Additionally, it presents Boone’s “big ideas”, including:

- Reducing auto dependency by creating walkable communities
- Expanding affordable housing
- Promoting sustainability
- Prioritizing equity

Finally, the chapter explains how to use the plan, detailing goals and policies in each chapter. Goals are the high-level and long term outcome statements that work toward achieving the vision framework. Each goal contains a list of policies with more specific direction. Policies provide more specific direction for achieving the goals and vision. While the implementation actions listed in the Appendix are proactive, policies provide Town staff, appointed officials, the Town Council, developers, business owners, and residents ongoing guidance for decision-making.

Land Use and Development

This chapter includes the vision for Boone to be grounded in its historic character, to be a distinct pedestrian-oriented town that is affordable, livable, human-scale, and connected through a network of

walkable, mixed-use corridors and activity centers. The Land Use and Development chapter details specifics tools such as:

- The Planning Principles that provide a core vision to guide planning, zoning, and development decisions and to be used when considering amendments, development decisions, and Town planning and policy initiatives.
- The Growth Management Tiers Map's purpose is to help manage growth within Town limits by providing guidance for making decisions about utilities and annexations.
- The Utility Service and Annexation Criteria that lists a set of criteria to be evaluated for consideration of individual requests for annexation and extension decisions.
- The Future Land Use Map is to shape and implement Boone's vision for the next 15-20 years. This map features land use types that are a recommended list of general land use categories, building form, and objectives, which articulate a general vision for future development.

Multiple Safe Travel Options

This chapter highlights the vision for residents to have the freedom to safely and realistically travel in Town using a variety of connected, convenient, and comfortable transportation modes. We will focus on a walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly network for ensuring an accessible community. This chapter explores transportation best practices for improving safety, expanding mobility options, improving traffic flow, and promoting sustainability. Detailing best practices and analyzing current conditions in Boone, this chapter highlights strategies for future implementation of multimodal transportation options.

A Vibrant Local Economy

This chapter begins with the vision that Boone's innovative, entrepreneurial, and diverse economy will value progress and opportunity. We will foster a dynamic and inclusive economy that will provide dignified, living wage jobs within a developing local job market. This chapter highlights current conditions of increasing housing demand while understanding the economic shifts of Boone toward a service-based and experience economy, while also seeking to diversify its economy beyond tourism and education.

Government and Public Services

This chapter's vision is that the Town is committed to engage inclusive processes that build upon existing commitments to expediency, innovation, and public engagement ensuring the provision of excellent services and facilities. The Town will foster a collaborative environment where community input is valued and integrated in Town decisions. This chapter details the way the Town provides a range of services to the community with increasing growth pressures that demand greater services and infrastructure, while using land use planning and growth management for long-term fiscal health and distribution of public goods.

Green and Resilient

This chapter embraces the vision that Boone will be climate-neutral, sustainable, resilient, and a responsible environmental steward. With the recently adopted Community Climate Action Plan, the Town has committed to strategies to reduce our carbon footprint and GHG reduction. With these key strategies

this chapter's goals and policies emphasizes actionable steps for stormwater management, sustainable practices in building, operations, and infrastructure, and providing active green spaces.

Conformity to Adopted Plans – Potentially Relevant Comprehensive Plan Provisions Comprehensive Plan Update

1.1 Overall Objectives for the Boone Comprehensive Plan (p. 15):

The following objectives, which have not been listed in any particular order of importance, are deliberately broad in scope and less specific than either a policy statement or an implementation action.

Economic Development: Acknowledge the area's natural beauty, university, and medical center presence as the Town's greatest assets for economic development and jobs creation. Treat them accordingly.

Community Appearance and Community Character: Blend the built environment with the natural, scenic, and historic character of a High-Country small town. Especially discourage commercial strip development, cluttered signage, and "cheap" apartment buildings.

Open Space: Integrate open space and greenways into the urban fabric of the Town. Preserve the countryside by discouraging suburban sprawl. Avoid development in floodplains, on ridgetops, and on steep slopes.

Environmental Quality: Address and monitor growth factors and activities that contribute to water, air, light, and noise pollution.

Trees: Conserve existing trees and plant new trees, especially hardwoods.

Infrastructure: Engage in long range planning for water and sewer systems, stormwater runoff, natural gas, and other utility systems. Place overhead utilities underground whenever feasible.

Public Safety: Maintain a high level of policing and fire protection and plan the expansion of public safety services to coincide with projected population increases and identified needs.

Energy and Waste: Reduce waste generation, and the consumption of energy and water. Develop area recycling programs to the fullest. Encourage an anti-litter consciousness among residents and visitors.

Neighborhoods: Ensure the livability of neighborhoods, especially through land use and traffic planning.

Public Involvement: Encourage active public involvement and volunteerism to expand the effectiveness of community planning and action.

2.1 THE ECONOMY

2.1.1 Economic Development

- A. The Town shall protect and enhance a high quality of life, image, cultural amenities, and natural beauty as the most effective, long term component of an economic development strategy.

2.3 THE COMMUNITY

- A. Urban type development within the Urban Growth Area shall meet appropriate Town standards.

2.3.4 Public Involvement

- A. Public involvement shall be encouraged in decisions concerning land use and development by making the public aware of proposed developments at the earliest opportunity, as well as fostering communication among developers, the Town, the County, the University, and the general public.
- B. Neighborhood and special area planning shall be encouraged to foster public involvement in the production of closely tailored, action oriented special area plans and programs.
- D. Special committees, advisory panels, educational forums, public workshops, leadership seminars, town meetings and media contacts shall be encouraged and fostered to enhance the effectiveness of citizen involvement in community planning and action.

Planning Board Report/Recommendations

Per NCGS 160D-604(b), subsequent to initial adoption of a zoning regulation, all proposed amendments to the zoning regulation or zoning map shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for review and comment. If no written report is received from the Planning Commission within 30 days of referral of the amendment to that board, the Town Council may act on the amendment without the Planning Commission report. The Town Council is not bound by the recommendations, if any, of the Planning Commission. Per NCGS 160D-604(d), when conducting a review of proposed zoning text or map, the Planning Commission shall advise and comment on whether the proposed action is consistent with any comprehensive plan that has been adopted and any other officially adopted plan that is applicable. The Planning Commission shall provide a written recommendation to the governing board that addresses plan consistency and other matters as deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission, but a comment by the Planning Commission that a proposed amendment is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan shall not preclude consideration or approval of the proposed amendment by the governing board.

Vote 1: Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future ☐is OR ☐is not consistent with the Town's current 2006 comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because:

Note 1

Note 1: describe elements of controlling land use plans and how the plan is or is not consistent.

Vote 2: The Planning Commission recommends ☐approval OR ☐denial of Ordinance #A25-0426 within Exhibit A and ☐approval OR ☐denial is reasonable and in the public interest because:

Note 2

Note 2: briefly explain why, factors may include the benefits and detriments to the landowners, the neighbors, and the surrounding community; why the action taken is in the public interest; and any changed conditions warranting the amendment.

Town Council– Adoption of Ordinance

Per NCGS 160D-605, when adopting or rejecting any zoning text or map amendment, the Town Council shall approve a brief statement describing whether its action is consistent or inconsistent with an adopted comprehensive plan. The requirement for a plan consistency statement may also be met by a clear indication in the minutes of the governing board that at the time of action on the amendment the governing board was aware of and considered the planning board's recommendations and any relevant portions of an adopted comprehensive plan.

Vote 1: Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future ☐is OR ☐is not consistent with the Town's current 2006 comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because:

Note 1

Note 1: describe elements of controlling land use plans and how the plan is or is not consistent.

Vote 2: The Town Council ☐approves OR ☐denies Ordinance #A25-0426 and believes ☐approval OR ☐denial is reasonable and in the public interest because:

Note 2

Note 2: briefly explain why, factors may include the benefits and detriments to the landowners, the neighbors, and the surrounding community; why the action taken is in the public interest; and any changed conditions warranting the amendment.

Ordinance #A25-0426

ORDINANCE # A25-0426

AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT BOONE NEXT: OUR TOWN, OUR FUTURE (COMPREHENSIVE PLAN)

WHEREAS, in compliance with N.C. Gen. Stat. 160D-501, the Town of Boone is required to adopt and maintain a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council initiated the process in 2022 to update the Town's comprehensive plan, last modified in 2018, to reflect evolving community needs and priorities; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Town of Boone launched an extensive community engagement process for Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future, incorporating public workshops, stakeholder meetings, and surveys to ensure broad participation; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission and the Town Council conducted a public hearing to review and discuss the proposed comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has reviewed the written recommendations of the Town of Boone Planning Commission and finds that Boone Next serves the best interests of the Town and those who call Boone home;

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council is authorized to adopt this Ordinance pursuant to its authority under G.S. Chapter 160D, Article 6;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOONE TOWN COUNCIL THAT:

SECTION 1. Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future is hereby adopted as the official comprehensive plan for the Town of Boone as set forth in the attached **Exhibit A** to this Ordinance, which is incorporated by reference:

SECTION 2. All provisions of any Town ordinance in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 3. In the event any section, subsection, subdivision, paragraph, subparagraph, item, sentence, clause, phrase or word of this ordinance is declared or adjudged to be invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration or adjudication shall not affect the remaining provisions of this ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect as if the portion so declared or adjudged invalid or unconstitutional was not originally a part of this ordinance.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance shall be effective immediately upon its adoption by Town Council.

Adopted this the 25th day of June, 2025.

The Honorable Tim Futrelle, Mayor

Attest:

Nicole Harmon-Church, Town Clerk

BOONE NEXT

OUR TOWN. OUR FUTURE.

The Comprehensive Plan

Town of Boone, North Carolina

Public Hearing Draft



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Boone Next represents the collective effort of our entire community, including numerous residents, businesses, organizations, Town Council, Town Staff, members of advisory boards and commissions, and our project consultants. Your collective vision and dedication are the cornerstone of Boone Next.

Mayor and Town Council

Tim Futrelle, Mayor
Dalton George, Mayor Pro Tem
Todd Carter, Council Member
Eric Plaag, Council Member
Virginia Roseman, Council Member
Edie Tugman, Council Member

Planning Commission

Adrian Tair, Chair
Frank Venio, Vice Chair
Chris Behrend, Commission Member
Anne Pruitt, Commission Member
Smith Warren, Commission Member

Town Staff

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Darrell Pulliam, Building Code Compliance Official
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Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources
Jimmy Isaacs, Fire and Emergency Services Director
Matt Krause, Fire Division Chief/Emergency Coordinator
Andy LeBeau, Chief of Police
Angie Matheson, Utility Billing Accountant
Allison Meade, Town Attorney
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Guy Miller, Finance Director
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Todd Moody, Public Works Director
Dale Presnell, Human Resources Director
George Santucci, Sustainability Manager
Justin Stines, Deputy Public Works Director
Laney Wise, Grants Coordinator/Communications

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A NEW COMMUNITY-CHARTED PATH FORWARD

This Comprehensive Plan for Boone, North Carolina, arrives in the wake of the devastating impacts of Hurricane Helene, which caused damage and destruction across western North Carolina. Hurricane Helene exposed a reality of an increasingly volatile climate with more frequent and powerful extreme weather events. It also demonstrated the social unity of people - when flood waters receded, residents and small businesses stepped up to help one another. This community collaboration and resolve in the face of adversity shows that Boone and its regional neighbors can overcome hurdles to create a better world for all who live and work here.

This plan was created through the robust involvement of hundreds of local residents. To maintain and protect what residents love about this town and achieve what residents imagine for the future, the plan charts a new path forward, one that reflects the town's deep commitment to building a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient

community for all its residents. As Boone continues to grow and evolve, this plan serves as a guiding framework, addressing four key themes that are essential to shaping a prosperous future:

- Equity
- Affordable housing
- Sustainability and climate action
- Resiliency

Each of these priorities is intricately connected, forming a holistic approach to the challenges and opportunities facing the community in the years and decades ahead.

At its core, the plan emphasizes equity. We recognize that the scale of the changes needed to solve inequality lie at higher levels of government, but the plan seeks efficiently use local resources to provide that every resident has better access to opportunities, services, and resources to live happy, healthy, prosperous, and meaningful lives. In turn, when residents have what they need, they can collectively contribute to society and the Town that we all love.

The outcome of an equitable community is one where diversity is accepted and celebrated, and where historic disparities that have marginalized certain groups become less acute. This theme is woven throughout the plan, particularly in the areas of housing, government services, and community engagement, ensuring that growth contributes to a better town and does not come at the expense of our residents, especially the most vulnerable residents.



Flooding along Blowing Rock Road in 2024 from Hurricane Helene

Affordable housing is a central policy focus of the plan. Boone and its surrounding areas have experienced significant growth pressure in recent years. This is due to the migration of new residents, increased tourism, and admissions at Appalachian State University. These factors have led to higher demand and increased competition, resulting in rising housing costs and increases in the overall cost of living. This threatens to price out long-time residents and workers. Recent data indicates that our area is one of the most cost-burdened in the state.

Strategies addressing housing range from general land use policies that encourage redevelopment in certain areas while threading green connections throughout town, to encouraging and incentivizing income-restricted housing, to committing to further engaging with residents to explore creative housing opportunities that make Boone more beautiful while expanding the kinds of housing available. All of this is in recognition that we need high quality affordable housing today and must leave a protected supply of high quality affordable housing to future generations. The goal is to create a housing stock that serves all income levels, family sizes, and preferences, helping Boone remain a place where people can live, work, within a walkable and healthy environment and thrive without fear of displacement.

In addressing sustainability and climate action, the plan incorporates the Boone Community Climate Action Plan and aligns with global efforts on the part of local governments to combat climate change while seeking to make Boone more livable. A key objective is to transition the Town government and community as a whole toward climate neutrality through a comprehensive approach to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The plan advocates for investments in clean energy infrastructure, including solar power, wind energy, and electric vehicle infrastructure to decrease Boone's environmental footprint. Additionally, sustainable development

practices are embedded in zoning, transportation, and building standards to create a greener, more resilient town.

Finally, the comprehensive plan underscores the importance of resiliency, especially in the wake of Hurricane Helene, which exposed vulnerabilities in Western North Carolina's infrastructure and response systems. The plan calls for investments in flood mitigation, enhanced stormwater management, and infrastructure improvements to safeguard against future climate events. But resiliency extends beyond physical infrastructure—it also encompasses social resilience, ensuring that Boone's residents, particularly those most impacted by disasters, have the support and resources to recover from potential threats quickly and equitably.

Together, these four themes—equity, affordable housing, sustainability, and resiliency—form the foundation of a comprehensive plan that seeks to build a Boone that is inclusive, sustainable, and capable of facing the challenges of an uncertain future. By integrating these priorities into the Town's growth and development, Boone is not simply planning for tomorrow, but for a brighter, more equitable, and resilient future for generations to come.

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs

Lo que más amo
de Boone es...

La comunidad



3 grandes ideas
que tengo para
Boone son...

- 1 - Menos tráfico
- 2 - Mayor accesibilidad a viviendas
- 3 - Mayor inclusividad.

I INTRODUCTION

Boone, North Carolina, is a destination that attracts people from across the state and country who wish to live, work, study, and visit. The town features a beloved downtown with scenic views and is situated at the gateway to some of the state's most beautiful natural areas. Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Boone is also a hub of activity for thousands of students and academic research, making it a truly unique place.

This plan builds on existing trends and conditions in Boone, informed by thousands of conversations and community comments, to establish a new community-wide plan for the town we all cherish.

CHAPTER CONTENTS

History and Planning Context

Planning Boone's Future

The Boone Community Vision

How to Use This Plan

Big Ideas for Boone

HISTORY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

Boone is a special place for all who live, work, study, and visit this town. Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of central Watauga County, Boone is a bustling, charming, and historic college town with lush rugged landscapes, small local shops and restaurants, a variety of neighborhoods and housing types, strong civic pride, and many of the conveniences and offerings of a larger city.

Watauga County itself is located in Northwest North Carolina abutting Johnson County, Tennessee to the west and surrounded by Ashe, Avery, Caldwell, and Wilkes counties. Within Watauga County, Beech Mountain lies west of Boone, Seven Devils to the southwest, and Blowing Rock to the south.

Native Americans lived upon the land, likely several thousand years ago, with Cherokee, Catawba, and Shawnee tribes calling the area home before the arrival of European settlers.¹

¹ Citizens' Plan for Watauga, Page 3

Incorporated in 1872, Boone's growing population received service from the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad (nicknamed "Tweetsie") in 1919 until 1940.

Appalachian State University plays a central role in Boone's economy and occupies a large proportion of land within the Town's municipal limits. Originally the small Watauga Academy, ASU is now the sixth largest university in the University of North Carolina system.

Once rural and isolated, the town finds itself as a desirable destination experiencing strong growth pressures from people looking to live, work, study, and visit in the area.

Today, several overarching trends and planning conditions are impacting the way that Boone that exists today — presenting the Town with key challenges and opportunities. The following topics represent some of the Town's important trends and existing conditions influencing this plan.



Boone is undergoing strong growth pressures.

Growth pressure is an important topic in Boone, especially with the desirable quality of life and outdoor amenities, growth of the Appalachian State student body, and the county-wide proliferation of tourism and seasonal rentals. This pressure creates both a challenge and an opportunity for the town as the community works to reconcile the cherished small-town character, rising cost of living, and other realities of unprecedented growth pressures including the availability and cost of housing and traffic.

Local and regional travel patterns are impacting Boone.

Traffic is a top concern within the Boone community. Traffic congestion from automobiles has increased due to a variety of factors, including a growing population, a lack of street connectivity due to Boone's rugged terrain, Boone's tourism economy and frequent visitors, inward and outward commuting patterns, the town's auto-centric built pattern, and the town's location along regional travel networks. A strong desire exists to decrease congestion, enhance roadway safety, and increase the variety of travel options, with a focus on active transportation.

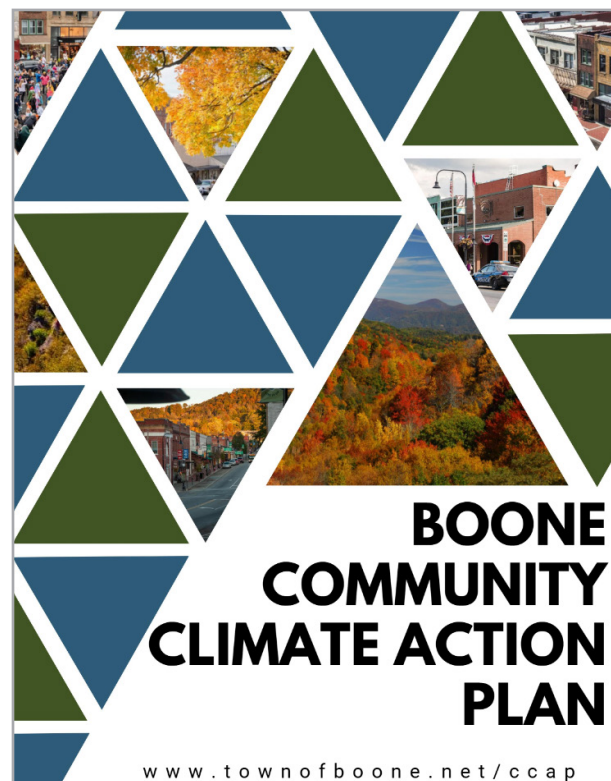
Housing has become more expensive and unattainable for many.

Housing is a high priority in Boone, especially for low income and workforce renters and buyers, but also extending to middle income households and students. Boone's desirability as a place to live and visit has increased the cost of living beyond the reach of many low- and middle-income workers and students, who are forced to live outside of Boone town limits, and even Watauga County, and commute in, or contribute large percentages of their income each month to pay for housing.

Several parts of town contain existing housing stock, particularly aging apartment complexes, that has remained affordable; yet, often residents face challenges related to housing instability, quality of housing, displacement, or rent increases.

Climate action and resilience are key town goals.

Boone's Community Climate Action Plan demonstrates the community's commitment to achieving climate neutrality as a matter of responsibility to future generations and the world. Many aspects of climate action require corresponding policies and actions within the comprehensive framework of a community-wide plan, folding climate action into transportation, land use, economic development, and community services. This comprehensive plan incorporates climate action into townwide planning.



PLANNING BOONE'S FUTURE

Planning for the future is an important way to create an agreed upon collective community vision and goals, and achieve it by prioritizing and acting upon policies and actions. Planning also helps to be efficient with limited resources and govern communities in a fiscally balanced way.

The comprehensive plan is a community's broadest public policy document and sets forth the long-range vision for transportation, housing, development, the environment, and other local government services and facilities. It serves to connect existing and future community plans under one cohesive umbrella.

ABOUT BOONE NEXT

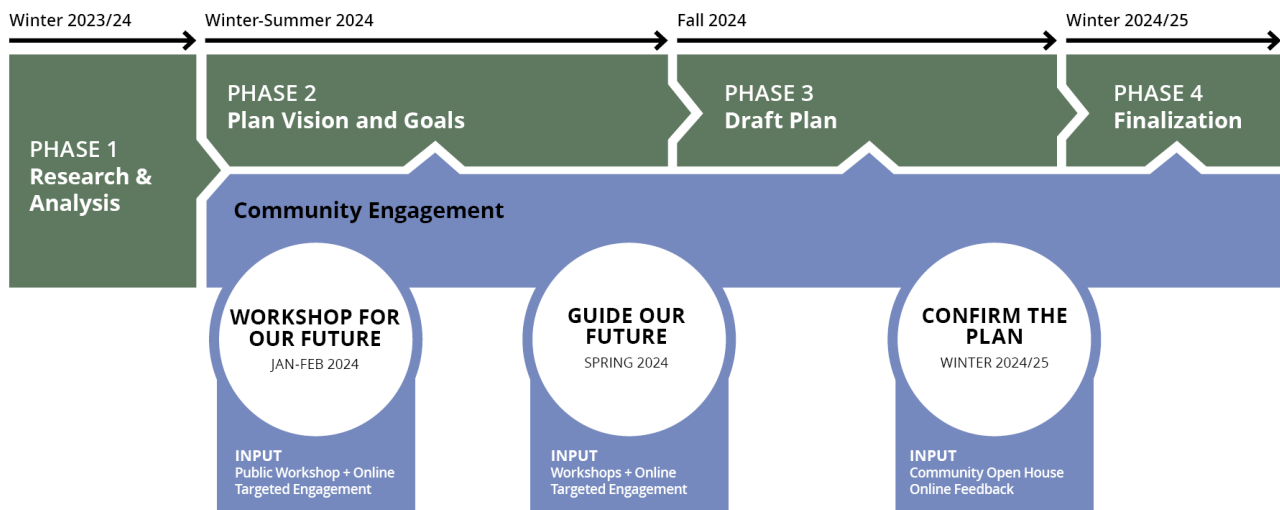
This plan is the result of a robust planning and community engagement process that involved over 700 participants through in-person interviews and workshops, small group discussions, mapping exercises, online surveys, paper surveys, and emails. The result is a community-based plan to guide the community as it grows and changes. The Boone Community Vision sets the plan's direction. Each of the five policy chapters provides additional guidance to achieve the vision. This plan is intended to be readable, accessible, and user-friendly.

Public engagement served as the foundation of the Boone Next planning process, with three rounds of public input.

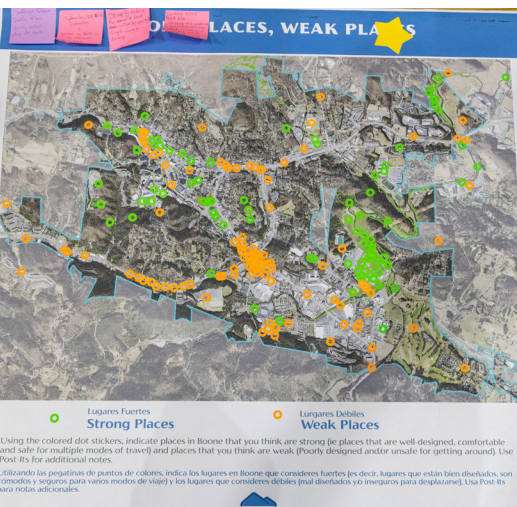
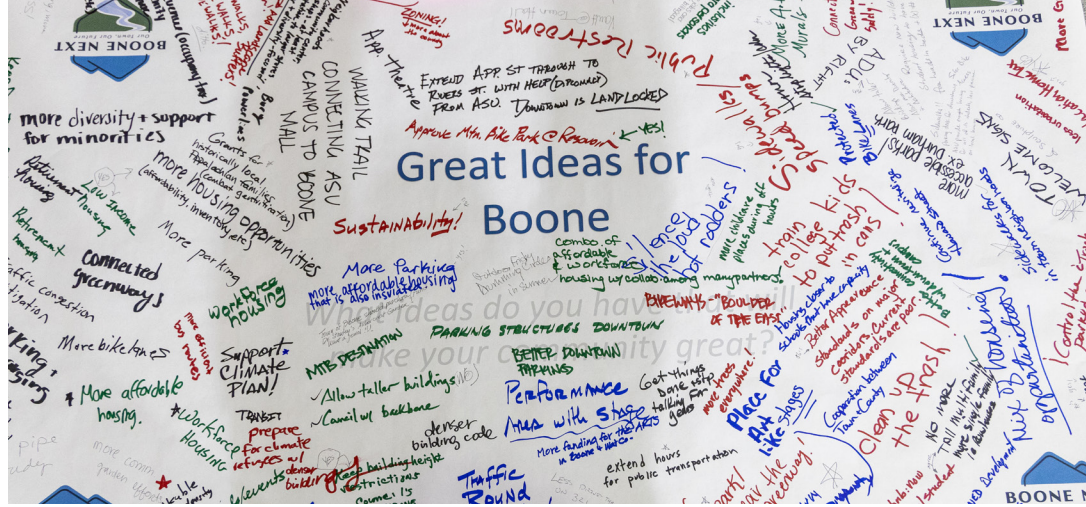
The philosophy behind the engagement process followed that every member of the Boone community should know that they have a choice to participate in the Boone Next process. To accomplish this, diverse outreach initiatives made community members aware of the process and encouraged participation, including the project and Town websites, social media, email listservs, announcements at Town meetings, water bills, yard signs, and at events and gatherings throughout the town. Stakeholder meetings were convened to target and hear from specific groups, such as environmental advocates, business and development, school administrators, social justice leaders, and jurisdictional partners.

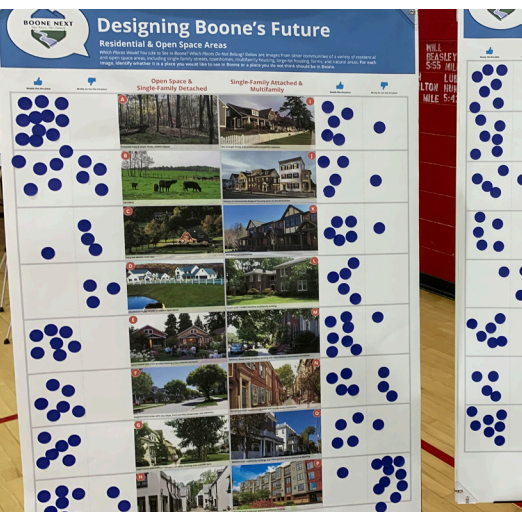
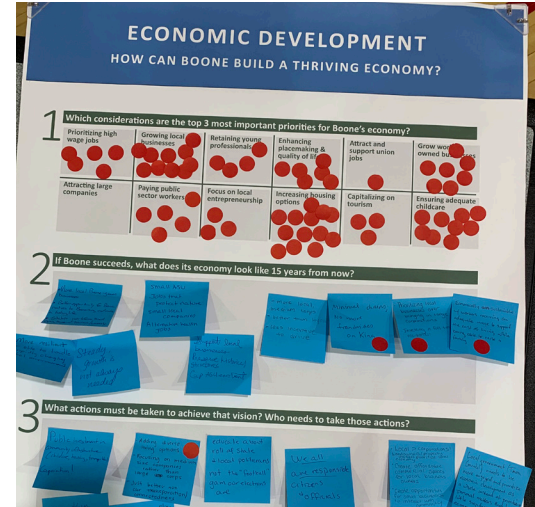
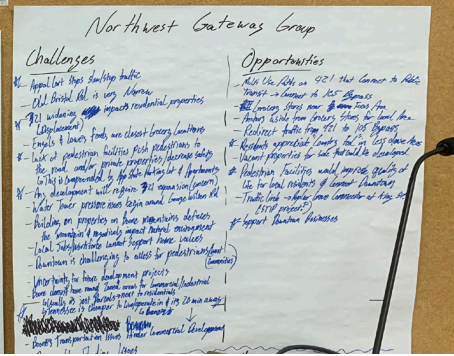
The first round of engagement took place throughout January and February 2024, engaging more than 500 participants. The second round occurred over the summer and involved around 400 total participants. Community members discussed important issues facing the town, provided big ideas, identified places to change and keep the same, identified key transportation needs, tested vision statements, provided economic development and housing ideas, marked up focus area maps, and identified building designs that they liked and disliked and mapped where they should go.

This input was used to draft the plan. The third round of engagement included review of the planning document, resulting in updates and refinements prior to the plan's adoption process.



Round 1 Workshop For Our Future





The Boone Community Vision

We will be a prosperous, livable, people-oriented mountain community modeling resilient growth that promotes and protects our natural resources with diverse housing options and dynamic economic opportunities. We will celebrate and build upon our community's historic foundation to leave a sustainable and equitable town for future generations.

Land Use and Development

Grounded in its historic character, Boone will be a distinct pedestrian-oriented town that is affordable, livable, human-scale, and connected through a network of walkable, mixed-use corridors and activity centers.

Multiple Safe Travel Options

Residents will have the freedom to safely and realistically travel in Town using a variety of connected, convenient, and comfortable transportation modes. We will focus on a walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly network for ensuring an accessible community.

A Vibrant Local Economy

Boone's innovative, entrepreneurial, and diverse economy will value progress and opportunity. We will foster a dynamic and inclusive economy that will provide dignified, living wage jobs within a developing local job market.

Government and Public Services

The Town is committed to engage inclusive processes that build upon existing commitments to expediency, innovation, and public engagement ensuring the provision of excellent services and facilities. The Town will foster a collaborative environment where community input is valued and integrated in town decisions.

Green and Resilient

Boone will be climate-neutral, sustainable, resilient, and a responsible environmental steward.

BIG IDEAS FOR BOONE

The Big Ideas for Boone represent high level takeaways from this plan. In other words, this is a synthesis of what the plan says we should do as a town to achieve our vision.

Address auto-dependency and traffic congestion head-on: create small, connected “communities within our community” across Boone - mixed use activity centers that use similar design characteristics as our beloved downtown - to create more walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented destinations and access to daily needs for residents, students, workers, and visitors.

Build and protect affordable housing: achieve thoughtful and well-designed residential housing density and diversity without inducing displacement or negative externalities to the community. Use creative tools to incentivize income-restricted housing units in new developments and encourage new types of housing tenure like community land trusts and cooperative housing.

Foster a sustainable, green, and health-conscious built environment that mitigates and adapts to climate change and extreme weather while reimagining the community’s relationship with natural resources. Treat natural resources as assets by orienting development toward them rather than as burdens by orienting development away from them.

Prioritize equity in Boone: allocate town resources toward Boone’s most vulnerable residents through programs like housing with wraparound services, fare-free transit, translation services, tenant advocacy, property tax relief, equitable community engagement, and critical services provided in collaboration with nonprofit and multijurisdictional partners.

KEY TERMS

Activity Center: A compact, walkable area intended to contain a mix of uses

Activate (a space): Using a combination of building and urban design, uses, and activities planning, creating spaces that are comfortable for human interaction whether its related to civic activity, leisure, or commerce

Active Transportation: Any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation such as walking, biking, and other movements requiring coordinated action by the user. May also include the use of mobility devices such as wheelchairs

Affordable Housing: In Boone, a combination of subsidized/regulated housing (see Income-Restricted Housing) and market rate housing that is attainable for households making less than 80% of the area median income

Agglomeration Economies: Firms and workers, especially of related industries, benefit from locating close one another. This geographic concentration of economic activity is referred to as agglomeration and these benefits as agglomeration benefits or agglomeration economies

Capital Improvements/Investments: Infrastructure projects (i.e., buildings, facilities, roads) or services undertaken by or supported by funds from the Town of Boone or other governmental body

Civic Use: Uses involving collective needs and functions of a community, as opposed to residential or commercial uses. Civic uses refer to places like municipal and county buildings, public parks and plazas, and other similar uses

Cluster Development: A development approach where residential units are grouped together on a portion of a site, allowing the remaining land to be preserved as open space, conservation areas, or other public uses, essentially concentrating development to protect sensitive environmental features while maintaining the overall density of the development area

Complete Streets: Streets designed to provide safe travel for a variety of vehicular (automobile, bus, bicycle) and non-vehicular users (pedestrians, strollers, etc.)

Complete Neighborhoods: Neighborhoods that have a mix of residential, commercial, and community facilities within walking or biking distance, essentially creating areas where residents can access most daily needs without relying heavily on cars, promoting walkability and quality of life within a neighborhood unit

Context-Sensitive: Buildings, public spaces and open spaces, or infrastructure designed to be of similar or compatible scale with its existing or future surroundings

Density Bonus: A zoning tool that allows developers to build more housing units, taller buildings, or more floor space than normally permitted. In exchange, developers must provide a public benefit, such as affordable housing, open space protection, or higher-quality building design

Economic Development: A process that involves a collaboration between the government, private sector, non-governmental organizations, and communities to improve the quality of life and economic growth in a local area. The goal of economic development is to build up the economic capacity of Boone to ensure a better economic future for its residents

Future Land Use and Character Map (vs. zoning): The Future Land Use and Character Map provides policy direction for land use and urban design in Boone. It guides zoning and development decisions. The zoning map applies legal standards to parcels within Boone's town limits

Goal, Policy, Implementation Action: Goals are broad statements of purpose; Policies refine and/or support purpose statements; and Implementation Actions are specific efforts to achieve each goal/policy

Growth Management: Policies and practices that support informed development decisions based on long-term, rather than short-term, considerations and the town's ability to adequately support desired growth through infrastructure and services

Human-Scale: Buildings, public spaces and open spaces, or infrastructure designed to be used and experienced first and foremost by a pedestrian. Key features include: Active ground floors and mixed-use buildings; window transparency; wide sidewalks; street trees; short building widths; pedestrian lighting; and parking behind buildings

Ideas and Opportunities: These are sections throughout this comprehensive plan that offer ideas from other communities to help inspire thinking. While they are not direct policy, they are often related to goals and policies in the plan

Income-Restricted Housing: In Boone, this is generally defined by housing that is legally required to be attainable for households making less than 80% of the Area Median Income

Infill: Development that occurs in areas already served by infrastructure

Institutional & Community Partners: Local schools, places of worship, and community-based organizations (often nonprofits) that contribute to our community through services, programs, and other offerings

Legacy Comprehensive Plan: Boone's legacy Comprehensive Plan, the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update was originally adopted in 2006 and was updated in 2018. The Town also adopted a plan in 2009 called "Boone 2030: The Smart Growth Plan for the Heart of the High Country," however this plan was repealed in 2018

Living Wage: Income sufficient for a worker to meet basic household needs at a generally-accepted standard of living

Low Impact Development (LID): Building/site design systems and "best management practices" (BMPs) that use or mimic natural processes to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat and reduce the impact of built areas. Examples may include, but are not limited to, rain gardens and bioswales that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration or use of stormwater

Metrics: Ways to measure and/or track information for reporting purposes

Mixed Use Development (or Vertical Mixed Use): a development strategy where different land uses, like residential, commercial, and office spaces, are stacked within a single building, essentially placing various functions on different floors, creating a "mixed-use" environment within one structure, maximizing land utilization.

Mobility: The ability of people to move about freely using a variety of transportation options — including pedestrian, bicycle, motor vehicle, ride-share, emerging technologies (i.e. autonomous vehicles) or transit on a range of infrastructure components — streets, greenways, and transitways

Office-Institutional: Office-Institutional uses are generally uses with minimal external impacts. They include professional and corporate offices, as well as institutional uses (which may in some cases overlap with Civic Uses) such as schools, utilities, or certain sites of government operation

Opt-In Zoning Districts: Opt-in zoning districts are alternative zoning standards that apply by-right within a zoning district where a developer or landowner can build higher densities than otherwise permitted while providing additional public benefits within their development

Permeable Building Frontage: Doors, windows, and other features that allow people to walk in and out and see in and out of buildings. On upper stories, this may also include balconies. Permeable building frontages create more pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and foster a greater sense of safety on the street

Planning Principles: Policy statements based on public input that guide decision-making and initiatives listed in the plan. The planning principles supplement the goals and policies of this comprehensive plan

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR): A government agency or land trust buys the right to develop a piece of land from a landowner, preventing or limiting future development while allowing the owner to retain ownership and continue using the land for permitted activities like farming, often through a conservation easement. This may be through a donation or in exchange for financial compensation. This is a tool to protect sensitive landscapes like farmland or open space while maintaining private ownership

Smart Growth: A set of policies and practices that aims to direct growth to existing/desired areas; preserve open spaces; provide a mix of housing types; offer a variety of transportation options; ensure economic prosperity; and, create vibrant places

Sustainable: In this plan primarily refers to environmental, social equity, or fiscal considerations, emphasizing the need to make long-term decisions with these topics in mind

Terminating Vista (or Terminated Vista): An important urban design tool, a terminating vista is a signature or noteworthy structure seen at the end of a street, such as a civic building like a church or city hall, tower, or even natural feature like a mountain or cliff. These buildings/features feel more important as they stand in the middle of a narrow view framed by the street

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): A strategy where a landowner can sell their right to develop a property in a designated "sending area" (usually environmentally sensitive land) to a developer in a designated "receiving area," allowing the developer to build at a higher density than normally permitted in exchange for preserving the sending area land from development. TDR is a market-based tool to incentivize land conservation by redirecting development potential to areas where growth is desired

Utilitarian Transportation: Walking or biking in order to reach a destination, rather than purely for exercise or leisure. Designing urban environments where land is zoned and developed in a way that prioritizes practical, everyday travel needs, like commuting to work or running errands, by promoting walking, cycling, and public transit options through features like mixed-use development, high density, and close proximity to destinations, essentially making it easier for people to reach necessary places without relying heavily on cars

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

There are many important actors responsible for shaping Boone, starting with the community. Each stakeholder plays a key role in creating and conserving the places we as a community love. The Town government serves an important role in engaging with and managing multiple stakeholders to achieve the vision of the community. The comprehensive plan and Town zoning regulations provide the guidance and enforceable regulatory framework to achieve the community's vision.

The tiles below explain the ways that this plan's maps, policies, and actions can be used in the Town's land use planning and decision making.

Residents and Community Members

Boone residents played a key role in shaping this plan. Residents and other community groups such as HOAs should reference the goals, policies, and maps when seeking to understand and/or apply Town policy and development related issues.

Government and Nonprofit Partners

Governing and nonprofit partners should review the plan to understand the town's vision and carefully consider how their work will align with Boone Next.

Town Staff

Town staff should consult and cite the plan when reviewing development proposals, making recommendations, and addressing zoning, development, utility, and capital investments. Staff will also introduce the plan to stakeholders so that they may be aware of the town's vision and goals. In land use cases, the Planning Principles, Future Land Use and Character Map and its area descriptions, and goals and policies are all important to use. Case studies and other plan dialogue may be cited but is of lesser importance than previously stated policy direction.

Developers and Landowners

In addition to complying with the town's development regulations, landowners, developers, and design professionals should prepare plans that align with Boone Next goals and action steps.

Business Owners

Business owners should review the vision, goals, and policies of the plan when considering location, growth, economic opportunities, and the Boone community's vision for the town's future.

Elected and Appointed Officials

The comprehensive plan touches on many aspects of life in Boone. Town officials should be familiar with the plan as a way to carry out their work and mission. Some boards will regularly consult the plan for guidance on decision-making and policy formulation.

Description

The description provides an overview of the area as it exists and general purpose.

Downtown

DESCRIPTION

Downtown Boone is the historic and cultural heart of Boone. Development features a blend of historic buildings, some dating back to the early 1900's or earlier, alongside more recent construction. This area supports a mix of retail, restaurants, business and professional offices, and residential uses. Buildings are up to three stories, limited in width, located close to the sidewalk, and include ample transparent windows and doors along first floors that make them architecturally interesting while activating the sidewalk by creating a safe, interesting, and inviting atmosphere. Driveways and surface parking are limited in this land use type. Where appropriate, wider sidewalks and street trees adjacent to the curb enhance the pedestrian experience and promote a sense of place.



Sample Images

The sample images show a mix of existing conditions as well as generally desired types of development types within each area.

Objectives

Objectives list the intent and potential actions in each area.

OBJECTIVES

- Retain historic character through continued preservation
- Ensure new infill development is architecturally sympathetic to historic buildings and incorporates high quality architectural design and materials
- Enhance streetscapes with street trees, wider sidewalks, pedestrian amenities, safer intersection crossings, and burying utilities where feasible

PRIMARY USES

- Vertical mixed-use with ground floor commercial and upper story residential and/or appropriate commercial uses
- Limited light industrial/manufacturing uses with minimal external impacts

Primary Uses

Uses are general and are not the same as more specific uses in zoning districts. Primary Uses describe the main intended uses in each area while

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Goals

Goals are high-level and long term outcome statements. Goals work toward achieving the vision framework. Each goal contains a list of policies with more specific direction.

GOAL 1.4

A NETWORK OF OPEN SPACE & GREEN CORRIDORS

Boone will build on its reputation as a green and outdoor city and create and protect an integrated network of green corridors, parks, and open spaces, along with meaningful rural and agricultural uses.

Policy 1.4.1: Protect Ecologically Valuable Areas and Corridors

Through regulations and development decisions, protect, restore, and connect ecologically valuable areas such as critical watersheds, stream buffers, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and hardwood forests. Prioritize conservation of lands adjacent and connected to existing protected areas.

Policy 1.4.2: Integrate Green Space Throughout the Built Environment

Abundant access to green space is vital to human health. Continue to thread green space throughout the built environment by growing, enhancing, and protecting the urban tree canopy like street trees, and providing natural green public spaces, neighborhood gardens, green walls, and greenways. To the extent possible, encourage native landscaping.

Policy 1.4.3: Support Rural and Urban Farmland

Protect and support active farmland, both urban and rural, recognizing the economic, environmental, and social importance of farmland protection and local foods production.

Policy 1.4.4: Promote Environmental Education

Promote environmental stewardship through educational outreach programs that enhance knowledge and understanding of environmental systems. Outreach may take the form of classes, signage, or public art, among other methods.

Policy 1.4.5: Protect Valued Mountain Viewsheds

Boone is a beautiful mountain Town and must protect those viewsheds deemed most important by the Boone community.

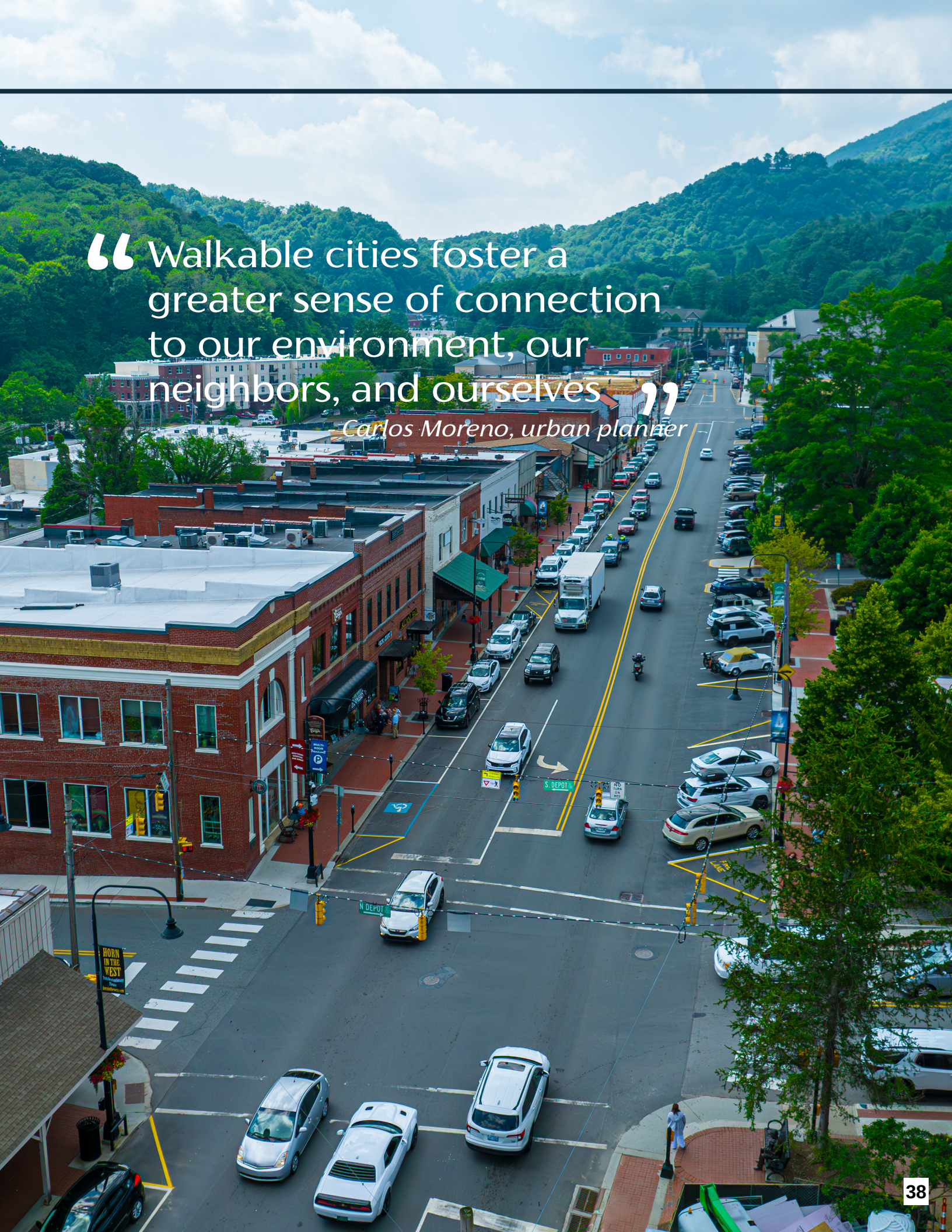
Policy 1.4.6: Expand Use of Low Impact Development Techniques

Reduce the impact of built areas by using low impact development green infrastructure that uses or mimic natural processes to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat. Examples may include, but are not limited to, rain gardens and bioswales that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration or use of stormwater.

Policies

Policies provide more specific direction for achieving the goals and vision. While the implementation actions listed in the Appendix are proactive, policies provide Town staff, appointed officials, the Town Council, developers, business owners, and residents ongoing guidance for decision-making.

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“ Walkable cities foster a
greater sense of connection
to our environment, our
neighbors, and ourselves ”

Carlos Moreno, urban planner

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Boone is a special mountain town cherished by residents and visitors alike for its easy access to the outdoors, scenic beauty, culture, greenways and green spaces, small businesses, historic downtown, and major university (Appalachian State). Challenges to the town's livability include traffic congestion, lack of quality affordable housing, high cost of living, need for more diverse job opportunities, and growth and development pressures. Residents' ideas for making Boone better include daylighting streams and wetlands, expanding parks and greenways, building affordable housing, and facilitating alternative modes of transportation.

This chapter is intended to provide tools that will help the town protect what people love about Boone and promote changes that could make the town even better.

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Overview

Planning Principles

Growth Management Map

The Town of Boone Future Land Use Map

Planning Goals and Policies

OVERVIEW: SMALL TOWN WITH MID-SIZED CITY CONDITIONS

While Boone is a small town, it faces planning conditions and growth pressures typically found in larger mid-sized cities. Several major NCDOT-owned roads crisscross the jurisdiction and are used by incoming and outgoing commuters, visitors, students, and regional travelers. From a planning perspective, automobile dependence has led to automobile-centric patterns in infrastructure and development. With ever-growing vehicular volume, this automobile-centric pattern, once associated with freedom and comfort, has evolved into dependence, resulting in congestion, traffic safety problems, high infrastructure maintenance costs, and limited transportation choices.

Boone faces additional pressures from tourism and the presence of Appalachian State University. The university's events, activities, and campus expansion call for careful planning and coordination with the town to ensure sustainable growth meeting the needs of both permanent residents and students.

The town's scenic beauty, outdoor activities, and cultural events draw visitors year-round, placing demands on local infrastructure, services, and accommodations. Coupled with the university's growing student population, tourism intensifies the demand for housing, resulting in rising housing costs and pressure on the local rental market and making it more difficult for permanent residents to find affordable housing.

Boone's geographic conditions, including steep slopes and special flood hazard areas, further compound its planning challenges. These factors create a complex land-use environment that necessitates a comprehensive and interconnected approach to planning and development. The goal is to work towards a balanced and sustainable future that meets the needs of the town's diverse communities.

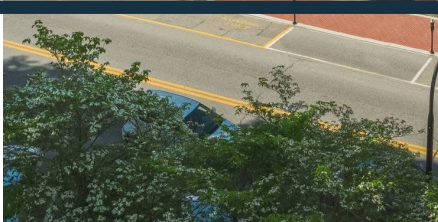
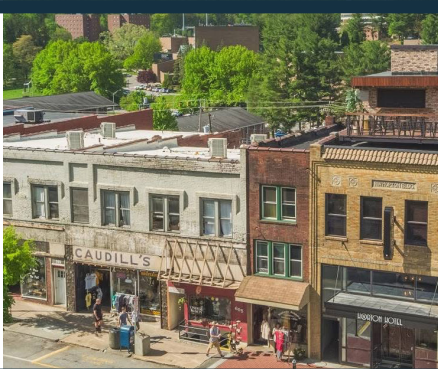
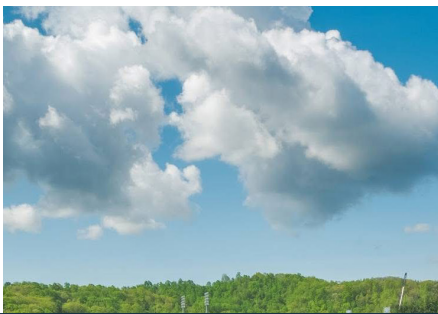
A VISION FOR BOONE'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Boone Next is intended to provide both a cohesive vision for the town's growth and development and practical tools for achieving that vision. Those tools are the Boone Next Planning Principles, the Growth Management Tiers Framework, and the Future Land Use Map. These tools are intended to be applied together in a complementary and harmonious fashion, providing a comprehensive and interconnected approach to guide Boone's growth and encourage planning decisions that are consistent, well-informed, and aligned with the town's long-term vision.

The Boone Next Planning Principles are intended, as a collective, to provide a core vision to guide planning, zoning, and development decisions. These principles should be carefully considered with respect to all zoning map amendments, ordinance text amendments, and other development decisions as well as other town planning and policy initiatives.

Alongside the Planning Principles, the Growth Management Tiers Framework is intended to guide expansion of the town's corporate limits. This framework sets out areas to consider for potential annexation within the next 10 to 15 years, to help ensure that growth is both strategic and sustainable. The Framework includes Utility Service and Annexation criteria that provide further guidance for evaluating individual requests for annexation and utility extensions.

At the heart of Boone's long-term vision is the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map describes and designates specific land use types to serve as a framework for decisions related to land use, public infrastructure, and transportation. This essential tool is intended to guide the town's development and land-use decisions for the next 15-20 years. This map ensures that Boone's vision is thoughtfully realized through careful planning and implementation.



THE VISION

Grounded in its historic character, Boone will be a distinct pedestrian-oriented town that is affordable, livable, human-scale, and connected through a network of walkable, mixed-use corridors and activity centers.

Planning Principle 1

Prioritize thoughtfully designed development of underutilized land within the town's existing built-upon areas over development of undeveloped land on the town's outer limits.

It is preferable to accommodate growth in locations within the existing town limits that are appropriate for, can support, and would be enhanced by, new development. Infill and redevelopment will occur in a strategic manner that considers community needs like provision of and access to goods, services, transit, and quality public space.

Planning Principle 2

Emphasize quality design to create an attractive, inspiring public and private realm—architecture, streetscape, corridors, gateways, and edges—that is uniquely Boone.

Public areas (streetscapes, sidewalks, parks, plazas, etc.) and private areas (building facades, landscaping, parking facilities, etc.) will be planned, arranged, and designed with quality materials to celebrate a sense of place and character by balancing function, appearance, and affordability, while fostering creativity, innovation, and human-scale design that is true to Boone.

Planning Principle 3

Encourage compact, human-scale development that integrates a vertical mix of uses (residential, commercial, office, institutional, civic, etc.) and connects with existing developed areas.

Places will be created with multiple uses in proximity to each other, perhaps on the same site and/or in the same structure.

Close attention will be given to the compatibility of those uses and their surroundings. Uses will be arranged in a manner that maximizes pedestrian activity and create "communities within our community."

Planning Principle 4

Encourage development and connections that better balance the needs of pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, and transit users.

Opportunities will be sought to improve the street pattern and connectivity, thereby increasing travel options, potentially decreasing vehicle miles, reducing congestion, and improving safety.

- » A connected street pattern will be the preferred network for future development and redevelopment unless prevented by streams, steep slopes, or other barriers.
- » Well-connected streets will be designed with short blocks and alleys and include sidewalks and street trees to facilitate walking.
- » Streets and trails will have high connectivity within and between neighborhoods and commercial districts.
- » Bicycle and pedestrian trails with supporting amenities will be integrated into new development and areas undergoing redevelopment.
- » Enhance connectivity to community amenities; add sidewalks, bike facilities, transit, and other pedestrian safety facilities where feasible.

Planning Principle 5

Employ planning policies to accommodate growth while promoting an equitable town and protecting the most vulnerable residents and small businesses against economic displacement.

Planning and zoning policies and practices seek to limit the negative and undesired effects of gentrification and displacement. Current residents and small businesses that are in Boone today and want to remain here should be able to afford to stay while people who work in Boone should be able to afford to live within the town limits.

Robust engagement and communication with residents and small businesses is key to promoting equitable planning in Boone.

Planning Principle 6

Continue supporting Downtown Boone's vibrant mix of businesses, residences, retail, restaurant, entertainment, and civic uses, while preserving its cherished distinctive human-scale character.

As the historic and civic heart of Boone, Downtown will be a focus and model for thoughtful design efforts aimed at strengthening community and placemaking.

- » New development in Downtown Edge areas will be compatible with downtown's historic human-scale feel and help strengthen the town's gateways into downtown.
- » New buildings should frame streets with well-designed permeable edges, develop new civic spaces, and create "outdoor rooms" where possible – places that are comfortable, interesting, and inviting to people for leisure and gathering.
- » New outdoor parks and plazas can contribute to placemaking and economic development.

Planning Principle 7

Support the town's established neighborhoods and new residential developments through neighborhood-level engagement and planning.

Neighborhoods may include a variety of land uses (residential, commercial, civic, and recreational areas), building types, and housing types. They may have an identifiable center that offers basic services such as cafés, childcare, specialty stores, and grocery options. Neighborhoods will support a variety of travel options and be well-connected to adjacent neighborhoods and parks. They will seamlessly integrate the members of diverse, multi-generational communities living in proximity to one another.

Planning Principle 8

Promote a network of green infrastructure and greenways to protect and connect wildlife habitat and sensitive natural areas and provide recreational and transportation opportunities.

Land planning for future development and conservation will contribute to expanding the quantity, quality, access to, and connections between the town's parks, open space, and recreational amenities. Thoughtful planning, development, and conservation efforts will ensure Boone is a green city built within the context of the beautiful surrounding Appalachian Mountains.

Planning Principle 9

Incorporate environmentally sensitive and sustainable practices into future developments.

Development will be designed to reduce potential negative impacts on environmental features such as wetlands, riparian buffers, streams, steep slopes, wooded areas, special flood hazard areas, wildlife habitats, etc.

- » The town will continue efforts to protect and restore watersheds, wetlands, streams, and special flood hazard areas in development or redevelopment.
- » New construction will use context-sensitive design to reduce impacts on existing site features.
- » New development should use green building practices. Projects should minimize energy consumption, use renewable energy where feasible, minimize the consumption of resources, and use recycled building materials.
- » Green stormwater management is important, along with protections to our waterways.
- » Infill and redevelopment should maintain or enhance Boone's Urban Forest.

Planning Principle 10

Encourage appropriate development to meet the town's urgent need for housing or other specific community needs by means of density bonuses or other mechanisms.

Encourage construction of affordable housing, public infrastructure, or other identified community needs by means of density bonuses or other incentives in appropriate areas of the town. For example, increased building height or additional units may be allowed in exchange for incorporating affordable housing units in a development.

Planning Principle 11

Continue to preserve and enhance Boone's historic buildings and places.

Historic preservation is fundamental to maintaining our cherished small town character, contributing to residents' quality of life, and remembering our history.

- » Build upon downtown's status as Boone's social and civic center and create additional compelling public spaces to foster interaction among residents.
- » Preserve and encourage stewardship of historic buildings.
- » Encourage development of vacant spaces to meet the needs and desires of a diverse community.

THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT TIERS MAP

The Growth Management Tiers Map is a policy tool intended to help Boone manage the growth of its corporate limits. The map identifies areas inside and outside the corporate limits that are likely to face development pressures, and it identifies those areas that are most appropriate for the town to consider serving by means of annexation within the next 10 to 15 years. The Growth Management Tiers Map is supplemented by and should be applied in concert with the Future Land Use Map, where applicable.

The overall purposes of the map are to:

- Promote better interjurisdictional and long-range planning between and among the town, Watauga County, and utility providers.
- Encourage long-term fiscally and environmentally sustainable growth by carefully managing the extension of taxpayer-funded town services
- Encourage infill development
- Inform developers, landowners, farmers, and residents with respect to the town's priorities and approach to the growth of its corporate limits
- Provide policy guidance to town decision-makers regarding annexations, town service provision, fees and incentives, and locations for capital improvements

The map sets out Primary, Secondary, and Rural and Green Space tiers within Boone's Planning Area.

Priority Growth Area

Land where growth is most encouraged; designated as Downtown, Downtown Edge, and Walkable Mixed Use on the Future Land Use Map.

Primary Growth Area

Land where provision of services is preferred and encouraged over the 10- 15 years following adoption of this plan.

This area includes existing incorporated areas and unincorporated areas surrounded by incorporated land within the outer boundaries of the town's municipal limits.

Secondary Growth Area

Land where provision of services would be part of annexation decisions made by town officials. Additional care should be taken to analyze whether the requested type of proposed land uses are consistent with the town's goals and policies.

Rural and Green Space

Land where provision of services and new development should be limited within 10- 15 years of the adoption of this plan (and potentially well beyond that time horizon).

How to Use the Growth Management Tiers Framework

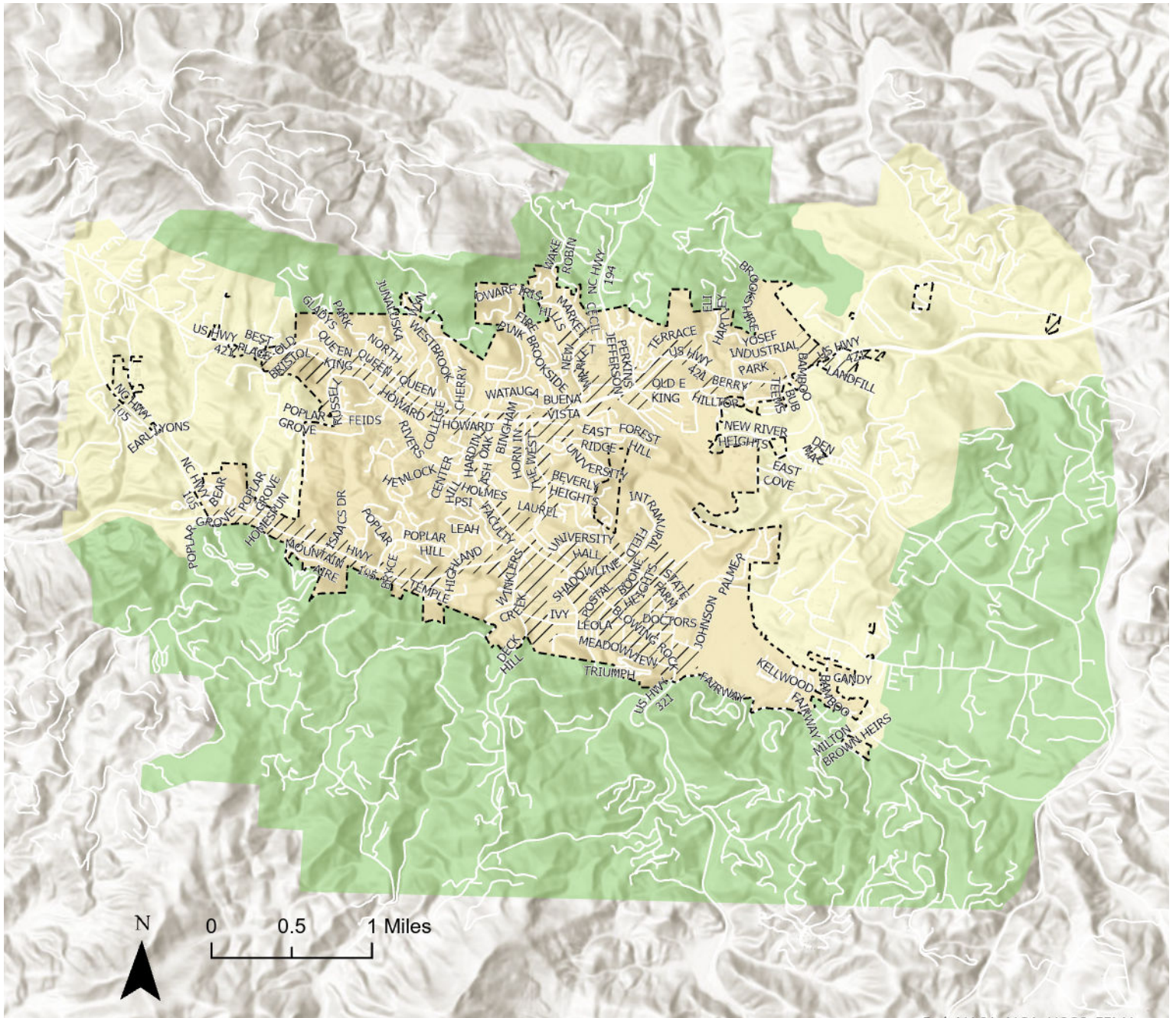
The map can be used in three key ways:

To Guide Annexation Decisions. This map provides town officials with a rational basis for making annexation decisions and is supported by policies in this chapter.

To Direct Growth. This map identifies areas where growth is preferred and can be encouraged through incentives.

To Coordinate Planning. The map provides a tool for coordinating the plans of the town, Watauga County, ASU, utilities, and other regional partners on an ongoing basis.

Town of Boone Growth Management Tiers Map



[hatched] Priority Growth Area

- Primary Growth Area
- Undesignated Secondary Growth Area
- Rural Area
- Municipal Limits

UTILITY SERVICE AND ANNEXATION CRITERIA

In the State of North Carolina, a property is typically annexed into a municipality at the voluntary request of the property owner. It is the town's policy that if a property owner requests public water or wastewater services, the owner must seek voluntarily annexation into the town.

The following criteria should be evaluated upon consideration of individual requests for annexation and utility extension decisions. These criteria should inform the decision-making process but it is not necessarily required that all criteria must be met to justify approval.

Criteria 1: Does the requested annexation align with the Comprehensive Plan?

Is annexation consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, specifically the Town of Boone Growth Management Tiers Map and Future Land Use Map?

Criteria 2: Is the requested annexation consistent with logical town boundaries?

Would annexation contribute to logical town boundaries and service areas and/or elimination of unincorporated islands within the town's corporate limits?

Criteria 3: Are other public services and utilities available?

If annexed, can the property be adequately supported by current or future town services, including but not limited to public safety and public utilities. Can the property can be serviced by other utility providers (electric, phone, internet, etc.)?

Criteria 4: Does the request demonstrate community benefits?

Does the requested annexation result in fiscal and/or other community benefits that outweigh costs?

Criteria 5: Is the request consistent with interjurisdictional agreements

Is the requested annexation consistent with any applicable interjurisdictional agreements?

THE TOWN OF BOONE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map is a critical tool intended to give shape to and help implement Boone’s vision for the next 15-20 years. The map and associated land use types provide a framework for development and other land use-related decisions, including decisions on public infrastructure and transportation.

Land Use Types

Each land use type has a recommended list of general land use categories, building form, and objectives which, taken together, articulate a general vision for future development in particular areas of the town and will inform regulatory and zoning map amendment decisions.

A land use type is a planning concept that is completely distinct from the zoning districts set forth in the town’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Each land use type allows a range of zoning districts as set forth in the town’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The applicable zoning districts will provide particular regulatory standards (e.g., density, height, setbacks, and permissible uses) that give specific shape to the land use type as envisioned for that particular area. In other words, what a particular property or area is mapped on the Future Land Use Map does not mean that the most intense zoning district, either in use or density, will be approved in that particular area.



How are the Zoning Map and the Future Land Use and Character Map different?

The Future Land Use Map should not be confused with the town’s zoning map. Adoption of this Map, as with adoption of the entire Boone Next comprehensive plan, will not affect the current zoning of property or rights relating to the current use of the property.

Boone Next and the Future Land Use Map will not be referenced during administrative approvals of development plans. However, both will be evaluated during the course of zoning map and text amendment cases. In these legislative decision-making cases, Council and the Planning Commission will review Boone Next and the Future Land Use Map to ensure that the request:

- » is consistent with the goals and policies set forth in this plan; and
- » is consistent with the land use type as shown on the Future Land Use Map; and if not ensure that the requested change of zoning will not negatively impact the intent of the mapped land use type; and
- » is supported by existing or planned infrastructure.

Boone Next and the Future Land Use Map may also be considered by the Board of Adjustment in special use permit cases, where applicable.

Neighborhood 1

DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood 1 describes lower-density to moderate-density residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are suited for low-rise construction. On appropriately sized and located lots, height may reach up to three stories. Overall building forms (height, setbacks, and density) should be appropriate to each neighborhood's existing character while ensuring that a variety of compatible housing types are provided to meet the town's housing demands. Decisions on density and form are based on location and infrastructure availability.



OBJECTIVES

- Protect existing housing stock from incompatible redevelopment
- Protect, maintain, and promote housing that is affordable to persons of low to middle income in a variety of compatible housing types
- Encourage historic preservation
- Evaluate opportunities for neighborhood-scale, neighborhood-enhancing businesses such as cafes, small grocers/bodegas, and childcare facilities.

PRIMARY USES

- Single family dwellings
- Accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, and similar uses on appropriately sized lots
- Quadplexes and small townhouse developments in transitional areas along higher-traffic sub-collector, collector, and arterial streets, or adjacent to higher-density residential/commercial areas and neighborhoods

Neighborhood 2

DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood 2 describes neighborhoods composed primarily of higher density multifamily housing in various forms and includes some buildings with ground floor nonresidential uses. Neighborhood 2 may include a variety of housing types in larger developments which could result in a mix of low- to high-density housing.

These neighborhoods are suited for low- to mid-rise construction. In some cases, on appropriately sized and located lots, height may reach up to four stories, with an overall building form (height, setbacks, and density) appropriate to each neighborhood's existing character. Decisions on density and form are based on location and infrastructure availability.

OBJECTIVES

- Protect, maintain, and promote affordable housing
- Enhance connectivity to community amenities; add sidewalks, bike facilities, transit, and other pedestrian safety facilities where feasible
- Supportive nonresidential uses where appropriate
- Evaluate opportunities for neighborhood scale-businesses that enhance neighborhoods with accessible resources such as cafes, grocery stores, and childcare facilities

PRIMARY USES

- Multi-family
- Other lower density residential uses
- Vertical mixed-use with limited ground floor commercial and upper story residential uses



Downtown

DESCRIPTION

Downtown Boone is the historic and cultural heart of Boone. Development features a blend of historic buildings, some dating back to the early 1900's or earlier, alongside more recent construction. This area supports a mix of retail, restaurants, business and professional offices, and residential uses.

Buildings are up to three stories, limited in width, located close to the sidewalk, and include ample transparent windows and doors along first floors that make them architecturally interesting while activating the sidewalk by creating a safe, interesting, and inviting atmosphere. Driveways and surface parking are limited in this land use type.

Where appropriate, wider sidewalks and street trees adjacent to the curb enhance the pedestrian experience and promote a sense of place.



OBJECTIVES

- Retain historic character through continued preservation
- Ensure new infill development is architecturally sympathetic to historic buildings and incorporates high quality architectural design and materials
- Enhance streetscapes with street trees, wider sidewalks, pedestrian amenities, safer intersection crossings, and burying utilities where feasible

PRIMARY USES

- Vertical mixed-use with ground floor commercial and upper story residential and/or appropriate commercial uses
- Limited light industrial/manufacturing uses with minimal external impacts

Downtown Edge

DESCRIPTION

Downtown Edge areas are adjacent and similar to the Downtown. Downtown Edge areas will evolve over time through development and redevelopment into walkable, mixed-use corridors and destinations that more closely resemble the patterns of downtown.

Buildings in these areas may be up to four stories in height, oriented toward the street, and follow similar standards as found in the downtown area, transitioning to standards that complement adjoining land use types. Driveways are limited and parking areas placed to the sides and rears of buildings. Ground floors should create an inviting atmosphere for pedestrians by, for example, incorporating features like generous transparent windows and inviting entryways.

Where appropriate, wider sidewalks complemented by street trees adjacent to the curb enhance the pedestrian experience and promote a sense of place.



OBJECTIVES

- Provide for a vertical mix of uses and housing types
- Creative design features to symbolize gateways into downtown Boone
- Incorporate public plazas, artwork, and design that build on Boone's unique character
- Ensure new infill development is architecturally compatible to the downtown area and uses high quality architectural design and materials
- Enhance streetscapes with street trees, wider sidewalks, pedestrian amenities, safer intersection crossings, and burying overhead wires where feasible

PRIMARY USES

- Vertical mixed-use with ground floor commercial and upper story residential and/or appropriate commercial uses
- Limited light industrial/manufacturing uses with minimal external impacts
- Limited multi-family

Walkable Mixed Use

DESCRIPTION

Walkable Mixed-Use areas are envisioned as places that should evolve from existing auto-oriented patterns into green, walkable, mixed-use corridors and destinations.

New street and alley grids may be established, fostering a more urban environment while maintaining a commitment to well-designed, green, and visually-engaging building patterns.

Buildings in these areas are oriented toward the street and generally up to four stories in height; in some cases, on appropriately sized and located lots, they may reach up to six stories. Parking and drive aisles in the front are minimized and the majority of parking placed to the sides and rear. Ground floors should feature ample transparent windows and doors. Ground floors should create an inviting atmosphere for pedestrians by, for example, incorporating features like generous transparent windows and inviting entryways.

Where appropriate, wider sidewalks and street trees enhance the pedestrian experience and promote a sense of place.

The overall vision behind the Walkable Mixed-Use Land Use Type is to foster vibrant, self-sufficient communities where everything is just a short stroll away – a true realization of the “15-minute city” or “city within a city” concept. Here, residents enjoy access to local businesses, services, and amenities that cater to their daily lives, while commercial spaces thrive on the support of a connected residential environment.

OBJECTIVES

- Eliminate curb cuts on arterials through rear access parking and new alley construction and dedication
- Evaluate opportunities for neighborhood scale- businesses that enhance neighborhoods with accessible resources such as cafes, small grocers/bodegas, and childcare facilities
- Mixed-use buildings provide a variation in layout and size for ground floor non-residential uses
- Encourage and facilitate public spaces like plazas, playgrounds, and other public amenities

PRIMARY USES

- Vertical mixed-use with ground floor commercial and upper story residential and/or appropriate commercial uses; or a mix of single-use commercial and/or residential buildings within a single development
- Multi-family
- Limited light industrial/manufacturing uses with minimal external impacts

Campus

DESCRIPTION

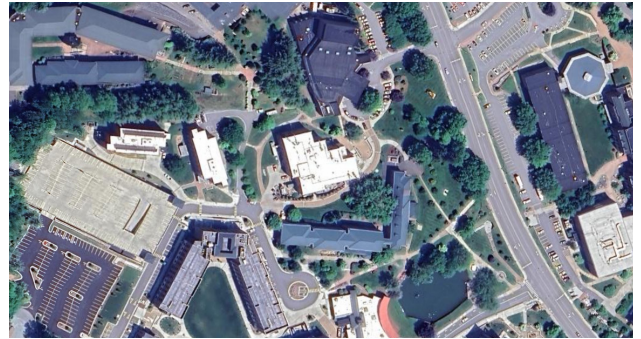
The Campus areas are primarily for larger-scale buildings for education, healthcare, and office uses.

These areas include: Watauga County school campuses; Appalachian State University and Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute campuses; UNC Health Appalachian campus; and Samaritan's Purse campus.

This area is intended to apply to a cohesive, contiguous campus, rather than stand-alone properties.

Buildings in these areas are generally multi-storied and higher-density and should be easily accessed by all modes of transportation. Where necessary, the building form should be adjusted to complement other adjacent land use types.

Where appropriate, wider sidewalks and street trees enhance the pedestrian experience and promote a sense of place.



OBJECTIVES

- Enhance connectivity by adding sidewalks, bike facilities, transit, and other pedestrian safety facilities where feasible
- Coordinate the location of student parking and development patterns to discourage daily use of parking by the student population

PRIMARY USES

- Educational uses
- Healthcare uses
- Office uses
- Religious uses
- Other supportive uses, including residential uses, where appropriate

Manufacturing/Distribution

DESCRIPTION

Manufacturing/Distribution areas are designed to support diverse business growth and employment opportunities by hosting industries like warehousing, manufacturing, distribution, and assembly and supportive uses such as office spaces, research facilities, and service-oriented businesses. These areas foster business innovation and job growth while ensure that more intensive activities are carefully managed to maintain long-term environmental and community sustainability.

Buildings in these areas are suited for low-rise construction up to three stories with larger buffers and green spaces to provide transitions between neighboring uses. These areas generally are dependent on heavy-vehicle traffic and necessarily auto-oriented.

OBJECTIVES

- Preserve land within municipal limits that can be used for employment and industry
- Provide flex spaces for new and growing business
- Enhance connectivity for employees by adding sidewalks, bike facilities, transit, and other pedestrian safety facilities where feasible

PRIMARY USES

- Manufacturing/assembly
- Distribution
- Research and Development
- Warehousing
- Other supportive commercial uses



Undesignated Secondary Growth

DESCRIPTION

Undesignated Secondary Growth areas are currently outside of town limits and have not been assigned another future land use type

Development in Undesignated Secondary Growth areas may follow a different future land use type based on context of the development and site (accessibility, environmental hazards, infrastructure, town goals, transportation, etc). Where and when development occurs, it should be sensitively designed and, where feasible, pedestrian-oriented with clustered homes and businesses, community amenities, and protected open space. Development should prioritize protection of high-quality open space and occur sustainably.



OBJECTIVES

- Cluster compact residential / mixed-use development where feasible
- Protect wildlife habitat, farmland, floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes
- Enhance connectivity; add sidewalks, bike facilities, transit, and other pedestrian safety facilities where feasible

Parks and Open Space

DESCRIPTION

Parks and Open Space areas are current or desired permanently protected active and passive open space areas for recreation or other similar purposes that enhance residents' quality of life. These areas can be either natural or used primarily for recreational purposes. They can include fields, trails, benches, playgrounds, and other limited types of development that support the open space use.

These areas may include land that is inappropriate for development such as stormwater facilities, stream buffer, and steep slopes. Preservation of these areas enhance community resiliency.

Buildings in this area are typically low-rise and most commonly include park structures and related community facilities.



OBJECTIVES

- Permanent open space protection, which may occur through public land acquisition or dedication and/or purchase of development rights or open space easements

PRIMARY USES

- Recreation facilities
- Trails and open space
- Wildlife habitat

DESCRIPTION

Rural areas include land and viewsheds that should be protected in their current state, with limited development over the lifespan of this comprehensive plan. Rural areas generally include forest, farmland, and large-lot single-family housing outside the town limits and where development is limited or discouraged. This area is suited for low-rise construction. In some cases, on appropriately sized and located lots, height may reach up to three stories, with an overall building form (height, setbacks, and density) appropriate to the area's existing character. Decisions on density and form are based on location and infrastructure availability.

OBJECTIVES

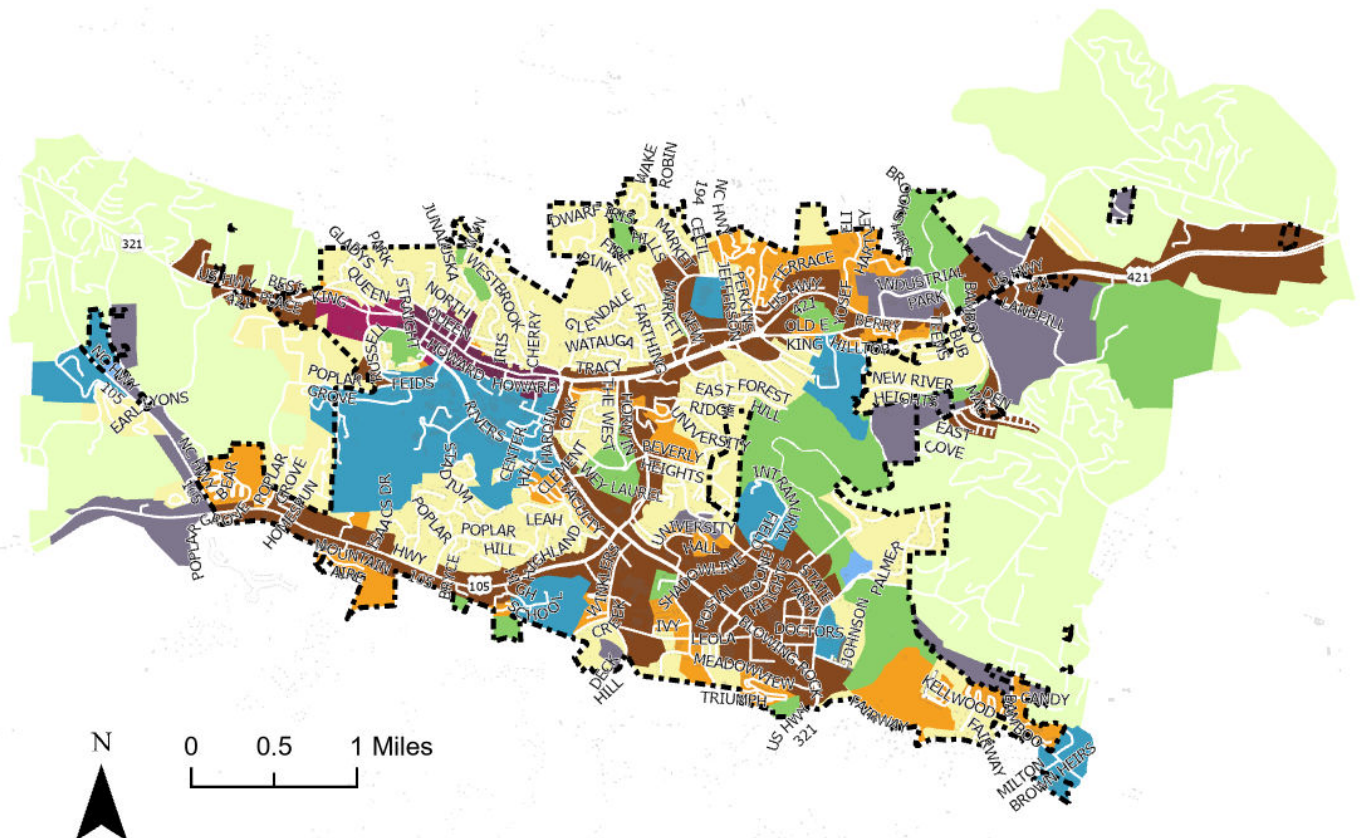
- Protect open space forest and farmland
- Protect viewsheds
- Purchase of development rights and open space easements

PRIMARY USES

- Open space
- Farm
- Existing single family



Town of Boone Future Land Use Map



NOTE: The text box to the left will include a hyperlink to a larger map once the final document is prepared. This will allow readers viewing the map on the computer to click to a larger map, or could even provide a link to an online map.

Click link for larger map

PLANNING GOALS & POLICIES

HOW WE'LL CREATE AND CONSERVE PLACES WE LOVE

Boone is a beautiful mountain town and a desirable place to live, work, study, and visit. The attractiveness of the town to residents, visitors and students also presents a challenge as the town seeks to balance its small-town character against the impacts of local and regional growth pressures like high housing costs and heavy traffic. The town can and should be selective about how and where it grows, and deploy the tools and resources at its disposal to achieve the community's vision of carefully-planned growth and conservation.

Achieving this vision requires a clear understanding of primary goals and a comprehensive, coordinated approach to growth and conservation.

GOALS

1.1: A SUSTAINABLE BUILT PATTERN

1.2: DEVELOPMENT TRUE TO BOONE'S VISION

1.3: A PRESERVED HERITAGE

1.4: A NETWORK OF OPEN SPACE & GREEN CORRIDORS

1.5: INTENTIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT

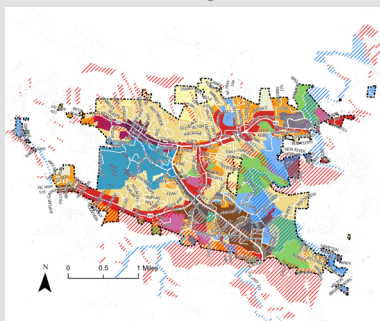
1.6: AN AFFORDABLE TOWN TO LIVE IN

1.7: A CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC TOWN

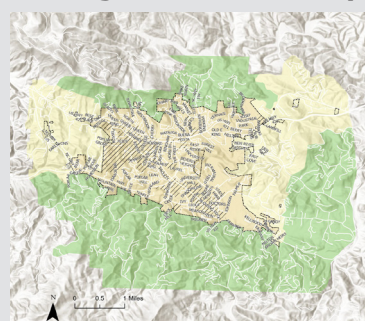
Boone's Land Use Planning Maps to Guide Development Decisions

Boone's Land Use Planning Maps consist of the **Future Land Use Map** and the **Growth Management Tiers Map**. The Growth Management Tiers Map provides guidance for making decisions about utilities and annexations. The Future Land Use Map provides policy guidance on the character of future development and zoning.

The Future Land Use Map



The Growth Management Tiers Map



GOAL 1.1

A SUSTAINABLE BUILT PATTERN

Boone's interwoven natural and built environments will promote social, environmental, and fiscal sustainability while aiming to reduce auto-dependence and the roots of traffic congestion. The town will be a leader of green building design and climate responsibility.

Policy 1.1.1: Use the Future Land Use Map

Use the Future Land Use Map to guide development, growth, and conservation decisions. Additionally, use the Focus Area Plans in the Appendix for more detailed policy direction within each of those areas.

Policy 1.1.2: Use Best Design Practices in New Development

All new growth should move Boone toward creating a network of "communities within a community" - a polycentric pattern of walkable, human-scale activity centers located within short distances of residents across the town. This pattern is key to supporting sustainability by aiming to reduce vehicle trips and their associated emissions, improving human health by supporting active utilitarian modes of transportation, and guiding growth away from natural areas. Where feasible, new growth should establish short blocks and connected rights-of-way, prominent civic spaces, stream daylighting and protected natural resources, front-facing buildings with transparent and welcoming first floors and public spaces, a diversity of housing types, income-restricted housing units, neighborhood-serving and context-sensitive nonresidential uses, rear parking and alleys, front porches¹ (residential), and safe multimodal transportation infrastructure design.

Policy 1.1.3: Promote Sustainable Building and Site Design

Promote and/or incentivize innovative building tools and approaches, such as LEED, LEED-ND, STAR Communities, WELL Building Standard, the Sustainable Development Code, and sustainable building standards and incentives in the town's unified development ordinance. New approaches may include green roofs, renewable energy generation, alternative lighting strategies, use of local and/or recycled materials, optimization of solar access, and other innovative practices.

Policy 1.1.4: Adapt to Climate Variations and Transition to Becoming a Carbon Neutral Town

Through design of the built environment, support the transition to becoming a carbon neutral town, recognizing the urgent need to respond to the threat of a changing climate by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Consider membership in the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance or other coalition or initiative with similar missions. Promote partnerships with local nonprofits and businesses addressing sustainability, including educational programs and incentives for sustainable initiatives.

Policy 1.1.5: Incorporate Low Impact Development and Green Building Practices In Public Projects

Incorporate low impact development and green design approaches in public projects including but not limited to: bioretention filters and swales and porous pavement.

Encourage designs that take advantage of multiple simultaneous benefits, such as the coupling of detention ponds with public parks or the use of landscaping and green roofs to control rain water and provide habitat.

¹ In the State of North Carolina, there may be statutory limitations on requiring - or the method of requiring - certain design elements like front porches in small-scale housing.

GOAL 1.2

DEVELOPMENT TRUE TO BOONE'S VISION

Boone's development and redevelopment will enhance the best of the town's existing built environment and reinforce the vision set forth in this plan.

Policy 1.2.1: Build the Town for People

To the extent possible, the built environment should be human-scale and pedestrian-oriented rather than large-scale and auto-oriented. There are urban design characteristics that transcend eras, styles, and typologies that help to explain why Boone's beloved downtown makes human beings comfortable. Human-scale development is not defined by density, but instead by urban design that makes human beings comfortable and happy navigating streets, activity centers, and neighborhoods on foot. Human-scale built environments might consider terminating vistas at the end of streets or the width and frontage of new buildings.

Policy 1.2.2: Infill Development Enhances the Town

Infill development is important because it directs growth away from natural areas, but it must be done well. Infill development shall enhance and not detract from the building character of the town by replicating key elements of Boone's cherished historic design features (like building scale, proportion, setbacks, character) with high quality, pedestrian-oriented design and providing public goods like plazas, wide sidewalks, public art, and affordable spaces for living, artists, and small businesses. Rules for new development should avoid financially incentivizing displacement of vulnerable populations.

Policy 1.2.3: Coordinate Land Use and Transportation Planning

Ensure transportation infrastructure supports walkable development and multimodal transportation options — including connections to activity centers. Important considerations include the width and design of sidewalks, street trees, physically protected bike lanes, tight curb radii at intersections, traffic calming devices, appropriate lane widths that create safer design speeds, and other features that enhance the safety and comfort of all travelers.

Policy 1.2.4: Create and Enhance Gateways

Gateways can serve as visual cues that travelers are passing between and arriving in new places. New development, public infrastructure projects, and preservation efforts should consider gateways into Boone and between distinct areas within the town.

Policy 1.2.5: Use Appropriate Transitions Between Different Scales and Intensities

Use appropriate transitions between different building uses and intensities by stepping down building heights and scale from areas allowing taller buildings to primarily residential neighborhoods.

GOAL 1.3

A PRESERVED HERITAGE

Boone's unique architectural and cultural history is celebrated. The town preserves historic buildings and encourages the design of new buildings and places that complement its architectural heritage.

Policy 1.3.1: Support Preservation of Historic Properties and Districts

Support identification, stewardship, and preservation of historic and culturally valuable properties and Boone's historic districts, including features of both the private and the public realm.

Policy 1.3.2: Minimize Impacts on Existing Historic Resources

Historic and cultural resources should be considered when planning for capital projects. Adverse impacts from capital projects on historic resources should be avoided, or minimized and mitigated.

Policy 1.3.3: Reference Historic Patterns in New Development

Design of new development should reference existing historic context and patterns while recognizing the importance of neighborhoods that feature a variety of building types.

Policy 1.3.4: Encourage Reuse and Rehabilitation

Support and encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing homes and buildings. Where appropriate, minimum building code standards should be applied in a manner compatible with historic preservation efforts.

Policy 1.3.5: Promote Connectivity Between Centers

Connect existing areas of historic downtown and adjacent areas through enhanced streetscapes. Prioritize connections to downtown and other key activity centers, particularly those undergoing redevelopment into more walkable and transit-oriented types of places.

GOAL 1.4

A NETWORK OF OPEN SPACE & GREEN CORRIDORS

Boone will build on its reputation as a green and outdoor city, creating and protecting an integrated network of green corridors, parks, and open spaces as well as meaningful rural and agricultural uses.

Policy 1.4.1: Protect Ecologically Valuable Areas and Corridors

Through regulations and development decisions, protect, restore, and connect ecologically valuable areas such as critical watersheds, stream buffers, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and hardwood forests. Prioritize conservation of lands adjacent and connected to existing protected areas.

Policy 1.4.2: Integrate Green Space Throughout the Built Environment

Abundant access to green space is vital to human health. Continue to thread green space throughout the built environment by growing, enhancing, and protecting the urban tree canopy like street trees, and providing natural green public spaces, neighborhood gardens, green walls, and greenways. To the extent possible, encourage native landscaping.

Policy 1.4.3: Support Rural and Urban Farmland

Protect and support active farmland, both urban and rural, recognizing the economic, environmental, and social importance of farmland protection and local foods production.

Policy 1.4.4: Promote Environmental Education

Promote environmental stewardship through educational outreach programs that enhance knowledge and understanding of environmental systems. Outreach may take the form of classes, signage, or public art, among other methods.

Policy 1.4.5: Protect Valued Mountain Viewsheds

Boone is a beautiful mountain town and must protect those viewsheds deemed most important by the Boone community.

Policy 1.4.6: Expand Use of Low Impact Development Techniques

Reduce the impact of built areas by using low impact development green infrastructure that uses or mimic natural processes to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat. Examples may include, but are not limited to, rain gardens and bioswales that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration or use of stormwater.

GOAL 1.5

INTENTIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Boone will manage growth thoughtfully and intentionally within its borders and at its edges to enhance the town's livability and meet the needs of a growing community.

Policy 1.5.1: Manage Growth to Balance Protection of Community Character and Natural Areas While Directing Desired Growth to Identified Centers

The town will manage growth in a manner that balances the protection of community character and natural lands with accommodating future population. Change in the community will be carefully managed to protect critical natural lands, provide a variety of housing options for a diversity of households, support economic development, support fiscal balance, ensure adequate public safety services, and utilize growth patterns that support regional and local transit services. Lands within the town's current corporate limits are priorities for infill and redevelopment. New development areas contiguous with the town and in identified activity centers should be secondary priorities for development and ahead of areas outside centers.

Policy 1.5.2: Guide Utility Service Extensions and Annexations Using the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria

Use the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria of this chapter to evaluate applications for annexation of lands into the town and extension of public utilities to new areas. These criteria serve as the primary guide for making annexation and utility extension decisions. The criteria provide a framework for ensuring decisions are made consistently and in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. They are complemented by the Growth Management Tiers Map.

Policy 1.5.3: Guide Growth Using the Growth Management Tiers Map

The Growth Management Tiers Map serves as a guide for development and investment decisions. The map's purpose is to ensure Boone accommodates growth consistent with the Boone Next Planning Principles, intentionally directs growth to desired areas, manages the pace of development, and aims for fiscal balance. This map is intended to be used when considering zoning and development approvals, utility service extensions, annexations, incentives, and capital investments. This map should be used in coordination with the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria. The Growth Management Tiers Map will be updated from time to time to reflect changing planning conditions.

GOAL 1.6

AN AFFORDABLE TOWN TO LIVE IN

Boone will facilitate sustainable affordable housing for low- to middle-income residents.

Policy 1.6.1: Support Income-Restricted Housing

Support permanently affordable housing for low- and middle-income residents geographically located throughout the town. Prioritize permanent affordability, particularly for those at or below 60 percent of the area median income, through community land trusts, nonprofit ownership and management, the Housing Authority, town ownership, and restricted deeds and covenants. Consider programs that fund home improvements for low income homeowners in exchange for right of first refusal to purchase homes for affordable housing partners.

Policy 1.6.2: Use Innovative Tools to Expand Affordable Housing

Using incentives like density bonuses, regulations, and other strategies, strive to achieve a minimum of 5-10 percent income-restricted units in new multi-unit residential construction projects.

Policy 1.6.3: Diversify Boone's Housing Options

Promote a variety of housing types as well as housing tenure options around Boone. While the town should continue to build single-family, townhome, and multifamily buildings, explore other types of well-designed and contextually compatible housing, such as quadplexes and small-scale multiplexes. The town can use creative tools, like zoning "opt-in" districts, to ensure additional densities come with public benefits like income-restricted units. Also, support alternative housing tenure options like the community land trust model and cooperative housing. Unless Boone's rugged terrain precludes it, consider the use of pre-approved blueprints to reduce construction costs while ensuring high quality building designs and materials.

Policy 1.6.4: Make Daily Needs More Accessible Across Boone

Consider both the cost of housing and the cost of transportation as the town develops, recognizing that transportation costs rise as distances to daily needs like grocery stores, daycare, work, and school increase. Focus on distribution of uses and services using walkable urban design principles that make daily needs more accessible to all ages and abilities. Measure and track progress toward increasing the proportion of residents living within a comfortable 5-10 minute walk, bike, or transit ride to daycare facilities; grocery stores; parks, greenways, or playgrounds; and employment destinations.

Policy 1.6.5: Preserve the Town's existing affordable homes

While ensuring housing is safe for tenants through code enforcement, preserve the townwide stock of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) using zoning and other innovative planning tools.

GOAL 1.7

A CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC TOWN

Boone leverages the arts and supports creative public places and spaces within its physical built environment.

Policy 1.7.1: Incorporate Art into New Construction

Incorporate art into new public and private development, civic spaces, gateways, and infrastructure projects. Ideally art should be interactive, educational, and allow the community to engage with it.

Policy 1.7.2: Use Art in Demonstration Projects

Support and carry out demonstration projects, especially using art, to test and display building and transportation retrofit opportunities. This could include “pop-up urbanism” that temporarily tests new types of infrastructure changes, like neighborhood bulb-outs and bicycle lanes, using art, such as colorful paint on pavement, creative physical barriers, and other ideas.

Policy 1.7.3: Use Artistic Gateways and District Indicators

Enhance gateways between different parts of town with art and incorporate art into infrastructure like sidewalks, street grates, utility boxes and poles, and private buildings and spaces. Support art corridors that use a combination of artist studios and artistic infrastructure to create inspiring placemaking.



Examples of public art in public and private development from other places

An aerial photograph of a city street, likely in a downtown area. The street is wide with multiple lanes, marked with yellow and white lines. On the left side of the street, there are large green trees and a grassy area. On the right side, there are several multi-story buildings with various storefronts, some with awnings. A red fire truck is visible on the right side of the street. The background shows more city buildings and greenery. A semi-transparent dark blue box is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image, containing a quote in white text.

“Transportation is a prism for understanding the city and designing its future.”
- Janette Sadik-Khan

MULTIPLE SAFE TRAVEL OPTIONS

Boone faces critical challenges in its transportation system, including high traffic volumes, a limited financial base, and a centralized road network that creates congestion. These issues are compounded by physical constraints, such as topography and the lack of a grid system, which hinder road expansion and the development of new infrastructure. Additionally, there is no unified community vision for large-scale mobility projects, complicating efforts to improve the town's transportation network. Addressing these challenges requires innovative, community-supported solutions that integrate multimodal options—walking, cycling, driving, and public transit—while maintaining Boone's small-town charm and promoting sustainability, safety, and equity.

CHAPTER GOALS

- Increase Mobility Through A Safe Systems Approach
- Encourage Mobility Choice Through Walking & Biking
- Increase Mobility Choice Through Transit
- Increase Mobility Through Capacity & Access Management
- Connect Sustainability & Mobility Through Infrastructure
- Increase Town of Boone's Ability to Implement Mobility Projects

Before reading this chapter, it's helpful to understand key concepts:

Mobility refers to the ease of movement using different travel options, such as walking, biking, driving, or public transit.

Multimodal planning focuses on creating a transportation network that integrates these travel options and their connections, ensuring flexibility and accessibility for all users.

Right-of-way refers to the legal land or corridor designated for public infrastructure, such as roads, sidewalks, railways, or utilities, ensuring access and use for transportation and related purposes.

These ideas frame Boone's strategies for building a more inclusive and efficient transportation system.

2

SAFELY CONNECT PEOPLE & PLACES

INTRODUCTION

Residents and visitors in Boone care deeply about the experience of traveling through town—whether by car, on foot, by bike, or via public transit. Many prioritize reducing traffic congestion, while others emphasize improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Boone’s small-town charm remains central to its identity, fostering strong support for mobility solutions that balance preserving this character with advancing economic growth and quality of life. Boone faces significant challenges in improving its mobility network, including limited resources, a centralized road system, barriers to road expansion, and diverse community opinions. Addressing these issues requires innovative, community-driven strategies to enhance safety, access, and efficiency while preserving the town’s character.

The *Boone Next* plan positions transportation as a key driver of the town’s future, advocating for a multimodal approach that integrates walking, biking, transit, and vehicle travel. By aligning transportation strategies with land use and development goals, Boone aims to enhance safety, sustainability, and mobility for all. The plan outlines four primary transportation goals—shaped by community input, land use priorities, and existing conditions analysis—to address current and future challenges. These goals focus on improving safety, promoting sustainability, expanding transportation choices, and managing congestion while ensuring accessibility for all users. Together, they provide a framework for creating a more connected, efficient, and resilient transportation network in Boone.

THE VISION

Boone’s mobility network enhances the town’s mountain charm and small-town character by safely interconnecting our residents, employees, and visitors to community services and institutions, neighborhoods, the town, and the region through investments that are walkable, bikeable, transit supportive, and sustainable.



Safe System Approach

In the 2024 update to the North Carolina Strategic Highway Safety Plan, North Carolina safety partners rededicated themselves to the core objectives with a strong emphasis on the principles that shape the Safe System Approach. The principles form the basis of the approach and represent a significant shift from traditional safety approaches.

Source: USDOT



BOONE NEXT MOBILITY OUTCOMES

IMPROVE SAFETY

To improve safety on Boone's roads, adopting a Safe System Approach (SSA) will be key. This approach focuses on preventing traffic fatalities and reducing nonfatal collisions by considering human error, road conditions, and vehicle factors in the design and operation of transportation systems. It promotes the idea that road safety is a shared responsibility among road users, engineers, lawmakers, and public health professionals, with an emphasis on creating a transportation environment where mistakes do not result in death or serious injury.

Key components of the Safe System Approach include:

- **Roadway Design:** Streets should incorporate safety features like lower speeds in high-risk areas, clear pedestrian/bike lanes, and improved intersection visibility. Traffic calming, lighting, and signage improve safety for vulnerable users, reducing fatalities and injuries.
- **Speed Management:** Reducing speed limits in areas with high pedestrian activity, such as school zones, helps prevent severe accidents. Slower speeds give drivers more reaction time, significantly lowering fatality risk for pedestrians.
- **Behavioral Safety MeApp Stateres:** Promoting safe driving through

education, enforcement, and public campaigns can reduce risky behaviors like speeding and distracted driving, leading to fewer fatalities.

- **Improved Pedestrian and Cyclist Infrastructure:** Safe crossings, protected bike lanes, and accessible transit stops reduce collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists, with cities that prioritize such infrastructure seeing fewer fatalities.
- **Data-Driven Safety MeApp Stateres:** Using crash data and safety audits to identify high-risk areas ensures targeted interventions, leading to consistent reductions in collisions.
- **Vehicle Safety Technology:** Modern safety technologies like automatic braking and lane-keeping assist help reduce human error and lower crash rates.

EXPAND MOBILITY OPTIONS

Transportation projects in Boone should accommodate all users, regardless of mode or ability, ensuring that walking, biking, or taking transit is accessible and comfortable. Prioritizing lower-emission modes like walking, biking, and transit aligns with Boone’s goals for sustainability and improved mobility. A Complete Streets approach addresses the needs of all travelers—pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit users—by reconfiguring infrastructure to balance accessibility and safety. This includes measures like adding bike lanes and improving pedestrian crossings on major roads originally designed for high vehicle traffic.

IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW

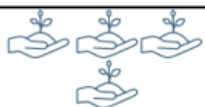
Managing traffic congestion in Boone requires strategies that minimize travel delays and cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets while ensuring the safety of vulnerable populations like children and seniors, who likely have limited mobility and slower reaction times. Reducing vehicle reliance during peak times and maximizing the efficiency of existing streets are critical to addressing Boone’s constrained transportation network.

Multimodal transportation projects will play an important role in helping Boone achieve the sustainability targets outlined in the Boone Community Climate Action Plan (Boone CCAP). The plan sets ambitious goals, including:

- Achieving carbon neutrality in municipal operations by 2030.
- Reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 54% by 2030.
- Reaching community-wide carbon neutrality by 2050.

Transportation and mobile sources contribute to 47% of Boone’s total greenhouse gas emissions. To meet the CCAP goals, it is essential to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by promoting low- and non-polluting forms of transportation, such as walking, biking, and transit. Meeting these targets will require significant changes in travel behavior, with investments in infrastructure and services designed to support sustainable transportation options.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

Action	Co-Benefits	Reduction Potential
T 1 – Reduce VMT by Expanding Mass Transit and Improving Bicycle, Pedestrian, E-Bike and Scooter Infrastructure		
T 2 – Improve Electric Vehicle Adoption. Transition 20% of Light Duty Vehicles to EVs		
T 3 – Increase Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, Including Infrastructure in Multi-Family Homes		
T 4 – Collaborate with Institutional and Private Fleet Operators		

Boone Community Climate Action Plan Transportation Items

Multimodal transportation projects can also be used to improve water quality by integrating green infrastructure features into transportation improvement projects.

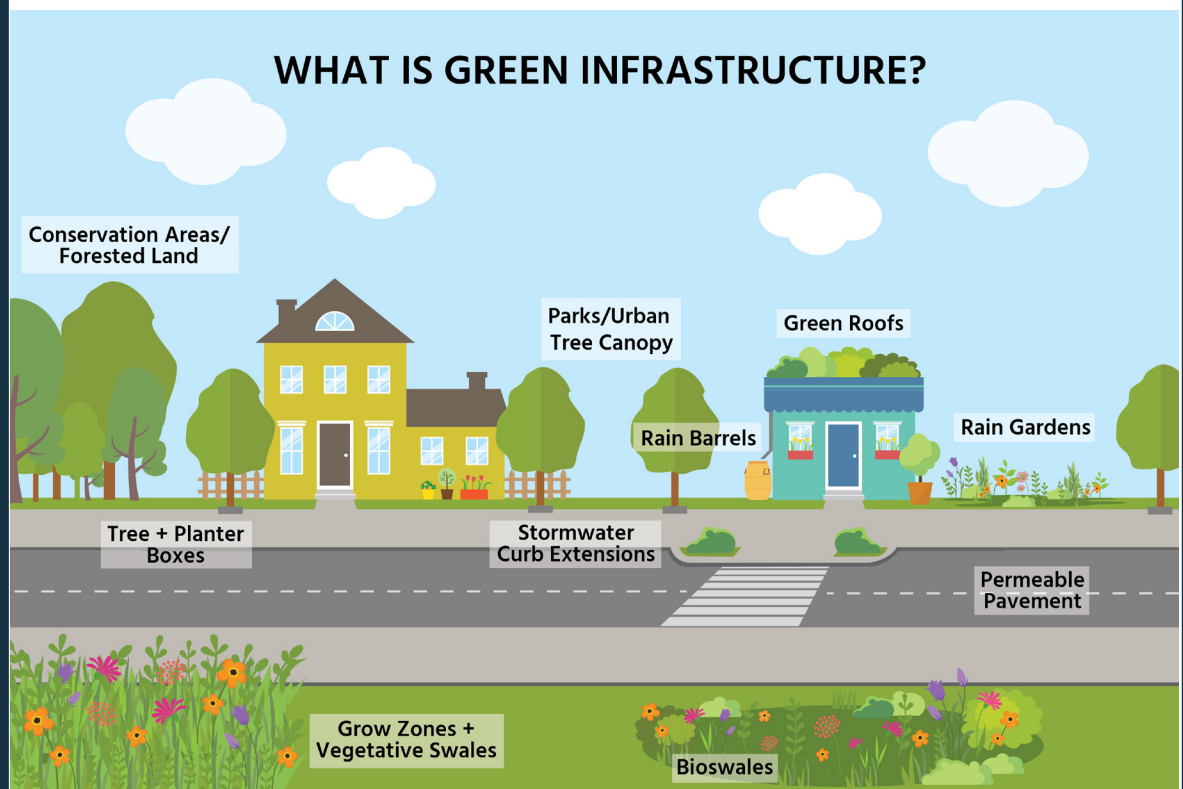
Source: Town of Boone

WHAT IS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE?

Green infrastructure refers to a sustainable and cost-effective approach to managing stormwater while enhancing urban environments. Instead of relying solely on traditional systems like storm drains, green infrastructure incorporates natural processes and design elements to divert, absorb, and filter rainwater. Examples include:

- **Curb Extensions:** These reduce runoff by redirecting stormwater to planted areas.
- **Landscape Strips:** Vegetated areas alongside roads or sidewalks that capture and absorb rainfall.
- **Rain Gardens and Bioswales:** Designed to filter and slow stormwater, allowing it to infiltrate the ground.
- **Permeable Pavements:** Surfaces that let water pass through, reducing surface runoff.

Beyond stormwater management, green infrastructure contributes to improved air quality, urban cooling, and more attractive public spaces, making communities more resilient to climate change.



Source: BREC

BOONE'S REGIONAL POSITION & MOBILITY

Boone is the economic driver in the High Country, serving as the anchor of the regional transportation network. It is intersected by three U.S. Highways (US 321, US 421, US 221) and two North Carolina Highways (NC 105, NC 194), with the nearest interstates — I-40 near Hickory and I-77 near Marler — just over an hour's drive away. Boone is also a gateway to popular attractions such as Blowing Rock, ski resorts, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and outdoor and cultural destinations.

With a population of 20,000, Boone bears the transportation burden from hosting nearly 12,000 workers commuting from surrounding areas. Appalachian State University (App State) adds to this demand, enrolling more than 20,000 students for Fall 2024.

As a popular year-round tourist destination, Boone has many visitors as well, with Watauga County ranking 15th in the state for visitor spending. These factors create regional mobility pressures, making Boone's transportation challenges a concern for the wider area.

Locally, Boone faces congestion, pedestrian-unfriendly intersections, neighborhood cut-through traffic, and gaps in its bike and greenway networks. Addressing these challenges is crucial for economic growth, ensuring access to jobs, education, healthcare, and other services. By improving infrastructure, technology, and mobility policies, Boone can enhance connectivity for both residents and visitors, promoting equitable access to opportunities.

WHY MOBILITY MATTERS

Land use and mobility are deeply connected—how land is used determines transportation needs, while transportation investments shape future development patterns. In Boone, these decisions often occur separately and on differing timelines, leading to challenges in aligning growth with transportation capacity.

Boone Next seeks to address these issues by emphasizing a multimodal approach. By coordinating transportation investments with land use planning, Boone can create a balanced, connected community that reflects its core values while supporting both livability and mobility.



Downtown Boone

King Street balances the need for through traffic, access to App State, pedestrian activity, and convenient parking.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Before outlining a strategy to achieve Boone’s mobility vision, it’s important to assess the current conditions that affect how people move within and to the town. Understanding these existing conditions will highlight the challenges and opportunities for improving mobility in Boone. This section offers an overview of Boone’s mobility network, including: the parts, or components, of the roadway network; how people move around; traffic volume; capacity of the network; safety along roadways; AppalCART public transportation; and the community’s viewpoint on transportation.

BOONE’S MOBILITY NETWORK COMPONENTS

Boone’s mobility network includes infrastructure such as town-managed roads, NCDOT roads, Appalachian State University (App State) roads, private roads, bike and pedestrian facilities, greenways, and the AppalCART transit system. Key features include:

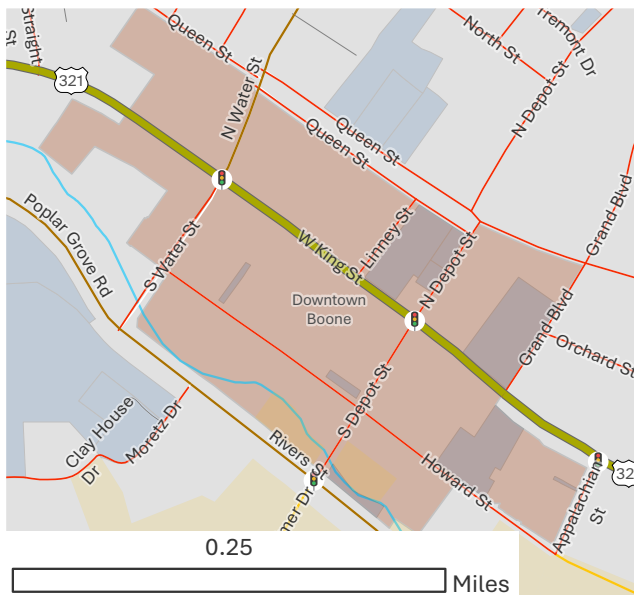
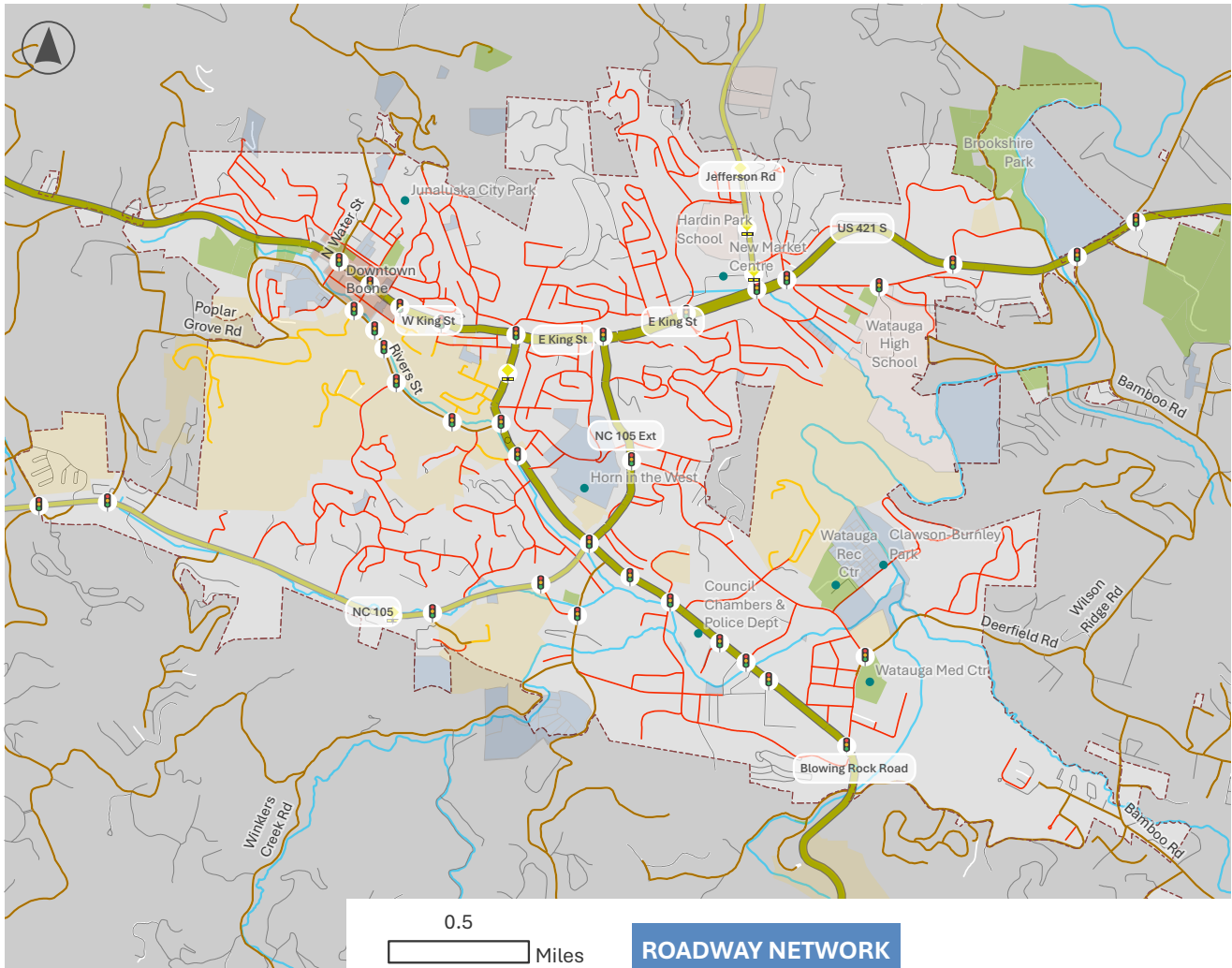
- **Motorized Vehicle Network:** Boone relies heavily on US and NC Highways for both regional and local travel.
- **Sidewalk Network:** The sidewalk

system is expanding, but significant gaps remain, particularly in high-traffic pedestrian areas.

- **Bicycle Infrastructure:** There is limited bike infrastructure for transportation, highlighting a need for more bike-friendly routes.
- **Greenways:** Mostly focused on recreation, Boone is working to expand greenways for transportation as well.
- **AppalCART Transit System:** Boone’s public transit system is well-used, especially by students and workers.

This network reflects Boone’s mixed mobility infrastructure, with ongoing efforts to integrate alternative transportation options like walking, biking, and greenways to address mobility challenges. The following maps and images illustrate Boone’s mobility network.

Roadway Network



ROADWAY NETWORK

NCDOT Traffic Signals

- Signal
- Flasher

NCDOT Roadway Network

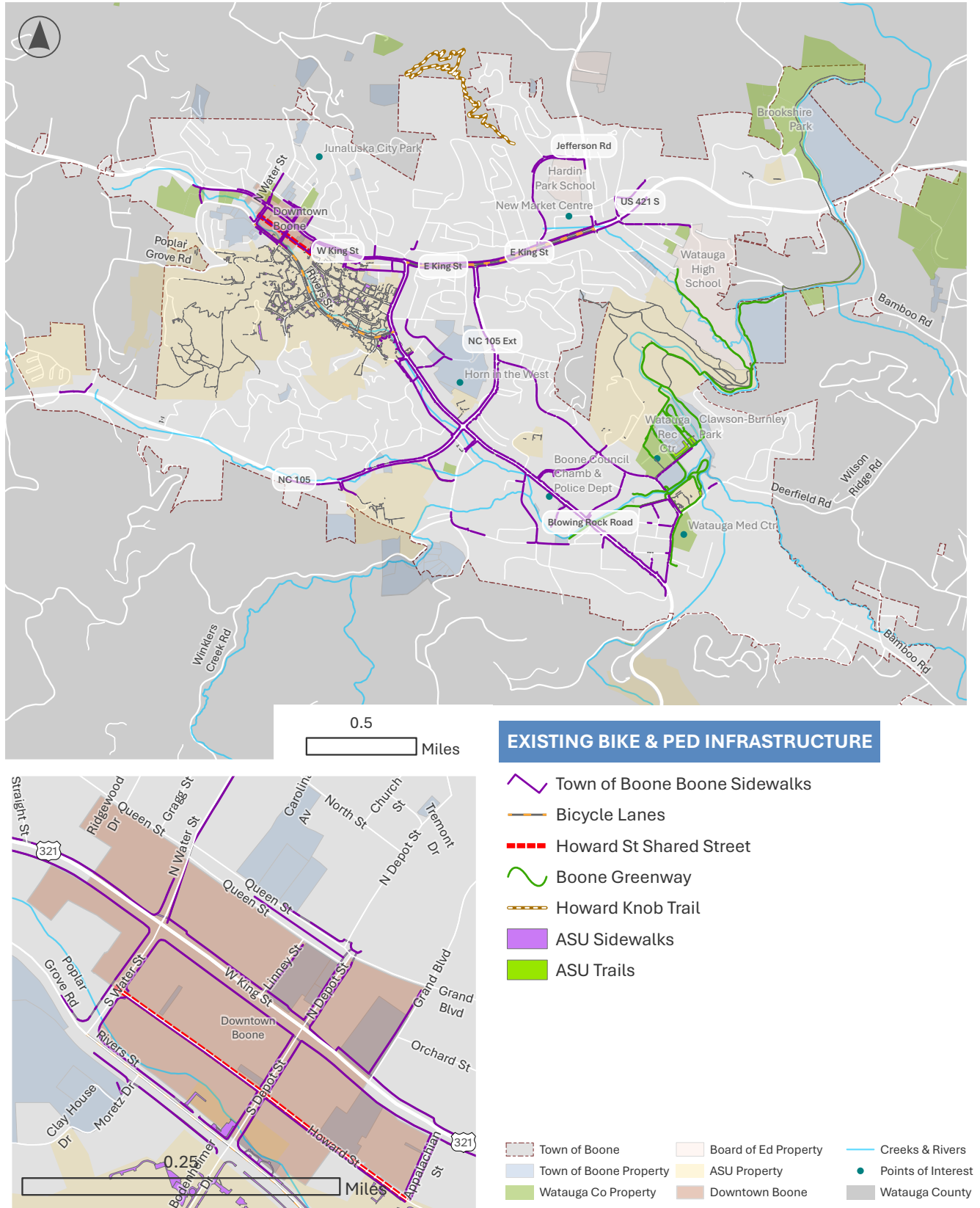
- US Routes
- NC Highways
- Secondary Roads (SRs)

Local Road Network

- Town of Boone
- App State
- Private Roads

- Town of Boone
- Board of Ed Property
- Creeks & Rivers
- Town of Boone Property
- ASU Property
- Points of Interest
- Watauga Co Property
- Downtown Boone
- Watauga County

Existing Bike & Ped Infrastructure



HOW PEOPLE MOVE AROUND

Boone's residents, students, employees, and visitors use the town's mobility network every day to connect to destinations within Boone and beyond. Reflecting mobility trends and patterns in Boone Next allows the town to anticipate changes and accommodate future mobility demands.

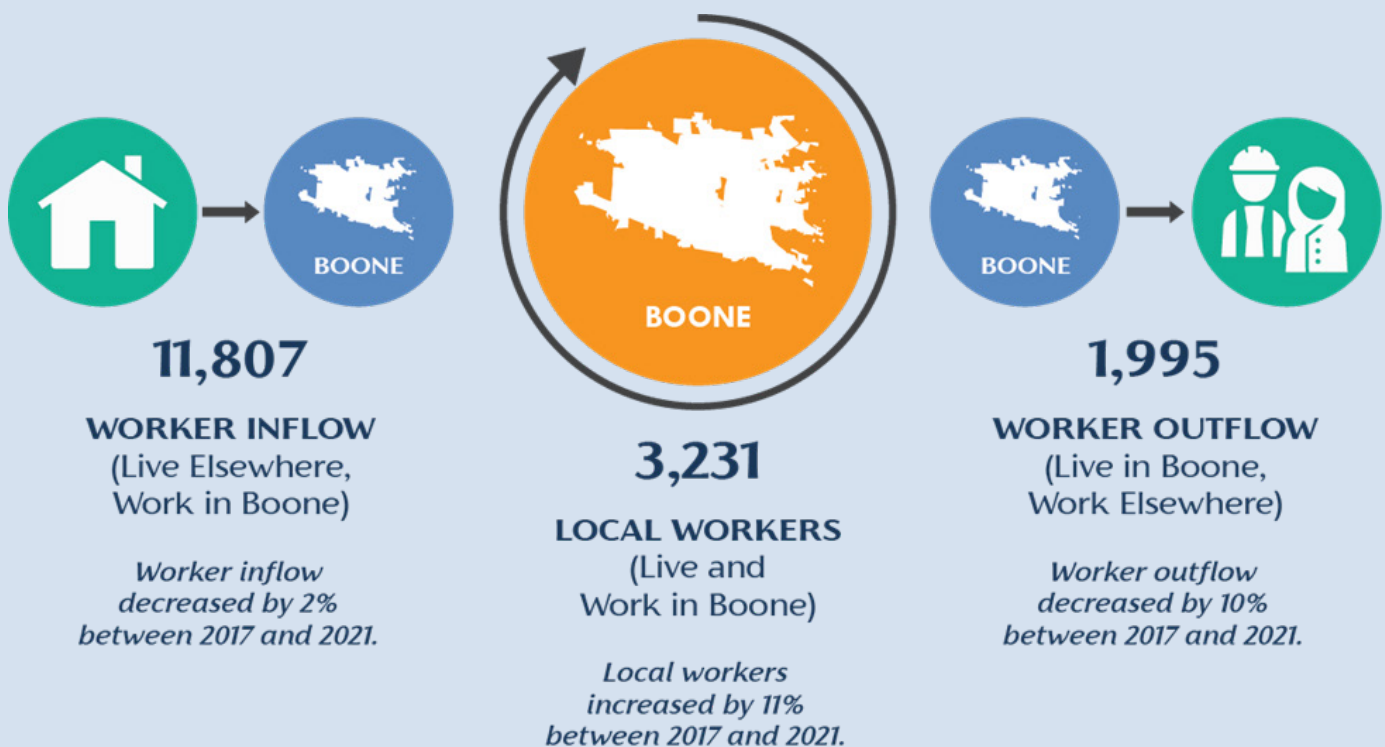
Commuting Characteristics

Boone, with the highest concentration of jobs in the High Country (13,608), sees 87% of its workforce commuting from outside town. Only 13% of jobs are filled by residents who live and work in Boone, while 32% of workers commute out of town. This results in a significant daily influx of commuters, most of whom drive alone, contributing to traffic congestion and straining the mobility network.

The figure below illustrates these commuting patterns, highlighting the pressure on Boone's transportation system.

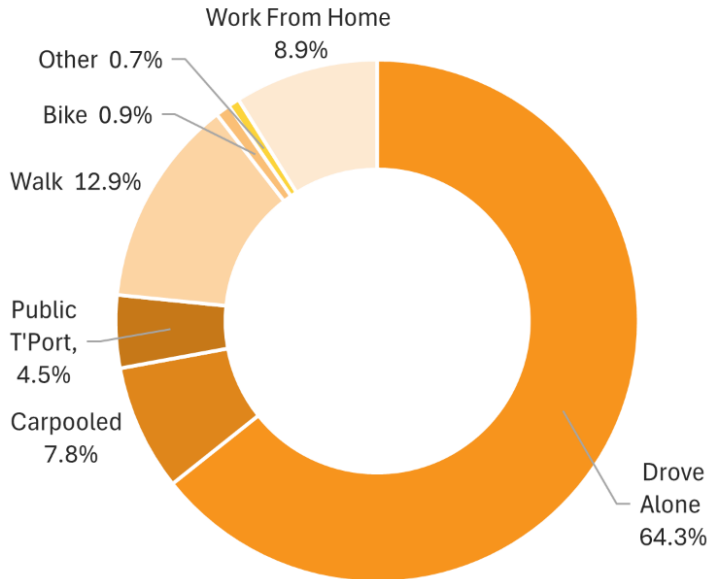
Mode Share: How People Get to Work

In Boone, 64% of workers aged 16 and older commute by driving alone, with smaller percentages walking (12.9%), using AppalCART (4.5%), or working from home (8.9%). Notably, 18% of workers use walking, biking, or transit for their commute, a higher rate than in many comparable areas. This demonstrates a strong willingness to use alternative transportation, indicating a demand for more infrastructure and programs to support walking, biking, and transit. These trends suggest that further investment in sustainable transportation options could encourage even more people to choose these modes.



Data Source: US Census American Community Survey (2017-2021)

Mode Share



Data Source: US Census

Ithaca, NY, is a good comparison city to Boone due to their similarities as university towns with hilly terrain, compact urban cores, and significant student populations. Both cities face similar challenges in supporting active transportation, managing transit demand, and accommodating seasonal tourism.

Multimodal Commute Mode Share

	BOONE, NC	CHAPEL HILL, NC	ITHACA, NY	NORTH CAROLINA
Public Transportation	4.5%	7.0%	11.7%	0.8%
Walk	12.9%	6.1%	27.7%	1.6%
Bike	0.9%	2.6%	1.6%	0.1%
Combined (Comparison)	18.3%	15.7% (-)	41.0% (+)	2.5% (-)

Data Source: US Census

WHERE ARE PEOPLE TRAVELING TO?

Top counties people in Watauga County travel to for work:

*Avery County: 1,128
Caldwell County: 356
Ashe County: 323
Wilkes County: 231
Catawba County: 106*

Top counties people travel from to work in Watauga County:

*Ashe County: 1,848
Caldwell County: 848
Johnson County (TN): 844
Wilkes County: 710
Avery County: 532*

Work from Home: A Changing Trend

Remote work, which surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, is evident in Boone and surrounding areas. This shift has economic and mobility implications, though its full impact on transportation is still unclear. While remote workers travel less for work, they tend to travel more for shopping, services, and recreation. Additionally, some individuals have relocated to more

rural areas, increasing travel distances for essential services. As a result, the overall effect on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) remains uncertain. Studies also indicate that remote work has led to reduced transit use, which can negatively affect small transit systems like Boone's.

Work From Home Trends

	BOONE, NC	CHAPEL HILL, NC	ITHACA, NY	NORTH CAROLINA
2019 Work from Home	7%	11%	9%	7%
2022 Work from Home	9%	25%	23%	12%
(Compared to Boone)		(+)	(+)	(+)

Data Source: US Census

Travel Time

Travel time, a key metric in mobility planning, measures the average time spent commuting to work. Boone's 16+ workforce spends an average of 13 minutes commuting, with 60% traveling 14 minutes

or less and 30% commuting 10 minutes or less. These short commutes are lower than in comparison areas and present an opportunity to encourage a modal shift. Many of these short trips can be replaced by walking, biking, or transit.

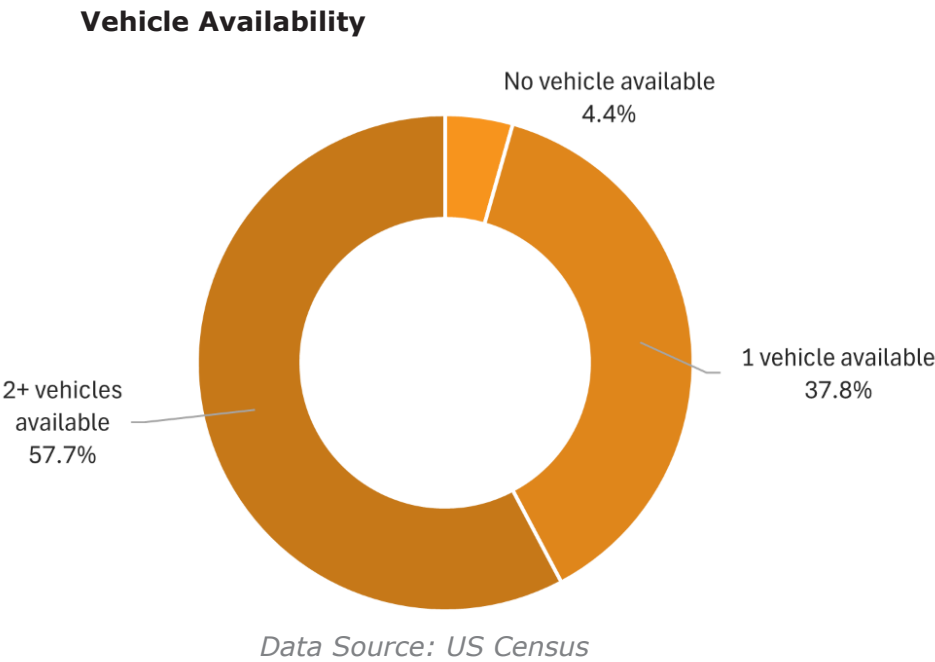
Mean Travel Time to Work

	BOONE, NC	CHAPEL HILL, NC	ITHACA, NY	NORTH CAROLINA
Mean Travel Time to Work (in Minutes)	13.8	19.6	18.4	25
(Compared to Boone)		(+)	(+)	(+)

Data Source: US Census

Vehicle Availability

In Boone, 58% of households have access to two or more vehicles, 38% have access to one, and 4% lack access to a vehicle. Despite having vehicle access, 18% of the 16+ workforce still choose alternative transportation options like walking, biking, or using the bus. The 4% of households without vehicle access highlights the need for diverse mobility options for residents who either cannot drive or prefer not to own a car.



Households without Vehicles

	BOONE, NC	CHAPEL HILL, NC	ITHACA, NY	NORTH CAROLINA
Households without Vehicles	4.4%	6.3%	27.3%	5.4%
(Compared to Boone)		(+)	(+)	(+)

Data Source: US Census

Annual Average Daily Traffic

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is a key metric in mobility planning, measuring the average two-way traffic on a road segment over a year. While it doesn't indicate trends in traffic growth or congestion, AADT is useful for identifying high-traffic areas and guiding resource allocation for transportation planning. In Boone, notable AADT figures (from NCDOT's 2022 traffic data) include:

- Blowing Rock Road between Wendy's and Boone Heights Drive (42,000 AADT) and US 421 eastbound between the NC 105 Extension and NC 194/Jefferson Road (36,500 AADT) have the highest traffic volumes.
- West King Street's AADT ranges from 13,000 (downtown) to 16,500 (east of downtown).
- Rivers Street has an AADT of 10,500 near campus, rising to 18,500 closer to Blowing Rock Road/Hardin Street.
- Other high-volume areas include NC 105 coming into town (30,000), Blowing Rock Road/Hardin Street from Wendy's to Rivers Street (25,000), and NC 105 Extension (22,500-31,000).
- The intersection near Wendy's is especially complex due to the convergence of four roadways with some of the town's highest AADT.

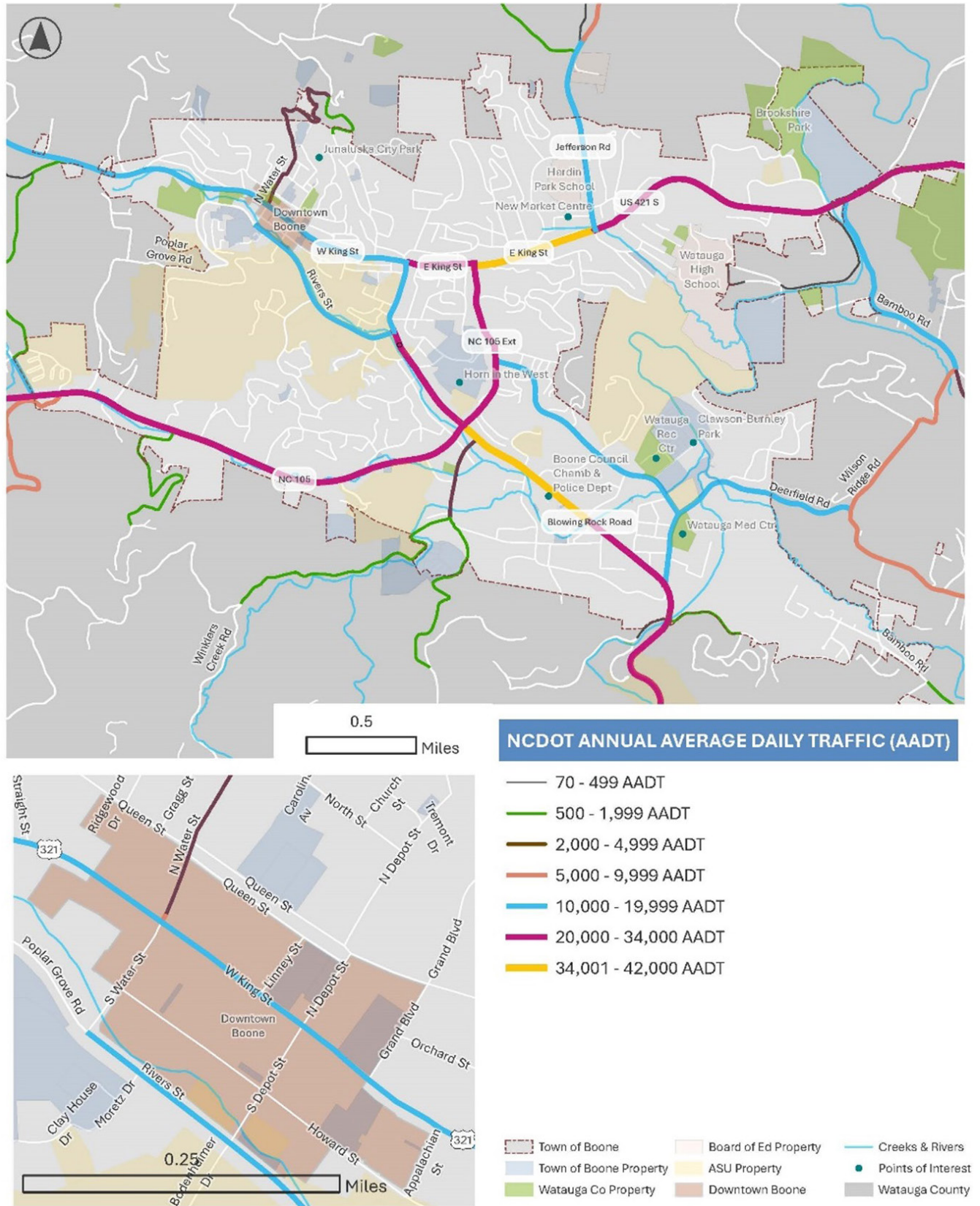


Traffic on West King Street

Traffic on West King Street highlights the challenges of managing congestion along one of Boone's central corridors, where limited routes serve growing demands.

Source: High Country Host

NCDOT Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)



Capacity of the Network

Roadway capacity refers to the maximum number of vehicles a road can accommodate within a given time under specific conditions. It is influenced by factors like road dimensions, lane count, traffic signals, and turning movements.

Capacity affects congestion, travel times, and the effectiveness of the network for all users, including drivers, transit riders, and people walking or biking. Traditionally, capacity management focuses on optimizing vehicle flow, often neglecting pedestrian and cyclist needs.

A common method for assessing capacity is the Volume over Capacity (VoC) ratio. A VoC value above 1.00 indicates that traffic volume exceeds road capacity, leading to congestion. The map below illustrates areas where roads are operating above capacity, with red segments indicating such issues, if the roadway were to operate at a LOS D.

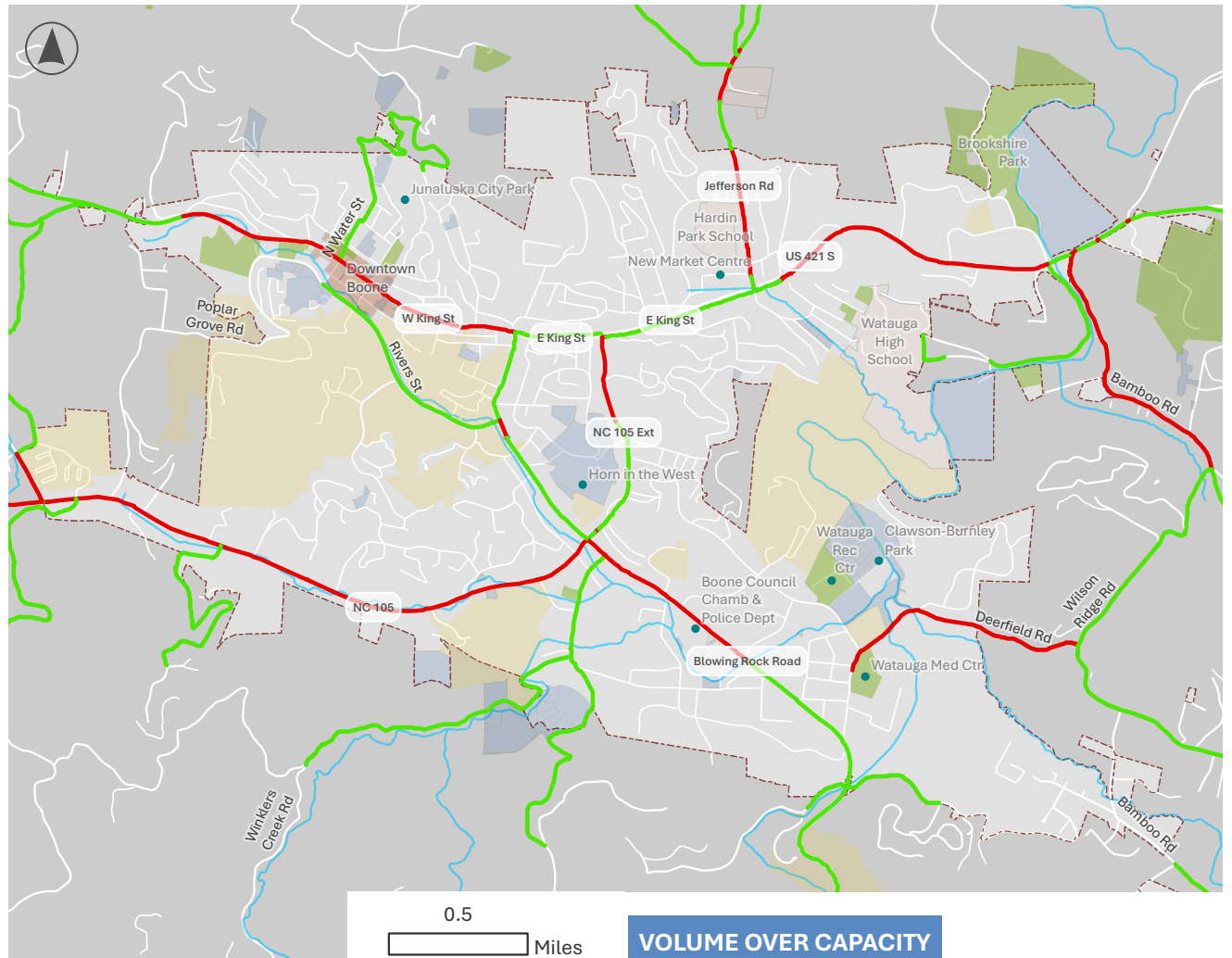
LEVEL OF SERVICE

Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of traffic flow that helps assess road performance based on factors such as speed, congestion, and driver comfort.

- **LOS D:** *At this level, speeds decline with increasing traffic, and drivers experience limited freedom to maneuver. Even minor disruptions can lead to queuing due to lack of space in the traffic stream.*
- **LOS E:** *Conditions are near capacity, where the traffic flow is highly volatile. There are few usable gaps in the stream and any disruption (e.g., vehicles entering from ramps or changing lanes) can cause significant delays and queuing, with little ability to recover from incidents.*

These LOS criteria are commonly used to evaluate the effectiveness of roadways and inform traffic management decisions.

Traffic Volume over Roadway Capacity



VOLUME OVER CAPACITY

VoC for LOS D

- 0.001 - 1.000 (Under Capacity)
- 1.001 - 2.800 (Over Capacity)



- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Town of Boone | Board of Ed Property | Creeks & Rivers |
| Town of Boone Property | ASU Property | Points of Interest |
| Watauga Co Property | Downtown Boone | Watauga County |

Safety Along the Network

Boone's road network presents safety concerns for both motorists and pedestrians/bikers. The following outlines key safety metrics and areas of concern:

- **NCDOT Safety Scores:** Roads are assigned a safety score (0-100) based on three factors: Class Density Ratio, Crash Severity Index, and Critical Crash Rate Ratio. Scores closer to 100 indicate higher safety risks. In Boone:
 - North Water Street (W. King to ¼-mile north): Score: 100
 - NC 105, Blowing Rock Rd/Hardin St., Blowing Rock Rd, US 421 S: Score: 89
 - West King St., East King St., NC 105 Extension, Blowing Rock Rd, Bamboo Rd, Wilson Ridge Rd, Deerfield Rd: Score: 78
- **High-Crash Intersections:** The highest concentration of crashes occurs at:
 - Wendy's intersection
 - NC 105 Extension/US 421 S
 - Poplar Grove Connector/US 421/US 321
 - NC 105/Wilson Rd
 - Blue Ridge Rd/Winkler's Creek Rd
- **Pedestrian Safety:** Between 2017-2022, 9 pedestrians were severely injured or killed in Boone. Between 2010-2019, Boone ranked 3rd in the state for severe/fatal pedestrian crashes among towns with populations between 10,000 and 25,000.
- **Dangerous Areas:** Clusters of severe and fatal crashes of all types occurred in the following areas:
 - US 421 S near NC 194
 - Blowing Rock Rd/Hardin St. (Rivers St. to Wendy's intersection)
 - NC 105 (near Hodges Gap/Poplar Grove Rd)
 - East King St. near New Market Blvd

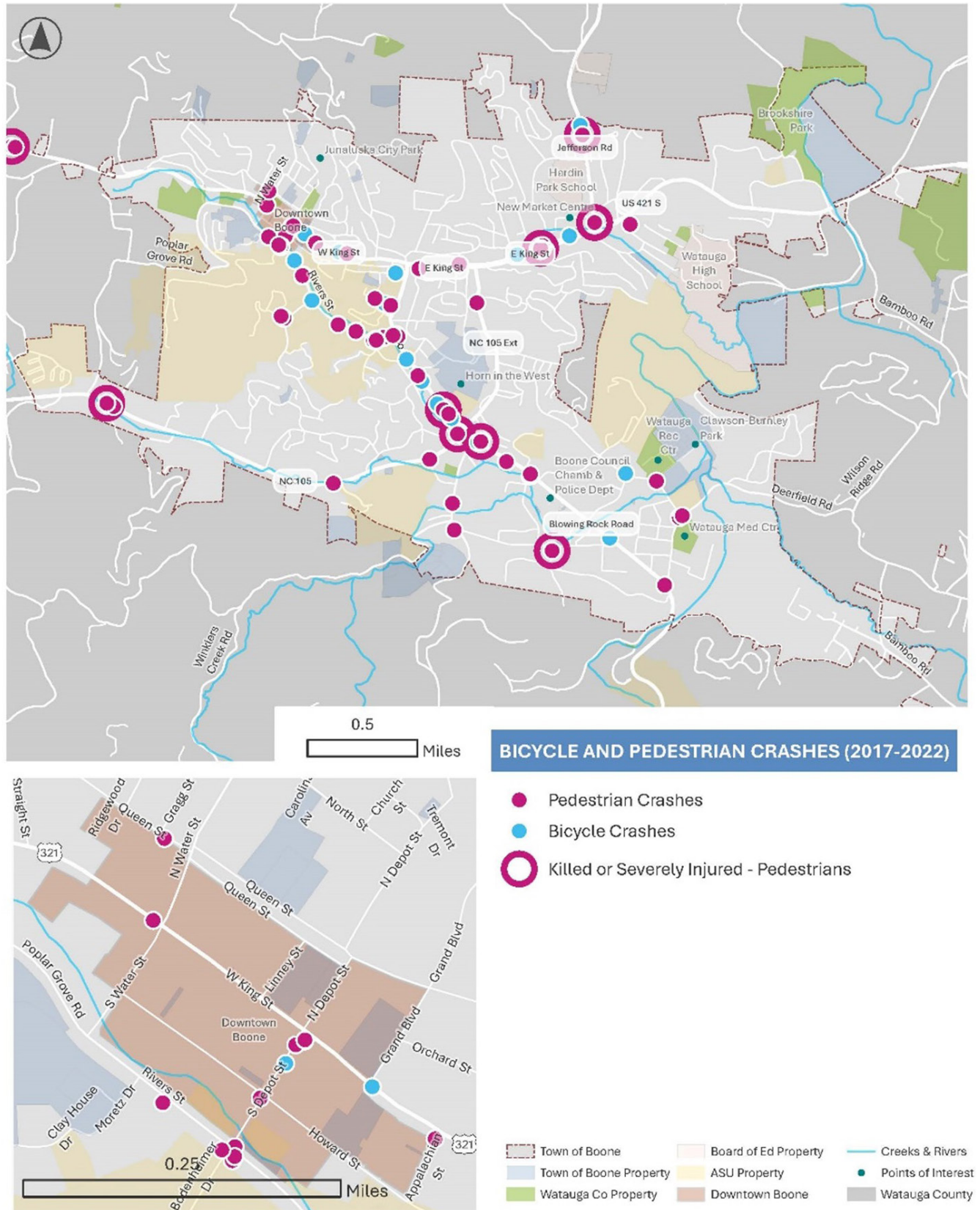


Walk/Bike to School Day

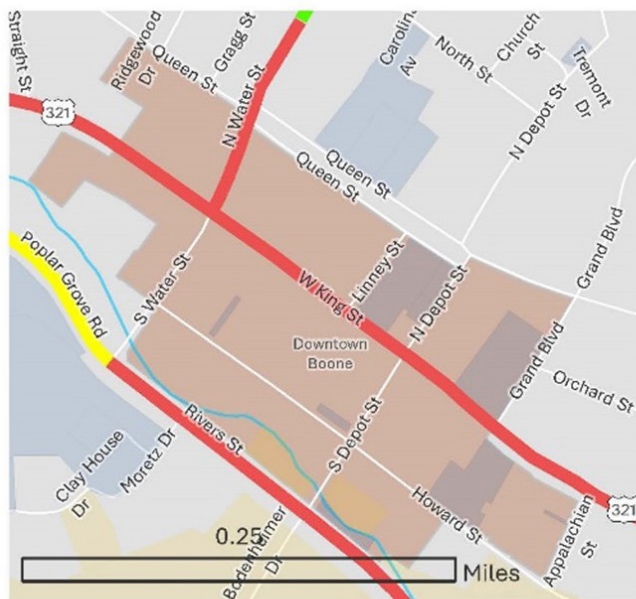
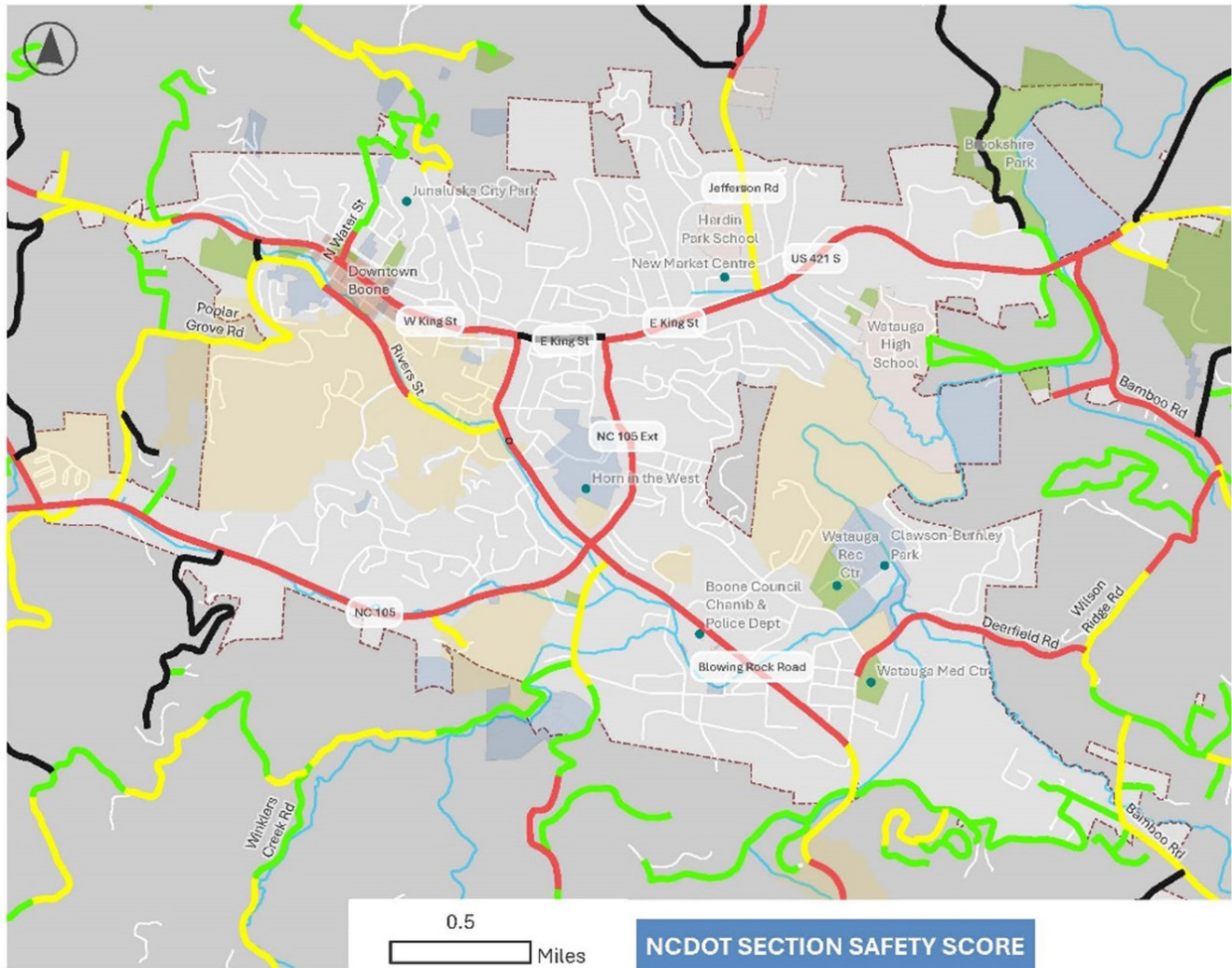
Hardin Park Elementary School students and parents get a lesson in bicycle safety at a walk/bike to school event.

Source: Watauga Democrat

Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes (2017-2022)



NCDOT Section Safety Score



NCDOT SECTION SAFETY SCORE

Section Safety Scores

- 0 to 33
 — 33 to 66
 — 66 to 100
 — Not Scored

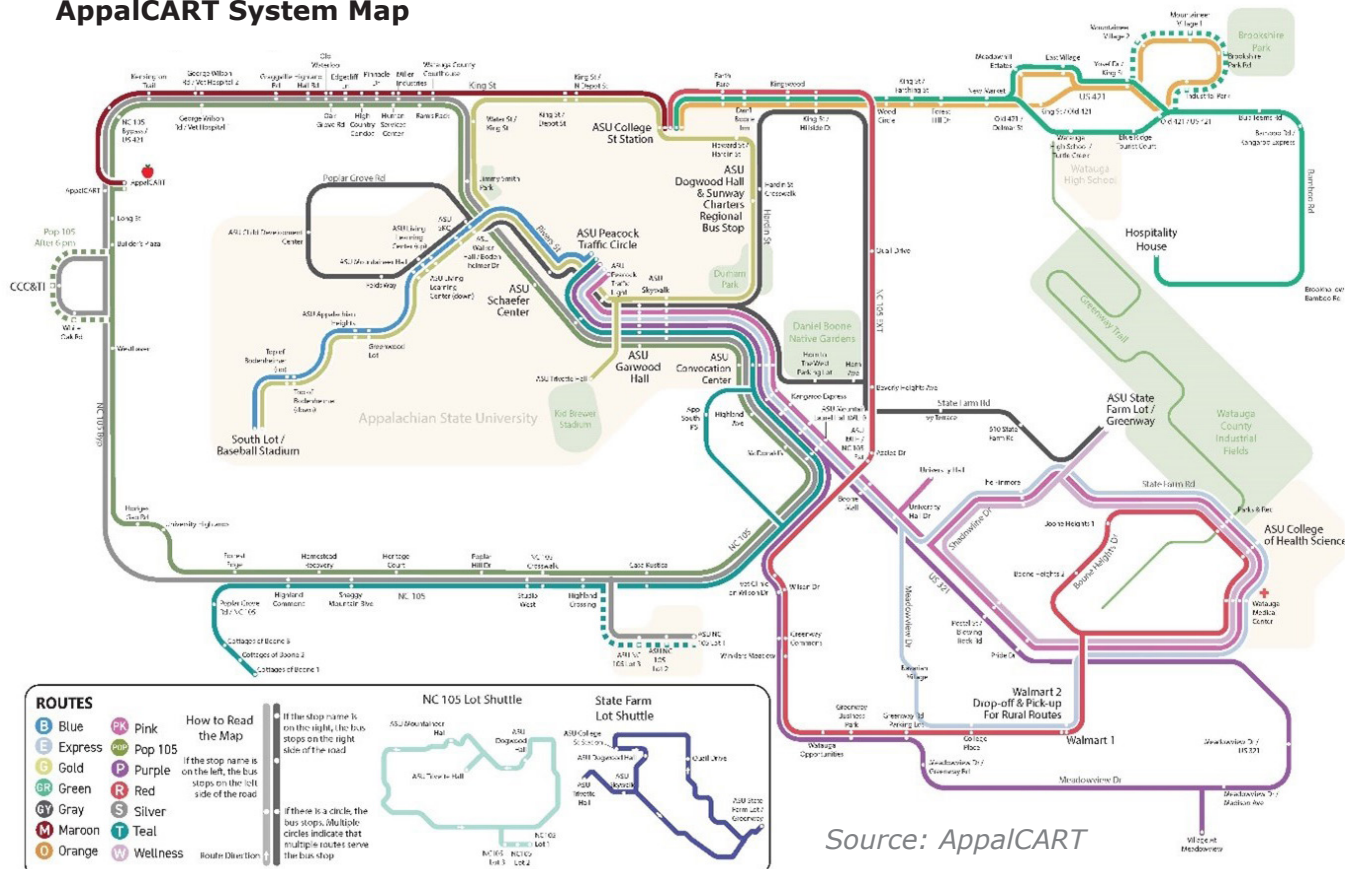
-  Town of Boone
  Board of Ed Property
  Creeks & Rivers
-  Town of Boone Property
  ASU Property
  Points of Interest
-  Watauga Co Property
  Downtown Boone
  Watauga County

AppalCART has been serving Boone and Watauga County since 1981, providing 13 fare-free fixed bus routes and 10 van routes for paratransit riders (outside of the immediate Boone area), the general public, and the Project on Aging. The system is a key mobility choice in the area, with ridership steadily increasing, except for a dip during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

AppalCART Annual Ridership

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Weekday Ridership	1,727,339	1,547,997	372,507	1,173,163	1,327,006
Total Ridership	1,820,412	1,649,980	412,310	1,249,321	1,429,555

AppalCART System Map



While AppalCART does provide weekend service through four weekend routes, the community reported the need for greater weekend service and later service along some routes.

According to engagement, this need applied to the routes that travel east of campus. For example, Wellness route does not travel to the hospital area (a large employment center) on the weekends.

AppalCART Route Schedules

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	Break Adjustment (M-F)
Blue	7:00 am - 6:00 pm*							
Express	7:00 am - 10:00 pm							7:00 am - 7:55 pm
Grey	7:00 am - 6:00 pm							
Gold	6:00 pm - 10:00 pm					8:30 am - 6:00 pm	11:30 am - 8:00 pm	7:00 am - 5:30 pm
Green	7:30 am - 10:30 pm					8:30 am - 6:00 pm	12:00 pm - 8:00 pm	7:00 am - 8:00 pm
Maroon	7:00 am - 10:00 pm					9:00 am - 6:00 pm	12:00 pm - 8:00 pm	7:00 am - 8:00 pm
Orange	7:00 am - 10:30 pm							7:00 am - 6:00 pm
Pink	7:00 am - 6:00 pm							
Pop 105	7:00 am - 10:00 pm					9:00 am - 6:00 pm	12:00 pm - 8:30 pm	7:00 am - 8:00 pm
Purple	7:00 am - 10:00 pm							7:00 am - 8:00 pm
Red	6:30 am - 10:30 pm							
Silver	7:00 am - 6:00 pm							
Teal	7:00 am - 10:30 pm							
Wellness	7:30 am - 10:00 pm		7:30 am - 6:00 pm (F)					

*Times are rounded to the nearest hour or half-hour.

Source: AppalCART



AppalCART Buses

AppalCART buses provide vital transit connections in Boone, offering residents, students, and visitors a reliable, sustainable way to navigate the town and surrounding areas.

Source: AppalCART

In addition to AppalCART services, people in Boone have access to Sunway Charter's Mountaineer North/South (Boone to Charlotte) and East/West (Boone to Greensboro) routes.

Sunway Charter Bus Schedules

HEADING NORTH

Location	Time	Daily	Friday/Sunday & Holidays*
⑥ Charlotte		8:15 AM	1:00 PM
⑤ Gastonia		8:55 AM	1:40 PM
④ Lincolnton		9:30 AM	2:15 PM
③ Newton		10:10 AM	2:55 PM
② Lenoir		10:50 AM	3:35 PM
① Boone		11:45 PM	4:30 PM

HEADING SOUTH

Location	Time	Daily	Friday/Sunday & Holidays*
① Boone		1:45 PM	5:30 PM
② Lenoir		2:40 PM	6:25 PM
③ Newton		3:20 PM	7:05 PM
④ Lincolnton		4:00 PM	7:45 PM
⑤ Gastonia		4:35 PM	8:20 PM
⑥ Charlotte		5:15 PM	9:00 PM

*An additional schedule is available Fridays during ASU Fall and Spring Semesters. This schedule does not operate when ASU classes are not in session (Spring Break, Fall Break, Winter Break, etc.). Please check schedule and seating availability at www.sunwaycharters.com.

STOP INFORMATION:

① **Boone (ASU)**
Appalachian State University
230 Hardin Street
Boone, NC 28607
Tickets sold at Phil's CITGO*
168 Hardin Street
828-268-0555

② **Lenoir**
Lenoir Crossings Shopping Center
*Stop at Pizza Hut
125 Hickory Blvd.
Lenoir, NC 28645

④ **Lincolnton**
Ingles Gas Express
2130 E. Main Street
Lincolnton, NC 28092
704-748-6305

⑥ **Charlotte***
Greyhound
518 W. 4th Street
Charlotte, NC 28208
1 (800) 231-2222

③ **Newton***
CITGO
3361 Fairgrove Church Rd. SE
Newton, NC 28658
828-464-2323

⑤ **Gastonia**
Gastonia Transit Station
121 N. Oakland Street
Gastonia, NC 28052
704-842-5101

Give us feedback on your experience.

Effective August 19, 2024

*Tickets sold at these locations

Fares & Tickets

Location	Boone	Lenoir	Newton	Lincolnton	Gastonia
Lenoir	\$10				
Newton	\$12	\$10			
Lincolnton	\$15	\$12	\$10		
Gastonia	\$17	\$14	\$12	\$9	
Charlotte	\$20	\$16	\$14	\$11	\$9

If paying directly to the driver, exact change is required.

ADA Information

For ADA passengers seeking information about our services, please call 704-509-1725 or email ADA@sunwaycharters.com.

Title VI Notice To The Public

The Trolleys Inc., dba Sunway Charters' Notice to the Public is as follows:
Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI

TROLLEYS INC.,
DBA SUNWAY CHARTERS

Trolleys Inc., dba Sunway Charters operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the Trolleys Inc., dba Sunway Charters.

For more information on the Trolleys Inc., dba Sunway Charters' civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact (336) 767-1511 Ext. 265, email Contact@sunwaycharters.com, or visit our administrative office at 3636 Glenn Avenue NE, Winston-Salem, NC 27105, or 2400 Queen City Drive, Charlotte NC 28208.

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC, 20590.

SUNWAY Operates 7 days a week, 365 days a year

Proud Partner with NCDOT
Supporting the goal of Intercity Travel.

Source: Sunway

Summary of Major NCDOT Roads

The following table highlights the primary roadways in Boone, summarizing key features and conditions based on current data and existing conditions.

Major NCDOT Roadways

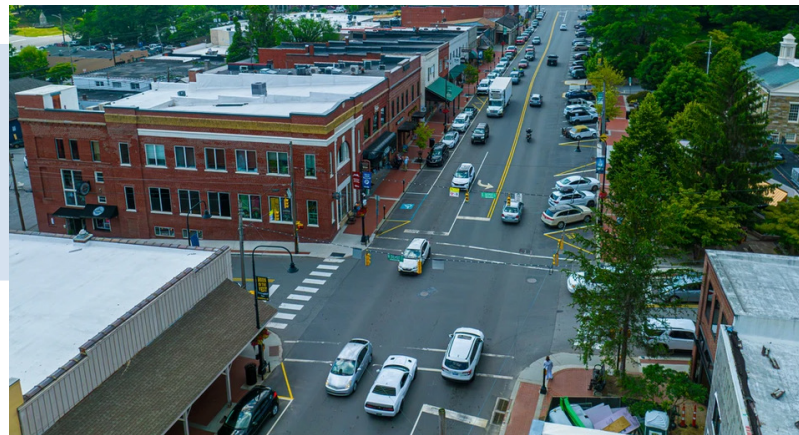
Roadway	Cross Section 1	Cross Section 2	ADT (Link)	Speed (Link)	Crash Count – Severe and Fatal Crashes (Link)	Planning Level Safety Score (out of 100) (Link)	Capacity (Link)	Ped Facilities	Bike Facilities	Transit
NC 105 From: Town Limits at Hodges Gap/ NC 105 Bypass; To: US 321 / Blowing Rock Rd Intersection (Wendy's)	Five Lane to Dogwood Rd	Four Lane to Blowing Rock Rd	31,000 – 35,000	35 mph	10	Range from 78-89	LOS D: Range from 1.1 to 1.2 LOS E: Range from 1.0 to 1.2	One side from Ambling Way to Poplar Grove Rd; One side from Graduate Ln to Mountaineer Ridge Drive; Two sides from Mountaineer Ridge Drive to Wendy's	None	Yes
BLOWING ROCK RD - US 321 & US 221 From: Town Limits at Fairway Drive; To: NC 105 / US 221 Intersection (Wendy's)	Five Lane for Entire Segment		21,000-41,000 (highest at Wendy's intersection to Boone Heights Dr)	35 mph	5	Range from 44-89	LOS D: Range from 0.8 to 1.6 LOS E: Range from 0.8 to 1.6	Two sides along entire segment	None	Yes
BLOWING ROCK RD / HARDIN STREET (US 321) From: NC 105 / US 221 Intersection (Wendy's); To: W King St.	Five Lane for Entire Segment	N/A	19,000-25,500	35 mph	5	Range from 78-89	LOS D: Range from 0.7 to 1.0 LOS E: Range from 0.7 to 1.0	Two sides along entire segment	None	Yes
NC 105 EXTENSION (US 221 & NC 105) From: NC 105 / US 221 Intersection (Wendy's); To: US 421 / E King Street	Six lanes from Wendy's to Sunset Dr.	Five lanes from Sunset Dr to US 421/E King St	28,500-30,500	35 mph	1	Range from 78, 78	LOS D: 0.7 to 1.2 LOS E: Range from 0.7 to 1.1	Two sides from Wendy's to State Farm Rd; one side from State Farm Rd to Quail Dr; two sides from Quail Dr to US 421/E King St	None	Yes
WEST KING STREET (US 421 & US 321) From: Hardin St / E King St Intersection; To: NC 105 Bypass	Entire length of corridor is 2-lane	13,000-17,000	12,000-13,500	20 mph-35 mph	3	Range from 56-89	LOS D: 0.8 – 1.6 LOS E: Range from 0.7 to 1.4	Two sides from Hardin St/King St to Green St; One side from Green St to Poplar Grove Connector	None	Yes

Table 7. Major NCDOT Roadways (Cont'd)

Roadway	Cross Section 1	Cross Section 2	AADT (Link)	Speed (Link)	Crash Count – Severe and Fatal Crashes (Link)	Planning Level Safety Score (out of 100) (Link)	Capacity (Link)	Ped Facilities	Bike Facilities	Transit
EAST KING ST (US 421 & US 321) From: Hardin St / W King St Intersection To: East end of Old US 421	Entire length of corridor is 5	N/A	22,000-38,500	35 mph-55 mph	15	Range from 33-89	LOS D: 0.5-1.2 LOS E: Range from 0.5 to 1.2	Two sides from King St/Hardin to Grove St/Old E. King St; One side from Grove St/Old E. King St running app. 740 ft NE	Two sides from Hardin St/King St to 194/Jefferson Rd	Yes
RIVERS STREET	Four lane along entire segment with two short medians at eastern terminus		10,500-18,500	25 mph	0	Range from 56-67	LOS D: Range from 0.4 – 0.8 LOS E: Range from 0.4 – 0.7	Two sides from Burrell St to Depot St	Two sides along entire segment	Yes
POPLAR GROVE RD	Two lane along entire segment		6,300	35 mph	0	56	No Data	None	None	Yes

US 321 Through Boone

A well-traveled NCDOT-maintained roadway in Boone, highlighting the critical role of state-maintained infrastructure in supporting mobility and connectivity in the region.



PLANNED PROJECTS

Key roadways in Boone experiencing capacity issues, high crash rates, or insufficient pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure are primarily managed by NCDOT (refer to the Summary of Major Roads table). Improvements to these roads rely on NCDOT's planning and funding processes, which can take years from initial concept to project completion.

Larger projects, such as intersection realignments or road widenings, are typically funded through NCDOT's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)—a multi-year capital improvement plan that outlines construction and funding strategies for roadway projects. NC's STIP covers a 10-year period, with the first five years (2024-2028 at the time of Boone Next Development) is referred to as the delivery STIP and the latter five years (2029-2034 in this version) as the developmental STIP. North Carolina updates its STIP every two years to ensure alignment with evolving priorities and funding availability.

Other projects can be funded, when possible, through other NCDOT funding sources which vary based on the project. Two examples include:

- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP): Boone currently does not have any active HSIP-funded projects. However, the town has identified several potential projects that meet HSIP criteria but have not been funded.
- Highway Maintenance Improvement Plan (HMIP): The HMIP is NCDOT's program for maintaining its roadway network. The accompanying table outlines upcoming maintenance projects in Boone that are prioritized within the HMIP framework. A table of NCDOT HMIP projects specifically relevant to Boone is included in the Appendix.

- Some of the larger resurfacing projects include:

- Perkinsville Road/US 221/US 421 S from Grove Street to the Town Limit (2026)
- New River Hills Road from Cecil Miller Road to US 221 (2026)
- NC 105 Extension/US 221 from East King Street to Blowing Rock Road (2027)

The Town of Boone manages and funds improvements for locally maintained roads using resources such as general funds, Powell Bill funds, and available discretionary grants.

The map provided highlights projects within Boone that are in various stages of planning. A detailed summary of all planned projects, drawn from relevant planning documents, is available in the Appendix.

Road Resurfacing

The Town of Boone and NCDOT oversee resurfacing for streets they manage, using Powell Bill funds and NCDOT's annual Highway Maintenance Improvement Program (HMIP) to guide these efforts. Resurfacing projects present opportunities for enhancements like high-visibility crosswalks, bike lanes, and larger changes such as road diets to improve safety and accessibility.

Cities like Asheville have successfully used resurfacing to reallocate roadway space, enhancing multimodal options for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. Boone can adopt similar strategies to strengthen its transportation network during future resurfacing initiatives.

New Bike Lanes on NCDOT Repaving Project

NCDOT collaborated with the City of Hendersonville to repave S. Main Street, incorporating new bike lanes, free on-street parking, and pedestrian improvements. This project enhances safety and accessibility for Ecusta Trail users traveling to downtown and the Henderson County Visitor Center.

Source: City of Hendersonville

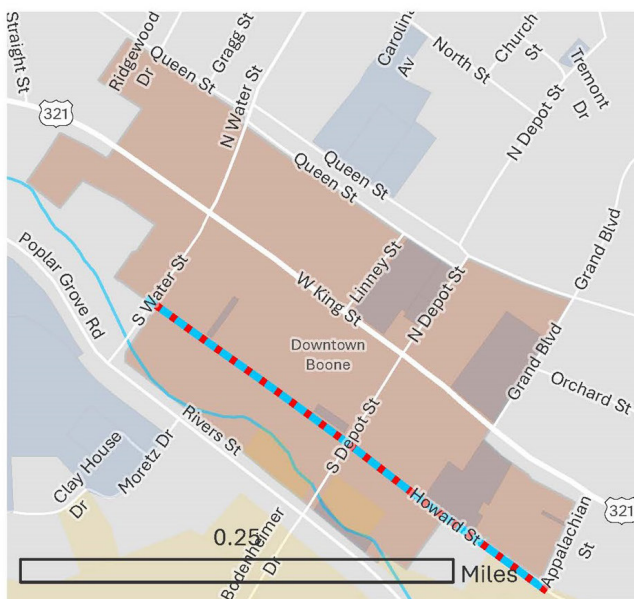
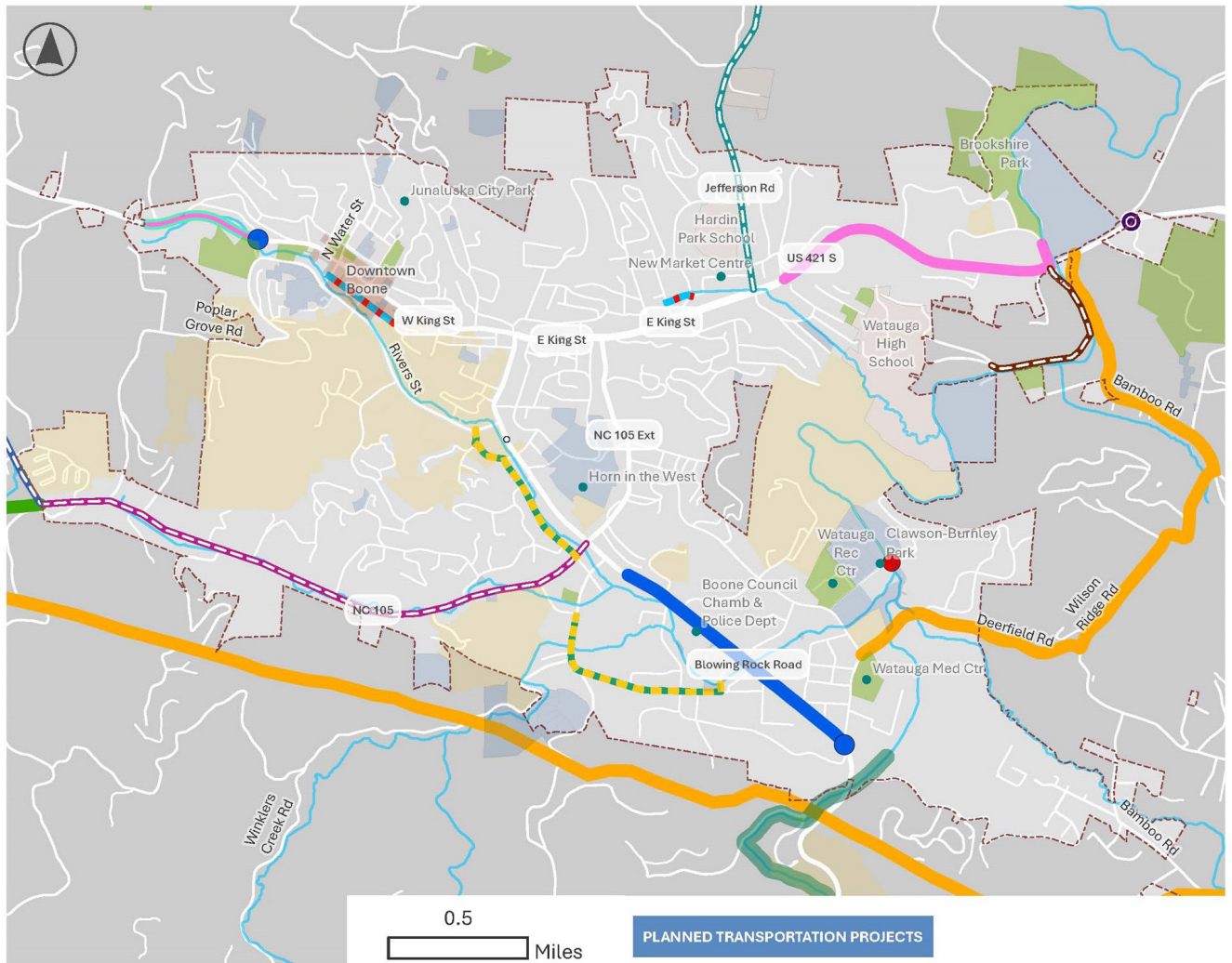


THE VALUE OF PAVEMENT MARKING PLANS

Resurfacing projects offer a strategic opportunity to enhance mobility and safety through thoughtful pavement marking plans. These plans guide road users by incorporating upgrades such as pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, and transit facilities. For example, Greenville, SC, partnered with Traffic Planning and Design, Inc. (TPD) to integrate multimodal improvements into its resurfacing schedule, resulting in pedestrian and bicycle facility gains on 18 streets.

For Boone, this approach can serve as a model, demonstrating how routine resurfacing can advance pedestrian system upgrades and align with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance through curb ramp improvements. By leveraging pavement marking plans, Boone can maximize the benefits of resurfacing projects to support safer and more accessible transportation options.

Planned Transportation Projects



PLANNED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

■ Town of Boone Transportation Projects
■ Proposed Cross Town Connector
■ Potential Middle Fork Greenway Alignment

2024-2033 STIP Points

- Statewide Highway
- Bridge; None Bridge

2024-2033 STIP Lines

- Statewide Highway
- Regional Highway
- Division Highway
- Other Highway; None Highway; None Highway Safety
- Division Bicycle And Pedestrian; Regional Bicycle And Pedestrian
- Other Bicycle And Pedestrian; Ex Congestion Mitigation-Non;

Proposed SPOT 7.0 Projects

- NC 105 - Town Section
- NC 105 Bypass
- NC 194
- New River Hills Road Multi-Use Path
- US 421/Old US 421 Intersection Improvements

- Town of Boone
- Board of Ed Property
- Town of Boone Property
- ASU Property
- Watauga Co Property
- Downtown Boone
- Creeks & Rivers
- Points of Interest
- Watauga County

COMMUNITY VIEWPOINT

The *Boone Next* engagement process highlights the need for improvements to ensure safety and mobility within Boone's transportation network. Community input for the *Boone Next* plan reaffirmed two primary perspectives on in-town roadway widenings, as identified in the 2016 Boone Comprehensive Plan Update:

1. The negative impacts of road widenings through developed areas may outweigh the benefits of reducing traffic congestion.
2. Road widenings are essential for Boone's economic prosperity.

Participants expressed a strong desire for Boone's transportation network to prioritize safety, connectivity, and sustainability while addressing traffic concerns. Key themes emerged:

Traffic & Transit

- **Congestion Relief:** Reducing traffic delays is a top concern for residents, students, and commuters. Many advocated for advancing the Daniel Boone Parkway to alleviate congestion on major routes like US 421, US 321, and NC 105.
- **Public Transit Enhancements:** Expanded public transportation hours, higher frequency, and better connections for workers and students were highly desired.

Active Transportation & Urban Design

- **Walkability and Bike-ability:** Residents prioritized developing a safe and accessible network of sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and trails that connect neighborhoods, businesses, parks, and green spaces. There is strong support for Complete Streets designs that accommodate all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit riders.

- **Key Routes and Intersections:** Improvements to intersections at King Street and Hardin, King Street and Highway 221 North, and Blowing Rock Road (Highway 321) and Highway 105 were frequently mentioned, with a focus on pedestrian crossings, traffic calming, and accessibility. Howard Street was also identified for enhanced pedestrian safety.

Sustainability & Aesthetics

- **Landscaping and Corridor Improvements:** Residents value landscaping buffers along walkways and beautification of transportation corridors to enhance Boone's character.
- **Sustainability Alignment:** Many emphasized the importance of aligning transportation improvements with sustainability goals, such as adding electric vehicle charging stations, expanding public bicycle and e-bike options, and providing better access to natural areas and rivers.

Public feedback underscores the need for Boone's transportation network to balance walkability, reduced congestion, and equitable mobility options while supporting economic vitality and environmental sustainability. Boone residents envision a town with seamless, multimodal connections and infrastructure that enhances quality of life for all users.

MOBILITY SCENARIOS

MOBILITY IMPROVEMENT IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN BOONE

While there is a clear need for mobility improvements to enhance safety, efficiency, and access in Boone's transportation network, several challenges make it difficult to implement these solutions effectively. These include the town's limited financial resources, the current road network design, and physical constraints that hinder the expansion and development of transportation infrastructure:

- **High Traffic, Limited Resources:** Boone experiences vehicle volumes comparable to larger cities but has the funding constraints of a small town.
- **Centralized Road Network:** Most roads converge in a single area, intensifying congestion without sufficient alternative routes.
- **Lack of a Grid System:** The absence of a traditional grid network or diverse north-south and east-west connectors places excessive pressure on main thoroughfares.
- **Constraints on Road Widening:** Topography, established development patterns, and past road widenings restrict further expansion of existing roads.
- **Challenges in Building New Roads:** Factors such as limited available land, high construction costs, and the lengthy timeline for planning, designing, and building new roads pose significant obstacles.
- **Divergent Community Opinions:** There is no unified vision for large-scale projects, complicating consensus on the best path forward.

These factors underline the need for innovative, community-supported solutions to improve Boone's mobility network.

FUTURE MOBILITY SCENARIOS

Boone's approach to improving mobility over the next 20 years can be summarized through five potential scenarios, recognizing that no single solution will fully address the town's needs:

1. ***Business as Usual:*** Maintain the current mobility network with minimal changes. This may include small-scale improvements, such as the planned intersection upgrade at Poplar Grove Connector and US 421. However, without significant changes, continued growth will likely exacerbate existing mobility challenges.
2. ***Expanded Network Connections:*** Focus on major roadway projects, such as completing sections of the Daniel Boone Parkway listed in the current State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or advancing improvements to NC 105 through SPOT. While these projects address key network concerns, they are long-term initiatives that may take years to materialize.
3. ***Optimizing the Existing Network:*** Enhance the efficiency of Boone's current infrastructure through targeted projects like signal timing adjustments and intersection reconfigurations.
4. ***Investing in Multimodal Solutions:*** Prioritize mobility options such as public transit, bicycling, and pedestrian infrastructure to reduce dependency on personal vehicles and improve overall accessibility.
5. ***Comprehensive Strategy:*** Implement a combination of approaches from Scenarios 2, 3, and 4 to balance immediate needs with long-term mobility goals.

RECOMMENDATION

Each scenario offers distinct benefits and challenges. This portion of Boone Next recommends the Comprehensive Strategy with near-term focus on optimizing the network and investing in multimodal solutions to address Boone's evolving transportation needs effectively. The Comprehensive Strategy allows town and regional leaders to work with NCDOT to plan, design, and construct larger project that are many years away from completion while at the same time implementing smaller projects to keep the mobility network functioning until larger solutions are implemented.

NEXT STEPS FOR BOONE'S MOBILITY FUTURE

The Boone Next Transportation Chapter provides a strategic framework to guide the Town toward a more connected, efficient, and safe mobility network. To ensure the successful implementation of the recommendations, the following actions are essential:

- **Prioritize Projects:** Use community input, technical analysis, and funding opportunities to rank and initiate projects that align with Boone's mobility goals.
- **Seek Diverse Funding Sources:** Leverage state, federal, and private funding opportunities, while exploring innovative financing methods like grants and partnerships.
- **Engage the Community:** Foster ongoing dialogue with residents and stakeholders during all phases—planning, design, and construction—to build consensus and ensure projects meet community needs.
- **Monitor and Adjust:** Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of implemented projects, updating priorities and strategies as conditions and needs evolve.

- **Commit to Sustainability and Equity:** Integrate green infrastructure, multimodal options, and accessible designs to ensure Boone's transportation system serves all residents while protecting the environment.

By embracing these actions, Boone can overcome its transportation challenges and lay the foundation for a mobility network that supports its growth, enhances quality of life, and aligns with the community's vision for the future.

The scale and range of actions capable of addressing Boone's mobility challenges vary widely in scope, from regional improvements like the more complicated projects proposed in NCDOT's SPOT 7.0 prioritization process to the low cost, low effort recommendation to establish a Safety Task Force. Proposed actions may address all of Boone's transportation challenges, a combination of challenges, or a single challenge. The following goals and policies provide an at-a-glance view of Boone's mobility recommendations.

GOAL 2.1

INCREASE MOBILITY THROUGH A SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH

By fostering partnerships and focusing on data-driven solutions, the town will address roadway safety challenges, enhance intersection functionality, and manage traffic effectively.

Policy 2.1.1: Establish a Safety Task Force to Accelerate Roadway Safety Project Implementation Through a Collaborative Approach

The task force could meet regularly - monthly or quarterly - to identify, prioritize, and address Boone's roadway safety challenges, with a focus on protecting vulnerable road users. Potential members of the task force could include representatives from the Town of Boone (public works and police), High Country RPO, NCDOT, AppalCART, major employers (such as the hospital), and 1-2 members of the community. This diverse group would ensure a comprehensive approach to safety and foster partnerships to accelerate solutions.

Policy 2.1.2: Apply for a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant to Develop a Town-Wide Safety Action Plan

This plan will use a safe system approach to reduce traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries. Once the Safety Action Plan is in place, the town will become eligible to apply for SS4A implementation funding to address high-priority projects identified in the plan.

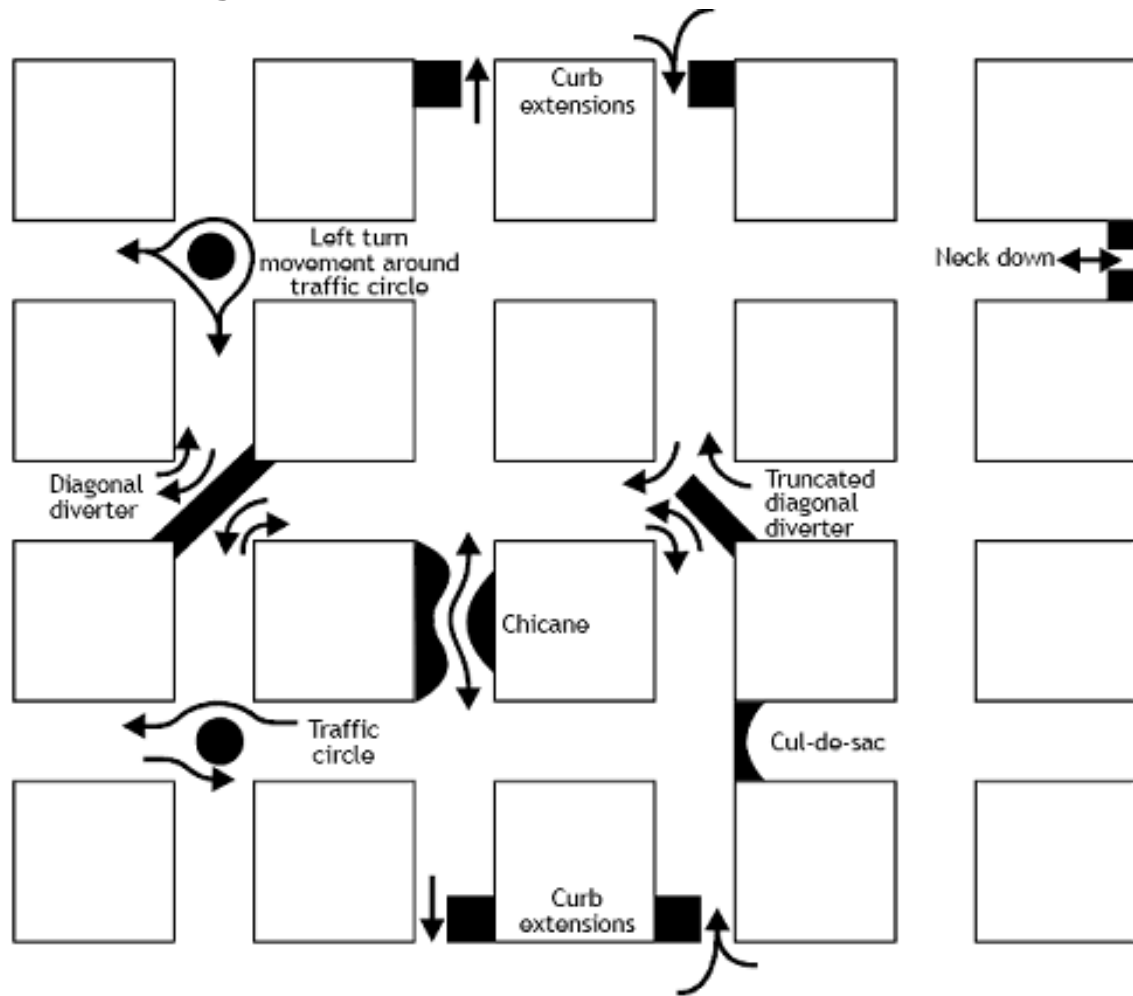
Policy 2.1.3: Partner with NCDOT to Improve Safety At All Intersections

The Safety Task Force can lead this effort by conducting an Intersection Safety Audit and Prioritization to identify critical intersections for safety improvements across all modes of travel. Potential enhancements include curb extensions (which can incorporate green infrastructure), marked or high-visibility crosswalks, raised crosswalks, median refuge islands, pedestrian hybrid beacons (such as the one on NC 105), or pedestrian-activated LED signage like Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).

Policy 2.1.4: Develop a Comprehensive Traffic Calming Toolkit

The Town of Boone can employ a wide variety of traffic calming tools to reduce motor vehicle speeds, restrict certain motorized vehicle movements, and reduce cut-through traffic where appropriate. (Note: given the capacity problems of Boone's roadways, reducing cut-through traffic is not without consequence. Careful consideration should be given before reducing traffic on some residential/cut-through streets). Speed reduction tools could include median islands, chicanes, pinch points/chokers, or curb extensions, neighborhood traffic circles, street trees, or speed humps. Tools to manage traffic volumes and cut-through traffic could include partial closures, diverters, or median islands to restrict some types of turning movement or redirect vehicles to reduce cut-through traffic.

Traffic Calming Methods



Source: Federal Highway Administration



Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon

This pedestrian-activated indicators help improve safety by increasing driver awareness at crosswalks and midblock crossings. Their bright, flashing lights are highly visible, helping reduce crashes and ensuring safer crossings for all road users.

Source: TAPCO

GOAL 2.2

ENCOURAGE MOBILITY CHOICE THROUGH WALKING & BIKING

Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will be prioritized on high-activity streets and key connections, with designs reflecting community needs and exceeding minimum standards where appropriate.

Policy 2.2.1: Establish Pedestrian Zones for Boone's Street Network

Identifying and assigning Pedestrian Zones for Town of Boone streets provides a tool to apply pedestrian facilities with updated standards based on the street's context. This differs, slightly, from Boone's current UDO standards and the *Roadway & Sidewalk Program Handbook* (Handbook) standards in that the UDO requires sidewalks (developed in accordance with the Handbook) for new major subdivisions, for multi-family developments, and for office, institutional, commercial, or industrial development. The Handbook's minimum width is five feet, and notes that it can require seven feet in some circumstances.

Designating Pedestrian Zones creates a structure to identify the needs of each street and other pedestrian facilities to include based on the context. Establishing pedestrian zones will require additional planning and community engagement. Examples of zones to consider include:

Pedestrian Priority Zones - areas where high quality and connected pedestrian facilities are provided. Sidewalks should exceed the minimum standard (five feet) and should be at least 7five feet or wider. Actions in these areas could include requiring sidewalks during development when the opportunity presents, closing sidewalk gaps (through new construction or repair of existing), removing obstacles, providing sidewalks on both sides of the street, constructing or requiring (during development) pedestrian amenities such as integrated transit stops, or implementing high-quality intersections and crossings.

Examples: Downtown Boone, App State Facilities, near schools, the Wellness District, and near multi-family developments should be considered. The Boone Next Focus Areas could also be considered.

Neighborhood Sidewalk Zones and/or a Neighborhood Sidewalk Program - established neighborhoods that either have sidewalks in need of improvements or additional connections, or do not have sidewalks. These are the areas that will see minimal sidewalk construction through new development. It is likely that these will be Town-led sidewalk projects with minimal developer participation. Sidewalks should meet minimum width requirements, have improved crossings, and may need other applications (lighting, signage, pavement markings, etc.) to improve the pedestrian experience.

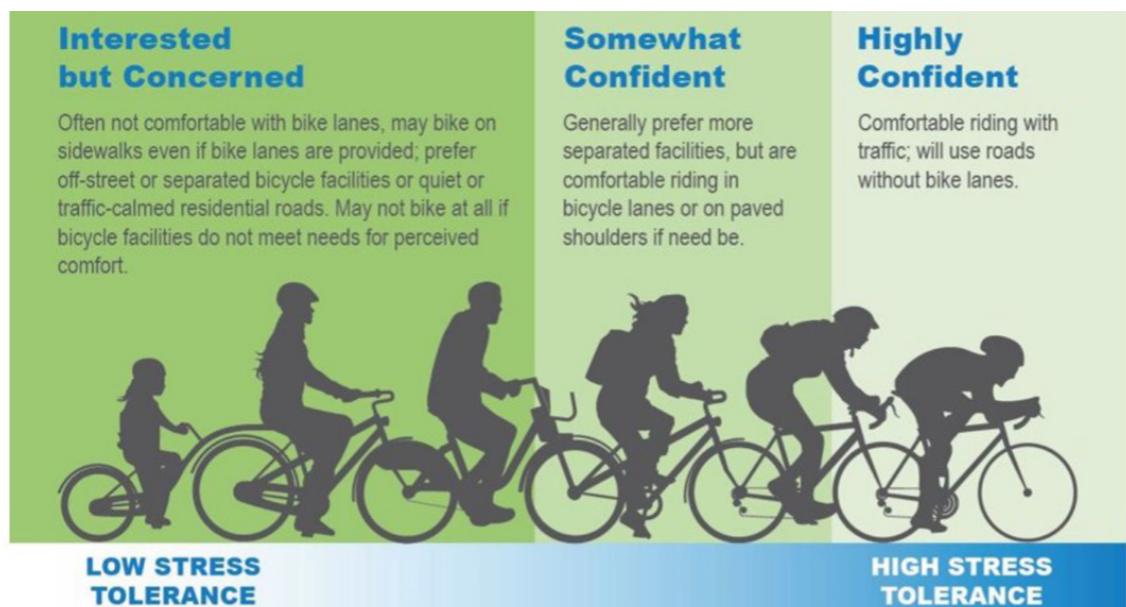
EXAMPLES: Streets that connect neighborhoods to Boone's primary corridors, such as Farthing St and Chestnut Dr or Hillside Dr and Oak St. An example of a new connection is extending the Cherry St sidewalk to where it meets with the Westbrook and Eastbrook loop.

Shared Zones – residential areas that do not currently have sidewalks and are not likely to have them due to low traffic volumes or low residential density (dead ends streets, for example), or areas where the topography is too challenging – such as steepness or the need for extensive retaining walls. Actions in these areas could include traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speed or signage and/or pavement markings to alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians in the roadway.

Policy 2.2.2: Identify and Implement Bicycle Facilities that Encourage People to Take More Trips by Bicycle

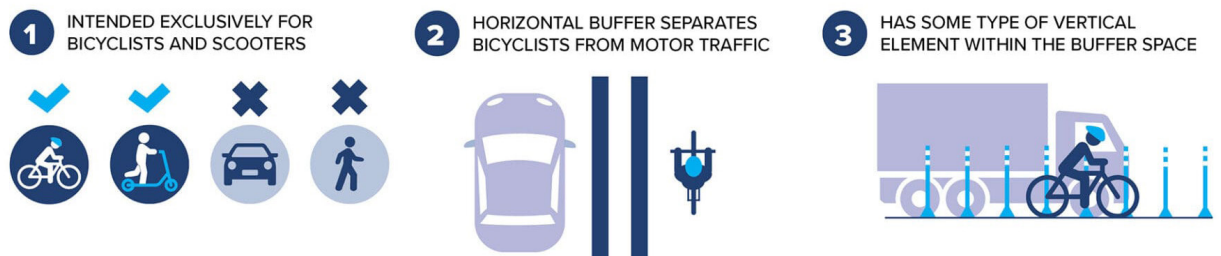
Focusing on the “interested but concerned” group - those willing to bike if safer, more accessible infrastructure is available - can significantly increase bicycle use. Studies show these riders prefer separated facilities (e.g., protected bike lanes) or low-volume, low-speed streets to feel comfortable. Additionally, separated facilities have been proven to reduce crashes for all road users, enhancing overall roadway safety. Research indicates that many people (51%-56% of the population) will bicycle for transportation if they are separated from traffic.

Bicyclist Design User Profiles



Source: Federal Highway Administration's Bikeway Selection Guide

What is a Separated Bike Lane?



Source: Federal Highway Administration's Bikeway Selection Guide

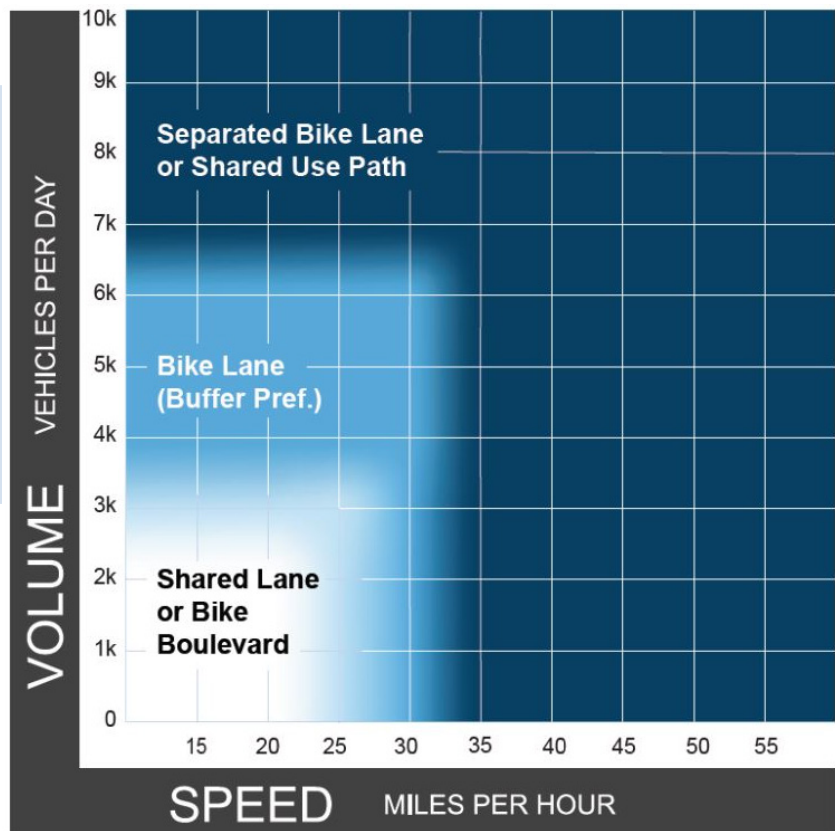
Policy 2.2.3: Plan to Incorporate Separated Bicycle Facilities as NCDOT Projects Progress Through the Design and Implementation Process

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA)'s *Bikeway Selection Guide* offers clear criteria for determining when separation from vehicular traffic is needed. Roads with higher speeds (30–35 mph), higher volumes (6,000–7,000 vehicles per day), or both typically warrant some form of separation for cyclists. Options range from painted buffers adjacent to travel lanes to fully separated shared-use paths. However, not every road meeting these thresholds is suited for separated facilities. For example, King Street in Downtown Boone poses challenges due to its constrained space and existing land use. Boone also faces difficulties implementing separated facilities on rural roads like Poplar Grove Road, where design and right-of-way constraints may limit options. The *Bikeway Selection Guide* includes strategies specific to rural contexts, which can guide facility selection in these areas. Boone's focus should be on collaboration with NCDOT to ensure that bicycle-friendly designs are incorporated into roadway improvements.

Bikeway Selection Guide

This chart from the FHWA's *Bikeway Selection Guide* illustrates how roadway volume and speed influence the choice of bikeway type. Bicycle traffic on most NCDOT roads in Boone, which are the roads most people use for transportation, meet the design threshold for a separated bike facility.

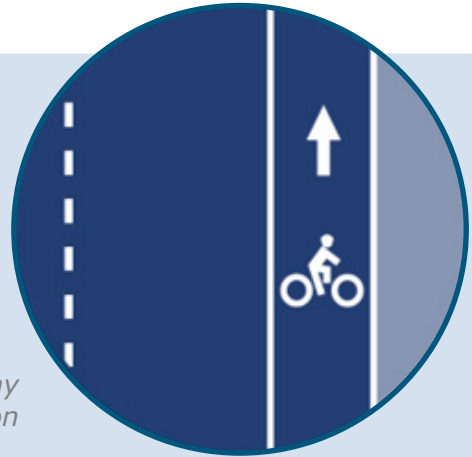
Source: Federal Highway Administration's *Bikeway Selection Guide*



Separated Bike Lane Safety Benefits

Separated bicycle facilities are one of the FHWA's proven safety countermeasures. Converting traditional or flush buffered bicycle lanes to a separated bicycle lane with flexible delineator posts can reduce crashes up to 53% for bicycle/vehicle crashes.

Source: Federal Highway Administration



Policy 2.2.4: Formally Update the Town of Boone's Guiding Plans to Prioritize Buffered or Separated Bicycle Facilities

Updates should be made to the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the High Country Bicycle Plan, and other relevant documents. These updates are crucial to aligning with NCDOT's Complete Streets Policy, ensuring that separated facilities are considered during the development of future roadway projects. Since many of Boone's roadways are under NCDOT management, implementing separated bicycle facilities will largely depend on NCDOT's project development process. To maximize opportunities, recommended facilities must be explicitly identified in adopted plans, a prerequisite for applying the Complete Streets Policy to NCDOT projects.

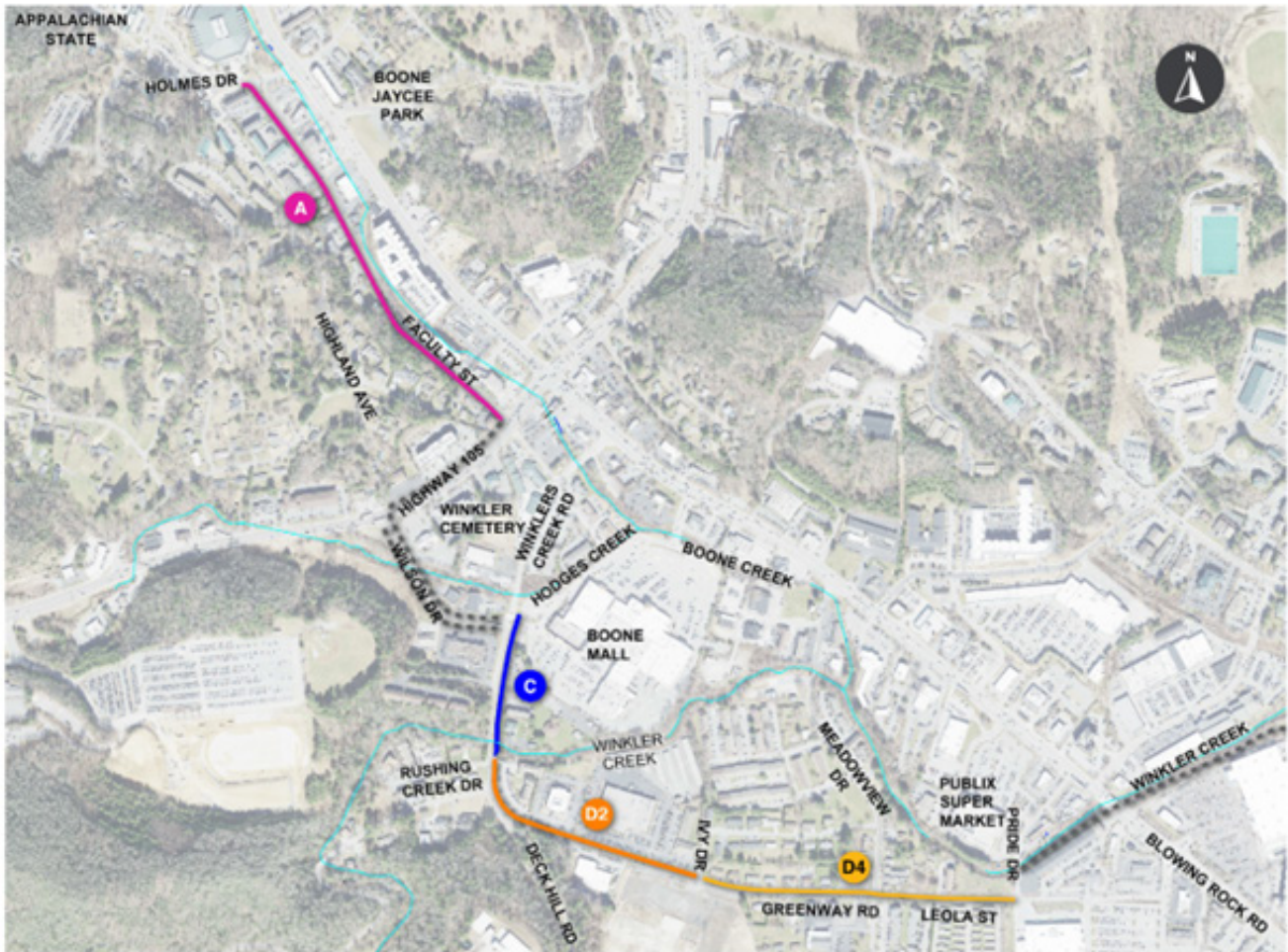
Policy 2.2.5: Update the Town of Boone Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to Prioritize Intersection and Roadway Crossing Improvements

This can help ensure safe connections for bicyclists and pedestrians between lower-speed, lower-volume Town-maintained streets and larger NCDOT-managed roads. While Boone's streets typically do not require the same level of separation as higher-speed, higher-volume NCDOT roads, enhancing crossing infrastructure is essential for a cohesive and safe multimodal network. Additionally, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan can be updated to incorporate recent advancements in shared street concepts to guide improvements within Boone's street network.

Policy 2.2.6: Develop a Comprehensive Town of Boone Greenway/Trail Plan to Provide Additional Mobility Choice

The Town of Boone currently lacks an extensive greenway network designed for mobility, with the Boone Greenway primarily serving recreational purposes. However, the Winkler's Creek Greenway and the Winkler's Creek/Holmes Dr Connector are examples of greenways that are more transportation oriented. This could be incorporated with an updated bicycle and pedestrian plan. Such a network would provide residents and visitors with additional non-motorized transportation options and enhance connectivity across the town.

Sidewalk, Multi-Use Path, and Greenway Feasibility Study



The Town of Boone received funding from NCDOT's Integrated Mobility Division to develop a Feasibility Study Report for sidewalks, multi-use paths, and greenways, focusing on connecting the Winkler Creek Greenway to Holmes Drive.

Source: Town of Boone

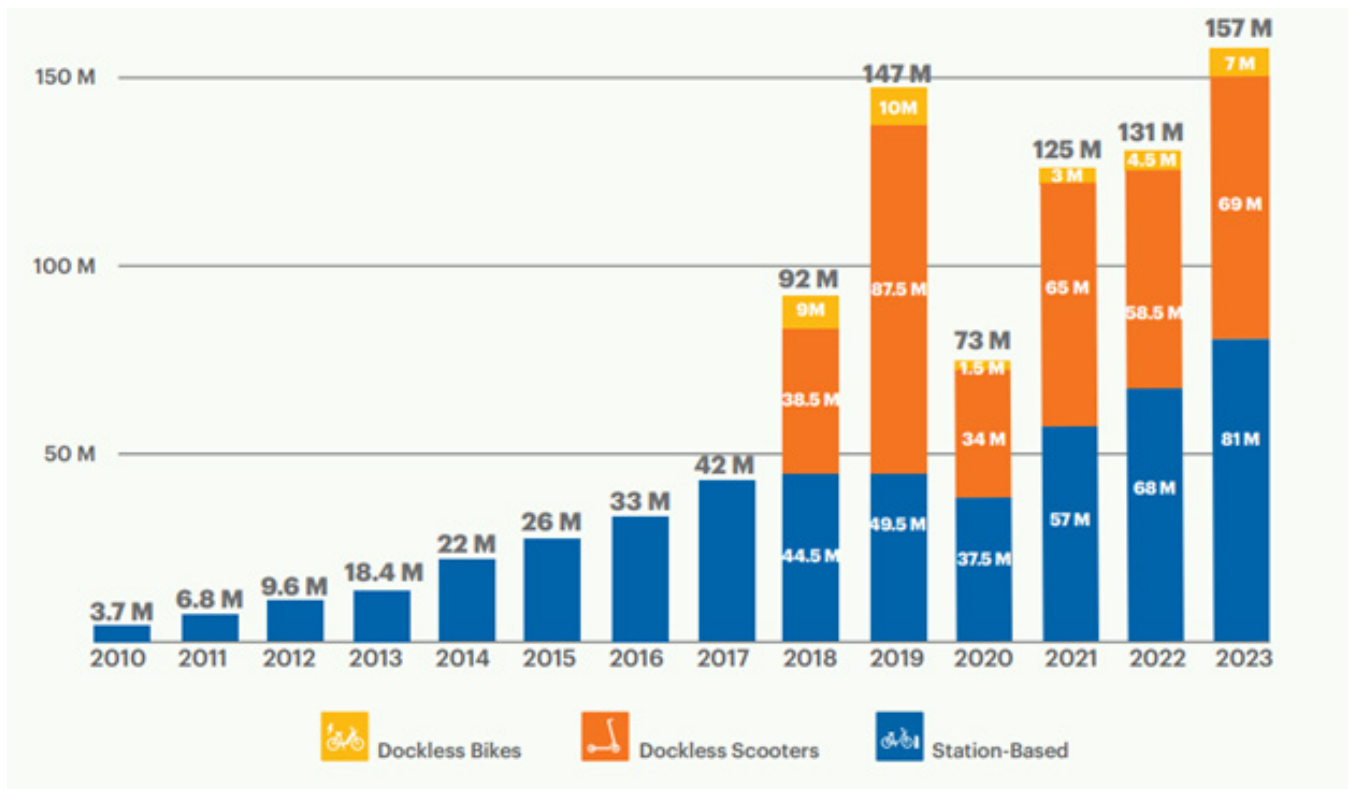
Policy 2.2.7: Develop a Coordinated Pedestrian/Bicyclist-Oriented Wayfinding and Signage System

Boone's bicycling, pedestrian, and greenway network will benefit from a coordinated wayfinding and signage system and additional roadway signage and pavement markings to help with navigation and to alert drivers that they are in a bike/ped friendly area.

Policy 2.2.8: Explore Shared Micromobility Options Like Electric Scooters and E-bikes with App State

These modes can integrate with AppalCART, providing first- and last-mile connectivity, and reduce reliance on cars for short trips in the App State/ Downtown Boone area. As shared micromobility systems have matured, there are now established best practices and regulatory frameworks to guide their successful implementation and management.

Shared Micromobility Ridership in the U.S. and Canada (2010-2023)



The Town of Boone received funding from NCDOT's Integrated Mobility Division to develop a Feasibility Study Report for sidewalks, multi-use paths, and greenways, focusing on connecting the Winkler Creek Greenway to Holmes Drive.

Source: NACTO

Types of Micromobility Devices

Shared Micromobility encompasses all shared-use fleets of small, fully or partially human-powered vehicles such as bikes, e-bikes, and e-scooters.



Station-based bike share
(including e-bikes)



Dockless bike share
(including e-bikes)



Scooter share

Source: NACTO

GOAL 2.3

INCREASE MOBILITY CHOICE THROUGH TRANSIT

Boone will expand mobility options in partnership with AppalCART. Efforts focus on improving accessibility, addressing service gaps, preparing for growth, and upgrading transit stops.

Policy 2.3.1: Work with AppalCART to Enhance Transit Options

The Town of Boone and AppalCART have a long-standing partnership in developing effective transit solutions, with AppalCART having a clear understanding of the community's needs, including a desire for expanded weekend service. To continue meeting the transportation needs of those in and around Boone, the Town should maintain its strong partnership with AppalCART, working together to enhance transit options. Likewise, AppalCART is encouraged to support Boone's broader mobility efforts. Reduced congestion on Boone's roadways is essential for maintaining the efficiency and timeliness of the transit system. Less traffic means smoother operations for AppalCART, ensuring timely service for passengers while making it easier for buses to navigate through town. Efficient transit helps address mobility challenges, providing people with reliable options for getting around, particularly in the downtown and App State areas.

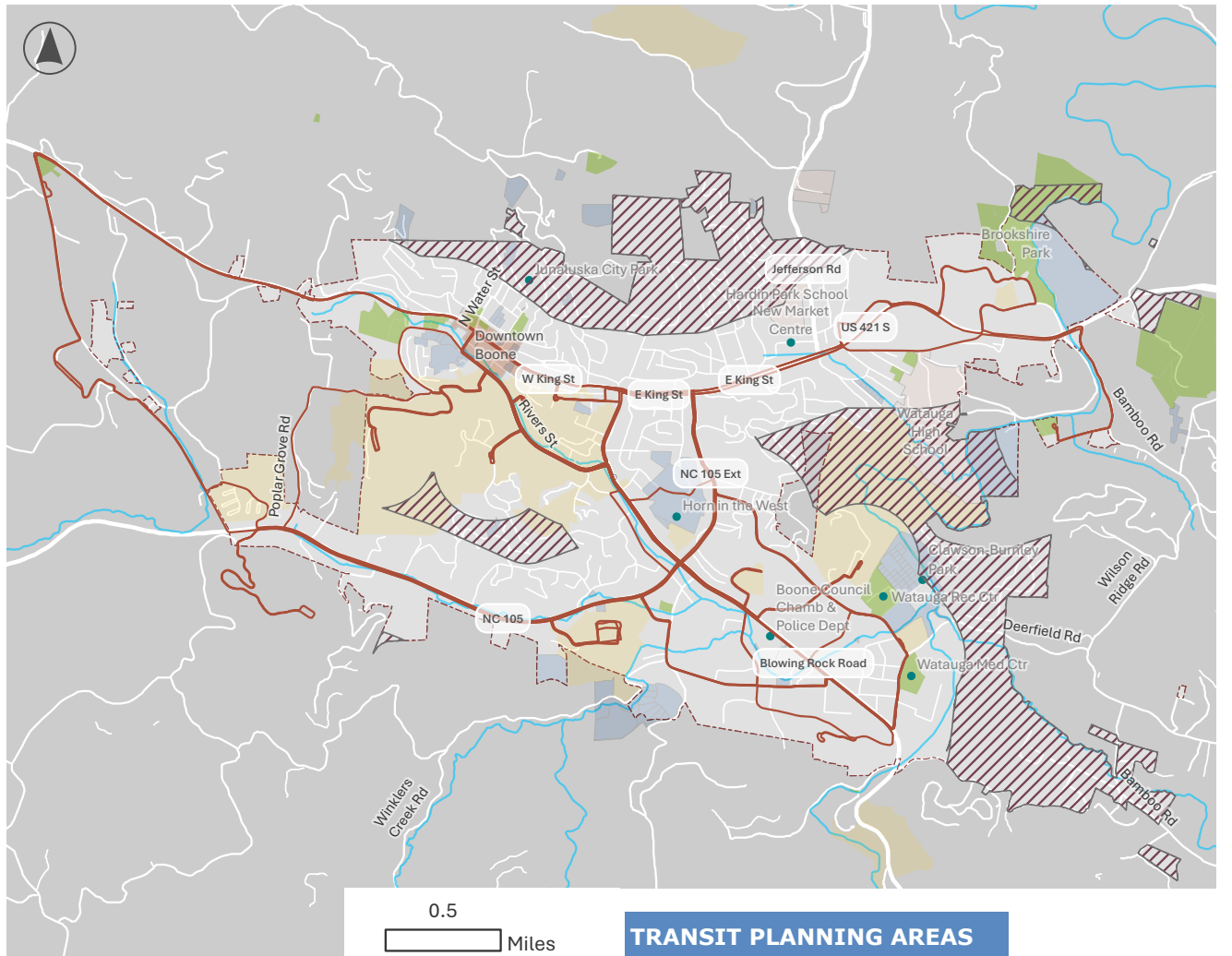
Policy 2.3.2: Plan for Expanded Transit Options to Serve Projected Growth Areas to Accommodate the Increasing Demand

AppalCART provides solid coverage across Boone, with most areas within a half mile of a transit line. However, some parts of the town, particularly in the east, are beyond this distance, as shown by the hatched areas on the map below. As Boone expands, especially in the growth areas highlighted in Boone Next, the town will need to plan for expanded transit options to ensure future accessibility. The Town of Boone, App State, AppalCART, and other partners should begin to plan for expanded transit options to serve projected growth areas to accommodate the increasing demand.

Policy 2.3.3: Develop a Comprehensive Transit Stop & Amenity Program

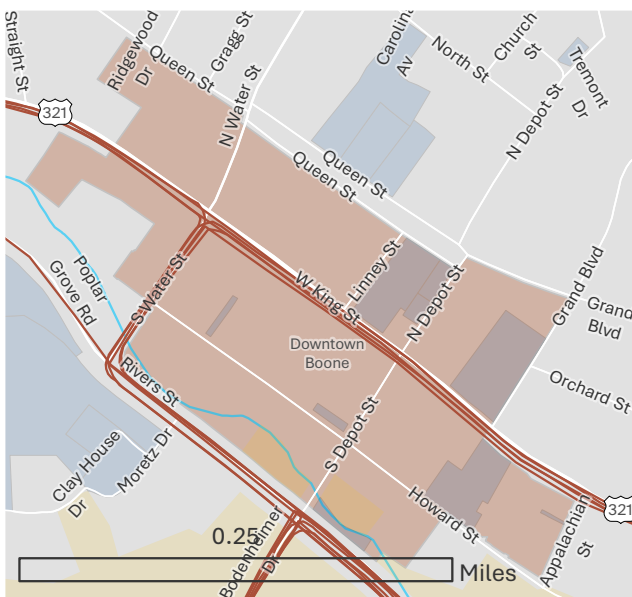
Some of Boone's transit stops are currently minimal, often consisting of little more than a sign. To improve the experience and accessibility of public transit, the Town should collaborate with AppalCART to develop a comprehensive Transit Stop and Amenity Program. This program would outline the types of amenities that should be included at transit stops across Boone, such as bus shelters, bike racks, seating, and lighting. It would also identify requirements for developer participation, which could be added to the Town's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) or Roadway & Sidewalk Program Handbook to ensure these amenities are integrated into new developments.

Transit Planning Areas



TRANSIT PLANNING AREAS

- Areas Not Served by Transit
- AppalCART Transit Lines



- Town of Boone
- Board of Ed Property
- Town of Boone Property
- ASU Property
- Watauga Co Property
- Downtown Boone
- Watauga County
- Creeks & Rivers
- Points of Interest

GOAL 2.4

INCREASE MOBILITY THROUGH CAPACITY & ACCESS MANAGMENT

Ensure Boone's street network supports safe, reliable transportation for all modes by addressing growth-related challenges with strategic roadway improvements beyond traditional widening.

Policy 2.4.1: Conduct a US 321/Blowing Rock Road Corridor Study in Partnership with NCDOT

Many communities in NC have conducted studies and reconfigured roads similar to US 321/Blowing Rock Road to develop mobility solutions that do not require significant roadway widening. This five-lane corridor, with its wide footprint, offers potential for reconfiguration that could enhance mobility in ways that do not require extensive road expansion.

Tunnel Road Corridor Study Roadway Network Map

Tunnel Road in Asheville, NC has many similarities to US 321/Blowing Rock Road. The Tunnel Road Corridor Study identified a variety of strategies to improve mobility for all users.

Source: City of Asheville

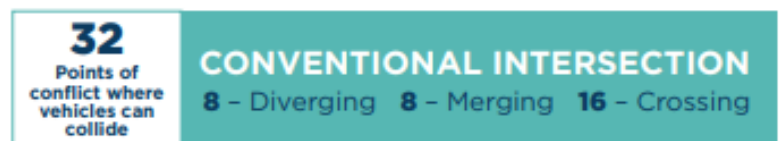


LEGEND

Existing Streets	Proposed Parallel Street	Existing Traffic Signal
Existing Parcels	Potential New 'A' Street	Existing Crosswalk
Water/Creek	Proposed Shared-Use Path	Proposed Crosswalk

Policy 2.4.2: Prioritize NCDOT Improvements Along the NC 105 Corridor

NC 105 has long been a challenge for both Boone and NCDOT, as regional population growth, including the expansion of App State, has placed considerable strain on the corridor's ability to handle traffic. This has led to significant safety concerns for all road users. To address these issues, the Town of Boone should initiate a coordinated planning process with NCDOT to prioritize improvements along the NC 105 corridor. One such planned improvement includes upgrading NC 105 to a signalized Reduced Conflict Intersection (RCI) Corridor (see explanation below) from US 321 to the NC 105 Bypass, which is currently listed in the SPOT 7.0 project roster.



Reduced Conflict Intersection

Corridors with growing traffic volumes and high crash rates are good candidates for a Reduced Conflict Intersection (RCI). This is a general term used to describe several types of designs that may be used to improve safety and traffic flow on a highway. While there are variations to the designs, they all function the same by reducing conflicts for drivers and pedestrians - hence the term Reduced Conflict Intersection.



Diverging - When one traffic stream splits to form two
Merging - When traffic streams join to form one
Crossing - When two vehicles cross paths

Source: NCDOT

Policy 2.4.3: Work with NCDOT to Identify and Implement Quick-Win Solutions to Enhance Safety and Capacity along NC 105 Until the Roadway Improvement Project Can Begin

Ideally, SPOT 7.0 projects will be included in NCDOT's 2026-2035 STIP. However, at the time this report was written, the impact of Hurricane Helene in September 2024 on NCDOT's ability to fund future projects is still unclear. Given these uncertainties, it is likely that the timeline for the NC 105 project will be delayed beyond 2033. As a result, the Town of Boone should collaborate with NCDOT to identify and implement quick-win solutions to enhance safety and capacity along the corridor until the NC 105 project can begin. Suggested examples can be found in the NC 105 focus area.

Policy 2.4.4: Evaluate and Enhance Traffic Signals with a Signal Optimization Study

Traffic signals are essential for managing vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic, ensuring safety and efficiency at intersections. Boone has made strides in optimizing its signal system, but ongoing advancements in technology and traffic management offer new opportunities to further improve how people move through signalized intersections. The Town of Boone, the High Country RPO, and NCDOT should work together to evaluate and enhance the over 30 signals managed by NCDOT and the eight managed by Boone with a signal optimization study, that identifies safe system improvements and makes use of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) tools to improve safety and the overall flow of traffic at key intersections throughout the area.

Examples of strategies to that could result from a signal optimization study include:

Identify Additional Pedestrian-Oriented Signal Locations - Implementing measures like Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) to give pedestrians a head start in crossing intersections, such as those on Blowing Rock Road. Additionally, restricting right turns on red lights in busy pedestrian areas can enhance safety by reducing conflicts between turning vehicles and pedestrians.

Locations to install Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (PHBs) - Using PHBs (sometimes called HAWK signals), such as those installed on NC 105 at Studio West and Jefferson Road near Hardin Park School, to provide safe pedestrian crossings at mid-block locations.

Optimizing ITS Tools - Determine how to use advanced signal technologies such as signal synchronization to reduce delays, adaptive traffic control to adjust signal timing in real time based on traffic conditions for improved vehicular traffic flow, or Transit Signal Priority (TSP) to give buses green lights at intersections, improving overall transit efficiency.

Policy 2.4.5: Incorporate Additional Access Management Tools into Boone's UDO and Roadway & Sidewalk Program Handbook

Examples to investigate and incorporate include incorporating traffic calming tools on new streets to avoid retrofitting at a later point.

Policy 2.4.6: Promote Future Connectivity by Planning Stub Streets, Reducing Access Points on Major Roadways, and Encouraging Cross-Parcel Links During Redevelopment

Design for future connectivity between neighborhoods, such as stub streets for future connections (this somewhat contradicts with the current standards in the UDO and therefore needs careful evaluation).

Identify tools to close access points on properties with multiple access points, particularly on major roadways such as NC 105 or US 321, during redevelopment projects. Identify tools to minimize new access points and encourage cross parcel connectivity during redevelopment and new construction projects.

Policy 2.4.7: Advocate for Mobility Projects Aligning with Boone’s Vision through the High Country RPO Partnership

Continue to collaborate and advocate for mobility projects through the High Country RPO, prioritizing initiatives that align with and advance Boone’s mobility vision. Strengthen partnerships to secure funding, support regional connectivity, and promote projects that enhance transportation options, improve safety, and foster sustainable growth. By working closely with the RPO and other stakeholders, Boone can ensure its transportation needs are effectively addressed while contributing to broader regional mobility goals.

WHAT IS AN RPO?

Transportation Planning for the High Country Council of Governments is provided through operation of the High Country Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RPO). The High Country RPO provides a forum for local officials to prioritize transportation funding and develops plans and projects in conjunction with NCDOT. The RPO has been providing continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning for the seven county region since being chartered in 2002.



GOAL 2.5

CONNECT SUSTAINABILITY & MOBILITY THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE

Improve sustainability in transportation projects by integrating green infrastructure to manage stormwater and enhance environmental quality (e.g., bioretention areas and permeable pavement).

Policy 2.5.1: Incorporate Green Infrastructure Elements into transportation Projects to Help Manage Stormwater and Improve Environmental Quality

Transportation projects in Boone offer an excellent opportunity to incorporate green infrastructure (GI) elements that help manage stormwater and improve environmental quality. As demonstrated in the planned Howard Street project, the Town of Boone can integrate GI features into transportation initiatives. NCDOT also includes stormwater management tools through its project development process, and the Town can go beyond NCDOT's minimum requirements by requesting additional improvements through NCDOT's betterment programs. Examples of GI tools include bioretention areas, flow-through planters, use of native plants (now required by NCDOT), silva cells, vegetated swales, infiltration trenches, and permeable pavement.

Brevard Roundabout



In the coming years, the City of Brevard, NC will have 8 new roundabouts to manage roadway capacity (two have been constructed, six are in design). Through NCDOT's betterments program, Brevard has incorporated green infrastructure elements, including a native plants landscaping plan implemented here.

Source: TPD, Inc.

GOAL 2.6

INCREASE BOONE'S ABILITY TO IMPLEMENT MOBILITY PROJECTS

Enhance Boone's ability to implement mobility projects by building capacity, securing funding, fostering community engagement, and promoting alternative transportation options.

Policy 2.6.1: Consider Hiring a Transportation Planner (or Engineer with a Strong Planning Focus) to Guide, Plan, and Advocate for the Town's Mobility Needs

This professional can lead efforts to develop, coordinate, and advocate for the Town's mobility initiatives, ensuring alignment with local priorities and regional goals. By collaborating with other town departments, external agencies, and community stakeholders, this role would provide the expertise needed to advance projects, secure funding, and implement strategies that improve connectivity, safety, and sustainability throughout Boone.

Policy 2.6.2: Communicate the Tradeoffs of Transportation Projects in a Transparent and Intentional Manner

Nearly all the recommended actions designed to achieve Boone's vision for mobility have some sort of tradeoff and in some cases, there may be competing goals. Some projects may lead to mobility gains, but these could come with sacrifices in other areas, such as the loss of parking, changes in traffic flow, or impacts on other modes of transportation. The Town's leadership should engage with the community in a transparent and intentional manner to communicate the tradeoffs of projects so that stakeholders understand the complexities of each decision, and that the benefits of mobility improvements are balanced with the needs and concerns of the community.

Policy 2.6.3: Identify Additional Sources of Funding to Implement Mobility Projects

Most local governments, including Boone, need greater funds to implement mobility projects. The Town of Boone should identify additional sources of funding to implement mobility projects. Examples include an ad-valorem tax increase dedicated to mobility projects, a transportation-oriented bond referendum, and developing a pipeline of local projects to position the Town for grant funding.

Policy 2.6.4: Identify and Encourage Use of Transportation Demand Management Strategies with App State and Other Major Employers

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a program that examines how people make transportation decisions and encourages them to choose different mobility options other than driving a single-occupancy vehicle. Examples of TDM strategies include programs that encourage transit use, integrate micromobility options, collaborate with major employers to stagger work hours, and promote ride-sharing options.

“Local economic development must center on the power of labor and the strength of small businesses. It’s the workers and small businesses that define a community’s resilience and sustainability.”

- David Harvey



A VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY

There is no single blueprint for building a successful local economy. Instead, local economic development requires constant collaboration, evaluation, and policy adjustments to identify a community's potential within its historic and geographic context. The goal of economic development is to improve quality of life for local residents and create a diverse array of good jobs.

Boone has a strong knowledge- and tourism-based local economic foundation on which to build and diversify. Addressing land use, housing, environmental, and transportation challenges are key economic development initiatives. Additionally, the Town and its many partners will continue to stimulate an entrepreneurial ecosystem, support and grow local businesses, invest in agglomeration economies, collaborate to offer workforce training, and leverage public resources to support worker conditions and quality of life.

CHAPTER GOALS

A Strong and Diverse Local Economy

A Competitive Workforce

A Renowned Tourism Destination

Innovation Through Arts, Culture, and Creativity

OVERVIEW: A STABLE ECONOMIC FOUNDATION WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO DIVERSIFY

The foundation of Boone's economy has historically been rooted in education, tourism, and agriculture, but in recent years, the town has seen increasing diversification. The presence of Appalachian State University continues to be a major driver of economic activity, attracting and growing a skilled workforce, fostering innovation, and supporting local businesses. Tourism, especially in relation to outdoor recreation, has been a growing sector, attracting visitors year-round to enjoy the region's hiking, skiing, and mountain festivals. The Watauga Medical Center also represents a key economic anchor. Additionally, local businesses have played a pivotal role in shaping Boone's economy, contributing to its economic resilience and sense of community.

As Boone continues to evolve, there is a growing need for a comprehensive economic development strategy that strikes a balance between development and sustainability. The town's infrastructure, workforce development, and business environment must all be aligned with our community vision. Economic development should not only create jobs but also enhance the quality of life for all residents and ensure that Boone remains a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

Although Boone does not currently have its own economic development plan, there are several local and regional partner economic development actors, initiatives, studies, and plans, including the High Country COG Economic Development Strategy for the region. Several key trends and conditions influence the current state of Boone's local economy. High level influences are listed below:

1. Increasing Demand for Housing and Real Estate Development. Boone has seen a growing demand for housing, driven by the town's expanding population, university enrollment, and a steady influx of seasonal and vacation home buyers.

As Boone's economy grows, the demand for both residential and commercial real estate has increased, creating pressures on the local housing market. With the presence of App State and its growing student population, along with an increasing number of people seeking to live or invest in the town due to its natural beauty and lifestyle appeal, the housing market has become more competitive. A large proportion of

THE VISION

Boone's innovative, entrepreneurial, and diverse economy will value progress and opportunity. We will foster a dynamic and inclusive economy that will provide dignified, living wage jobs within a developing local job market.



housing within Watauga County has been shifted to the short-term rental market.

There has also been a long-time underinvestment by state and federal governments in low-income housing. These trends have led to rising home prices and rents, putting affordability at risk for residents and students. New real estate developments have emerged, including student housing projects and mixed-use developments, which offer learning experiences for the town, such as how buildings can be well-designed. Managing growth without compromising Boone's charm, environmental integrity, and equitable outcomes remains an important task.

2. Economic Shifts Toward a Service-Based and Experience Economy. Boone's economy is shifting toward a greater reliance on the service sector, particularly in retail, hospitality, and experience-driven industries.

The transition to a service-based economy is becoming more apparent in Boone, where tourism, education, and hospitality are major economic drivers. The town's growing appeal as a destination for outdoor recreation and cultural experiences has fostered the expansion of businesses in sectors such as restaurants, hotels, and experiential services. Boone's strong tourism economy, fueled by visitors looking for outdoor activities, festivals, and a small-town escape, creates opportunities for businesses offering unique experiences and services, such as guided tours, wellness retreats, adventure sports, and walkable retail. This trend aligns with broader shifts in consumer preferences, where people increasingly value experiences over material goods, driving economic growth in service industries.

3. Focus on Sustainable and Green Development. There is a growing emphasis on sustainable development practices to protect Boone's natural environment while fostering economic growth.

Boone's location in the scenic Appalachian Mountains makes it highly sensitive to the impacts of development, such as environmental degradation, loss of green spaces, and the strain on natural resources. Sustainable and eco-friendly development practices are becoming increasingly important. This includes energy-efficient buildings, green construction techniques, and efforts to preserve open spaces and reduce the carbon footprint of local businesses and infrastructure. Moreover, there is an increasing demand for "green" tourism, with visitors seeking eco-conscious experiences like hiking, farm-to-table dining, and sustainable lodging options. Boone's commitment to sustainability not only helps protect its natural environment but also enhances its appeal to residents and tourists who prioritize environmental responsibility.

4. Diversification of the Local Economy Beyond Tourism and Education. Boone is actively seeking to diversify its economy, with new initiatives focused on innovation, technology, healthcare, and other sectors.

While tourism and education have traditionally been the pillars of Boone's economy, the town is recognizing the need to diversify and build resilience against uncertainties in these industries. New economic initiatives may focus on sectors such as technology, healthcare, and remote work. Fostering innovation and entrepreneurship through incubators, tech hubs, and workforce development programs are key opportunities in collaboration with the local and regional partners. Diversification can ensure long-term economic stability and reduce dependency on the town's existing base industries.

GOAL 3.1

A STRONG AND DIVERSE LOCAL ECONOMY

Boone will have a strong and diverse local economy that builds on existing economic sectors and fosters the growth of new green economic sectors.

Policy 3.1.1: Build on Boone’s Existing Economic Assets

Leverage existing economic assets by promoting businesses that are actively investing in Boone and providing living wage jobs.

Policy 3.1.2: Support Light Manufacturing and Creative Industries

Promote light manufacturing, small-scale artisans, and creative industry clusters by working collaboratively with Watauga County and High Country COG to offer affordable workspaces, tax incentives tied to performance outcomes, and development grants.

Policy 3.1.3: Create Business and Technology Incubators

Coordinate with local and regional partners, like Watauga County, App State, the Chamber of Commerce, CCC&TI, and others to support business incubators like the Appalachian Enterprise Center focused on new and early-growth stage businesses.

Policy 3.1.4: Support Boone’s Small Businesses

Support Boone’s independent businesses and ensure existing resources are adequately advertised to existing and prospective small business. Foster a spirit of entrepreneurship and information-sharing. Create opportunity for creating new locally-owned small businesses, including protecting and expanding the supply of small, affordable spaces in existing and new buildings.

Policy 3.1.5: Stimulate Equity in Economic Development

Support the development and growth of worker-owned businesses as a means of promoting higher wages, upward mobility, and a diversity of locally-owned services. Support growth of and collaboration with unions and unionized businesses.

Policy 3.1.6: Expand Child Care Accessibility

Support childcare accessibility across Boone through collaboration and planning with Watauga County and community partners. Affordable, accessible, high quality, and convenient childcare is critical for a high quality of life.

GOAL 3.2

A COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE

Boone will be a hub for education and workforce training, leveraging high-quality schools, App State, and other education and training providers.

Policy 3.2.1: Promote Workforce Training and Outreach

Support ongoing coordination among local high schools, colleges, training facilities, economic development organizations like High Country Workforce Development Board, and employers to match workforce training with local industries, employment opportunities, and the town's target industries, with an emphasis on training, apprenticeship, and internship programs that support middle skill jobs paying higher wages.

Policy 3.2.2: Support Partnerships with App State

Continue to collaborate with App State as it redevelops and modernizes its programs and facilities, ensuring mutually beneficial outcomes for the university and the town. Partner on mutually beneficial projects that benefit the Boone community.

Policy 3.2.3: Enhance Access to Affordable High Speed Internet

Collaborate with partners to expand access to high quality, affordable internet services.



PODER EMMA

Poder Emma is a community and worker-ownership model in western North Carolina that empowers local communities by providing them with the tools and resources needed to foster entrepreneurship, job creation, and stable homes. By focusing on inclusive growth, it promotes economic stability and can reduce inequality by offering marginalized groups access to skills training and financial support. Cooperatives like Poder Emma can strengthen local economies, encouraging sustainable development through community-driven solutions and partnerships.

GOAL 3.3

A RENOWNED TOURISM DESTINATION

Boone will continue to be a tourism destination with its access to the Appalachian Mountains, the beauty of its natural surroundings, and its outstanding shopping, food, entertainment, and cultural offerings. Tourism infrastructure will have the added effect of contributing directly to the quality of life of local residents.

Policy 3.3.1: Invest in Placemaking Initiatives

Invest in placemaking initiatives that create active streets, plazas, and public art. Encourage developments that are environmentally, socially, and financially sustainable, use renewable energy, green infrastructure, incorporate public art, and reduce pollution.

Policy 3.3.2: Market Boone's Identity and Values

Support marketing efforts that highlight Boone's assets and position as a key destination for visiting, such as local and regional retail, restaurant, cultural, outdoor, and leisure activities.

Policy 3.3.3: Plan for Parking

Plan for and coordinate parking for out-of-town visitors when they come to Boone. Boone should be a place where visitors can park once and access the destinations they seek to reach by foot, transit, bike, or other mode to minimize the amount of necessary automobile infrastructure including, roads and parking, that can otherwise be used for more socially and economically valuable uses.

Policy 3.3.4: Support Events

Support community events for residents across the community that also draw in people from across the region and state. Additionally, support smaller scale events such as running and biking events.



GOAL 3.4

INNOVATION THROUGH ARTS, CULTURE, AND CREATIVITY

Boone is a place where art, culture, and creativity nourishes the mind and body as well as supports livelihoods.

Policy 3.4.1: Support Growth with the Existing Arts Community

Capitalize on Boone's existing arts infrastructure to strengthen the town as a center for art and culture. Support arts districts and corridors.

Policy 3.4.2: Arts Incubation

Consider an incubator space for local entrepreneurs, artists, and musicians.

Policy 3.4.3: Incorporate Art into Public and Private Projects

Support public art in public infrastructure projects. Incorporate public art into new development projects of a certain size. Promote hiring of local artists for public art in public and private projects.

Policy 3.4.4: Local and Regional Foods

Build and strengthen the local food economy through local farmers' markets and food hubs. Support, grow, and expand local food cooperatives like Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture and High Country Food Hub. Seek to eliminate food deserts and make food geographically accessible to residents across the community. Support local restaurants, food incubators, food-related events, and other initiatives.

Policy 3.4.5: Promote Community Gardens and Urban Farms

Support community gardens, like the community garden in North Street Park and the Leola Street Community Garden, throughout the town to expand local food production and foster a strong sense of community.



Turchin Center
Staircase Mural

“Development in urban areas is not just about infrastructure, but about building and maintaining community, culture, and access for all residents.”

Dr. Davarian Baldwin



GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC SERVICES

The residents of Boone are the heart of this community. The Town of Boone is committed to supporting all of its residents by providing a variety of excellent facilities, services, and programs that continue to make our town a great place to live, study, grow, raise a family, and live a happy and healthy life.

As we navigate growth and development pressures, Boone will continue to provide quality services and facilities, be a responsible steward of town resources, and engage in coordinated planning efforts with partner jurisdictions and institutions. Growth pressures bring both challenges and opportunities, and it is important to leverage growth to maintain and enhance high-quality services and a fiscal balance for current and future generations.

CHAPTER GOALS

Local Government that Implements the Community Vision

High Quality Public Services and Facilities

Interjurisdictional and Institutional Collaboration

Long-Term Fiscal Balance

OVERVIEW: A GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Providing public services - like emergency services, trash and recycling pickup, infrastructure construction and maintenance, and water and sewer service - is one of the primary functions of local government. Boone provides these and other important services to support the quality of life of Boone residents.

While other types of services are part of the private sector or other jurisdictions - like childcare, food, health, retail, and others - the town also has some influence over these types of services through coordination with partners, planning and zoning policies, capital investments, and economic development strategies.

As the town experiences population growth and tourism pressures, increased demand for existing infrastructure and services requires careful planning and growth management. This ensures that high-quality infrastructure and services are maintained and accessible to all and supports the town's long-term fiscal balance.

Because Boone does not currently have an extra-territorial jurisdiction so that it can adequately provide planning and zoning at its edges, and because of other large jurisdictional and institutional partners operating within and around Boone, it is important that the town continue interjurisdictional coordination.

The following represent some high level influences related to government and services:

1. Growth pressures increase demand for services and infrastructure. The town provides a range of public services to the community. As needs increase demands for infrastructure, facilities, and services, Boone will need to be strategic about leveraging exactions and increased revenue from growth to maintain and enhance quality of life of existing residents, managing the growth, and seeking to maintain community access to public service needs.

THE VISION

The Town is committed to engaging inclusive processes that build upon existing commitments to expediency, innovation, and public engagement ensuring the provision of excellent services and facilities. We will foster a collaborative environment where community input is valued and integrated in town decisions.



2. Land use planning and growth management can help ensure long-term fiscal health and distribution of public goods.

Development types come with different fiscal impacts. In general, but not always, development that is within existing municipal limits will be more fiscally balanced than development outside of municipal limits while compact and walkable development can also provide greater fiscal benefits than lower density development. Meanwhile, distributing key services across the town can ensure more residents live closer to the services they regularly need.

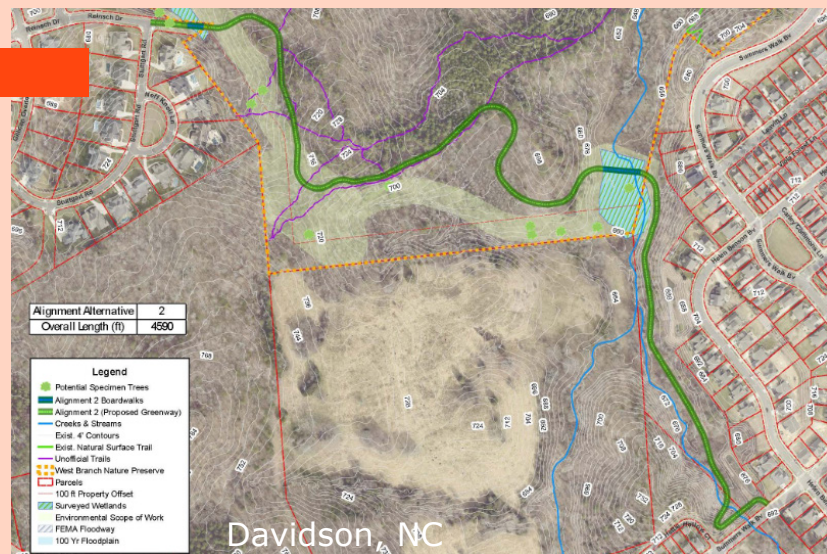
3. Local and regional coordination key to delivering high quality services for the Boone community.

There are numerous governmental and anchor institutions in and around Boone who play a role in delivering needed services. Communication and coordination remains important in order to fill gaps in services and avoid redundancies.

IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

G.O. Bonds

A General Obligation (G.O.) bond is a financing tool that local governments can use to borrow significant long-term debt to pay for major infrastructure investments. G.O. Bonds are secured by the full faith and credit and taxing power of the municipality require voter approval. In 2024, Davidson, NC issued \$2.15 million G.O. bonds to connect a missing section of the West Branch Nature Preserve Greenway. Additional proceeds went to a roundabout, pedestrian safety projects, park shelters, gymnasium, and roof replacement.



Goal 4: Significant Progress this Past Fiscal Year

Ref.	Progress	Action	Notes
4.2.A	70%	Strengthen relationship between the Board of Commissioners and Planning Board	Working to align Planning Board and Town Board policies, procedures, and agenda packages
4.3.F	75%	Revise Downtown Development Incentives	Draft ready for Board consideration
4.4.C	50%	Advocate with Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) for federal and state funding in the Mooresville region	Staff working on additional funds for Hwy115/Faith Road Project
4.4.H	20%	Preliminary Design of East West Connector Phase II	Staff working with consultant and NCDOT on next steps which include 25% design, traffic forecasting and preliminary environmental.
4.4.K	99%	Conduct Traffic Unit Feasibility Study	Project is nearly completed and awaiting final report

Strategic Plan

While Comprehensive Plans are citywide, community-driven, and long-term, and tend to focus on land use and transportation, Strategic Plans are short- to medium-term, focus on operational, budgeting, organization, and service delivery priorities and performance metrics, and are more driven by elected officials and town management.

The example to the left is pulled from the Mooresville, NC Strategic Plan, measuring progress on its Goals related to Planning, Infrastructure, and Housing.

Mooresville, NC

GOAL 4.1

LOCAL GOVERNANCE THAT IMPLEMENTS THE COMMUNITY'S VISION

Local government is easy to understand, navigate, and engage with. Local policies and actions advance the long-term best interests of the community.

Policy 4.1.1: Continued Excellence in Transparency

Continue to make governance and government decision-making accessible and transparent to all residents.

Policy 4.1.2: Proactive Community-Driven Planning

Promote ongoing, community-driven neighborhood and small area planning that delivers area-specific targeted zoning, capital investment, and programmatic solutions throughout Boone.

Policy 4.1.3: Engage Hard-To-Reach Populations

Actively seek to include hard-to-reach populations in engagement efforts. Where possible, track participant demographics to identify participation gaps.

Policy 4.1.4: Accessible and Understandable Documentation

Seek to make key Town documents, such as the annual budget and the capital improvements program, user-friendly and accessible to the general public.

Policy 4.1.5: Promote Strategic Planning

Where it would be beneficial, conduct strategic plans across the Town government and within specific departments.



GOAL 4.2

HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Boone will provide high quality public services and facilities that meet the needs of all Boone residents.

Policy 4.2.1: Maintain and Improve Levels of Service

As the population grows, ensure high quality services and infrastructure are maintained or improved. Support improvements especially within areas of need through strategic planning, community benefits agreements, bonds, and the capital improvements program.

Policy 4.2.2: Provide a High Quality Parks and Greenway System

Plan ahead for parks needs through parks master planning. Encourage or require dedication of public spaces, such as parks, playgrounds, and squares, within new master planned developments. Promote geographic accessibility of parks and community spaces, and ensure parks are fairly distributed across the town. Aim to expand the proportion of residents living within a one quarter mile walk of a public park, playground, plaza, or greenway. Where possible, seek to create outdoor rooms by centralizing parks, squares, and plazas. Front buildings toward them and use high quality design, public art, and green building.

Policy 4.2.3: Use Evidence-Based Best Practices in Public Safety

Use data-driven approaches to law enforcement, such as using crash data to target enforcement of traffic laws at dangerous intersections. Collaborate with community leaders in shaping law enforcement practices, like community policing, by facilitating open communication between law enforcement and residents. Reduce burdens on emergency services, for example with community drug intervention and diversion efforts and emergency mental health responders.

Policy 4.2.4: Geographically Accessible Services

Through a combination of land use planning, capital planning, and collaboration with the private sector, seek to distribute key public and private services and resources geographically to make them accessible across Boone, including parks, child care, food, medical and dental services, and playgrounds.

GOAL 4.3

INTERJURISDICTIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

Residents within and surrounding Boone will benefit from collaborative interjurisdictional planning and coordination that maximizes limited resources.

Policy 4.3.1: Coordinate with Neighbors on Regional Decisions

Coordinate with neighboring governments and jurisdictions on decisions of local significance. Consider plans of neighboring governments in decision-making. Partner with governments or organizations when appropriate to more effectively and efficiently provide services and infrastructure.

Policy 4.3.2: Coordinate on Service Extensions and Annexations

Use the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria and the Growth Management Tiers to guide service extensions and annexations. Continue interjurisdictional coordination in order to determine future service extensions and annexations.

Policy 4.3.3: Collaborate with Institutional and Community Partners

Collaborate with institutional and community partners, including App State, CCC&TI, Watauga County, Watauga County Schools, High Country COG, area nonprofits, and nearby municipalities, to provide services and pursue initiatives that will enhance Boone community members' quality of life.

GOAL 4.4

LONG-TERM FISCAL BALANCE

Long-term fiscal balance will be achieved through land use and growth decisions that are informed by long-term fiscal impacts of development.

Policy 4.4.1: Promote Use of Existing Resources

Promote infill, redevelopment, and adaptive use as a way to maximize use of existing services, infrastructure, and utilities.

Policy 4.4.2: Proactively Manage Growth and Development

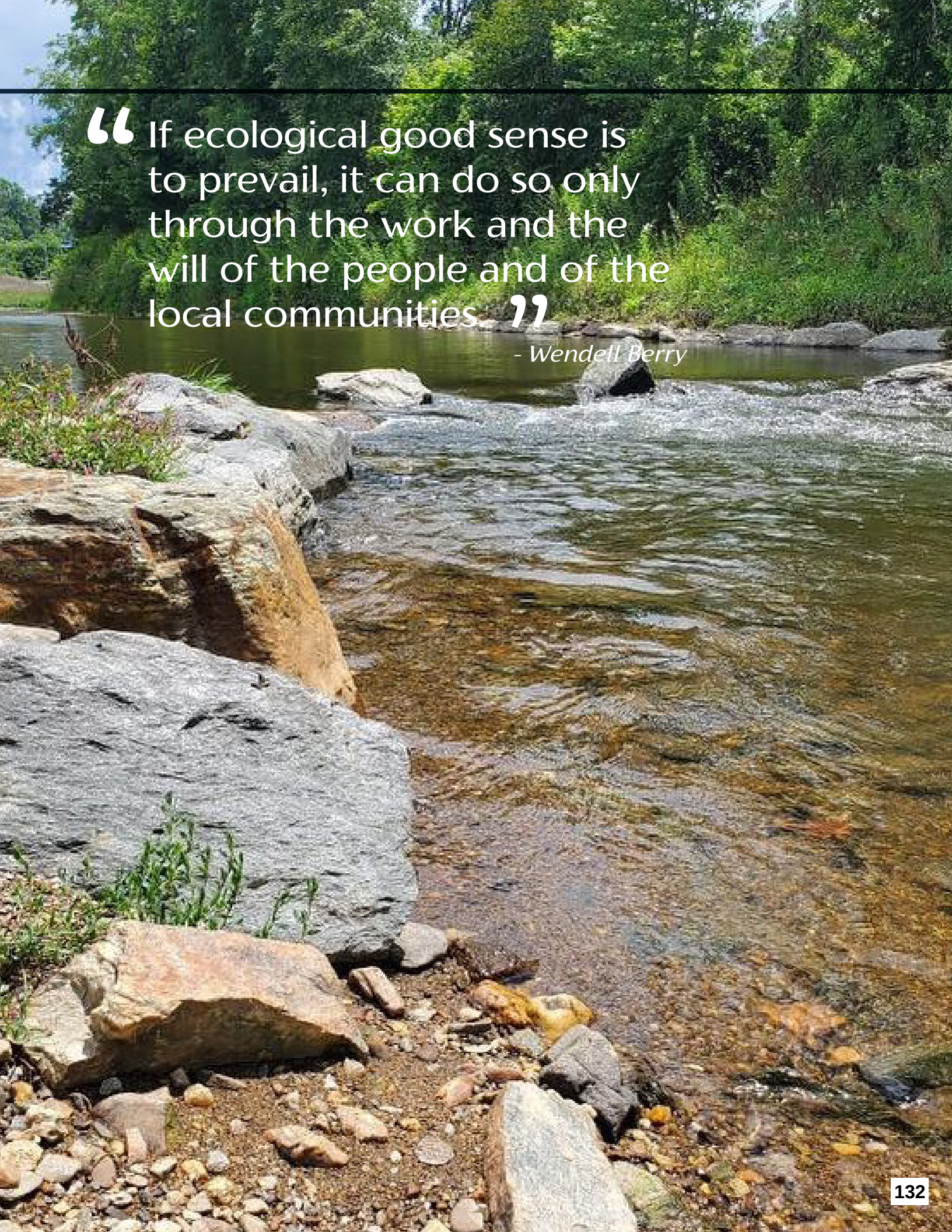
Anticipate and guide future growth and development using the planning principles, frameworks, and maps in this Comprehensive Plan to ensure that new development can be supported by town infrastructure and services while protecting open space.

Policy 4.4.3: Promote Smart Growth

Ensure new growth and development is fiscally balanced in the long run while directing more growth to areas with existing services and infrastructure. Some types of developments and land uses are necessary to the social needs of the town and do not necessarily directly improve the town's fiscal balance, such as recreation and cultural facilities or affordable housing. Encourage compact development that can be more efficiently served, especially as indicated on the Future Land Use and Character Map.

Policy 4.4.4: Consider Community Priorities and Long-Term Impacts

Consider community priorities and long-term impacts in decision-making, with the understanding that some community priorities may not have positive fiscal impacts and some decisions may not provide short-term benefits.



“ If ecological good sense is to prevail, it can do so only through the work and the will of the people and of the local communities. ”

- Wendell Berry

GREEN AND RESILIENT

The Town of Boone is committed to creating a sustainable and resilient future for its residents and visitors. As the community continues to grow, the importance of preserving the natural environment and adapting to climate challenges has never been more critical. Boone is dedicated to being green by fostering environmentally responsible practices, promoting energy efficiency, and enhancing green spaces. Boone aims to reduce its carbon footprint, protect its rich natural resources, and ensure a healthy and vibrant environment for generations to come.

In addition to environmental sustainability, Boone is equally focused on resilience—the ability to withstand and recover from both natural and human-made disruptions. With increasing environmental challenges such as extreme weather events and changing climate conditions, resilience is important to the town’s future planning. By integrating green and resilient approaches, Boone envisions a future where growth and development harmonize with the natural world, creating a community that thrives both today and in the years ahead.

CHAPTER GOALS

A Sustainable and Resilient Watershed

Sustainable Buildings, Operations, and Infrastructure

Plentiful Interconnected Green Spaces

OVERVIEW: BOLD CLIMATE PLANNING AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE RESILIENCE

Sustainability and resilience are key to the future of our community. Boone Next builds on our past and current goals and initiatives address climate neutrality hazard mitigation.

Boone Climate Action Plan

Boone's climate action plan provides a blueprint for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions while fostering overall city resilience.

Boone's community-wide greenhouse gas emissions overwhelmingly derive from transportation and mobile sources (47%) illustrating the importance of improving transportation conditions in Boone. Following transportation, commercial energy (26%), water and wastewater (14%) and residential (12%) represent the next largest contributors to Boone's emissions.

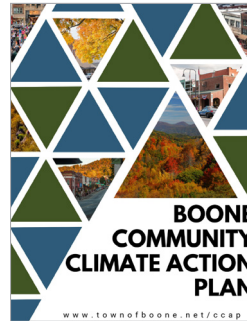
GHG Reduction Targets

The Town of Boone has set the following targets to reduce its emissions.

- » Municipal Operations. Carbon Neutrality by 2030 Community-Wide.
- » 54% reduction below 2020 levels by 2030 Community-Wide.
- » Carbon Neutrality by 2050

Climate Action Strategies

The Climate Action Plan organizes strategies into Station Energy (addressing energy consumed in residential and commercial



Climate Action Plan Vision

The below three statements represent the vision for Boone's Climate Action Plan

1

Make The Town of Boone a leader in clean and local energy that comes from renewable sources.

2

Transform our buildings into highly energy efficient places to live, work, learn, and play.

3

Transform the Town of Boone into a community where people walk, bike, take transit, or carpool for most trips in a safe, accessible, and affordable transportation network.

buildings), Transportation (reducing vehicle miles traveled through changes to the built environment and making transit more viable), Municipal Emissions (addressing government operations), as well as supporting strategies including Waste Management, Local Food, Water Quality and Quantity, and Nature and Parks.

Example actions include installing solar power, incorporating energy efficiency measures in buildings, expanding transit and improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, continuing completion of 100% electrification of government buildings by 2030 and expanding electrification of gasoline fleets, and protecting forested woodlands, especially those owned by the Town.

THE VISION

Boone will be climate-neutral, sustainable, resilient, and a responsible environmental steward.

Building Resilience

Environmental stewardship, stormwater control, and hazard mitigation are growing in importance as climate change causes more powerful storms. Boone has experienced the consequences of flooding from storm events.

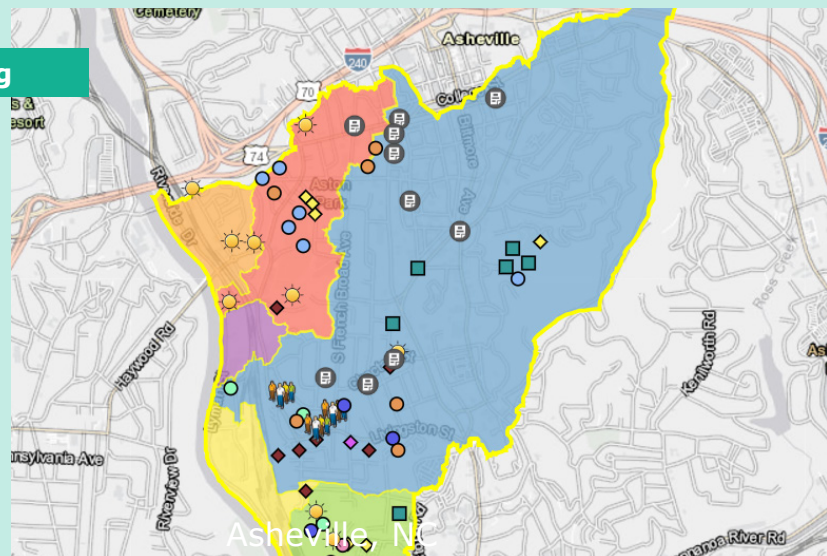
All development creates impermeable surfaces. Generally, it takes more space to accommodate car-dependent growth rather than transit-oriented growth, and so car-dependent development typically results in more impermeable surface area per capita. A large amount of surface area covered by impermeable surfaces, such as large parking lots, can be detrimental

to the watershed and increase flooding hazards. When water cannot seep into the soil where it falls, it flows faster and harder toward streams. High velocity stormwater runoff causes flooding when the flow exceeds what channels can hold, causes soil erosion from more intense flow, and causes property damage and potential loss of life. Impermeable surfaces are also often covered with oil or particulates coming from cars. High velocity flows without natural filtration can pollute streams. Good land use planning, development regulations, and stormwater master planning can help address stormwater issues.

IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Watershed Master Planning

Watershed Master Planning allows fine-grained planning to address water quality and quantity. The Central Asheville Watershed Restoration Plan is focused on restoring and protecting the watershed. An essential goal of the plan is to reconnect the people in the watershed to the streams and to ensure that the resulting actions serve, not further harm, under-served communities. Through field assessments and stakeholder input over 75 potential projects were identified to restore and protect water quality in the Central Asheville watershed.



Resilience Quotient

Norfolk, Virginia sits on coastal lands increasingly vulnerable to the threats of sunny day flooding. In 2018, Norfolk, Virginia adopted a new zoning ordinance seeking to address that threat through the way that the city grows and redevelops. One innovative aspect of the updated ordinance is that all new development within the city is required to meet a resilience quotient. This requirement is measured on a points system covering three separate resilience elements: risk reduction, stormwater management, and energy resilience.



STORMWATER ON STREETS

Streets often become conduits for delivering pollutants into the water system. Runoff from surfaces can carry everything from heavy metals from car tires, brakes, and engine wear to hydrocarbons from engine lubricating fluids. Uncontrolled stormwater runoff is a significant factor in the degradation of surface water quality and can lead to costly overflows that result in flooding and public health hazards. Stormwater abatement infrastructure helps protect against storms and flooding events and enhance community resilience.

Stormwater management in transportation is especially vital in collecting and cleaning runoff. Engineering design is key in diminishing these effects, with specific strategies tailored by location or project to incorporate stormwater best management practices (BMPs).

Incorporating effective and environmentally sensitive stormwater management practices into the street and roadway project development process is a beneficial strategy. This encourages a greater uniformity in developing plans for stormwater management systems that:

- » Ensure safe driving conditions
- » Diminish downstream flood risks to individuals and properties
- » Mitigate downstream bank and channel erosion
- » Decrease pollutants in stormwater runoff to safeguard water quality

Pollutant	Primary Sources of Pollutants in Street and Highway Runoff
Particulates	Pavement wear, vehicles, maintenance, snow/ice abrasives, sediment disturbance
Nitrogen, Phosphorus	Roadside fertilizer use, sediments
Metals	Gasoline, diesel, tire wear, lubricating oil and grease, bearing wear, auto body rust, brake linings wear, engine parts wear
Sodium, Calcium	De-icing salts, grease
Chloride	De-icing salts
Sulphate	Roadway beds, fuel, de-icing salts
Petroleum	Spills, leaks, motor lubricants, antifreeze, hydraulic fluids, asphalt surface leachate
Pathogenic bacteria	Soil litter, bird droppings, trucks hauling livestock/stockyard waste

Source: Adapted from Kobringer, N. 1984. Sources and Migration of Highway Runoff Pollutants. FHWA



Source: City of Portland OR



Source: NACTO



Source: City of Los Angeles CA

GOAL 5.1

A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT WATERSHED

Boone will have a sustainable and resilient watershed that uses natural approaches to address stormwater.

Policy 5.1.1: Use Low Impact Development Practices

To protect water quality, use low impact development practices, like bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavement that use or mimic natural processes. Promote use of local plant species and limit or eliminate the planting of invasive plant species.

Policy 5.1.2: Expand Green Infrastructure Features

Expand green infrastructure features throughout the built environment, like street trees, green roofs, and green walls. Expand and enhance street tree infrastructure between sidewalks and street curbs. Line public spaces with street trees.

Policy 5.1.3: Plan for Stormwater

Support stormwater master planning, such as the Winkler Creek Stormwater and Restoration Study, and focus on the plans' long term capital investments.

Policy 5.1.4: Support Hazard Mitigation Planning

Support hazard mitigation planning, including the creation and implementation of the High Country Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Policy 5.1.5: Promote Environmental Stewardship

Promote environmental stewardship through education outreach programs, classes, signage, public art, or other methods.

Examples of low impact development stormwater practices



GOAL 5.2

SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS, OPERATIONS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Boone will seek sustainable practices in buildings, operations, and infrastructure of town government and across the community.

Policy 5.2.1: Boone's Climate Action Plan

The Community Climate Action Plan will guide Boone's town government and community-wide vision, goals, policies, and actions around climate action and achieving climate neutrality. The work of achieving climate neutrality comes with additional benefits, such as enhancing quality of life, reducing longterm costs, creating good jobs, improving public health, and enhancing the environment.

Policy 5.2.2: Manage Growth on Boone's Edges

Intentionally manage outward growth to balance protecting community character and natural areas while directing desired growth to identified centers. Use the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria and the Growth Management Tiers Map to manage growth.

Policy 5.2.3: Promote Green and Resilient Design in New Private Development

Promote energy efficiency and green building in new private development and redevelopment projects through development regulations, incentives, and dialogue.

Policy 5.2.4: Green Building for New Public Buildings

Construct new public buildings to LEED or equivalent green building standards.

Policy 5.2.5: Sustainable and Accessible Foods

Eliminate food deserts and aim to expand the proportion of residents living within a half mile travel distance of a grocery store. Support and promote farmers markets as ways of offering fresh foods and supporting food and farmers, produced within the region. Support and promote community gardens. Support residential gardens, including in front yards, and ensure there are not unnecessary regulatory barriers.

GOAL 5.3

PLENTIFUL INTERCONNECTED GREEN SPACES

Boone will proudly be a green town with passive and active green spaces throughout the community, connected by green corridors.

Policy 5.3.1: Protect Ecologically-Valuable Areas

Protect floodplains, steep hillsides, wetlands, and other ecologically valuable areas and corridors from development.

Policy 5.3.2: Use Design to Celebrate Natural Features

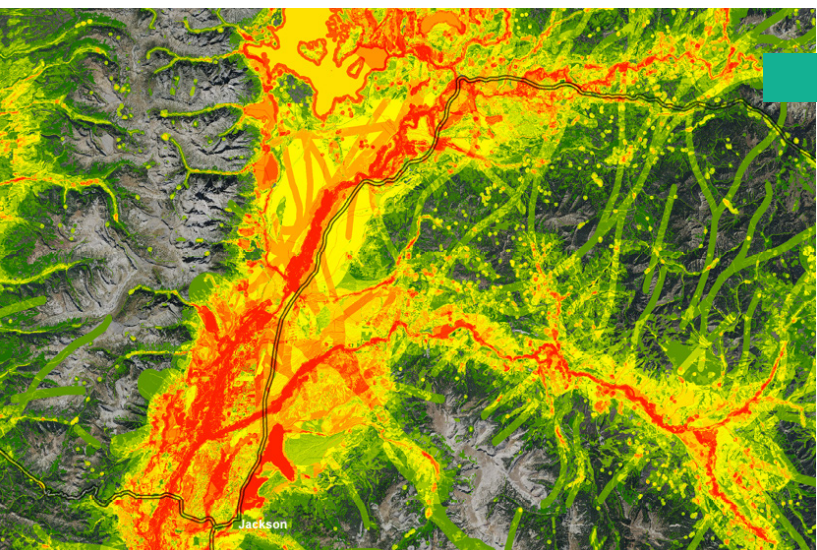
Celebrate streams and other natural features by orienting the frontage of buildings adjacent to and nearby to face them. Encourage public access to green space and natural features within walkable and bikeable distances to residential properties.

Policy 5.3.3: Plan for Wildlife

Plan for and manage the coexistence of nature and wildlife habitat through development standards that integrate habitat and wildlife migration throughout the town.

Policy 5.3.4: Encourage Accessibility to Green Space

Where feasible and practical, encourage public accessibility to green spaces including passive open space.



Natural Resources Overlay

Scientists in Jackson, Wyoming mapped migration patterns of wildlife throughout its jurisdiction. This map was used to create a natural resource overlay (NRO) zoning district. Land within the overlay contains special zoning rules to mitigate the impacts of development on wildlife, such as special fencing that allows certain kinds of animals to cross or jump over or developing a habitat mitigation plan.

The best way to predict the future is to create it.

- Abraham Lincoln

GOALS and POLICIES

GOAL 3.1 A STRONG AND DIVERSE LOCAL ECONOMY

Boone will have a strong and diverse local economy that builds on existing economic assets and fosters the growth of new green economic sectors.

- Policy 3.1.1: Build on Boone's Existing Economic Assets
- Policy 3.1.2: Support Light Manufacturing and Creative Industries
- Policy 3.1.3: Create Business and Technology Incubators
- Policy 3.1.4: Support Boone's Small Businesses
- Policy 3.1.5: Stimulate Equity in Economic Development
- Policy 3.1.6: Expand Child Care Accessibility

GOAL 3.2 A COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE

Boone will be a hub for education and workforce training, leveraging high-quality schools, App State, and other education and training providers.

- Policy 3.2.1: Promote Workforce Training and Outreach
- Policy 3.2.2: Support Partnerships with App State
- Policy 3.2.3: Enhance Access to Affordable High Speed Internet

GOAL 3.3 A RENOWNED TOURISM DESTINATION

Boone will continue to be a tourism destination with its access to the Appalachian Mountains, the beauty of its natural surroundings, and its outstanding shopping, food, entertainment, and cultural offerings. Tourism infrastructure will have the added effect of contributing directly to the quality of life of local residents.

- Policy 3.3.1: Invest in Placemaking Initiatives
- Policy 3.3.2: Market Boone's Identity and Values
- Policy 3.3.3: Plan for Parking
- Policy 3.3.4: Support Events

GOAL 3.4 INNOVATION THROUGH ARTS, CULTURE, AND CREATIVITY

Boone is a place where art, culture, and creativity nourishes the mind and body as well as supports livelihoods.

- Policy 3.4.1: Support Growth with the Existing Arts Community
- Policy 3.4.2: Arts Incubation
- Policy 3.4.3: Incorporate Art into Public and Private Projects
- Policy 3.4.4: Local and Regional Foods
- Policy 3.4.5: Promote Community Gardens and Urban Farms

Write additional comments and ideas about economic development below

To make the most of the upcoming "Economic Development" process, the City of Boone is looking for input from the community. We want to hear from you about what you think is important for Boone's future. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts and ideas with us. Your input will be valuable in shaping the future of Boone.

Write your comment and its corresponding response

Provide information to multiple employers to help them recruit and hire more people in Boone.

Boone is a great place to live and work. We need to make sure we have enough jobs for everyone who wants to live here.

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Working with HS students to open paths to Public Management

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| APPENDIX

Items in the Appendix are key parts of the comprehensive plan which may require updates from time to time.

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Implementation Actions

Focus Areas

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

A.1 UPDATE THE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

- Incorporate new and revised graphics and tables to explain zoning concepts
- Improve the page layout and internal reference system
- Ensure standards and criteria are clear
- Modernize, refine, and update definitions
- Streamline the review procedures, where appropriate
- Study the current Limited Use standards section and consider updates where necessary for simplicity, best practices, and better alignment with the comprehensive plan
- Add affordable housing density bonus provisions

Example Images:

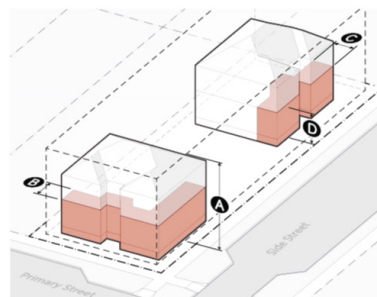
Right: Graphical illustrations of zoning district standards

Below: Development standard graphics illustrating building orientation and parking location

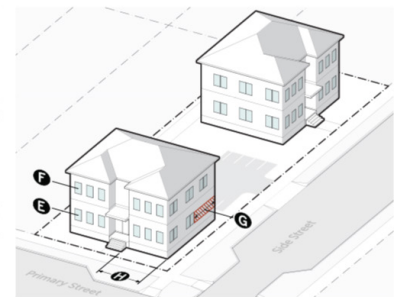
Right next page: Sample design and material standards

Below next page: "opt-in" zoning district standards that offer a density bonus in neighborhoods for better design and affordability

B. Building Standards

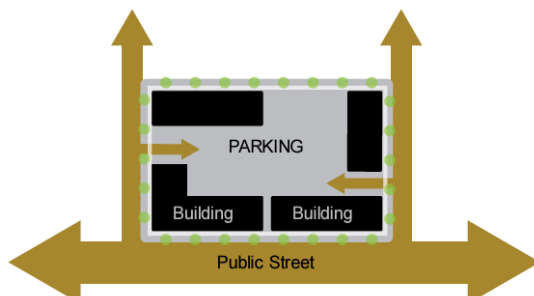


1. Massing	
a Height (max)	3 stories / 40'
2. Active Depth	
b Primary street (min)	9'
c Side street (min)	9'
3. Ground Story	
d Ground story height (min)	9'
Ground story elevation (min/max)	
0'/3'	

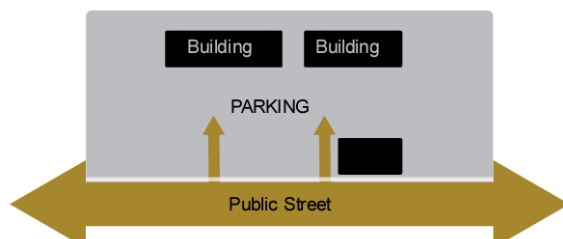


	Primary St.	Side St.
4. Windows		
e Ground story (min)	20%	20%
f Upper story (min)	15%	15%
g Blank wall width (max)	10'	20'
5. Doors		
h Street-facing entry spacing (max)	75'	100'

DO THIS



NOT THIS



- General design and material standards and district-specific design and material standards
- Review and modernize district and development standards
- Potential public art requirements in new projects
- Study barriers to infill development and explore any necessary modifications to existing standards
- Adopt sustainable development standards and incentives, explore “resiliency quotient” (sample: Kannapolis, NC; Norfolk, VA)
- Update ROW improvement standards to incorporate best practice cross-sections
- Consider formalizing Growth Management Tiers Map and Annexation Criteria
- “Opt in” zoning standards for residential neighborhoods
- Review and update parking requirements

Figure 5.7.E(3)a: Example of Front Façade Offsets

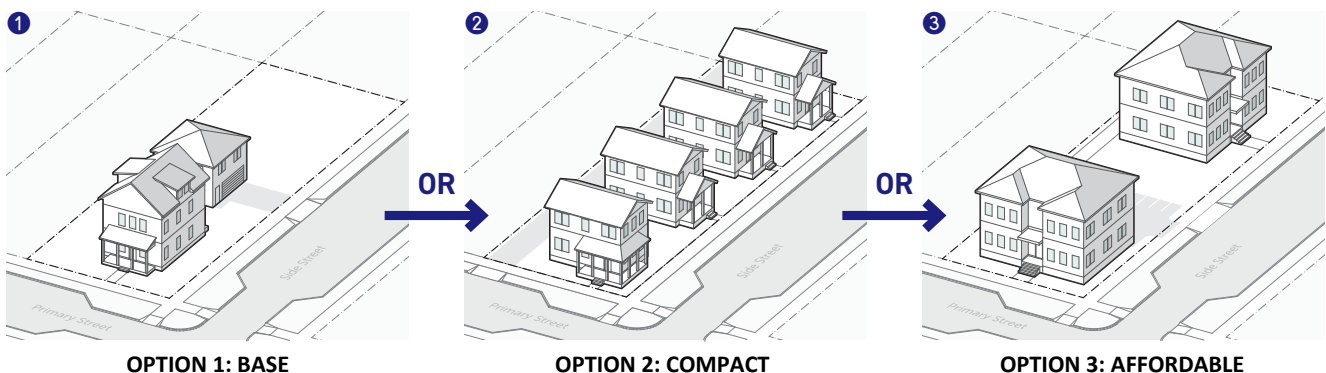
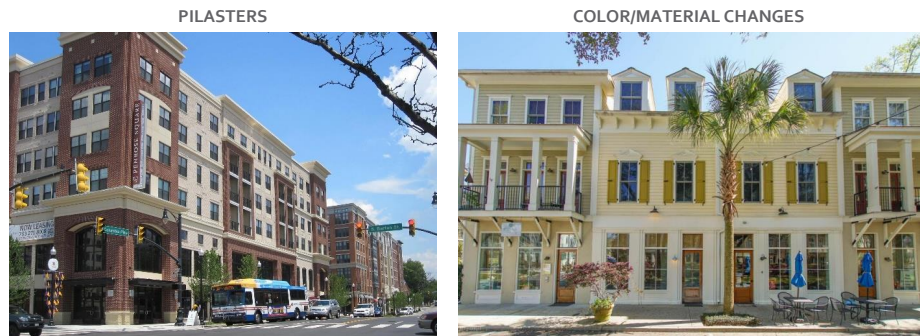


b. OFFSET ALTERNATIVES

The following techniques may be used (alone or in combination with other techniques and/or wall offsets) as an alternative to the required front facade offsets (see Figure 5.7.E(3)b: Façade Massing):

1. Changes in façade color or material every 50 feet;
2. Columns or pilasters that are at least eight inches deep and at least eight inches wide, and have a height equal to at least 80 percent of the façade’s height; or
3. Roofline changes that vertically align with a corresponding wall offset or change in façade color or material, including changes in roof planes and changes in the height of a parapet wall (such as extending the top of pilasters above the top of the parapet wall).

Figure 5.7.E(3)b: Façade Massing



H. TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

(1) PURPOSE

The purpose of the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District is to provide lands for walkable, transit-oriented, mixed-use development that features high quality building design and materials and supports active streetscapes. TOD development should include densities and use mixes that fully support non-auto-dependent lifestyles. The vertical mixing of residential uses with nonresidential uses within a single project or building, with residential development on upper floors, is strongly encouraged.

(2) DIMENSIONAL AND INTENSITY STANDARDS [1]

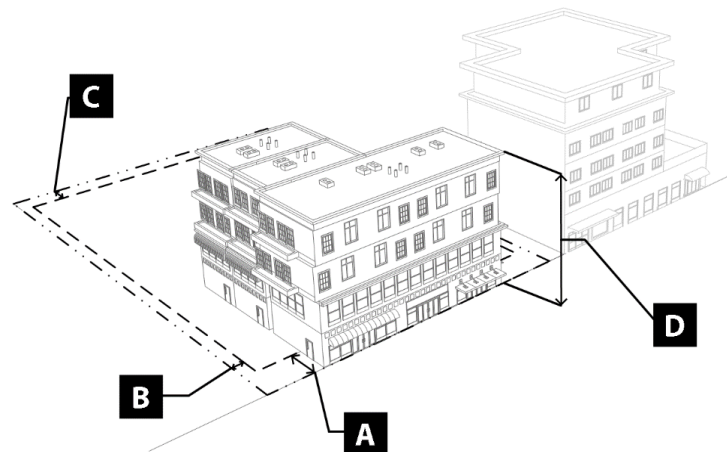
LOT AND DENSITY/INTENSITY STANDARDS	
Lot area (min)	None
Lot width (min)	40 ft
Density (max)	See Section
Floor Area Ratio (max)	3.4.H(5)
Impervious surface ratio (max)	0.95
SETBACK AND HEIGHT STANDARDS	
A Front build-to zone (min max) [2]	0 15 ft
Percentage of build-to zone width occupied by building (min) [3]	75%
B Side setback (min)	None
C Rear setback (min) [4]	None 10 ft
D Building height (min max)	25 ft 82 ft

(3) OTHER STANDARDS

OTHER STANDARDS	LOCATION IN KDO
Use Regulations	Article 4
Development Standards	Article 5
Subdivision Standards	Article 6
Rules of Measurement	Section 9.3

NOTES:

- [1] May be superseded by other standards in this Ordinance (see Section 3.1.C, Superseding Dimensional and Intensity Standards).
- [2] The area between the minimum and maximum build-to zone boundaries that extends the width of the lot constitutes the build-to zone. The maximum build-to zone boundary may be increased by 15 feet along 25 percent of the lot width for a civic space or outdoor dining area.
- [3] Buildings shall be located so that they occupy the minimum percentage of the linear width of the lot's build-to zone (see Section 9.3.A(6)).
- [4] The minimum rear setback is 10 feet, except there is no minimum rear setback where the rear lot line abuts an alley.

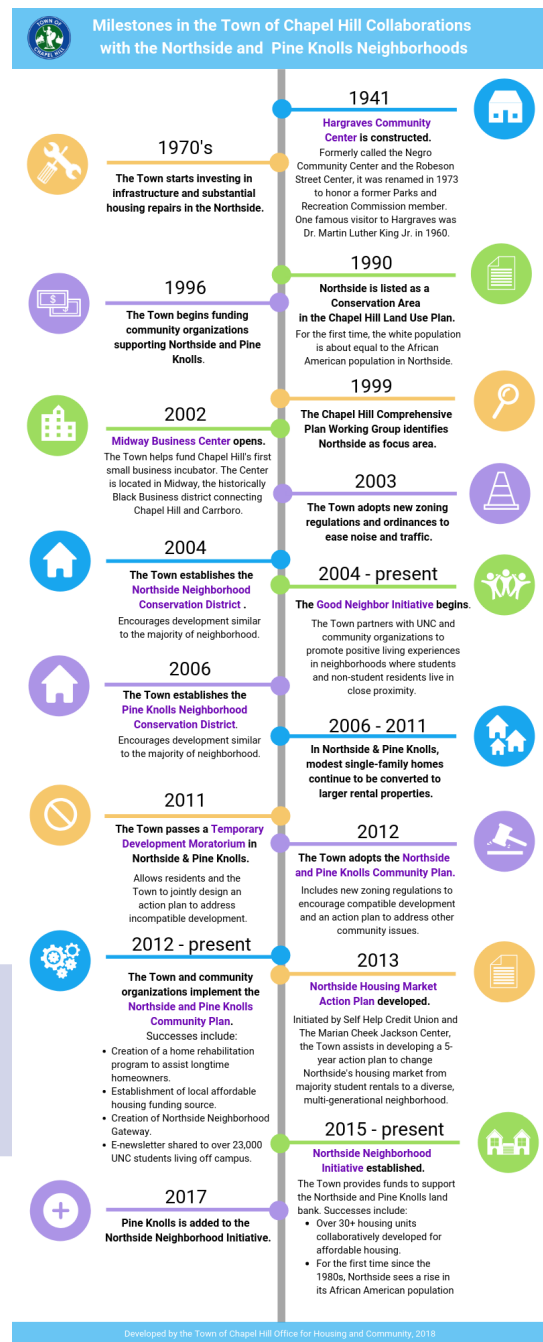


This graphic shows a single-page layout of zoning district standards which enhances the understandability and user-friendliness of the regulations

A.2 OTHER LAND USE ACTIONS

- Develop visions for the community opportunity areas, maintain flexibility for future opportunities
- Conduct a Junaluska Neighborhood Plan. Review Chapel Hill's planning work for the Northside neighborhood as part of this work.
- Conduct design charrette for areas designated as Walkable Mixed Use along Blowing Rock Road
- Recruit and attract developers with successful track records consistent with Boone's values and vision to work in Boone – partner with EDC
- Protect industrial park for industrial/employment uses

Chapel Hill's planning work around the Northside Neighborhood can provide some example initiatives for neighborhood plan with the Janaluska community.



A.3 TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

- Update Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Establish Safety Taskforce
- Conduct a US 321/Blowing Rock Road Corridor Study
- Modernize the town's street design standards and guidelines
- Explore pedestrian safety zones, other tools to determine priority ROW design and investment
- Develop a Comprehensive Traffic Calming Toolkit
- *For more details, see Chapter 2*

A.4 CREATE AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

- Analysis of economic conditions, demographics, current ecosystem of economic development partners and institutions, market trends and opportunities, SWOT analysis
- An analysis of target industry clusters
- Analysis of the Town's current development tools and policies and effectiveness of those tools and policies; analysis of additional or revised tools and policies that could be leveraged to support desired outcomes
- Development of economic development goals and implementation strategies for discussion, review, and refinement with Town officials, and other collaborating participants.
- Analysis of development and redevelopment sites that includes data regarding potential for revenue producing activity, focused on opportunity areas and designated walkable mixed use areas in the Boone Next Comprehensive Plan
- Key findings, possible strategies, and tools for achieving desirable outcomes
- Develop Strategic Plan goals, objectives and implementation strategies based on historical data and stakeholder input
- Consider and incorporate other Town guiding documents, as appropriate
- Include specific recommendations for Opportunity Areas and Walkable Mixed Use areas from the comprehensive plan
- Develop an implementation plan with action steps and timelines. Include institutional and organizational recommendations if necessary

A.5 GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICES ACTIONS

- Develop a Town Strategic Plan
- Modernize the Town's capital improvement program
- Consider a bond for quality-of-life projects: Consider bond investments in parks, trails, sidewalks, stormwater projects, and permanent affordable housing
- Collaborate with community stakeholders to identify potential arts districts and corridors; among other implementation considerations, explore arts-related development requirements within arts corridor/district areas
- Assess the town's budget document formatting for accessibility and readability and consider improvements, if appropriate
- Parks and facilities master plan or some planning and analysis around parks facilities
- Establish an agreement on maintenance of greenways between the town and county
- Explore a potential MOU or other approach with App State focused on sustainable growth and development, see Providence, RI
- Create a metrics dashboard (For example, percentage of residents living within a quarter mile walk of grocery store, childcare, park, trail, or playground)

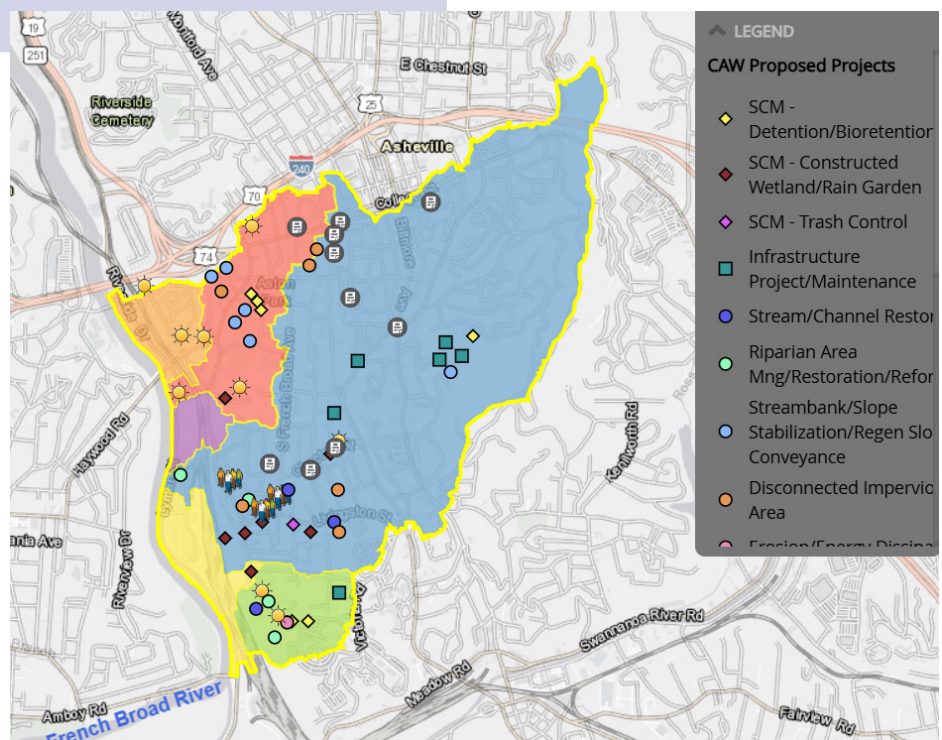
The Old Town North Alliance in Alexandria collaborates with the City to implement the Arts and Cultural District Walk as suggested in the Old Town North Small Area Plan adopted in 2017. The Alliance commissioned an Arts Walk plan and have been working to implement this plan. The map to the right illustrates the arts corridor as it exists and evolves.



A.6 GREEN AND RESILIENT ACTIONS

- Implement the Climate Action Plan
- Develop a Watershed Master Plan – stream restoration, preservation, daylighting; stormwater amenities
- Evaluate the Town’s existing open space standards
- Prioritize stormwater solutions along Blowing Rock Road, with particular consideration of catalyst projects
- Consider adopting sustainable design standards and incentives in UDO development standards
- Identify state and federal grants to assist in funding sustainability and resiliency projects

Screenshot from the Central Asheville Stormwater Restoration Plan interactive map showing proposed a variety of stormwater restoration projects.



BOONE NEXT FOCUS AREAS

Four focus areas were identified early in the planning process for in-depth consideration. While not official “small area plans”, this section provides a description of each area today and provides recommendations –both visual and descriptive – of how these areas could evolve and transform in the future.

As Boone continues to grow, with limited space to do so, these areas on the edges of town will continue to develop and re-develop. Guiding the character and function of these areas is a key goal. These four “focus areas” each have unique opportunities and challenges, but all function as gateways into Boone from the major transportation corridors.

The focus areas are as follows and shown on the map (next page):

- o Northwest Gateway: US 421 heading into town from Tennessee
- o Southwest Gateway: Highway 105 heading into town from Avery County
- o Blowing Rock Road: US 321 heading into town from Hickory; and j
- o East Boone: US 421 heading into town from Winston-Salem.

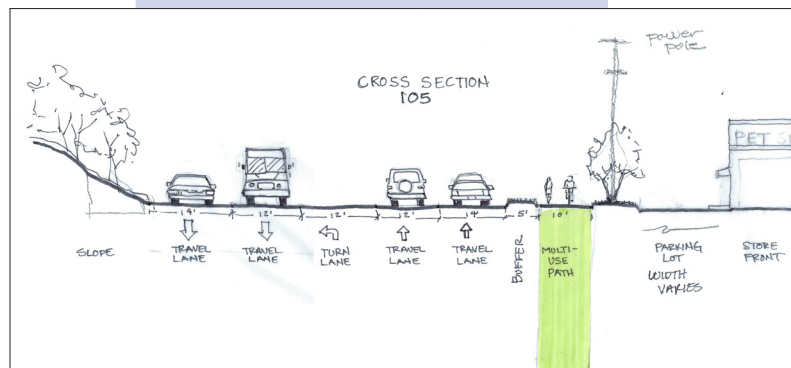


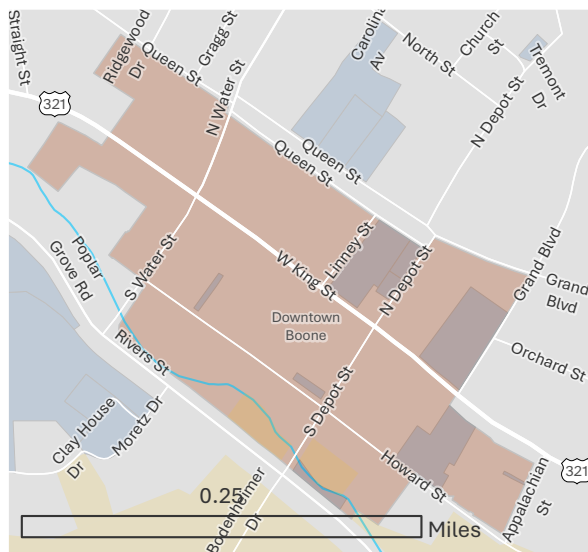
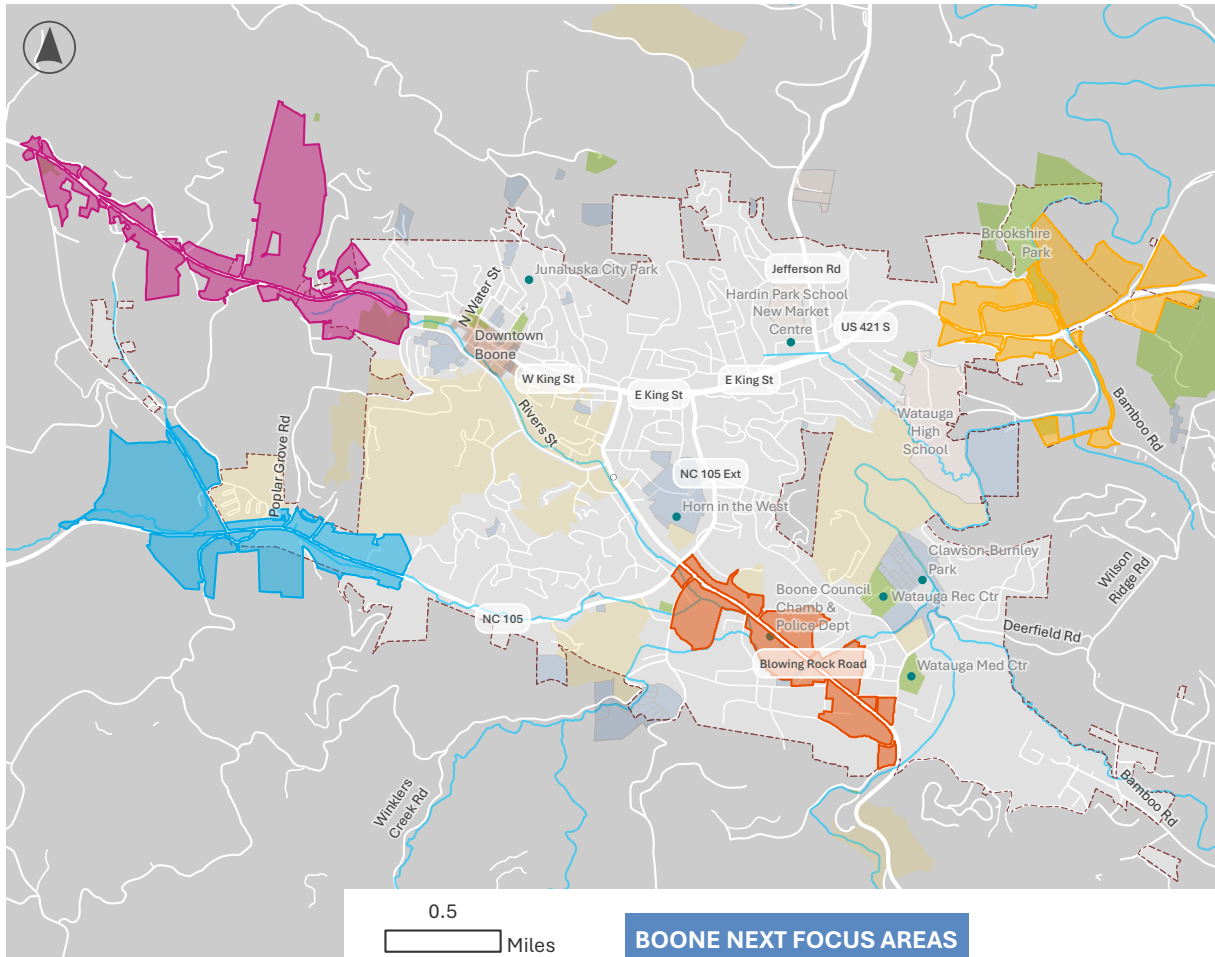
In addition to the first impression visitors get when coming into town, these areas are also places where people live, work and find services. This section provides a description of each area as it is today and the character, function, and land use the town would like to encourage in the future.

COMMUNITY INPUT ON FOCUS AREAS

The planning team and town staff conducted a three-day workshop during late April and early May of 2024 for Boone Next. Residents provided insights and ideas for the focus areas. Facilitators sketched ideas over large maps in real time to record input from participants. Workshop attendees also shared their comments on sticky notes corresponding to specific geographic areas on the maps. For example, if they wanted to identify an intersection that was unsafe, they posted a note directly on the intersection.

During the workshop dedicated to the focus areas, participants and facilitators developed “real time” concepts for each of the focus areas.





- Northwest Gateway
- East Boone
- Blowing Rock Road
- Southwest Gateway

- Town of Boone
- Board of Ed Property
- Creeks & Rivers
- Town of Boone Property
- ASU Property
- Points of Interest
- Watauga Co Property
- Downtown Boone
- Watauga County

Four focus areas were identified early in the planning process. These are: Northwest, Southwest, Blowing Rock Road, and East Boone.



Workshop participants helped develop conceptual diagrams that guided the Focus Area Framework Plans

Ideas that arose out of the workshops include a greater emphasis on infill development, traffic management and expanding transportation options, creating connections between community assets and an emphasis on community character. A vision was set that these areas become smaller “communities within the community,” servicing the needs of residents close to home. These ideas are described in further detail in this section of Boone Next.

BLOWING ROCK ROAD FOCUS AREA

THIS AREA TODAY

The Southeast Focus Area comprises Blowing Rock Road (US Highway 321) and its immediate environment. Blowing Rock Road acts as a gateway into Boone from Blowing Rock, Lenoir and Hickory.

This part of Boone represents the most commercially developed corridor in Boone with land uses that include the Boone Mall, Walmart, Lowe’s Home Improvement and three major grocery stores. In addition, smaller retailers include coffee shops, gas stations, car washes, and fast food.

Multi-family residential uses, such as the Village at Meadowview and Bavarian Village Apartments, can also be found off the main corridor in this focus area. Boone’s only single wide residential park is also in this area on Leola Street.

The built-environment is automobile-oriented. Lanes are wide (12+ feet), street trees are lacking or rare, sidewalks are not always present and often lack adequate width. Buildings are set back



Blowing Rock Road and its surrounding area represents the most commercially developed corridor in Boone.

far from streets and generally distanced from one another in a manner that is not conducive to walking. Frequent curb cuts and driveways cause conflicts both on the road and between vehicles and pedestrians. Blocks are long and streets are curvilinear in design.

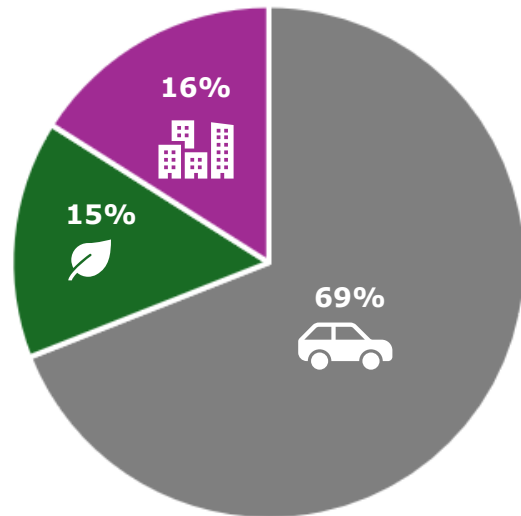
The majority of land cover in this area is for vehicle use: parking lots and roads represent approximately 69% of the land cover, with approximately 15% as “green” space and 16% made up of buildings. The abundance of paved surface represents a significant challenge for stormwater management. The more impervious surface, the greater and faster runoff from rainfall events, which causes flooding and diminishes water quality in the local streams.

This area is constrained by the surrounding topography and the floodplain. The southwest side of Blowing Rock Road rises sharply above Meadowview Drive behind Walmart. The area is further constrained by the confluence of three creeks: Boone Creek, Hodges Creek and Winkler Creek all flow together near Meadowview Drive causing frequent flooding in and around the Boone Mall and Boone Docks St. On the opposite side of Blowing Rock Road, Winkler Creek and the Middle Fork of the South Fork of the New River converge in a wide floodplain that frequently floods Deerfield Road.

Although development is automobile-oriented with the highest traffic volumes in the town limits, Blowing Rock Road is also used by people walking and bicycling. This area is served by Appalcart which has multiple routes that traverse the corridor and surrounding street network. Traffic volumes along Blowing Rock Road represent a challenge for Appalcart schedules with delays due to heavy traffic.

During the fall of 2024, Hurricane Helene caused massive flooding in this area, resulting in damage to roads, the greenway, homes, and businesses. Given the extent of the damage, rebuilding in the next 10-20 years needs to include a greater emphasis on stormwater management and flood storage.

Blowing Rock Road Focus Area % Land Cover



● Parking / Vehicle Use ● Green and Public Space ● Buildings

This part of Boone includes a significant amount of land dedicated to parking and automobile movement. The diagram shows the relative land cover breakdown (approximately 69% in pavement, 16% in buildings and 15% in “green” space).





New development can encourage green infrastructure such as bioretention to store and remove pollutants from stormwater.

THIS AREA TOMORROW

This focus area contains the greatest potential for transformational change in the Town of Boone that would see the area convert its land use from primarily surface parking to a walkable mix of uses, with new streets, stormwater facilities, trees, plazas and parks, and high quality urban design.

The abundance of pavement provides an opportunity for infill development and conversion to space for pedestrian infrastructure, stormwater storage, and green space. The impacts from the hurricane flooding in 2024 underscore the importance of managing stormwater through new development as the area evolves.

Existing parking lots should be reconfigured to build a connected network of streets and alleys forming shorter blocks within commercial areas. Greater connectivity reduces the need for commercial driveways on Blowing Rock Road, which will alleviate some traffic congestion and conflicts. However, a holistic approach to the road network is key to the successful implementation of this vision.

Blowing Rock Road can be re-designed to better accommodate other modes of transportation besides private vehicles. For example, some communities have adopted, bus-only travel lanes or lanes for right-turns and buses only. Wider sidewalks, dedicated spaces for bicycling and separation from vehicles will entice more users to get out of their cars and use other modes of transportation.



The City of Boulder, Co, also a university town, converted the outside vehicle lanes on a main connector road to bus and right-turn lanes.



A stormwater project that creates a public amenity could help catalyze pedestrian-oriented redevelopment along the corridor. This rendering from Durham, NC shows a project in process.

[illegible]

This Area Tomorrow: Recommendations

- o For the greatest potential impact, conduct a design charrette for the areas designated for Walkable Mixed Use on the Future Land Use and Character Map. The charrette should result in detailed streets, blocks, alleys, public space, stormwater controls, and primary and secondary retail streets.
- o Promote coordinated redevelopment through engagement with property owners, recruitment of proven development teams, purchase and consolidation of property, offering density bonuses; consider public investments using synthetic TIFs, bonds, CIP funding, MSD formation, and other financial instruments.
- o Prioritize catalyst projects such as redevelopment of Boone Mall and a stormwater restoration park-pond project.
- o Encourage development and redevelopment on underutilized parcels or combined parcels. New development will need to consolidate driveways and encourage parking behind buildings on Blowing Rock Road with shared access. Primary retail/nonresidential building frontages may be located on new streets perpendicular to Blowing Rock Road.
- o Redevelopment will need to integrate innovative ways to accommodate stormwater storage. Continue implementation of the Stormwater and Stream Enhancement Plan for Winkler, Hodges, and Boone Creeks.
- o Support transit use by adding bus shelters and universally accessible bus stops.
- o Coordinate with NCDOT on timing traffic signal progression as signals timed to cycle- and transit-friendly speeds can reduce motorists' incentive to speed.
- o Consider dedicated bus lanes.

- o Continue to develop the Cross-Town Connector along Greenway Road in addition to traffic calming treatments on Greenway Road.
- o Integrate the Boone Greenway with the local road network through complete streets, especially on Boone Heights Drive where bicycles and pedestrians frequent.
- o Support Middle Fork Greenway construction as an off-road, separated linear bicycle facility along US 321 from the Watauga Medical Center campus toward Blowing Rock.

FUTURE LAND USE & CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Along with future land use and character, conceptual development scenarios illustrate redevelopment possibilities for each focus area. These concepts are meant to show general development patterns and opportunities consistent with the goals of the comprehensive plan. Redevelopment will be based upon willing buyers and sellers with private or institutional investment and not by eminent domain.

Redevelopment of larger parcels can result in pedestrian-oriented new commercial development with outdoor spaces, parking along side streets and building relationships that frame open space.



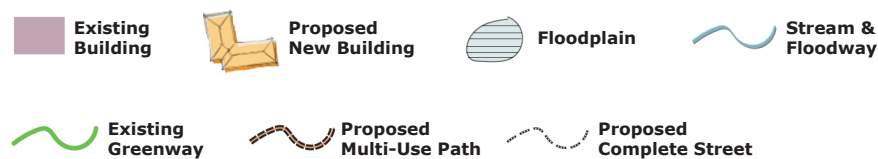
CONCEPTUAL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS



BOONE MALL AREA



COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR



EAST BOONE FOCUS AREA

THIS AREA TODAY

East Boone acts as a gateway into town from Wilkesboro and Winston-Salem on US Highway 421. This area is transitioning from an underdeveloped industrial area to an identifiable district.

Industrial development, such as the gravel extraction along Bamboo Road, still exists, but small businesses such as Hatchet Coffee and Center 45 south of 421 and Booneshine Brewing and The Summit on the north side, have given new life to this area. These businesses not only serve residents in the area but are a draw for people to come from other parts of town and the county.

Other land uses include multi-family residential, single family residential and human services such as Hospitality House, The Community Care Clinic and Hunger and Health Coalition. More development is planned for this area including hotels, a bicycle hub and the Town of Boone's future facility on town-owned land on Highway 421.

This area hosts an abundance of well-loved recreation and green spaces. Watauga County's Brookshire Park, soccer fields, and Rocky Knob Park draw residents and visitors alike. A paved path along the New River as well as a loop through Brookshire Park provide paved trails. Furthermore, the Boone Greenway terminates at the wastewater treatment plant near New River Hills Road.

Although in close proximity, the trails are not connected via paved greenways. Trail users must travel along New River Hills Road, along with vehicles to get to a bicycle underpass under Highway 421. There also exists a disconnect of East Boone to the heart of Boone via bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

The Hunger and Health Coalition is one of the many human-services related uses in East Boone along with restaurants, coffee shops and outdoor recreation uses.



THIS AREA TOMORROW

Two NCDOT projects on the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) will have big impacts in East Boone.

1. The Grove Street Connector Project (NCDOT Project EB-5983). This project would construct over a mile of multi-use sidepath from Grove Street to Brookshire Road and would provide an important multi-modal transportation connection from East Boone to New Market Center.
2. NCDOT Project U-5810 which includes modernizing Bamboo Road from US 421 to Wilson Ridge Road and would include a multi-use sidepath along Bamboo Road and roundabouts at Brook Hollow and Wilson Ridge intersections.

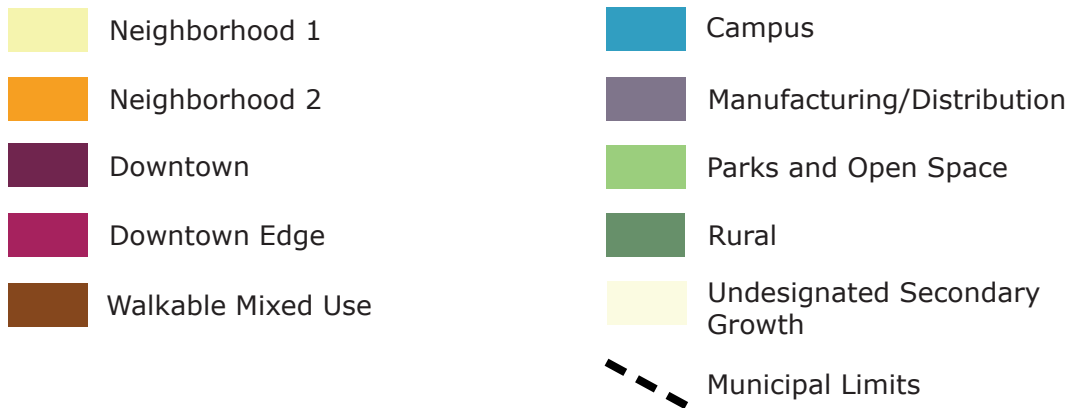
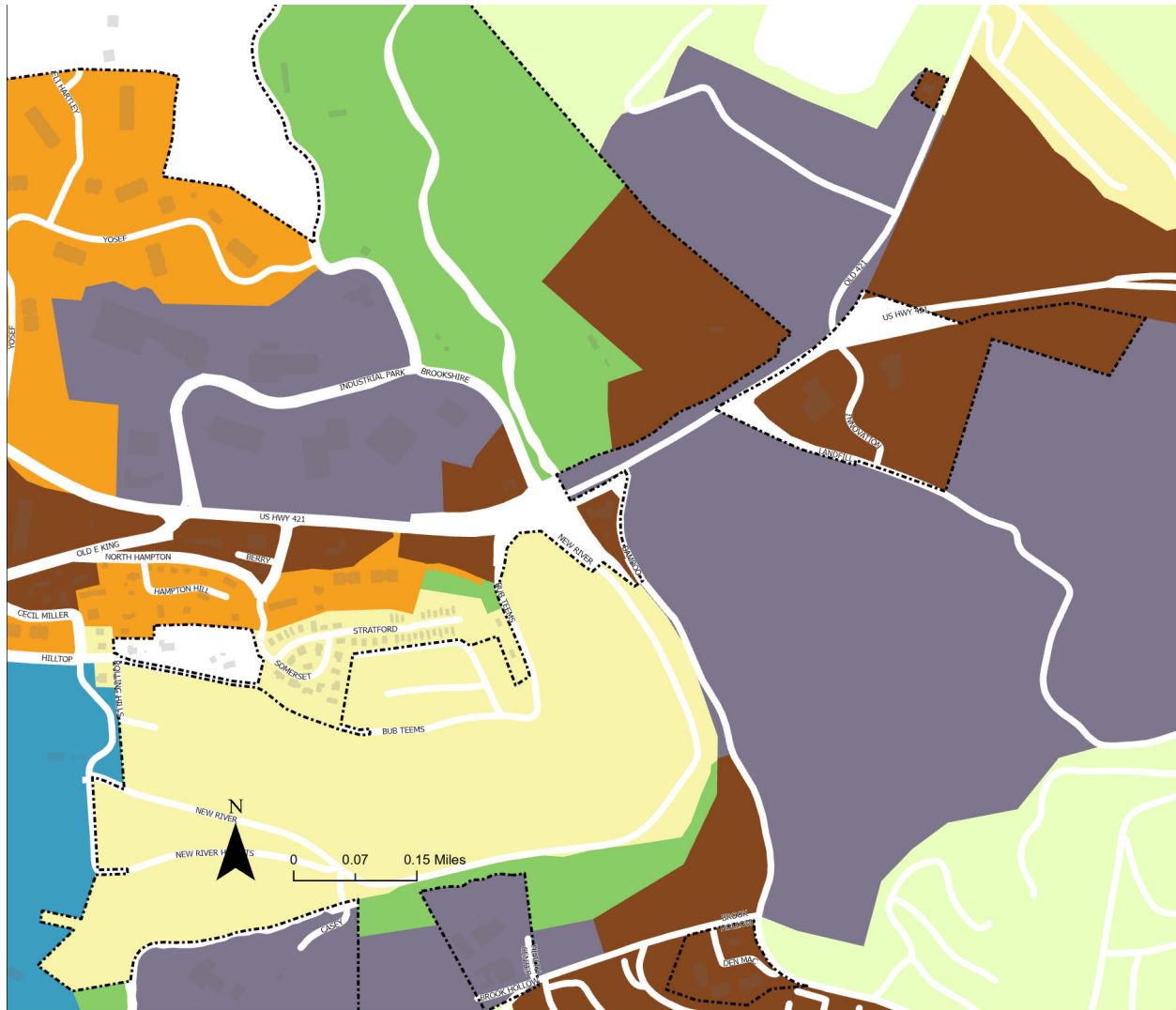
In addition to supporting these two projects, other recommendations include the following:

- o Support new commercial/mixed-use development or re-development inside the Town of Boone limits.
- o Coordinate with NCDOT to make intersection improvements on US 421 and consider traffic calming measures between Bamboo and Highway 194, such as narrow travel lanes; medians in specific locations to allow pedestrians to cross roadways easier.
- o Identify a location for a park-and-ride lot that is serviced by Appalcart.
- o Identify pedestrian connections from Boone's property east of the New River with the county's land on the west side of the New River. In the long term, construct a new pedestrian bridge that is parallel to the US 421 vehicle bridge to connect Bamboo Road to greenway system.
- o Coordinate with NCDOT and Watauga County to convert New River Hills to a neighborhood greenway with new pavement, markings for shared use and signs for drivers to share the road.
- o Seek trail easements to connect Den Mac commercial node and the services on Brook Hollow Road to the Boone Greenway via a new paved spur trail.

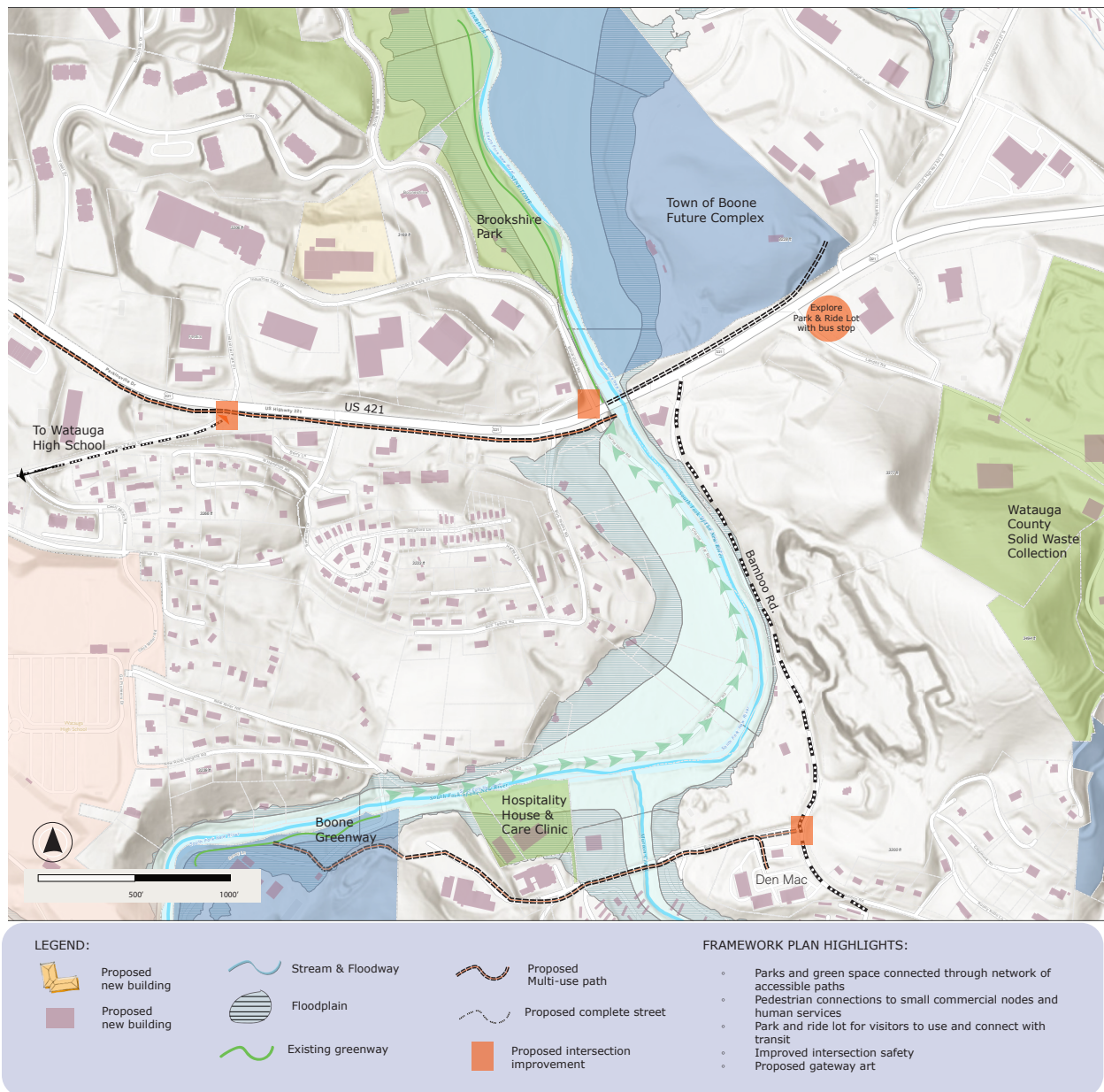
Greenways and commercial businesses can co-exist with the use of privacy fences where needed.



East Boone Future Land Use and Character



East Boone Future Development Scenario





The Highway 105 corridor is characterized by strip commercial development. The five lane roadway experiences high traffic volume.

SOUTHWEST GATEWAY

THIS AREA TODAY

The Highway 105 corridor and surrounding area referred to as “Hodges Gap”, acts as a gateway into town from the southwest.

This area is characterized by commercial strip development and multi-family housing. The proximity of Appalachian State University’s campus via Poplar Grove Road has given rise to several apartment complexes that are largely student occupied, such as University Highlands Apartments, Studio West in the town limits, and The Cottages of Boone outside of town limits. Single family neighborhoods lie between the 105 corridor and Appalachian State University.

Transportation in this focus area has two main purposes: motorists coming into town from locations to the southwest and students who live in apartment buildings off campus traveling the short distance to Appalachian State’s campus. A smaller share of traffic is motorists accessing the restaurants, retail and other commercial businesses along the corridor. Appalcart services this area of Boone with bus stops at apartments buildings and Highland Commons, the main commercial node with several stops along the corridor. Aside from disconnected sidewalks, this area does not include bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

In 2019 Boone Town Council rejected a proposed NCDOT project for the 105 corridor along the roughly two-mile stretch of road from the NC 105 Bypass at the edge of town limits to the intersection with Blowing Rock Road. The “superstreet project”, would have implemented a center median with u-turn bulbouts for trucks and widened roads to include sidewalks.

As this planning process is taking place, the NCDOT project to widen Highway 105 at Broadstone Road southwest of town has the potential to make travel into Boone easier for motorists, possibly adding to traffic volume on the Highway 105 corridor in town.

THIS AREA TOMORROW

Highland Commons which includes a grocery store and numerous small businesses gives this area the potential to realize the “community within a community vision” that was shared during the planning process. Furthermore, the proximity of Appalachian State University’s Innovation Campus, means that this area will continue to attract a range of people associated with Appalachian State and spur further growth.

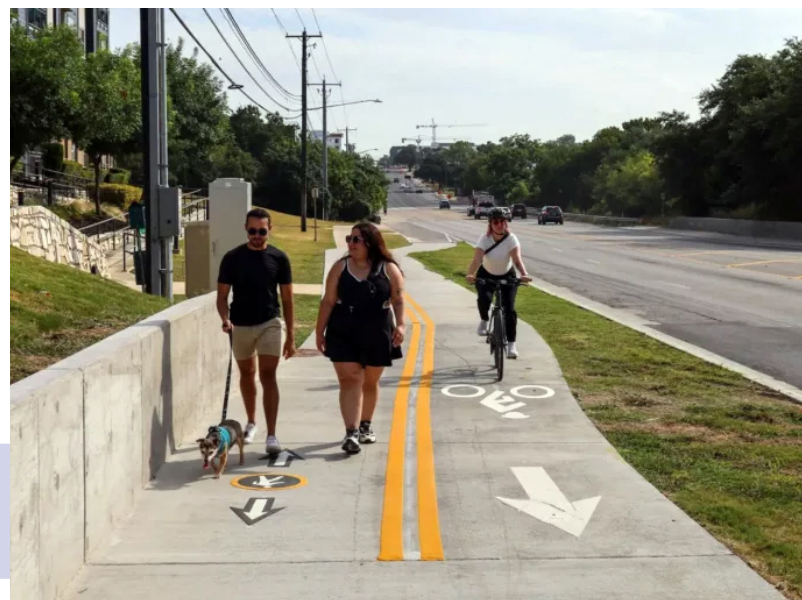
For the vision to be realized, the area needs to a more holistic approach to transportation with greater opportunities for other modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling and micro-modal transportation for residents in the area to traverse from home to stores to campus without getting in their cars.

The Town would benefit from a corridor transportation study for the Highway 105 corridor. The study would identify ways to manage the volume of traffic while providing traffic calming and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Other recommendations are as follows

- o Coordinate with NCDOT on intersection safety improvements including high-visibility crosswalks with refuge islands in key locations.

- o Explore options for a multi-use sidepath adjacent, but separated from traffic along Highway 105.
- o Encourage development on underutilized parcels and re-development of older building stock by combining parcels. New development should consolidate driveways and encourage parking behind buildings on Highway 105.
- o Redevelopment will need to integrate innovative ways to accommodate stormwater storage, such as green infrastructure.
- o Explore a neighborhood greenway that would connect the 105 corridor to Appalachian State’s Innovation Campus via Homespun Hills Road, which is a more direct connection than Poplar Grove Road.
- o Include gateway treatments such as public art that sends a visual signal to drivers that they are entering a different zone where slower speeds are required.

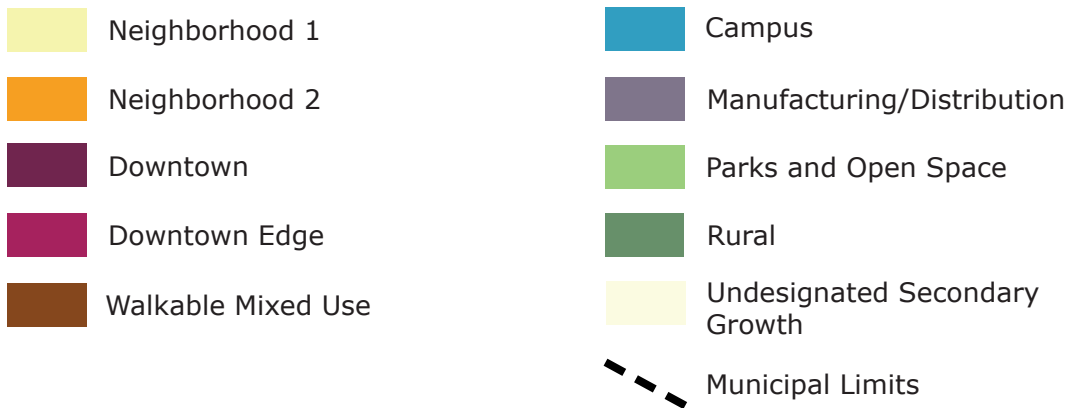
The 105 corridor would be better served by a multi-use sidepath for people who choose to bicycle or walk. Image credit: AURA.



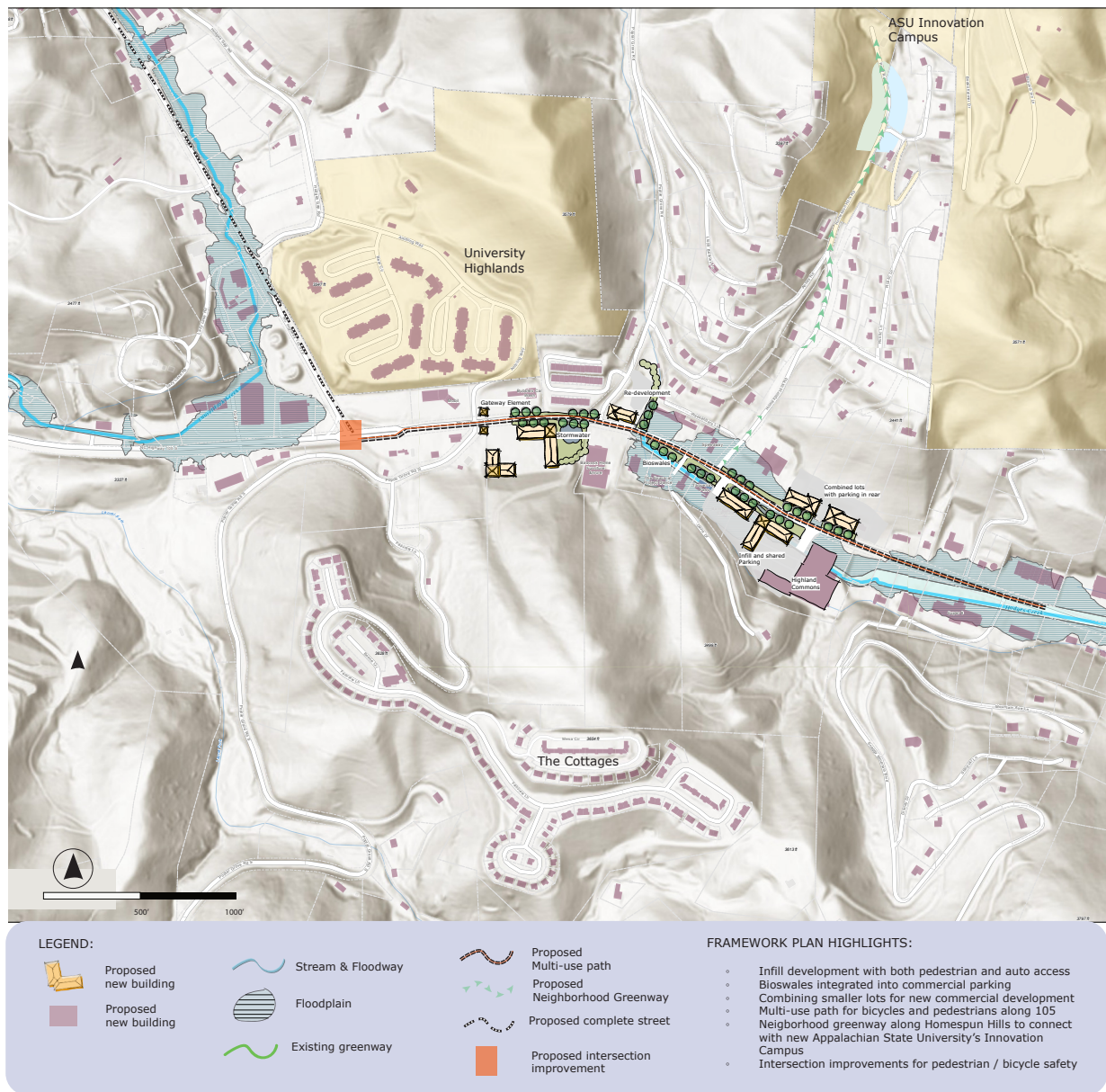
The map displays the following neighborhoods and areas:

- Water Bodies:** Monona Lake (top left), Kegonsa Lake (top right), Kegonsa Reservoir (center right), Kegonsa Lake (bottom right).
- Parks:** Kegonsa Park (top right), Kegonsa Park (center right), Kegonsa Park (bottom right).
- Residential Areas:** Kegonsa Park (top right), Kegonsa Park (center right), Kegonsa Park (bottom right).
- Commercial Areas:** Kegonsa Park (top right), Kegonsa Park (center right), Kegonsa Park (bottom right).
- Industrial Areas:** Kegonsa Park (top right), Kegonsa Park (center right), Kegonsa Park (bottom right).

Major roads shown include Hwy 105, Hwy 108, and Hwy 109. A scale bar indicates 0 to 0.25 miles, and a north arrow is present.



Southwest Gateway Future Development Scenario





This area hosts the King Street Market, which operates weekly during warmer months and provided a key community resource for creating a "community within a community".

NORTHWEST GATEWAY FOCUS AREA

THIS AREA TODAY

With proximity to the historic downtown, this northwest focus area along West King Street/ Highway 421 acts as a gateway from Sugar Grove, Vilas, and Tennessee. Multi-family residential, light industrial, rural, and strip commercial characterize the existing land use in this area. Several older and some relatively newer apartment complexes house a growing off-campus student population.

The 421 corridor is served by Appalcart with several stops between the 105 Bypass and downtown/campus area. However, sidewalks to get to bus stops are not complete and riders must walk along the high-volume roadway to bus stops that are not universally accessible in many locations.

Watauga County's social services and planning complex is a large landowner in this focus area. The open green space adjacent to US 421 is used for community activities including a weekly farmer's market in April through October. Other land uses include small businesses such as a laundromat, gas station, and other automobile sales and service businesses. Some businesses have recently transitioned to commercial retail such as clothing stores.



From used cars to used clothing stores, businesses such as this have transitioned in recent years due to changes in demand.

Like the 105 corridor, Highway 421 is serving multiple user groups from motorists arriving into Boone from out of town and students traveling to campus and downtown. A smaller share of traffic is from industrial and commercial uses along Highway 421, like Loven Concrete. Aside from disconnected sidewalks, this area does not include bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

THIS AREA TOMORROW

While the topography in this area does not lend itself to large scale development, there are opportunities for infill development on small parcels and re-development opportunities. As has already begun to happen with apartments constructed in the recent past, new development needs to be pedestrian-oriented. NCDOT's project BN-0010 includes funding to construct sidewalks and other improvements from Poplar Grove Connector Road west for .45 miles along Highway 421.

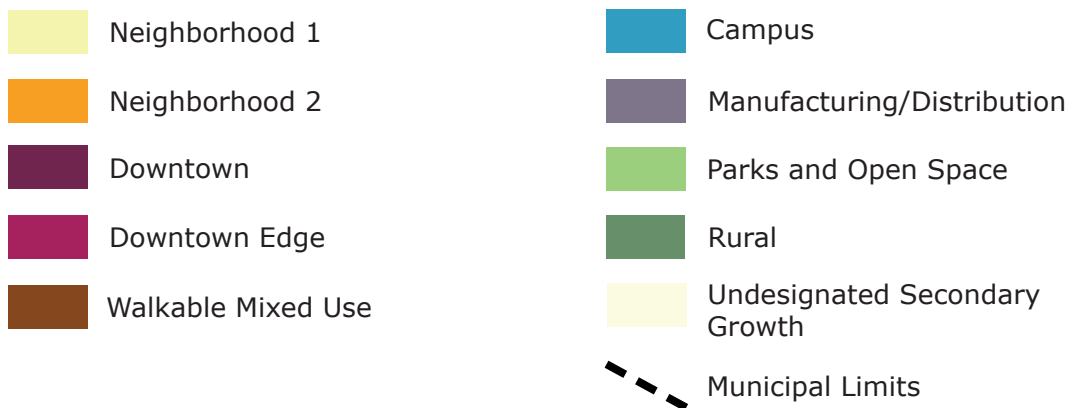
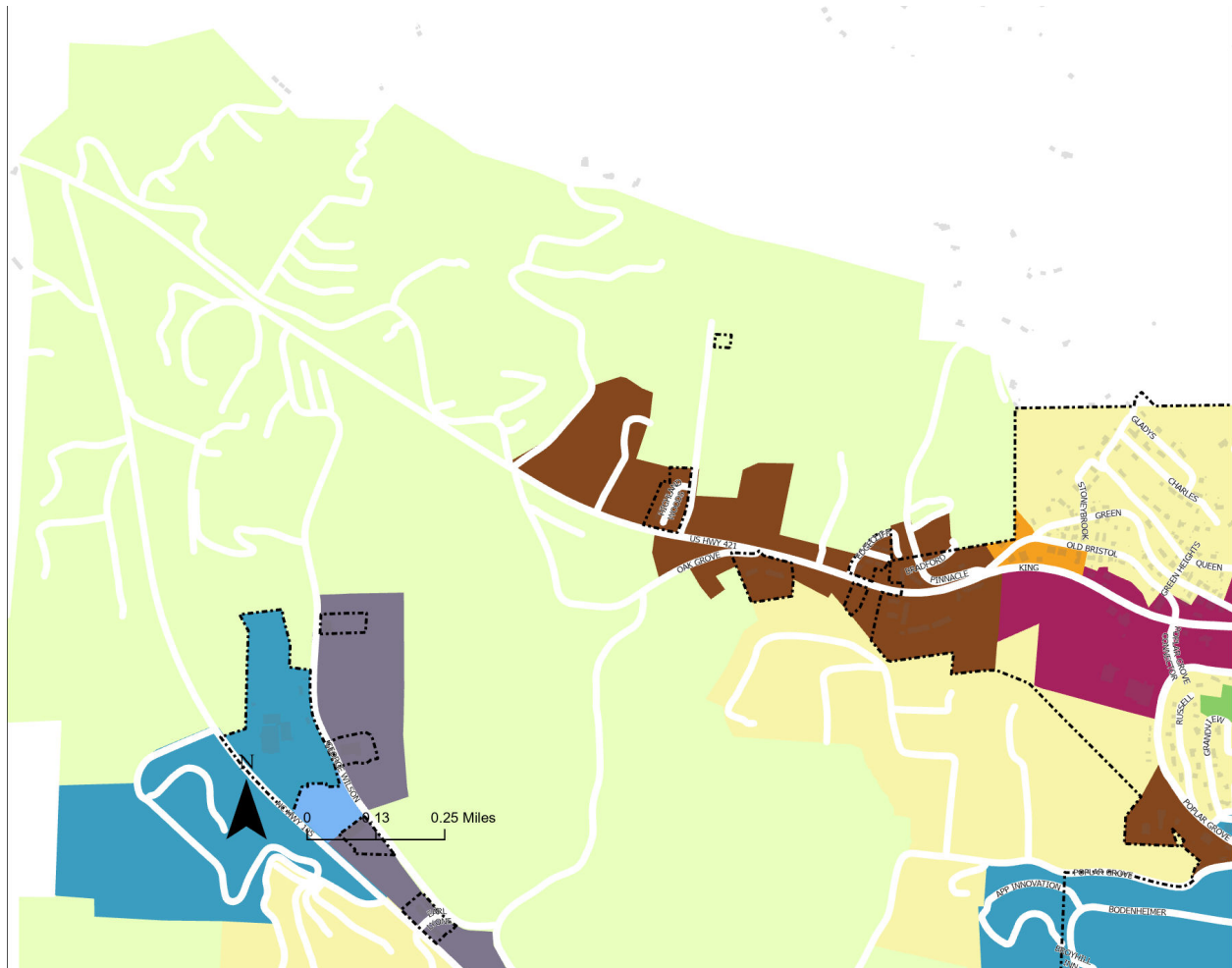
Furthermore, NCDOT has future plans to widen Highway 421 between Vilas and the 105 Bypass to multiple lanes. As this is a major transportation corridor into downtown, several opportunities exist to further expand the character of downtown westward in this focus area. Recommendations include the following:

- o Promote infill development and conversion of existing buildings to pedestrian-oriented and neighborhood-serving commercial uses.
- o Work with NCDOT to further extend sidewalks west along US 421 to service more apartment buildings and park-and-ride lots.
- o Support future planned roundabout at Poplar Grove and Old Bristol Road to facilitate continued movement at this busy intersection and gateway into downtown.
- o Add bus shelters and improve bus stops to be universally accessible.
- o Coordinate with NCDOT on intersection improvements entering and exiting onto US 421, for example at Pinnacle Road and Old Bristol Road.
- o Convert Old Bristol Road between US 421 and Poplar Grove Connector to a neighborhood greenway where cars and bicycles share the low-speed road.
- o Add placemaking elements such as public art at bus stops, and town-owned green spaces.

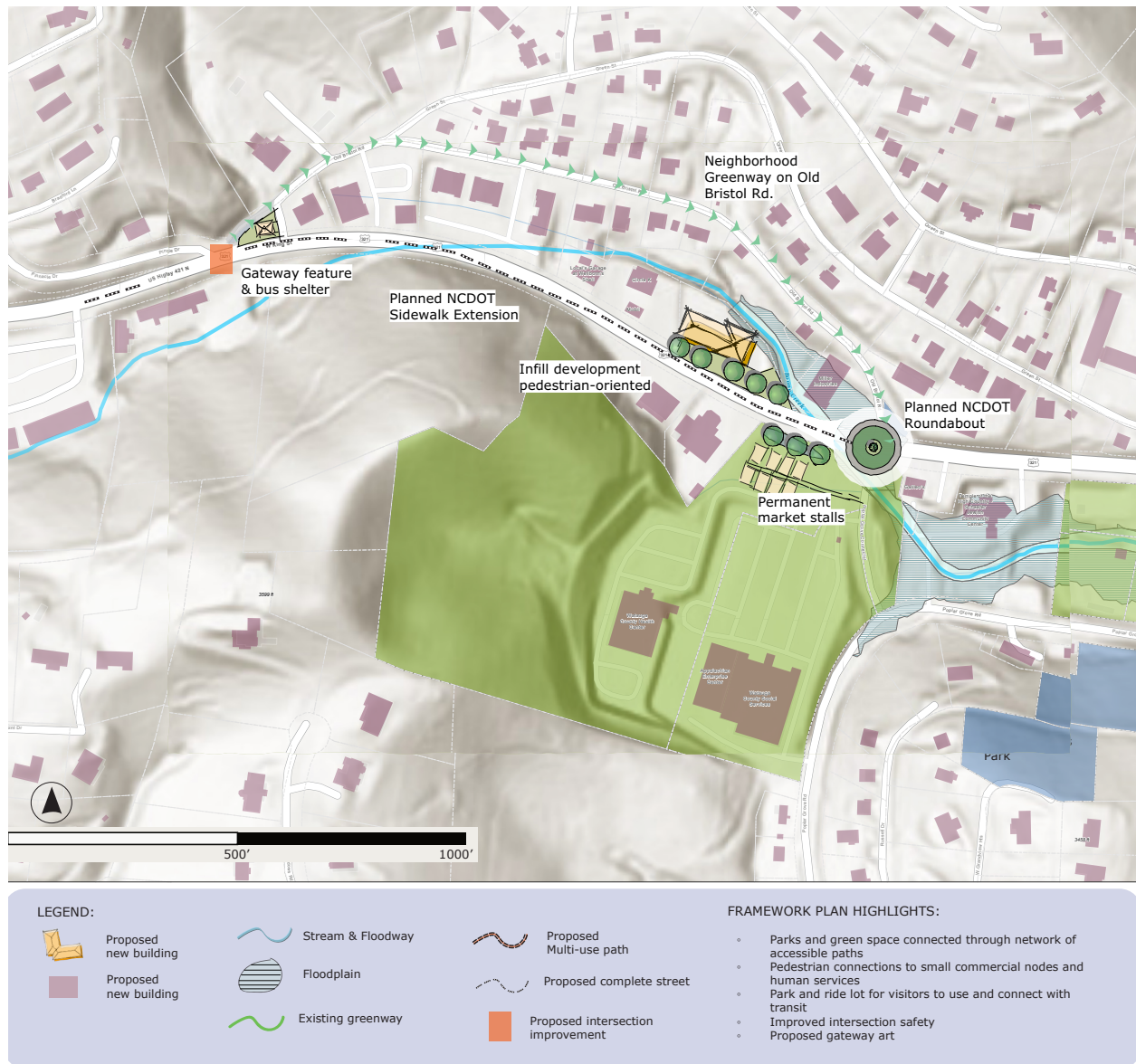
A neighborhood greenway, which promotes biking and walking along the street is recommended on Old Bristol Road.



Northwest Gateway Future Land Use and Character



Northwest Gateway Future Development Scenario



PLACEMAKING PALETTE

Each of the focus areas acts as a gateway into town as well as a place for people. As such, the town can take measures to continue to promote an identity for each focus area. Placemaking elements, such as sculptures, murals and public art help vivify public space. In addition, small public spaces such as pocket parks and playgrounds can add quality of life to neighborhoods at a relatively low cost. Lastly, roads in the focus areas that are low volume, can be converted to neighborhood greenways for all modes of transportation.

TEMPORARY PROTECTED BIKE LANE



BIOSWALE



BUS SHELTER



OUTDOOR SEATING



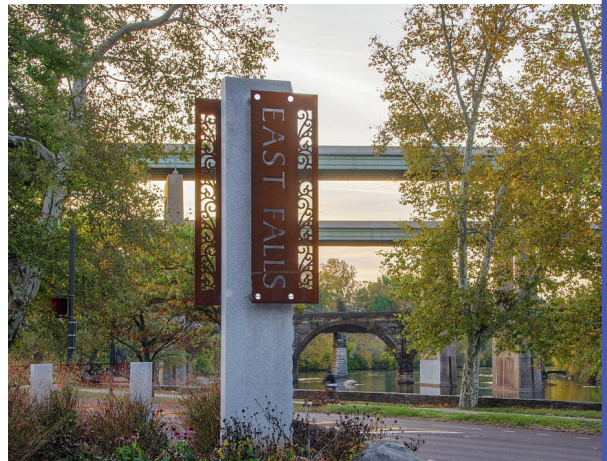
BUS SHELTER WITH PUBLIC ART

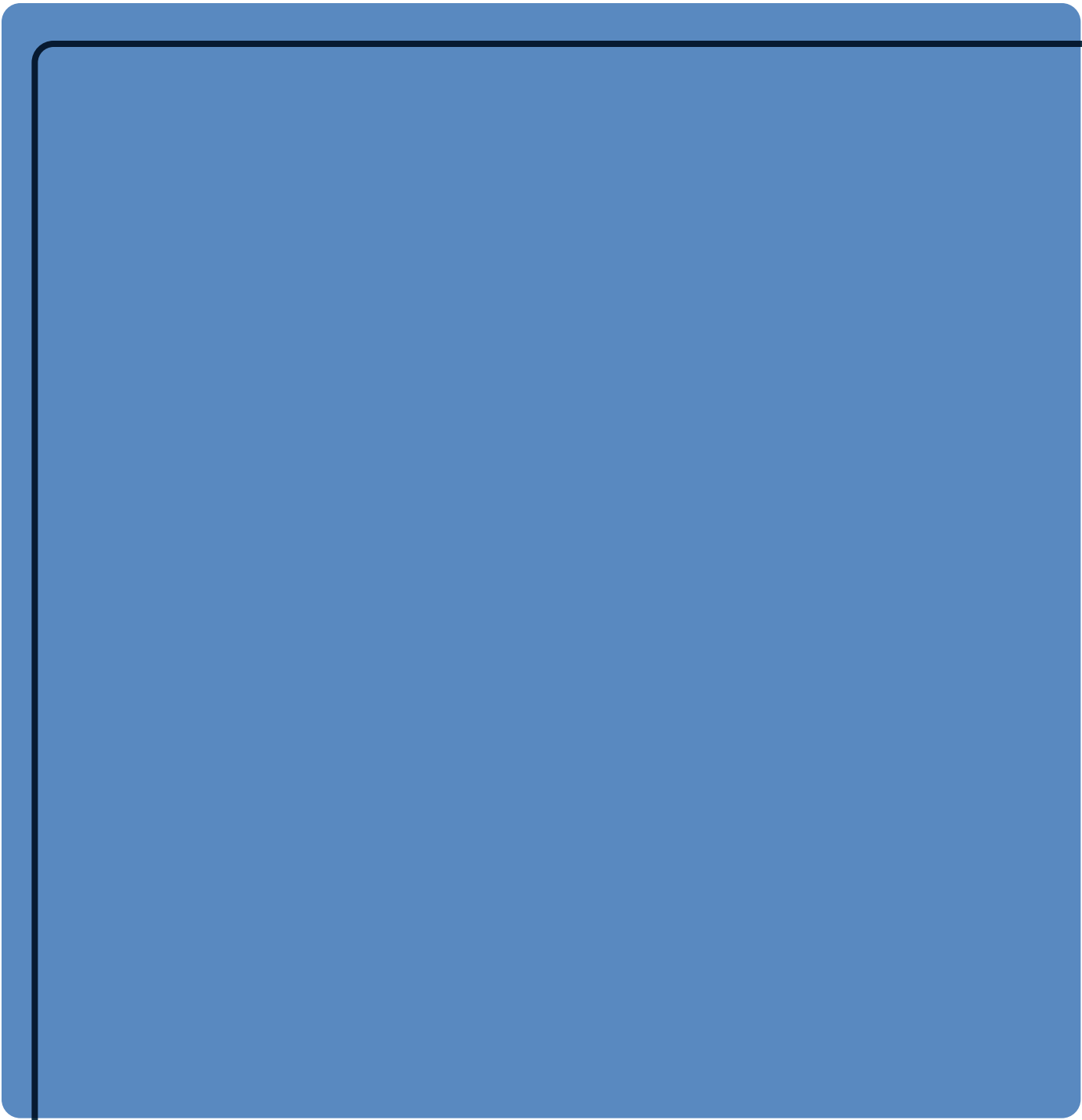


POCKET PARK



PUBLIC ART





Planning Commission Chair/Vice-Chair Application

Town of Boone Planning & Inspections Department
680 W. King Street, Suite C ♦ Boone, North Carolina 28607

Phone (828) 268-6960 ♦ Fax (828) 268-6961 ♦ Email: planning@townofboone.net ♦ www.townofboone.net



Board Member Information (Please see Board Secretary if needed for term information)

Name (Print):

Date Appointed:

Date Term Expires:

Number of Terms Served:

Position:

☐ Chair ☐ Vice-Chair

Questions

1. Orientation & Training

A. Have you completed the Planning Commission orientation?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

B. If no, are you willing to attend orientation (2-3 hour commitment) prior to participating as Chair or Vice-Chair?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

2. Comprehensive Plan & Other Adopted Plans

A. Are you familiar with the Town's 2006 Comprehensive Plan and other adopted Plans as listed on the Planning and Inspections website under the "[Ordinances, Plans & Studies](#)" heading?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

B. If no, are you willing to take the time to review these documents in order to familiarize yourself with the intent and content of these plans prior to participating as Chair or Vice-Chair?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

3. Unified Development Ordinance

A. Are you familiar with the Town of Boone's [Unified Development Ordinance](#), specifically Articles 1 General Provisions, Article 2 Administrative Mechanisms, Article 4 Permits, and Article 9 Amendments?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

B. If no, are you willing to take the time to review these Articles in order to familiarize yourself with the intent and content of these Articles prior to participating as Chair or Vice-Chair?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

4. Robert's Rules of Order

A. Are you familiar with Robert's Rules of Order?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

B. If no, are you willing to take the time to review this Guide in order to familiarize yourself with the intent and content prior to participating as Chair or Vice-Chair?

☐ Yes ☐ NO

5. Please explain why you wish to obtain this appointment:

Official Use Only

Date Reviewed by Planning Commission:

Date Reviewed by Town Council:

S:\Boards\PC\Chair & Vice-Chair Application\PC_Chair&Vice-Chair_Application_08122021.docx