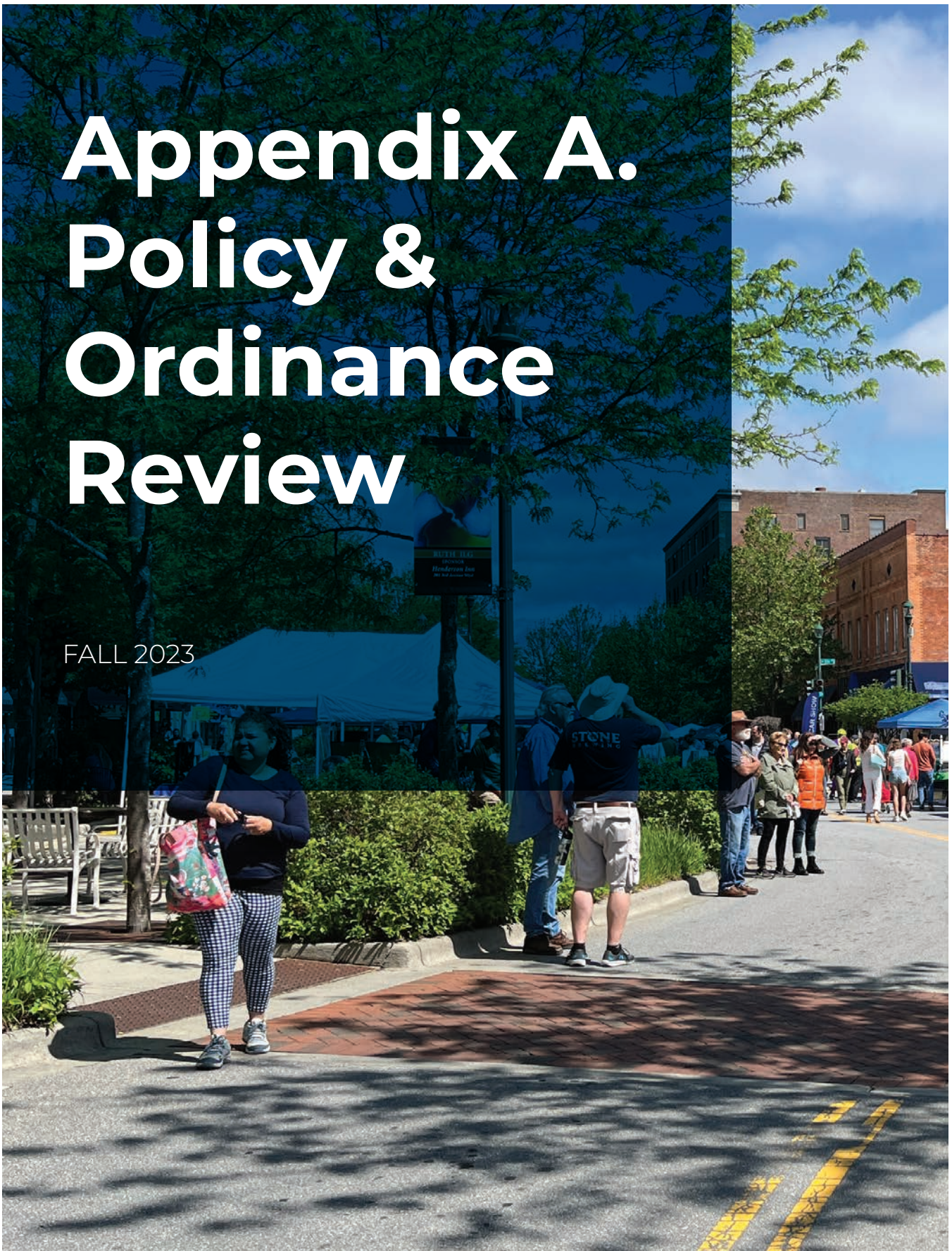


# Appendix A. Policy & Ordinance Review

FALL 2023



# Introduction

A review of Hendersonville’s adopted plans and ordinances provides important insight into its existing policy and regulatory framework for addressing the challenges and opportunities that the City faces as a growing mountain community at the southern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This discussion will help to inform recommendations on how the City can implement the updated community vision that will be crafted as part of the *2045 Comprehensive Plan*.

As a result, this scan is a valuable component of the Data, Inventory, & Analysis phase of the comprehensive planning process. This Policy & Ordinance Review examines the following issues:

**Plan Consistency:**

- How consistent are the City of Hendersonville’s plans with each other?

- How consistent are the City of Hendersonville plans with those of its neighbors?

**Ordinance Consistency:**

- How consistent are the City’s plans with its current development ordinances, and what are some key opportunities to improve its Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations?



Family on Main Street | City of Hendersonville (above); Main Street in Hendersonville (previous page)

**Investment Consistency:**

- How consistent are the City’s plans with its planned public investments, and what potential resources exist to help with plan implementation?

**Opportunities:**

- What are some key opportunities for the City to advance its community goals in the years ahead?

To conduct this analysis, the City’s various adopted plans were reviewed, along with those of its neighbors, as well as the City’s development ordinances, FY23-24 Annual Budget and Capital Improvements Program (CIP), and Rates & Fees Schedule. The results of this review will help inform the goals, policies, and implementation measures included in the new 2045 Comprehensive Plan, which will provide a valuable touchstone for making thoughtful decisions and strategic community investments in the years ahead.



Bearfootin’ Bear | City of Hendersonville

**With a population of seniors that is nearly twice the percentage of North Carolina as a whole, Hendersonville has a growing need to make the community more age friendly.**

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# Plan Consistency

## INTERNAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

In general, there appears to be strong alignment among the various policies in City plans. A particular area of policy intersection is around promoting safe places to walk and bike, as referenced in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the 2021 Henderson County Health Assessment, the 2002 Hendersonville Southside Development Initiative, the 2017 Hendersonville Bicycle Plan, the 2019 Henderson County Greenways Master Plan, recent community surveys, and the new Walk Hendo Pedestrian Plan to upgrade the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the city.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the 2021 Henderson County Health Assessment also align to identify the importance of finding more ways to address the issue of housing affordability. Both housing and pedestrian and bicycle access and

safety are key issues for younger and older populations, as the City continues to experience housing demand as a retirement destination for seniors while also attracting young families.

Key opportunities and needs noted in the plans include:

### Increasing the supply of affordable housing

The City has been studying ways to address the challenge of housing affordability. The N.C. Housing Coalition notes that 26% of households in Henderson County are cost burdened based on high housing costs, causing them to have to spend more than 30% of their annual income on housing.

An income of \$58,640 is needed to afford the Fair Market Rent for rental housing in the county, but the average annual salary for a police officer is \$46,840, and for a healthcare worker is \$27,780.

The 2021 Henderson County Community Health Assessment lists “safe and affordable housing” as one of the top five public health priorities.

In turn, the 2018 Aging Plan for Henderson County notes the need for increased availability of home improvement/ modification programs to help seniors maintain safe, healthy, livable environments.

In addition to the recommendation about the housing study, the City is in the process of developing a Strategic Housing Plan.

Finding partners such as Habitat for Humanity, senior services agencies, faith-based groups, hospitals and health care foundations, and non-profit affordable housing developers can help magnify the investments that each entity makes in addressing this issue.

## Developing more parks and recreational opportunities

The pandemic highlighted public demand for parks and the need for expanding the opportunities for people to get outside and be active close to where they live.



Cross jurisdictional collaboration in Hendersonville

### Making the community more age-friendly

Based on data from the U.S. Census, the City of Hendersonville has a higher percentage of residents that are age 65 and older (30.9%) than the United States as a whole (16.8%), the State of North Carolina (17%), and even Henderson County (26.6%). As a result, making sure the community is age friendly is a continuing need.

Already, Henderson County has prepared a thoughtful Aging Plan, drafted in 2018 by the Council on Aging for Henderson County.

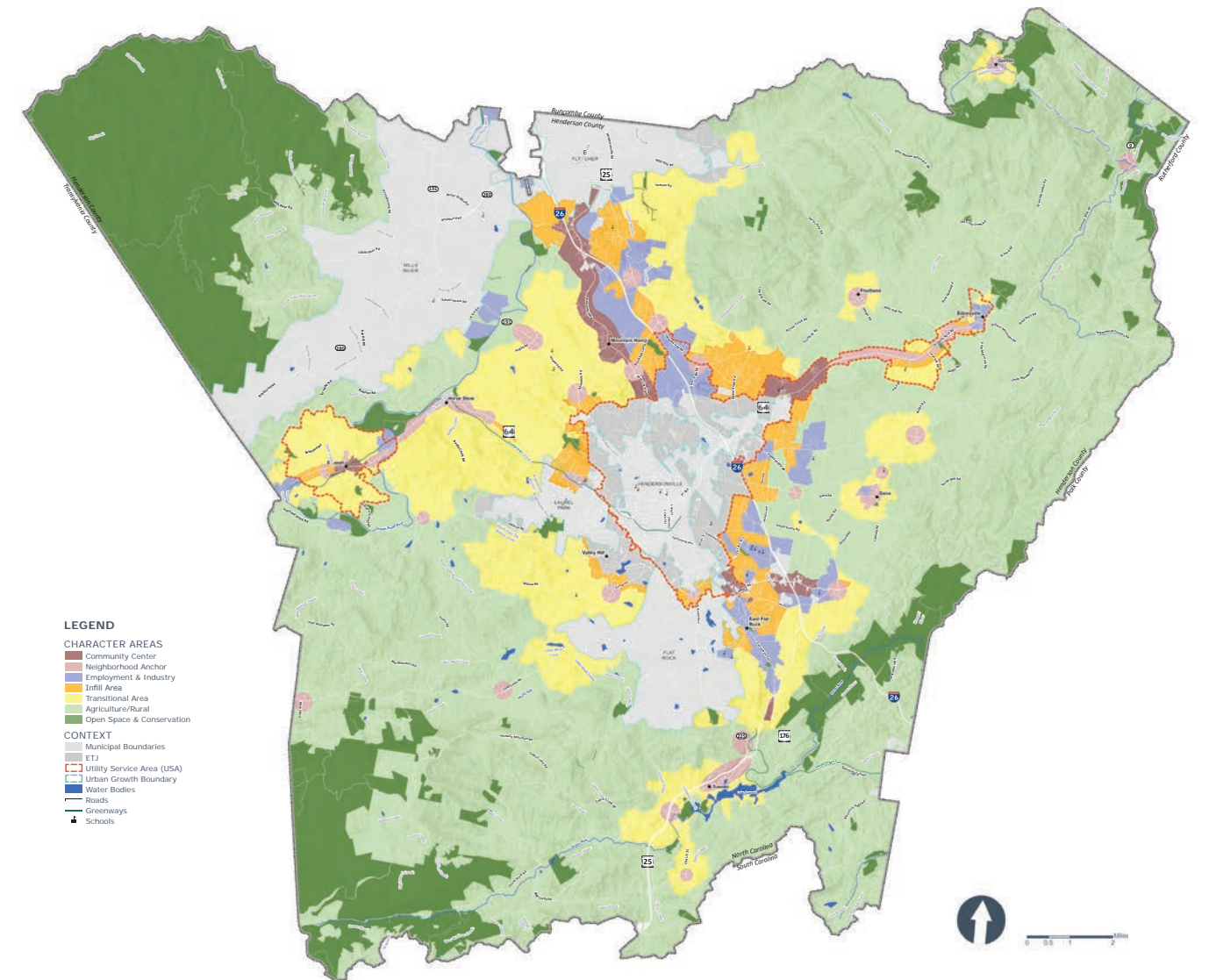
The City has a key role in helping to implement this plan, and the City's updated Comprehensive Plan may provide important new ideas that can be used to help update it. If it hasn't occurred already, collaboration on identifying action steps to pursue the vision for the aging plan would be a useful next step.

### Catalyzing commercial and mixed use redevelopment and creating more attractive gateways

The contrast between the vibrant downtown and some of the City's aging commercial entry corridors is significant, and catalyzing commercial redevelopment can both improve community appearance and function, and also provide a key location for accommodating growth. This is a key issue to address in the 2045 Hendersonville Comprehensive Plan.

### Promoting sustainability

The City has created a new Sustainability Department and has prepared a Sustainability Strategic Plan and Tree Canopy Study. This is important work, and synchronizing these efforts with other community needs, such as attracting and retaining young professionals and families, can help magnify the impact.



Henderson County Future Land Use Map | Henderson County, NC

### Making needed transportation improvements

Thanks largely to topography and natural constraints, circulation in the community is often circuitous. A more connected network of collector streets can help improve the ability of people to get to the places they want to go in a timely manner.

In addition, the 2022 Livable Henderson County Survey found that the community did not rate highly among more than 500 respondents for the accessibility, affordability, timeliness, and safety of the public transportation system. If it hasn't already, Hendersonville and Henderson County might examine the potential of point-to-point microtransit service to help meet the need of residents who don't own a car or have ready access to one. In a similar way, the community did not rate highly for having safe sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities in the 2023 Livable Henderson County Survey, so the adoption of the Walk Hendo Pedestrian Plan is timely.

### Improving the framework for providing water and sewer service

The City maintains a separate water and sewer fund that provides the resources needed to maintain and develop these systems. However, with only one municipal wastewater treatment plant in the county, sewer service in particular may require an evolving management framework to help ensure adequate investment and efficient use of resources in coordination with land use policy goals.

The City is currently engaged in equalizing water and sewer rates inside and outside of its incorporated limits over a 10-year period, which provides an important example of how to treat customers in a financially equitable manner throughout its service area.

An overarching message that comes through the plans is the desire of the Hendersonville community to maintain its small-town character as it grows. Many kinds of activities can contribute to this end, and this goal can provide an important filter for determining priority investments.

At the same time, as a small growing city with lots of needs and desires, a key challenge will be finding ways to achieve multiple objectives through the local government projects that are implemented, and developing partnerships is vital in order to leverage local public investments with county, state, federal, and private dollars to help deliver envisioned improvements.

### PLAN CONSISTENCY WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

In the same way that it can be helpful to examine the internal consistency of adopted plans, it can also be useful to look at the extent to which Hendersonville's plans dovetail with those of its neighbors.

### Laurel Park

Analysis included in Laurel Park's 2016-2026 Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2015 identifies less topographically constrained eastern parts of the Laurel Park community as more suitable to accommodate new growth. It includes a proposed town center on Sixth Avenue/US 64 and Pisgah Drive. However, this is located at Laurel Park's existing commercial core and so does not represent a significant change from existing conditions. The plan envisions retrofitting this area to make it more walkable and civic oriented.

In addition, the plan calls for the town center to make appropriate transitions to adjacent residential development. If realized, this vision would create a more engaging activity center that could help serve residents at the western edge of Hendersonville.

One opportunity for the City is to retrofit streets and require new development to include pedestrian and bicycle facilities to help link Hendersonville residents of all ages to this evolving amenity.

The Laurel Park Comprehensive Plan also calls for the rest of its eastern border with Hendersonville to remain residential, with single-family homes on half-acre lots, which would dovetail well with the low- and moderate-density residential and open space designations that already exist and that are called for in Hendersonville’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

The Laurel Park Plan also identifies the area between the incorporated limits of Laurel Park and Hendersonville, all of which is in Hendersonville’s Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, as an “Interlocal Study Area” in which the two municipalities would work to develop a shared vision and discuss which municipality

is best suited to provide services. The Laurel Park Plan notes that “The Interlocal Study Area is highly developed, and land use patterns are not expected to change greatly.”

One question is whether this potential point of coordination and collaboration has been pursued to date by the two communities.

One other point of connection is along the Ecusta Trail, with Phase 1 slated to link Jackson Park in Hendersonville with Laurel Green Park in Laurel Park, continuing north and west through Laurel Park to Brevard in future phases. This will create an exciting amenity serving all of the communities along its path.

#### Flat Rock

The 2022 Village of Flat Rock Comprehensive Land Use Plan calls for maintaining “existing land use patterns and densities within the Village, with a focus on limiting nonresidential development; encouraging single-family detached residential uses; preferring large

residential tracts; encouraging the protection of open space; and protecting the integrity of the Flat Rock Historic District.” Altogether, three quarters of the village is in the Flat Rock Historic District, limiting the extent of land use changes that can occur. As a result, land use compatibility and impacts from this community on Hendersonville are likely to remain similar to their current state. Understanding potential land use benefits and impacts on Flat Rock from possible future redevelopment along Spartanburg Highway in Hendersonville, however, may be important.

One opportunity for building the regional green space network would be to connect the 66-acre Park at Flat Rock with Jackson Park in Hendersonville via a multi-use path. The 2019 Henderson County Greenway Master Plan shows a proposed 2.5-mile South Oklawaha Trail in order to make this linkage.

Such connections often yield outsized benefits to residents and businesses along the length of such trails by creating new opportunities for longer recreational or exercise opportunities to interesting new destinations.

#### Henderson County

The proposed Future Land Use Map in the draft 2045 Henderson County Comprehensive Plan calls for mostly “Infill” areas and “Transitional” areas immediately adjacent to Hendersonville’s incorporated and extraterritorial jurisdictional limits. In addition, there are several “Employment and Industrial” areas immediately adjacent to the city, as well as two proposed “Community Centers”.

One of the proposed Employment and Industrial areas is located north of the US 64 interchange with I-26 around the existing quarry and sand and gravel pit, extending west to the existing Kimberly-Clark manufacturing facility.

Some of this area comes close to existing residential development, so ensuring appropriate transitions will be important. A second Employment and Industrial area is southeast of the US 64/I-26 interchange in an area with a mix of light industrial, civic, commercial, and residential uses, so ensuring land use compatibility will be important here as well through techniques such as housing all industrial activities in fully enclosed buildings, and providing adequate vegetative buffering.

One proposed Community Center includes the area extending east from the intersection of US 64 and Fruitland Road and the Apple Valley Middle School. However, the area in Hendersonville west of this location already includes significant commercial development including a Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, and other retail development. Taking a closer look at how to develop this area in a coordinated manner with more walkable design and parallel routes to distribute traffic could make this a more attractive and functional area.

The other proposed community center is just east of Spartanburg Highway and west of East Henderson High School. Already, this area includes a significant number of commercial and civic uses developed in a largely suburban manner that could benefit from being knit together into more of a walkable mixed-use center with better community design.

The remaining areas proposed adjacent to Hendersonville's incorporated limits and ETJ include "Infill" areas that call for a "residential focus that includes a mix of housing types inside subdivisions and planned developments", as well as "Transitional" areas that call for "residential areas of limited density", with a preference for conservation subdivisions to help protect open space as part of the development. This would appear to dovetail with the predominantly residential areas on the City's borders.

A key point of discussion is what should constitute the utility service area in the county. The 2045 Henderson County Comprehensive Plan calls for it to include a large swath of land running through the central part of the county from Flat Rock north to Fletcher and the northeastern part of Mills River, and including islands of land to the west and east around Etowah and Fruitland/Edneyville.

More discussion about an appropriate delineation of future service could be important, especially if the City of Hendersonville is to provide significant utility outside its borders.



Hendo Bee Line Mural in downtown Hendersonville

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# Ordinance Consistency

As the ordinance is reviewed for consistency, an initial question is how consistent the Hendersonville 2030 Comprehensive Plan is with the current (2023) Zoning Ordinance. The Hendersonville 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes 10 Future Land Use Categories that are intended to function together as a “transect” or land use continuum that transitions from more intense activity in the heart of the community and in designated activity centers, to less intense activity at the periphery. In turn, the Zoning Ordinance includes 30 zoning districts, with the following number of zoning districts for each land use type:

- **Commercial: 9**
- **Mixed Use: 5**
- **Historic Overlay: 3**
- **Industrial: 2**
- **Institutional: 3**
- **Residential: 8**

These existing zoning districts don't appear to support all of the future land use categories included in the 2030 plan. For example, the distinction between the Downtown Core and the Downtown Support areas intended to transition to adjacent residential areas is not fully realized in the current zoning categories, with no real zoning district that embodies the Downtown Support vision. In turn, it is not clear the extent to which the Highway Mixed Use (HMU) category supports the vision for Neighborhood Activity Centers called for in the plan, and the Central Mixed Use zoning category is largely downtown focused, leaving no clear vehicle for implementing the Neighborhood Activity Center land use category in the plan. While the High-Intensity Neighborhood land use category in the plan is matched with the High-Density Residential zoning district, the latter does not allow attached dwellings

beyond duplexes, as called for in the 2030 plan. In addition, the Medium-Intensity Neighborhood land use category does not have a corresponding residential zoning district that allows limited multi-family development along major roadways, as the plan specifies. The Low-density Residential land use category does not have a corresponding residential zoning district that allows attached dwellings, as called for in the plan. Finally, there is currently no good zoning match for the Natural Resource/Agricultural land use category, with the existing R-40 Estate Residential allowing one unit per acre, which is too dense to support most traditional agricultural operations, and does not constitute true open space land because of its significant residential component.

Unrealized opportunities to translate the 2030 Comp Plan into updated zoning districts and standards, as well as corresponding zoning designations on the ground, extend to the 2030 Future Land Use Map

(FLUM). The 2030 FLUM includes three Regional Activity Centers and five Neighborhood Activity Centers. These are in varying states of being operationalized into corresponding zoning designations in the current Hendersonville zoning map. The two northern Regional Activity Centers – one around Blue Ridge Mall, and the other just east of I-26 -- both have considerable land zoned for commercial development and substantial commercial development on the ground. However, they don't appear to have significant multi-family development or sufficient design features to promote a walkable environment. The southern Regional Activity Center appears to be relatively early in its zoning and development, and also is developing in a largely suburban pattern.

The five areas designated for Neighborhood Activity Centers (NACs) in the 2030 Future Land Use Map have also been operationalized to varying degrees to date through zoning and development.



The northernmost Neighborhood Activity Center along the Asheville Highway around the American Freight Furniture and Mattress Store appears to be early in its commercial zoning and development, while the next Neighborhood Activity Center to the south at Asheville Highway and Haywood Road is more realized on the zoning map and on the ground at this major intersection. Continuing south, the third Neighborhood Activity Center at South Main Street and Spartanburg Highway has several major grocery tenants but lacks a walkable design and significant multi-family development, while the fourth NAC at Spartanburg Highway between Brooklyn Avenue and Shepherd Street also has growing commercial and light industrial activity, and similarly lacks a pedestrian friendly design. However, it has two apartment complexes just to the south. The southernmost NAC at Spartanburg Highway and Upward Road has significant commercial development on the zoning map and on the ground, but also lacks a walkable design.

These observations indicate that the 2030 Future Land Use Map and land use categories include significant components that have not been translated into updated zoning standards and the current zoning map. Altogether, the 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes about 160 implementation projects or “actions” -- a potentially overwhelming portfolio of projects. A key task as part of the 2045 comprehensive planning process will be to understand which implementation projects from the 2030 Comp Plan have been completed, and which ones still remain to be done.

Hendersonville currently has a separate Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. A review of these documents yielded the following suggestions:

### Formatting

The City has an opportunity to improve the readability of the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The addition of more summary tables and graphics would be useful. Examples of helpful summary tables would include ones for dimensional standards and for development review processes required for different types of permit applications (for example, adding a table in the Zoning Ordinance on the decision-making process similar to the existing Table 2.02 in the Subdivision Regulations).

### Document organization

Standards are spread throughout the Zoning Ordinance, and in some cases are repeated for the same function, such as for conditional zoning (included both in Section 4-4 and Section 7-4-9.1). Duplicative or overlapping standards increase the potential that some standards will get updated in some places and not others over time, increasing the potential that they may conflict

with each other in the future, making them more difficult to use and interpret. In addition, clearer formatting and organization can help City staff and others to more easily identify opportunities to improve the standards. The City’s development codes would benefit from the creation of a Unified Development Ordinance that integrates zoning and subdivision standards into a single easy-to-use document.

### Enhanced parkland dedication requirement

Currently, the Subdivision Regulations require the dedication of 500 square feet of parkland per dwelling unit. A widely used standard in other communities is 1/35th of an acre per dwelling unit, or about 1,244 square feet. As a result, the City should consider revisiting this standard. A related question is the extent to which developers provide a payment in lieu of dedication, as opposed to land. To the extent that it makes sense for the City to accept a fee instead of land for a particular development project, it can provide a more flexible resource for the City that may be used for a greater range of needs, including park improvements and as part of the City's matching fund requirements for state and federal grant (although land can sometimes be used as well).

### Structure of conditions for conditional zoning districts:

The North Carolina General Statutes allow conditions of approval to be more strict or more lenient than current ordinance standards to help a proposed project harmonize with the site on which it is proposed. While conditions are often more strict in order to help mitigate potential impacts of new development on surrounding properties and the community, in some cases allowing conditions that reasonably relax ordinance standards, particularly for dimensional requirements, can help a project work on a challenging infill or redevelopment site. This may become more important for the City as it runs out of greenfield sites and looks to find ways to help encourage appropriate infill development.

### Minimum housing code

The City's existing Minimum Housing Code would benefit from updating and revisions to detail the minimum housing elements and address aesthetic issues within the constraints of state law. This can be particularly important in communities that have aging housing stock.

As part of this evaluation process, the City should assess the staffing needed to adequately enforce these standards. There may be ways to add targeted capacity to the existing code enforcement staff to help carry out this function efficiently and effectively.

### Form-based code

Another opportunity to improve key sections of the Zoning Ordinance would be to consider drafting a form-based code for certain districts. This approach to ordinance standards puts more emphasis on design and how buildings and sites interface with the public realm along the street frontage.

This approach can be more costly to develop, and potentially to administer, and so is often most useful in places where the community would like to promote a more walkable environment, such as in downtown, along 7th Avenue, and in other current or potential activity centers. This work could be done separately or in conjunction with the preparation of a Unified Development Ordinance.

These are a few initial opportunities for improving the City's development codes. Conducting a more detailed code "diagnosis" will be an important task as part of a major update to the City's development ordinances.



b. **Include frequent public spaces.** Provide pocket parks, public plazas, promenades, and other parks and public spaces throughout the development that include seating and landscaping to provide welcoming, comfortable, and green destinations for residents and visitors.



c. **Orient buildings to the street and use high-quality materials.** Orient the main building façade to the street, make the main entrance clearly visible to help pedestrians find where to enter, and use high-quality, durable building materials such as brick, stone, and other forms of masonry.



d. **Minimize blank walls.** Limit long stretches of blank walls. Instead, provide large windows with storefront displays and architectural details such as projecting and recessed building walls and other design elements to create more interesting buildings and a more engaging pedestrian environment.



e. **Minimize the visual impact of parking.** Screen surface parking lots with vegetation, low-lying walls, trellises, and/or other features to create a more pleasing streetscape and reduce the visual impact of parking. Line parking decks with other uses such as retail shops on the ground floor and residences on upper floors.



f. **Create interesting views.** Establish strong terminal vistas and a sense of discovery and arrival, such as by siting signature buildings at the end of a street view, to increase the quality and interest of the project design.




g. **Use landscaping to help improve the outdoor experience.** Use a coordinated landscape palette of trees, shrubs, and other vegetation to promote visual continuity and help create an attractive and comfortable outdoor experience.

§ 6.6 GATEWAY CONDITIONAL ZONING DISTRICTS.

6.6.1 Gateway Conditional Zoning District Standards.

In addition to the five Base Zoning Districts detailed in Section 6.5, the Butner Gateway also includes three Conditional Zoning Districts. These exist as floating zones as shown on the Butner Zoning Map, and can be applied to individual properties in the designated areas through approval of a conditional zoning following the procedures for a conditional zoning detailed in Section 6.3 and applying the applicable standards for each district detailed in this section.

(A) BUTNER COVE GATEWAY (BCG) DISTRICT				
<b>1. Purpose</b>				
		To encourage walkable, mixed-use development at the southern entrance to Butner that creates a high-quality gateway into the community, with commercial and higher density residential uses and activities that serve local and regional residents, workers, visitors, and the traveling public.		
<b>2. Density, Form, and Uses</b>				
		<b>Single-Family Attached Dwellings (townhomes)</b>	<b>Multi-Family Dwellings (condos, apartments)</b>	<b>Other Uses</b>
<b>Net Density (d.u./acre)</b>	<b>Min.</b>	8	10	N/A
	<b>Max.</b>	12	60	N/A
<b>Min. Height<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Stories</b>	N/A	2	2
	<b>Feet</b>	N/A	27	27
<b>Max. Height<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Stories</b>	4	6/20 <sup>2</sup>	6/20 <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Feet</b>	48	72/240 <sup>2</sup>	75/24 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Allowable Frontage Types<sup>3</sup></b>		Shopfront, Walk-up, Green		
<b>Mix of Uses</b>		Required (residential, commercial, and at least one of the following: office; institutional)		
<b>Allowable Uses</b>		See Table of Permitted Uses		
<b>3. Site Design</b>				
<b>Min. Lot Area (square feet)</b>		3,500	10,000	2,000
<b>Min. Lot Width (feet)</b>		20	50	20
<b>Build-to Line (feet)</b>	<b>Min.</b>	10	0	0
	<b>Max.</b>	20	20	20
<b>Min. Build-to Zone Street Frontage Occupied by Buildings (%)</b>		80 <sup>4</sup>	80 <sup>4</sup>	80 <sup>4</sup>
<b>Min. Front Setback (feet)</b>		N/A (see Min. Build-to Line above)		
<b>Min. Side Setback (feet)</b>		10 <sup>5</sup>	0	0
<b>Min. Corner Side Setback (feet)</b>		10 <sup>5</sup>	0	0
<b>Min. Rear Setback (feet)</b>	<b>Alley-loaded</b>	6	N/A	N/A
	<b>Other</b>	0	0	0
<b>Off-street Parking Types</b>		Surface lot, parking deck, underground parking		
<b>Off-street Parking Locations</b>		To the side, behind, above, below		
<b>Off-street Parking Ratio</b>		See Section 6.6.1(D)(7) <sup>6</sup>		
<b>4. Streets and Blocks<sup>7</sup></b>				
<b>Street Types – Internal Streets<sup>8</sup></b>		Main Street; Avenue		
<b>Street Types – Adjacent Arterials<sup>8</sup></b>		Parkway with Median, or as determined by Planning Director in consultation with NC Department of Transportation		
<b>Pedestrian Facilities</b>		Both sides of every street; safe crossings; connected network within and between projects		
<b>Bicycle Facilities</b>		Sharrows on local streets; Bike lanes on every collector; Multi-use paths on every arterial; Bicycle parking <sup>9</sup>		
<b>Streets</b>		Transportation Impact Analysis <sup>10</sup> , Right-of-Way dedication, street connectivity <sup>11</sup>		

# Investment Consistency

The City of Hendersonville *FY2023-2024 Adopted Budget* notes that the City general fund budget for this year is \$56 million, with a fund balance of 30.2% as of 6/30/22 and an FY24 tax rate of \$0.49 per \$100 valuation. We understand that the City has done significant work in recent years to make employee salaries more competitive to help with retaining and attracting personnel. Ensuring adequate staffing of qualified personnel is an industry-wide challenge currently, and this effort should help with maintaining a strong workforce and reducing the organizational cost of staff turnover.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING

The FY24 budget indicates that 3.09% of the budget has been allocated to capital projects, with another 13.85% dedicated to debt service on existing capital expenditures. The City has a significant list of building renovations, construction, and major vehicle and other equipment expenditures being funded through these sources. The City has a separate Water & Sewer Fund with an FY24 budget of \$24.3 million, as well as a Downtown Program, an Environmental Services Fund, and a Stormwater Fund, among others. The City has developed a thoughtful system for scoring potential capital projects for ranking in its 10-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), based on the degree of urgency and the priority of the function within city government.

## Capital Improvement Prioritization

FY24

The City of Hendersonville maintains a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to track and plan for future-year projects. The CIP is amended and adopted on an annual basis, with each fiscal year's budget process. The adopted CIP spans 10 years from date of adoption.

The City's CIP utilizes a two-dimension rating system where two types of priorities are established, the categories for each are ranked and assigned a numeric score, and the scores for the categories from one dimension are multiplied by the scores for the categories from the other dimension to produce a matrix of ratings. The two dimensions used in the City's matrix are (1) the degree of urgency and (2) the priority of the function, each with subsets ranked from high to low. A low rating on this matrix would equate to a high priority project for the City, and a high rating would equate to a low priority project. The image below is an excerpt from the City's CIP illustrating the City's rating system. As priorities change over time, the corresponding priority ranking for respective projects are re-evaluated each fiscal year

City of Hendersonville Two-Dimension Rating Matrix								
		Priority of Function						
		1 Protection	2 Environmental Health	3 General Government	4 Maintenance	5 Community Development	6 Recreation	7 History/ Culture
Degree of Urgency	1 Legislation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	2 Hazard	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
	3 Efficiency	3	6	9	12	15	18	21
	4 Economic Advantage	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
	5 Expand Service	5	10	15	20	25	30	35
	6 New Program or Convenience	6	12	18	24	30	36	42

The ratings for each category are detailed in the CIP as follows:

### Degrees of Urgency:

1. Legislation: Required by legislation or regulation of federal or state government.
2. Hazard: Removes an obvious or potential hazard to public health or safety.
3. Efficiency: Replaces equipment or a facility that is obsolete, or would be too costly to repair, or maintains and better utilizes existing equipment and facilities.
4. Economic Advantage: Directly benefits the City's economic base by increasing property values or other revenue potential.
5. Expand Service: Expands or increase a service or improves a standard of service.
6. New Program or Convenience: Makes possible a new service or increase convenience or comfort.

### Priority of Function:

1. Protection of persons and property: police, fire, rescue, inspections, etc.
2. Environmental Health: water, sewer, sanitation, public health, etc.
3. General Government: office facilities, central services, etc.
4. Maintenance: general maintenance of City owned property.
5. Community Development: public housing, rehabilitation, etc.
6. Recreation: Parks, athletic programs, etc.
7. Heritage/Culture: education, libraries, historic districts, etc.

Dept.	Fiscal Year	Project Title	Total Cost	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33+	Fund	Dept.	Acct.	Funding Source	
City Engineer		Above the Mid Greenway & Streetscape - 2208	1,323,000	76,000	-	1,658,450	82,476	1,063,000	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
		101-9800 Hwy Street Sidewalk, #21042	149,000	24,000	320,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
		101-9803 Green Street Sidewalk, #21043	424,000	31,000	360,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
		Traffic Calming Improvements	450,000	31,000	35,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	410	1014	51010	GF Cash	
	2024 Total		14,544,000	160,000	751,000	1,698,450	962,476	11,000,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	410	1014	51010	GF Cash	
		Maple St Parking Lot	215,000	-	215,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan
		Operations Center Parking Lot Replacement	780,000	-	780,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash
		Narrow Sidewalk Connection to Exotic Trail	480,000	-	480,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash
		Vehicle Replacement	40,000	-	40,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	Loan
	2025 Total		1,514,000	-	1,514,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan
	S. Main St. Streetscape (Allen to S. King)	6,779,000	-	-	801,000	276,000	5,700,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
2026 Total		6,779,000	-	-	801,000	276,000	5,700,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Clear Creek Greenway Reservoir	250,000	-	-	250,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Clear Creek Rd Trailhead Parking Lot	300,000	-	-	300,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Clear Creek Trail Loop and Bike Track	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
2027 Total		1,550,000	-	-	1,550,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	1st Avenue Streetscape (Church to Maple)	6,912,000	-	-	-	884,000	288,000	5,760,000	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	King Street Improvements, #21011	1,811,000	-	-	-	1,811,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash	
2028 Total		8,723,000	-	-	-	2,695,000	288,000	5,760,000	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash	
	1st Avenue Streetscape (Church to King)	5,140,800	-	-	-	452,000	388,800	4,320,000	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Church Street Improvements, #22003	2,351,000	-	-	-	2,351,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash	
2029 Total		7,491,800	-	-	-	2,703,000	388,800	4,320,000	-	-	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	2nd Avenue Streetscape (Church to King)	5,140,800	-	-	-	-	-	452,000	388,800	4,320,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
2030 Total		5,140,800	-	-	-	-	-	452,000	388,800	4,320,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	1st Avenue Streetscape (Church to King)	5,140,800	-	-	-	-	-	452,000	388,800	4,320,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Allen Branch Greenway	6,096,000	-	-	-	-	-	840,000	786,000	4,930,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Wilson Creek Greenway, Phase 1	1,328,750	-	-	-	-	-	112,500	801,250	1,125,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Cherry Branch Greenway	3,560,250	-	-	-	-	-	472,500	425,250	2,662,500	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Clear Creek Road Sidewalk Extension	2,149,250	-	-	-	-	-	288,000	241,250	1,640,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
2031 Total		18,285,000	-	-	-	-	-	2,122,000	2,857,500	14,317,500	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash	
	Maple Street Sidewalk Improvements	979,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	85,200	406,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash	
2032 Total		979,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	85,200	406,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Asheville Highway Pedestrian Improvements	3,500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,500,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Spartanburg Highway Pedestrian Improvements	5,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	Upward Road Sidewalk Improvements Project	5,900,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,900,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
	US 64 Pedestrian Improvements	4,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,000,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
2033 Total		18,400,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18,400,000	-	-	-	410	1014	51010	GF Cash Grant Loan	
City Engineer Total		85,561,600	160,000	2,261,000	2,695,450	2,615,476	19,460,000	3,316,000	5,530,800	6,863,800	6,856,700	6,856,700	18,400,000					
Community Development		Decor and Branding - 7th Avenue	10,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	21	2102	51000	MSD Cash	
		Main St. Electrical Panel Upgrade	14,000	7,000	7,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	2102	51000	MSD Cash	
		Pedestrian Wayfinding	40,000	80,000	5,000	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	2102	51000	MSD Cash	
		Zoning Compliance Permit Software	25,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	1300	51001	GF Cash	
		Comprehensive Plan Update	180,000	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	1300	51020	GF Cash	
	2024 Total		259,000	253,000	13,000	6,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	21	2102	51001	MSD Cash	
		Deport Plan Improvement Construction	300,000	-	200,000	100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	2102	51001	MSD Cash
		Sound System	40,000	-	40,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	2102	51001	MSD Cash
	2025 Total		340,000	-	240,000	100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	2102	51001	MSD Cash
		Decorative Lighting on Avenues	450,000	-	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	20	2102	51001	MSD Cash
2026 Total		450,000	-	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	20	2102	51001	MSD Cash	
Community Development Total		1,234,000	253,000	288,000	131,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	21	2102	51001	MSD Cash	

Capital Improvement Plan | City of Hendersonville

One item that does not appear in the capital portion of the current budget, and perhaps instead is included in the operating portion of an individual departmental budget not shown in the summary budget, is major software and information technology projects. With the increasing importance of online service capabilities, the opportunity to deliver services more efficiently and effectively using digital technology, and the importance of protecting system integrity and customer data, experts suggest that local governments should be spending

on information technology at a level close to what the private sector does, which is 8%-13% of total annual expenditures. Given the considerable needs of a growing community, and its significant but finite financial resources, Hendersonville will need to look for ways to achieve multiple objectives through the projects and public investments that it makes.

### PROJECT DELIVERY

Already, the City appears to be running a number of special projects. That demand will most likely grow following the adoption of the new Comprehensive Plan. As a result,

to help facilitate project execution in a timely and effective manner, the City should consider creating a Plan Implementation Fund in the Community Development Department to pay for small-dollar studies to scope projects in preparation for full design and construction, as well as to fund costs for smaller improvements.

If desired, use of these funds could be restricted to projects that specifically help implement the Comprehensive Plan. This fund should be structured so that the Community Development Director can tap these resources at their discretion to help move projects forward and deliver small ones in a timely manner. This can help maintain momentum between larger projects that require special budget line items in the annual budget or through third-party funding.

The City should also consider a larger City-wide Innovation Fund with funds available for spending at the discretion of the City Manager,

if such a fund does not exist already, to help the City act more quickly on new opportunities to improve the community. Each of these funds should be re-seeded with new monies in each annual budget.

### FEE SCHEDULE

A review of the FY24 Hendersonville Schedule of Rates and Fees suggests that the City may not be achieving full cost recovery on staff time and resources spent conducting development reviews. Given the significant growth pressure the City is experiencing, it has an opportunity to achieve full cost recovery with minimal impact on development demand. As a result, if it hasn't already done so recently, the City's Community Development should consider analyzing the cost of development reviews and proposing adjustments to the department's rates and fees as appropriate for the FY25 annual budget. Increased fees would also allow for incentivizing certain outcomes by offering to reduce fees if objectives are met.

## STATE AND FEDERAL GRANTS

Already, the City of Hendersonville is undoubtedly working to tap state and federal funding sources to leverage local expenditures in meeting community needs. There may be additional opportunities for this kind of leveraging, for example with the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), the N.C. Land & Water Fund, the federal Land & Water Conservation Fund, and other state and federal sources. Funds secured through the development process, for example as payments in lieu, along with general fund monies allocated by the City, can provide a local match, as needed.

Now is also a good time to review existing federal funding sources in light of major new grant programs that are becoming available through the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Act, the Deficit Reduction Act, and other sources, to identify potential new opportunities to magnify the impact of available local funding to advance the community vision.

To help the City do this, it could designate part of a staff position (for example a possible management analyst position in the City Manager's office or the Finance Department), if it hasn't done this already, to more systematically identify potential state, federal, and private foundation grant opportunities, and support the work of departments in pursuing appropriate sources to help leverage local dollars.

In these ways, the City can use its financial capabilities to enhance its system for timely delivery of identified plan implementation projects to help position it for continued success in the years ahead.



Downtown Hendersonville | Visit Hendersonville, NC

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# Continued Progress

As the City moves forward with its work to develop an updated comprehensive plan, four opportunities will be fundamentally important toward implementing the plan and making continued progress as a community in the years ahead.

## Developing stronger cross-jurisdictional collaboration

Cities and their surrounding counties have differing responsibilities, and sometimes differing priorities. But they both have a shared interest in the success of the community.

As a result, the City of Hendersonville and Henderson County should actively look for common ground and opportunities to collaborate to better serve their constituents. If needed, staff might enlist third-party facilitators to help support the identification of common goals. They could help identify specific projects for both entities to work on together, addressing common needs and strengthening their relationship to serve the community better.



Entrance to downtown Hendersonville | To Asheville and Beyond

Such coordination may also be helpful with the Town of Laurel Park and the Village of Flat Rock.

## Embracing differences:

A review of the City's adopted plans highlights that the community is a study in contrasts.

- It is a focus of activity in a sea of farm and forestland.
- It is both a desirable and growing destination as well as a cherished hometown.
- It has a walkable downtown connected to the world by auto-oriented corridors.
- It wants to preserve its small-town character while being a 21<sup>st</sup> century city.
- The population mixes traditional values with a diversity of cultures and lifestyles.

These differences suggest that for the City to thrive, the community must embrace its diversity.

Community initiatives to build a culture of tolerance and celebration of differences can help create a more welcoming environment for everyone in the community to help them contribute more fully to making Hendersonville a great place.

For example, the City might partner with community organizations to host festivals to celebrate the range of cultures in the community, sponsor community conversations to listen and talk about how to create a more welcoming environment for people of all ages, religions, cultures, and gender identities in order to respect, protect, and promote civil and human rights, develop a civility pledge for community members to sign committing to work to create a welcoming environment for all, and/or invite community members to contribute to a tapestry or mural that celebrates the diversity of the community.

### Managing emerging issues

Another opportunity is to track the growing array of emerging issues and identify the ones that are most relevant to Hendersonville. As communities recover from the pandemic and try to adjust to the new normal, a key activity will be improving their readiness to respond more quickly and effectively to the next disruption. This means working systematically to incorporate more of a future focus into local government operations. The essential action needed is to operationalize a future focus in the everyday work of the City.

The City should consider establishing an internal team to track emerging issues, identifying the ones most relevant to Hendersonville, and begin developing ways to address their impacts on the various aspects of City operations and the community. Collaboration with Henderson County and agencies like the Land of Sky Regional Council can help support this work.

The UNC School of Government is developing a Managing Disruption Briefing Book to help local governments identify drivers of change that are most relevant to them and develop and implement a Community Readiness Plan to help improve the ability of their community to respond to disruptive forces like a pandemic, workplace and workforce changes, and climate impacts. The book is due for release in early 2024.

### Preparing for build-out

Looking to the future, the City should also begin planning for the time beyond build-out, when sizable vacant development sites no longer exist in the community, and any new development will need to come in the form of infill and redevelopment. This can be a time with more limited new revenues from growth, and also when facilities begin to age and need more maintenance and replacement.

The best time to address a future challenge is when an organization is doing well and before the crisis hits<sup>1</sup>, and reaching build out is an issue that can be reasonably anticipated based on observations of the growth trajectory of similar communities.

Two ways to do this include, 1) developing a longer-range Capital Improvements Plan to map out needs in a more general way beyond 10 years, building on the strong existing 10-year CIP, and 2) developing a long-range Personnel Plan, if one does not exist already, to anticipate needed staff positions to maintain and

improve the City's level of community service as it grows. Together, these tools can help the City anticipate needed expenditures further in advance and budget appropriately.



Aerial of downtown Hendersonville | Sam Dean





Historic Depot building

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## Conclusion

Based on this review of more than 25 plans, reports, and ordinances, the City of Hendersonville has a high degree of consistency across its internal documents, a strong capital planning and funding system, and some opportunities for improving its operating framework to help effectively implement the new Comprehensive Plan. The City has a significant degree of land use consistency between its plans and those of its neighbors. At the same time, it has several opportunities for greater land use coordination, as well as to build a regional parks and greenways system and continue to deliver efficient utility service as the area grows.

Existing plans and documents highlight a variety of needs and desires, and significant but finite local government financial resources. As a result, finding ways to advance multiple objectives with each

public investment, and to leverage partnerships with neighboring local governments and private and non-profit organizations will help the City make greater progress in pursuing its goals. With an updated development ordinance, increased investment in technology, and greater cross-jurisdictional coordination, Hendersonville can better navigate the opportunities of a rapidly changing world and continue to strengthen its quality of life as it grows in the years ahead.

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# Appendix B. Existing Conditions Report

FALL 2023

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## Introduction

The *Gen H Comprehensive Plan* uses data inventories and assessments as the starting point for a comprehensive and engaging discussion with plan participants about the future of Hendersonville. Baseline conditions and emerging trends reported at this time were captured from existing data sets, adopted documents, and field observations.

The information will be used, in part, to frame a list of themes, observations, and recommendations that should be considered when planning for the City's future.

Data inventories and assessments for the new Comprehensive Plan address seven general subjects important to the plan's development: environmental conditions, land use conditions, mobility conditions, infrastructure conditions, community character, market conditions, and existing city policies and ordinances.

Henderson County Tourism Development Authority and Sam Dean (left)

A review of the City's policies and ordinances, and a market study, are published as separate documents.

### CITY GEOGRAPHY

The geography of Hendersonville is defined by its mountainous surroundings, scenic beauty, and a vibrant downtown area that serves as the city's focal point. Hendersonville, located in Henderson County, is positioned approximately 22 miles south of Asheville, the largest city in western North Carolina. Situated within the southern Appalachian Mountains, the city is encompassed by the beauty of the Pisgah National Forest as well as multiple state parks and protected forests.

The city benefits from connectivity to neighboring communities such as Greenville, Mills River, Fletcher, Laurel Park, Flat Rock, and Saluda.

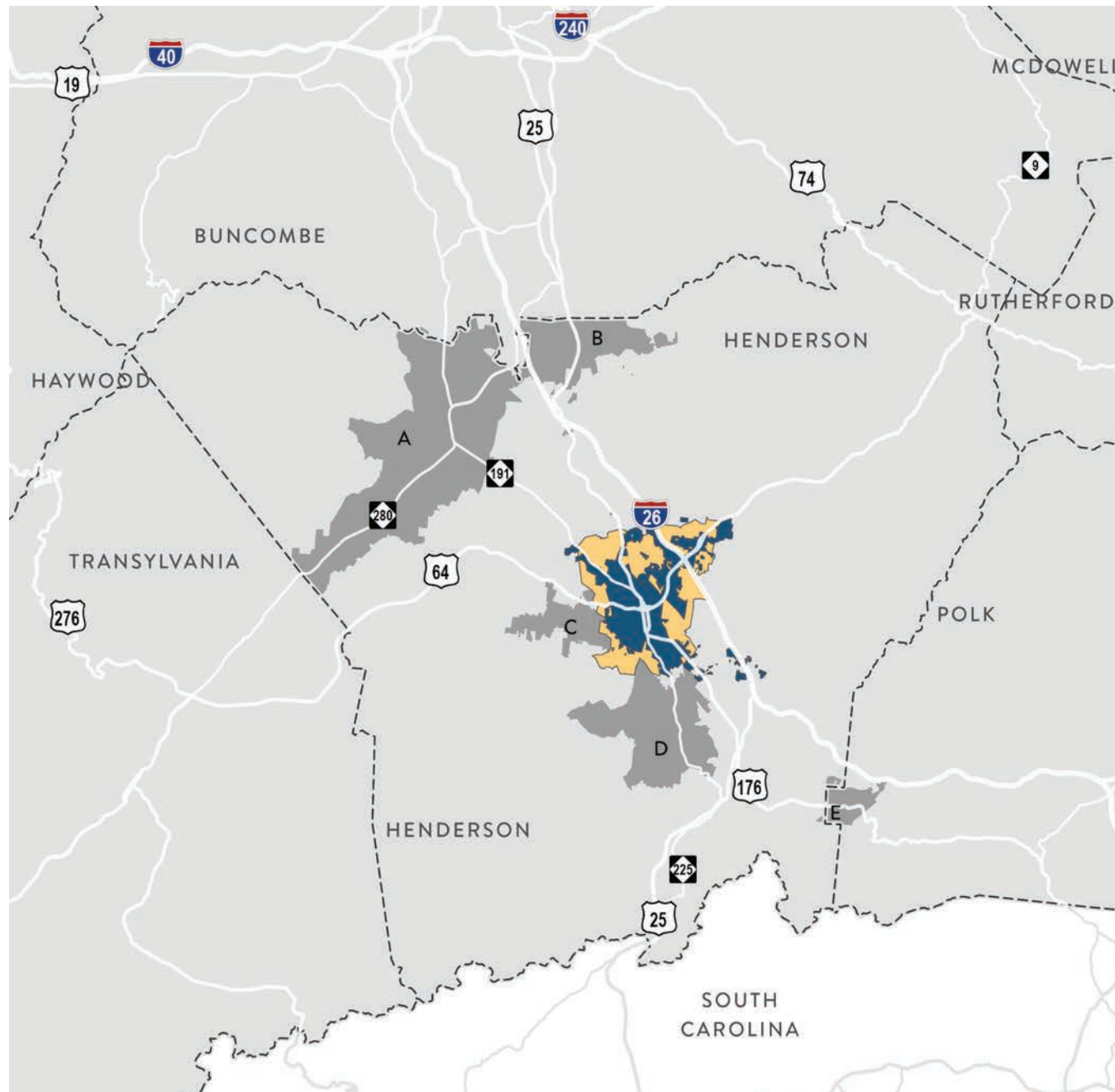






Figure B.3.1 Vicinity Map



-  Hendersonville City Limits
-  Hendersonville ETJ
-  Nearby Municipalities
-  Counties
- A - Mills River
- B - Fletcher
- C - Laurel Park
- D - Flat Rock
- E - Saluda

Source: Henderson County, NCDOT, State of North Carolina

This is made possible by the presence of major highways like Interstate 26, US Route 25, and US Highway 64, enabling easy exploration of the area’s beautiful natural attractions.

The city’s advantageous proximity to Asheville affords residents the opportunity to engage with the vibrant cultural scene, diverse culinary offerings, and a plethora of recreational activities, all while experiencing the slower but growing pace of life that Hendersonville offers. Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Hendersonville offers captivating vistas with apple orchards, forests, rolling hills, and valleys, lying just west of the Eastern Continental Divide.

The presence of the renowned Blue Ridge Parkway near the city grants access to panoramic views and hiking trails, further enhancing its appeal for outdoor enthusiasts. The city boasts a plethora of local attractions catering to outdoor enthusiasts, including the Holmes Educational State Forest, Chimney Rock State Park, Hickory Nut Gorge, Green River

Gamelands, Carl Sandburg Home and National Historic Site, and the North Carolina Arboretum. In addition, Hendersonville’s regional location offers abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation, with Pisgah National Forest, Dupont State Recreational Forest, and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park just a short drive away. These areas offer extensive trail systems, cascading waterfalls, picturesque camping spots, and scenic overlooks, making them ideal for hiking, biking, and wildlife observation enthusiasts.

Hendersonville is made up of various neighborhoods, each with its own character and charm. Hendersonville’s downtown area is the heart of the city, featuring a charming Main Street lined with historic buildings, local businesses, restaurants, and shops. The downtown district has a pedestrian-friendly design and is a popular destination for residents and visitors.

Hendersonville experiences a humid subtropical climate, characterized by four distinct seasons, thus earning its nickname as the City of Four Seasons. Summers are typically warm and humid, while winters can be cold with occasional snowfall. Spring and fall seasons offer mild temperatures and colorful foliage.

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

Hendersonville, North Carolina, is a city with a rich historical background that spans over a century. Originally inhabited by indigenous Cherokee tribes, European settlers explored the region in the late 18th century. The City's establishment can be traced back to the mid-19th century.

Hendersonville was officially incorporated in 1847. The City's early development was primarily driven by its strategic location along major transportation routes, including the Buncombe Turnpike and the arrival of the railroad in 1879. These connections facilitated trade and contributed to the City's growth.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Hendersonville thrived as an agricultural and commercial center. The surrounding fertile lands allowed for successful farming, particularly in apple orchards. Henderson County, where Hendersonville is located, became known as the "Land of the Sky" due to its scenic beauty and reputation as a major apple-producing region.

Hendersonville also became a popular tourist destination during this time. Visitors were drawn to the area's cool mountain climate and picturesque landscapes. The City's hotels and boarding houses accommodated the influx of tourists. The completion of the railroad connection in the late 1800s between Asheville and Hendersonville further facilitated tourism, as travelers sought out the region's natural beauty and recreational opportunities. The Flat Rock Playhouse, established in 1940, became a renowned theater destination and large influence in the region.

Over the years, Hendersonville has faced various challenges and experienced periods of economic transformation. The decline of the apple industry in the mid-20th century led to a diversification of the local economy, with a shift towards tourism, manufacturing, and services.

The city has preserved its historical charm through the preservation of historic buildings, such as the Henderson County Historic Courthouse, the 7th Avenue Depot, and many of the buildings along Hendersonville's historic Main Street.

Today, Hendersonville continues to be a vibrant community with a blend of historical significance and modern amenities. The city's downtown area features a mix of boutique shops, art galleries, restaurants, and cultural attractions. The downtown district boasts numerous buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, reflecting various architectural styles such as Queen Anne, Neoclassical, and Art Deco.

The City's rich historical background, coupled with its scenic beauty and diverse economy, makes Hendersonville a unique and enduring destination that celebrates its past while embracing the opportunities of the present.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

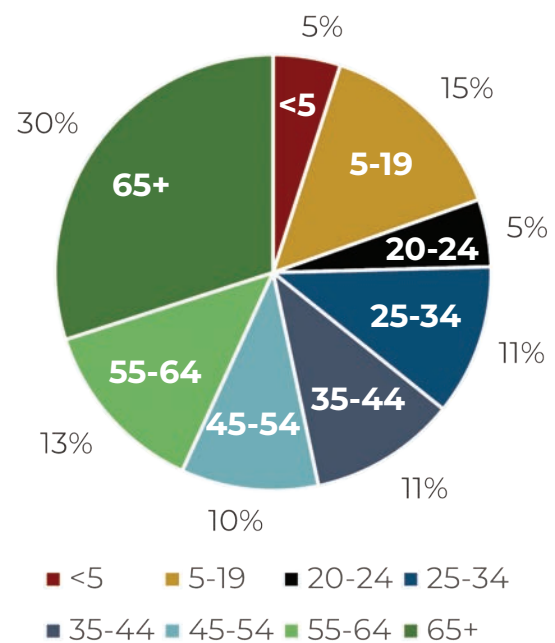
Based on the United States Census Bureau, Hendersonville has a population of 15,269 within 7,651 households. The median age is 52.2, and while the median household income earnings is \$50,198, the median disposable income for residents of Hendersonville is \$42,417 annually. Hendersonville is a highly educated community with only 6.4% of the population without a GED or high school diploma. Meanwhile, 22.3% of the community have a high school diploma, 33.2% have some college or an Associate Degree, and 37.6% have a Bachelor, Graduate, or Professional Degree.

The unemployment rate is low at 1.1% with 59.2% of the workforce in white collar jobs, 24.1% in blue collar jobs, and 20.7% making up the service industry jobs.

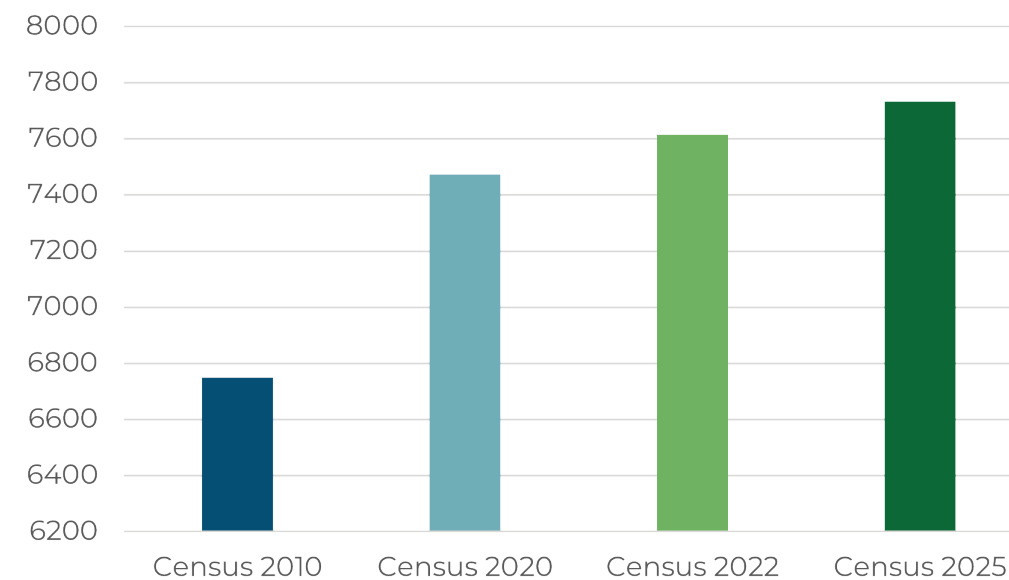
### Senior Population

Hendersonville has a large senior population accounting for about 30% of the population, and is one of the top retirement communities in the state.

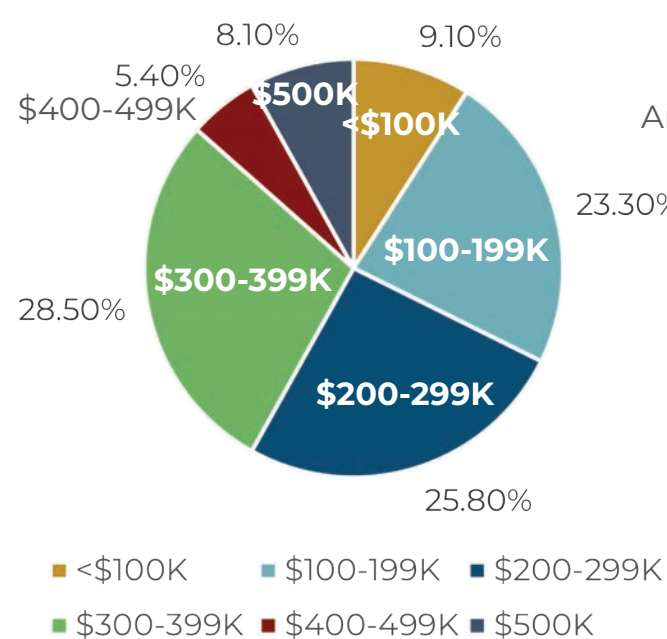
2022 Population by Age



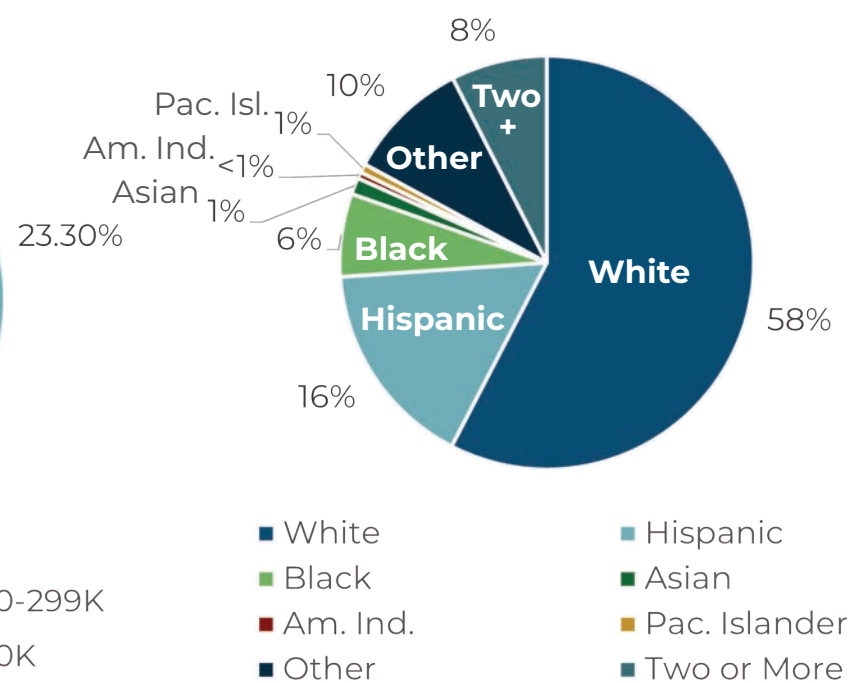
Number of Households



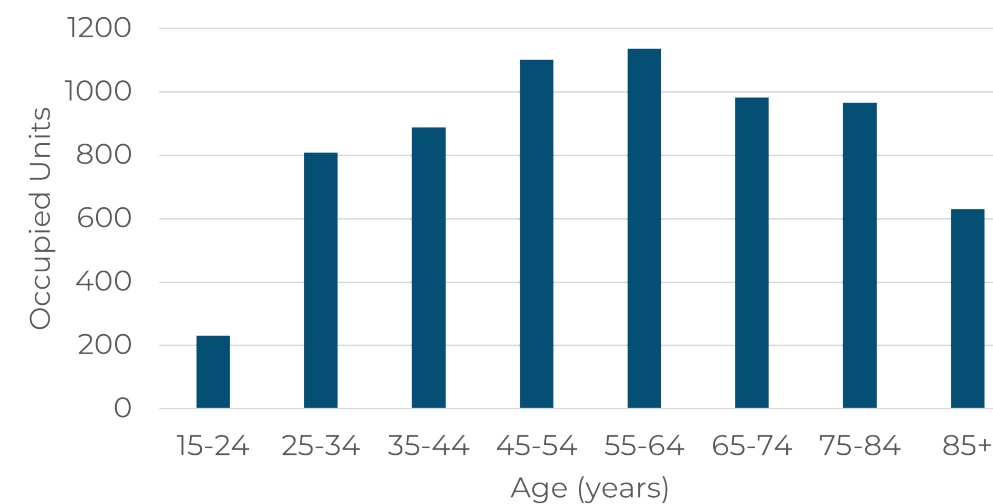
2022 Home Value



2022 Population by Race



Age of Householder



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# Environmental Conditions

The City of Hendersonville is committed to the protection of natural resources such that they may continue to function, grow, and provide for future generations. The existing parks and natural areas serve as the framework for recreation, public space, and their associated ecological systems. The responsibility for the preservation of these areas is shared among all generations, signifying that each individual has a role to fulfill in ensuring Hendersonville's ongoing prosperity.

Maintaining a sustainable ecosystem requires a concerted effort by both the city and county through management and by individuals through active participation in protection and preservation. With all partners actively engaged, environmental stewardship will allow Hendersonville's parks, open spaces, and natural systems to flourish

and expand to benefit current and future generations.

The region's geological history has shaped its scenic beauty, natural resources, and geological hazards (landslides). Hendersonville's geology is characterized by ancient, metamorphic bedrock, with granitic intrusions and evidence of folding and thrusting. The geology of Hendersonville plays a crucial role in shaping its water resources. The fractured nature of the bedrock allows for the formation of aquifers, which are underground water bearing layers. These aquifers provide a significant source of groundwater for the area.

## CLIMATE

Hendersonville experiences a humid subtropical climate. The city nicknamed "a city of four seasons," enjoys mild winters, warm summers, and moderate precipitation throughout the year.

Ecusta Trail corridor | Real Digital Productions, Conserving Carolina (right)



In winter, snowfall is possible but relatively infrequent, with an average of a few inches per year. Frosty mornings are more common during this season. Spring is known for its pleasant weather, blooming flowers, and increasing rainfall. Summer in Hendersonville is warm and humid. It is the rainiest season, with periodic showers and thunderstorms. Fall brings cooler weather and vibrant foliage, attracting visitors to enjoy the scenic beauty of the region.

Overall, Hendersonville experiences a pleasant climate with moderate variations in temperature throughout the year. It offers a mix of seasonal experiences, from the mild winters and comfortable springs to the warm summers and colorful autumns.

### WATER BODIES

Creeks, lakes, branches, and ditches provide numerous benefits to the environment and surrounding communities. These water bodies serve as important sources of freshwater, providing a vital resource for drinking

water, irrigation, and industrial use. Creeks, lakes, branches, and ditches support diverse ecosystems, reduce the risk of flooding by accommodating excess runoff, reduce the impact of erosion, and can provide recreation opportunities.

The [Water Supply Watershed Program](#) is responsible for implementing local policies, strategies, and regulations aimed at safeguarding the surface waters of Henderson County. Its primary objective is to mitigate the detrimental effects of stormwater pollutants and runoff on the water supply.

By enforcing effective stormwater control measures, the program ensures the protection and preservation of the county's surface waters, promoting their cleanliness and sustainability. The program is observed by Henderson County and the Town of Mills River, but the city does not implement any policies from the program due to having a separate stormwater ordinance.

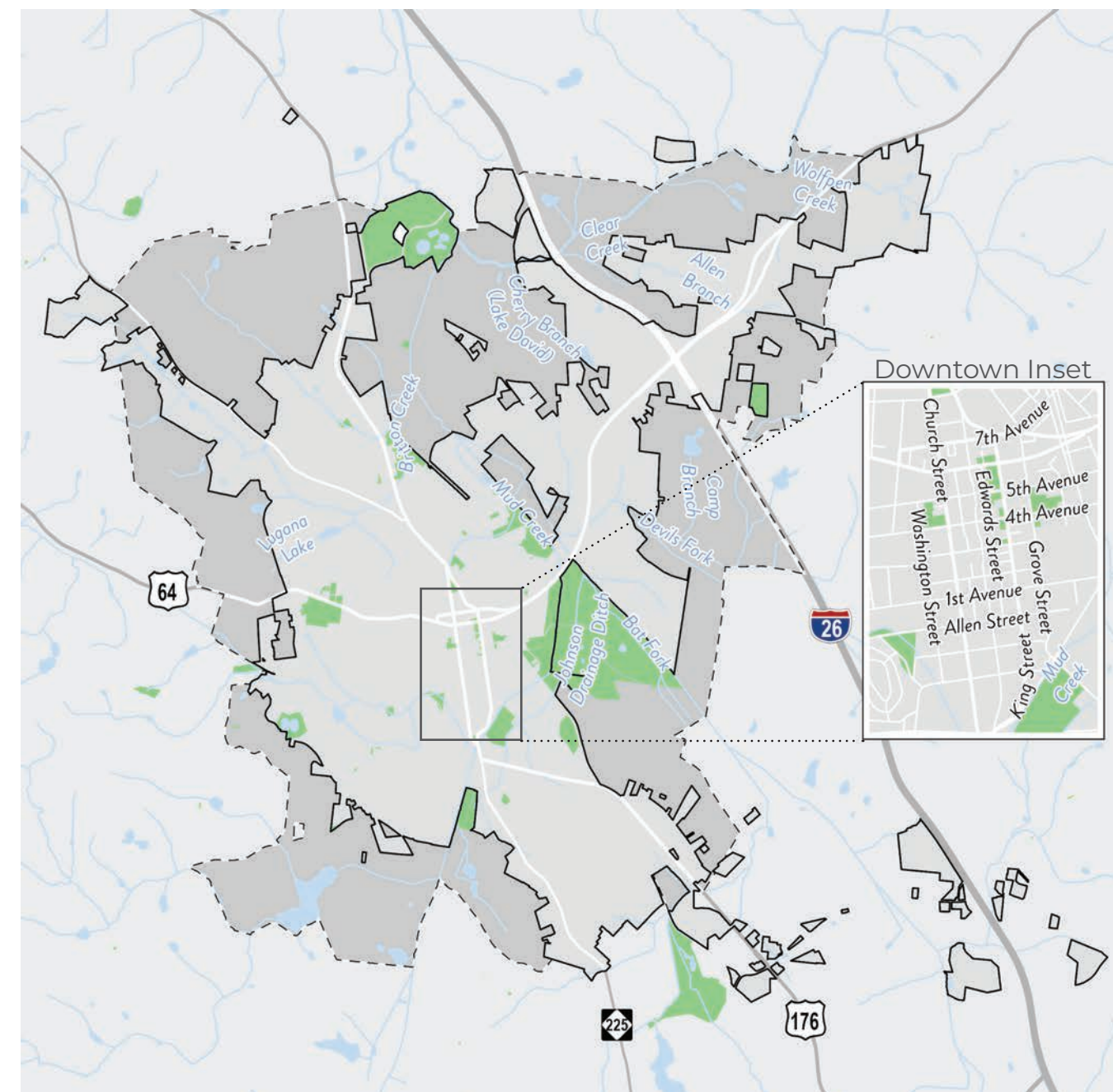


Figure B.3.2 Water Bodies and Public Lands Map

- Lakes and Ponds
- Streams
- Public Lands
- Hendersonville City Limits
- Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT



Hendersonville is home to the following waterbodies: Brittain Creek, Wash Creek, Mud Creek, King Creek, Wolfpen Creek, Clear Creek, Lugana Lake, Temple Terrace Lake, Cherry Branch, Allen Branch, Johnson Ditch, Bat Fork and Devils Fork.

Hendersonville’s streams and creeks are classified either as Class C or Class B by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. Class C is described as “waters protected for uses such as aquatic life propagation, survival and maintenance of biological integrity (including fishing and fish), wildlife, secondary contact recreation, and agriculture.

Secondary contact recreation means wading, boating, other uses not involving human body contact with water, and activities involving human body contact with water where such activities take place on an infrequent, unorganized, or incidental basis.” Class B is described as “waters protected for all Class C uses in addition to primary contact recreation. Primary contact recreation means swimming, diving,

water skiing, and similar uses involving human body contact with water where such activities take place in an organized manner or on a frequent basis.” Wash Creek is the only stream that is classified as Class B within the city limits of Hendersonville. Mud Creek, Bat Fork, Devils Fork, and Clear Creek are listed as impaired by the State.

### FLOOD AND WETLAND AREAS

The U.S. Wildlife and Fisheries provides maps of national wetlands. Figure B.3.3 map showcases the wetlands in the region using data from Henderson County. There are two main types of wetlands observed in Hendersonville.

#### Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland:

This type of wetland is characterized by the prevalence of shrubs as the dominant woody vegetation, typically measuring less than 20 feet in height. Additionally, there are forested areas with woody vegetation reaching 20 feet or taller.

**Freshwater Estuary Wetland:** This wetland type features erect, rooted, herbaceous hydrophytes (plants

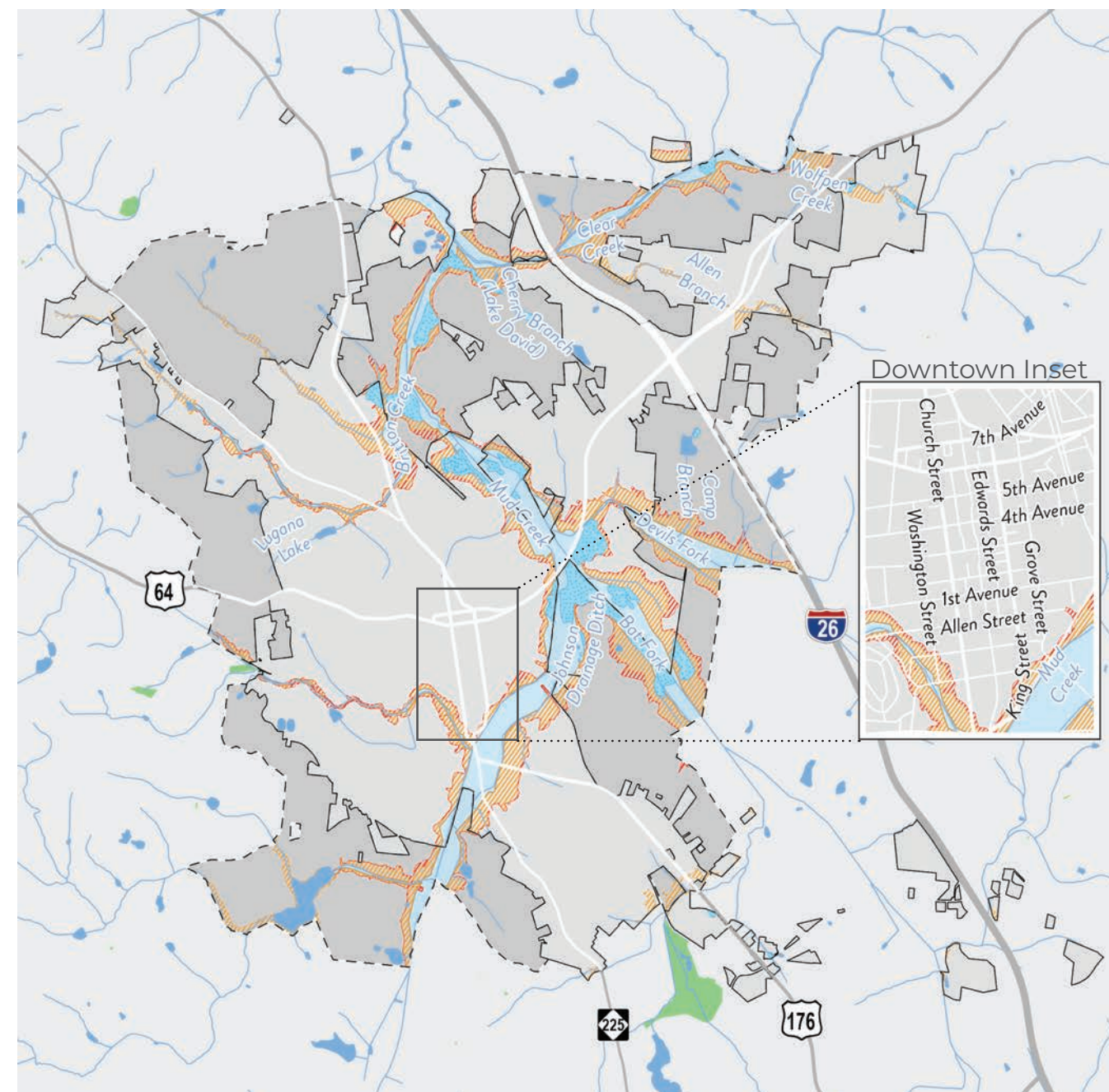
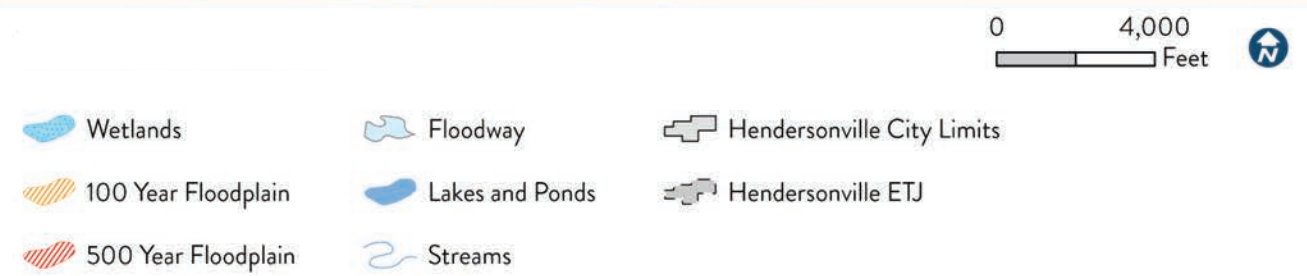


Figure B.3.3 Wetlands and Floodplains Map



Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

adapted to grow in waterlogged conditions), excluding mosses and lichens. Vegetation in these wetlands persists for most of the growing season and is predominantly composed of perennial plants.

These wetlands contribute to the local ecosystem by providing habitat for diverse plant and animal species, supporting water filtration, and playing a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance.

### WATERSHEDS

In accordance with the Federal Clean Water Act, North Carolina designates use classifications for all rivers, streams, and lakes in the state. Water bodies are classified by human use and ecological/ biological factors. The land surrounding these waters may be given a classification as well, since water quality is affected by drainage from its watershed. Each classification has a particular set of protection standards and permitting procedures intended to protect water quality.

Hendersonville is part of the Upper French Broad Watershed (HUC 06010105), which covers approximately 1,260 square miles in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. The hydrology of the watershed is characterized by streams and rivers that ultimately flow into the Tennessee River. The watershed receives an average of 55 inches of precipitation per year, with snowfall in the higher elevations during the winter months. The surface water in the watershed is of high quality and supports diverse aquatic life.

In recent years, the area has experienced an increase in both average temperatures and precipitation, leading to more frequent flooding events.

Hendersonville's Stormwater Management Program works to preserve, protect, and restore the quality of water in the streams, rivers, and lakes within the City of Hendersonville. The City's Stormwater Management program was developed

in compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act and the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that stormwater is effectively controlled to reduce pollution generated from stormwater runoff.

### WATER QUALITY BUFFERS

The City of Hendersonville amended the zoning ordinance to include stream buffer projection standards (Section 17-3). The primary objective of stream buffer protection standards is to maintain land adjacent to streams in an undisturbed vegetated state in order to enhance and maintain water quality, protect stream channel wetlands, minimize stormwater runoff, reduce sedimentation and erosion, conserve plant and wildlife habitat and protect wildlife movement corridors. The standards contained in this section addresses the regulation of water temperature through shading of the stream bed, by limiting sedimentation from streambank erosion and stormwater flow, and by supporting aquatic life through the provision of organic debris such as leaves and twigs.

### VEGETATION

Deciduous forests dominate much of the Hendersonville landscape, featuring tree species such as Oaks, Maples, Hickories, and Birches. In higher elevations, coniferous forests thrive, with species like Eastern White Pine, Fraser Fir, and Hemlock adding evergreen beauty to the landscape.

Hendersonville is also known for its rich plant diversity, with numerous wildflowers, ferns, and mosses gracing the forest floors and shaded areas. Springtime brings an array of blooming flowers, including sunflowers, violets, and rhododendrons. See the City of Hendersonville Approved Landscape Species List for Street Trees and Land Development Projects [here](#).

## TREE COVER

Hendersonville’s urban forest serves as an invaluable asset providing residents, businesses, and visitors with many environmental, social, and economic benefits. In 2023, the City conducted an assessment that mapped tree canopy (TC), possible planting area (PPA), and analyzed how they are distributed throughout Hendersonville’s current City boundary and ETJ, 2007 City boundary, future land use, census block groups, zoning, current land use class, and public property parcels.

In 2022, Hendersonville’s city boundary had 35% tree canopy cover and 26% possible planting area, and the other 39% of the City was classified as unsuitable for planting without significant land modification. The City’s ETJ zoned areas added 2,388 acres of canopy (54% within its boundaries), bringing the City and ETJ’s combined canopy cover up to 44%. The combined 4,093 acres of tree canopy in Hendersonville provide ecosystem benefits valued at over \$6.7 million per year through air quality improvements, stormwater runoff prevention, and carbon sequestration.

Results from the assessment found that canopy cover dropped from 37% to 35% from 2014 to 2022 (-2% or -115 acres) within the current City boundary. The ETJ areas also lost canopy, 29 acres (or -1%) during the eight year study period. Canopy loss can generally be attributed to residential development and commercial infrastructure expansion along the corridor of Highway 26.

### Heritage Tree Designation

Significant trees within the city are protected through the heritage tree designation. The Tree Board locates and identifies heritage trees in collaboration with relevant civic groups and the consent of owners.

The following criteria must be met for a tree to qualify as a heritage tree according to the City of Hendersonville [Heritage Tree Designation Program](#):

- It has reached its mature growth as specified in Hortus Second.
- It is listed as a Champion Big Tree, as designated by the NC Division of Forest Resources.
- It has significant historic value to the community.
- It is a rare species, or provides a habitat for rare species of plants,

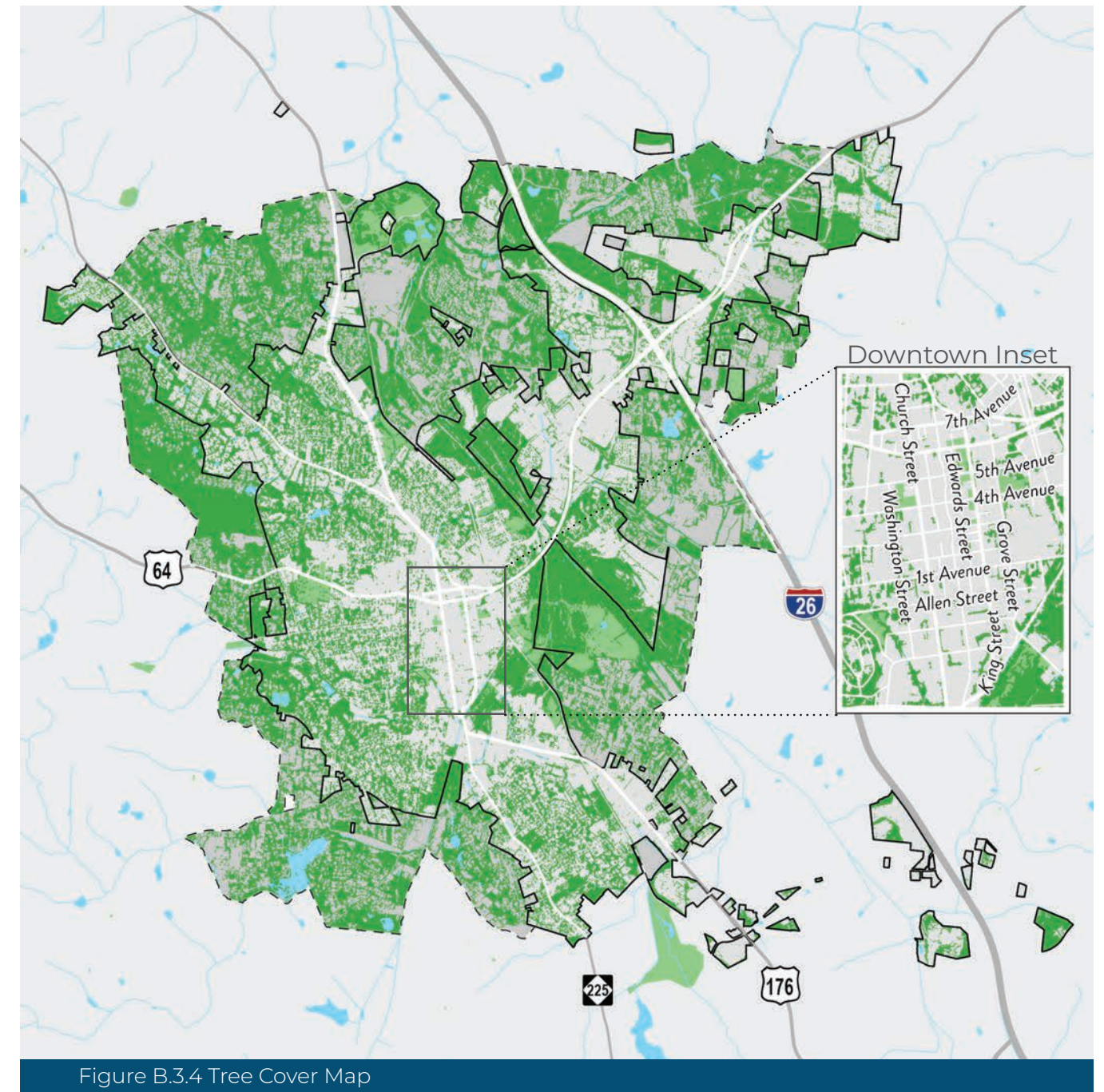


Figure B.3.4 Tree Cover Map



Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, NCDOT

- animals or birds.
- A designated heritage tree cannot be trimmed, cut or removed without prior written notice of 30 days to the director of public works.

For locations of existing designated heritage trees, the City has compiled a map [here](#) and have an [interactive storymap](#) available on the City's website.

### TOPOGRAPHY

Hendersonville features rolling hills, valleys, and lush forests at an elevation of about 2,156 feet. Its terrain, a mix of gentle slopes and rugged peaks, is due to its location in western North Carolina along the Appalachian Mountains. Some ridges near the ETJ limits have established protections in the form of building height restrictions through the [North Carolina Mountain Ridge Protection Act \(MRPA\)](#) of 1983.

### SOILS

Hendersonville is in the Inner Piedmont Belt, known for metamorphosed igneous and sedimentary rocks. South of Asheville Regional Airport is the

Inner Piedmont Geologic Province, while north is the Blue Ridge Geologic Province.

The boundary between these two provinces is defined by the Brevard Fault Zone. In Hendersonville, the primary soil types and their descriptions are as follows:

- Hayesville-Bradson association:** These well-drained soils on ridges and stream terraces have a subsoil of loam and clay.
- Evar-Edneyville-Ashe association:** These mountain soils, on steep slopes, have loamy subsoil sometimes overly drained.
- Codorus-Toxaway-Rosmon association:** These flat floodplain soils vary in drainage, with a loam and sand subsoil.

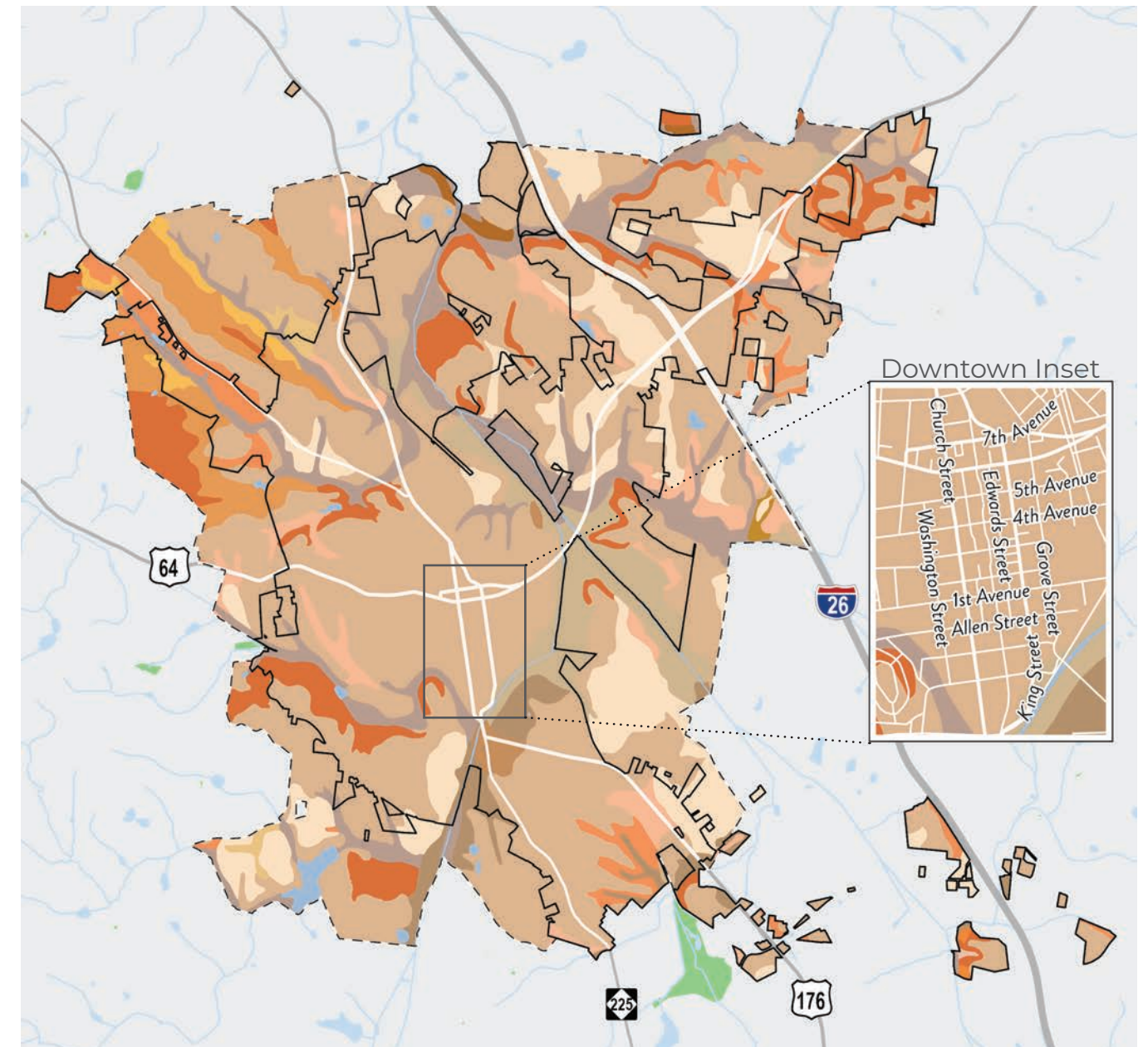


Figure B.3.5 Soils Map



Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

# Land Use Conditions

## EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use for the City of Hendersonville was initially developed in 1964, with major revisions in 1970 and 1980, and completely updated in 2009. The Land Use Tables present the number of acres and the percentage of land cover for each land use category.



Downtown Hendersonville | Blue Ridge Mountain Travel Guide

## EXISTING ZONING

Zoning is a regulatory tool used to control land use and establish guidelines for development within specific areas or districts. It involves dividing land into different zones and setting regulations for each zone. Land use, on the other hand, refers to the actual activities or purposes for which land is utilized, such as residential, commercial, or industrial uses. In simple terms, zoning is the legal framework that governs land use, while land use refers to the actual activities happening on the land.

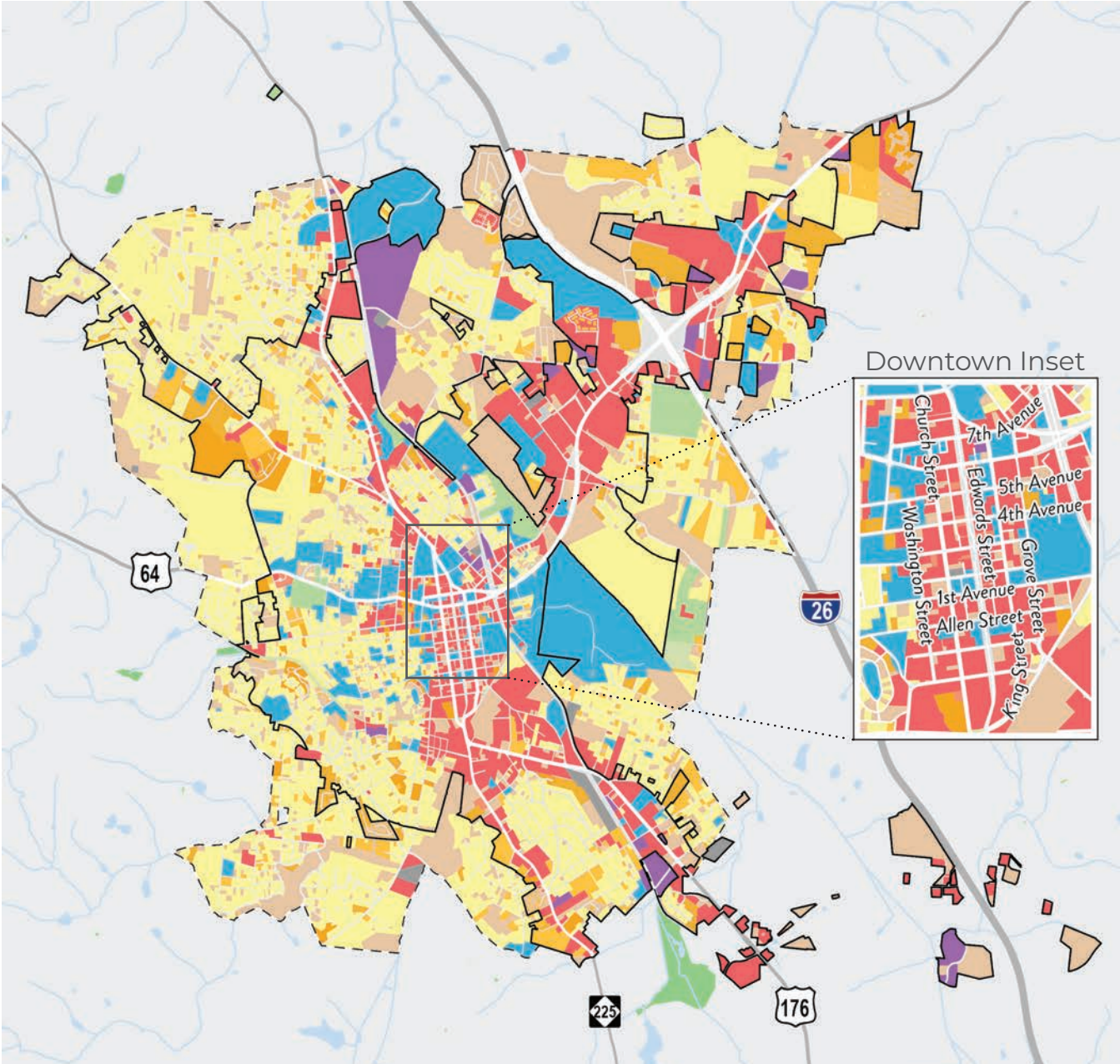


Figure B.3.6 Existing Land Use Map

### Existing Land Use

- |                            |                                   |                              |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Low Density Residential    | Public/Institutional              | Agriculture and Preservation |
| Medium Density Residential | Industrial                        | Vacant                       |
| High Density Residential   | Transportation                    | Insufficient Data            |
| Mixed Use                  | Utilities                         | Hendersonville City Limits   |
| Commercial                 | Open Space, Parks, and Recreation | Hendersonville ETJ           |

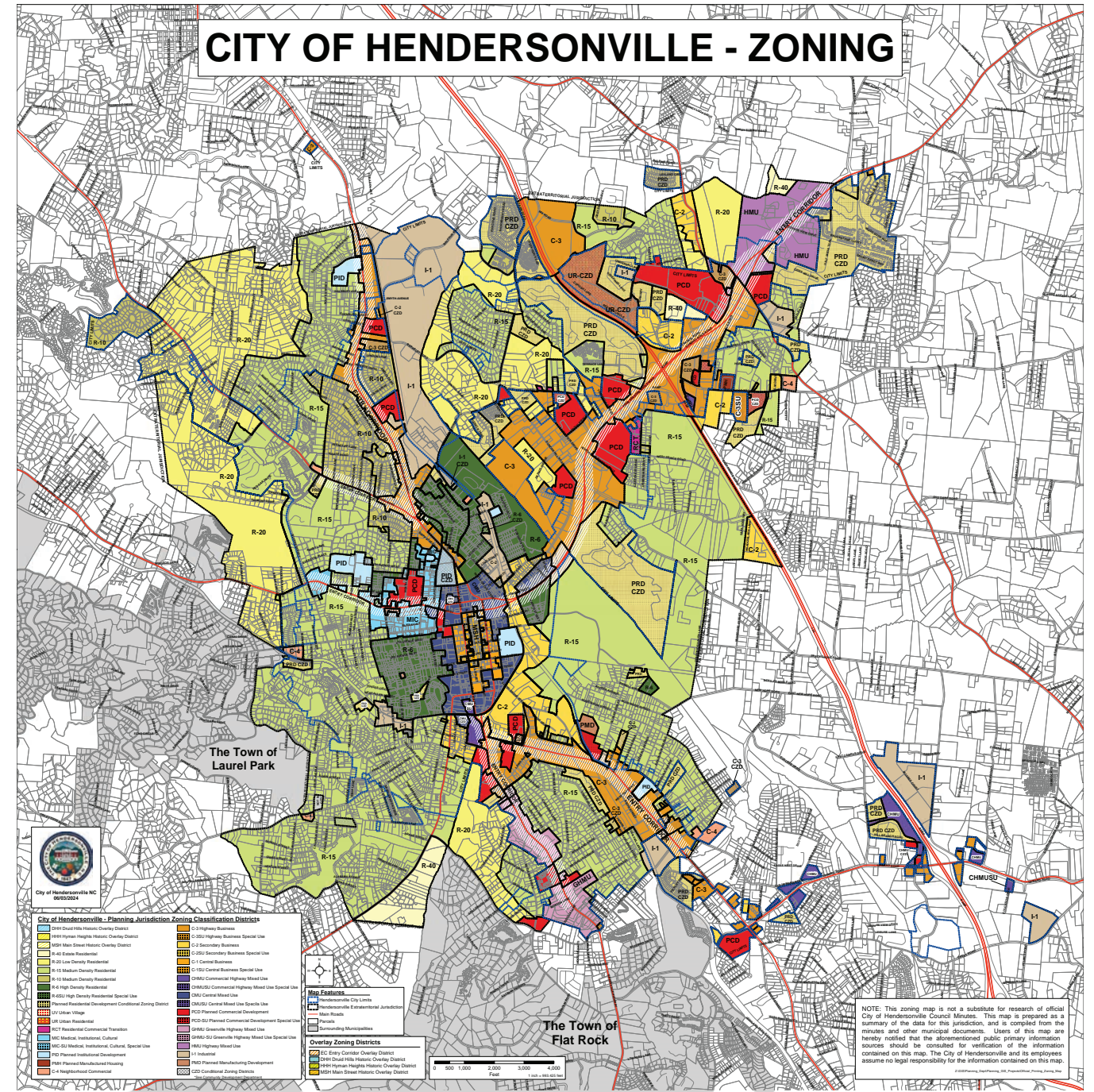
Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, Henderson County Real Property Division (2023), NCDOT

## LAND USE TABLES

City Limits		
Land Use Class	Acreage	Percent
Insufficient Data	65.74	1.50%
Agricultural	0.00	0.00%
Industrial	128.79	2.93%
Institutional	376.64	8.58%
Multi-Family Residential	340.86	7.77%
Office	176.36	4.02%
Parks / Open Space	254.30	5.79%
Retail	648.36	14.77%
Single Family	1643.41	37.44%
Two Family Residential	142.86	3.26%
Vacant	611.63	13.94%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4388.94</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

ETJ		
Land Use Class	Acreage	Percent
Insufficient Data	29.70	0.75%
Agricultural	45.61	1.15%
Industrial	148.60	3.74%
Institutional	91.08	2.29%
Multi-Family Residential	24.32	0.61%
Office	20.10	0.51%
Parks / Open Space	362.88	9.12%
Retail	61.44	1.54%
Single Family	2329.58	58.58%
Two Family Residential	4.39	0.11%
Vacant	859.26	21.61%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3976.97</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Combined		
Land Use Class	Acreage	Percent
Insufficient Data	95.44	1.14%
Agriculture	45.61	0.55%
Industrial	277.40	3.32%
Institutional	467.72	5.59%
Multi-Family Residential	365.18	4.37%
Office	196.47	2.35%
Parks/Open Space	617.18	7.38%
Retail	709.79	8.48%
Single Family Residential	3972.98	47.49%
Two Family Residential	147.25	1.76%
Vacant	1470.89	17.58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8365.91</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



City of Hendersonville Zoning Map | June 2024

## ZONING TABLES

City Limits		
Zoning Class	Acreage	Percent
C-1 Central Business	63.36	1.29%
C-1SU Central Business Special Use	1.00	0.02%
C-2 Secondary Business	187.48	3.83%
C-2SU Secondary Business Special Use	0.42	0.01%
C-3 CZD Highway Business Conditional Zoning Districts	0.85	0.02%
C-3 Highway Business	720.69	14.72%
C-3SU Highway Business Special Use	28.55	0.58%
C-4 Neighborhood Commercial	16.50	0.34%
CHMU Commercial Highway Mixed Use	32.03	0.65%
CHMUSU Commercial Highway Mixed Use Special Use	5.34	0.11%
CMU Central Mixed Use	162.07	3.31%
CMUSU Central Mixed Use Special Use	9.91	0.20%
GHMU Greenville Highway Mixed Use	102.69	2.10%
GHMU-SU Greenville Highway Mixed Use Special Use	2.09	0.04%
HMU Highway Mixed Use	35.96	0.73%
I-1 Industrial	223.15	4.56%
MIC Medical, Institutional, Cultural	79.65	1.63%
MIC-SU Medical, Institutional, Cultural, Special Use	19.23	0.39%
PCD Planned Commercial Development	305.14	6.23%
PCD-SU Planned Commercial Development Special Use	1.48	0.03%
PID Planned Institutional Development	81.80	1.67%
PMD Planned Manufacturing Development	0.36	0.01%
PMH Planned Manufactured Housing	5.25	0.11%
Planned Residential Development Conditional Zoning District	791.92	16.17%
R-10 Medium Density Residential	235.23	4.80%
R-15 Medium Density Residential	1264.84	25.83%
R-20 Low Density Residential	131.34	2.68%
R-40 Estate Residential	11.74	0.24%
R-6 High Density Residential	372.98	7.62%
R-6SU High Density Residential Special Use	1.35	0.03%
RCT Residential Commercial Transition	0.69	0.01%
UR Urban Residential	2.27	0.05%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4897.33</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

ETJ		
Zoning Class	Acreage	Percent
C-2 Secondary Business	111.58	2.49%
C-2SU Secondary Business Special Use	5.02	0.11%
C-3 Highway Business	224.79	5.01%
C-3SU Highway Business Special Use	0.86	0.02%
C-4 Neighborhood Commercial	10.19	0.23%
GHMU Greenville Highway Mixed Use	0.17	0.00%
HMU Highway Mixed Use	132.48	2.95%
I-1 Industrial	225.15	5.02%
PCD Planned Commercial Development	20.71	0.46%
PCD-SU Planned Commercial Development Special Use	7.89	0.18%
PID Planned Institutional Development	13.78	0.31%
PMD Planned Manufacturing Development	7.11	0.16%
PMH Planned Manufactured Housing	0.30	0.01%
Planned Residential Development Conditional Zoning District	55.22	1.23%
R-10 Medium Density Residential	68.28	1.52%
R-15 Medium Density Residential	2183.58	48.66%
R-20 Low Density Residential	1234.89	27.52%
R-40 Estate Residential	94.82	2.11%
R-6 High Density Residential	5.91	0.13%
RCT Residential Commercial Transition	9.48	0.21%
UR Urban Residential	75.03	1.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4487.25</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Combined</b>		
<b>Zoning Class</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percent</b>
C-1 Central Business	63.36	0.68%
C-1SU Central Business Special Use	1.00	0.01%
C-2 Secondary Business	299.06	3.19%
C-2SU Secondary Business Special Use	5.44	0.06%
C-3 CZD Highway Business Conditional Zoning Districts	0.85	0.01%
C-3 Highway Business	945.48	10.07%
C-3SU Highway Business Special Use	29.41	0.31%
C-4 Neighborhood Commercial	26.68	0.28%
CHMU Commercial Highway Mixed Use	32.03	0.34%
CHMUSU Commercial Highway Mixed Use Special Use	5.34	0.06%
CMU Central Mixed Use	162.07	1.73%
CMUSU Central Mixed Use Special Use	9.91	0.11%
GHMU Greenville Highway Mixed Use	102.86	1.10%
GHMU-SU Greenville Highway Mixed Use Special Use	2.09	0.02%
HMU Highway Mixed Use	168.44	1.79%
I-1 Industrial	448.30	4.78%
MIC Medical, Institutional, Cultural	79.65	0.85%
MIC-SU Medical, Institutional, Cultural, Special Use	19.23	0.20%
PCD Planned Commercial Development	325.84	3.47%
PCD-SU Planned Commercial Development Special Use	9.36	0.10%
PID Planned Institutional Development	95.58	1.02%
PMD Planned Manufacturing Development	7.47	0.08%
PMH Planned Manufactured Housing	5.55	0.06%
Planned Residential Development Conditional Zoning District	847.14	9.03%
R-10 Medium Density Residential	303.51	3.23%
R-15 Medium Density Residential	3448.42	36.75%
R-20 Low Density Residential	1366.23	14.56%
R-40 Estate Residential	106.55	1.14%
R-6 High Density Residential	378.89	4.04%
R-6SU High Density Residential Special Use	1.35	0.01%
RCT Residential Commercial Transition	10.18	0.11%
UR Urban Residential	77.30	0.82%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9384.58</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Snowy aerial of downtown Hendersonville | Jay Heatherly (right)



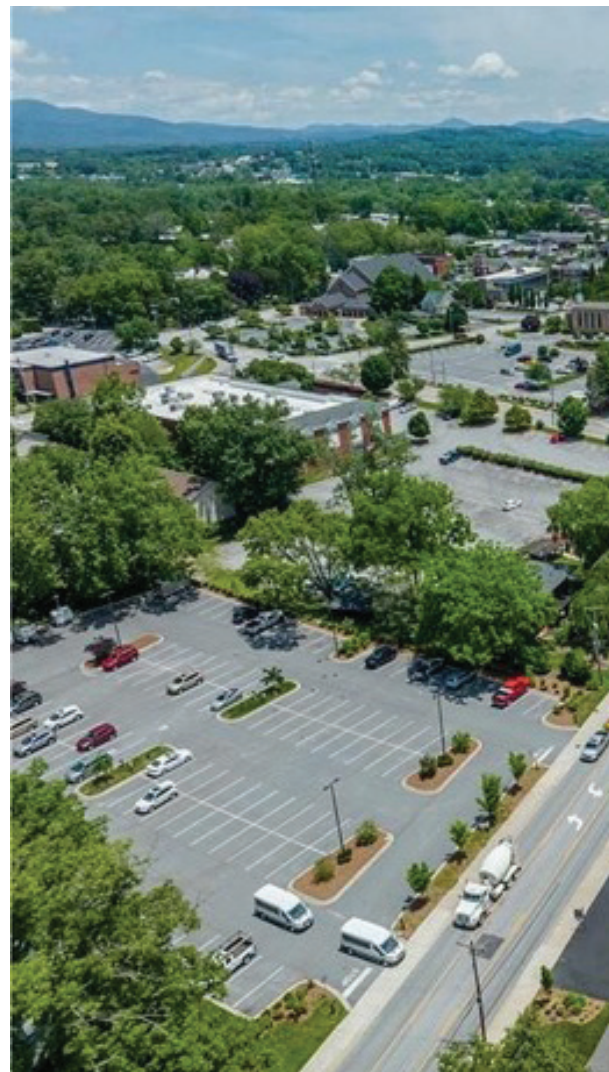


## BUILDABLE AREAS AND CONSTRAINTS

The Buildable Areas and Constraints Map shows areas that are developable and areas that are less than desirable for development due to constraining factors such as steep slopes, environmentally sensitive areas, and flood zones areas.

## VACANT LAND

Hendersonville currently contains approximately 370 acres of vacant land, which is about 8% of the city's land area. Within the ETJ, vacant land accounts for nearly 765 acres and 17% of the overall ETJ. Vacant land is scattered throughout the city and ETJ on parcels of varying sizes, but concentrations are found within the ETJ to the north-central, east, and south. Downtown itself also contains several smaller vacant parcels.



Underutilized parking lot | LandSearch

**41.7% of overall land currently impervious**

**17.6% of overall land currently vacant**

**0.55% of overall land currently zoned agricultural**

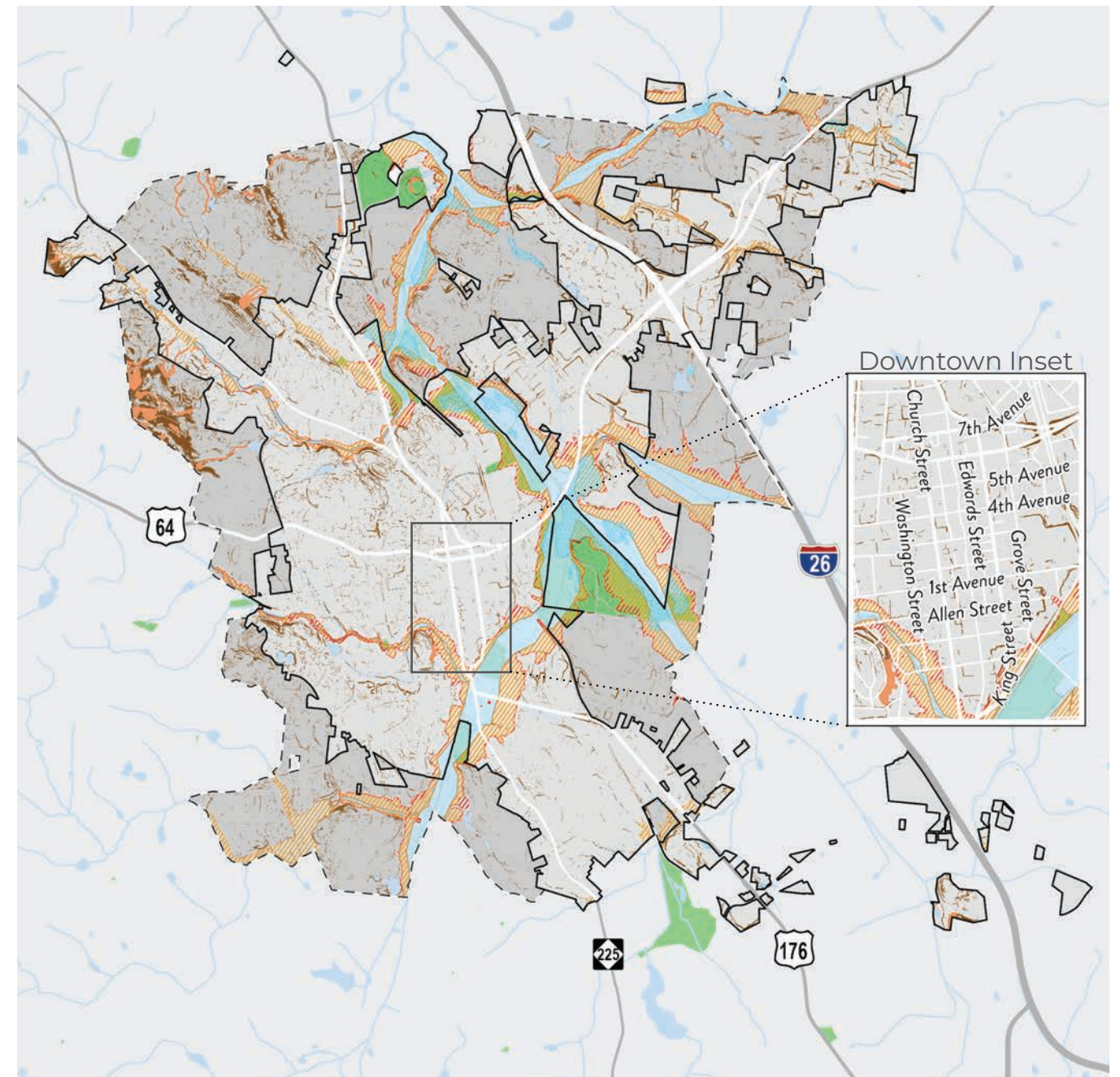


Figure B.3.7 Buildable Areas and Constraints Map

0 4,000 Feet

- ≥ 20% Slope
- Potential Landslide Debris Flow Pathways
- Brownfields
- Managed Areas
- Wetlands
- Floodway
- 100 Year Floodplain
- 500 Year Floodplain
- Lakes/Ponds
- Streams
- Hendersonville City Limits
- Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NC Department of Environmental Quality, NCDOT

## COMMITTED DEVELOPMENT

Hendersonville has nearly **30 sites** with committed development that cover more than **575 acres** in total. The developments are a mix of nonresidential, single family residential, and multi-family residential and total about **2,750 residential units**. The Committed Development Map and proceeding table provide a summary.

ID	Project #	Project Name	Status	Units (SF)	Units (MF)	Units (COM)	Acres
1	21122	Providence Walk	Construction	93			17.25
2	19108	Clear Creek Subdivision	Completed	334			87.89
3	20102	Universal at Lakewood	Completed		291		26.93
4	21133	O'Reilly Auto Parts	Construction			1	1.31
5	20103	Ivy Crossing	Completed	45			12.86
6	20134	Hendersonville Parking Deck	Completed	1			0.65
7	21120	Kanuga Trails	Construction		9		4.76
8	20105	Chick-Fil-A 640 Spartanburg	Completed				1.55
9	22205	Spartanburg Hwy Dunkin Donuts	Construction	1			0.68
10	21121	Barksdale Avenue Subdivision	Construction	5			3.27
11	20114	1210 Shepherd St	Construction	12			1.83
12	20137	Landings of Flat Rock	Construction	141			8.01
13	21130	Waterleaf at Flat Rock Apartments	Construction		264		32.57
14	19139	Dairio Upward Rd	Plan Review			1	2.85
15	21117	Oak Preserve PRD	Construction		30		5.33
16	22128	715 Greenville HWY	Pre-Entitlement		207		8.80
17	21135	Washburn Tract	Entitled	70	390		161.90
18	22109	Blue Ridge Commerce Center	Construction			4	63.79
19		303 Chadwick Ave Single Family Housing Project	Construction	3			0.71
20		Dairy Street Minor PRD	Construction	5			1.17
21	22201	Hawkins Pointe	Construction		43		1.66
22	20112	The Cedars Hotel/Fairmont	Entitled		132		2.24
23	22114	Towns at Martha Kate	Entitled	26			13.10
24	21105	Duncan Terrace	Entitled		132		8.66
25	22110	Lakewood Apartments Project	Entitled		322		60.56
26	22106	Cottages at Mastermind	Entitled		99		12.76
27	21143	Half Moon Heights	Construction	93			33.65
				<b>Total</b>			<b>576.7</b>

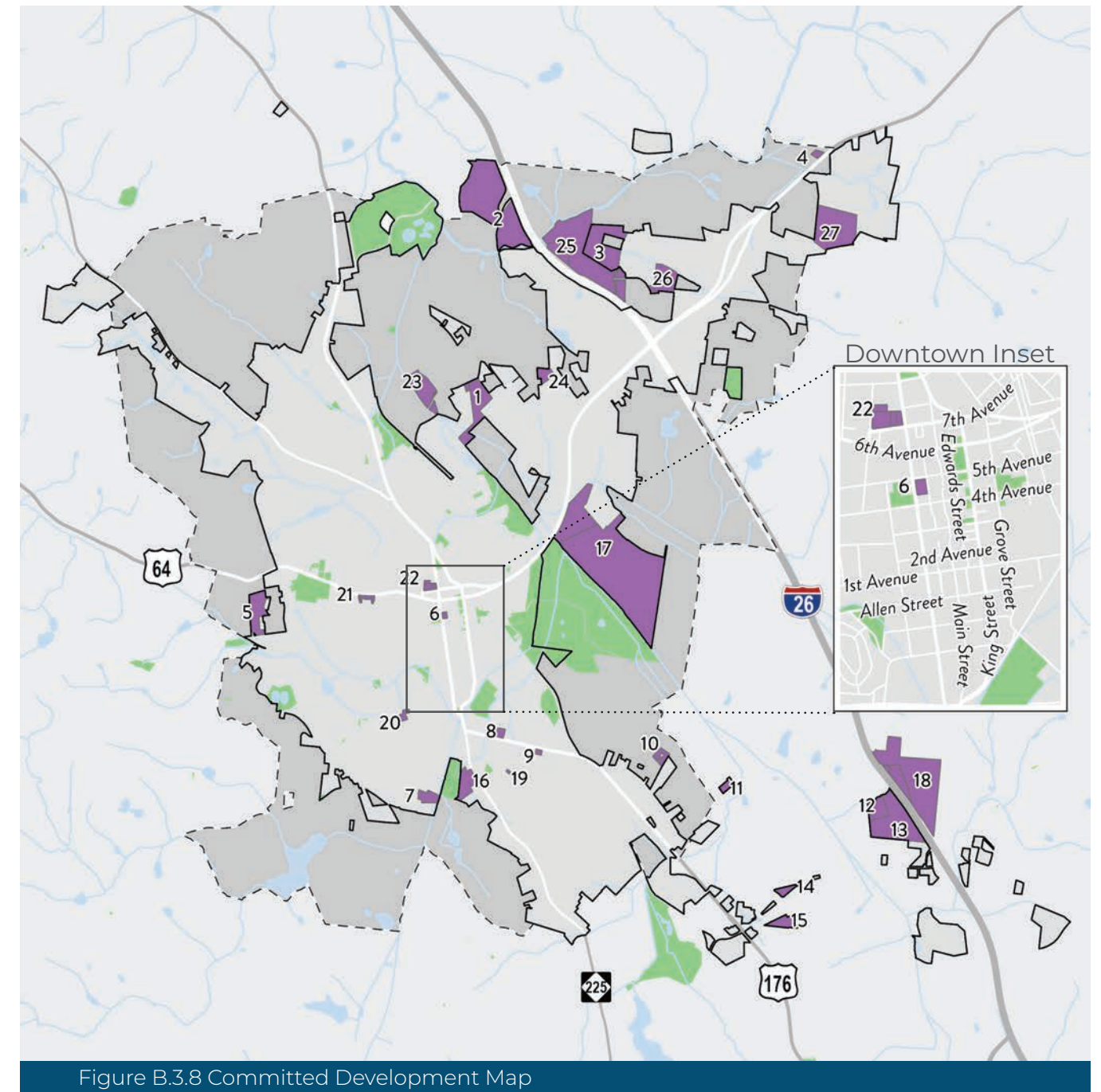


Figure B.3.8 Committed Development Map

- Committed Development Projects
- Public Lands
- Streams
- Lakes/Ponds
- Hendersonville City Limits
- Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

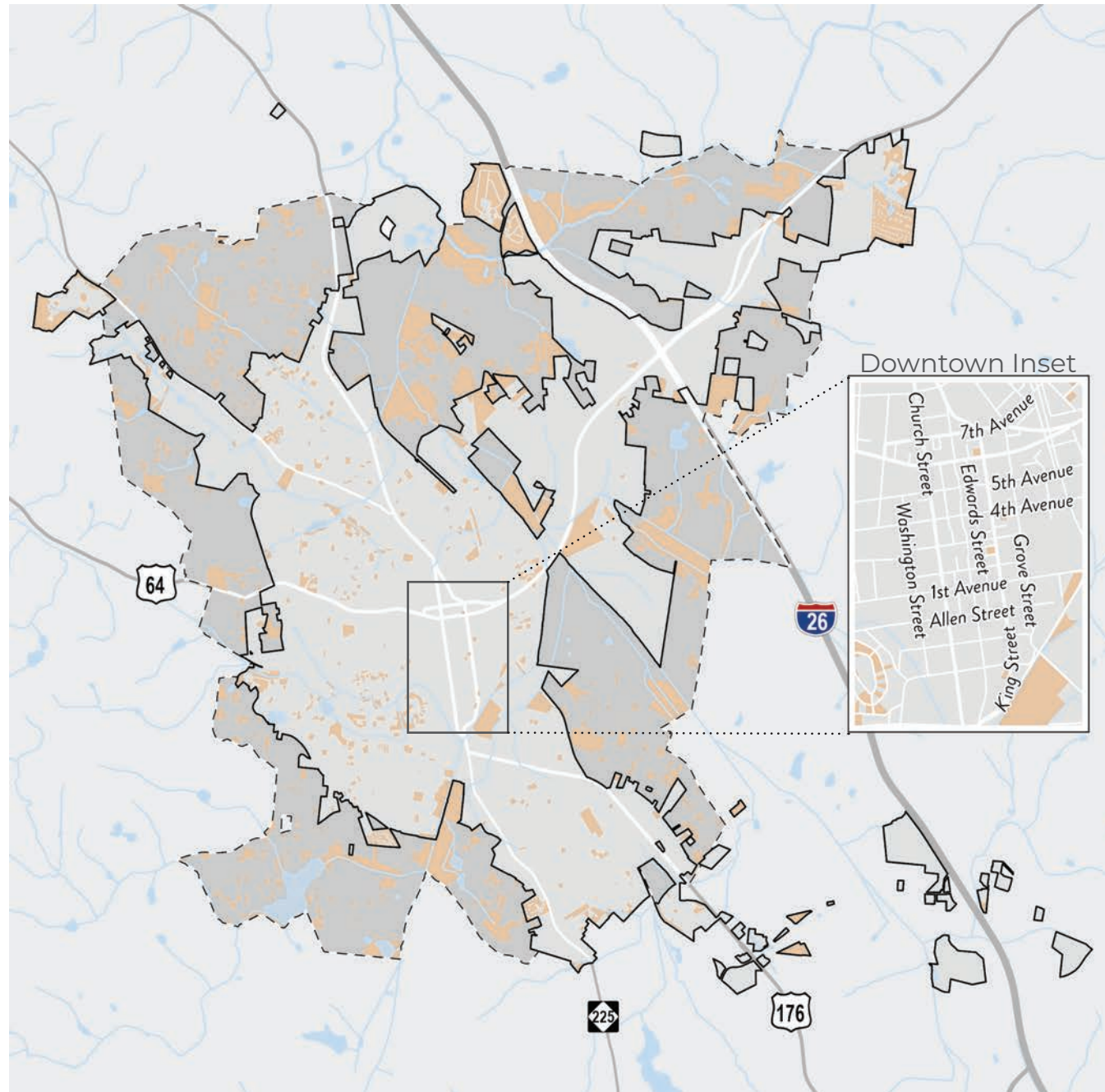
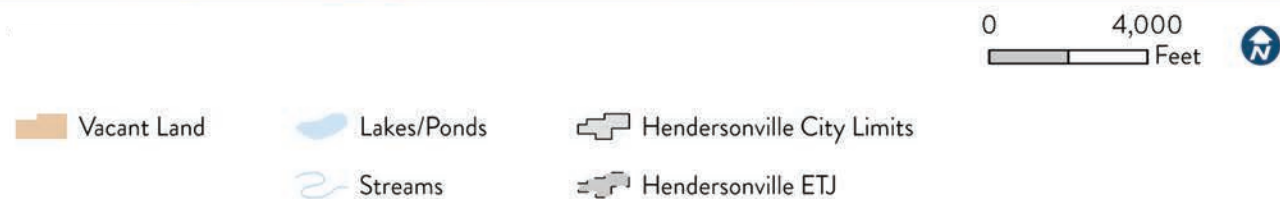


Figure B.3.9 Vacant Land Map



Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

## AGRICULTURE

Hendersonville is surrounded by agricultural land, while only .55% of the land within the city and ETJ is zoned for agriculture. The area is an important agritourism hub due to its famous apples, foliage, and wineries.

However, the city faces pressure to expand city services into these agricultural areas, threatening the agriculture industry. The agricultural value must compensate for any commercial value or residential value that could reside in the lands instead. This could result in significant changes with land use. The County and City must have a shared viewpoint of development on agricultural land and merge their propositions for the areas to enable a cohesive vision.

## HOUSING

Hendersonville offers a range of housing options to cater to different lifestyles and preferences. The city is predominately single-family homes, but also includes a range of townhouses, condominiums, and

apartments. The housing market provides opportunities for both homeownership and rental, with varying styles and sizes available. However, the vast majority of housing options are heavily single-family. The neighborhoods in Hendersonville showcase a blend of architectural designs, including historic homes, contemporary residences, and craftsman-style houses. The city suffers from a shortage of Missing Middle Housing. To illustrate, out of the total land use, only 7.77% is allocated for multi-family residences, while a mere 3.26% is designated for two-family residential units.

Hendersonville is currently facing challenges in addressing housing for its growing aging population and influx of retirees, all within the constraints of limited developable area. Retirees are drawn to the city's scenic beauty, mild climate, and welcoming community, the demand for housing, healthcare services, and amenities tailored to the needs of older adults has increased.

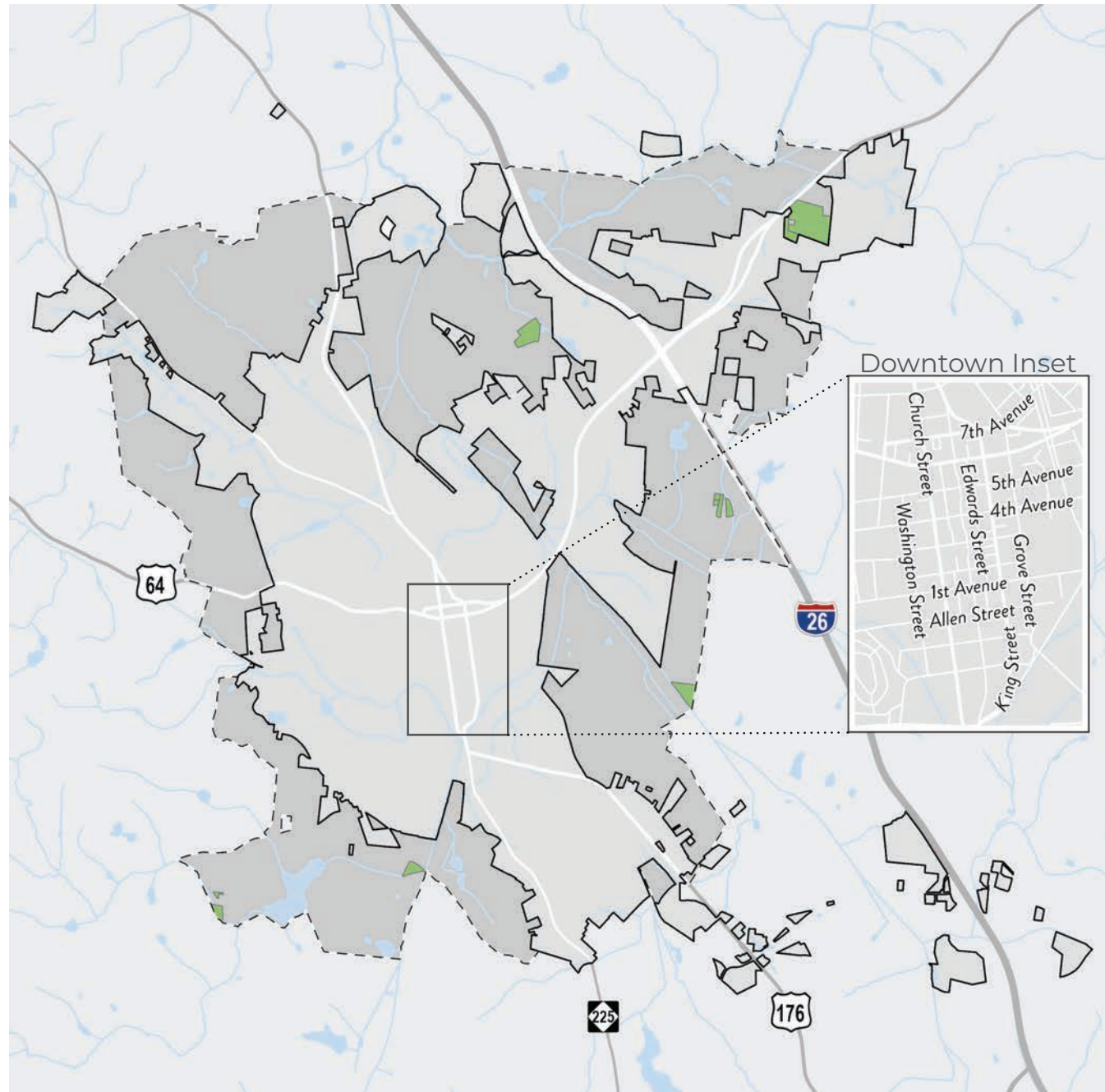
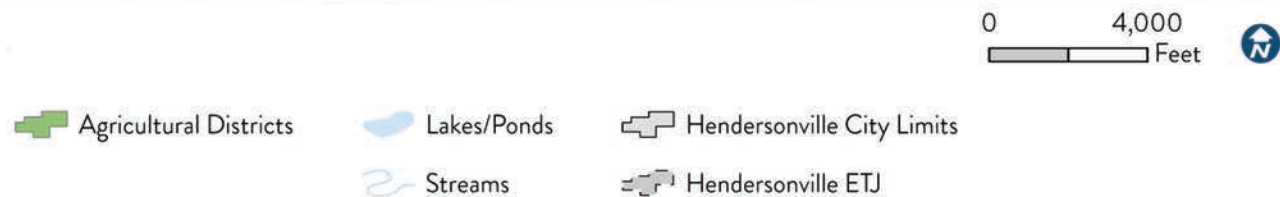


Figure B.3.10 Agriculture Districts Map



Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

Limited availability of developable land poses a significant obstacle in meeting these demands. Hendersonville must carefully consider land-use planning, density regulations, and smart growth strategies to optimize the use of available space while preserving the city's natural and historical assets. By addressing these challenges, the city can ensure a high quality of life for its aging residents and sustain its appeal as a desirable retirement destination.

Hendersonville will also need to address the rapid increase of rent and the limited amount of housing units in its downtown area, particularly in terms of supporting workforce housing. As the downtown core experiences an increased demand for commercial space and desire for mixed use, the availability of affordable housing options for the local workforce becomes a pressing concern.

The limited supply of housing units poses difficulties in attracting

and retaining essential workers, such as teachers, healthcare professionals, and service industry employees, who may struggle to find affordable housing in proximity to their workplaces. Addressing this challenge requires a multi-faceted approach, including incentivizing the development of workforce housing units, promoting mixed-use developments that combine commercial and residential spaces, and exploring innovative solutions such as accessory dwelling units or cooperative housing models.

Increased population may threaten Hendersonville's appeal as a small, hometown of about **2,000 people per square mile**. However, trained workforce is limited and in demand in Hendersonville to fill hourly positions. A balance of growth is necessary to achieve so new people can be integrated without sacrificing small-town character and agriculture.

# Mobility Conditions

## TRANSPORTATION

Hendersonville has a network of roads and highways that connect the city with neighboring areas. Major thoroughfares include Interstate 26 and US Route 64. The city also has public transportation services, including buses operated by Apple Country Public Transit.

Hendersonville’s downtown seeks to enhance its pedestrian infrastructure, aiming for additional pedestrian facilities that mirror the successful design and connectivity of the existing facilities along Main Street.

While Hendersonville’s downtown is walkable, many locations outside of it lack as much accessibility. There are almost no bicycle paths, facilities, or designations to connect to and from downtown. With growth and the addition of greenways, the lack of bike infrastructure will become an increasing issue.

Transportation routes could prove challenging to develop; for example, the floodplains, topography, and existing neighborhoods in the city make it challenging to connect arterials where they converge downtown.

Heavy traffic conditions exist throughout the city along its main corridors and through downtown. 7th Avenue plans to enhance their streetscape and general ambiance to encourage development. There are also plans to connect 7th Avenue to Main Street, but 64 and 25 present themselves as barriers to the connection, proving planning to be a challenge. A bypass, however, would mitigate some traffic on Four Seasons Boulevard which currently has no alternative connections. The city wants to promote and expand their public transit, although Henderson County is conducting a feasibility study in reaction to falling ridership.

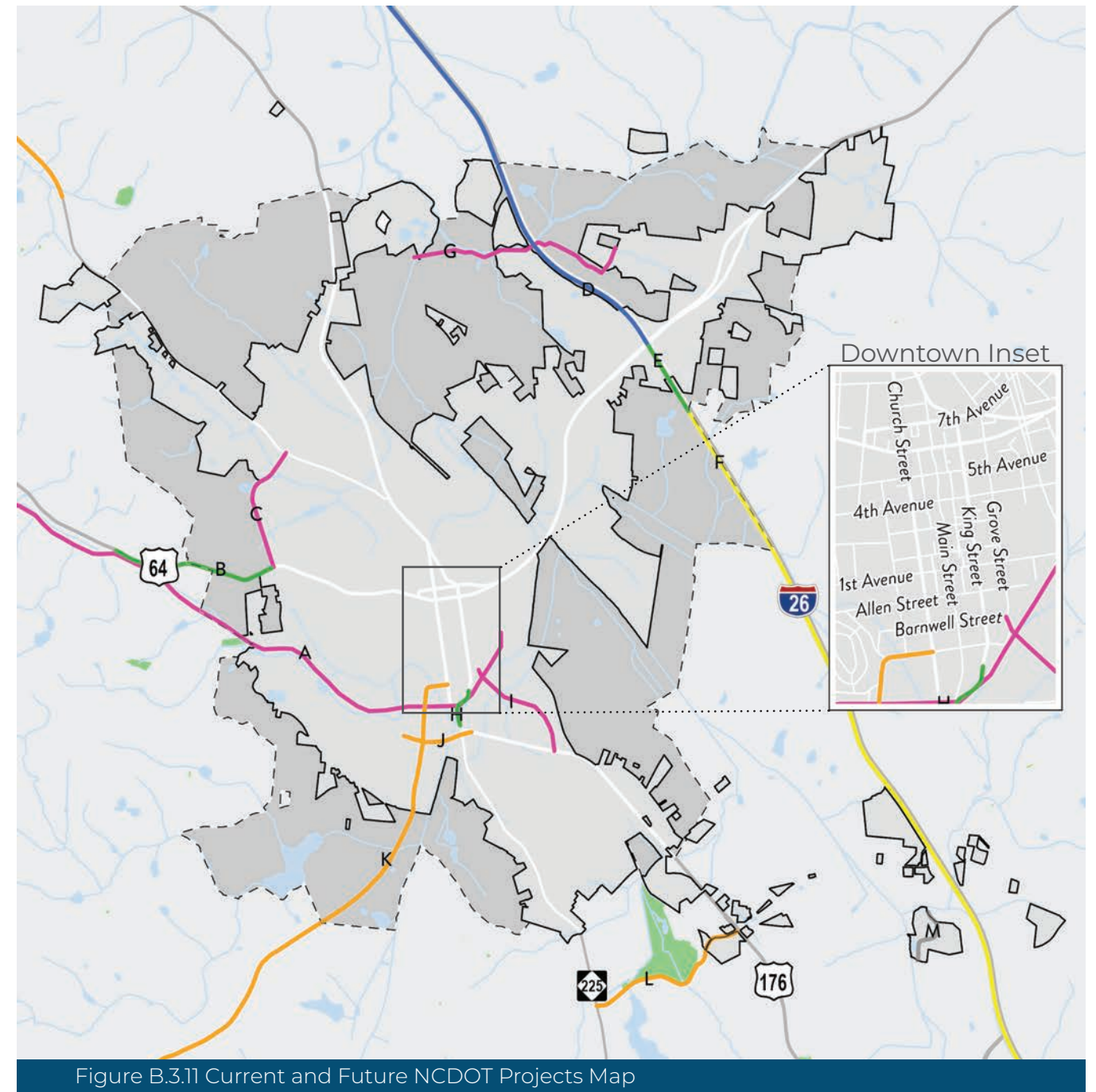


Figure B.3.11 Current and Future NCDOT Projects Map

0 4,000 Feet

<b>Project Type</b> Division Bicycle And Pedestrian Division Highway Ex Highway Statewide Highway Regional Highway Interstate Maintenance	Hendersonville City Limits Hendersonville ETJ Streams Lakes/Ponds	A - BL-0007, EB-6037B B - U-5783 C - EB-5860 D - HO-0002A, I-4400BB E - I-4400A F - I-5925 G - BL-0008 H - U-6049 I - EB-5963 J - U-5886 K - R-5748 L - U-5887 M - HA-0003
---	--	--

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) categorizes roadways into different functional classifications to articulate each road’s role in the broader network and to help identify different design standards for different types of road. Interstates, like I-26 are high-speed, free-flowing roads with extremely limited access provided only at interchanges and are generally intended for long-distance travel between destinations. Arterial roadways make up the core of most urban roadway networks and have design features that support high traffic volumes at moderately high speeds. Principal arterials like US 64/Four Seasons Boulevard and Haywood Road and minor arterials like King Street, Church Street, and Asheville Highway are expected to move large volumes of cars and trucks to provide connections between neighborhoods and centers. Collector roadways provide ways for people to move between adjacent communities and to connect

between neighborhoods and arterial roadways. 5th Avenue and Duncan Hill Road/Dana Road each serve this goal by connecting other roadways to the core transportation network. Local streets connect individual properties to each other and to other roadways and have more focus placed on access and local connectivity than on speed and inter-regional connections.

## VEHICULAR VOLUMES AND LEVEL OF SERVICE

NCDOT regularly collects data about the number of vehicles on major roadways and uses that information to estimate total volume on the roadway network. The busiest road within the planning area is I-26, which carried around 62,500 vehicles per day in 2021. This exceeds NCDOT’s planning-level capacity thresholds for roads of this type, suggesting that I-26 may experience substantial congestion. Other high-volume roadways include Four Seasons Boulevard (24,000 vehicles per day), Asheville Highway (29,000 vehicles per day), and Spartanburg Highway (20,500 vehicles per day).

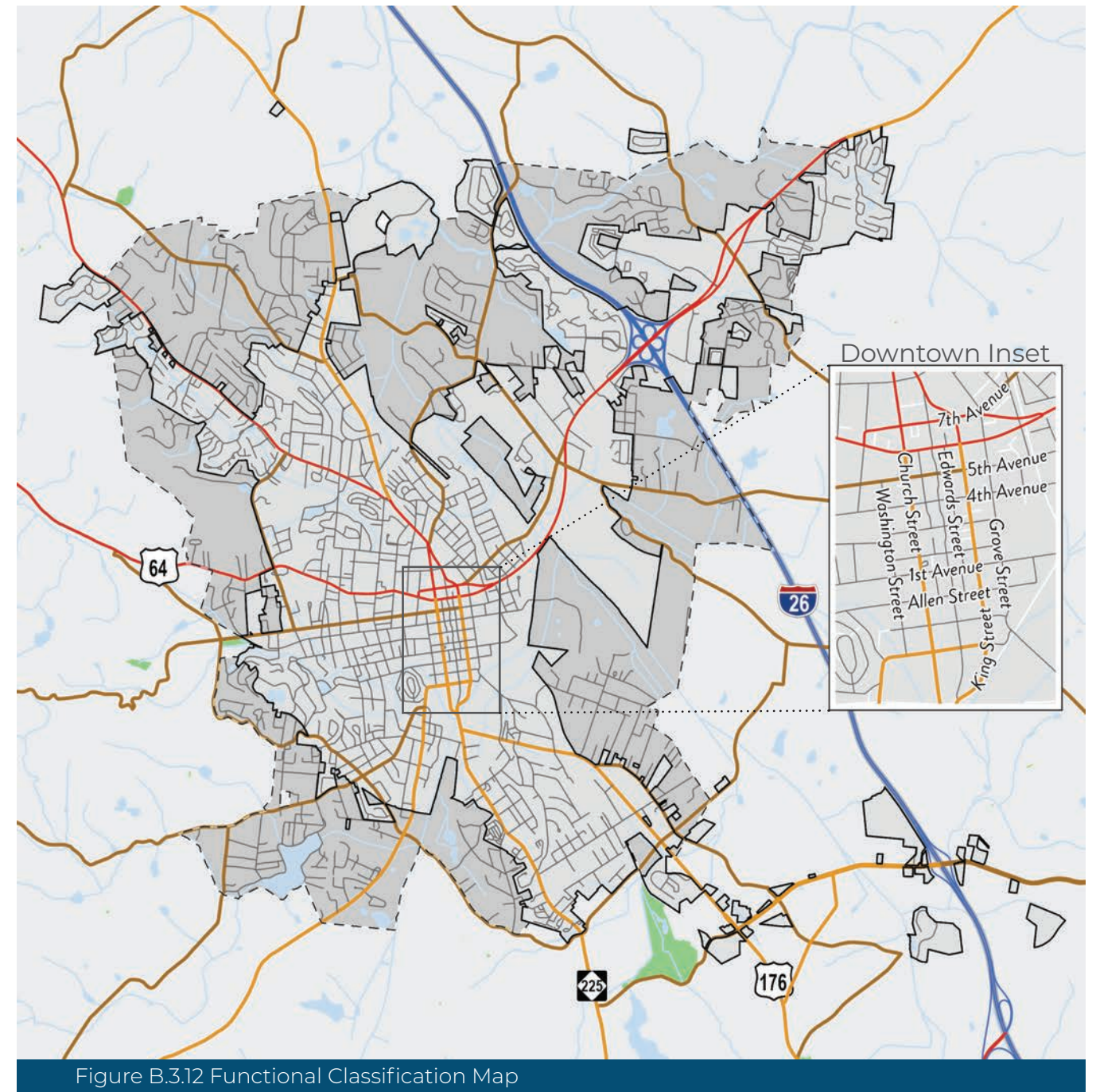


Figure B.3.12 Functional Classification Map



Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

These four-lane roads are generally expected to carry around 25,000 vehicles per day before substantial congestion occurs, though Asheville Highway is already in excess of that threshold. Some two-lane roads carry substantial volumes of traffic as well, such as Haywood Road (10,000 vehicles per day), 6th Avenue / US 64 West (15,500 vehicles per day), and Kanuga Road (8,600 vehicles per day). Of these, 6th Avenue is currently carrying more cars than expected and may be in need of improvements to reduce congestion.

### TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

From 2018 through 2022, NCDOT reports that approximately 4,500 crashes took place in Hendersonville, including 18 fatal or serious injury crashes. Of the 86 municipalities with over 10,000 people in North Carolina, Hendersonville had the 27th most crashes in 2019 despite being the 71st most populous. This actually marks an improvement since 2016, when Hendersonville had the 3rd highest number of crashes of municipalities with over 10,000 residents. In 2022,

Henderson County had the 29th highest crash rate (crashes per total miles driven) of the 100 counties in North Carolina, but had a lower than average rate of fatal crashes.

Over the last decade, dozens of pedestrians and bicyclists have been involved in crashes on Hendersonville roads. Many of these occurred downtown, but additional clusters have been observed on Four Seasons Boulevard near Blue Ridge Mall and on Greenville Highway near Chadwick Avenue.

### BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Hendersonville's downtown core and older neighborhoods are well-served by a largely complete system of sidewalks. While some gaps in these areas do exist, most roadways have sidewalks on both sides of the road. Outside of the traditional core, however, these facilities are less consistent. Sidewalks are available along some major roads like Asheville Highway and Spartanburg Highway, but are missing on others like Four Seasons Boulevard.

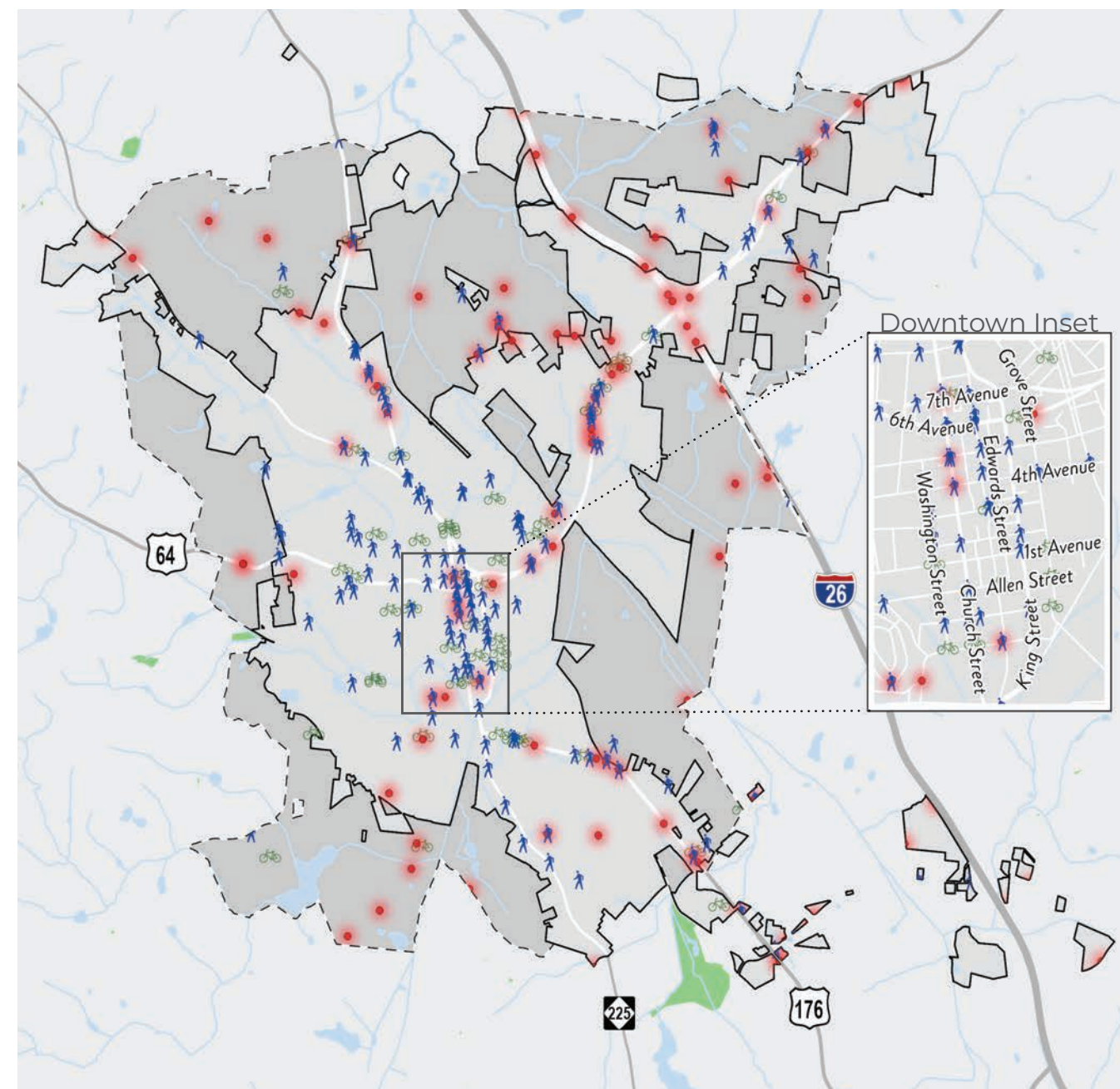


Figure B.3.13 Crashes Map

0 4,000 Feet

- Pedestrian Crashes (2007-2021)
- Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes (2012-2021)
- Bicycle Crashes (2007-2021)
- Hendersonville City Limits
- Hendersonville ETJ
- Lakes/Ponds
- Streams

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

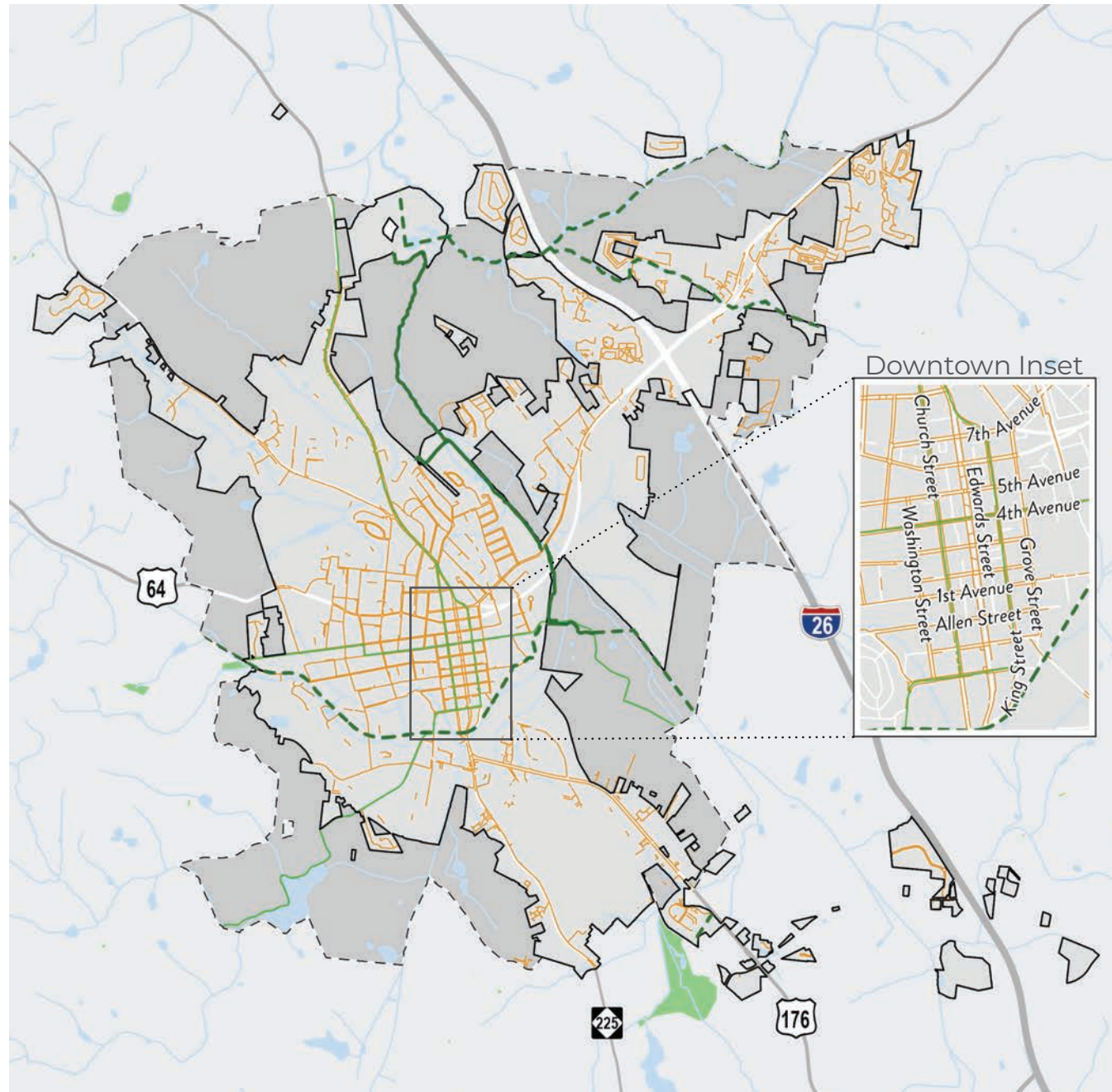




Figure B.3.14 Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Map



-  Sidewalks
-  Bike Routes
-  Existing Greenways and Trails
-  Proposed Greenways and Trails
-  Lakes/Ponds
-  Streams
-  Hendersonville City Limits
-  Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

Some more recently developed residential neighborhoods have internal sidewalks, but these often connect to roads that have no dedicated space for walking or biking.

Dedicated bicycle facilities are uncommon in Hendersonville today. Though some roadways like Asheville Highway and 5th Avenue West/4th Avenue East are designated as bicycle routes, neither has dedicated facilities.

The Oklawaha Greenway east of Downtown does provide an off-street bicycle and pedestrian connection from Berkeley Mills Park to William H. King Memorial Park and then underneath Four Seasons Boulevard to Jackson Park, roughly following Mud Creek. It also includes spur trails connecting to Patton Park and Sullivan Park.

There is a spur near Kanuga Road and Church Street that heads west to Brevard. This is the Ecusta Trail - opening next fall after 20 years of planning and construction. The

Ecusta Trail will be a major focus for land use planning, and the community is wholly excited for its implementation.

### SIDEWALKS

The City has taken steps to improve sidewalks, ensuring pedestrians have ample space to walk comfortably and safely. Recently, the city conducted the [BiPeds Sidewalk Assessment](#) with the assistance of volunteers to collect field data. Volunteers reviewed existing conditions to determine where sidewalks did or not occur and where gaps were present.

The City is also wrapping up the [Walk Hendo Pedestrian Plan](#) and will be going for adoption in December of 2023. It conducted a public survey aimed to gain community input on how to make the city more pedestrian friendly through the development of sidewalk and path projects.

**“Hendersonville ranks #1 in pedestrian crashes with severe injuries and fatalities amongst small cities in North Carolina.”**



## TRANSIT

Apple Country Public Transit (ACPT) provides bus service throughout the City of Hendersonville, Town of Fletcher, and Laurel Park with three bus routes running from 6:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday on a 1-hour cycle. Routes originate from the Transfer Site, located at the corner of 4th and Grove Street in downtown Hendersonville (next to the 1995 Henderson County Courthouse). Henderson County contracts with WNCSource to provide transit and paratransit services.

ACPT offers a vital service to the community, particularly to underserved individuals, providing essential trips to jobs, shopping, and access to health services and education across the entire county. In recent years, ridership on ACPT services declined significantly. The County seeks to increase ridership while optimizing the level of service to current and potential riders.

Henderson County is developing a Transit Feasibility Study to determine

where there are opportunities to improve transit service in the county. The study will look at existing services, connectivity to important destinations, bus stop location, and first/last mile connections before recommending transit service enhancements and capital improvements making transit more convenient for the community.

The study will be guided by a steering committee comprising stakeholders from Blue Ridge Community College, Partnership for Economic Development, Pardee Hospital, Tourism Development Authority, Hendersonville City Police, Council on Aging, Henderson County Health Department, Henderson County School System, and Henderson County Sheriff's Department.

## RAILROAD

The Watco rail line operated by Norfolk Southern Railroad serves Hendersonville. It is the main line from Charleston, SC to Cincinnati, OH. The rail line is east of the Downtown area and is still active but only for the storage of cars.

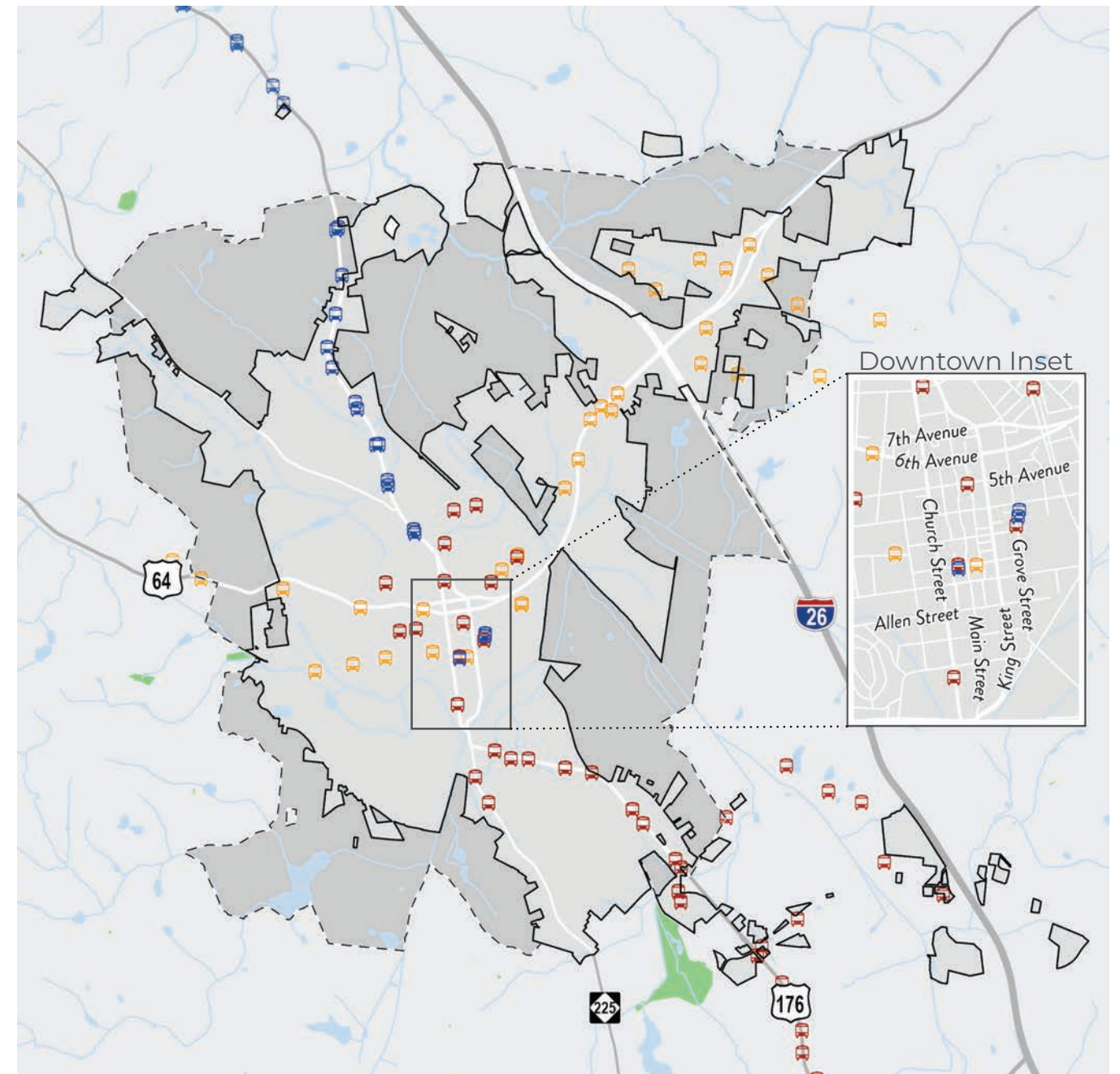
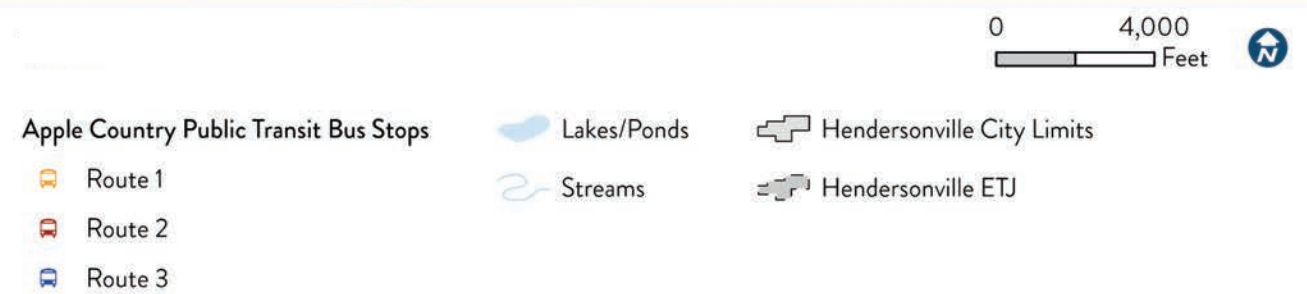


Figure B.3.15 Transit Map



Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

## AIRPORTS

Hendersonville is served by two airports, Asheville Regional Airport and Greenville-Spartanburg Airport. Asheville Regional Airport is located a 15 minute drive from downtown Hendersonville and is easily accessible from Interstate 26. The airport's runway is 8,200 feet long. Greenville-Spartanburg Airport is located 40 miles from Hendersonville.

The Hendersonville Airport is privately owned, but open to the public. It is located two miles east of downtown and has been active since 1937. For a 12-month period ending June 20, 2002, there were 56 average aircraft operations per day.

According to the AirNav website, there are 44 single engine airplanes, two multi-engine airplanes and two helicopters based at the airport. Runway dimensions are 3,075 feet by 40 feet.



Asheville Regional Airport | Visit Hendersonville

# Infrastructure Conditions

## PUBLIC SAFETY

The City of Hendersonville has dedicated fire and police departments that play essential roles in ensuring public safety and emergency response.

### Police Protection

The Hendersonville Police Department is responsible for law enforcement and maintaining public safety within the city. The department has a staff of 66 members and receives an average of 3,884 monthly calls for service, including 105 criminal arrests, 198 incident reports and 213 traffic safety citations. The police officers are sworn law enforcement professionals who enforce local, state, and federal laws, respond to emergency calls, investigate crimes, and ensure the safety of the community.

The police department works to maintain a visible presence in the community and engage with residents through community policing initiatives. They collaborate with community organizations, neighborhood associations, and schools to build positive relationships and address specific concerns or issues affecting the community. The department also provides educational programs on topics such as crime prevention, drug awareness, and personal safety.

Hendersonville Police Department is the City's only precinct station.



Hendersonville Police Department | City of Hendersonville

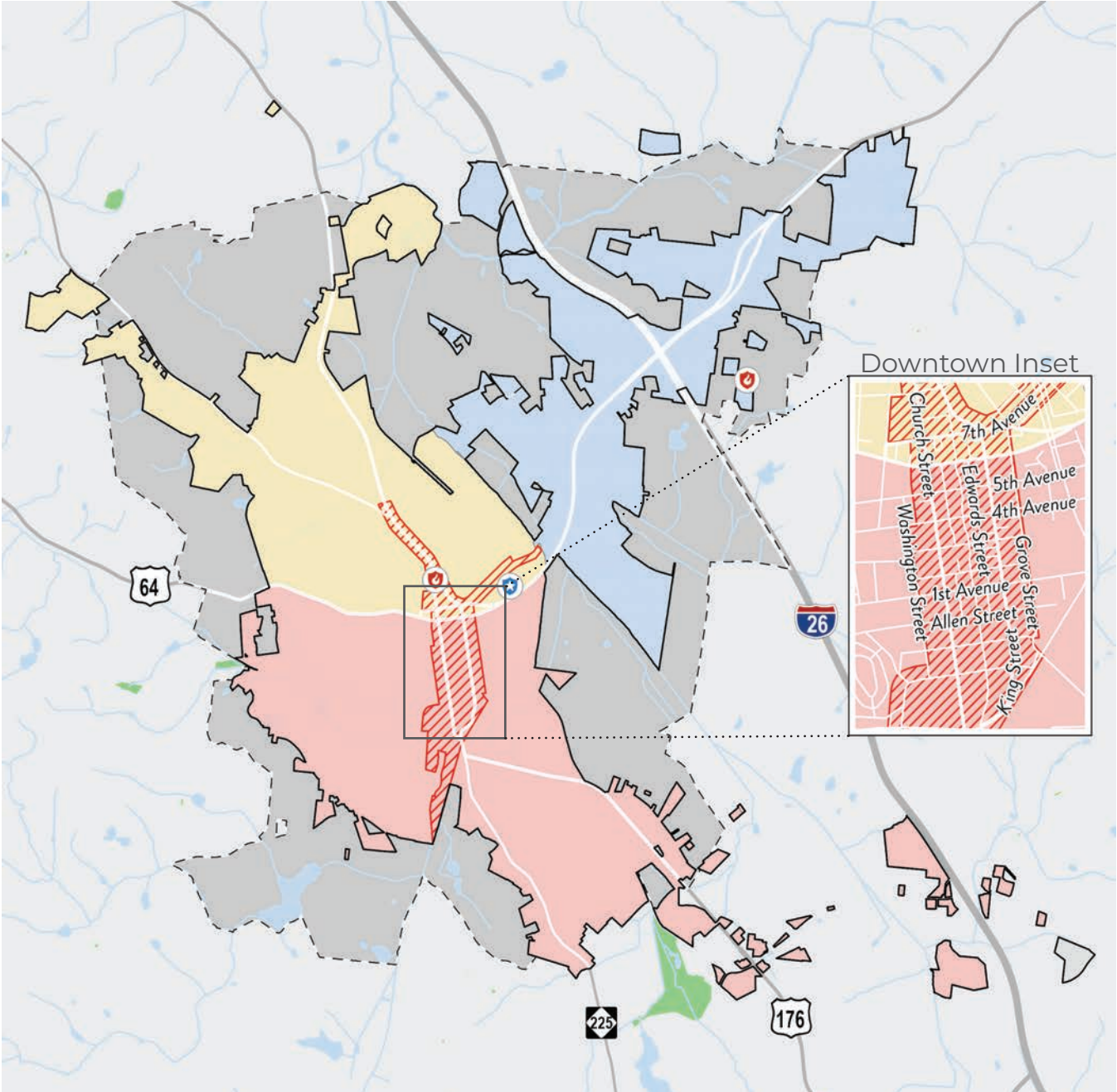


Figure B.3.16 Public Safety Map

- Fire Station
- Police Station
- Fire Primary District
- District One
- District Two
- District Three
- Lakes/Ponds
- Streams
- Hendersonville City Limits
- Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

## FIRE PROTECTION AND EMS

The Hendersonville Fire Department is responsible for fire suppression, fire prevention, and emergency medical services within the city. The Operations division has 42 full-time career personnel that respond to an average of 4,500 calls per year and are organized into three rotating shifts that provide 24-hour coverage. The department operates three engines, one aerial platform, and a Battalion Chief with a total of 14 personnel each day. The department has two fire stations and a North Carolina Response Rating Class 1 for its public protection classification.

Hendersonville Fire Department was recently awarded a new ISO Class 1 rating. The Public Protection Classification (PPC) Class 1 rating from the Insurance Services Office (ISO) is the best rating possible and represents Hendersonville's superior level of preparedness and defense against fire risk and property loss.

Hendersonville businesses and residents may see lower insurance premiums thanks to this rating. This designation places the fire department in the top 2% of fire departments in North Carolina and in the top 1% nationwide. There are two fire stations in Hendersonville, located:

- 851 N. Main St, Hendersonville, NC 28792
- 632 Sugarloaf Rd, Hendersonville, NC 28792



Fire station | City of Hendersonville

## STREETS MAINTENANCE

The Public Works Department maintains 134 lane miles of City streets but not all streets in the City are City-maintained ([map](#)).

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) maintains several major thoroughfares (U.S. 64, U.S. 176, Highway 25, and Highway 191 - including King and Church Streets, and others).

Funding for the maintenance of City streets come from what is known as Powell Bill funds. These funds are not property taxes but are monies received from the taxes paid on gasoline. Allocation of these funds is based on population (75%) and street mileage (25%). Recently, City Council made street maintenance a very high priority by allocating one cent of the property tax toward street maintenance. All of this money goes directly toward the annual street resurfacing program.

The monies the City receives from the Powell Bill Fund cannot be spent on maintaining any NCDOT street.

### 2022 Street Resurfacing

In 2022, the City of Hendersonville completed its annual resurfacing program and repaved 3.6 miles within the City. The City of Hendersonville uses a Pavement Condition Survey to determine the condition of city-maintained streets and to establish a prioritized repair program.

***Last year alone, the City repaired over 1,200 potholes.***

### Traffic Signals

The Public Works Traffic Division maintains 42 City owned traffic signals on City Owned Roadways, over 8,000 signs and posts, 301 City owned decorative street lights, 175 historic banners, 5 trail emergency phones, 5 electric car charging stations, over 1,500 parking spaces, and 27 parking kiosks within the City.

### Street Lighting

Through Duke Energy, the City has more than 1,800 streetlights. These are designed to illuminate the street only - not private property. Duke Energy maintains numerous outdoor lights to help promote safety and security in public areas.

### SOLID WASTE

The City of Hendersonville Environmental Services Division provides weekly pickup of solid waste, recycling and yard waste. Residents can also take their recycling materials to the Henderson County Convenience Center.

Most mixed paper, cardboard, cans, glass, and plastic are accepted. All recycling collected by the City is taken to the Henderson County Transfer Station. White goods such as water heaters, ovens, ranges, etc. are also picked up curbside which are sold as scrap metal to help support the enterprise fund. Yard waste is ground up into mulch then given back to the public through our mulch giveaway program.

The City has an interactive [Track-A-Truck map](#) where residents can view truck locations and routes in real-time.

### WATER AND SEWER SERVICES

Hendersonville Water and Sewer provides water service to over 31,000 homes and businesses in Hendersonville and Henderson County as well as sewer service to over 10,000 homes and businesses. About 78,000 people are being served with water and over 21,000 people receive sewer service.

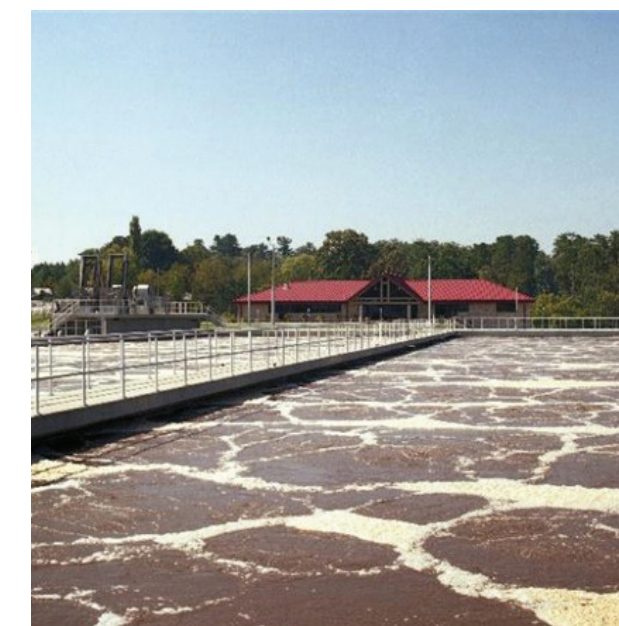
The Department also operates and maintains over 683 miles of water mains (ranging in size from 2-inches to 24-inches), 54 water pumping stations, 24 water storage tanks (ranging in size from 80,000-gallons to 5,000,000-gallons), over 180 miles of sewer mains (ranging in size from 3-inches to 42-inches) and 31 sewer pumping stations. The Department has a staff of 88 employees making up seven divisions including Administration, Facilities Maintenance, Water Treatment, Operations Support, Excavations, Wastewater Treatment and Preventive Maintenance.

The Administration division is responsible for the overall management of the Department, recommending policy to City Council, overseeing projects, capital improvements planning, grant writing, upkeep and maintenance of departmental GIS data, budgeting and purchasing oversight. This division consists of seven employees including the utilities director,

operations manager, utilities engineer, assistant to the utilities director, environmental compliance coordinator, administrative assistant III and administrative assistant I.

Water and sewer infrastructure projects:

- **Water supply:** The French Broad River Intake, currently under construction at a cost of \$23.5 million, will be the system's fourth water source. The three existing intakes are North Fork and Bradley Creek in Pisgah National Forest, and the Mills River.



Hendersonville Wastewater Treatment Facility | Hendersonville, NC

- **Water service:** Services 78,000 people, 75% of which are outside of the city limits.
- **Sewer system:** Services are provided within the City of Hendersonville. Properties that request service outside of the city must petition into the city, which requires collaboration with the county.
- **Water Sewer Advisory Council:** An advisory council consisting of governing members of Henderson County and municipal boards, businesses, economic development and customer representatives that advise on rates and policy.

### Water System Master Plan

In 2017, the City of Hendersonville completed a water system master plan that identifies capital improvements to eliminate low pressures, remedy deficient fire flows and supply future water demands.

The project included evaluating water age and developing unidirectional flushing (UDF) plans in water quality problem areas. This project supplements a 2014/2015 project that built a new hydraulic model from the city’s GIS and customer billing records. The water system master plan envisions expanding the service area into both the urban service area and the rural transition area by 2040. The service area was defined through meetings with city staff and the county planning department. Population estimates for the service area were based on projections developed by the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization for traffic analysis zones (TAZs). These projections show the water system will supply an additional population of 74,000 people by 2040.

### North Fork Reservoir Dredging Project

The City of Hendersonville is improving the water storage capacity of the North Fork Mills River Reservoir. The watershed and reservoir are located on completely

forested, public lands within the Pisgah National Forest and have provided water to Hendersonville and surrounding areas for approximately 100 years. Over time, sediment has naturally accumulated within the reservoir which has begun to infringe on the water intake structure’s ability to receive water.

To ensure this pristine water source can continue to serve the community, the reservoir’s water level will be temporarily lowered and accumulated sediment removed. The sediment will be temporarily stockpiled and then transported outside of the national forest for proper disposal. This process is known as “dredging,” and will increase water volume along with improving water quality. Construction work began the week of April 24, 2023, and is almost complete with a final walkthrough scheduled.

The City currently sources water from three locations - the North Fork Mills River Reservoir and Bradley Creek water intake located in Pisgah

National Forest, and the main stem of the Mills River. A similar dredging project was completed in 2019 to remove accumulated sediment from Bradley Creek. Water travels from these sources to Hendersonville’s water treatment facility where treatment occurs before traveling through pipes to homes and businesses across the community.

### STORMWATER SERVICE

Hendersonville’s Stormwater Management Program works to preserve, protect, and restore the quality of water in the streams, rivers, and lakes within the City of Hendersonville.



Water storage tank | City of Hendersonville

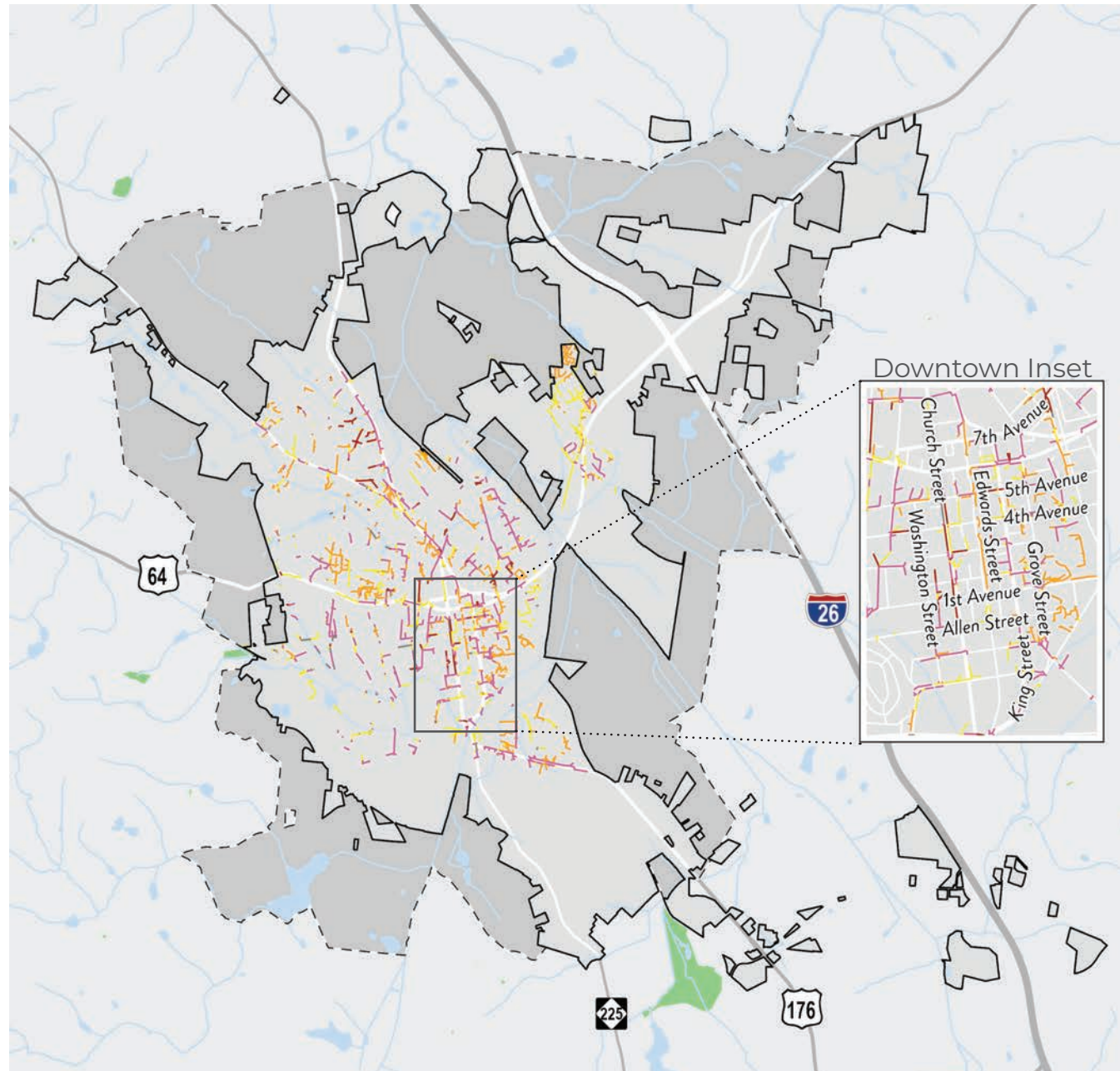


Figure B.3.17 Stormwater Map



- |                      |                |                 |                            |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Pipe Material</b> | Plastic        | Lakes and Ponds | Hendersonville City Limits |
| Brick/Clay           | Other; Unknown | Streams         | Hendersonville ETJ         |
| Metal                |                |                 |                            |
| Concrete             |                |                 |                            |

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

The City's Stormwater Management program was developed in compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act and the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that stormwater is effectively controlled in order to reduce pollution generated from stormwater runoff.

#### National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

The City of Hendersonville is a federally designated National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II community and operates under the authority of the Stormwater Management Program which became effective in August of 2007 after being drafted into the City's Code of Ordinances and operates as a division of the Engineering Department.

NPDES Phase II is a federal and state mandated program under the Clean Water Act to address non-point source pollution or stormwater runoff. The City's NPDES Permit consists of six management areas that reduce

stormwater pollution and assures clean water is maintained in our city's water bodies:

- Public Outreach and Education
- Public Involvement
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- Construction Site Runoff Control
- Post-Construction Runoff Control
- Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping

#### Stormwater management program

The City of Hendersonville stormwater management program includes educational and regulatory initiatives to encourage environmentally sound development and redevelopment.

The City's recently revised Stormwater Ordinance provides guidance on stormwater management plans required for development and redevelopment, and encourages the prevention of illicit discharges.

Components of the program include:

- **Annual Stormwater Management Plan:**
- Providing measures to meet City of Hendersonville NPDES Phase 2 Permit
- Documents/Forms to help developers understand the regulations and submit quality stormwater management plans
- Public education and outreach to improve stormwater pollution and water quality throughout Hendersonville.
- **Public Participation and Involvement:**
- The public can provide valuable input and assistance to the stormwater management program. The City provides the public opportunities to play an active role in both the development and implementation of the stormwater program.
- The City has a stormwater program, a NPDES Phase II Permit and is a participant in the Western North Carolina Stormwater Partnership.

- **Stormwater Accomplishments:**
- Michael Huffman, the City of Hendersonville’s Stormwater Division Manager, has been honored with the prestigious 2023 H. Rooney Malcom Award for his outstanding leadership, innovative approach, dedicated agency service, and significant contributions to the stormwater profession.



Patton Park Stormwater Stroll | City of Hendersonville

## UTILITIES

### Natural Gas

Dominion Energy distributes natural gas to over 338,000 customers in 95 cities, cities and communities in north central and western North Carolina, and currently is the sole supplier of gas to Hendersonville.

### Electric

There are two companies that provide electricity to Hendersonville:

- Duke Energy - Serving a 20,000 square mile area in the Piedmont Carolinas, Duke Energy is one of the nation’s ten largest electric utilities. Duke Energy Companies operate nuclear, fossil fueled, hydroelectric and other renewable power generation facilities.
- Carolina Power & Light (CP&L) - CP&L provides electric power to approximately 1,000,000 customers in eastern and western NC and central SC.

It serves a 30,000 square mile territory with a population of more than 3.5 million.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Phone service is offered by multiple providers including, but not limited to:

- BellSouth
- Verizon Wireless
- AT&T
- Sprint

### Broadband

Broadband is emerging as the new “utility” and a necessary service for commerce, education, and support of all digital transactions and interactions. On-demand and reliable internet access is key to the economic sustainability and development of the city.

Hendersonville boasts 100% residential coverage with fixed broadband speeds of 25/3 Mbps or greater. However, when looking at fixed fiber with speeds of 100/20 Mbps or greater the map below shows weak coverage on the central core and northeast areas.



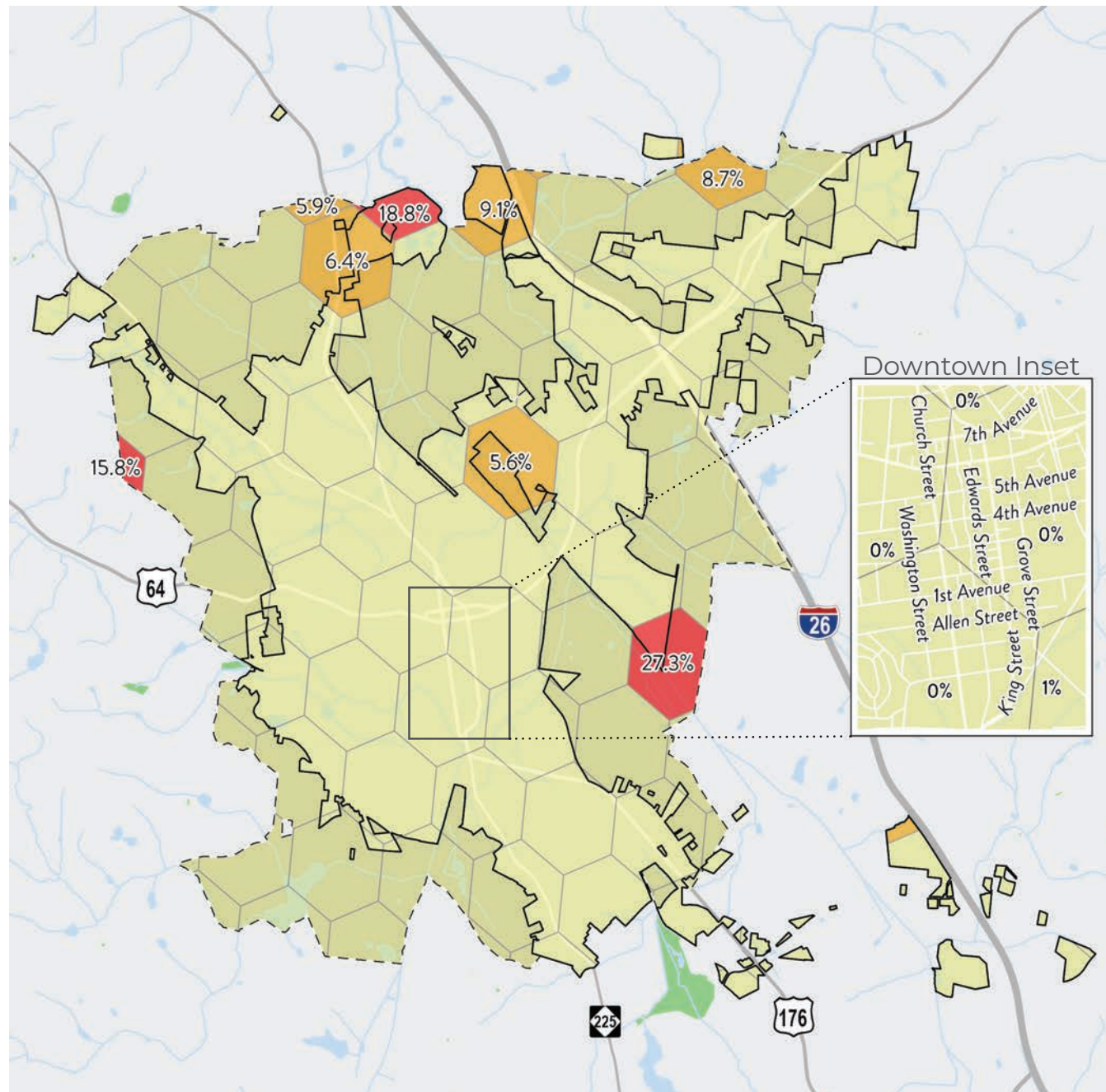


Figure B.3.18 Fixed Broadband Internet Coverage Map



**Percent of Location Underserved**

- < 5%
- 5% - 10%
- 15% - 30%

- Lakes/Ponds
- Streams

- Hendersonville City Limits
- Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT, NC OneMap

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

Hendersonville boasts a number of well-maintained parks that provide recreational spaces for residents and visitors. Popular parks include:

- **Berkeley Mills Park** parcel is split in ownership between the School and City. The School's part offers a baseball park with a pavilion and restrooms. The section of the park with the trail head to Oklawaha Greenway and developing disc golf course is still City-owned.
- **Patton Park** provides facilities for swimming, basketball, and tennis, and even includes a skatepark.
- **Main Street** is a linear park which has proven to be a very successful public space.
- **Rotary Park** is comprised of a walking trail, an equipped playground, and a pavilion.
- **Edwards Park** is currently under construction and will boast a playground with a mini golf course.

- **Sullivan Park** is comprised of five acres containing a playground, a few basketball courts, picnic tables, a public restroom, and a connector trail to Oklawaha Greenway Trail.

These parks contribute to the quality of life in Hendersonville, offering opportunities for outdoor activities and community gatherings.

Even so, the community desires to have more green spaces and the city wants to have more passive parks, preferably on higher elevations close to greenways and trails.

**Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

The Hendersonville Parks and Greenspace Master Plan is being developed concurrently with the comprehensive plan, ensuring a coordinated approach to community development and the provision of recreational facilities and programs. See the tables on the following pages for information on all the parks and trails in the city and county.

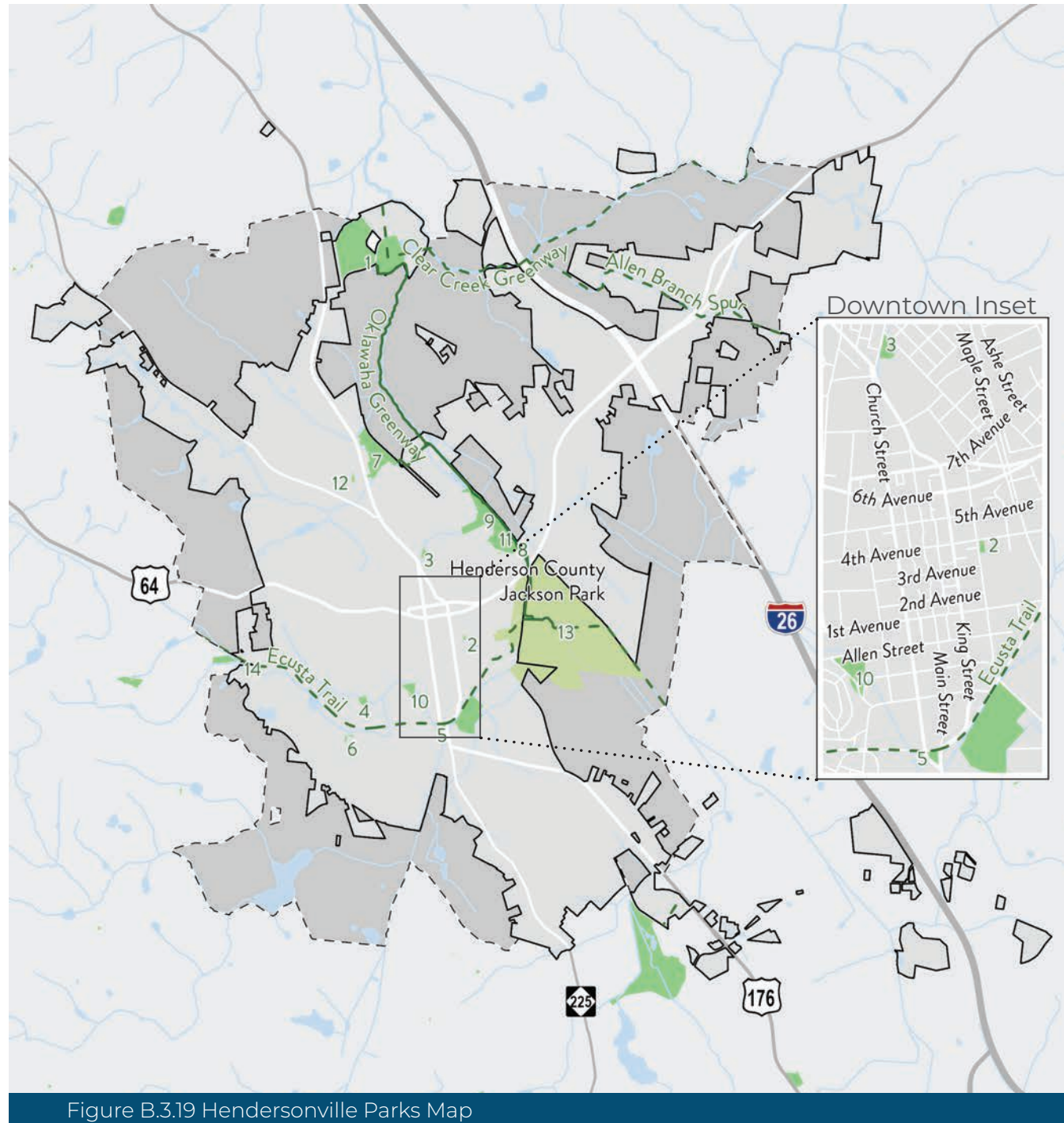


Figure B.3.19 Hendersonville Parks Map

**CITY PARKS**

#	Name	Amenities
1	Berkeley Mills Park	Trailhead for Oklawaha Greenway Trail, developing disc golf course
2	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park	Picnic tables, a walking path, and a granite memorial
3	Edwards Park	A new park with an 18-hole ADA accessible mini golf course, concession stand, and a playground
4	Four Seasons Rotary Park	Pavilion, picnic tables, walking trail, and playground
5	HonorAir Park	Visual entrance feature to Historic Downtown Hendersonville, greenspace
6	Lenox Park	Greenspace and picnic tables
7	Patton Park	Basketball courts, 2 tennis courts, 2 baseball fields, a football field, two pavilions with picnic tables and grills, 2 gazebos, a playground, a one-half mile lighted walking trail, bathrooms, and an Olympic-size swimming pool.
8	Pets' Own Place on Seventh Avenue	Large dog area, small dog area, trash receptacles, and a water spigot
9	Sullivan Park	Playground, picnic tables, restroom, and 2 basketball courts
10	Toms Park	Picnic tables and shuffleboard courts
11	William H. King Memorial Park	Natural trail, baseball field, and walking trail
12	Keith Park	Greenspace and large mature trees
<b>Trails</b>		
13	Oklawaha Greenway	
14	Ecusta Trail	

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

See the following table for park names and information in correspondence with the map.

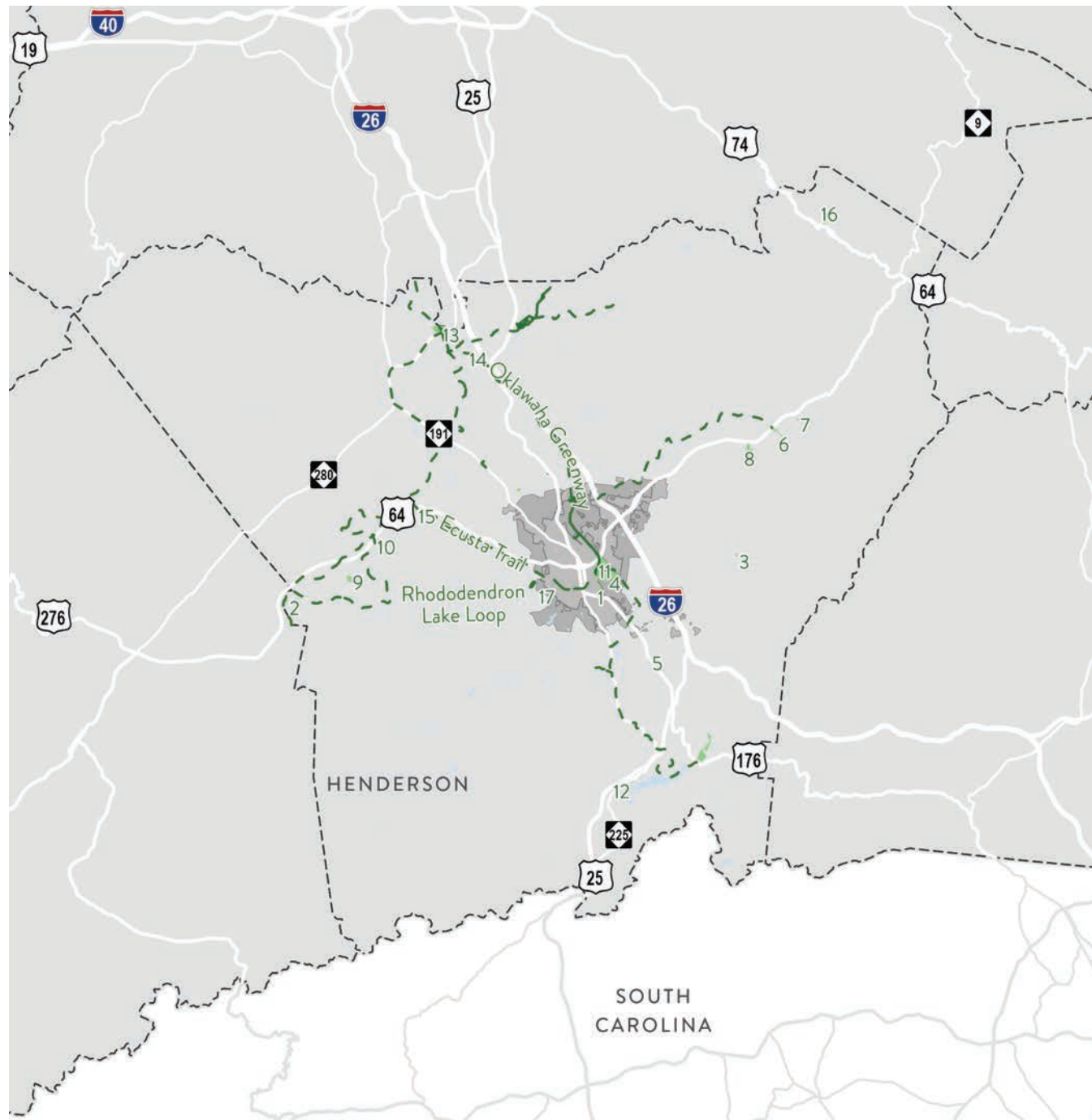


Figure B.3.20 Henderson County Parks Map



- Henderson County Owned Parks
- Lakes/Ponds
- Hendersonville ETJ
- ~ Existing Greenways and Trails
- Hendersonville City Limits
- Counties
- - - Proposed Greenways and Trails

See the following table for park names and information in correspondence with the map.

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

**COUNTY PARKS**

#	Name	Amenities
1	Athletics & Activities Center Park	Multiple classrooms for various activities, dance room, soccer field, and gymnasium for basketball, volleyball, and pickleball
2	Blantyre Park	French Broad River access park with parking and a canoe port
3	Dana Community Park	Facilities include the Dana Park Community Building, covered picnic shelter, open field, walking trail, playground, basketball hoop and lots of parking
4	Donnie Jones All-Inclusive Jackson Park Playground	Huge playground
5	East Flat Rock Park	Picnic shelter, gazebo, playground, swings, walking trails, recreational fields
6	Edneyville Community Center	Edneyville Community Center, multi-purpose fields, walking trail, and playground
7	Edneyville Community Park	Facilities include tennis courts, a basketball court, playground, covered picnic shelter, walking trail, soccer fields, level playing field
8	Edneyville Elementary Gymnasium	Hosts pickleball and basketball courts
9	Etowah Park	Facilities include a shelter, playground, walking trail, tennis courts, lighted ball fields, concession stand, batting cages, playground, basketball court, soccer field, shuffleball court, little library, and a Frisbee golf course
10	Horse Shoe Boat Access	French Broad River access park with parking and a boat launch
11	Jackson Park	Largest municipal-owned park in Western NC; facilities include concession stands, mountain bike skills park, lighted tennis courts, lighted softball/baseball fields, soccer fields, lighted basketball courts, playgrounds, covered picnic shelters, a disc golf course, nature trail, and entrance to Oklawaha Greenway
12	Tuxedo Park	Facilities include a shelter, gazebo, playground, veterans memorial, walking trail, and open green space to play in
13	Westfeldt River Park	Facilities include river access, canoe/boat launch, picnic areas, walking trail, parking and an open field area
<b>Trails</b>		
14	Oklawaha Greenway	
15	Ecusta Trail	
16	Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Trailhead	
17	Rhododendron Lake Loop	

## GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

In 2019, Henderson County adopted the [Greenway Master Plan](#) with a long-term, 30-year vision. The plan aims to create a safe, accessible, comprehensive and connected system of constructed greenway trail that enhances quality of life throughout Henderson County by providing opportunities for transportation, recreation, public health, economic development, and environmental stewardship.

### The Ecusta Trail

The Ecusta Trail project aims to transform a 19.4-mile unused railway corridor into a multi-use greenway, connecting Hendersonville and Brevard. This rail-trail will serve as a picturesque “linear park,” inviting people of all ages and abilities to walk, run, bike, and wheelchair along its path. The trail will showcase the natural beauty of the region, winding through fields, forests, streams, pastures, and country churches. The vision is to create a vibrant cultural main street that enhances a sense of community

The Friends of Ecusta Trail, a grassroots organization formed in 2009, has been dedicated to making this dream a reality. With support from the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad and guidance from Conserving Carolina, the rail corridor was acquired for the purpose of developing the rail-trail. Grant awards from various entities, including NCDOT and county tourism authorities, have helped fund the purchase and initial development of the Ecusta Trail. In the summer of 2021, a ribbon cutting took place to celebrate Henderson County’s completion of a \$7.8 million purchase of the Ecusta Trail.

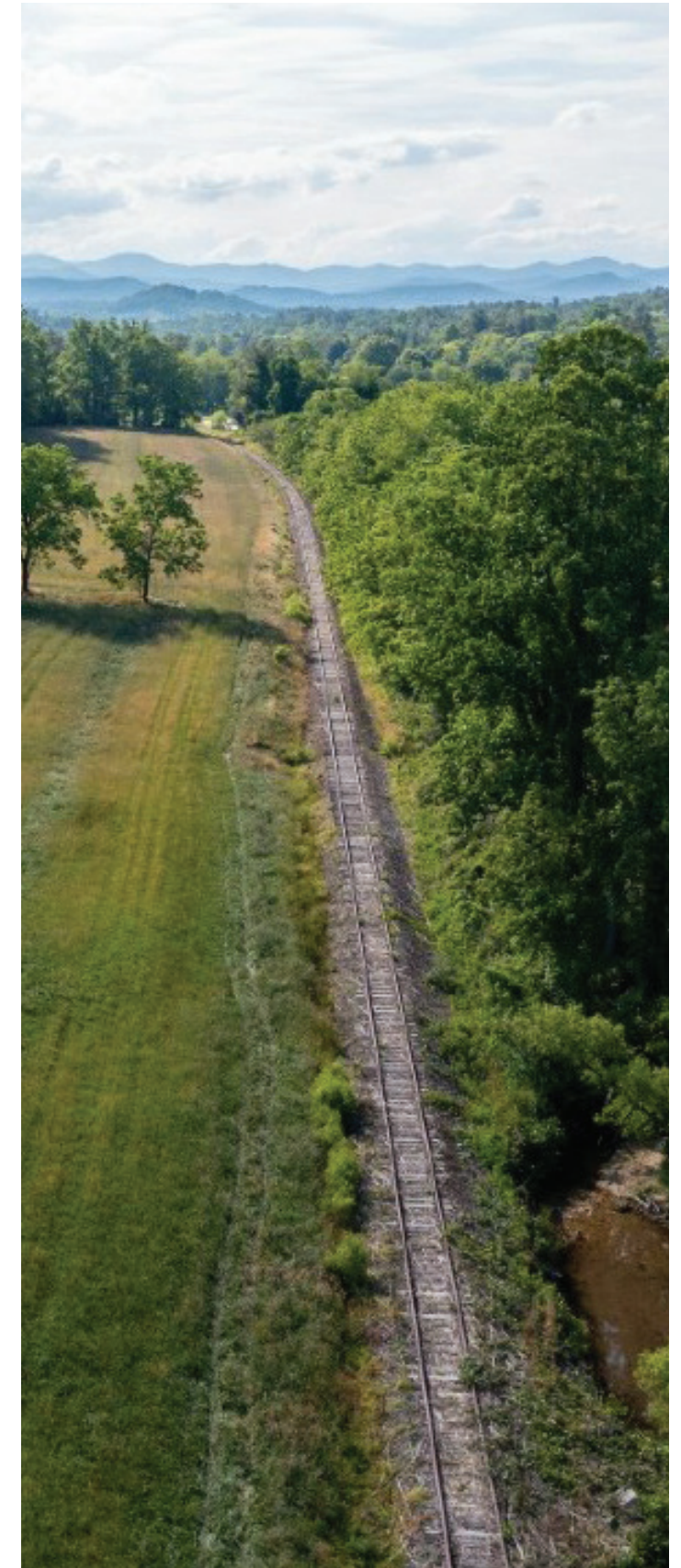
### The Oklawaha Greenway

The 3.5 mile Oklawaha Greenway winds through wetlands, meadows and forests to connect four parks. The fully paved Greenway is a few blocks from Main Street in Downtown Hendersonville and easily accessible from five convenient parking areas.

### City Cemetery

The City owns and maintains the grounds at Oakdale Cemetery, located at Highway 64 West and Valley Street. Oakdale Cemetery was established during Hendersonville’s prosperous era, spanning from 1879 to the early 20th century. The establishment of Oakdale Cemetery was accompanied by an ordinance that strictly prohibited burials within the city limits, mandating that Oakdale Cemetery be the sole designated burial site. This practice aimed to safeguard public health, preserve property values, and prevent any potential disturbances associated with burial grounds.

Henderson County provides a StoryMap for updates on the Ecusta Trail. See it [here](#).



Ecusta rail line | Conserving Carolina

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# Community Character

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment in Hendersonville is a blend of historical charm, residential areas, commercial spaces, public facilities, and recreational amenities. It is designed to cater to the needs of residents and visitors, while also preserving the city's heritage and natural surroundings.

## TERRAIN

Hendersonville's terrain influences development patterns of the city. The undulating topography of Hendersonville poses unique challenges and opportunities for development. The hilly terrain often limits the amount of flat land available for construction, leading to careful consideration of building locations and site preparation.

As a result, the buildable area is intricately shaped by the natural contours of the land, with development concentrated in flatter

sections or strategically adapted to the slopes.

Furthermore, the terrain influences the design and layout of commercial corridors, with roadways and infrastructure following the curves and inclines of the landscape. This creates distinct commercial corridors that wind through the city, taking advantage of the natural beauty and the city's four seasons while accommodating the constraints of the terrain. Asheville Highway and Spartanburg Highway are examples of routes cutting through the terrain to accommodate commercial development. The unique interplay between Hendersonville's terrain and its built environment contributes to the city's charm and character.

## HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

Hendersonville has several historic districts, including the Main Street Historic District and Seventh Avenue Historic District, which

are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These districts feature well-preserved buildings with architectural styles that reflect different periods of the city's history.

Main Street and Seventh Avenue attract residents and visitors year-round with their specialty shops, art galleries, restaurants, and entertainment venues. As a member of Main Street America, Hendersonville has been revitalizing its historic commercial districts for over 35 years, preserving its neighborhood feel and celebrating its rich history. The area is home to several significant architectural landmarks, including the Historic Downtown Courthouse and the Hendersonville Train Depot. Downtown Hendersonville comes alive with free outdoor festivals, concerts, and art shows, creating a vibrant atmosphere. The district is adorned with engaging public art, including the popular Bearfootin' Public Art Walk and the "Mountain



Downtown Hendersonville | City of Hendersonville

Memory" fountain. Designated as a National Historic District, Seventh Avenue showcases a collection of simple yet charming brick commercial and warehouse structures.

The preservation efforts focus on retaining the original form of the contributing properties while allowing certain modifications. Overall, Downtown Hendersonville is a dynamic destination that merges history, culture, and community engagement.

## COMMERCIAL-RETAIL

Hendersonville thrives with a vibrant commercial and retail scene, catering to the needs and desires of its residents and visitors alike.

The city boasts a diverse array of businesses, from locally-owned boutiques and specialty shops to national retail chains, providing a wide range of shopping options.

### Downtown commercial-retail

Downtown Hendersonville is a charming hub filled with unique stores, art galleries, and antique shops, offering a delightful shopping experience. The growth of the downtown area will affect people moving there, namely the potential for more parking, parks, and amenities in current spaces.

Downtown Commerce Locations:

- **7th Avenue National Historic District:** This emerging district features warehouse and commercial buildings from the early 1900s and developed into a commercial district in the late 1900s and early 2000s. The

thirty-two buildings are largely one to two story connecting brick structures. The street contains large surface parking lots near their businesses. There are opportunities to expand businesses on ground level.

- **Main Street Historic District:** The heart of Downtown, Main Street features wide sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking to complement the central business district. It bustles with the energy of the city as people pop in and out of the large assortment of shops and restaurants throughout the day. Constructing additional parking infrastructure and converting free on-street parking to paid hourly parking has received mixed feedback in the community.
- **The Henderson County Curb Market** is a popular market where local vendors sell fresh produce, crafts, flowers, and other goods. It is a public space where visitors can shop for

local products, interact with the community, and support local businesses.

- **The Hendersonville Farmers Market** is an open-air market that gathers weekly at the Historic Train Depot (650 Maple Street) and hosts local producers and growers providing farm fresh food to people of the community.

### Corridor commercial-retail

The city features several shopping centers and plazas, where shoppers can find well-known brands, supermarkets, and department stores. Alongside the retail, shoppers may access various other commercial enterprises, including restaurants, cafes, entertainment venues, and professional services. This blend of commercial and retail activity is found in the various commercial corridors throughout the city:

- **U.S. Highway 64/M.L.K. Jr. Boulevard/4 Seasons Boulevard/Chimney Rock Road:** The U.S. Highway 64 corridor is called Chimney Rock

Road east of Interstate 26, 4 Seasons Boulevard between Interstate 26 and central Hendersonville and continues along both 6th Avenue and 7th Avenue through Downtown and continues along 6th Avenue further west. East of central Hendersonville, this corridor is overwhelmingly dominated by auto-centric strip shopping centers. Many sections of the corridor are fronted by drive-through style restaurants, gas stations, and many driveways for adjacent shopping centers and industrial areas. This area provides a huge variety of shopping, dining, and services, but the form of the developments contributes to congestion, safety concerns, and is inaccessible to those without an automobile.

- **Spartanburg Highway:** U.S. Highway 176/Spartanburg Highway is a prominent highway running north-south parallel to Interstate 26 connecting Downtown to neighborhoods in the south. There is commercial industry built up all along the highway before transitioning to U.S. Highway 176 near the ETJ boundary.
- While this corridor has more industrial, it similarly features drive-through restaurants and drive up shopping centers but is much smaller in scale than U.S. Highway 64. Large shopping centers are usually focused on grocery stores and have residential neighborhoods immediately behind them. Connections between these neighborhoods and nearby retail and service opportunities are rare, and moving between residential and commercial areas usually requires accessing Spartanburg Highway.
- **Asheville Highway:** Similar to Spartanburg Highway, Asheville Highway also features commercial developments along its path parallel to Interstate 26, leading from Downtown north through more neighborhoods toward the city of Asheville. Retail along this corridor is less frequent and smaller in scale than previous corridors but features neighborhood-serving retail (small restaurants, pharmacies, small office buildings) along the roadway's frontage. As in other areas, nearby residents must access Asheville Highway to patronize any of these commercial establishments.
- **Greenville Highway:** Also similar to Spartanburg Highway, Highway 225/Greenville Highway runs parallel to and just west of Spartanburg Highway, traveling through the south neighborhoods and woodsy terrain. It currently has a few

commercial and retail places, but there is great potential to develop more and provide the edge neighborhoods with walkable destinations. Commercial establishments in this area are the smallest of the described corridors and include a more substantial share of small offices (including medical offices), but include larger retail buildings to the north near Spartanburg Highway.

#### PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

In addition to parks, Hendersonville offers various public open spaces that contribute to the overall built environment. Hendersonville has been designated as a Main Street Community by the North Carolina Department of Commerce. This recognition signifies Hendersonville's commitment to revitalizing its downtown area while preserving its historic charm. The downtown area features pedestrian-friendly streets, public squares, and plazas where people can relax, socialize, and

enjoy outdoor events. Historic Main Street is lined with charming shops and eateries, creating a vibrant and inviting atmosphere. The city has made efforts to enhance walkability and create inviting public spaces that promote community engagement.

The City's Community Development Department oversees the Main Street Program and works closely with the Downtown Advisory Board. These departments collaborate with downtown advisory committees and the nonprofit organization Friends of Downtown Hendersonville to ensure the effective management and enhancement of the city's main street public spaces. The program's vision is to create an authentic small-town atmosphere that offers a vibrant pedestrian experience and multiple options for urban living.

With a focus on supporting local businesses, the Main Street Program aims to maintain a thriving small business community with plenty of public spaces.

By implementing infrastructure improvements, organizing special events, and promoting economic incentives, the program employs the Main Street Four-Point Approach in collaboration with the City of Hendersonville and the broader community.

As an accredited Main Street America™ program, Hendersonville's downtown area serves as a national model for preserving historical character, fostering economic development, and creating high-quality public spaces that enrich the community.

### EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Hendersonville takes pride in its excellent educational institutions. The city is home to a variety of public and private schools that offer quality education to students of all ages. Notable schools include Hendersonville High School, Hendersonville Middle School, and several elementary schools. The school's legacy includes fourth-generation students walking

the same halls as their great-grandparents. While cherishing its traditions, Hendersonville High School also embraces innovation in education. With a student body of just over 800, the school fosters supportive relationships that allow students to explore their talents. Diversity is celebrated, and over twenty student organizations cater to various interests. The schools also face high traffic congestion during start and end of school times. There are also obstacles with navigating the city's streets for a car rider line.

Early childhood facilities are in limited supply in comparison to demand.



Hendersonville High School | Henderson County Schools

### GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC BUILDINGS

Hendersonville has several public buildings that serve various functions and provide essential services to the community. Notable public buildings in Hendersonville include:

- **Henderson County Courthouse:** The Henderson County Courthouse is located in downtown Hendersonville and serves as the primary judicial center for the county. It houses courtrooms, offices for judges and court staff, and other related facilities.
- **Hendersonville City Hall:** Hendersonville City Hall is the administrative center for the City of Hendersonville. It houses the offices of the mayor and various city departments responsible for providing municipal services and managing city affairs.
- **Henderson County Public Library:** The Henderson County Public Library is a public resource that offers a wide range of books, digital media, educational

programs, and community services. It serves as a gathering place for learning, research, and cultural activities.

- **Henderson County Department of Public Health:** The Henderson County Department of Public Health is responsible for promoting and protecting public health in the community. It provides a variety of health services, including vaccinations, health education, environmental health inspections, and more.
- **Henderson County Schools Administration Building:** The Henderson County Schools Administration Building houses the administrative offices of the Henderson County Public Schools district. It serves as the central hub for managing the district's educational programs, personnel, and resources.
- **Henderson County Sheriff's Office:** The Henderson County Sheriff's Office is responsible for law enforcement and public safety in the county. The sheriff's office



has its headquarters, Detention Facility, and other facilities within Hendersonville, providing law enforcement services to the community.

- **City Operations:** The City Operation Center a large assembly room and small conference rooms that residents can utilize by contacting the Public Works Department. Adjacent to the department is a fleet maintenance facility
- **Hendersonville Fire Department:** The Hendersonville Fire Department operates multiple fire stations throughout the city, ensuring fire protection and emergency response services. These fire stations house fire engines, equipment, and personnel dedicated to firefighting and rescue operations. Fire Station 1 is currently under construction and is set to open in 2024.
- **Hendersonville Police Department:** In 2021, the first police station specifically designed

for the Hendersonville Police Department opened at 630 Ashe Street. The lobby of the The 26,000 square foot building pays tribute to Officer Dennie Enevold with a mural featuring Officer Enevold and his 1981 patrol vehicle was created by artist and Henderson County native, David Soileau.

### INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORS

Hendersonville is a community characterized by its strong educational institutions, vibrant events, diverse religious organizations, active local organizations, tourism opportunities, unique architecture, within a stunning natural resource setting. These elements combine to create a community that values education, culture, nature, and community engagement.

Hendersonville is actively working towards becoming a regional leader in sustainability by concurrently developing a sustainability plan alongside the comprehensive plan, demonstrating their commitment to integrating sustainable practices into all aspects of community development.

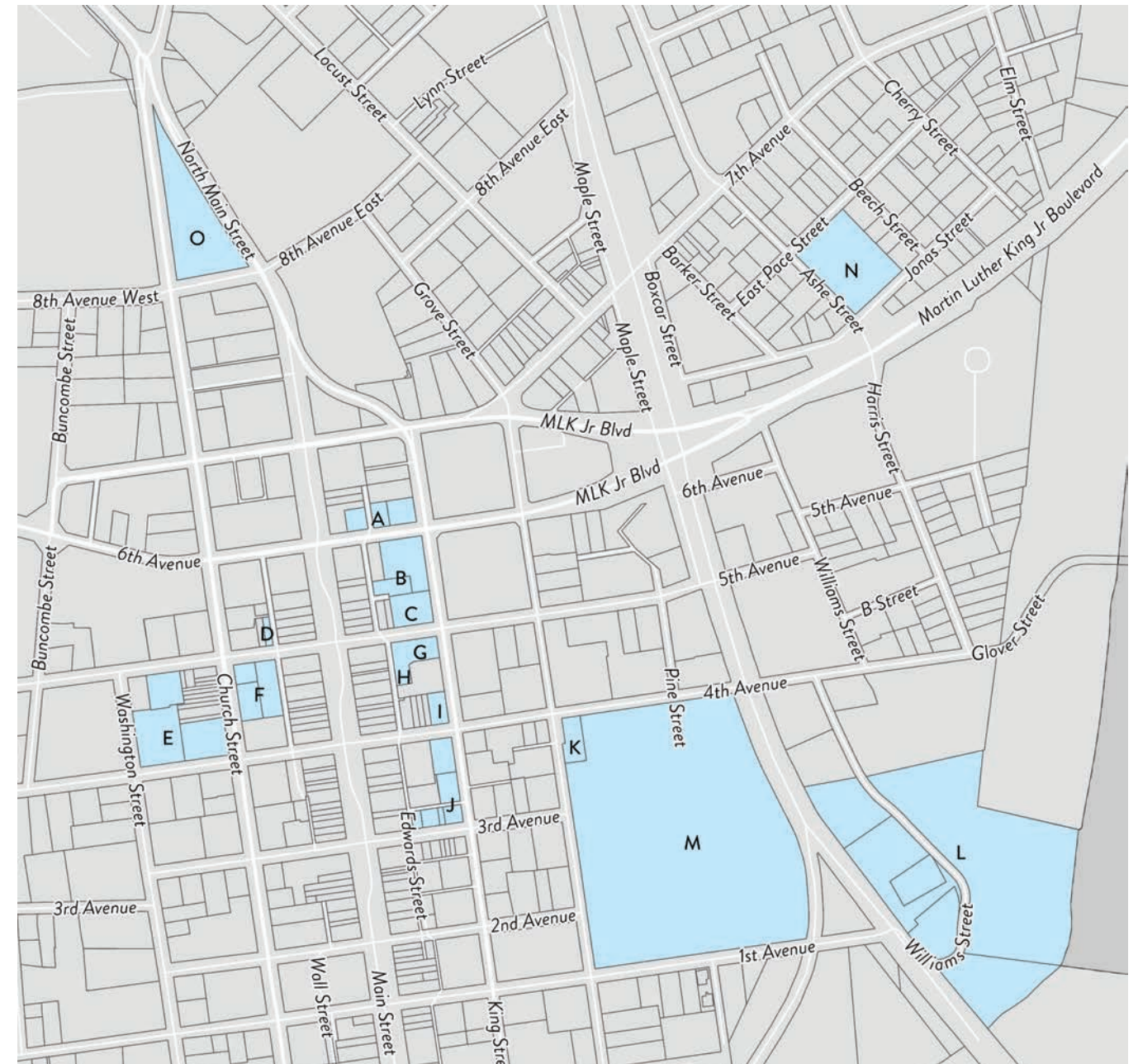


Figure B.3.21 City Properties Map



- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parcels Owned by City of Hendersonville</li> <li>A - Apple Lot, Permit Only</li> <li>B - City Hall Lot</li> <li>C - City Hall</li> <li>D - Public Restrooms and Office Space</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E - Dogwood Lot</li> <li>F - Parking Deck #70215</li> <li>G - Maple Lot #70212</li> <li>H - Maple Annex, Permit Only</li> <li>I - Spruce Lot #70214</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>J - Azalea Lot #70213</li> <li>K - MLK Memorial Park</li> <li>L - Hendersonville City Operations</li> <li>M - Henderson County Sheriff's Office &amp; Courthouse</li> <li>N - Hendersonville Police Department</li> <li>O - Hendersonville Fire Department</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

### Youth Organizations

The Boys and Girls Club, just north of Sullivan Park, offers programs focused on academic success, physical activity, healthy eating habits, and positive personal development for youth.

These programs collectively support the holistic development of youth, equipping them with the tools and values to succeed academically, maintain a healthy lifestyle, and make positive choices that contribute to their personal growth and the betterment of their communities.

### Faith-based Institutions

Hendersonville boasts a diverse and thriving religious community, with numerous places of worship representing various denominations. These places of worship play an essential role in fostering spiritual growth, community outreach, and social support. They offer worship services, religious education programs, charitable initiatives, and aging population services, which create a sense of unity and belonging among residents.

### Health and Wellness

Hendersonville places a significant emphasis on health and wellness. The community values an active lifestyle, and residents often engage in outdoor activities, such as hiking, biking, and gardening. The availability of parks, green spaces, and farmers' markets further supports a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.

Hendersonville is home to a wide range of local organizations that contribute to the community's well-being, such as those in the medical district associated with Pardee Hospital. Non-profit organizations, civic groups, and community associations actively engage in initiatives related to health and wellness, social services, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation. These organizations also provide valuable resources, volunteer opportunities, and networking platforms, fostering a strong sense of community pride and civic engagement.



Bearfootin' Bears in their natural habitat | Henderson County Tourism Development Authority and Sam Dean

### HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Hendersonville recognizes the importance of preserving its historical landmarks and architectural heritage. The city actively promotes historic preservation initiatives, ensuring the protection and maintenance of its significant buildings.

### The Historic Downtown

Hendersonville district, with its carefully preserved structures and picturesque streetscapes, serves as a testament to the city's commitment to preserving its historic charm.

### Main Street Historic District

The central business district of Hendersonville features a straightforward grid street plan established in 1841, which has largely retained its original character from its peak development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The district showcases a blend of commercial and Neo-Classical architectural styles, predominantly constructed with brick or stone materials. The typical layout of commercial districts is evident, with buildings adjoining one another in rows. A total of fifty-five structures contribute to the district's historical significance. Recognizing its importance, the City Council designated it as the Main Street Local Historic Overlay District on May 3, 2007.

### Seventh Avenue Depot District

Seventh Avenue East emerged as a bustling commercial hub in the late 1800s and early 1900s, centered around Hendersonville's inaugural train depot, founded in 1879. The architectural landscape of this district

primarily comprises modest one and two-story brick buildings, including commercial establishments and warehouses.

These structures adhere to the traditional pattern of interconnected buildings, forming a cohesive streetscape. In total, there are thirty-two noteworthy buildings that contribute to the district's historical character and significance.

### Cold Spring Park

Cold Spring Park Historic District is a well-organized neighborhood bounded by N. Main Street, Maple Street, 9th Avenue East (formerly Lynn Street), and Locust Street. This district is renowned for its Craftsman bungalow-style houses. Spanning approximately fourteen acres, the district encompasses residential buildings constructed between 1910 and 1953. Noteworthy features include fieldstone retaining walls and flat field stones integrated into the hillsides, which contribute to the district's distinctive character.



Hendersonville Train Depot | Visit Hendersonville

### Druid Hills

Established in 1923, Druid Hills showcases an exemplary implementation of the "Olmstedian" land planning concept, characterized by its network of gracefully curved streets adorned with mature trees and spacious open areas. The architectural diversity within the neighborhood is notable, featuring a variety of styles including Craftsman Bungalow, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and other less commonly seen designs. With a total of 76 contributing houses and outbuildings, Druid Hills epitomizes the architectural heritage of the area.

### Hyman Heights

Hyman Heights, originally platted in 1908, experienced expansion

when it merged with the Mount Royal section, which was platted in 1923. The area witnessed significant development following the establishment of Patton Hospital, Hendersonville's inaugural medical facility, in 1913 on Highland Avenue.

The presence of the hospital attracted numerous local physicians to the neighborhood. These houses showcased diverse architectural styles, including Craftsman Bungalow, Colonial Revival, Ranch, Four Square, and others. A notable residence, Killarney, a stone Gothic Revival house, holds the distinction of being the oldest, dating back to 1858. In total, the Hyman Heights neighborhood boasts 123 houses and outbuildings, each contributing to its rich historical fabric.

### Lenox Park

The Lenox Park Historic District holds significant historical and architectural value. Noteworthy architectural features include well-preserved Queen Anne, Four Square, and two-story gable-front houses dating back to 1908.

The district was pivotal in the social history of Hendersonville, uniting residents from diverse backgrounds, including business owners, industrial workers, real estate developers, and railroad employees.

Lenox Park's association with tourism-related businesses in the 1920s further enhances its historical significance. The district's architectural significance is underscored by its collection of well-preserved residences, exemplifying Queen Anne, Four Square, and gable-front styles. Overall, Lenox Park exemplifies Hendersonville's social and architectural history.

### West Side

The West Side Historic District is situated one block west of downtown Hendersonville's commercial center. Its boundaries, determined by concentrations of contributing buildings and historical plats, encompass approximately 111 acres. Modern developments surround the district, including medical office buildings along its northern edge.

Architectural styles range from bungalows, cottages, and I-houses to Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Queen Anne, and more. The oldest house, the Columbus Mills Pace House, predates the neighborhood's development, and renowned architect Erle Stillwell designed several notable structures within the district. The primary phase of development occurred from the 1910s to the late 1920s, with a smaller period of growth in the 1930s to late 1940s. Furthermore, the West Side Historic District stands out as a unique part of the city, showcasing examples of Missing Middle Housing alongside a diverse blend of architectural styles.

### Architecture

Hendersonville showcases a blend of architectural styles that reflect its rich history and evolving character. The downtown area features a mix of well-preserved historic buildings showcasing the city's heritage. The residential neighborhoods also showcase architectural diversity, featuring designs ranging from traditional to contemporary.

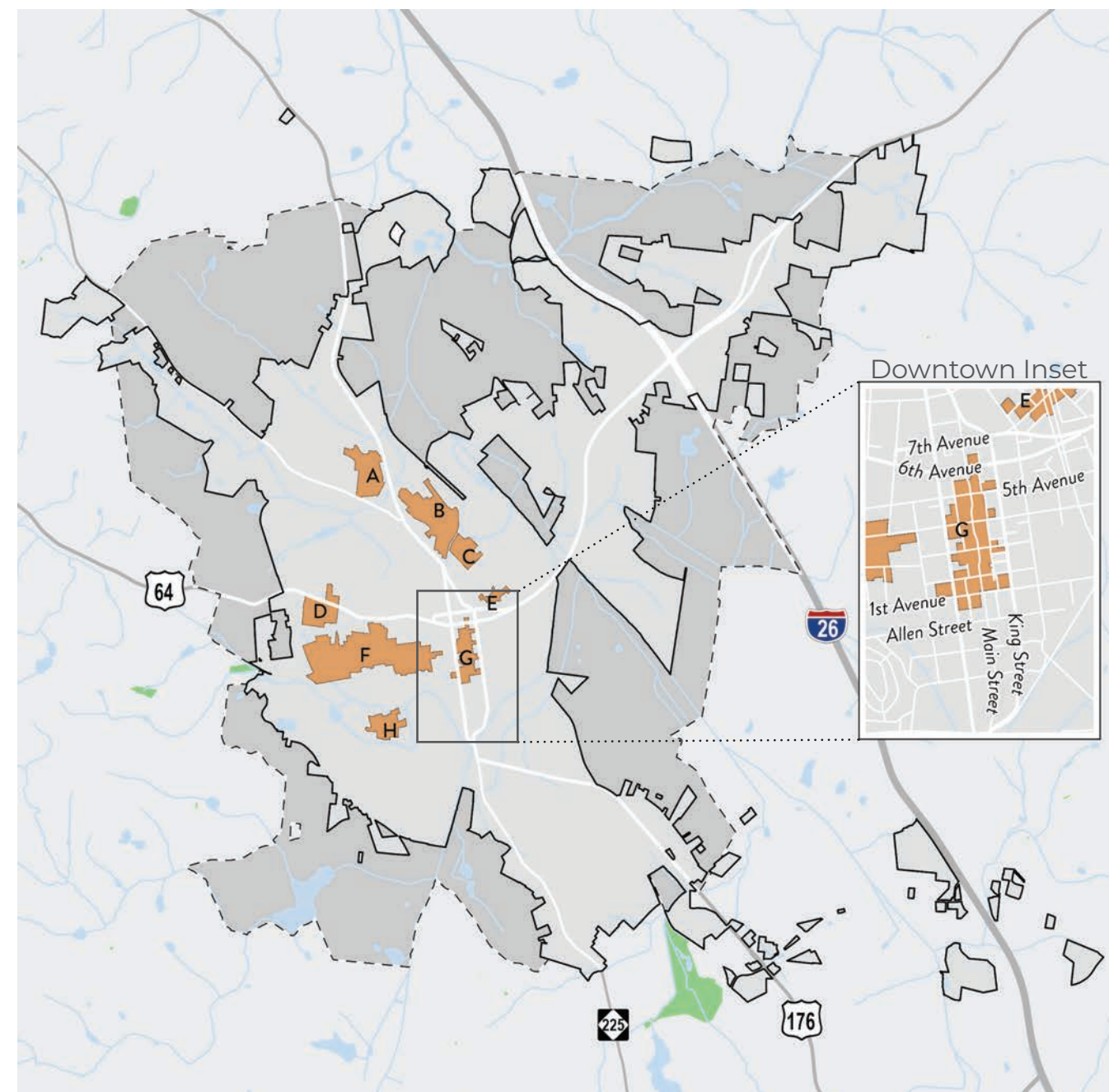
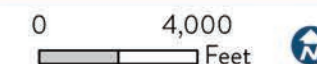


Figure B.3.22 Historic Districts Map



- |                            |  |  |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Historic Districts         | A - Druid Hills Historic District      | E - Seventh Avenue Depot Historic District |
| Streams                    | B - Hyman Heights Historic District    | F - West Side Historic District            |
| Lakes/Ponds                | C - Cold Spring Park Historic District | G - Main Street Historic District          |
| Hendersonville City Limits | D - Oakdale Cemetery Historic District | H - Lenox Park Historic District           |
| Hendersonville ETJ         |  |  |

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

The Georgian style, originating from 1715-1789, experienced a revival between 1880-1930, showcasing a symmetrical appearance with equal-sized windows and a transom/fanlight over the door. Colonial Revival style, popular in the late 19th century, draws from Georgian Colonial architecture with symmetrical facades and rectangular plans (1885-1915). Queen Anne style, prominent during the Victorian era, features wood construction, varied windows, and intricate details like turrets and porches (1890-1910). Other styles include Dutch Colonial, Tudor Revival, Four Square, Neoclassical Revival, Bungalows, Spanish Eclectic, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch. Preserving historic buildings and adding architectural details give Hendersonville its unique charm.

The renowned architect Erle G. Stillwell (1885-1978) played a significant role in designing many of the City's neighborhoods, public buildings, commercial structures, churches, and schools. He was adept at any architectural style

his clients preferred and thus designed many Georgian revival, Tudor revival, and rustic buildings for the city. Hendersonville owes much to his contributions, shaping both its own architecture and that of North Carolina as a whole. Notable examples of his work include Hendersonville City Hall and Hendersonville High School.

### CULTURE

Hendersonville is steeped in rich heritage, reflecting its origins. The city's cultural heritage is evident in its charming downtown district, which showcases beautifully preserved historic building sites, civic spaces, as well as events celebrating its history and culture. Hendersonville's cultural assets attract heritage tourism, with visitors coming to explore the area's history, enjoy local traditions, and experience the natural beauty of the region. The city's proximity to the Blue Ridge Mountains and access to outdoor recreational activities adds to the appeal for tourists seeking cultural and outdoor experiences.



Visitors exploring apple orchards | Henderson County Tourism Development Authority and Bill Russ

### Festivals and Events

Hendersonville hosts a variety of festivals and events throughout the year, showcasing its vibrant community spirit. The North Carolina Apple Festival is a notable event that celebrates the region’s apple industry and agricultural origin. Other festivals and events include the Garden Jubilee Festival, which highlights regional horticulture, and the Rhythm & Brews Concert series, located on South Main Street, providing live music performances in Downtown Hendersonville. Local restaurants and eateries feature farm-to-table menus, incorporating fresh and locally sourced ingredients. The city also hosts culinary events and food festivals that celebrate the flavors of the area.

### Visual Arts, Music and Performing Arts

Hendersonville has a thriving music and performing arts scene. The Hendersonville Theatre is a non-profit, volunteer based organization that offers a variety of plays, live music, and special events throughout

the year. Additionally, live music can be enjoyed at various venues, including restaurants, bars, and music festivals throughout the year. The city also embraces the visual arts with numerous galleries and art studios showcasing the works of local and regional artists. Art on Main, an annual event, allows visitors to explore and purchase artwork directly from artists. The Henderson County Arts Council also plays a vital role in promoting and supporting the visual arts in the community.

***Hendersonville is known as the “Apple Capital of North Carolina.”***

### Community Engagement

Hendersonville has a strong sense of community and actively engages residents and visitors in cultural activities. The Henderson County Public Library hosts literary events, workshops, and book clubs. The Henderson County Curb Market supports local vendors selling fresh produce, crafts, and homemade goods, fostering community and local businesses.

### Tourism

Hendersonville attracts tourists from near and far due to its scenic beauty, charming downtown area, and rich cultural heritage.

Visitors explore the following attractions:

- **Downtown Hendersonville:** A hub of activity with a charming Main Street, historic buildings, unique shops, galleries, and restaurants, where visitors enjoy walking, shopping, and dining.
- **Visiting Historic Sites:** Discover the history of the region by exploring historic sites such as the Henderson County Heritage Museum, the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, the Mineral and Lapidary Museum or nearby Johnson Farm.
- **Outdoor Recreation:** Eco-tourists explore the natural beauty surrounding the city with activities like hiking, biking, kayaking, fishing, or picnicking in places like

DuPont State Recreational Forest, Pisgah National Forest, or Chimney Rock State Park.

- **Wine and Brewery Tours:** Hendersonville is home to several wineries and breweries, offering tours and tastings of locally crafted beverages, including ciders.
- **Apples and Orchards:** Hendersonville is known for its apple orchards. Tourists visit apple orchards, participate in apple picking, and sampling homemade apple products.



Garden Jubilee in downtown Hendersonville | Jared Kay

- **Events and Festivals:** Hendersonville hosts various festivals and events throughout the year, attracting visitors from near and far. The North Carolina Apple Festival, Music on Main Street, Art on Main, and the Garden Jubilee are some of the popular events that showcase the local culture, music, arts, and crafts.
- **Live Music and Performing Arts:** Live music performances and theatrical productions are offered at venues like the Hendersonville Theatre, local breweries, and vineyards.
- **Arts and Crafts:** Hendersonville has a vibrant art scene aided by art galleries, attending art walks, or exploring craft shops and studios.
- **Outdoor Markets:** Farmers' markets and craft markets offer fresh produce, local products, and unique handmade items.
- **Dining and Culinary Experiences:** Foodies can sample a variety of cuisines at the city's restaurants.

## GOVERNMENT

The political environment in Hendersonville addresses a range of policy issues, including economic development, public safety, infrastructure improvements, environmental stewardship, education, and social services. The City Council and County Commissioners work on formulating policies and initiatives to address these issues based on community needs and priorities.



Hendersonville City Hall | City of Hendersonville

## Government Structure

Hendersonville operates under a council-manager form of government. The local government structure consists of a City Council, City Manager, and various departments responsible for delivering services to the community. Advisory boards, commissions, and various departments contribute to the function of Hendersonville's governmental operations.

## City Council

The mayor assumes the official leadership role within the city government and presides over all City Council meetings. They possess the authority to vote on all matters presented before the Council but lack the power to veto. The mayor's responsibilities and abilities are determined by the general laws of North Carolina, the Charter of the City of Hendersonville, and the city's ordinances. Currently, the Mayor of Hendersonville is Barbara G. Volk, who was elected in November 2009 and re-elected in 2013, 2017, and 2021.

Mayor Volk has been a member of the City Council since November 1989.

The City Council also appoints one of its members to serve as the Mayor Pro Tempore, who fulfills the Mayor's duties in their absence or if they are unable to perform them. To be eligible for candidacy or election as a City Council member, an individual must fulfill two requirements: being a resident of the city and being a qualified voter.

The Mayor and City Council members hold staggered terms of four years. The implementation of staggered terms for Council members began with the 1997 election. The election schedule for City Council will change from odd to even years beginning in 2024 following NC General Assembly legislation.

### Advisory Boards, Commissions, and Committees

The City of Hendersonville utilizes various Advisory Boards, Commissions, and Committees, which operate in accordance with the City Charter or City Ordinance. The City Council establishes these bodies to fulfill a range of community-related responsibilities. Some boards, such as the Board of Adjustment, Planning Board, and Historic Preservation, are established based on the authority granted by the North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS). According to the NCGS, these boards are empowered to carry out various functions, including legislative, policy-making, quasi-judicial, administrative, and advisory roles.

### City Departments

Various Hendersonville departments collectively support services offered to the area. The citizens of Hendersonville receive comprehensive services from the city, including fire and police protection, garbage and recycling

collection, street upkeep, snow and ice removal, leaf gathering, and water and sewer utilities. A full list of Hendersonville's departments can be found [here](#).

### Chamber of Commerce

Henderson County has an operating [Chamber of Commerce](#) to help support individuals and local businesses. The publications and networking opportunities offered by the Chamber serve as valuable assets for conducting market research and obtaining business guidance. A significant portion of the Chamber's work is accomplished by dedicated volunteers serving on various committees. These volunteers often find that investing their time in committee assignments not only fosters new business connections but also establishes a prominent presence for their companies.

Through collaborative efforts with community partners, the Chamber remains consistently engaged in cultivating a knowledgeable, skilled, and exceptional workforce. This

involves ensuring that the current employees receive appropriate training for today's jobs, as well as preparing schoolchildren to effectively tackle the jobs of the future.

The Henderson County Chamber of Commerce provides numerous avenues for members to engage with the community through a diverse range of volunteer committees and divisions. Participation in any of these programs can yield exceptional opportunities for networking and personal growth for the chamber's members.

### Funding

The City of Hendersonville operates two major funds, the General Fund and the Water and Sewer Fund. The City also operates a variety of other non-major governmental funds. The General Fund is the primary operating fund for the City and is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The General Fund is supported by various revenue sources including property taxes, sales taxes, franchise fees, permits and licenses, fines and forfeitures, intergovernmental revenues, charges for services, and miscellaneous revenues.

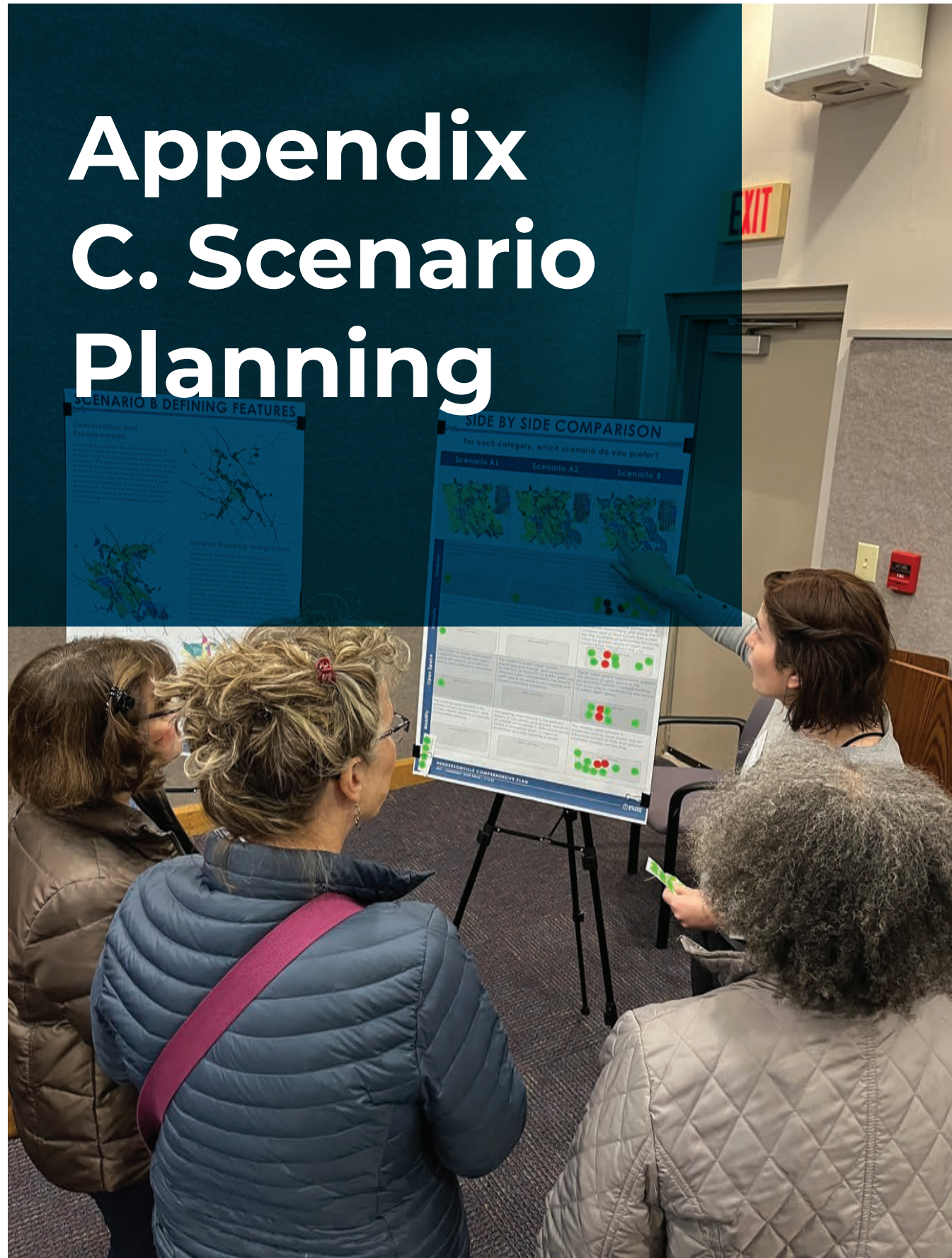
The Water and Sewer Fund is used to account for the operations of the City's water and sewer systems. It is supported by various revenue sources including water and sewer rates, connection fees, and miscellaneous revenues.

The City Council approved a **\$56,105,936 budget** for the city's fiscal year starting July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024. The General Fund makes up **\$23.26 million**, or **41.46%**, of the budget.

Text Source: Final Budget Post | City of Hendersonville



# Appendix C. Scenario Planning



## Scenario Planning

To obtain community feedback on future growth scenarios, a technique referred to as “scenario planning” was employed. Three scenarios based on public input as well as policy documents were presented to the public for feedback. These scenarios described what might occur taking into account a variety of factors including physical features, environmental constraints, market realities, and infrastructure investments.



Staff lead stakeholders in discussion about scenarios (left); Gen H team member discusses scenarios with City Council members (right)

# Scenario A1 (Trend)

## What if the city builds out according to current trends: Zoning?

Scenario A1 outlines a trajectory that prioritizes future single-family housing development, foresees gradual infrastructure expansion to support land development transition, and preserves green spaces through private open areas.

Key points include:

- Accommodates future single-family housing development within the city limits and planning area.
- Respects the scale and character of existing neighborhoods.
- Assumes a broad expansion of infrastructure and services to, over time, support the

transition of land within the city limits for low- to moderate-density development.

- Recognizes private open space as the preferred way to maintain green space within the community.

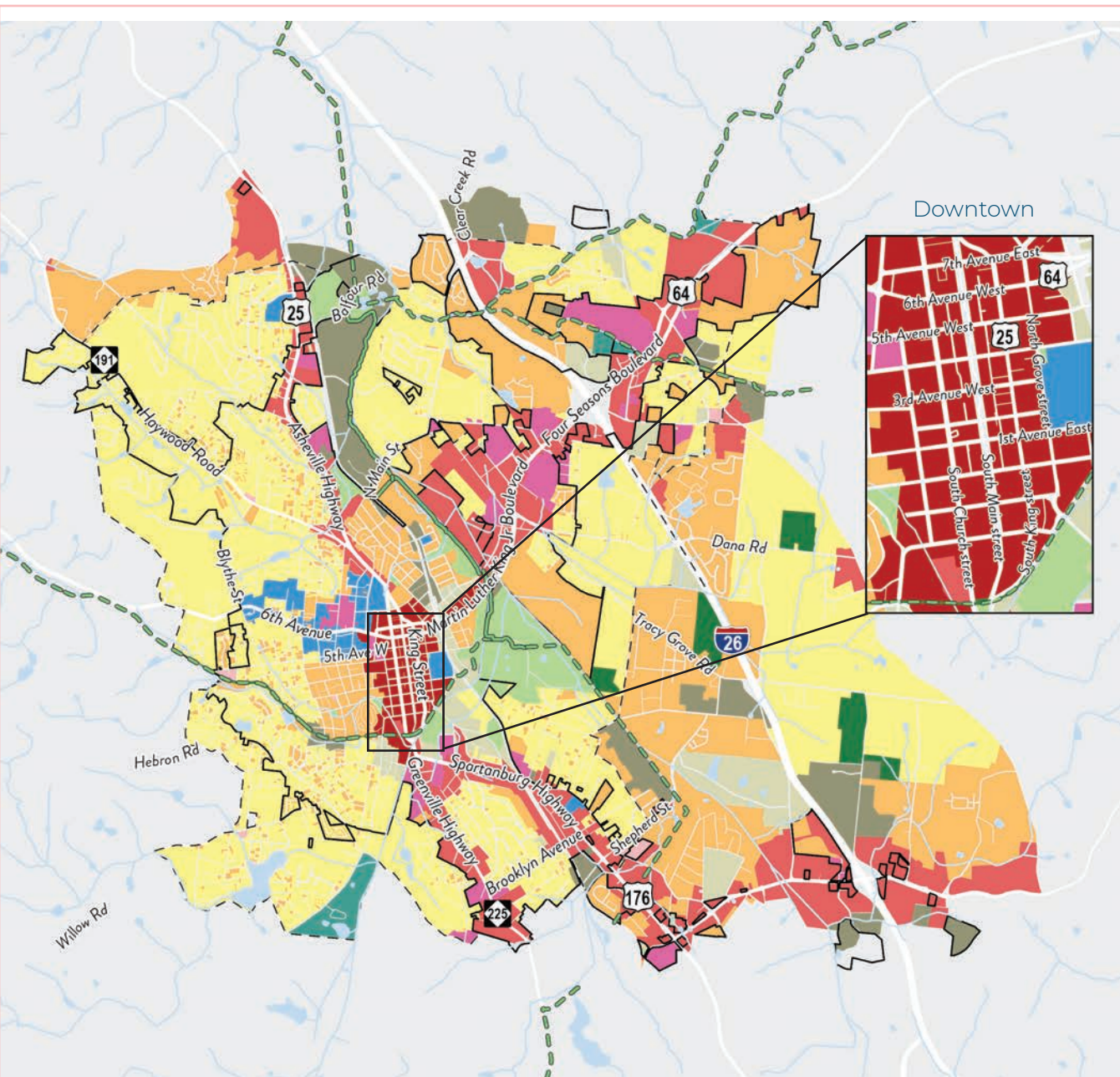


Figure C.1.1 Scenario A1 Map

0 4,500 Feet

<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkgreen;"></span> Open Space - Conservation	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:purple;"></span> Mixed Use - Commercial	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:olive;"></span> Production
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgreen;"></span> Open Space - Recreation	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightcoral;"></span> Neighborhood Center	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border-bottom:1px dashed green;"></span> Existing Greenways and Trails
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:teal;"></span> Rural Residential	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:firebrick;"></span> Suburban Commercial	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border-bottom:1px dashed orange;"></span> Proposed Greenways and Trails
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow;"></span> Family/Neighborhood Living	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightblue;"></span> Mixed Use - Employment	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border:1px solid black;"></span> Hendersonville City Limits
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange;"></span> Multi-Generational Living	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:blue;"></span> Institutional	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border:1px dashed black;"></span> Hendersonville ETJ
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:red;"></span> Downtown	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightyellow;"></span> Innovation	

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

## Scenario A1 (Trend)

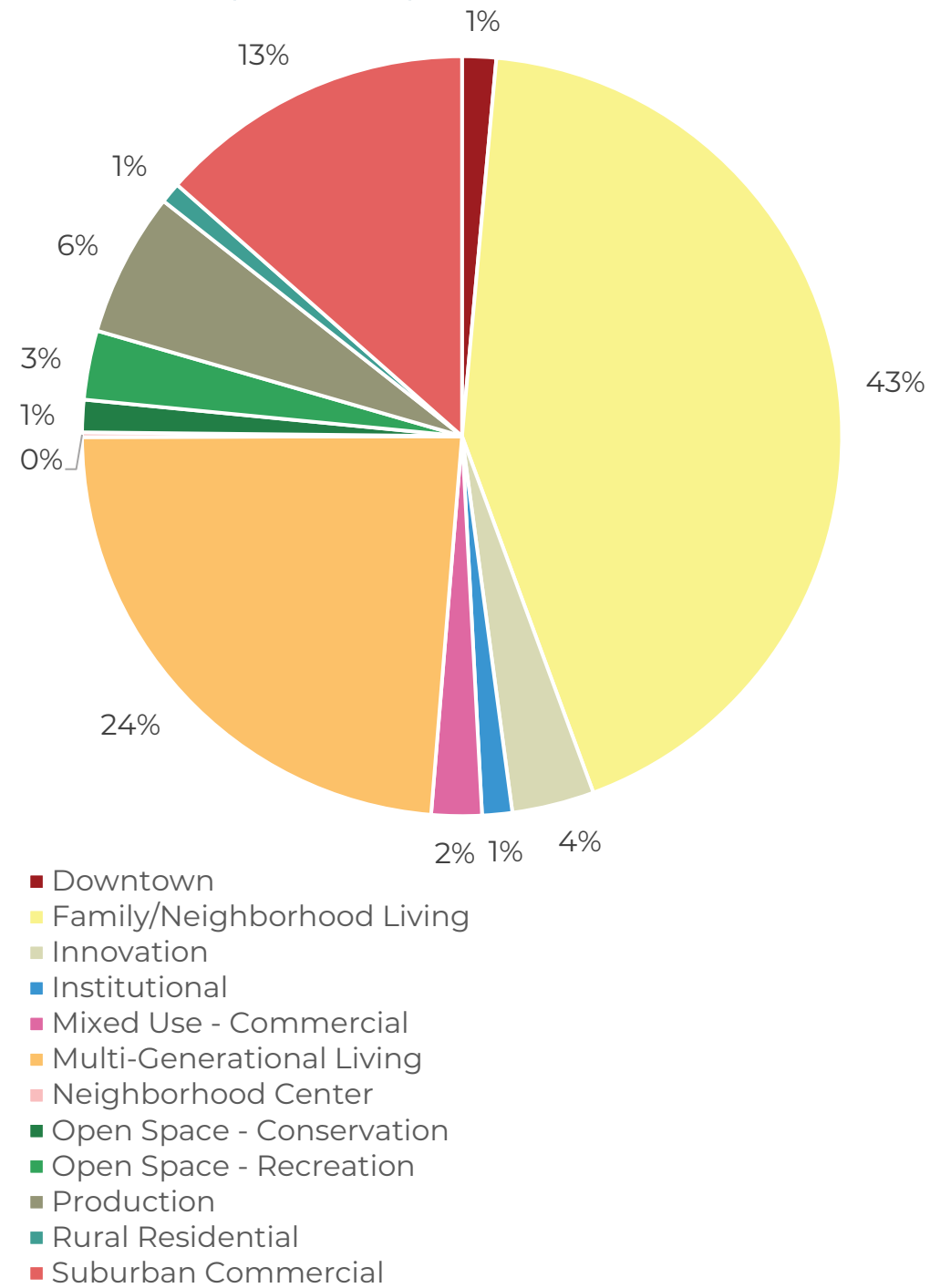


Figure C.1.2 - Character Area percentages for study area

Jurisdiction	Character Area	Acres	Percent
Hendersonville City Limits	Downtown	174.03	4.12%
	Family/Neighborhood Living	1243.49	29.41%
	Innovation	134.24	3.17%
	Institutional	140.47	3.32%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	228.10	5.39%
	Multi-Generational Living	1184.85	28.02%
	Neighborhood Center	14.57	0.34%
	Open Space - Conservation	12.12	0.29%
	Open Space - Recreation	164.73	3.90%
	Production	131.66	3.11%
	Rural Residential	16.53	0.39%
	Suburban Commercial	783.90	18.54%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4228.69</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Hendersonville ETJ	Family/Neighborhood Living	2874.44	71.80%
	Innovation	99.65	2.49%
	Institutional	13.54	0.34%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	29.86	0.75%
	Multi-Generational Living	206.10	5.15%
	Neighborhood Center	10.02	0.25%
	Open Space - Conservation	17.32	0.43%
	Open Space - Recreation	189.97	4.75%
	Production	197.30	4.93%
	Suburban Commercial	274.54	6.86%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4003.27</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
City / County Joint Planning Area	Family/Neighborhood Living	1058.14	27.68%
	Innovation	188.16	4.92%
	Institutional	0.00	0.00%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	0.00	0.00%
	Multi-Generational Living	1461.28	38.22%
	Neighborhood Center	0.00	0.00%
	Open Space - Conservation	136.13	3.56%
	Open Space - Recreation	0.00	0.00%
	Production	411.38	10.76%
	Rural Residential	0.07	0.00%
	Suburban Commercial	567.99	14.86%
<b>Total</b>		<b>3823.16</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Figure C.1.3 - Character Area percentages and acreage by city limits, ETJ, and City / County Joint Planning Area. ROW is not included in acreage percentages.

# Scenario A2 (Trend)

## What if the city builds out according to current trends: Adopted Future Land Use?

In Scenario A2, the approach advocates for infill development, enhances commercial hubs, expands employment opportunities, improves transportation infrastructure, and extends municipal services thoughtfully into designated areas, all while safeguarding the integrity of existing neighborhoods and preserving cultural heritage sites.

Key points include:

- Conserves natural areas, particularly undeveloped sections of the floodplain.
- Encourages infill in areas where infrastructure can support it.
- Directs commercial uses to existing commercial nodes, notably at highway interchanges and adjacent properties along major roads.
- Expands opportunities for additional employment

- Encourages improvements to the transportation network to include bike and ped facilities.
- Suggests an expansion of development and municipal services into areas east of the city.
- Envisions the retention of agricultural activities in the Urban Service Area.
- Respects the scale and character of existing neighborhoods.
- Protects the historic and cultural assets and elevates them in their contexts.
- Avoids areas with development constraints to minimize damage to public and private investments.

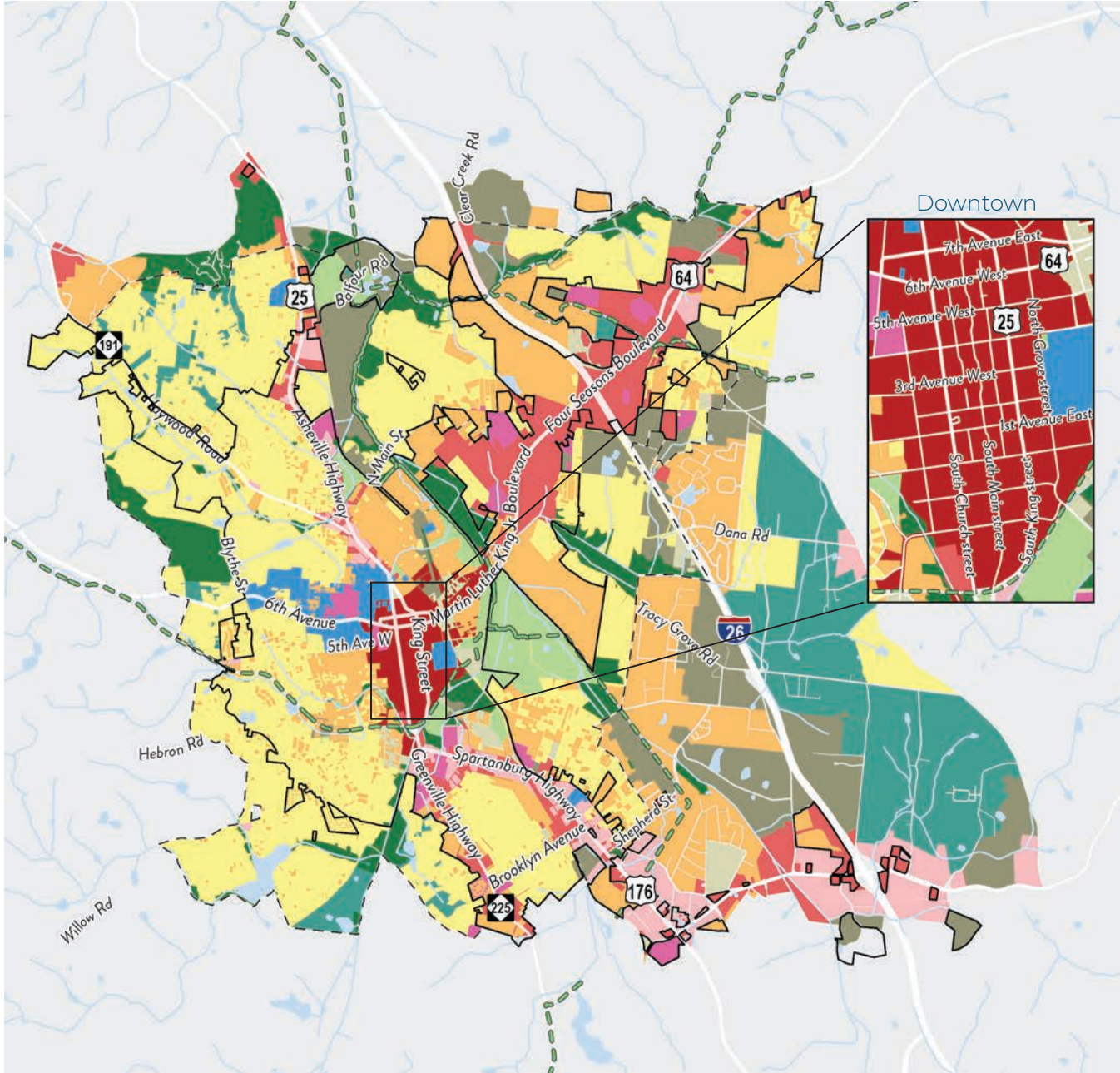
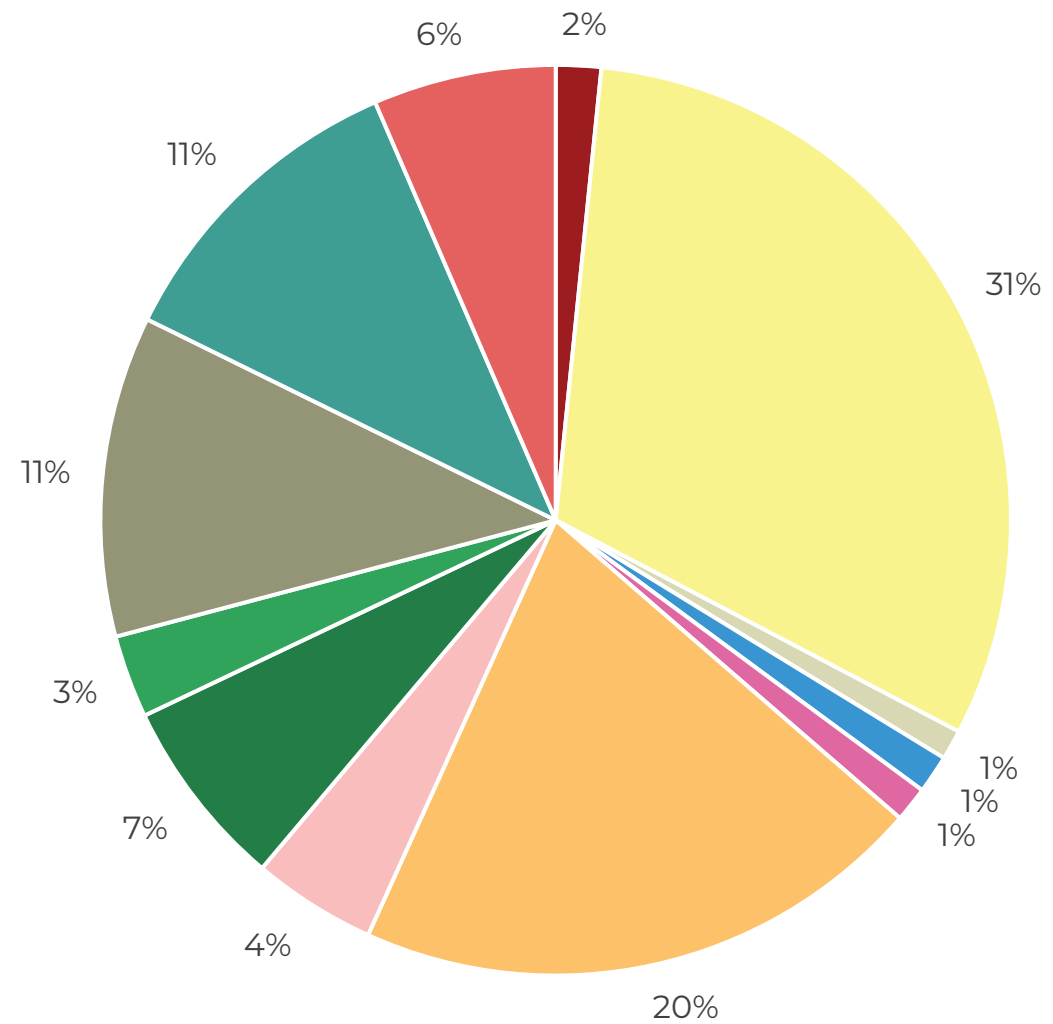


Figure C.2.1 Scenario A2 Map

Open Space - Conservation	Mixed Use - Commercial	Production
Open Space - Recreation	Neighborhood Center	Existing Greenways and Trails
Rural Residential	Suburban Commercial	Proposed Greenways and Trails
Family/Neighborhood Living	Mixed Use - Employment	Hendersonville City Limits
Multi-Generational Living	Institutional	Hendersonville ETJ
Downtown	Innovation	

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

## Scenario A2 (Trend)



- Downtown
- Family/Neighborhood Living
- Innovation
- Institutional
- Mixed Use - Commercial
- Multi-Generational Living
- Neighborhood Center
- Open Space - Conservation
- Open Space - Recreation
- Production
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Commercial

Figure C.2.2 - Character Area percentages for study area

Jurisdiction	Character Area	Acres	Percent
Hendersonville City Limits	Downtown	193.68	4.58%
	Family/Neighborhood Living	1286.00	30.41%
	Innovation	57.15	1.35%
	Institutional	150.31	3.55%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	126.91	3.00%
	Multi-Generational Living	1285.46	30.40%
	Neighborhood Center	179.09	4.24%
	Open Space - Conservation	88.21	2.09%
	Open Space - Recreation	164.73	3.90%
	Production	128.47	3.04%
	Rural Residential	16.61	0.39%
Suburban Commercial	552.05	13.05%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>4228.69</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Hendersonville ETJ	Family/Neighborhood Living	2181.62	54.50%
	Innovation	31.63	0.79%
	Institutional	13.54	0.34%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	23.47	0.59%
	Multi-Generational Living	334.22	8.35%
	Neighborhood Center	12.66	0.32%
	Open Space - Conservation	523.97	13.09%
	Open Space - Recreation	189.97	4.75%
	Production	424.73	10.61%
	Rural Residential	183.85	4.59%
	Suburban Commercial	83.59	2.09%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4003.27</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
City / County Joint Planning Area	Family/Neighborhood Living	280.79	7.34%
	Innovation	38.90	1.02%
	Institutional	0.00	0.00%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	0.00	0.00%
	Multi-Generational Living	841.53	21.99%
	Neighborhood Center	338.44	8.84%
	Open Space - Conservation	205.94	5.38%
	Open Space - Recreation	0.00	0.00%
	Production	820.46	21.43%
	Rural Residential	1154.60	30.16%
	Suburban Commercial	147.07	3.84%
<b>Total</b>		<b>3827.75</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Figure C.2.3 - Character Area percentages and acreage by city limits, ETJ, and City / County Joint Planning Area. ROW is not included in acreage percentages.

## Scenario B (Alternative)

### **What if growth and development is generally confined to the existing development footprint and the gaps within it?**

Scenario B prioritizes multi-functional green space preservation, encourages diverse housing, reimagines employment areas and commercial uses, and emphasizes bike and pedestrian connectivity. It supports compact development, increased development rights for affordability, and site redevelopment while preserving green spaces and neighborhood character. Key points include:

- Conserves the green “spine” to be utilized for: natural resource protection, recreation, transportation, utilities, etc.
- Encourages diverse housing integration where infrastructure allows.
- Strengthens the viability of commercial uses by concentrating, integrating—or locating near—housing units.
- Creates opportunities to re-

imagine aging employment into “creative hubs” while expanding viable industrial locations.

- Promotes connectivity via safe bike and pedestrian facilities.
- Emphasizes a compact development form for the efficient delivery of infrastructure and services.
- Allows increased development rights per acre to boost value and ease the impact of escalating land costs on affordability.
- Maximizes existing sites through redevelopment, which in turn can limit the future development footprint while preserving the relatively undeveloped areas.
- Respects the scale and character of existing neighborhoods.

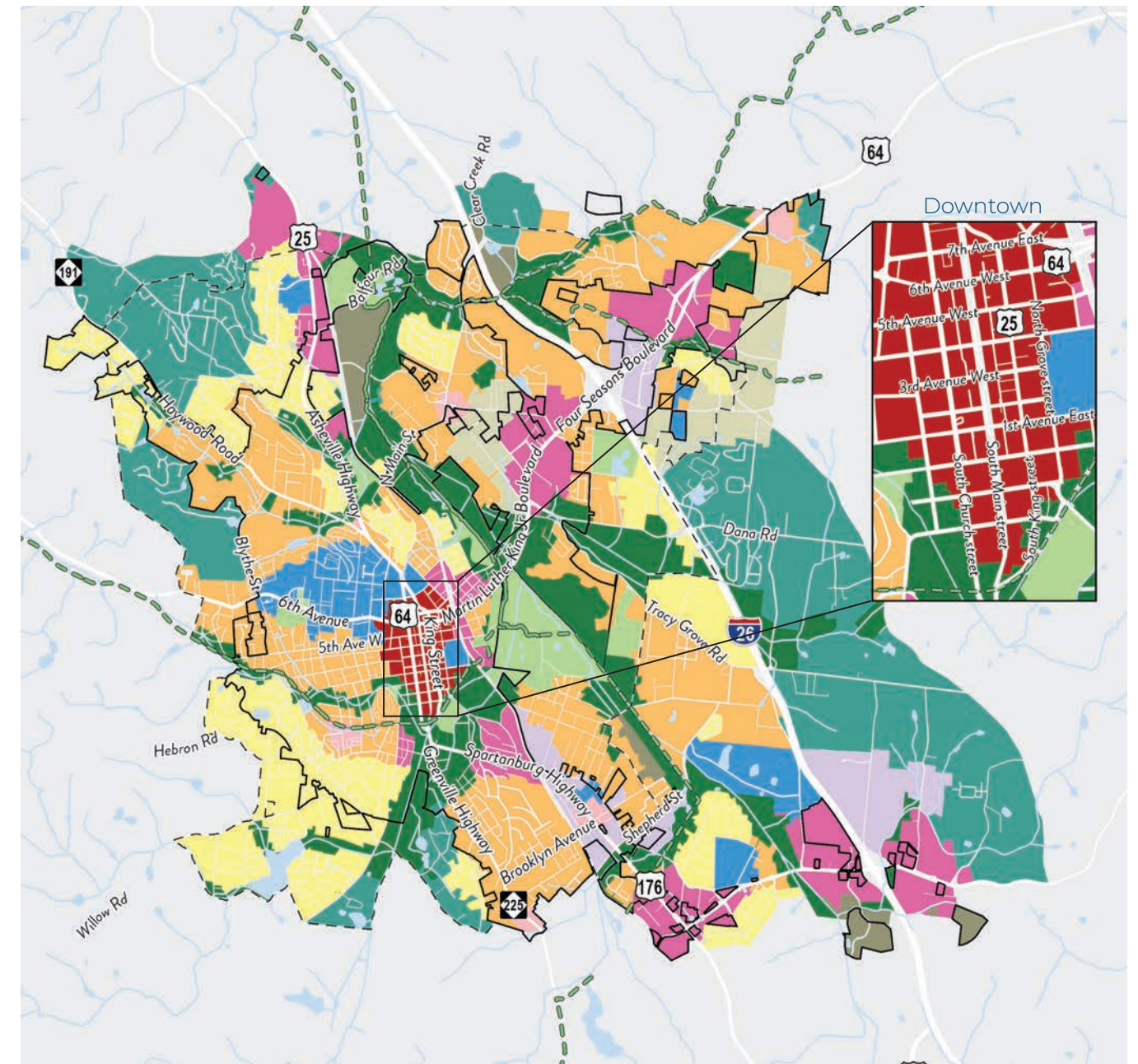


Figure C.31 Scenario B Map

0 4,500 Feet

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Open Space - Conservation    | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Mixed Use - Commercial   | <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Production |
| <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Open Space - Recreation | <span style="color: lightpink;">■</span> Neighborhood Center | Existing Greenways and Trails                   |
| <span style="color: teal;">■</span> Rural Residential             | <span style="color: redorange;">■</span> Suburban Commercial | Proposed Greenways and Trails                   |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Family/Neighborhood Living  | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Mixed Use - Employment | Hendersonville City Limits                      |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Multi-Generational Living   | <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutional            | Hendersonville ETJ                              |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Downtown                       | <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Innovation         |   |

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

## Scenario B (Alternative)

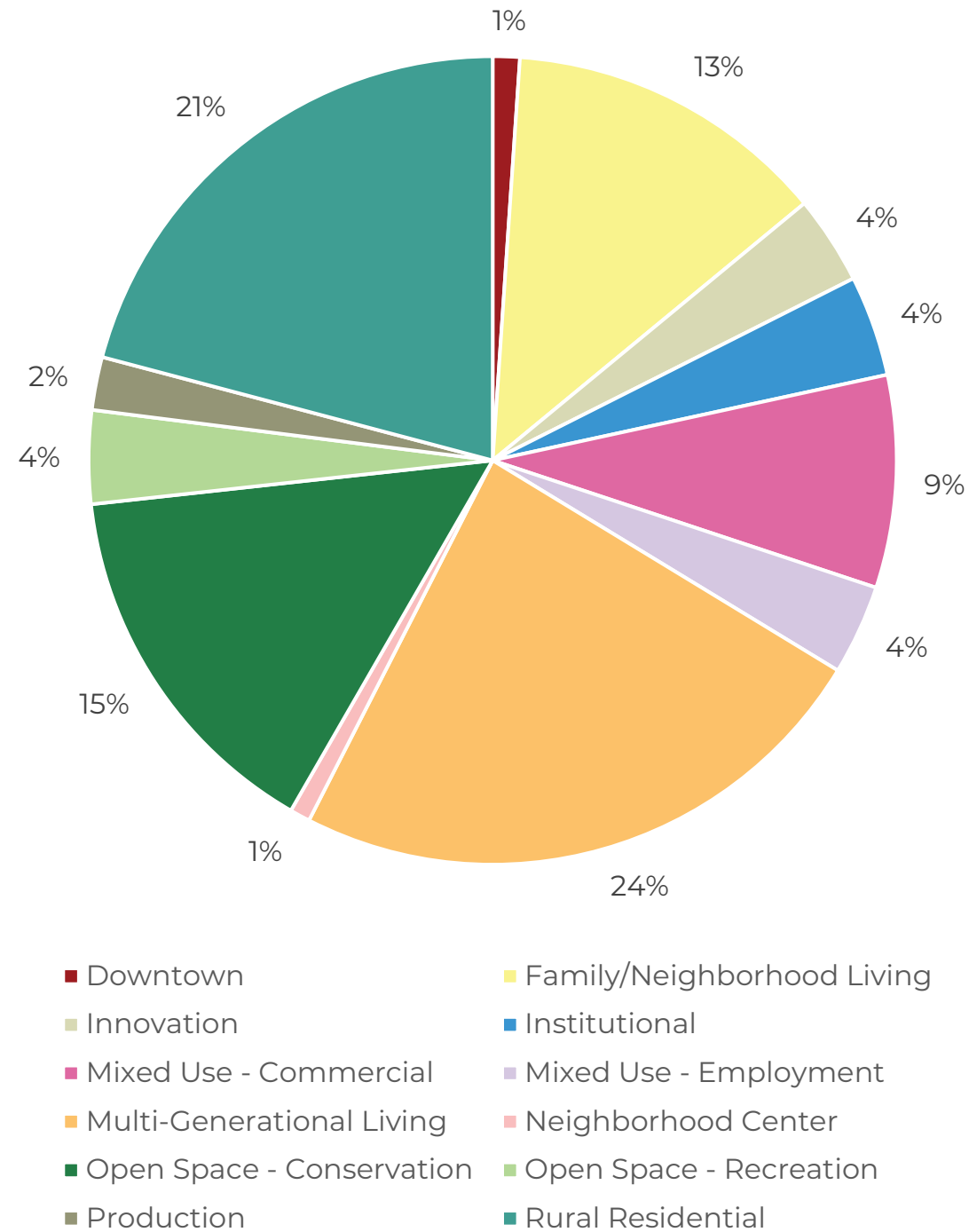
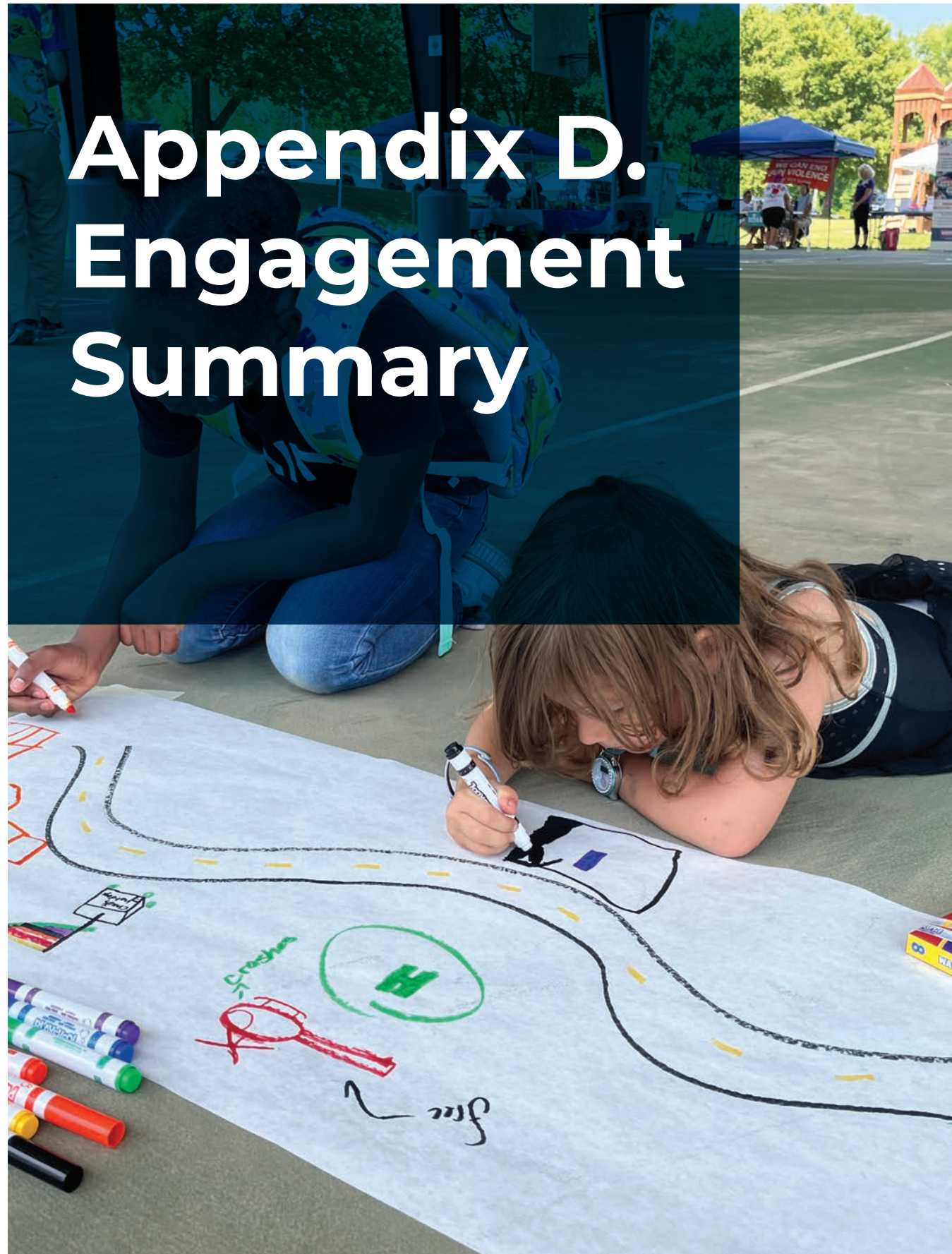


Figure C.3.2 - Character Area percentages for study area

Jurisdiction	Character Area	Acres	Percent
Hendersonville City Limits	Downtown	130.84	3.09%
	Family/Neighborhood Living	410.99	9.72%
	Innovation	128.72	3.04%
	Institutional	256.74	6.07%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	551.47	13.04%
	Mixed Use - Employment	121.82	2.88%
	Multi-Generational Living	1638.93	38.75%
	Neighborhood Center	79.19	1.87%
	Open Space - Conservation	642.51	15.19%
	Open Space - Recreation	173.04	4.09%
	Production	58.68	1.39%
Rural Residential	36.95	0.87%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>4229.87</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Hendersonville ETJ	Family/Neighborhood Living	840.34	20.99%
	Innovation	130.99	3.27%
	Institutional	36.86	0.92%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	89.92	2.25%
	Mixed Use - Employment	81.32	2.03%
	Multi-Generational Living	843.39	21.07%
	Neighborhood Center	19.02	0.48%
	Open Space - Conservation	814.09	20.33%
	Open Space - Recreation	279.24	6.98%
	Production	146.95	3.67%
	Rural Residential	721.30	18.02%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4003.44</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
City / County Joint Planning Area	Family/Neighborhood Living	318.02	8.18%
	Innovation	169.36	4.35%
	Institutional	195.08	5.02%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	389.12	10.01%
	Mixed Use - Employment	233.46	6.00%
	Multi-Generational Living	404.44	10.40%
	Neighborhood Center	0.20	0.01%
	Open Space - Conservation	355.07	9.13%
	Open Space - Recreation	0.00	0.00%
	Production	51.42	1.32%
	Rural Residential	1772.92	45.59%
<b>Total</b>		<b>3889.08</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Figure C.3.3 - Character Area percentages and acreage by city limits, ETJ, and City / County Joint Planning Area. ROW is not included in acreage percentages.

# Appendix D. Engagement Summary



## Engagement Summary

Throughout the Gen H planning process, the community was invited to engage with the project in a variety of ways to represent a diverse group of voices in the creation of the plan. Over the course of a year, stakeholders and community members were invited to partake in discussions, online surveys, community pop-ups, public open houses, community advisory committee meetings, neighborhood canvassing, and meeting kits. At meetings and events, participants shared their thoughts about existing conditions as well as their hopes and visions for the future. The online and printed surveys provided input opportunities for those not able to attend in-person events.



Children draw their ideas for Hendersonville's future (left), City staff at a pop up engagement (right)



# Public Engagement Plan

An extensive community engagement plan was developed as part of this process with the goal of obtaining input from community members of all ages and backgrounds. The City of Hendersonville communicated upcoming events and surveys through flyers, banners and signs posted throughout the city, mailed postcards, the City’s website, subscriber newsletters, and social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.

- Leverage opportunities to collaborate with project partners on outreach efforts
- Ensure that stakeholder questions and concerns are heard and answered
- Maintain and strengthen the relationships among the project partners
- Document engagement
- Align vision, goals, and recommendations

## ENGAGEMENT GOALS

- Identify stakeholder groups
- Utilize a variety of engagement tools, strategies, and activities geared toward reaching all identified stakeholder groups
- Meaningful involvement of lower-income and historically underrepresented populations
- Gather meaningful feedback from stakeholders that informs the development of recommendations



Custom branding was developed for the Gen H project

## BUILDING AWARENESS

- Project Branding
- Print Campaigns
- Media Campaigns
- Lower Participation Strategies
- Digital Ad Campaigns
- Radio and Spotify Ads
- Local Radio and TV Coverage
- Educational Video Series
- Future Planner Outreach Materials

## GATHERING INPUT

- Online Tools
- Community Survey
- Student Survey
- Meeting Facilitation
- Council Comp-versations
- Open Houses
- Pop-Up Meetings
- Meeting Kits
- Neighborhood Canvassing

## ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS



Stakeholder Discussions



Presentations & Pop-Ups



Round Table Discussions



Council Comp-versations



Meeting Kits



Community Advisory Committee Meetings



Policymaker Workshops



Community Surveys

## ENGAGEMENT PHASES

Phase 1: Issues & Opportunities	Phase 2: Scenario Planning & Growth Framework	Phase 3: Implementation Strategy	Phase 4: Adoption
Gather input on existing issues and opportunities	Gather feedback on scenario planning that align with community priorities and the development of the growth framework	Inform the public on the preferred recommendations and implementation strategy	Engage City Council, Boards, Committees, staff, and stakeholders during adoption process

## ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Strategy	Who It Reaches
Community Advisory Committee	Diverse Stakeholder Group
Technical Committee	Town, County, and State Staff
Policymaker Briefings	Decision Makers
Open Houses & Pop Ups	City Residents & Stakeholders
Neighborhood Meetings	Lower Participation Groups
Meeting Kits	Everyone

## ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE



City staff host a pop up engagement at the farmers market | City of Hendersonville

## Print & Media Campaigns

### LOCAL FOCUS RADIO INTERVIEW

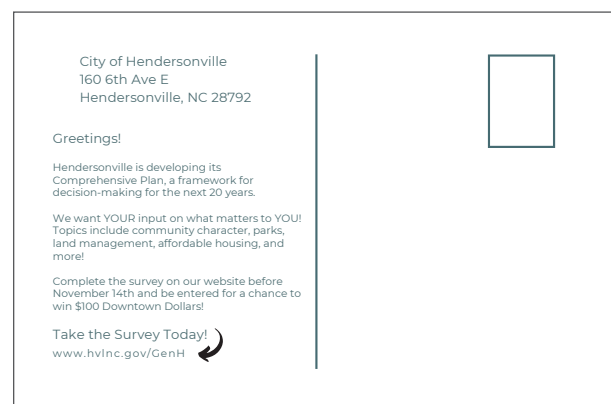
A local radio station conducted an interview sharing what Gen H is all about. [Listen to the interview here.](#)

### PRINT MATERIALS

Supporting informational materials, such as [project one-pagers](#), [survey promotion](#), children's [coloring books](#), rack cards, Gen H swag, and more, were created for distribution at community events. These materials gave an overview of the project and informed the public on how to access the project website for additional information. Project materials were provided in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

### YARD SIGNS, BANNERS, MAILED POSTCARDS

The City placed yard signs, hung banners, and mailed postcards to residents to help spread the awareness of the Gen H process and get people talking about how they can contribute to the planning process.



Postcards from Hendersonville

## Online Tools

### PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website served as the home for all project information including technical reports, conceptual drawings, and public meeting materials. The online survey was accessed through the project website as well. Individuals were able to subscribe to project email updates via the website to stay informed with project milestones during the study. [View the project website here.](#)

### PROJECT PROMOTIONAL VIDEOS

The City also created several videos in both English and Spanish introducing Gen H and explaining the public survey. [View them here.](#)

### PUBLIC INPUT

The online public engagement platform was used to receive feedback in the form of community surveys and questionnaires. [View the page.](#)

### ONLINE STUDENT SURVEY

A student survey was created to increase participation from high school students. Videos and lesson plans were created specifically for high school curriculum with staff visiting seniors at Hendersonville and East Henderson high schools.



Project promotional videos created by the City.

# Digital Engagement

The City of Hendersonville collaborated with RingoFire to launch ad campaigns on various digital platforms. Ads were designed to engage with audiences who may not interact with traditional local government outreach methods.

### SOCIAL MEDIA ADS

Organic and paid social media ads were utilized throughout the engagement process to bring awareness to the comprehensive plan development process and promote engagement opportunities such as surveys and community meetings.

As the engagement process progressed, staff utilized demographic data from the survey to adjust the graphics and imagery throughout the campaigns.

- Progression photos of Hendersonville’s history were displayed to emphasize the lasting impact of comprehensive planning

- Eye catching drone photography was featured when asking the community where they saw Hendersonville in twenty years
- Survey participation maps highlighted which areas were weighing in to be heard
- Videos of seasonal events like the Apple Festival and Gen H Pop-Up events personalized the digital posts to reflect the community and showcase the theme of “You are Gen H. Hendersonville’s next chapter starts with you.”

RingoFire assisted staff in scheduling and targeting ads to reach as many people as possible. Some of the ad funding was directed toward reaching historically underrepresented areas of the city.

### GOOGLE ADS

Google ads ran from August 14, 2023, to October 20, 2023. The ads ran to boost awareness and opportunities for public involvement in the plan.

### SPOTIFY ADS

Spotify ads ran for 3 months between August 14th, 2023, and November 14th, 2023. Spotify ads ran to reach a new segment of community members.

**76,664 Impressions**  
**173 Link Clicks**

Total Google Ad Interactions

**35,550 Impressions**  
**7,059 Reach**  
**62 Link Clicks**

Total Spotify Ad Interactions



Gen H Youtube and Spotify Ads

# Community Survey

The Gen H Comprehensive Plan Survey was open from August 14, 2023, through November 14, 2023. The City of Hendersonville staff attended community events, held meetings hosted by City Council, visited schools, and popped up at city gathering spots encouraging community members to take the survey. A student survey was also developed and shared with local high school students.

**In total, just over 4,700 people participated in the surveys and provided over 10,500 individual comments.**

View the full results of the [community survey here](#) and [the student survey here](#), or scan the QR code with a smart device.



## SUMMARY

### Top Concerns for Hendersonville's Future:

- Effects of Population Growth (increased traffic, sprawl, etc.)
- Housing (affordability, availability, variety – for sale/rent, houses, apartments, etc.)
- Community Safety and Appearance (crime, vacant/underutilized buildings, etc.)
- Access to Quality Goods and Services (shopping, dining, entertainment, etc.)
- Economic Development (jobs, workforce, small business support, etc.)

**Over 75% say that Quality of Life – An aspect of living or working in Hendersonville, that distinguishes it from other communities is what gives Hendersonville its character.**

### Top Priorities for Hendersonville as the City Plans for the Future:

- Preserving farmland and critical environmental areas
- Maintaining Hendersonville's distinct character and sense of place
- Providing a range of housing opportunities and choices at various price ranges
- Ensuring that new development is walkable and efficiently designed

**The majority of survey respondents do not feel that Hendersonville has enough housing.**

Looking to the future, the housing types (beyond single family houses) that respondents felt were needed to ensure residents can find housing to match their life stages are:

- Missing Middle Housing (duplex, triplex, quadplex, small apartment buildings)
- Townhome (row houses, attached single family)

- 55+ Community/Independent Living Facility (age restricted facility)
- Apartment Complex (rental)

### Top Improvements for Downtown:

- Historic preservation/reuse of existing buildings/façade improvements, building maintenance
- Safe/improved pedestrian and bike connections in and to downtown from neighborhoods (sidewalks, crosswalks, crossing signals, bike lanes)
- New and/or improved public spaces/parks (plazas, greenspace, amphitheater, etc.)
- Additional festivals, events, and programs in downtown
- Additional public parking

### Top Places Hendersonville Needs:

- Cultural and entertainment venues (theaters, galleries, etc.)
- Events (parade, festival, art show, live music)
- Dining, food service
- Housing

# Canvassing In Green Meadows

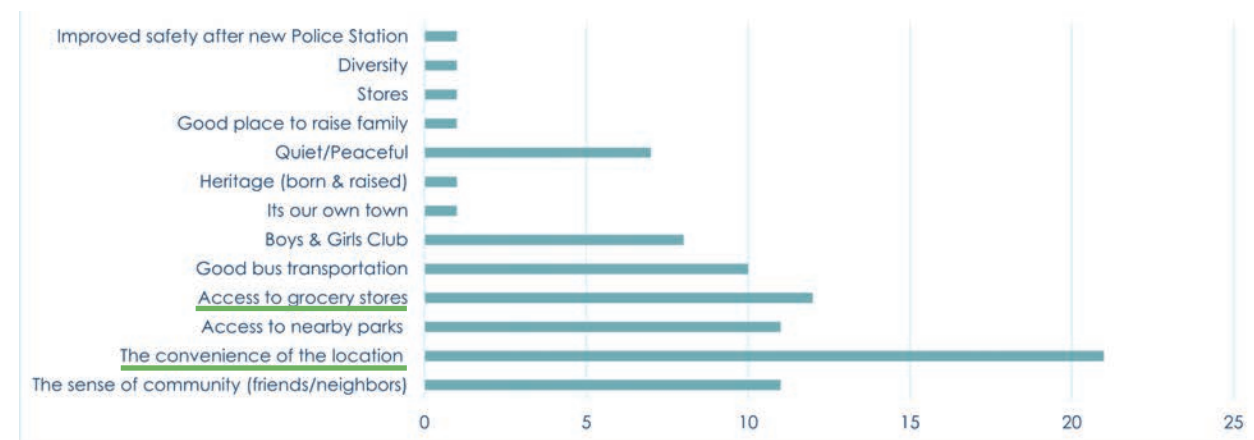
## DOOR TO DOOR CONVERSATIONS

During the horizon of the community survey, City staff and volunteers canvassed the Green Meadows neighborhood to engage with resident stakeholders. Through conversations held on front porches, residents learned about the Gen H Plan underway, and were invited to participate by taking the community survey and attend community events. They also answered a few tailored questions about their neighborhood during the neighborhood canvassing.

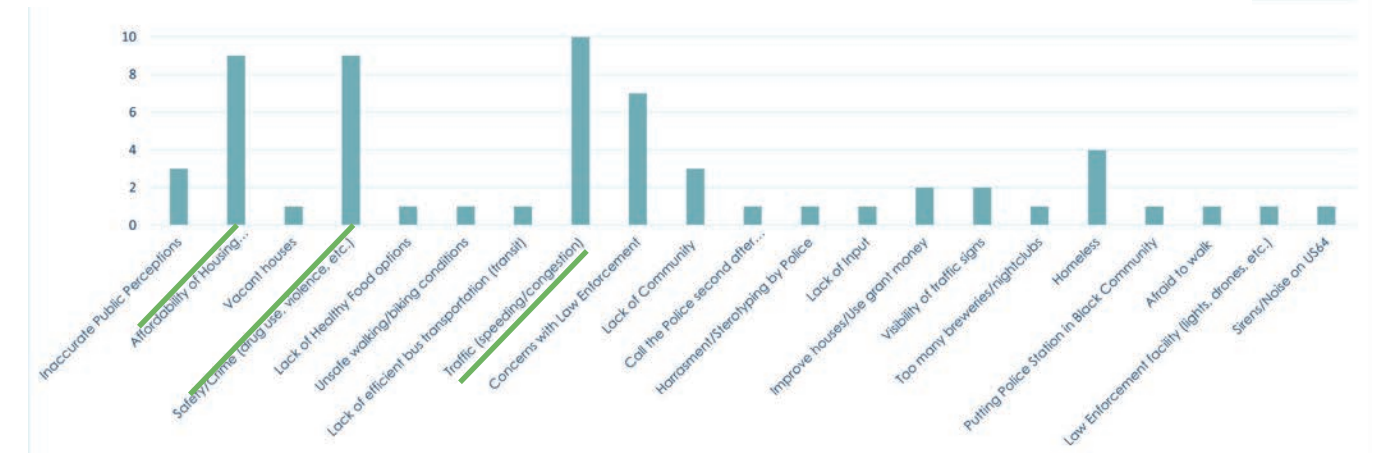
## FOLLOW UP CONVERSATIONS

The canvassing event led to several additional, more in depth conversations with community and faith-based leaders about the Black community in Hendersonville and their representation and the inclusion of ideas in the Gen H Plan.

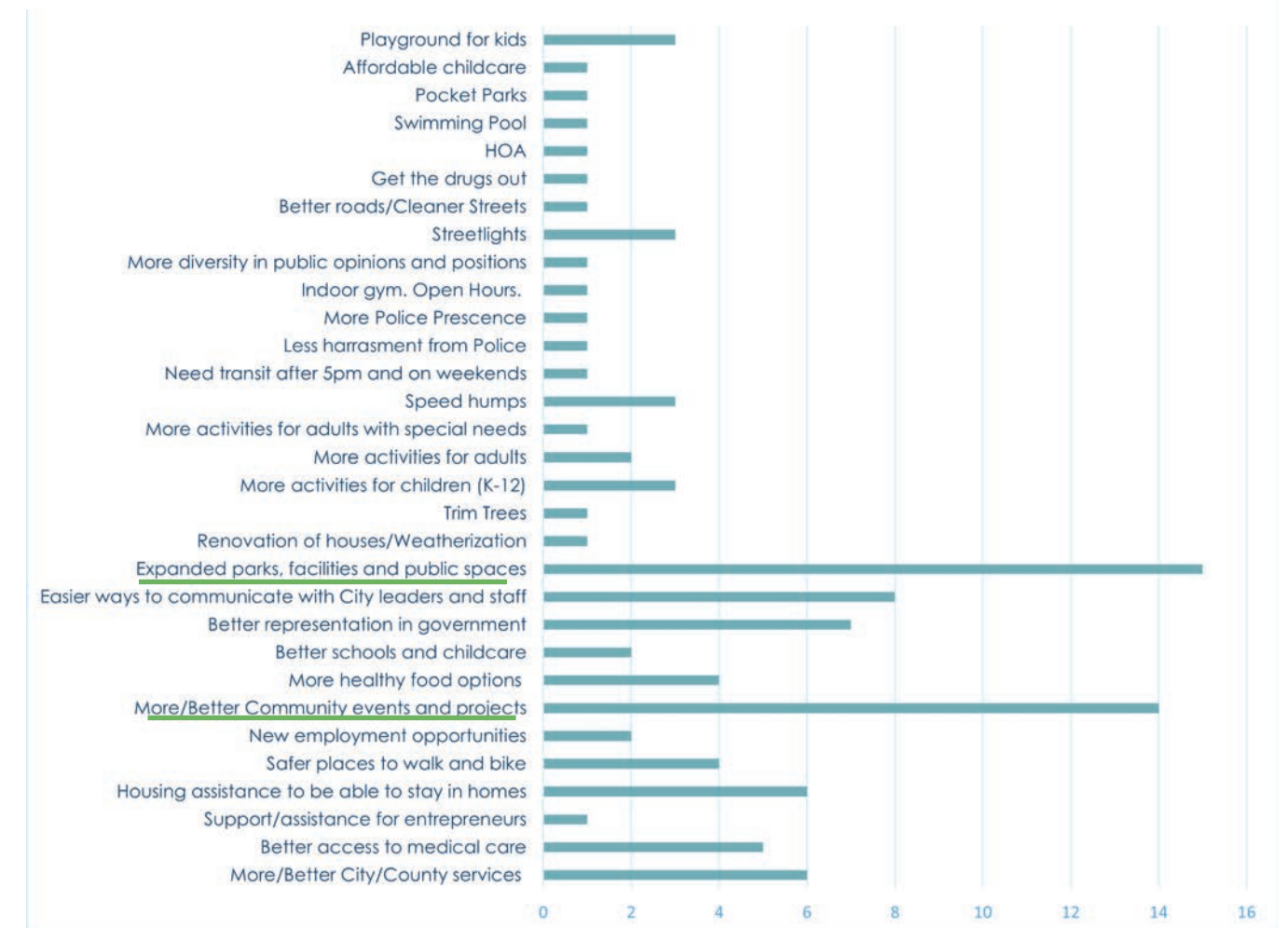
## WHAT IS GOOD ABOUT LIVING IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?



## WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST CONCERN?



## WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE FUTURE?



# Interviewing Stakeholders

Working with City staff, key stakeholder groups were identified to ensure a broad set of voices and views were heard during the Gen H Plan development. A priority of the plan was to foster meaningful involvement and gather impactful feedback from stakeholders that informed the development of recommendations.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEES

- Aging Projects
- Apple Country Public Transit
- Arts Council of Henderson County
- Beverly-Hanks & Associates
- Blue Ridge Bike Club
- Blue Ridge Community College
- Blue Ridge EV Club
- Blue Ridge Health
- Boys and Girls Club
- Children & Family Resource Center
- City residents
- Current commercial business owners and operators
- Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Downtown businesses and property owners
- Duke Energy
- Ecusta Trail
- Faith-based community
- First Victory
- French Broad River MPO
- Friends of Oklawaha
- Galleries and Museums
- Got your Back Neighbor
- Grand Blessings
- Green Meadows Neighborhood
- Hands On! Children’s Museum
- Henderson County
- Henderson County Chamber of Commerce
- Henderson County Council on Aging
- Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development

- Henderson County Public Schools
- Henderson County Tourism Development Authority
- Hendersonville Connections Center
- Hendersonville Middle School
- Hendersonville Pride
- Hendersonville Rescue Mission
- Hendersonville Theatre
- Hendersonville YMCA
- Hendo Earth Fest
- Heritage Trail
- Hola Carolina
- Hope Coalition
- Housing Assistance Corporation
- Housing Authority
- Land of Sky MPO
- Medical Loan Closet
- NCDOT Division 14
- Pardee Hospital
- Public Works
- Riddle Development
- Team ECCO
- The Free Clinics
- The Trolley Co.
- Thrive
- True Ridge
- Walk Wise
- Watermark
- WGLA Engineering
- Wingate University
- WNC Source

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# Stakeholder Topics and Themes

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW TOPICS

- Public Works
- Economic Development
- Agriculture
- Parks, Trails, & Greenways
- Environment, Resiliency, & Sustainability
- Downtown Stakeholders
- Arts, Culture, & Tourism
- Education Providers
- Equity & Inclusion
- Housing
- Senior Population
- Healthcare
- Developers, Large Landholders
- Historic Preservation
- Housed/Unhoused
- Transportation & Bike/  
Pedestrian
- Public Health
- Education
- Real Estate & Development
- Multi-Generational Business  
Community

## KEY THEMES

- Balancing growth with hometown character
- Affects of growth
- Workforce availability
- Directing growth to corridors and preserve sensitive areas
- Community health
- Opportunities to improve mobility and connectivity through parks, trails, and greenway networks



Opportunities to improve greenways and mobility through out Hendersonville was a theme throughout the stakeholder interviews | Oklawaha Greenway, Photo by Lu Ann Welter



# Council Comp-versations

The City held town hall meetings, coined “Council Comp-versations”, that highlighted various aspects of the Gen H Plan, including the plan purpose, goals, and how a comprehensive plan gets implemented.

A total of five meetings were hosted, each one led by a member of City Council. During these meetings, council members were able to share their own insights on the plan.



Council Member Dr. Jennifer Hensley leading a Council Comp-versation

Feedback from stakeholders at the downtown focused Council Comp-versation hosted by Mayor Pro Tem Lyndsey Simpson at the Main Event on Main Street in downtown



## Comp-versations

### COUNCIL CONVERSATIONS

We are having conversations across Hendersonville about the **Gen H - Hendersonville's Comprehensive Plan** and planning for the next 20 years & beyond!

#### WHERE DO YOU SEE HENDERSONVILLE IN 20 YEARS?

**Hello Gen H: Hendersonville's Comprehensive Plan Kick-off**  
 Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 | 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
 Back to School Fest @ Sullivan Park  
 713 Martin Circle  
 Council Member Debbie Roundtree

**The Heart of Gen H: Developing the Vision for Downtown's Future**  
 Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023 | 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM  
 The Main Event  
 125 S. Main Street  
 Mayor Pro Tem Lyndsey Simpson



**What Does Change Look Like to Gen H: Balancing Growth & Strengthening Community Character**  
 Monday, Oct. 2, 2023 | 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM  
 Interfaith Assistance Ministries (IAM)  
 310 Freeman Street  
 Mayor Barbara Volk

**A Healthy Dose of Gen H: The Place of Parks and Open Space**  
 Monday, Oct. 9, 2023 | 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM  
 Health Sciences Center - Room 2003  
 805 6th Avenue West  
 Council Member Jerry Smith

**The Housing Component of Gen H: Living in Hendersonville's Future**  
 Monday, Oct. 16, 2023 | 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM  
 Hendersonville High School - Cafeteria  
 1 Bearcat Boulevard  
 Council Member Jennifer Hensley



Take the Gen H survey & learn more at:



[www.hvInc.gov/GenH](http://www.hvInc.gov/GenH)

A flyer developed by the City to promote the five Council Comp-versations

# Pop-Up Events, Presentations, & More



The project team hosted field trips at City Hall for Bruce Drysdale Elementary School students



National Night Out pop-up event



Mayor Volk Council Comp-versation



Project team and Council Member O'Neal Roundree at Back to School Fest



Hendersonville High School presentation



Hendersonville PD at Back to School Fest



Building Bridges presentation aimed at connecting with the Latinx community

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# Community Advisory Committee

## COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) comprised of community leaders, residents, and business owners guided the process by providing oversight and input over the course of six meetings.

In addition to attending and participating in meetings, CAC members were encouraged to take part in as many partnering activities as possible and recruit members of the community to participate in the planning process as well. The CAC was a sounding board for the project team and provided feedback on important planning themes and key decision points for the Gen H Comprehensive Plan.

## KICK-OFF MEETING

The first CAC meeting convened on August 14, 2023. Participants engaged in introductions, familiarized themselves with the project's scope

through a comprehensive overview, and set the stage for subsequent sessions by outlining the agenda.

## EXPLORING FOUNDATIONS

The second CAC meeting, held on September 19, 2023, provided a deeper exploration of foundational elements crucial to the project's success. Attendees engaged in discussions surrounding project updates, existing conditions, market dynamics, policy frameworks, and the crystallization of vision and goals.

## VISIONING SESSION

The third CAC meeting was held virtually on November 11, 2023. Deliberations focused on assessing the vision and goals, identifying focus areas, and engaging in insightful presentations on market studies, policy landscapes, and existing conditions. Participants articulated their values through thematic discussions and keyword exercises.

## SCENARIO BUILDING

As the project progressed, the fourth CAC meeting on January 22, 2024, delved into land use and growth scenarios. Participants explored various scenarios and implications, further refining the project's focus areas to align with community needs and aspirations.

## COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

During the fifth meeting, held on February 27, 2024, attendees reviewed and analyzed feedback gathered from the Gen H Open House 2, integrating community perspectives into the ongoing

discussions. Concept boards were shared, providing an interactive platform for committee members to offer valuable insights.

## FINAL MEETING

At the sixth and final CAC meeting, which took place on April 25, 2024, the committee reviewed the draft Future Land Use Map, the five focus areas, and discussed implementation priorities for recommendations to be completed in the short-term (less than five years).



Community Advisory Committee convenes for their first meeting | City of Hendersonville

# Round Table Discussions

Over the course of the project the project team met with boards and interest groups to dive into key issues and shape recommendations for the Gen H Plan. Key takeaways included:

## BLACK PASTORS\*

- Focus on job creation in the Black community
- Strategies for protection from gentrification and erasure
- Places and programs for youth
- Equal investment in the parks, namely Sullivan and Jackson
- Collaboration of Black leaders through a coalition or advisory council

## BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Housing is needed to support demographic trends
- Infrastructure is needed to support growth
- Should the City consider an Urban Growth Boundary?

- Corridors and retail centers are ripe for redevelopment
- Opportunities for employment centers outside of downtown
- Blue Ridge Mall needs a balanced redevelopment strategy

## DOWNTOWN ADVISORY BOARD\*

- Prioritize character of downtown, but need infill
- Focus on small, local business growth in downtown with some regional chains
- Grow residential units downtown to support businesses
- Target improvements for vacant properties in downtown that could be subdivided for multiple businesses, market for new business types, and upfit upstairs spaces
- Need an anchor public space in downtown

\*Met multiple times during the process

## SENIOR POPULATION

- Hendersonville continues to attract a large, diverse population of retirees
- Need more collaboration between governments and agencies for resources
- Transportation and mobility is a key issue for the aging population, many do not drive
- Housing is a growing concern, many are on a fixed income
- Age-friendly housing and building codes are needed
- Isolation and depression is a growing issue

## TREE BOARD AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BOARD

- Infill development should decrease car trips and increase multimodal trips
- Expand greenway system
- Invest in renewable energy strategies
- Protect existing and plan for future trees in development standards
- Incentivize use of native species
- Invest in strategies to make the city more resilient to flooding
- Protect steep slopes and improve standards for sediment and erosion control



Downtown Advisory Board meets with the Gen H team | City of Hendersonville

# Policy Maker Workshop

The Gen H Plan team convened the Hendersonville City Council and the Planning Board for a Policy Maker Workshop mid-way through the process. Led by the consultant team, the policy makers were presented the following information:

- Updates on the project phases, information on stakeholder outreach and engagement
- Communication strategies
- Existing conditions analysis that included land use and development patterns, housing statistics, mobility, information on open/green space and parks, character and appearance, and community facilities and service
- Observations and conclusions from the policy analysis
- Draft goals and objectives for the plan
- Upcoming dates for meetings and open houses

## VISION EXERCISE

The policy makers participated in a visioning exercise that encouraged the development of ideas and recommendations based on the information and analysis. The Gen H team grouped the input into the following categories:

- Vibrant neighborhoods
- Abundant housing choices
- Healthy and accessible natural environment
- Authentic community character
- Safe streets and trails
- Reliable and accessible utility services
- Satisfying work opportunities
- Welcoming and inclusive community
- Accessible and available community uses and services
- Resilient community

The input received shaped the recommendations in the Gen H Plan.



Council members participate in the visioning exercise | City of Hendersonville



Consultant team member leads policy makers through visioning exercise | City of Hendersonville

# Open House 1

The first Gen H Open House was held on November 20, 2023 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Public Library located at 301 Washington St, Hendersonville. The Open House was drop-in style where participants could attend the event anytime within the time range to meet City representatives and provide their feedback on the set of goals for developing the future land use scenario maps.

Attendees were invited to familiarize themselves with the project by exploring Hendersonville’s existing conditions, demographics, adopted plans, policy analysis, and market study findings. Information from the Community Survey and other engagement efforts were also shared. The project team facilitated various feedback stations, covering topics such as goals and objectives, vision statement, issues and opportunities mapping, growth and development,

mobility, and open space conservation. A Junior Planners’ Station was available for children, featuring an interactive Place It Activity and Gen H coloring sheets.



Attendees at the Gen H Open House 1 providing feedback and engaging with project team members



Growth & Development and Mobility boards with comments.



Child interacting with Place It Activity during Gen H Open House 1

## Open House 2

The second Gen H Open House took place on February 13, 2024, at the Public Library from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This drop-in style event allowed participants to meet City representatives and review updated project information. At this event, feedback was instrumental in refining goals, shaping the vision statement, and laying the groundwork for big ideas. Community members were encouraged to participate by providing input on a range of topics, including:

- Key information regarding land supply, underutilized

- properties, and vacant land
- Evaluation of character areas and their alignment with Hendersonville’s vision
- Exploration of three potential future growth scenarios
- Review and discussion of community character images
- Deliberation on five focus areas, offering insights and local knowledge to advance Hendersonville’s vision

A Junior Planners’ Station was set up to allow children to contribute their ideas while enabling parents to engage in other discussions.



Community members gather at Gen H Open House 2.



Attendees at the Gen H Open House 2 providing feedback and engaging with project team members

# Meeting Kits

To ensure broad participation and opportunities for stakeholders to engage on their terms, the Meeting Kits were designed to encourage group discussion about the plan's goals and strategies. Utilizing this engagement strategy ensured a broader range of participation from stakeholders and that the plan is reflective of the community's vision for the future.

At events and pop-ups, City staff presented an overview of the Gen H planning process with the community. City staff led various discussion prompts and showed community members how to provide their input. At breakout tables, City staff guided community members through the Mapping Exercise and discussed the trade offs of different issues and opportunities and allowed them to give their own feedback about Hendersonville on the city-wide and downtown maps provided.

## MAPPING EXERCISE

The core concepts of this exercise can be summarized as follows:

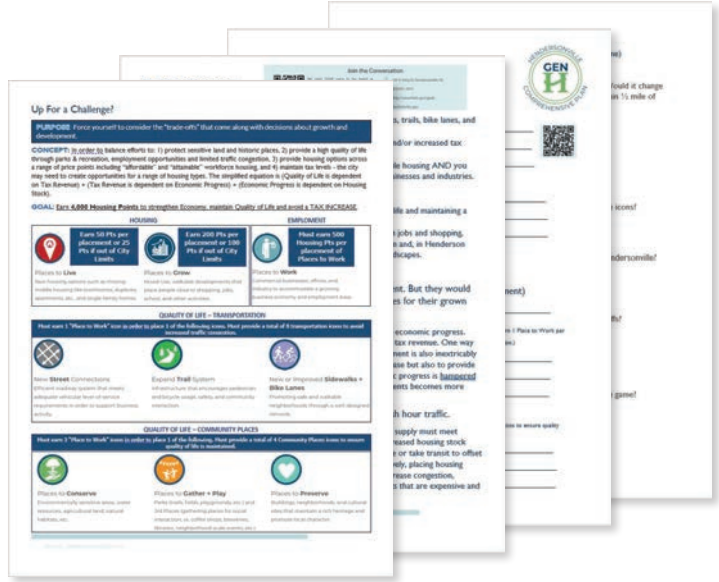
- Balancing Priorities:** The City aims to protect sensitive lands and historic places while ensuring a high quality of life, including access to parks, recreation, employment opportunities, and minimal traffic congestion.
- Diverse Housing Options:** To achieve this balance, the City needs to offer a variety of housing types that cater to different price points, including affordable and workforce housing.
- Interdependent Factors:** Quality of life in the city relies on adequate tax revenue, which in turn depends on economic progress. Economic progress is driven by having a sufficient and varied housing stock.

The simplified equation that captures these relationships is:

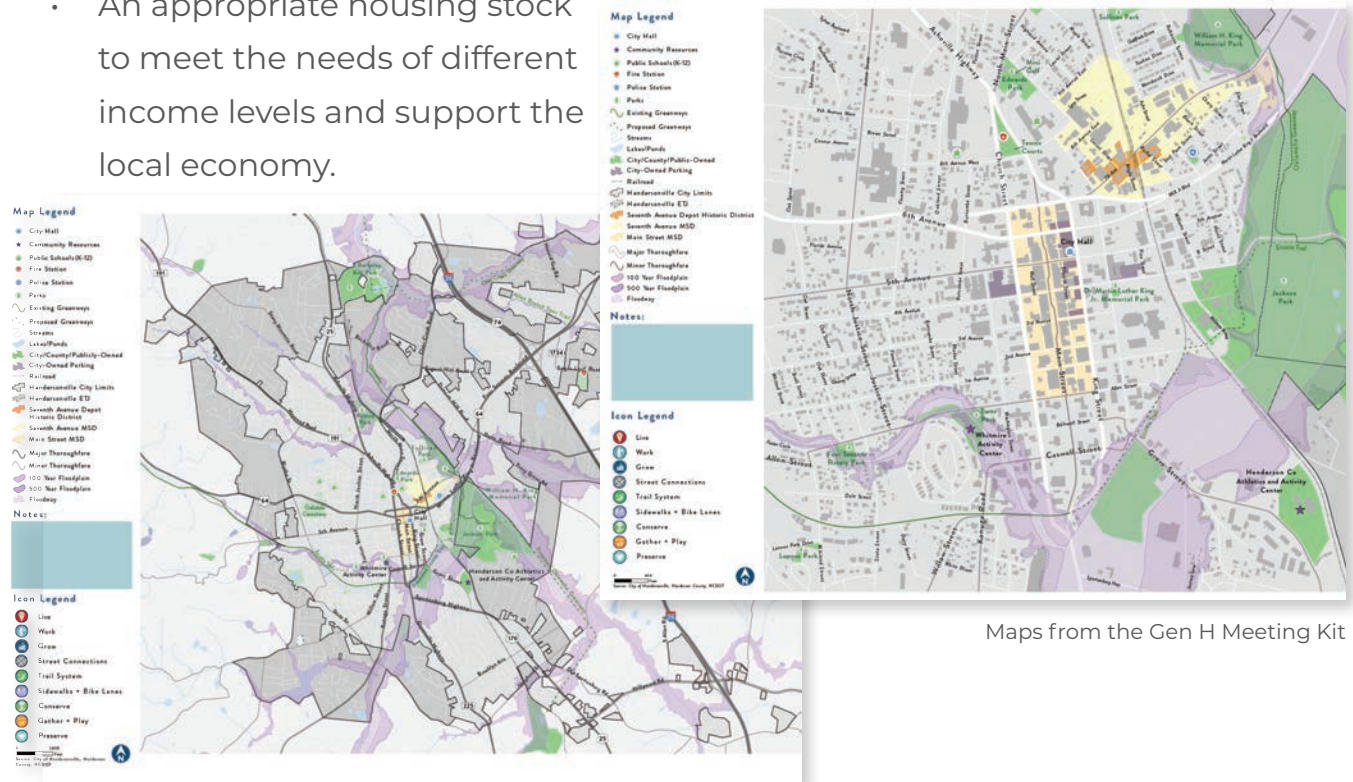
$$\text{Quality of Life} = \text{Tax Revenue} + \text{Economic Progress} + \text{Housing Stock}$$

This means that maintaining a high quality of life requires:

- Adequate tax revenue, which comes from economic activities.
- Economic progress, which is supported by having diverse housing options to attract and retain a workforce.
- An appropriate housing stock to meet the needs of different income levels and support the local economy.



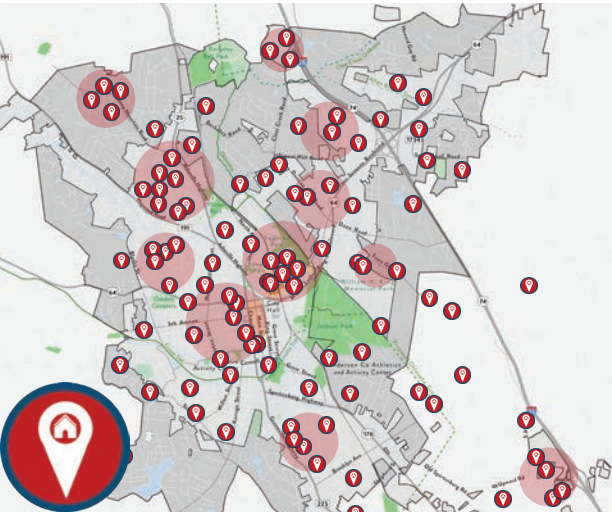
Instructions, Scoring Sheets, & Discussion Questions for Mapping Exercise



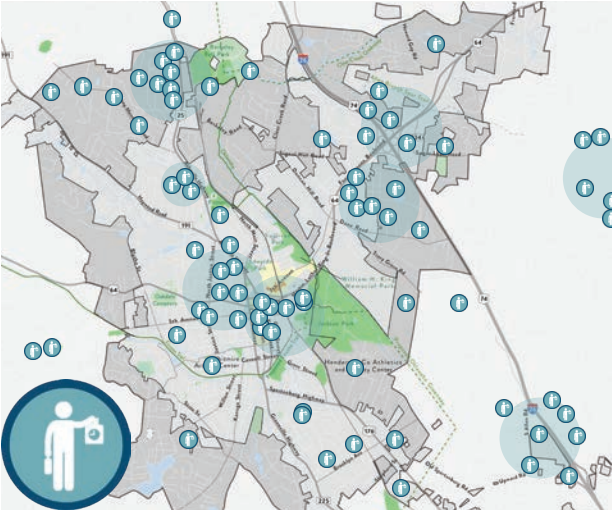
Maps from the Gen H Meeting Kit



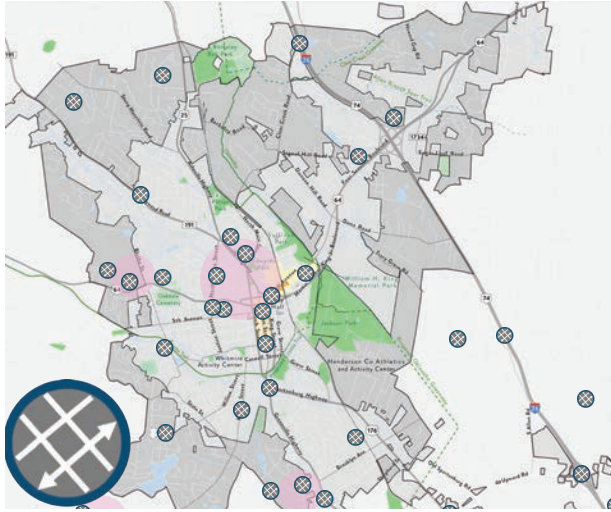
# Meeting Kit Feedback



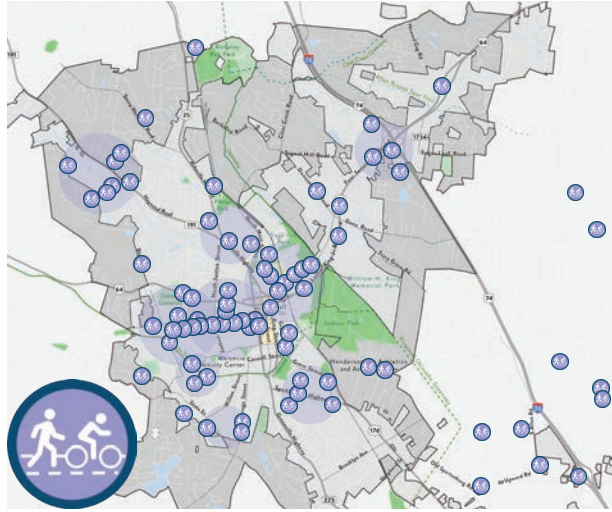
**Places to Live**  
 Low- to medium-density housing options such as missing middle housing like townhomes, duplexes, small apartments, and single-family homes.



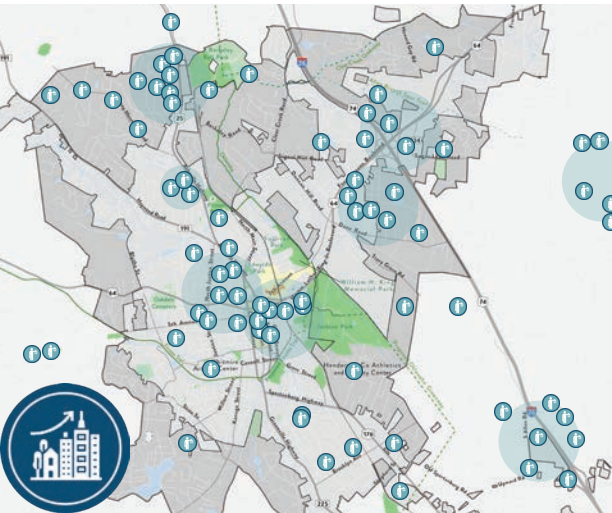
**Places to Work**  
 Commercial businesses, offices, and industry to accommodate a growing business economy and job base.



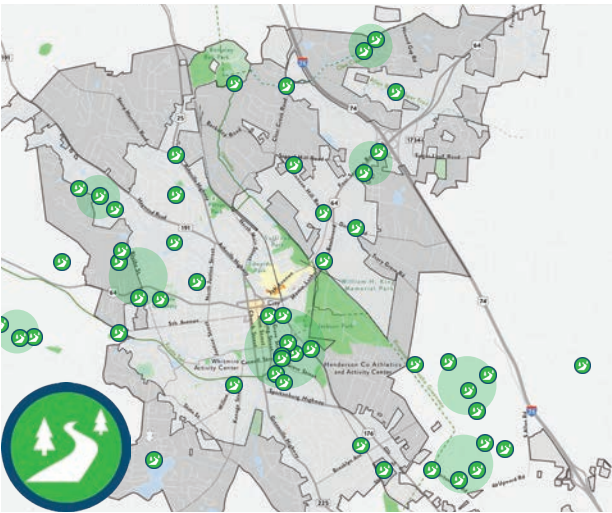
**New Street Connections**  
 Efficient roadway system that meets adequate vehicular level-of-service requirements in order to support business activity.



**New/Improved Sidewalks + Bike Lanes**  
 Promoting safe and walkable neighborhoods through a well-designed network.



**Places to Grow**  
 Walkable mixed-use developments that place people and housing close to shopping, jobs, school, and other activities.

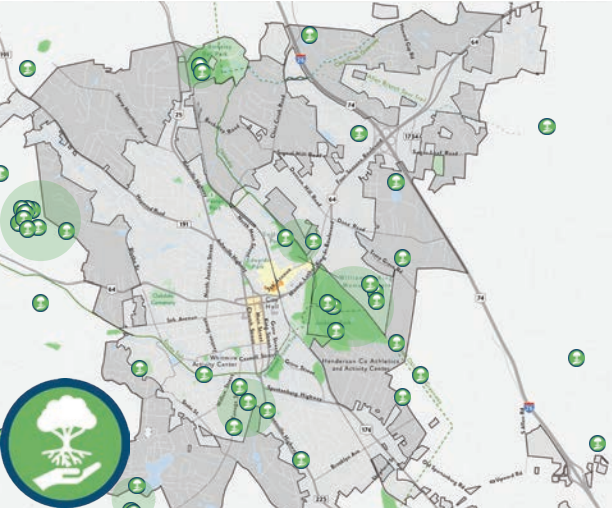


**Expanded Trail Network**  
 Infrastructure that encourages pedestrian and bicycle usage, safety, and community interaction.

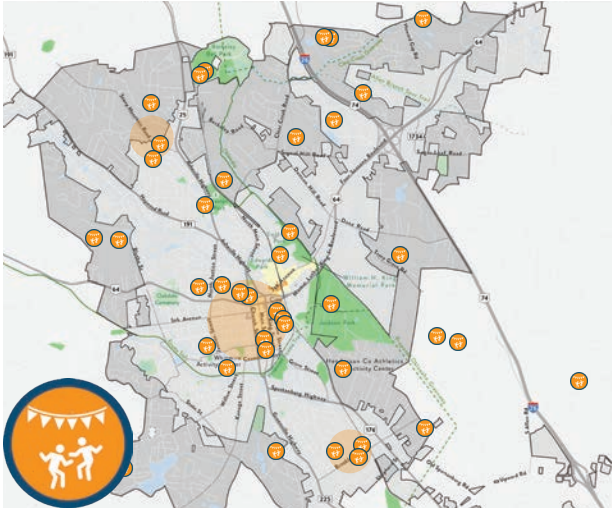


Participants Discuss Gen H Meeting Kits

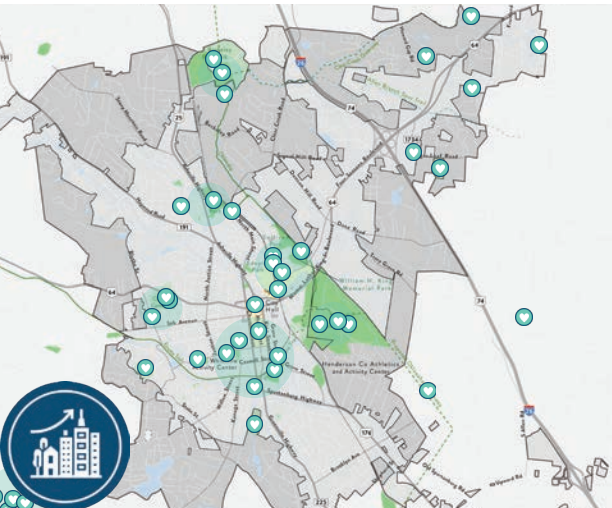
# Meeting Kit Feedback



**Places to Conserve**  
Environmentally sensitive areas, water resources, agricultural land, natural habitats, etc.



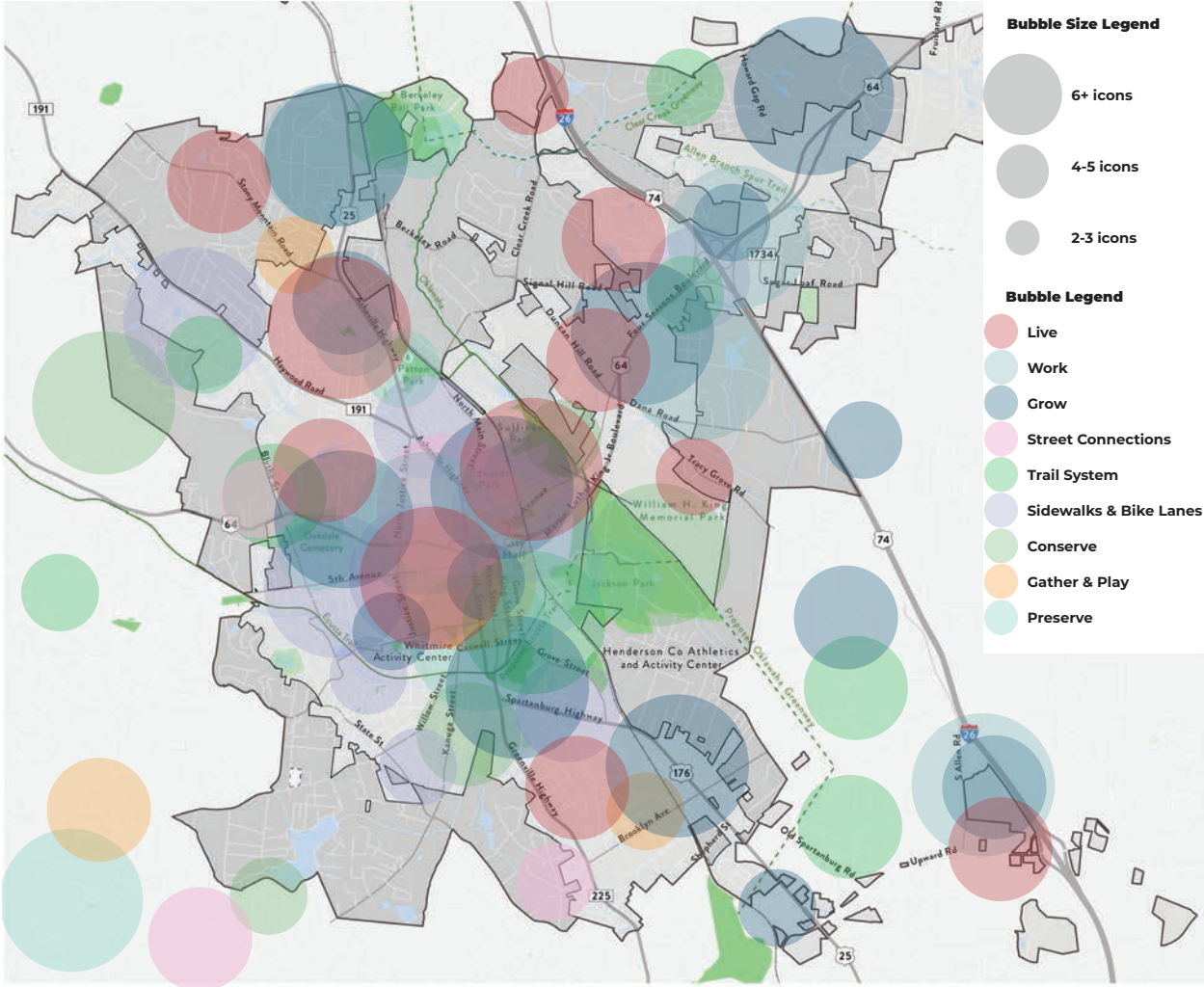
**Places to Gather + Play**  
Parks and 3rd Places (gathering places for social interaction, i.e. coffee shops, breweries, libraries, neighborhood-scale events, etc.)



**Places to Preserve**  
Buildings, neighborhoods, and cultural sites that maintain a rich heritage and promote local character.



Gen H Meeting Kit Mapping Exercise



Bubble diagram of feedback from Gen H Meeting Kits



# Appendix E. Economic Development Plan

INTRODUCTION

TRENDS & OUTLOOK

RECOMMENDATIONS

FALL 2023

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## Introduction

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

The Economic Development Plan (ED Plan) of the Gen H Comprehensive Plan outlines a strategic roadmap that aligns economic growth with the values and aspirations of the community. The ED Plan provides recommendations for the City of Hendersonville based on projected economic growth and aligns with recommendations in the Gen H Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Master Plan. By employing an analytical approach to examine historic trends and future trajectories, recommendations were developed to support sustainable economic advancement.

Recommendations encompass a multifaceted approach aimed at fostering authentic community character and cultivating satisfying work opportunities.

Across the city, the ED Plan encourages engaging businesses in decision-making, fostering entrepreneurship, establishing vacant property programs, and redeveloping underutilized properties. The ED Plan acknowledges the importance of sustaining the success of downtown Hendersonville and promotes targeted redevelopment efforts, the exploration of additional or expanded municipal service districts, and the incentivization of upper floor redevelopment to maximize the utilization of downtown spaces.

Leveraging best practices and lessons learned from peer municipalities, Hendersonville is poised to realize its full economic potential through utilizing its unique character and community assets to foster prosperity inclusive for all its residents.

Main Street Hendersonville | Green Heron Planning (left)

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# Trends & Outlook

As the Gen H Plan looks ahead to the next 20 years, it's important to understand existing conditions of commercial properties, redevelopment tools, and consumer behavior. However, the retail and consumer industry is rapidly changing. The following are relevant trends and an outlook on several key components of the economic development realm:

## OFFICE

Hybrid work patterns have contributed significantly to out-migration of the working population since the pandemic, moving out of urban cores to more suburban areas. In a national survey of working professionals conducted by McKinsey Global Institute, 20% of respondents reported that they had recently relocated and that the move was possible only because they could now work from home more frequently.

Of those that moved out of urban cores, they reported being drawn by housing conditions: better neighborhoods, prospect of homeownership, and outdoor space.

Hybrid work appears to be here to stay, with office attendance being down approximately 30% as compared to pre-pandemic levels. Office attendance is even lower in large firms in the knowledge economy.

It's projected that there will be 13% less demand for office space than pre-pandemic levels; however, the demand for Class A space will be much higher. Now that hybrid work has reduced the total amount of space that employers need, they can spend their budgets on small amounts of higher-quality space rather than larger amounts of lower-quality space.

Coworking space | Altura Architects (right)

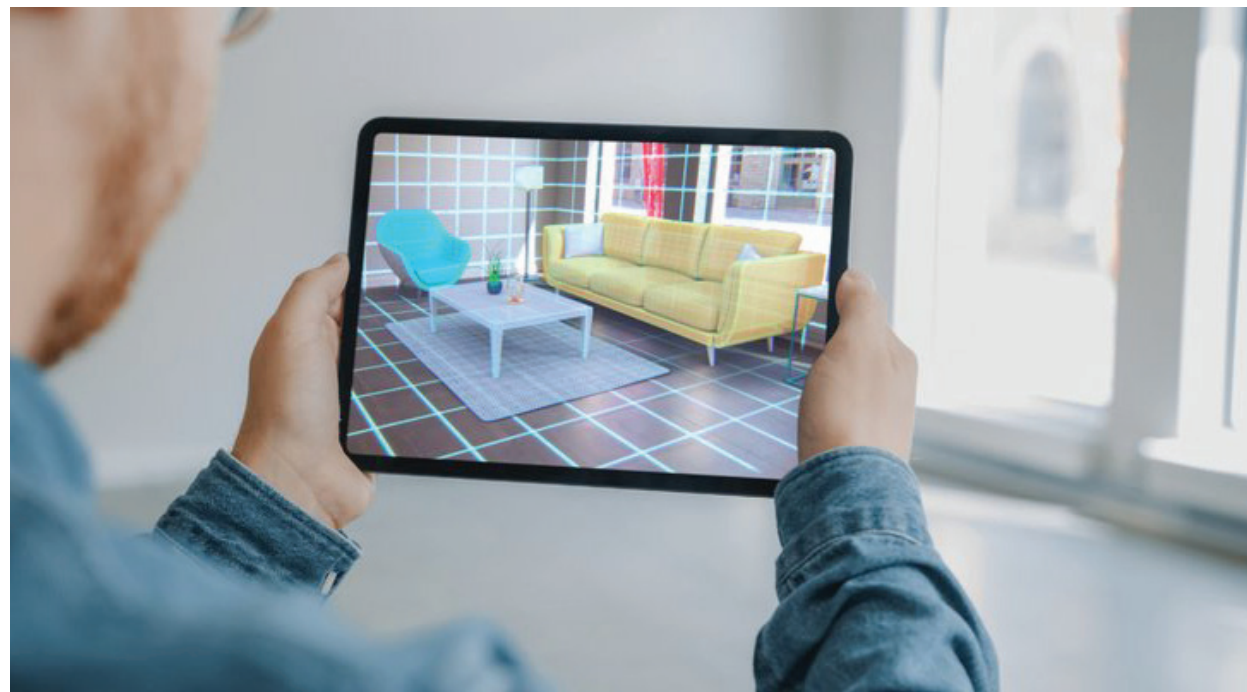


## RETAIL

According to mobile tracking data, foot traffic at retail locations is recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic more quickly in the suburbs than in urban cores. It remains 10-20% lower than pre-pandemic levels in urban cores.

In urban cores, demand for real estate in 2030 is predicted to be lower than it was in 2019, approximately 9% less. Residential space will be less affected, although price gaps between suburban and urban markets will be narrower than they once were.

Boston Consulting Group estimates that by 2027, e-commerce will capture 41% of global retail sales, where it currently captures approximately 15%. However, consumers will continue to desire to view, touch, and feel items for purchase in person. Thus, retail spaces will likely transition from a center of commerce to an experiential retail hub, utilizing virtual reality for consumers to experience items rather than keeping high levels of inventory in the brick and mortar.



Augmented Reality Retail Consumers | Retail Customer Experience

## LIVE, WORK, & PLAY

Business mix will be critical to sustainability of neighborhoods and development. Higher office ratios present greater risk. The “shop near where you work” trend is moving to “shop near where you live.” This gives support to retail/residential developments with good highway visibility, with a peppering of flexible, Class A office space.

Neighborhoods or nodes should not be dominated by a single type of real estate, but instead, incorporate a mix of office, residential, and retail.



Neighborhood Node | The Business Journals

New construction developments should be designed with spaces that are adaptable and flexible. That includes:

- Hybrid buildings: neutral-use building (design, infrastructure and technology could be medical, hotel, apartment, etc.)
- Accommodating different degrees of collaborative and individual work spaces
- Technology that promotes flexibility
- Retail space that includes new formats such as spaces intended for delivery, fulfillment, and logistics for a more omni-channel approach
- Building spaces more integrated with the environment: dining spaces that extend onto sidewalks
- Designing floor-level space that is modular and multi-use

Text Sources: McKinsey Global Institute; Boston Consultant Group; ICSC

## MANUFACTURING OUTLOOK

The manufacturing industry is poised for significant growth. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects an average of 933,000 job openings annually in production occupations, including manufacturing, until 2032, indicating a robust job market in the sector.

The manufacturing sector not only promises a bright future for the industry but also offers a plethora of career opportunities. From roles in production, process development, logistics, inventory control, quality assurance, health and safety, environmental assurance, maintenance, installation, and repair, the sector is ripe with potential for career growth and development.

The manufacturing industry is on the cusp of a transformative era, driven by the rapid integration of digital technologies. Deloitte's 2024 Manufacturing Industry Outlook Report reveals that 83 percent of modern manufacturers are confident

that innovative factory solutions will revolutionize production within five years. These technologies are not just tools, but catalysts for real-time insights, end-to-end visibility, scalable solutions, and improvements in efficiency, labor productivity, sustainability, and product quality.

Future manufacturing will demand faster innovation and more complex models and operational processes. It is envisioned as a highly efficient, high-tech sector capable of mass customization.

The demand for durable goods will begin earlier and last longer, mainly due to immigration patterns. This will lead to a broader customer demographic, including younger buyers. As people live longer and healthier lives, their purchasing power will also increase demand for goods such as caretaking robotics. Significant wealth is concentrated in older age groups, driving this trend.

As younger consumers dominate the market for major purchases like homes and cars, wealth accumulation will continue, boosting demand for manufactured goods.

## INNOVATION & JOBS

Innovation in manufacturing will have a profound impact on job creation, influencing both the quantity and nature of jobs available.

### Creation of New Job Categories

#### Advanced Technologies

- The adoption of advanced technologies such as robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), and the Internet of Things (IoT) will create new job categories.

Positions like robotics engineers, AI specialists, IoT developers, and data analysts will become increasingly common.

### Smart Factory Roles

- Jobs focused on the implementation, maintenance, and optimization of smart factory technologies will emerge. This includes roles such as smart factory managers, digital twin specialists, and industrial IoT consultants.



Smart industry control concept | Adobe Stock

### Demand for Highly Skilled Workers Upskilling and Reskilling

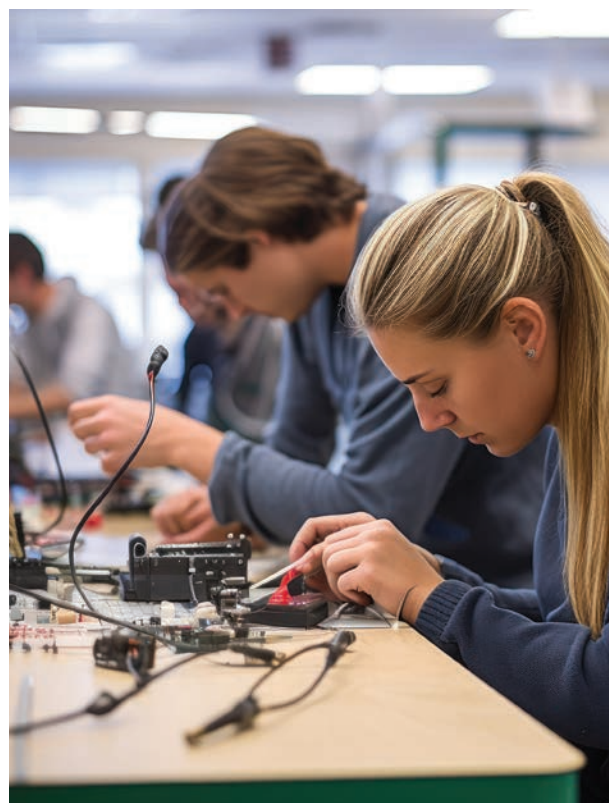
- As manufacturing becomes more technologically advanced, there will be a greater demand for workers with specialized skills. This will necessitate upskilling and reskilling programs to prepare the existing workforce for new roles in areas like automation, AI, and advanced manufacturing processes.

### STEM Focus

- Emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education will grow, creating a pipeline of skilled workers equipped to handle the complexities of modern manufacturing.

### Enhanced Productivity and Efficiency Automation

- Automation and robotics will handle repetitive and hazardous tasks, leading to higher productivity and efficiency. While this may reduce the number of traditional manufacturing jobs, it will also create opportunities in the design, programming, and maintenance of automated systems.



Students working in microchips design and electronics development lab | Adobe Stock

### Quality Control and Optimization

- Innovations such as machine learning and real-time data analytics will improve quality control and operational efficiency, leading to jobs in these specialized areas.

### Growth in Supportive Roles

#### Technical Support

- As factories become more advanced, there will be a growing need for technical support roles, including IT support, systems integration specialists, and cybersecurity experts to protect manufacturing networks.

### Training and Development

- Increased focus on continuous learning and professional development will create jobs in training and workforce development, ensuring employees are equipped to adapt to new technologies.

### Expansion of Niche Markets

#### Customization and Personalization

- The ability to produce customized and personalized products through technologies like 3D printing will open up niche markets. This will create jobs in design, customization, and small-batch production.

#### Sustainability

- Sustainable manufacturing practices will generate roles focused on environmental engineering, sustainable product design, and compliance with environmental regulations.

### Geographic Redistribution of Jobs

#### Emerging Markets

- As emerging markets grow and manufacturing focus shifts towards regions like Africa and India, job creation will follow, boosting local economies and providing employment opportunities in these areas.

Text Sources: Central New York Business Journal; Deloitte; Digi Web Global; TA Staffing

### Local Production

- Advances in localized and small-scale manufacturing (e.g., micro-factories, decentralized production) will create jobs closer to consumer bases, reducing reliance on large, centralized factories.

### Job Evolution and New Responsibilities

#### Hybrid Roles

- Traditional manufacturing roles will evolve into hybrid positions that combine manual skills with digital proficiency. For example, a maintenance worker might need to understand both mechanical systems and digital diagnostics.

#### Interdisciplinary Expertise

- The convergence of manufacturing with other fields such as biotechnology, nanotechnology, and materials science will create interdisciplinary roles requiring a broad range of expertise.

Innovation in manufacturing will drive the creation of new job categories, demand for highly skilled workers, and growth in supportive and niche roles. While some traditional jobs may decline due to automation, the overall impact will be a more dynamic and diversified job market. By focusing on upskilling, continuous learning, and embracing new technologies, Hendersonville's manufacturing sector can ensure a thriving workforce equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Advanced manufacturing program | Blue Ridge Community College (right)





# Recommendations

Informed by the market analysis and industry expertise, there are several key economic development recommendations for Hendersonville to implement over the life of the Gen H Plan. These recommendations are organized in the ED Plan to coordinate with and contribute to themes in the Gen H Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Master Plan.



Pop-up coffee shop | AB Franklin Interiors



Downtown square | Eater Atlanta

# Authentic Community Character

## CATALYZE DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT WITH CHARACTER DISTRICTS & OTHER KEY NODES AND COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Catalyzing development in new or underutilized downtown districts requires a strategic and multifaceted approach that leverages the district's assets, addresses challenges, and fosters collaboration among stakeholders. Primary strategies include:

### Invest in Infrastructure & Amenities

- Invest in infrastructure improvements, such as streetscape enhancements, pedestrian-friendly features, public transportation access, and parking facilities, to enhance downtown's attractiveness and accessibility.
- Provide amenities such as parks, plazas, public art, and recreational facilities to create inviting public spaces for residents and visitors.

### Support Mixed-Use Development

- Encourage mixed-use development that combines residential, commercial, office, and recreational uses within the downtown district.
- Mixed-use projects can create a vibrant and diverse urban environment, support round-the-clock activity, and generate economic vitality

### Provide Incentives & Support

- Offer financial incentives, tax credits, grants, or low-interest loans to incentivize private investment and development in the downtown district.
- Provide technical assistance, planning support, and streamlined permitting processes to help developers navigate regulatory requirements and expedite project approvals.

### Facilitate Adaptive Reuse & Redevelopment

- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings and underutilized properties within the downtown district.
- Provide assistance with building renovations, historic preservation efforts, and brownfield\* redevelopment to repurpose vacant or obsolete structures for new uses.

### Promote Entrepreneurship & Small Business Development

- Foster a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and small business development within the downtown district. Offer resources, mentorship programs, incubator spaces, and access to capital to help startups and local businesses thrive.

\*A brownfield is a tract of land that has been developed for industrial purposes, polluted, and then abandoned| Source: Merriam-Webster

### Cultivate a Unique Identity & Sense of Place

- Showcase the distinct character, history, and cultural heritage of the downtown district to differentiate it from other areas.
- Support local arts, culture, and creative industries through events, festivals, public art installations, and cultural programming that celebrate the community's identity and foster a sense of pride among residents.



Adaptive reuse | Gensler, Jason O'Rear

### Forge Public-Private Partnerships

- Collaborate with public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders to leverage resources, expertise, and networks for downtown revitalization efforts.
- Form partnerships to pursue joint projects, pool funding, and coordinate initiatives that align with the shared goals and priorities for the district.

The Gen H Plan and its recommendations cover all of these strategies through various projects, policies, and programs. Incentives, district policy programs, and other retail-focused strategies are detailed throughout this economic development report.



Downtown main street | Audrey Kletscher Helbling

## EXPAND CURRENT DISTRICTS' FOOTPRINT

The municipal service district tool, provided for by the Municipal Service District Act implements Section 2(4) of Article 5 of the North Carolina Constitution, which authorizes a local government to define special areas (districts) in order to assess additional ad valorem property taxes on properties located within the districts to fund projects and services in the districts.

Specifically, the Municipal Service District Act allows North Carolina municipalities to establish special taxing districts to fund, among a handful of other services or functions, downtown revitalization projects.

In Hendersonville, the Hendersonville Main Street Municipal Service District and 7th Avenue Municipal Service District generate funds for various Main Street programs and activities.

Consider using this tool to expand existing districts and create new ones downtown and throughout

Hendersonville. Property owner support and buy-in is critical, and engagement should be prioritized.

Commercial areas beyond the city's downtown area may qualify for a new municipal service district if one or more of the following conditions are met, according to G.S. 160A-536:

- It is the central business district of the city.
- It consists primarily of existing or redeveloping concentrations of industrial, retail, wholesale, office, or notable employment generating uses, or any combination of these uses.
- It is located in or along a major transportation corridor and excludes any residential parcels that are not, at their closest point, within 150 feet of the major transportation corridor right-of-way or any non residentially zoned parcels that are not, at their closest point, within 1,500 feet of the major transportation corridor right-of-way.

- It has as its center and focus a major concentration of public or institutional uses, such as airports, seaports, colleges or universities, hospitals and health care facilities, or governmental facilities.

## PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR ACTIVATION & REDEVELOPMENT OF UPPER FLOORS IN DOWNTOWN FOR RESIDENTIAL OR MICRO-COMMERCIAL USES

Having people living in downtown areas can lead to increased economic activity. Residents become customers for local businesses, supporting restaurants, shops, and cultural venues, which, in turn, can attract more businesses and investment to the area, and a well-populated downtown area with residential buildings on upper floors tends to be safer, particularly during evenings and weekends when office buildings may be empty.

More residents mean increased "eyes on the street," which can deter criminal activity and promote a

sense of community and security. Concentrating housing in the downtown core makes it more feasible for residents to rely on public transportation and walk or bike to work, services, and amenities. This can reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and the demand for parking spaces.

Many downtowns feature historic buildings with unique architectural value. Converting upper floors of these buildings into housing can help preserve their character and history while giving them new life and purpose.

However, property owners don't take action on these upper floor revitalization projects because the cost of rehabilitation, especially in a historic building, is far greater than the perceived return on investment via rent of residential units. Therefore, municipalities often incentivize this type of development if it's a targeted priority with grants.

## EXAMPLES IN PEER CITIES

### Biloxi, MS

- The City of Biloxi, MS, in partnership with Biloxi Main Street, implemented a Downtown Housing Incentive Program, offering a \$25,000 per-unit grant to incentivize market-rate residential units in a very targeted area of their downtown.

### Beloit, WI

- The Downtown Beloit Association in Beloit, WI, implemented a Downtown Upper Floor Housing Grant Program designed to promote the continued use and maintenance of commercial and mixed-use buildings in the Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District by making funds available for creating upper floor housing in eligible structures as a means to preserve the historic culture of the community.

- Minimum total project estimate to be considered is \$20,000 per housing unit, and grants awarded are capped to 50% of total project cost not to exceed \$30,000 per housing unit.
- Eligible improvements include:
  - Upgrading electrical and plumbing systems
  - Reconstructing or adding bathrooms or kitchens
  - Upgrading or adding windows
  - Moving interior walls
  - Paint and trim-finished units
  - Installing flooring and/or carpet
  - Installing new doors
  - Plaster and dry-wall
  - Soft costs including architectural engineering, inspections and appraisals (up to 10% of project cost)
  - Finishing including wall and floor treatments

### Albemarle, NC

- The City of Albemarle, NC, amended their Downtown Catalyst Grant Program which traditionally offered façade grants, to include provisions and funds for building stabilization.
- The program offers individual grants within the Municipal Service District of up to \$50,000.
- Building stabilization is defined as structural alterations or adaptations to buildings, or building system repair or replacement, that are undertaken as part of the process of rehabilitating, preserving, or restoring existing structures for business purposes.
- The program is funded by the City of Albemarle, Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation, and Uwharrie Bank.



Mixed-use buildings in a downtown | Visit Beloit

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## Satisfying Work Opportunities

### ACTIVELY ENGAGE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT & POLICY DECISIONS

Property owner engagement and interest is critical to revitalization success in both downtown and commercial districts. Often though, barriers such as fragmented ownership, diverse interests, changing financial positions and financial constraints, and lack of alignment with community goals can lead to a lack of investment and participation in revitalization goals.

Regular (quarterly) meetings with property owners, both in-person and virtual, is a great way to increase engagement, understand property owner perspective, and share exciting news, opportunities, and improvements with this important stakeholder group.

Letter campaigns have proven to be effective to engage absentee owners, and consistent communication is key to long-term success.

Agenda items for these property owner meetings could include:

- Review of area goals and vision
- Sharing incentive opportunities
- Development process feedback
- Understanding existing property owner barriers
- Identification of opportunities for collaboration
- Thought leadership (real estate trends and successes)

### ENCOURAGE PROPERTY OWNERS TO RE-IMAGINE THEIR REAL ESTATE

Modern retailers are increasingly seeking smaller brick-and-mortar spaces in downtown areas due to several factors:

### Changing Consumer Behavior

- With the rise of e-commerce and changing consumer preferences, the traditional large-format retail store model is becoming less relevant. Consumers are now looking for convenience, unique experiences, and curated selections, which can often be better provided by smaller, more specialized stores.

### Urbanization Trends

- Many cities are experiencing a resurgence in downtown living, with more people choosing to live and work in downtown areas. Smaller retail spaces in these downtown cores can tap into the dense population and foot traffic, providing convenience for local residents and workers.

### Rising Real Estate Costs

- Downtown real estate tends to be more expensive, and retailers are increasingly looking for ways to optimize

their use of space to control costs. Smaller stores allow retailers to maximize the value of their real estate investments while still maintaining a presence in desirable locations.

### Focus on Experience

- Modern retailers understand the importance of providing unique and memorable experiences to attract customers. Smaller stores allow for more intimate and curated shopping environments where retailers can create personalized experiences and engage directly with customers.

### Flexibility and Agility

- In today's fast-paced retail environment, agility is key. Smaller stores are nimbler and more adaptable, allowing retailers to respond quickly to changing market trends, experiment with new concepts, and adjust their offerings based on customer feedback.

### Omni-Channel Integration

- Retailers are increasingly adopting omni-channel strategies, where the online and offline shopping experiences are seamlessly integrated. Smaller brick-and-mortar spaces can serve as touchpoints for omni-channel initiatives, such as click-and-collect services, returns, and experiential events.

### Sustainability Considerations

- Smaller stores typically have a smaller environmental footprint compared to large-format stores, aligning with growing consumer demand for sustainable and eco-friendly businesses.

The following graphics illustrate how a demising wall can be used to modify existing building footprints in a downtown. Two scenarios are listed.

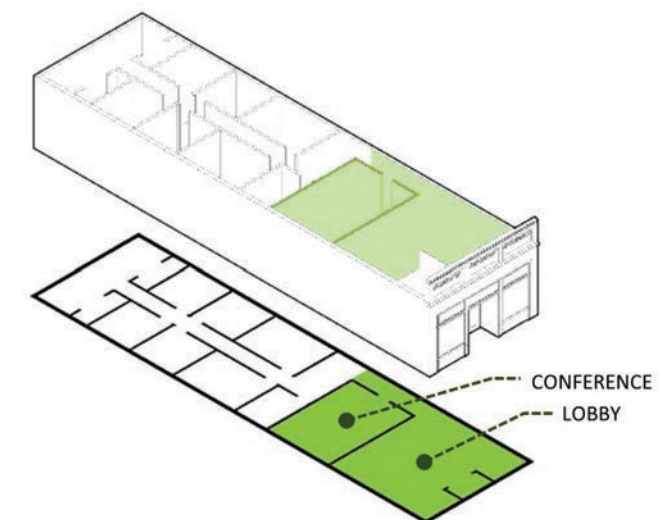
Scenario 1 is an existing office building that occupies the entire building footprint including the storefront. By modifying the underutilized lobby and conference room area with a demising wall, an additional small footprint retail space is created. This additional unit provides revenue for the property owner, offers much needed retail space, and activates the storefront and sidewalk downtown.

Scenario 2 illustrates how a large, vacant building can be modified into a small storefront unit by adding a demising wall. This provides a more affordable space along the storefront and activates a vacant building. This approach allows property owners to phase renovations rather than renovating the entire building at once.

Downtown property owners should be encouraged to consider this type of building re-imagining through property owner meetings, case studies, and technical assistance grants for architecture plans.

### Scenario 1 | Original Layout:

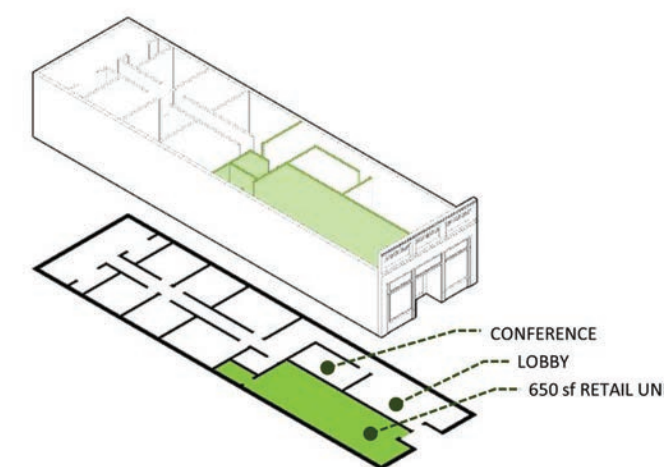
A typical downtown office space with an underutilized lobby area and conference room provides an opportunity to add additional retail space.



Scenario 1, Original Layout | Retail Strategies

### Scenario 1 | Modified Layout:

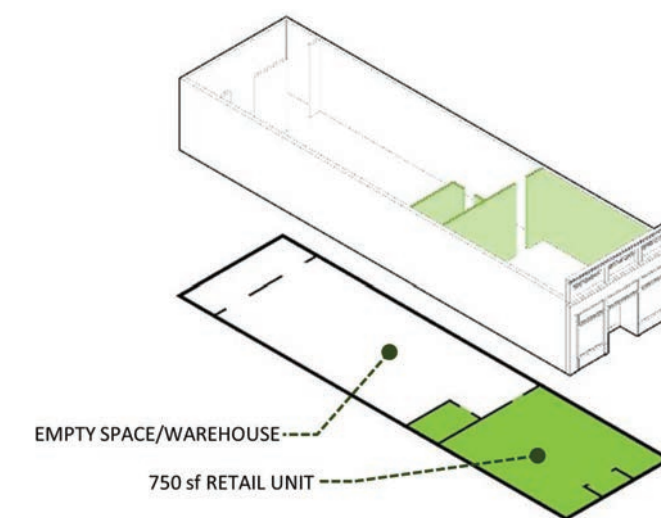
Adding a demising wall to reduce the size of the lobby and conference room adds an additional retail space to the downtown and provides additional income for the property owner.



Scenario 1, Modified Layout | Retail Strategies

### Scenario 2 | Oversized Building:

An oversized (2,500+ sf) “shell” of a building which is too large for a start-up retail business. A smaller (<1,000 sf) retail space can be added along the storefront.



Scenario 2, Oversized Building | Retail Strategies

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# Case Study

## Starkville, MS

### HOTEL CHESTER

The Hotel Chester, a boutique hotel located in downtown Starkville, Mississippi, saw a decline in the need of meeting and event space as a convention center opened locally. The configuration of the property included boutique hotel rooms on upper floors with meeting and event space on the ground floor. The property is located at a key corner and amasses nearly half a block in this rural downtown. The owners of the Hotel Chester, through conversations with the local economic development organization, decided to subdivide the large swath of event space on the ground floor and turn it into 3 retail spaces – each approximately 1,500 square feet.

This transformation created three new desperately needed commercial spaces, and the revenue gained from steady rental income for the Hotel Chester outpaced the event space revenue they were previously accumulating. This provided a win-win solution for the downtown and property owner and has now become a key location for commerce in this growing downtown.



Hotel Chester | Trip Advisor



Hotel Chester Beer Garden | The Clio

## GROWING A NEW GENERATION OF ENTREPRENEURS

Downtowns serve as a great “nest” for entrepreneurs to test concepts and grow over time. A common question for many communities is how to identify entrepreneurs and foster their growth? A short-term strategy is to tap into the existing entrepreneurs in the community - citizens who successfully took a risk and opened a new downtown business. These types of people are often connected with other like-minded individuals in the community. They likely know others who are operating an at-home business, striving to become a start-up, exploring options for brick-and-mortar locations.

### Build a List of Entrepreneurs

- Engage with existing business owners, add quality makers and vendors from markets and festivals, and partner with Blue Ridge Community College Small Business and Technology Development Center to craft a list of budding entrepreneurs.

### Host Entrepreneur Meet-Ups

- These casual gatherings of community members considering entrepreneurship can include programming such as thought leadership and trends, peer-to-peer success stories, maker-focused sessions and field trips, and real estate open house events.
- This programming can be incorporated into the Downtown Hendersonville Opportunity Fund.



Entrepreneur meet-up at a brewery | Giggster

### Encourage Pop-Up and Micro-Retail

In Hendersonville, there are two particular opportunities for pop-ups and micro-retail.

#### Pop-ups in Downtown Vacancies

- Pop-ups typically work by leasing or renting vacant spaces for a short period, ranging from a few days to several months. The organizers transform these spaces into temporary retail stores, art galleries, restaurants, or event venues. They may negotiate favorable terms with property owners, as landlords benefit from temporary income and potential long-term tenants attracted by the revitalized area.
- Successful pop-ups carefully plan their marketing strategies to attract customers and create a sense of urgency around their offerings. This may involve social media promotion, collaborations with local influencers, or partnerships with neighboring businesses.

- Additionally, creating a unique and immersive experience can differentiate a pop-up from traditional retail or entertainment options, encouraging visitors to return and spread the word.
- Supporting property owners with vacant properties by organizing a pop-up program can encourage them to clean-up buildings, receive some type of rent revenue, and contribute to the overall vitality of downtown, leading to a more permanent tenant in the future.



Pop-up coffee shop | Online Athens



### Micro-Retail along the Ecusta Trail

- Micro retail refers to small-scale commercial spaces that cater to specific niche markets or serve localized needs within a community. These spaces are typically much smaller than traditional retail stores, often occupying less than 1,000 square feet. Micro retail can include pop-up shops, food carts, kiosks, or tiny storefronts.
- Micro-retail structures can be executed in the form of built-out shipping containers, sheds, prefabricated modular buildings, or any other structure imagined. Key components include electricity and access to water for restaurant concepts. The structures would be available to rent for short-term or peak seasons and tenants would be required to place a uniformed sign at the location.

- Potential pop-up uses along the trail are:
  - Bike repair shop
  - Juice/smoothie bar
  - Coffee shop
  - Sandwich shop/deli
  - Craft beer bar
  - Ice cream/dessert shop
  - Local artisan market
  - Farmers' market stand
  - Outdoor yoga
  - Environmental education center
- Ultimately, the key to a successful pop-up retail or restaurant along a popular trail is to align with the outdoor lifestyle and interests of trail users while offering convenience, quality, and an authentic connection to the local community and environment.



Micro-retail | The Bodegas at Midtown, Auburn, AL



Bicycle pop-up shop along greenway | Garfield Township, MI

## ESTABLISH VACANT PROPERTY PROGRAM

Vacant Property Registry Ordinances (VPRO) implemented in numerous cities and towns across the country, require that owners of vacant commercial properties submit information to a registry and pay an annual fee for each year that the property remains vacant. In so doing, the municipality is able to track and monitor vacant properties, establish a dialogue with property owners to understand the nature of the vacancy, and develop strategies to help the owner either tenant the space, temporarily activate it, or else adhere to minimum standards for the appearance and maintenance of the property while vacant.

In North Carolina, a number of municipalities are considering or implementing this type of policy. Some examples include:

### Charlotte, NC

- Charlotte implemented a vacant property registration program aimed at monitoring and maintaining vacant properties. The program requires property owners to register vacant properties with the City and pay a registration fee. The City uses the registry to identify and address issues related to vacant properties, such as blight and safety hazards.

### Durham, NC

- Durham has also implemented a vacant property registration program to address blight and neighborhood deterioration. Property owners are required to register vacant properties with the City and pay a registration fee. The program aims to identify and monitor vacant properties, ensure compliance with property maintenance standards, and facilitate communication between property owners and the City.

### Winston-Salem, NC

- Winston-Salem has explored the idea of implementing a vacant property registry ordinance as part of its efforts to address blight and vacant properties. While the City has not yet implemented a formal registry program, it has considered various strategies to address vacant properties, including increased code enforcement efforts and partnerships with community organizations.

Other cities in North Carolina, such as Kings Mountain, Greensboro, Raleigh, and Fayetteville, have also considered or implemented vacant property registration programs or similar initiatives as part of their efforts to address blight, property maintenance issues, and neighborhood revitalization.

It is important; however, to allow property owners to request a variance through the VPRO process if they are actively working with an architect or contractor or working through legal processes such as change of ownership or estate issues. In these cases, a variance could be granted for a short period of time if there is a written plan on file with the City as well as a hard stop date for re-evaluation. During this variance period, the property owner should be asked to work with the City and other community partners to temporarily activate the storefront with local art, storytelling posters, or some type of visually enhanced improvement.

## REDEVELOPMENT OF UNDERUTILIZED SHOPPING CENTERS AND MALLS

Considering the trends provided in the opening of this report, it's important to think about how existing shopping centers and malls can be redeveloped to more modern day uses now and in the future. The Gen H Plan identifies design and policy applications that will help transform commercial centers over time into more dense, economic drivers providing for not only commerce opportunities, but also residential and recreational.

In decades past, shopping centers and malls centered around a retail anchor – generally a department store or some other large footprint that acted as a destination and draw for consumers. Today, developers and real estate professionals are considering “green space” as the new anchor for commercial real estate developments.

Consumers are changing the way they purchase items. When anything can arrive at a consumer's doorstep in two days, they have more choices than ever and are proving that if they choose to step into a brick-and-mortar shopping space, they crave an experience, not just a transaction. Progressive real estate developers are now prioritizing square footage for green space and applying the same placemaking principles to commercial shopping centers and malls that we've seen in downtowns for decades, such as murals, art installations, programming and events, outdoor dining, shared gathering space, beautiful landscaping, ornamental light fixtures with banners, and wayfinding signage.

Ultimately, these centers are privately owned, and sometimes with multiple owners, so leading conversations with property owners with the vision is critical. Adding residential developments to underutilized centers is often the first step, as there

is immediate return on investment. Next comes rethinking the existing footprint of commercial real estate, either recruiting new tenants that support residents, or taking down the real estate and adding new construction. As one can imagine, the pro forma may not “pencil out” for the latter, which could require assistance from the municipality.

Supporting developers by providing infrastructure improvements to roads, ingress and egress, and utilities is a pragmatic way the municipality can be involved.

Additionally, for projects that personify the vision in this plan, gap finance grants or an advance on projected increases of sales and property tax revenue should be considered.

It's likely that the realization of this revitalization may not happen for quite some time, but having conversations with property owners early allows them to be mindful of long-term lease renewals from large tenants, and an understanding of what the municipality is willing to do to assist may make the difference.



Redevelopment of old mill to have mixed-use development and a food hall | Eater

