

TENTATIVE AGENDA AND MEETING NOTICE

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 5:30 PM



Watauga County Administration Building,
Commissioners' Board Room

TIME	#	TOPIC	PRESENTER	PAGE
5:30	1	Call Regular Meeting to Order		
	2	Approval of Minutes		3
		• December 16, 2025, Regular Meeting		
		• December 16, 2025, Closed Session		
	3	Approval of the January 13, 2026, Agenda		13
5:35	4	Public Comment	Chairman Braxton Eggers	14
		• Limited to a maximum of one hour, with time adjusted based on the number of speakers.		
5:40	5	Public Hearing to Allow Citizen Comment on the Watauga County Comprehensive Land Use Plan	Mr. Deron Geouque	15
5:45	6	Public Hearing to Allow Citizen Comment on Watauga County's Ambulance Franchise Agreement with Appalachian Regional Healthcare System	Mr. Deron Geouque	117
5:50	7	Project on Aging Matters	Mrs. Angie Boitnotte	
	A.	Request for Acceptance of FY 2026 Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) Grant/Contract		124
	B.	FY 26 Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) Grant/Contract		130
5:55	8	Parks and Recreation Matters	Mrs. Keron Poteat and Mrs. Joy James	
	A.	Approval to Submit PARTF Helene Recovery Fund Grant		137
	B.	Presentation of Watauga County Outdoor Spaces Report		184
6:00	9	Approval to Apply for the North Carolina Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure (HRRI) Grant Program	Mr. Chris Marriott	196
6:05	10	Tax Matters	Mr. Tyler Rash	
	A.	Monthly Collections Report		225
	B.	Refunds and Releases		227
6:10	11	Miscellaneous Administrative Matters	Mr. Deron Geouque	
	A.	Change Order Request #3 for Howard Knob Park		244
	B.	Furniture Bid Award for EMS Facility		247
	C.	State Employees' Credit Union ATM Lease		252
	D.	Proposed Dates for Annual Pre-Budget Retreat		261
	E.	Proposed Dates for Budget Work Sessions		264
	F.	Boards and Commissions		265

TIME	#	TOPIC	PRESENTER	PAGE
6:15	12	Commissioners' Comments	Chairman Braxton Eggers	270
6:20	13	Break		270
6:25	14	Closed Session		270
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of Real Property per G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5) • Attorney-Client Matters per G. S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Including Case No. 5:25-cv-157, <i>Watauga County Voting Rights Task Force v. Watauga County Board of Elections</i> 		
6:30	15	Adjourn		

A G E N D A I T E M 2 :

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- December 16, 2025, Regular Meeting
- December 16, 2025, Closed Session

MEETING MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Commissioners' Board Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building in Boone, North Carolina.

1. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Eggers called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The following were present:

PRESENT: Braxton Eggers, Chairman
Todd Castle, Vice-Chairman
Emily Greene, Commissioner
Tim Hodges, Commissioner
Ronnie Marsh, Commissioner
Nathan Miller, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Katie Hancock, Clerk to the Board

Vice-Chairman Castle offered the prayer and Commissioner Greene led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Additionally, Chairman Eggers congratulated the Watauga High School football team, noting that the County is now the “Home of the 6A State Champions.”

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Eggers presented the December 2, 2025, regular and closed session meeting minutes.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the December 2, 2025, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the December 2, 2025, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Eggers called for additions or corrections to the December 16, 2025, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested the following additions:

- Agenda Item 9B1: Consideration of Letter of Support for Cooperative Extension
- Closed Session Item: Personnel Matters pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6)

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to approve the December 16, 2025, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

- **Misty Mayfield**, a resident of Vilas, stated that she has lived in Watauga County for 26 years. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and noted that she and others have attended meetings for several months in support of fair electoral maps. Ms. Mayfield expressed concern that voting maps had been altered or manipulated and that the results of a referendum were disregarded. She stated that 71% of Watauga County voters should not be ignored and indicated that she and others would continue to attend meetings to voice these concerns.
- **Maria Stegall** spoke regarding a proposed development across from Food Lion on U.S. 421. She expressed concern about the use and placement of septic systems for a 48-unit apartment project, particularly regarding potential impacts to adjoining properties. Ms. Stegall also questioned whether adequate planning and traffic considerations were being addressed and expressed concern about whether the project would provide local economic benefits.

[Clerk's Note: The following public comments were received after Commissioners' Comments.]

- **Heather Reeves**, a Boone resident, spoke regarding a Landmark Properties development. She expressed concern about the scale of the project, the use of septic systems and wells, and potential impacts to water resources, wildlife, surrounding neighborhoods, and public services. Ms. Reeves requested a thorough review of environmental and development plans and provided a handout to the Board.
- **Robert Rochell** expressed concern regarding the proposed development and questioned whether Wild Cherry Lane would be connected to the project. He stated that such a connection could increase traffic on Browns Chapel Road and create additional issues for the area.

- The Board received a public comment from **Jill Holmes**, a resident of Tom Shook Road, via email, as she was unable to attend the meeting. **Chairman Eggers read the comment aloud**. In her correspondence, Ms. Holmes requested that no action be taken regarding the proposed annexation of property into the Valle Crucis Planning Area until all affected property owners are notified and given an opportunity to express questions and concerns to the Valle Crucis Community Council, the Valle Crucis Planning Board, and the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.

5. 2022 WRDG GRANT BUDGET AMENDMENT – BOONE GORGE PARK

Wendy Patoprsty, Blue Ridge Conservancy, requested a budget amendment to the 2022 WRDG grant for Boone Gorge Park in the Middle Fork Greenway project. The \$25,000 originally allocated for Construction Administration (CEI) would be reallocated to construction to maximize grant use. The project includes a pavilion, sculpture art walk, benches, interpretive signage, wetlands, stream stabilization, riparian buffers, bridges, a 10-foot-wide asphalt loop trail, and a boardwalk, with a natural surface trail to be developed separately.

Ms. Patoprsty noted that approximately two miles of the Greenway will be under construction next year. Additionally, she stated that construction is currently on hold due to wet conditions, bridges are on order, and the pavilion is provided at no cost. She explained that the interpretive signage will provide information on archaeology, local history, and environmental features.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to authorize the County Manager to submit the attached letter to the Division of Water Resources requesting the budget amendment.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

6. GENERATOR REPLACEMENT FOR MEDIC BASE 3

Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, presented a request to replace the generator at Medic Base 3 following a comprehensive review of all medic bases after the transition of Emergency Medical Services from Watauga Medics, Inc. to the County. The assessment determined that the existing generator requires extensive repairs, and staff recommended replacement with Option 4 from Jared Munday Electric, Inc., at a cost of \$26,193.13, noting that repairing the current unit would be substantially more expensive. The replacement would convert the generator to diesel.

In response to questions, staff explained that Bases 1 and 2 currently lose power during outages, whereas the new generator at Base 3 would ensure uninterrupted service.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to authorize the replacement of the Base 3 generator using Option 4 from Jared Munday Electric, Inc., in the amount of \$26,193.13.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

7. PLANNING AND INSPECTION MATTERS

A. Valle Crucis Planning Area - Annexation

Jason Walker, Planning and Inspections Director, presented a request to add ten parcels to the Valle Crucis Planning Area, established under the County's Community Planning Guidelines. The petition received consent from the Valle Crucis Community Council at their November 20, 2025 meeting and met the requirement of support from at least 33% of affected property owners. Of the ten parcels, nine owners consented, while one property owner expressed a desire not to be included.

Chairman Eggers expressed concern about including a property owner without their consent. Commissioner Marsh noted the need for additional conversations with property owners. Mr. Walker agreed to schedule a meeting with the Valle Crucis Community Council and affected property owners, to be attended by Chairman Eggers and Vice-Chairman Castle, to address concerns.

The Board agreed to table the item for further discussion; no motion or vote was required.

B. Planning and Development Ordinance Changes

Mr. Walker presented proposed updates to Watauga County's development ordinances, including Soil Erosion, Flood Damage Prevention, and Watershed Protection, as well as a new Chapter 24 – Administration to clarify development permit procedures. The Planning Board and staff reviewed the ordinances and approved the proposed amendments and a Statement of Plan Consistency on November 17, 2025. A formal public hearing and adoption of the plan-consistency statement are required before final action.

Mr. Walker noted that some changes are mandated by the state, while others consolidate procedures, clarify language, and reorganize information to improve clarity and usability. Commissioner Marsh requested additional time to review the amendments and present questions. County Manager Geouque suggested the Board consider the item during the annual retreat at the end of February to allow dialogue with staff.

The Board agreed to table the item for further discussion at the annual retreat; no motion or vote was required.

C. Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Mr. Walker presented the updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which was prepared with assistance from the High Country Council of Governments and in coordination with the Planning Board. Public surveys and a community meeting were conducted to gather resident input and identify priorities. The draft plan was provided for Board review, and staff noted that adoption would require a formal public hearing with notice published in accordance with state law.

Mr. Walker explained that the plan updates the original Citizen Plan from 2008–2010 with new census data, projections, and minor corrections, while maintaining the overall structure and content of the previous plan.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to set a public hearing for January 13th for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

8. TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Mr. Tyler Rash, Tax Administrator, presented the November 2025 Monthly Collections Report. Copies are attached for reference (see *Attachment A*).

The report was presented for informational purposes only, and no Board action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Rash also presented the November 2025 Refunds and Releases Report for Board approval. Copies are attached for reference (see *Attachment B*).

Chairman Eggers noted that certain items repeatedly appear on the report and suggested exploring coding or software changes to prevent recurring issues. Mr. Rash indicated that similar issues have occurred in other counties, and County Manager Geouque asked whether the reports are proofed before issuance. Chairman Eggers recommended reviewing software options moving forward.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to accept the November 2025 Refunds and Releases Report.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

9. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Amendment to Audit Contract

The County's auditors requested approval of an amendment to the FY 2025 audit contract due to the delayed release of the 2025 OMB Compliance Supplement. The amendment provides additional time and a modest contract adjustment to complete required Single Audit compliance testing. County Manager Geouque noted that the delay was beyond the control of both the County and the auditors, likely resulting from the federal government shutdown. Commissioner Marsh inquired whether the audit would be completed by the extended deadline, and County Manager Geouque confirmed it would.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to authorize the amendment to the FY 2025 audit contract.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

B. Franchise Request from Appalachian Regional Healthcare System

Staff presented a request from Appalachian Regional Healthcare System (ARHS) for a one-year ambulance franchise agreement to provide patient transport services. Watauga County Emergency Services would retain first right of refusal for all interfacility transports, with exceptions for transports originating outside of the County and for critical-care transports, such as ventilator or IABP support, consistent with NCOEMS definitions of Specialty Care. Staff noted that these exceptions would not impact the County system and could relieve EMS crews from long-duration transports. The proposed franchise term is one year to allow evaluation of impacts on County EMS.

Staff also requested temporary authorization for ARHS to provide two services currently unavailable to Watauga County EMS due to legal or regulatory restrictions: (1) transports from outside the County to Watauga Medical Center, and (2) transports from Watauga Medical Center to a higher level of care under NCAC 10A 13P for Specialty Care Transport. This temporary authorization would be effective December 16, 2025, for 60 days while the franchise application is reviewed and would terminate immediately if the franchise is denied.

Staff noted that a public hearing is required for the franchise agreement, that the hospital requested "non-profit" be added to its name in the agreement, and that the County Attorney needs to review and approve any changes.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to schedule a public hearing for January 13, 2026, to receive public comment on the proposed one-year franchise agreement, contingent upon County Attorney changes.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to authorize temporary 60-day approval, effective December 16, 2025, pending County Attorney review, for ARHS to provide specialty-care and out-of-county patient transports while the franchise application is under review, with the authorization terminating immediately if the franchise is denied.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

B1. Letter of Support for Cooperative Extension

Staff presented a request to authorize execution of a letter of support for Watauga County Cooperative Extension's *Shared Use Equipment for Continued Recovery from Tropical Storm Helene* project. The project provides critical equipment to farmers across multiple counties to support ongoing recovery efforts and improve resilience to future extreme weather events. Watauga County will serve as fiscal agent for the project, providing a financial match and in-kind support, including employee time and county property for equipment storage.

Staff noted that a certified copy of the minutes from the approval to serve as fiscal agent and provide the \$5,000 match will be submitted with the letter. Staff also clarified that, as a State agency project, the shared equipment will be available for use by surrounding counties.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to authorize execution of the attached letter of support for Cooperative Extension.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque informed the Board that Rick Mattar, a long-time At-Large member of the Watauga County Planning Board, has submitted his letter of resignation. He noted that Mr. Mattar has been a valued member of the Planning Board and expressed regret at his departure.

January 6, 2026 Board Meeting

Mr. Geouque recommended canceling the January 6, 2026 Board of Commissioners meeting due to the holiday schedule and rescheduling the January 20, 2026 meeting to January 13, 2026. This change would result in a single meeting for the month of January.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to cancel the January 6, 2026 meeting and reschedule the January 20, 2026 meeting to January 13, 2026.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- Vice-Chairman Castle commented on the rollout of new ambulances, noting the importance of cooperation rather than competition. He expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts of the hospital and staff and expressed hope that patient care will improve.
- **Commissioner Hodges** thanked Emergency Services Director Will Holt and staff for their efforts in making the ambulance rollout possible.
- **Commissioner Marsh** noted the extensive preparation involved in the rollout, highlighting the dedicated work of the Human Resources Department, and expressed appreciation for Watauga Medics Inc. Director Craig Sullivan's years of service. He hopes to see significant improvements as the program progresses.
- **Chairman Eggers** recognized the passing of Barbara Kinsey and asked that her family be kept in prayers. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, encouraged support for those in need, and expressed appreciation for the Board, County Manager, and citizens who enable effective decision-making.

11. CLOSED SESSION

At 6:25 PM, Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to enter Closed Session pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) to discuss matters protected by attorney-client privilege, including Case No. 5:25-cv-157; pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5) to consider matters related to the acquisition of real property; and pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss personnel matters.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

At 8:16 PM, Chairman Eggers, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to resume the open meeting.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

12. ADJOURN

At 8:17 PM, Chairman Eggers, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Aye - 5
Nay - 0

Braxton Eggers, Chairman

ATTEST: Katie Hancock, Clerk to the Board

DRAFT

A G E N D A I T E M 3 :

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 13, 2026, AGENDA

A G E N D A I T E M 4 :

PUBLIC COMMENT

Manager's Comments:

Public Comment is limited to a maximum of one hour, with time adjusted based on the number of speakers.

A G E N D A I T E M 5 :

**PUBLIC HEARING TO ALLOW CITIZEN COMMENT ON WATAUGA COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

Manager's Comments:

A public hearing has been scheduled to allow citizen comment on the Watauga County Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Planning Board recommends the proposed changes for the Board's consideration.

The High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) assisted Watauga County in updating the Citizen Plan. In coordination with the Planning Board, HCCOG conducted public surveys and held a community meeting to gather input and identify resident priorities and concerns.

Upon completion of the public hearing the Board may approve the changes as presented, request further action or information of the Planning Board, or schedule a joint work session with the Planning Board at the County's annual budget retreat.

Direction from the Board is requested.

2025 Watauga County Comprehensive Plan



Acknowledgments

Watauga County Comprehensive Plan

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

Braxton Eggers, Chairman
Todd Castle, Vice Chairman
Emily Greene
Tim Hodges
Ronnie Marsh

Watauga County Manager

Deron Geouque

Watauga County Planning and Inspections Department

Jason Walker
Jennifer Storie

Watauga County Planning Board

Joel Farthing
Savva Kostis
Richard Mattar
Seth Norris
Matt Vincent
Justin Warren
Neal Winebarger
Neil Hartley*
Diane Tilson*
Marsha Walpole*

*past members

Plan Developed with Assistance from High Country Council of Governments

Select Photographs By
High Country Council of Governments
Explore Boone



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Illustration 15 – Economic Gateways

Illustration 16 – Water and Sewer

Illustration 17 – Schools in Watauga County

Illustration 18 – Watauga Fire Districts and Stations

Illustration 19 – National Historic Sites and Districts

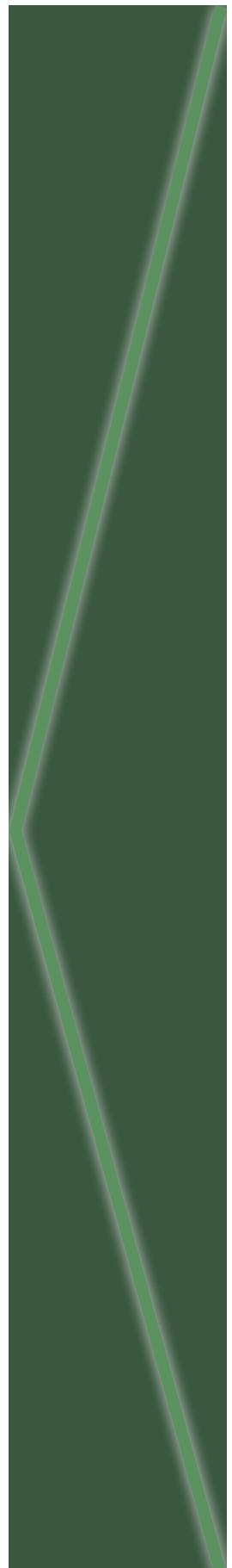
Illustration 20 – Parks and Recreation in Watauga County

Illustration 21 – Summary of Natural Limitations

Illustration 22 – Municipal Planning Jurisdictions

Illustration 23 – Community Planning Districts

Illustration 24 – Managing Growth in Watauga County



Preface

PREFACE

Human beings, the land on which we live, and our environment are undeniably interrelated. Sustaining an equitable balance in these relational elements is important for present and future generations.

Our individual and collective decisions and actions affect the quality of human life and the quality of our natural environment. By understanding these principles, we establish a common basis for working toward becoming a "sustainable community."

This document is a reflection of the Watauga community's concern for such principles. At the same time, this plan focuses on new issues that have emerged, such as "sustainability" and "green" issues, which are of great importance to the future of the Watauga community.



Sustainability Principles

This emphasis on sustainability and the efficient use of land and other natural resources is particularly relevant given the recent decline in our national and local economies. It is essential that the community acts to protect its vital economic and natural resources. Further, strategic community investments in capital improvements must be carefully weighed against the collective benefits and economic gain derived from such investments. This re-emphasis on sustainability points to the greater need to plan and prioritize to achieve strategic community goals and meet essential needs.

- ▼ A natural resource will only be available for a finite time if the depletion rate exceeds the replacement rate. Thus, unconstrained use of resources affects future generations.
- ▼ Human activity produces harmful substances, which must be mediated to maintain balance in the natural systems.
- ▼ Humans and other living creatures make up ecosystems, which are inter-dependent. Ecosystems are most stable when they include a diversity of species. Overuse and pollution of the natural environment has implications for maintaining the earth's biodiversity.
- ▼ Human needs have physical, economic, environmental, cultural, social and spiritual dimensions. They can be met equitably without compromising the physical environment. To achieve social stability and the cooperation required for large-scale changes related to the first three principles, we must work together to achieve greater fairness.

BEGINNING THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Watauga County Comprehensive Plan is an update of the “Citizens’ Plan for Watauga” adopted in 2008. During that process, the Watauga County Board of Commissioners named residents from each commission’s district and the County Planning Board to the Plan Oversight Group (POG).

The 2025 update utilized the sitting Watauga County Planning Board and the Watauga County Planning and Inspections Office. Meetings with area stakeholders were held as well as a stakeholder meeting to obtain information for the plan. A survey to gain citizen input was distributed from September 2024 through January 2025.

In addition to the stakeholder and citizen input, this update includes all current demographic and economic data, updated maps, and reevaluation of all recommendations from the old plan.

During the 2025 update of the plan, the Community has the same issues and concerns as in 2008, with a few shifts in priority.

Prominent Community Issues/Concerns in Watauga:

2008

1. Traffic congestion
2. Water availability
3. Protection of natural resources
4. Farmland/large tract preservation
5. Land use divisions that are appropriate
6. Preservation of unique community identities and mountain heritage
7. Economic development/employment/affordable housing
8. Emergency services keeping pace with growth
9. Educational opportunities
10. Widespread recreational opportunities

2025

1. Traffic congestion
2. Affordable Housing
3. Emergency services keeping pace with growth
4. Water availability
5. Economic development/employment
6. Widespread recreational opportunities
7. Protection of natural resources
8. Farmland/large tract preservation
9. Preservation of unique community identities and mountain heritage
10. Educational Opportunities

WATAUGA COUNTY

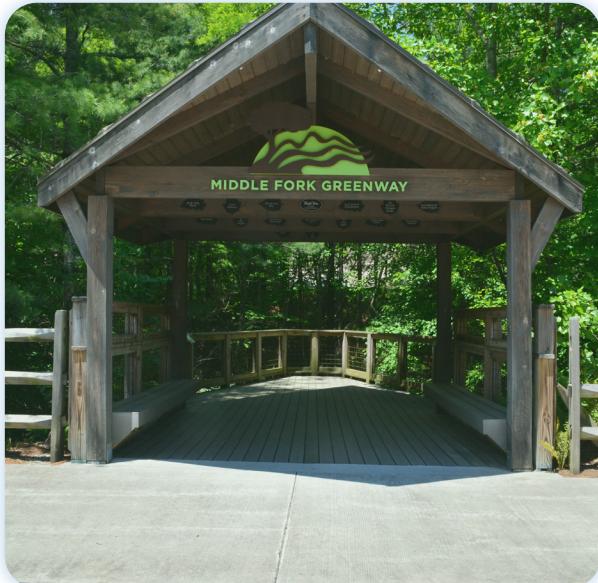
Watauga County is located in northwest North Carolina. Ashe, Avery, Caldwell and Wilkes counties in North Carolina and Johnson County in Tennessee bound the County. The County has a complex geology and falls within the Unaka Mountain Range and Blue Ridge Mountain Range. The County is the headwaters for four major river basins: Yadkin, New, Watauga and Catawba; all four flow in different directions.

The human history of the area of Watauga County starts with the Native Americans, probably several thousand years B.C. In later eras, the Cherokee, Catawba and perhaps Shawnee hunted, camped and had agricultural villages here. The name Watauga is probably of Cherokee origin.

A few people of European descent were here by 1730. Later, would-be settlers had no easy access from the great wagon road of the Shenandoah Valley. As early as 1760, Daniel Boone was one of the early "long hunters," who came here from the Yadkin River in the Piedmont.

In many ways, he was the original "tourist," visiting regularly, staying for a while, and then passing on to what became the states of Tennessee and Kentucky. Watauga County was created in 1849, with most of its territory derived from the large County of Wilkes. The first U.S. census for the County was in 1850, which shows the population to be small in number and dedicated largely to subsistence agriculture. Most of the County's public records were destroyed by General George Stoneman's raid through the County near the end of the Civil War in 1865 and again with the burning of the courthouse in 1872.

Today Watauga County is a home to Appalachian State University; it has a thriving tourist economy; and is well known for its expansive outdoor recreation opportunities.



Section 1 Demographics



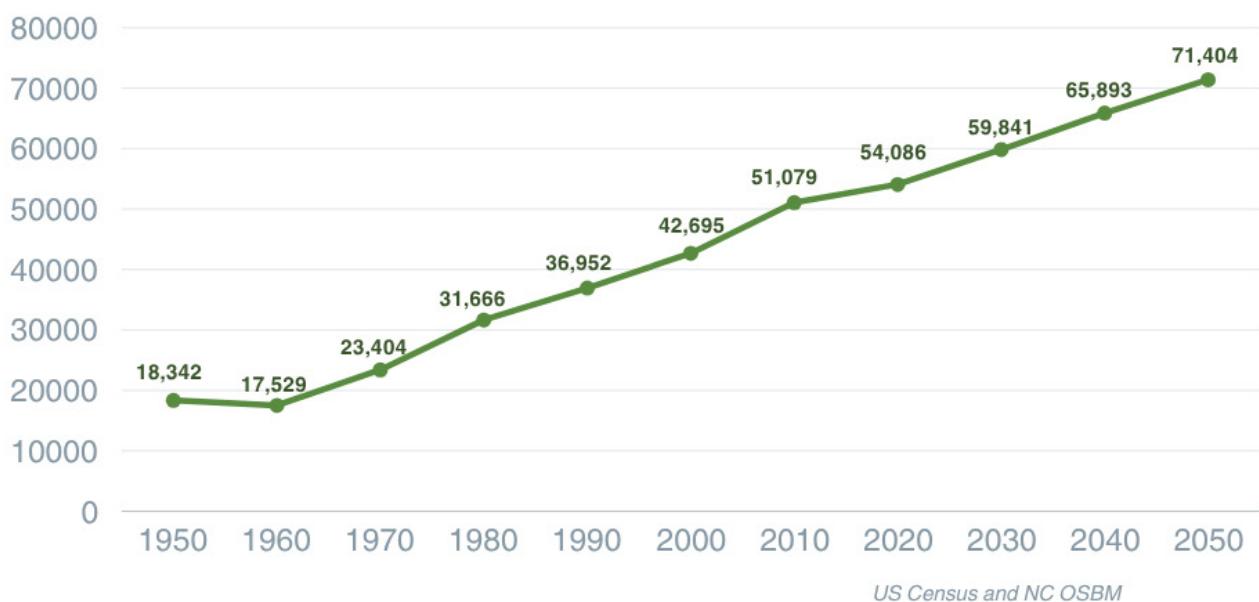
POPULATION TRENDS

Watauga County has experienced growth during every decade since 1960. Between 1970 and 2020, the population more than doubled from 23,404 to 54,086 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The increase from 2010 to 2020 was 5.9%, equaling 0.8 people moving into Watauga County every day throughout the ten-year period. The N.C. Office of State Budget and Management projects a population increase of more than 17,318 new residents by 2050.

Watauga County remains an increasingly popular location within North Carolina for first and second home buyers. The projections by the N.C. Office of State Budget and Management do not include the people who are second homeowners. Although these people are not counted in the census as residents of Watauga County, they will nonetheless, directly affect the County's capacity to manage growth and deliver essential services.

The projections for future population (Table 1) do not include planned increases in Appalachian State University's student population.

Table 1
Watauga County Population
1950-2050



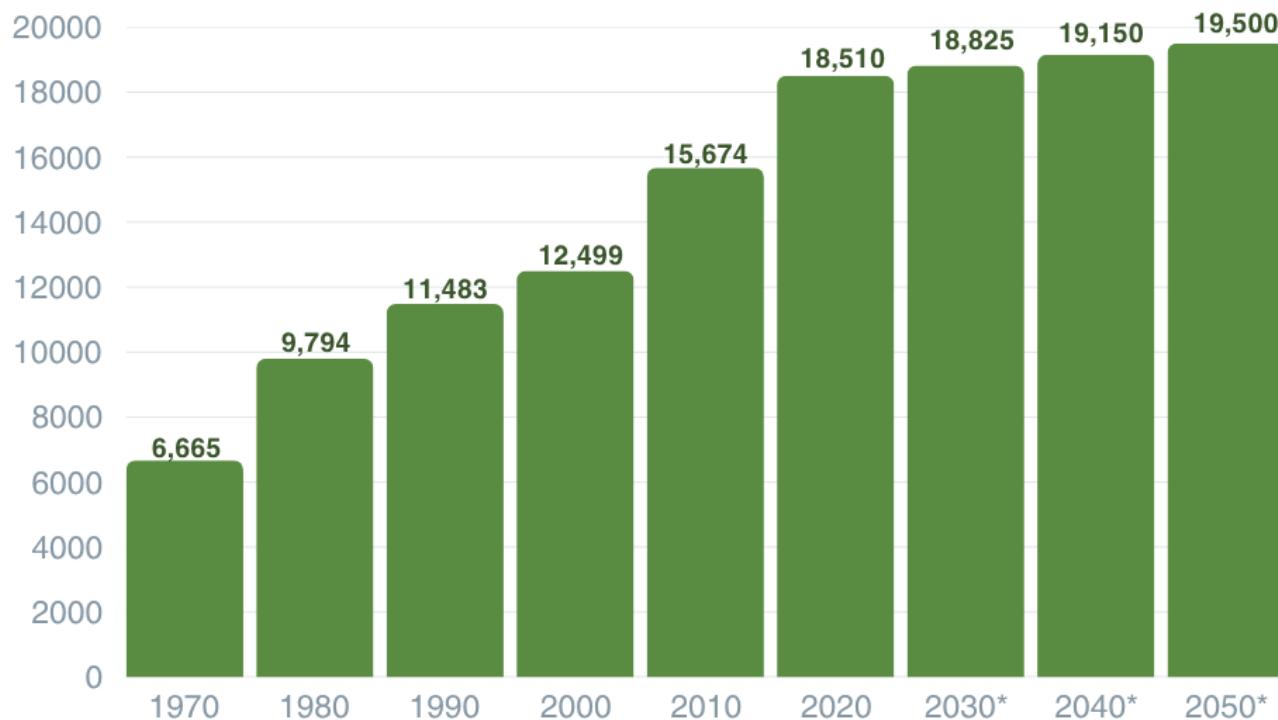


Population Trends – Appalachian State

Appalachian State University (App State) is a major contributor to Watauga County in many ways. Student enrollment at App State is a significant contributor to overall County population. In 1970, student enrollment was 6,665. In 2020 the on-campus student enrollment was up to 18,510 (an increase of over 177%). In 2023, App State expanded and opened a campus in Hickory, North Carolina in nearby Catawba County. All data presented in this plan with regards to App State refers only to the Main Campus in Boone, North Carolina.

Projections for future growth at App State (Table 2) are more modest. The enrollment for Fall of 2004 was 18,601. Projected enrollment* from 2024 to 2030 is expected to increase by only 1.2%, with an estimate of 19,500 by 2050.

Table 2
Appalachian State University
Actual and Projected* Boone Campus Enrollment



Source: Appalachian State University – Department of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning



Population Trends – Watauga Municipalities

Watauga County has four municipalities: Beech Mountain, Blowing Rock, Boone and Seven Devils. Of these four towns, Boone is the only municipality that lies totally within the Watauga County boundary. Beech Mountain, Blowing Rock and Seven Devils all straddle a county line. Both Beech Mountain and Seven Devils lay partially within Avery County. Blowing Rock lies partially within Caldwell County.

Table 3 provides the populations of each town and their growth from 2000-2020. Also listed in both Table 3 and Table 4 is the portion of each town's population (in adjoining counties) that lies outside of Watauga County.

- Boone is the largest of the municipalities by population. It is the county seat of Watauga County. Appalachian State University is located within its boundaries, which adds significantly to Boone's population.
- Blowing Rock is the second largest municipality, with a population of 1,376 in 2020. During the summer, Blowing Rock's population swells to over 7,300.
- Beech Mountain is the next largest with 675 Watauga County residents in 2020. Its population increased 128% from 2010 to 2020.
- Seven Devils is the smallest town in Watauga County, with 313 Watauga County residents in 2020, an impressive increase of 90.9% from 2010. Second only to Beech Mountain's increase of 128% during the same period.

Table 3
Watauga County Municipality Populations and Population Changes 2000-2020

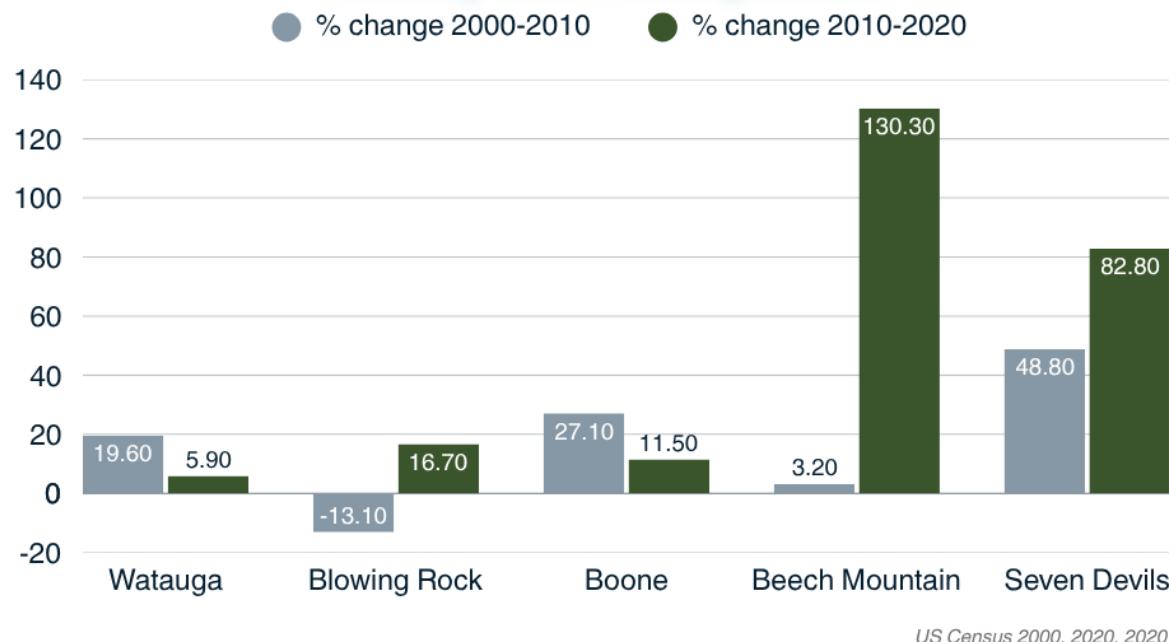
	POPULATION 2000	POPULATION 2010	PERCENT CHANGE 2000-2010	POPULATION 2020	PERCENT CHANGE 2010-2020
WATAUGA COUNTY					
BLOWING ROCK, TOWN (PART)	1,365	1,192	-12.7%	1,376	15.4%
BOONE, TOWN	13,472	17,122	27.1%	19,092	11.5%
BEECH MOUNTAIN, TOWN (PART)	297	296	-0.3%	675	128.0%
SEVEN DEVILS, TOWN (PART)	112	164	46.4%	313	90.9%
AVERY COUNTY					
BEECH MOUNTAIN, TOWN (PART)	13	24	84.6%	62	158.3%
SEVEN DEVILS, TOWN (PART)	17	28	64.7%	38	35.7%
CALDWELL COUNTY					
BLOWING ROCK, TOWN (PART)	35	25	-28.6%	44	76.0%

US CENSUS 2000, 2010, 2020



Table 4

Population Change County and Municipalities



US Census 2000, 2020, 2020

Population Trends - Watauga Townships

Watauga County is divided into 15 Townships. Table 5 depicts the actual decennial population in each of Watauga County's Townships for the past 100 years (1920 through 2020). A steady growth in the Watauga County population is reflected in each township, some healthier than others. Boone Township and New River show tremendous growth over the past decade, while one township, North Fork, has actually declined.

Table 6 summarizes the average percentage change in population of each township from 1970 to 2020. The Townships of New River and Brushy Fork were not established until the 1940s, first showing up in the 1950 US census. New River Township was split from Boone Township, and parts of Boone, Cove Creek, Laurel Creek, Meat Camp, and Watauga Townships were carved out to make up what is now Brushy Fork Township.

The two townships with the greatest population increase in the past 50 years are Blue Ridge and New River; these two townships had the largest number of new residents moving into the County. As expected, the highest growth rate in the County during the 100-year period occurred in the New River Township which averaged over 65%, Blue Ridge Township came in a close second, with an average of over 48%.

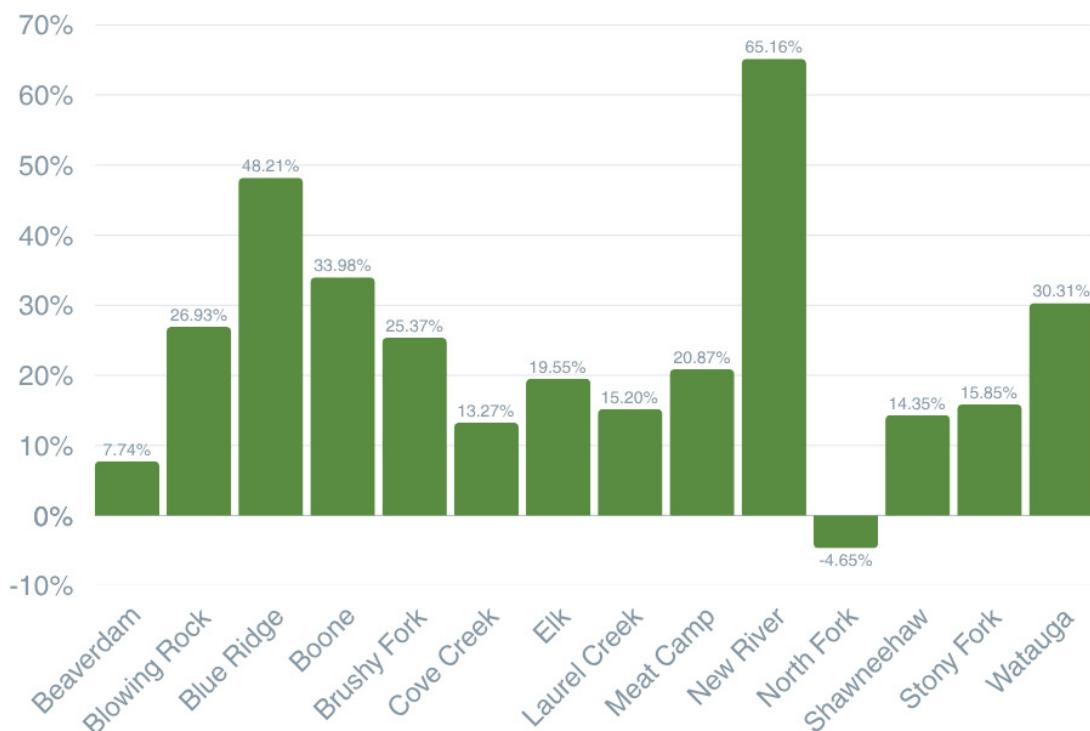
As of 2020, slightly more than 44% of the total population of the County resides in the Boone and New River Townships. This is not surprising due to the proximity of these townships to Appalachian State University, with more than 18,500 students and nearly 4,000 employees.

Table 5
Actual County and Township Populations 1920-2020

	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Bald Mountain	421	432	436	380	361	363	280	334	485	619	687
Beaverdam	1,161	1,156	1,434	1,279	944	847	1,030	1,204	1,283	1,351	1,332
Blowing Rock	734	1,001	1,167	1,042	982	1,321	2,295	2,340	2,858	2,715	2,913
Blue Ridge	738	713	818	665	644	898	1,613	2,125	3,628	4,211	4,357
Boone	2,033	3,332	4,504	2,973	3,686	8,754	10,191	12,915	8,690	9,379	10,697
Brushy Fork				1,272	1,642	2,345	2,656	3,368	3,205	4,935	4,679
Cove Creek	1,483	1,766	1,908	1,921	1,626	1,780	2,141	2,233	2,935	3,118	2,951
Elk	493	443	608	428	366	274	260	281	462	638	749
Laurel Creek	1,124	1,155	1,373	1,212	1,036	1,096	1,332	1,404	1,756	1,947	2,090
Meat Camp	1,133	1,236	1,518	1,468	1,257	1,275	1,805	2,288	2,673	3,191	3,139
New River				1,718	1,952	1,499	3,785	3,367	8,848	11,838	13,137
North Fork	347	339	378	350	261	231	207	223	222	229	202
Shawneehaw	667	630	751	655	450	390	544	574	675	765	835
Stony Fork	1,127	1,243	1,436	1,388	1,199	1,192	1,476	1,876	2,061	2,585	2,420
Watauga Township	2,016	1,719	1,783	1,591	1,123	1,139	2,051	2,420	2,914	3,558	3,898
Watauga County	13,477	15,165	18,114	18,342	17,529	23,404	31,666	36,952	42,695	51,079	54,086

US Census

Table 6
Average Decennial Population Change 1970-2020



US Census



THE CHANGING FACE OF DEMOGRAPHICS IN WATAUGA COUNTY

- ▀ The population of the nation and our state is getting older (Table 7). This is revealed in the census data for 2020 and in the estimates produced by the NC Office of State and Budget Management (NC OSBM). The median age in the United States increased from 37.2 to 38.8 from 2010 to 2020.
- ▀ The average age in North Carolina increased from 37.4 to 39.4. This trend toward an older population is also revealed in the number of people with an age of 65 years or older (Table 8).
- ▀ Watauga County's median age statistic is greatly influenced by the student population at Appalachian State University. In general, the large number of students in the 18- to 24-year-old cohorts skews the data toward a substantially lower median age.
- ▀ The percentage of persons in Watauga County over age 65 is currently less than the state's average (Table 8).
- ▀ The N.C. Office of State Budget and Management projects that the percentage of persons in Watauga County age 65 will continue to increase in 2030 but is expected to decrease by 2040 and 2050.

Watauga County experienced a growth rate of 6.1% from 2010 to 2020. The natural growth during the period declined by 129 (Table 9), indicating a death rate that exceeded the birth rate during the period. This means the growth in Watauga County resulted totally from in-migration. The neighboring mountain counties experienced population declines during this period, with deaths exceeding births and loss of population through out-migration. Ashe County had the least amount of population and out-migration decline (-1.7%), with Avery County experiencing the most with -10.5%. The neighboring foothill counties of Caldwell and Wilkes experienced population declines as well with -2.3% and -4.5% out-migration rates, respectively. In comparison, North Carolina's average in-migration growth rate was 9.3%.

Table 9
County Population Growth and Migration 2010-2020

	2010 POPULATION	2020 POPULATION	POPULATION GROWTH*	PERCENT GROWTH	BIRTHS	DEATHS	NATURAL GROWTH**	NET MIGRATION***	PERCENT NET MIGRATION
WATAUGA	51,079	54,086	3,007	5.9%	293	422	(129)	3,136	6.1%
ASHE	27,281	26,577	(704)	-2.6%	200	427	(227)	(477)	-1.7%
AVERY	19,979	17,806	(2,173)	-10.9%	139	212	(73)	(2,100)	-10.5%
CALDWELL	83,029	80,652	(2,377)	-2.9%	789	1,252	(463)	(1,914)	-2.3%
WILKES	69,340	65,969	(3,371)	-4.9%	693	976	(283)	(3,088)	-4.5%
NORTH CAROLINA	9,535,483	10,439,388	903,905	9.5%	121,577	107,975	13,582	890,323	9.3%

Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management & NC State Demographer

*Growth = 2010 Population minus 2020 Population

**Natural Growth = Difference of Births and Deaths



Table 7
Median Age of Population

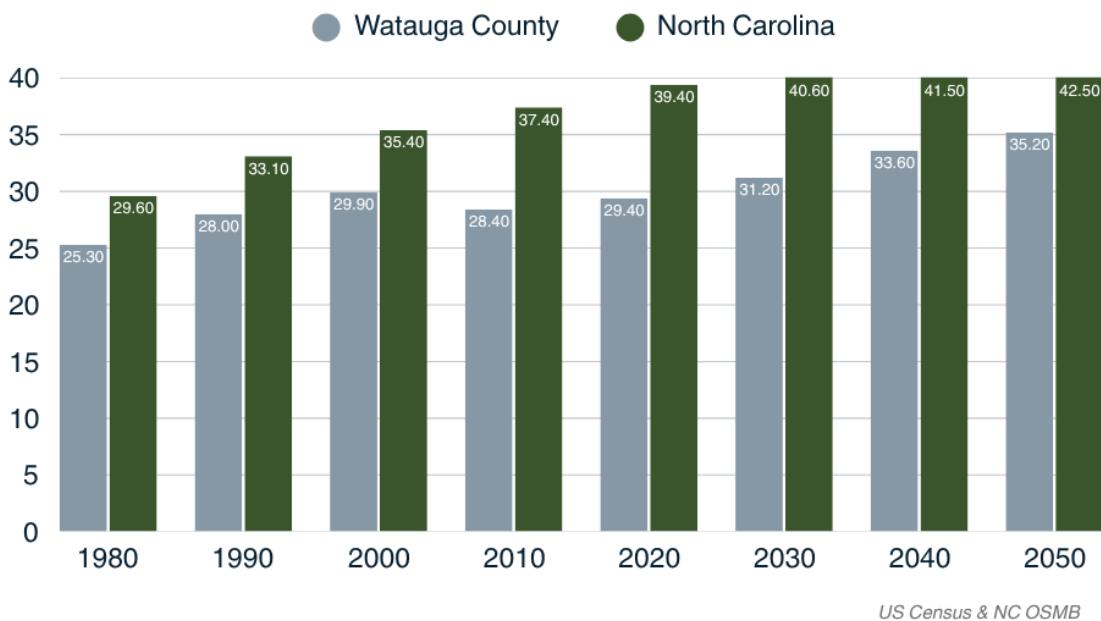
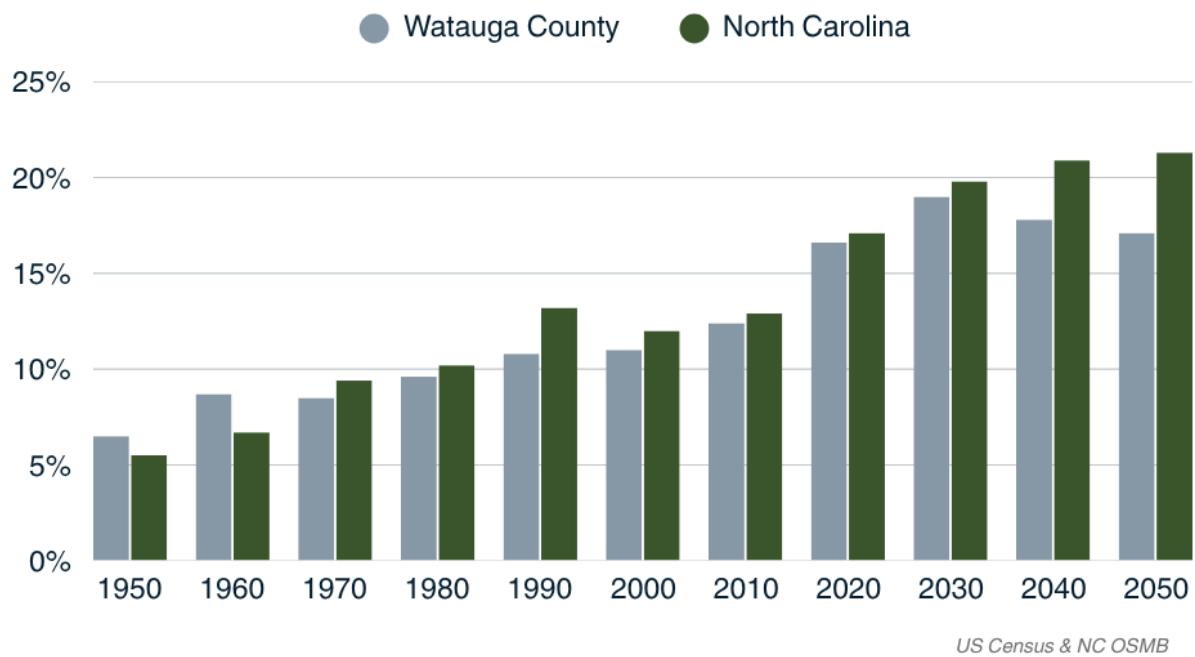


Table 8
Percent of Population 65+





WATAUGA COUNTY HOUSING

North Carolina has one of the fastest growing populations in the United States. North Carolina's overall percentage increase in housing units between 2010 and 2020 was 8.8%. Table 10 summarizes the housing growth for counties exhibiting the highest rates of change, Watauga County, and its border counties.

Growth in housing units in Watauga County was well below the state average of 8.8% at 1.6%. Watauga County ranks 49th of North Carolina's 100 counties for growth in housing units, with 500 housing units constructed in the 10-year period between 2010 and 2020. The recession that began in 2007 is still affecting the rate of residential development nearly 13 years later.

Table 10
Change in number of Housing Units
2010-2020 - Ranked

	2010 US Census	2020 US Census	Percent Change	Ranking
North Carolina	4,327,528	4,708,710	8.80%	
Johnston County	67,682	84,340	24.60%	1
Wake County	371,836	462,582	24.40%	2
Onslow County	68,226	84,180	23.40%	3
Cabarrus County	71,937	87,410	21.50%	4
Durham County	120,217	144,559	20.20%	5
Mecklenburg County	398,510	478,966	20.20%	6
Chatham County	28,753	33,947	18.10%	7
Iredell County	69,013	79,372	15.00%	8
Union County	72,870	83,788	15.00%	9
Brunswick County	77,482	88,330	14.00%	10
<hr/>				
Watauga County	32,137	32,637	1.60%	49
Cleveland County	43,373	43,630	0.60%	50
Person County	18,193	18,284	0.50%	51
Camden County	4,104	4,119	0.40%	52
Haywood County	34,954	34,889	-0.20%	53
Avery County	13,890	13,827	-0.50%	54
Rockingham County	43,696	43,431	-0.60%	55
<hr/>				
Perquimans County	6,986	6,866	-1.70%	62
Caldwell County	37,659	36,931	-1.90%	63
Chowan County	7,289	7,131	-2.20%	64
Yadkin County	17,341	16,946	-2.30%	65
Ashe County	17,342	16,935	-2.30%	66
Beaufort County	24,688	24,090	-2.40%	67
<hr/>				
Greene County	8,213	7,846	-4.50%	78
Wilkes County	33,065	31,545	-4.60%	79





SEASONAL AND ABSENTEE OWNER POPULATION

The 2023 American Community Survey recognized 33,028 total housing units in Watauga County (Table 11). Approximately 9,292 housing units are considered seasonal, recreational or for occasional use. Thus, 28.1% of all housing, or 78.5% of all vacant housing in Watauga County is considered seasonal.

Arriving at a definitive estimate of Watauga County's seasonal population is difficult. Data is incomplete and conflicting. The data produced by the 2023 ACS is dated, but it is probably the most realistic indicator available. Based on the number of vacant homes categorized as "seasonal/recreational" (9,292) and the average household size in Watauga County (2.24 people) indicators, it can be estimated that the number of seasonal residents in Watauga County is around 20,000 or 37% of the County's permanent population.

In 2020, the U.S. Census reported 54,086 people living in Watauga County. If the above estimates of seasonal residents is reasonable, then the population of Watauga County may be as high as 74,000 on a seasonal basis. A figure that does not include tourists only here for a few days during the summer and winter months. This increase in population, even if temporary, is certain to place extra demand on essential services including water and sewer, fire and police protection, roads and streets, and emergency services.

Table 11
Housing Occupancy

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	33,028	
OCCUPIED	21,187	64%
VACANT	11,841	36%
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE	2.24	

TOTAL OCCUPIED	21,187	
OWNER OCCUPIED	12,966	61%
RENTER OCCUPIED	8,221	39%

TOTAL VACANT UNITS	11,841	
FOR RENT	134	1%
RENTED, NOT OCCUPIED	538	5%
FOR SALE ONLY	286	2%
SOLD, NOT OCCUPIED	59	1%
FOR SEASONAL, RECREATIONAL, OR OCCASIONAL USE	9,292	80%
FOR MIGRANT WORKERS	0	
OTHER VACANT	1,532	13%



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DEMOGRAPHIC CONCLUSIONS

Watauga County has transformed from a rural, agrarian county to a robust and growing transition community with a large tourism industry and growing population. Population growth more than doubled from 1970 to 2020. Predictions by the N.C. Office of State Budget and Management reflect continued steady growth through 2050.

Population projections for Watauga County place the population (excluding seasonal residents) in 2050 at approximately 71,000. To fully understand the potential for growth in Watauga County, one must consider two influencing factors, which are student enrollment at App State and seasonal population.

Analysis indicates that the seasonal population may increase the year-round permanent population by as much as 37%. Townships that currently have a very large percentage of seasonal population include Blowing Rock, Laurel Creek and Watauga. Therefore, the effective population could be as high as 97,200 by 2050.

Another noteworthy issue is that these numbers do not include tourists visiting Watauga County. Their numbers are substantial during three seasons of the year and add to the demand for services. The increasing number of seasonal residents and tourists are elements of growth that officials and planners must consider in weighing future growth issues.

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Income Characteristics

Three income characteristics are particularly important in analyzing the economic viability of the Watauga community: Income Per Capita, Median Household Income and Median Family Income. These three income characteristics, when viewed in comparison to one another, help to indicate the strength of the local economy. Table 12 compares these three income indicators for Watauga County, North Carolina and the United States.

NOTE: Income statistics are no longer provided within the decennial census. Since 2010 the information is only available through the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an on-going survey that provides data every year – giving communities the most current information to use in their decision-making processes. Table 12 uses information from both sources ,US Decennial Census and ACS.

- For each of these three income statistics, Watauga County is lower than the average for North Carolina and the United States in each census year from 1970 – 2000.
- From 2010 through 2023 similar averages show up with the exception of Family Median Income. In 2020 and 2023 the Watauga Family Median Income was more than the State.
- The 2010 ACS shows that Watauga County's per capita income is 84.7% of that for North Carolinians and 76.6% of the per capita income for the nation. In the 2023 ACS, these amounts have decreased slightly to 82% of North Carolina and 75% of the nation.
- For median family income in 2010, Watauga County families earn 99.9% of the income of other North Carolina families and 89.1% of families in the United States. By 2023 Watauga County families earned just over 100% of the North Carolina average but was still lower than the national average at 90%.
- Median household income in Watauga County lag significantly behind other North Carolina households in 2023 at 73% (down from 83% in 2000), and behind U.S. households at 65% (78% in 2000).
- Much of the difference in these income areas can be attributed to the high student population.

Table 12
Income Characteristics 1970-2023

		US Decennial Census				American Community Survey		
		1969	1979	1989	1999	2010	2020	2023
Watauga	<i>Per Capita Income</i>	\$1,969	\$5,097	\$10,628	\$17,258	\$20,961	\$27,962	\$32,631
	<i>Median Family Income</i>	\$6,149	\$14,532	\$27,752	\$45,508	\$56,112	\$75,042	\$87,273
	<i>Median Household Income</i>	\$5,323	\$11,039	\$20,252	\$32,611	\$31,967	\$46,453	\$51,367
North Carolina	<i>Per Capita Income</i>	\$2,474	\$6,133	\$12,885	\$20,307	\$24,745	\$31,993	\$39,616
	<i>Median Family Income</i>	\$7,770	\$16,792	\$31,548	\$46,335	\$56,153	\$70,978	\$86,947
	<i>Median Household Income</i>	\$7,025	\$14,481	\$26,647	\$39,184	\$45,570	\$56,642	\$69,904
US	<i>Per Capita Income</i>	\$3,119	\$7,298	\$14,420	\$21,587	\$27,334	\$35,384	\$43,289
	<i>Median Family Income</i>	\$9,586	\$19,917	\$35,225	\$50,046	\$62,982	\$80,069	\$96,922
	<i>Median Household Income</i>	\$8,486	\$16,841	\$30,056	\$41,994	\$51,914	\$64,994	\$78,538

US Decennial Census 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2010, 2020, 2023

Employment/Wages by Industry

In 2024, the number of employed persons in Watauga County was approximately 30,493, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Table 13).

- ▼ Private industry employed 24,578 individuals.
- ▼ Federal, state and local governments employed 5,915 people.
- ▼ Specific areas that stand out as employers of a large percentage of workers include state government, educational services, the accommodations and food services sector, and retail trade.
- ▼ State government and educational services numbers are high, mainly due to the large number of employees in administration and teaching at Appalachian State University.
- ▼ Large numbers of workers in the accommodation and food services sector and retail trade are explained by the area's popularity as a tourist destination.
- ▼ The weekly wages for Watauga County workers are lower than the average wages in North Carolina in all categories of industry except one – education services.





Table 13
Employment/Wages by Industry - Watauga County with
State for Comparison (2024)

Governmental Industry	Watauga Average Employment	Watauga Average Weekly Wage	North Carolina Average Weekly Wage
Total Federal Government	106	\$1,314	\$1,724
Total State Government	4,082	\$1,243	\$1,304
Total Local Government	1,727	\$937	\$1,181
Private Industry			
Total Private Industry	24,578	\$999	\$1,732
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting	0	\$0	\$931
Mining	0	\$0	\$2,078
Utilities	0	\$0	\$2,088
Construction	1,080	\$1,015	\$1,429
Manufacturing	482	\$680	\$1,436
Wholesale Trade	417	\$1,198	\$1,928
Retail Trade	3,527	\$597	\$752
Transportation and Warehousing	381	\$998	\$1,176
Information	0	\$0	\$2,490
Finance and Insurance	296	\$1,588	\$2,505
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	765	\$894	\$1,335
Professional and Technical Services	908	\$1,598	\$2,132
Management of Companies and Enterprises	311	\$1,470	\$2,769
Administrative and Waste Services	907	\$815	\$1,075
Educational Services	4,828	\$1,186	\$1,170
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,889	\$1,267	\$1,296
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	937	\$557	\$802
Accommodation and Food Service	4,300	\$427	\$487
Other Services, (except Public Admin)	575	\$725	\$941
Public Administration	975	\$971	\$1,269
Unclassified	0	\$0	\$1,088
Total All Industries	30,493	\$1,123	\$1,485

NC Commerce - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage (2024)

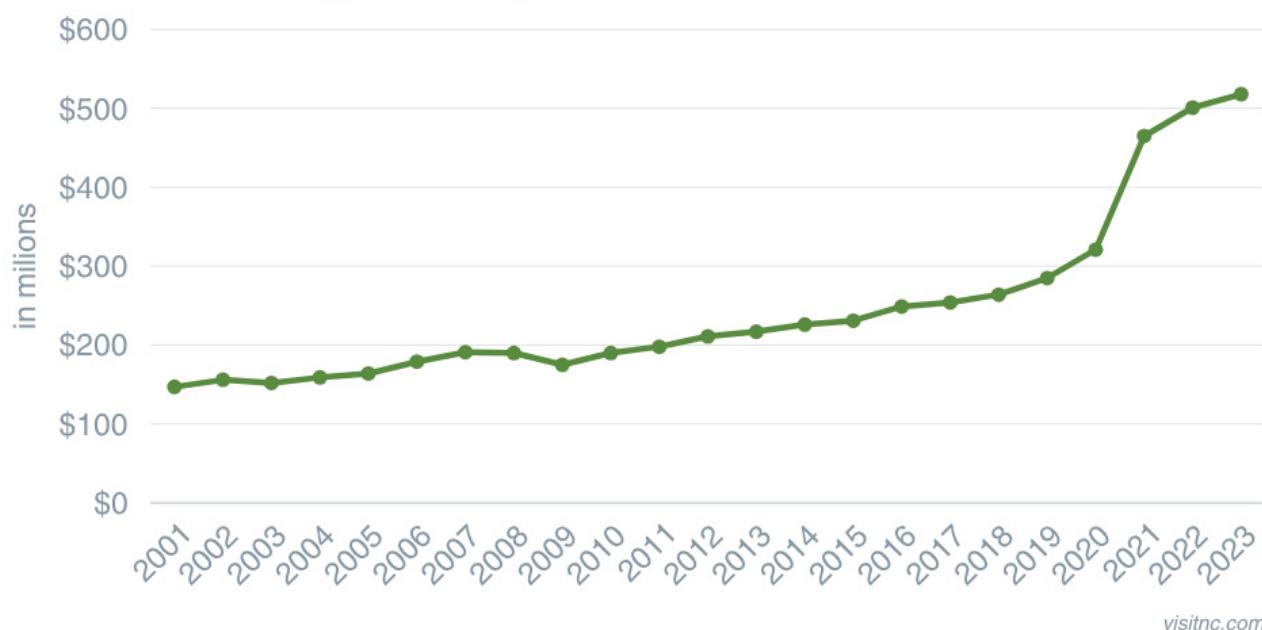


ECONOMIC TRENDS

Tourism Statistics 2023

- Domestic tourism in Watauga County generated an economic impact of \$517.51 million in 2023, a more than 172.6% increase since 2008 (\$189.8 million).
- In 2023, Watauga County ranked 15th in travel impact among North Carolina's 100 counties.
- More than 3,064 jobs in Watauga County were directly attributable to travel and tourism.
- Travel generated a \$127.7 million payroll in 2023.
- State and local tax revenues from travel to Watauga County amounted to \$35.60 million. This represents a \$652.00 tax saving for each County resident.
- Area attractions include the Blue Ridge Parkway, Horn in the West outdoor drama, Mast General Store, Beech Mountain Resort, Mystery Hill, museums devoted to Appalachian culture and heritage, Appalachian Theatre of the High Country, The Blowing Rock, Tweetsie Railroad, Hiking and Biking trails (Elk Knob, Rocky Knob), and Appalachian Ski Mountain.
- There are several attractions in adjoining counties that contribute to Watauga County for basic services, such as restaurants and lodging that also contribute to the county's tourism.
- Watauga County tourism saw a large (nearly 45%) increase in tourism revenue between 2020 and 2021. This growth in spending can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. After months of quarantines, temporary business closures, social distancing, and travel restrictions, people wanted to travel again enjoying outdoor events and activities that Watauga County could offer while still observing mandated safety protocols.

Table 14
Watauga County Tourism Revenue 2000-2023





PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS

Table 15
25 Largest Employers - Watauga County (2024)

Rank	Company Name	Industry	Employment Range
1	Appalachian State University	<i>Education</i>	1,000+
2	ARHS Attn Human Resources	<i>Health Services</i>	1,000+
3	Samaritans Purse, Inc.	<i>Health Services</i>	1,000+
4	Watauga County Board of Education	<i>Education</i>	500-999
5	Watauga County	<i>Public Administration</i>	250-499
6	Appalachian Ski Mountain	<i>Arts, Entertainment & Recreation</i>	250-499
7	Beech Mountain Resort, Inc	<i>Arts, Entertainment & Recreation</i>	250-499
8	Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.	<i>Retail</i>	250-499
9	Mast General Store, Inc	<i>Retail</i>	100-249
10	Glenbridge Health & Rehabilitation	<i>Health Services</i>	100-249
11	Advisor Irep, Inc	<i>Administrative & Support</i>	100-249
12	ECR Software Corp.	<i>Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services</i>	100-249
13	Town of Boone	<i>Public Administration</i>	100-249
14	Lowes Home Centers, Inc	<i>Retail</i>	100-249
15	Publix North Carolina	<i>Retail</i>	100-249
16	RHA Health Services	<i>Health Services</i>	100-249
17	Food Lion	<i>Retail</i>	100-249
18	Prospera-CMC	<i>Accommodation & Food Service</i>	100-249
19	Stick Boy Bread Company	<i>Manufacturing</i>	100-249
20	Lost Province Brewing Company	<i>Accommodation & Food Service</i>	100-249
21	High Country Community Health	<i>Health Care & Social Assistance</i>	100-249
22	Harris Teeter	<i>Retail</i>	100-249
23	Abount Health, LLC	<i>Health Care & Social Assistance</i>	100-249
24	Tweetsie Railroad, Inc	<i>Arts, Entertainment & Recreation</i>	100-249
25	Goodnight Bros. Produce Co., INC	<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	100-249

NC Commerce - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage (2024)

Watauga County's largest employer is Appalachian State University (App State)

- In Fall 2024, App State had 3,228 full-time employees.
- The total employment is nearly 4,000 with part-time and temporary employees.
- Considering full-time employees, App State employees 11% of the County's entire workforce.
- The employment of Appalachian Regional Healthcare System was 1,600 in April 2025.
- The next largest employers are Samaritan's Purse with 1,000+employees and the Watauga County Board of Education, with more than 500 employees.
- Other major contributors to the labor force in Watauga County include Watauga County, Town of Boone, Wal-Mart, Mast General Store, Appalachian Ski Mountain, and Beech Mountain Resorts.



EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The U.S. Census defines labor force as “all people classified in the civilian labor force (i.e., “employed” and “unemployed” people), plus members of the U.S. Armed Forces.” Tables 16 and 17 summarize key employment and economic sector statistics for Watauga County.

Table 16
Watauga County Employment Characteristics 2000-2024

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2024	27,817	26,849	968	3.50%
2023	29,969	29,070	899	3.00%
2022	29,336	28,374	962	3.30%
2021	28,110	27,041	1,069	3.80%
2020	26,797	25,317	1,662	6.20%
2019	29,249	28,240	1,009	3.40%
2018	28,475	27,464	1,011	3.60%
2017	28,163	27,018	1,145	4.10%
2016	27,861	26,608	1,253	4.50%
2015	27,365	26,056	1,309	4.80%
2014	27,043	25,683	1,360	5.00%
2013	27,019	25,339	1,680	6.20%
2012	27,276	25,213	2,063	7.60%
2011	27,147	25,010	2,137	7.90%
2010	26,990	24,894	2,096	7.80%
2009	23,227	21,299	1,928	8.30%
2008	23,089	21,992	1,097	4.80%
2007	24,800	23,890	910	3.70%
2006	23,909	22,952	957	4.00%
2005	23,318	22,329	989	4.20%
2004	22,834	21,841	993	4.30%
2003	22,873	21,822	1,051	4.60%
2002	22,299	21,251	1,049	4.70%
2001	23,664	22,799	865	3.70%

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



Table 17
Current Industry Structure - Watauga County

	Number of Business Units	Average Employees	Percent of NC Average	Percent of Watauga Average
All Industries	1957	24,778	0.52%	
Construction	257	1,080	0.40%	4.36%
Manufacturing	51	482	0.10%	1.95%
Wholesale Trade	62	517	0.25%	2.09%
Retail Trade	294	3,527	0.66%	14.23%
Transportation and Warehousing	31	381	0.18%	1.54%
Finance and Insurance	58	296	0.13%	1.19%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	168	765	1.06%	3.09%
Professional and Technical Services	247	908	0.27%	3.66%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	8	311	0.37%	1.26%
Administrative and Waste Services	130	907	0.28%	3.66%
Educational Services	45	4,828	1.23%	19.49%
Health Care and Social Assistance	177	3,889	0.56%	15.70%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	45	937	1.07%	3.78%
Accommodation and Food Service	205	4,300	0.94%	17.35%
Other Services, (except Public Admin)	156	675	0.51%	2.72%
Public Administration	23	975	0.00%	3.93%

NC Commerce - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage (2024)



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Since 2000, the average annual unemployment rate in Watauga County has been lower than North Carolina's average annual rate and lower than the national average rate. The unemployment rate in Watauga County has also been very favorable compared to adjoining counties. Many individuals commute from other counties in North Carolina and Tennessee to work in Watauga County.

Table 18
Average Annual Unemployment Rate
Counties 2000-2023

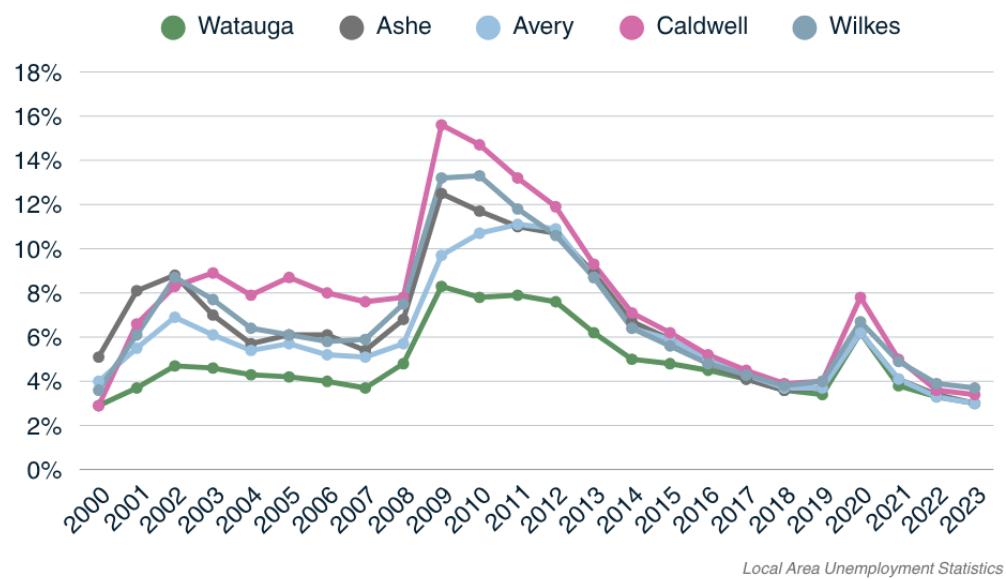
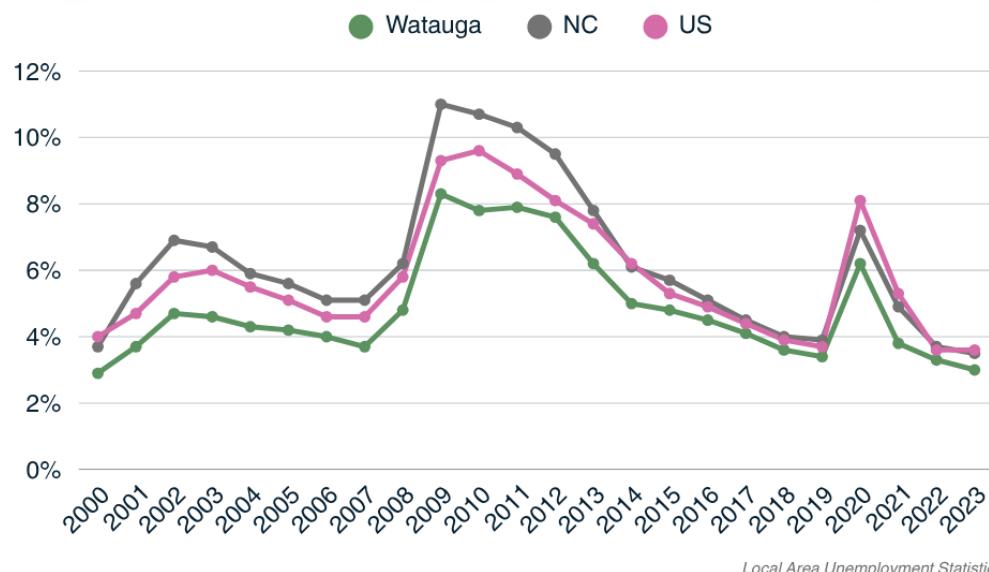


Table 19
Average Annual Unemployment Rate - Comparison





WORKING COMMUTERS

- ▀ In 2022, 12,234 individuals, or 41.7% of the labor force in Watauga County, lived in counties other than Watauga County.
- ▀ Over one third of these people lived in the adjoining counties of Ashe (1,577) Caldwell (934), Avery (717), and Johnson County, TN (611).
- ▀ 3.1% of the workers commuting to Watauga County lived in Tennessee and 65.4% of these came from Johnson County.
- ▀ In 2022, 8,295 individuals living in Watauga County commuted outside of the county to work. Approximately 13.5% of these individuals work in states other than North Carolina.

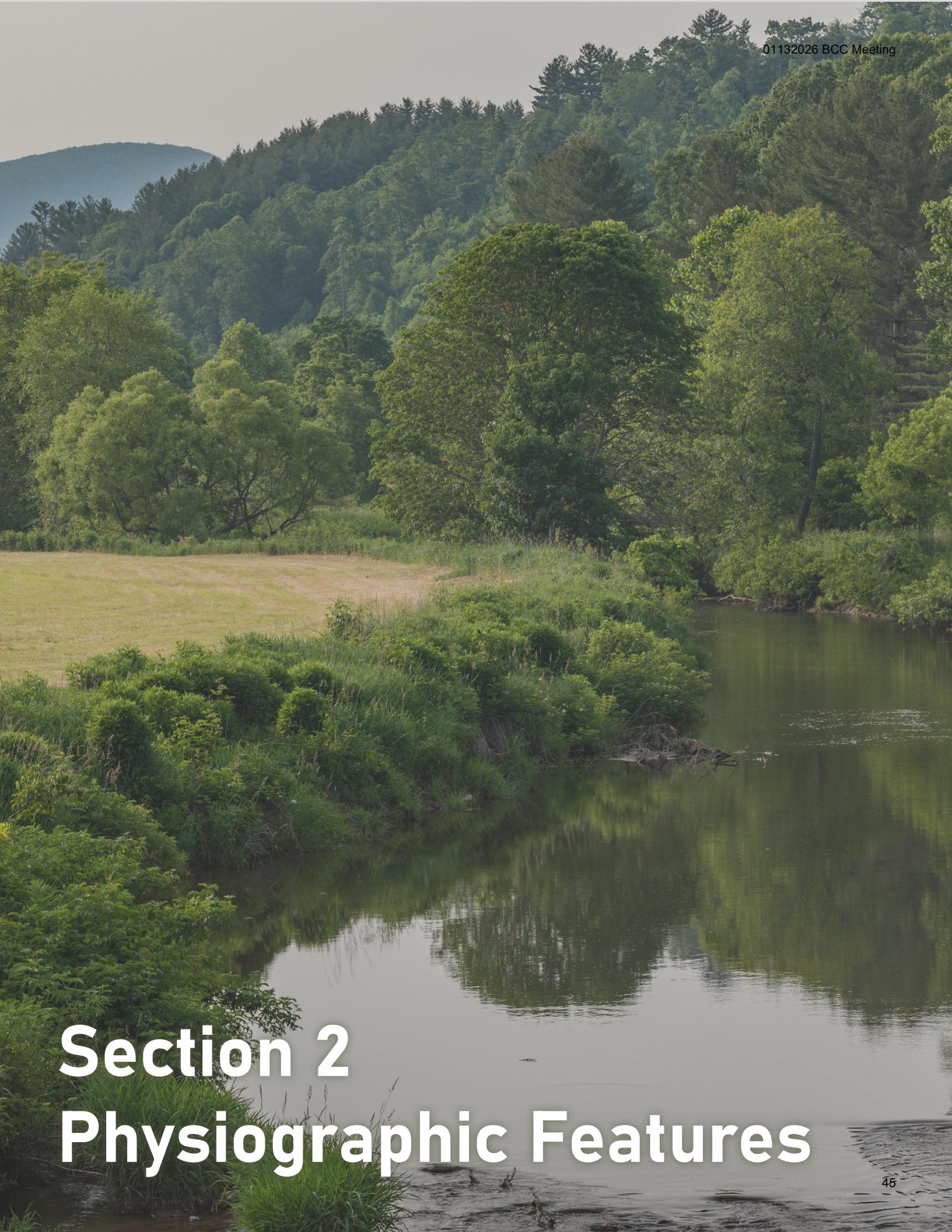
Table 20
Workers Commuting TO Work in
Watauga County, Living In

Counties	2012	2022
<i>Ashe, NC</i>	1,324	1,577
<i>Coldwell, NC</i>	857	934
<i>Avery, NC</i>	887	714
<i>Mecklenburg, NC</i>	498	658
<i>Wilkes, NC</i>	509	634
<i>Wake, NC</i>	417	484
<i>Johnson, TN</i>	661	611
<i>Gilford, NC</i>	301	404
<i>Other</i>	5,574	6,218
Total	11,028	12,234
States		
<i>Tennessee</i>	1,009	933
<i>Virginia</i>	345	395
<i>South Carolina</i>	128	212
<i>Other</i>	200	242
Total	1,682	1,782

Table 21
Workers Living IN Watauga
County Commuting to Work In:

Counties	2012	2022
<i>Avery</i>	604	935
<i>Mecklenburg</i>	566	722
<i>Buncombe</i>	803	657
<i>Wake</i>	1,379	559
<i>Catawba</i>	537	416
<i>Caldwell</i>	443	394
<i>Wilkes</i>	361	332
<i>Other</i>	5,963	4,280
Total	10,656	8,295
States		
<i>Tennessee</i>	467	484
<i>Virginia</i>	193	191
<i>South Carolina</i>	173	83
<i>Other</i>	473	361
Total	1,306	1,119

US Census, Center for Economic Studies, LODES



Section 2 Physiographic Features

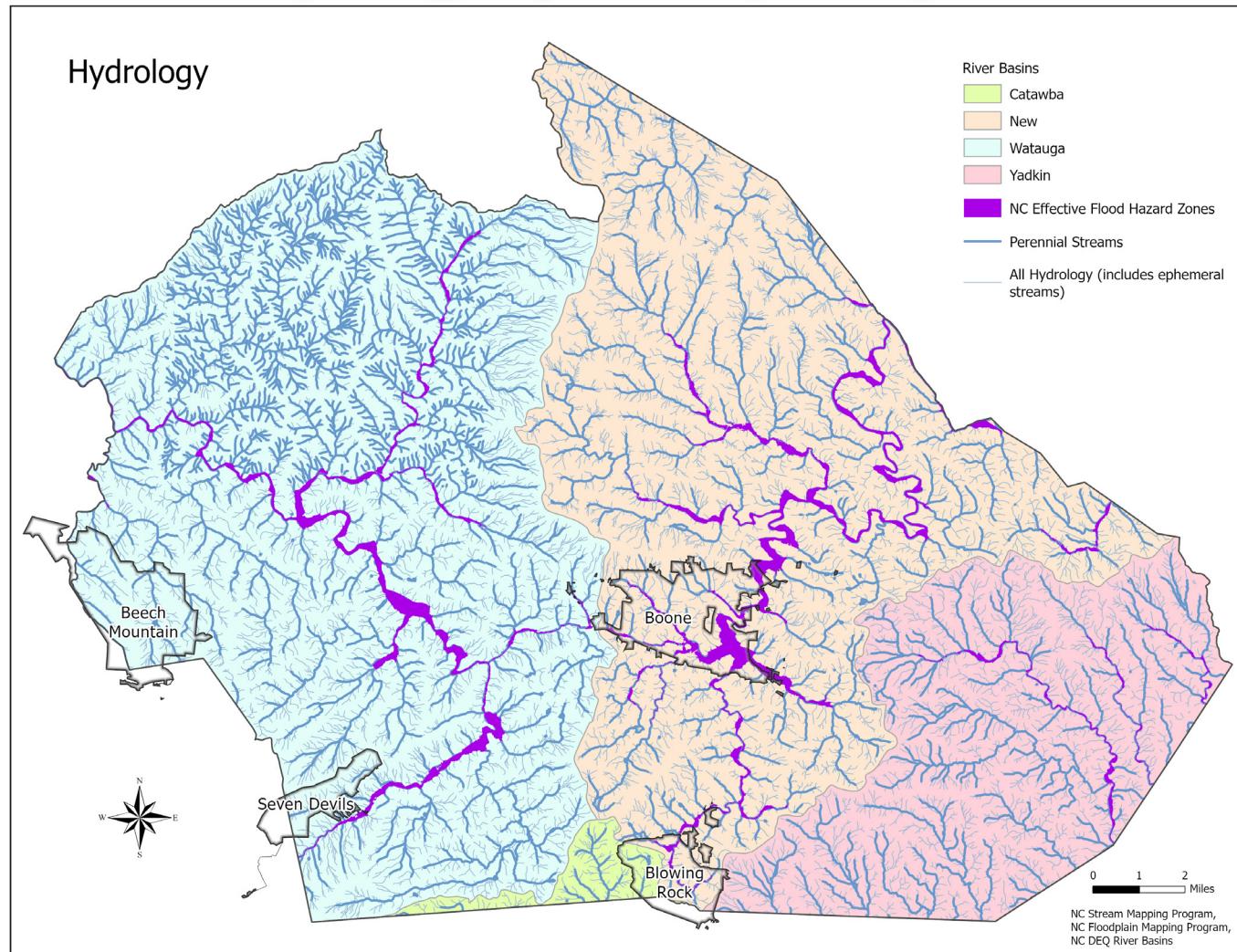
PHYSIOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The overall suitability of land to accommodate development is generally viewed as the cumulative constraint imposed by the natural features of slope, hydrology, soils, flooding and other sensitive environmental characteristics of the geographic area under consideration. For the purposes of this assessment, the additional factors of protected mountain ridges and certain publicly-owned lands have been added to this collective categorization. This assessment is made on the basis of natural constraints. Other limitations, such as the availability of water and sewer services and transportation capacities, are not considered.



Watauga County Hydrology and Flood Hazard

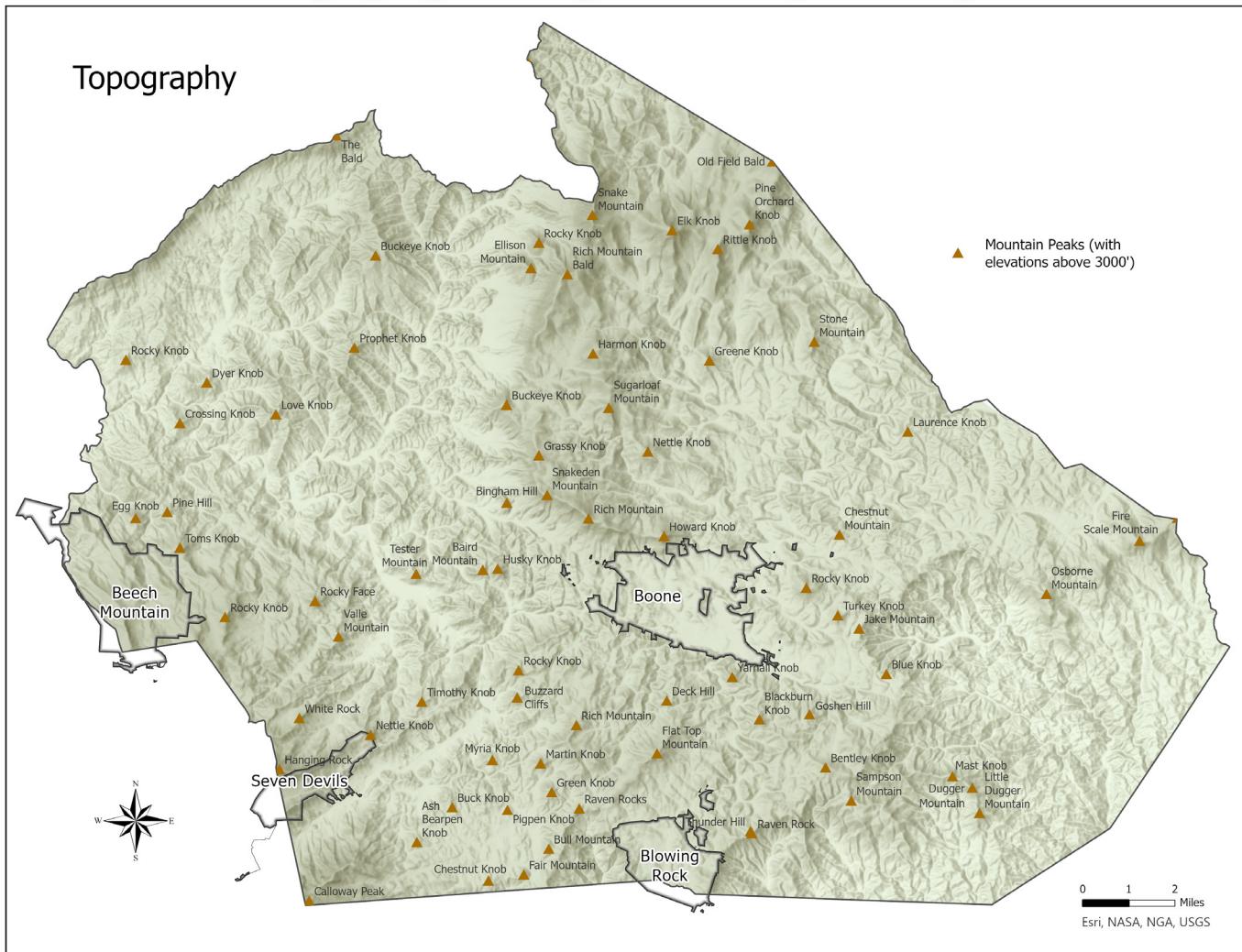
Illustration 1 Hydrology Map of Watauga County



Watauga County is fortunate to have abundant and relatively pure surface water in four major watersheds.

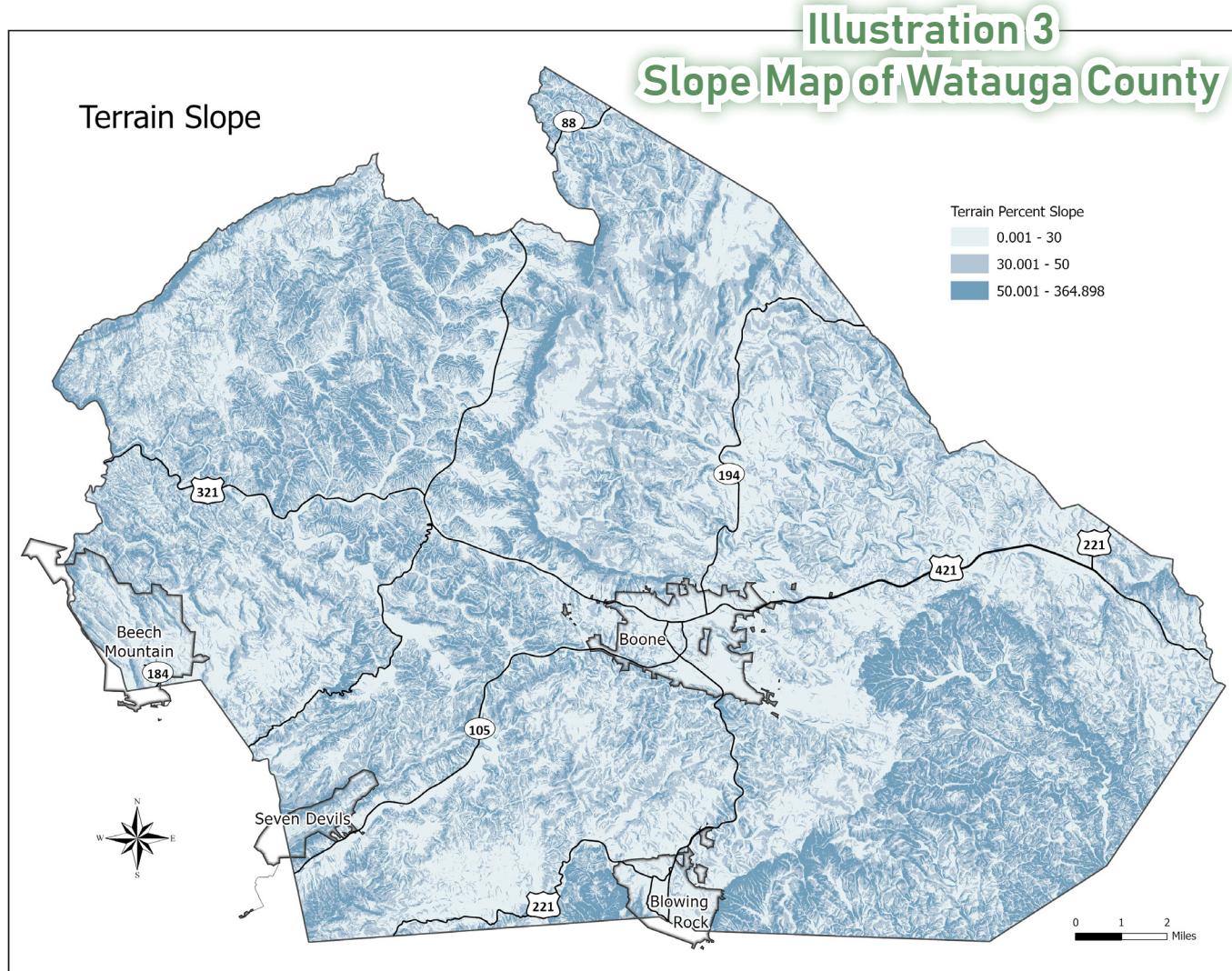
Topographic Characteristics

Illustration 2 Topographic Map of Watauga County



The lowest elevation is 1,350 feet above sea level in the Triplett Community in southeast Watauga County. The highest point is Calloway Peak at 5,964 feet above sea level. It is the highest peak of Grandfather Mountain and is shared with adjacent counties, Avery and Caldwell. The steeper the land, the more difficult it is to utilize and the more sensitive it is to change.

Slope Characteristics



Watauga County has very diverse topographic features. Elevations range from as low as 1,350 feet above sea level to 5,964 feet above sea level.

The Slope Map (Illustration 3) shows topographic characteristics in three categories.

Light areas are slopes between 0% and 30% and are most amenable to change.

Medium blue areas have very steep slopes of 50% or greater and are most sensitive to change.

The slope of the land has a direct bearing on land stability and suitability for development. Areas of steep slope are often associated with earth slides, increased fire hazards, increased potential for damage to the natural environment, and greater economic issues.

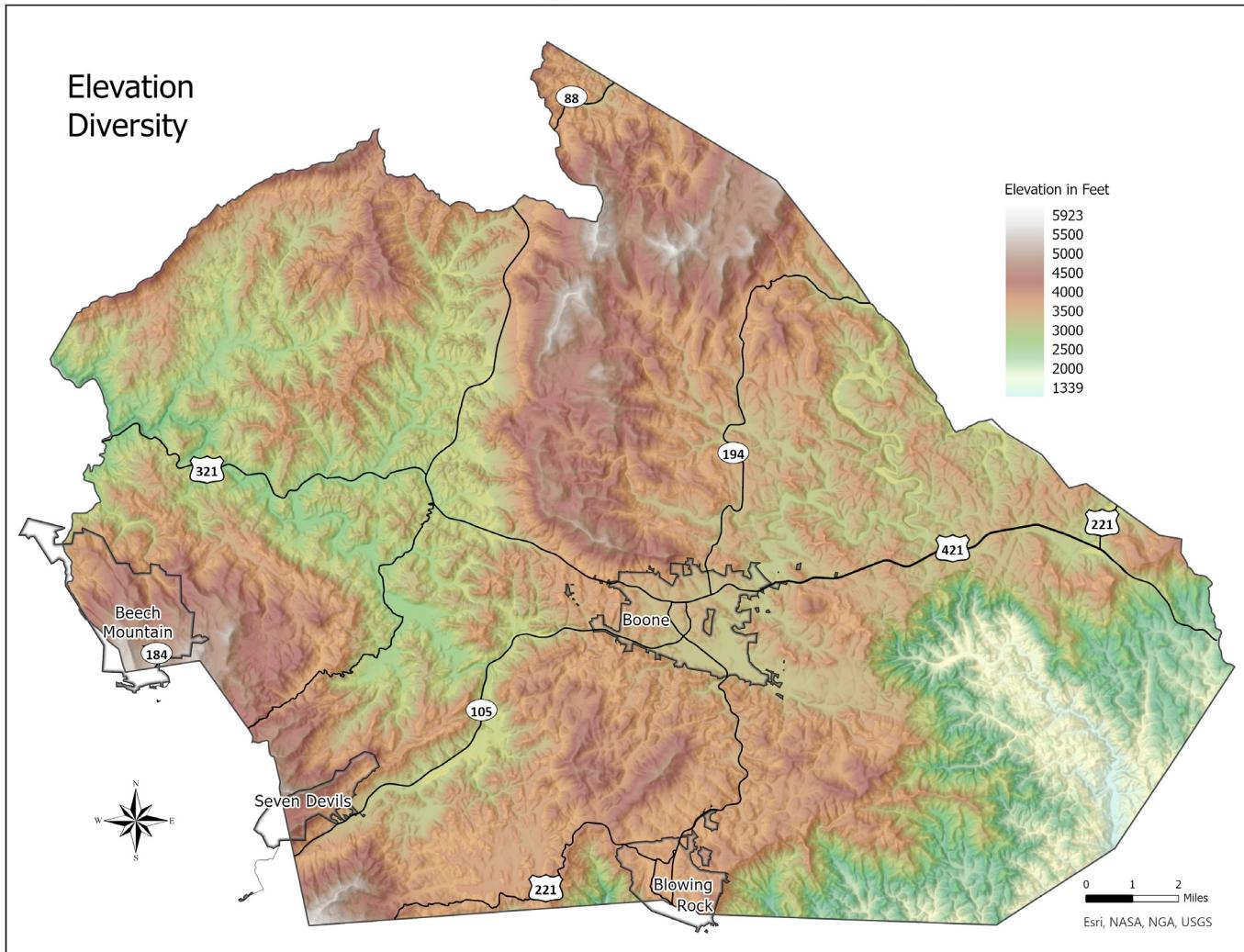
The Watauga County subdivision ordinance notes that a slope of 50% or greater is generally “considered too steep for subdivision development.”

This does not prevent construction of improvements on steep slopes. It merely restricts subdivision development.



Elevation Diversity

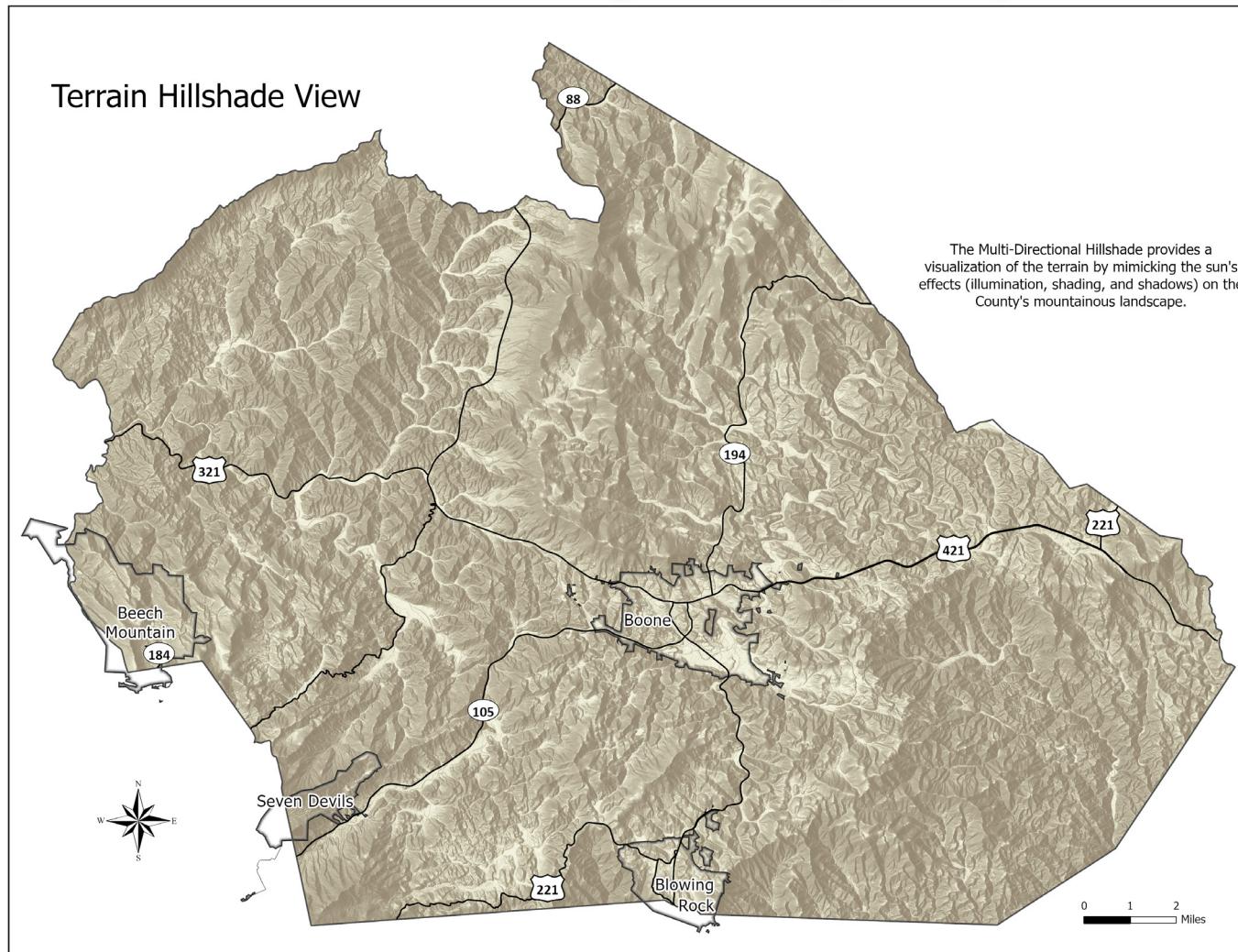
Illustration 4 Elevation Map of Watauga County



The Elevation Map (Illustration 4) graphically displays the wide variation in elevation in Watauga County. The largest portion of the County falls in the 3,000 to 3,500 feet above sea level category. However, about 25% of the County has elevations above 3,500 feet.

Hill Shade View

Illustration 5 Hill Shade View Map of Watauga County

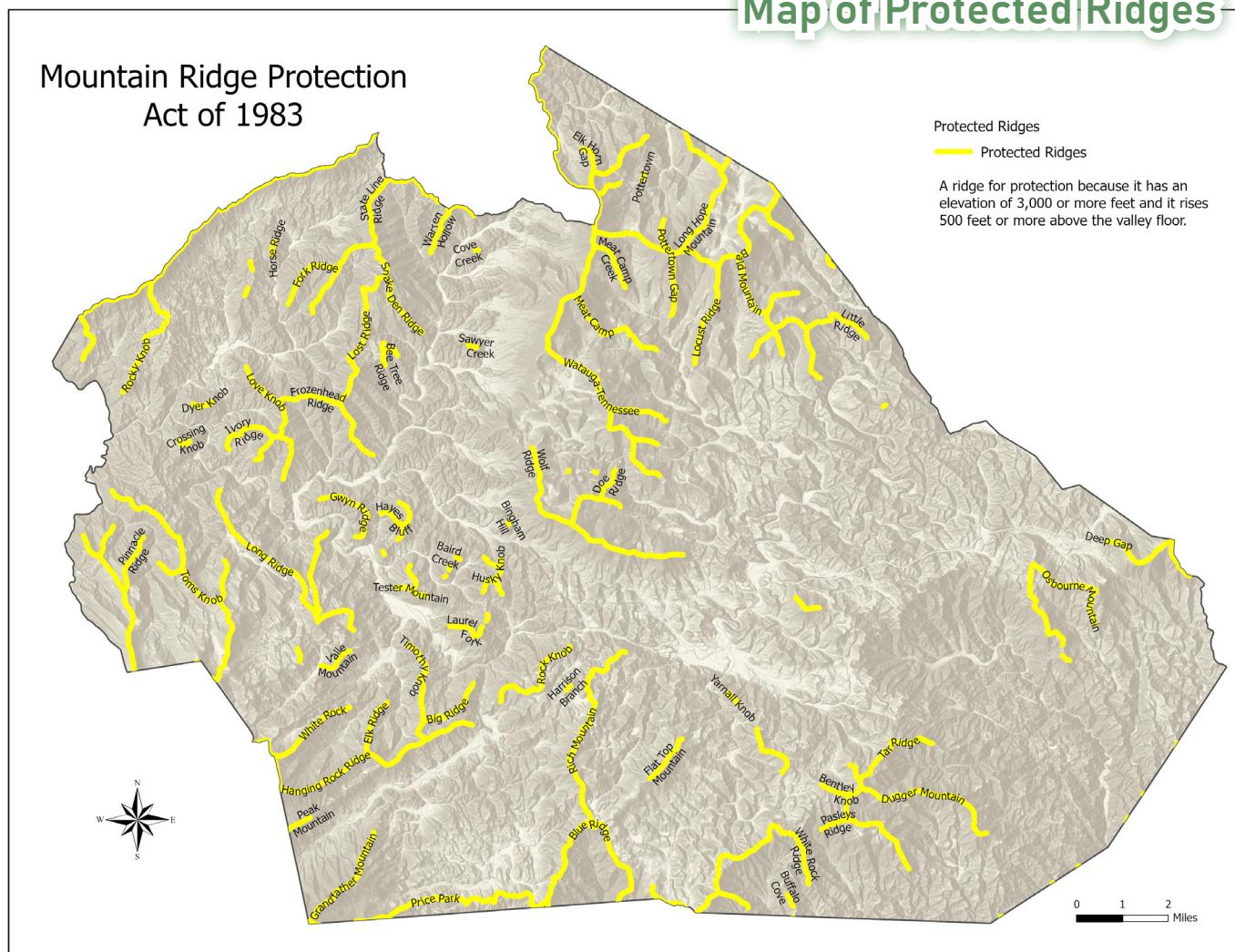


The Hill Shade View Map (Illustration 5) provides an alternate view of the topographic features of Watauga County. This map, along with the Topographic, Elevation and Slope Maps, provides a picture of the rugged and diverse landscape of the County. This graphic representation presents the relief of the landscape as viewed from the west quadrant of the map.



Protected Ridges

Illustration 6 Map of Protected Ridges

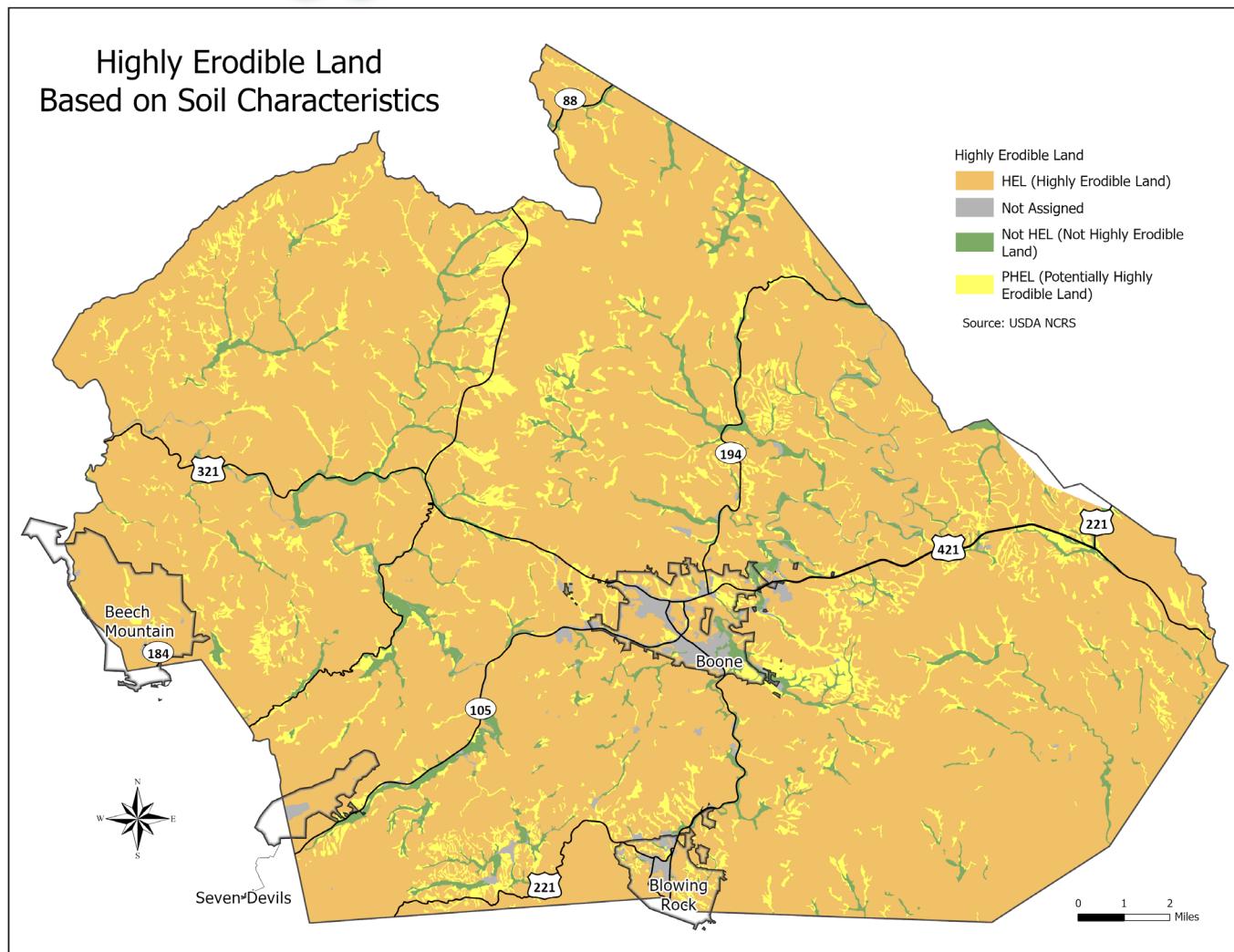


- ▀ In 1983, The General Assembly adopted North Carolina General Statute 113A - Article 14, known as the "Mountain Ridge Protection Act." The regulations contained therein apply to mountain ridges with an elevation of 500 feet or more above the valley floor. The regulated portion of the ridge is the area within 100 feet below the elevation of the crest of the mountain.
- ▀ The Act prohibits "tall buildings or structures" on protected mountain ridges.
- ▀ A "tall building or structure" has a vertical height of more than 40 feet measured from the top of the foundation to its highest point.
- ▀ Tall buildings or structures may not protrude above the crest of the ridge by more than 35 feet.
- ▀ Certain structures and building projections are not regulated under the Act, including towers for communications, electricity, telephone, television and radio, structures such as chimneys, spires, steeples, antennas, windmills, etc., and buildings and structures designated as National Historic Sites.

Soil Types

Illustration 7

Highly Erodible Land Based on Soil Characteristics



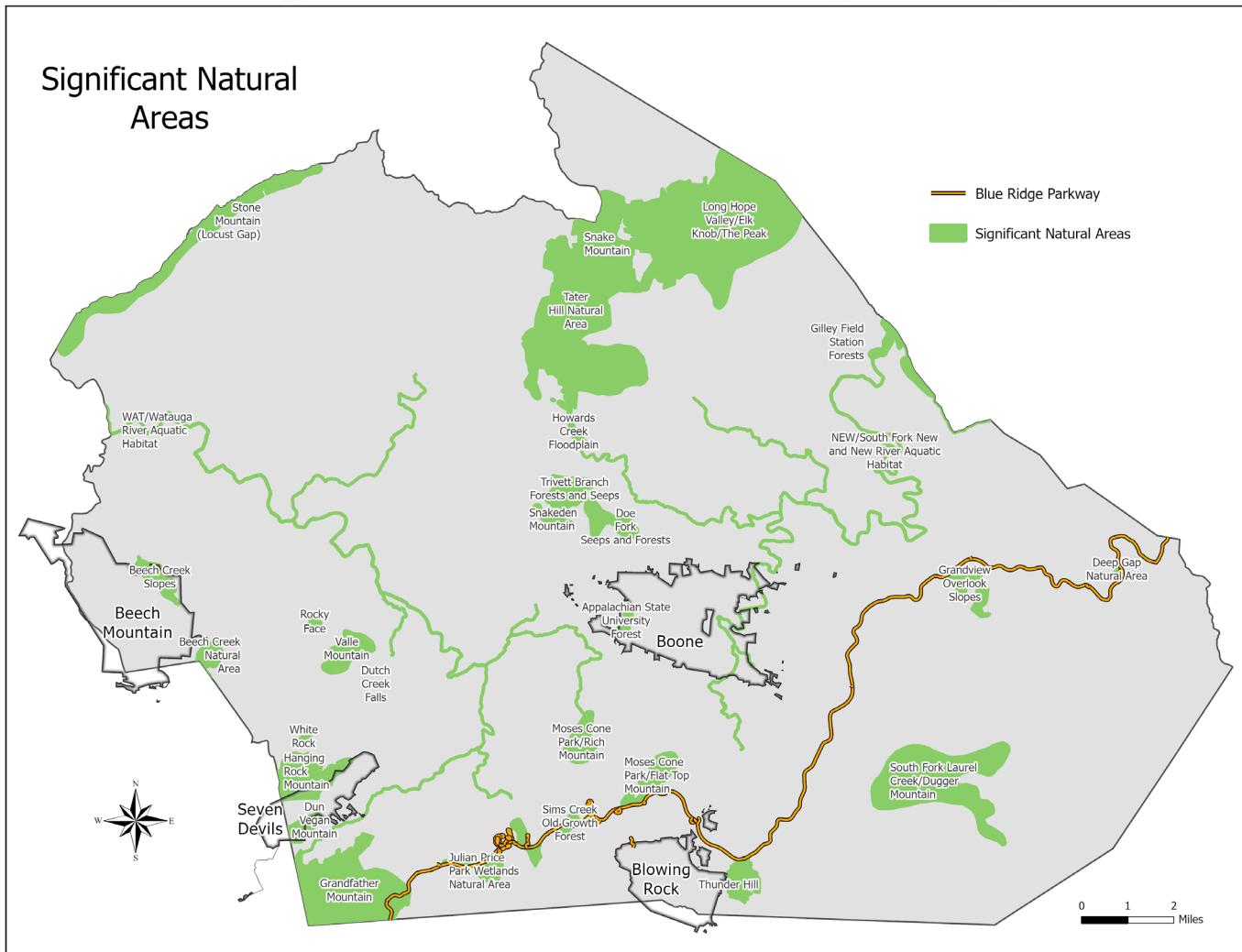
The Map shown in Illustration 7 shows the distribution of Highly Erodible Land Determinations (HEL) based on soil characteristics of Watauga County.

- Highly Erodible Land (HEL) provisions of The Food Security Act of 1985 are designed to protect the Nation's long-term capability to produce food and fiber. HEL is land that can erode at an excessive rate because of soil properties leading to long-term decreased productivity. Highly erodible land is designed on a field basis and based on the proportion of the total field acreage that contains highly erodible soils.
- The HEL Soils list identifies soils having an erodibility index (EI) of eight or more HEL. This index expresses the potential erodibility of a soil in relation to its tolerance for erosion without consideration of applied conservation practices or management. Soil can be classified as highly erodible for either wind or water erosion.
- Watauga County has approximately 171,152 acres (or 85.5% of the county) that is designated as highly erodible.



Significant Natural Areas

Illustration 8 Map of Natural Areas in Watauga County



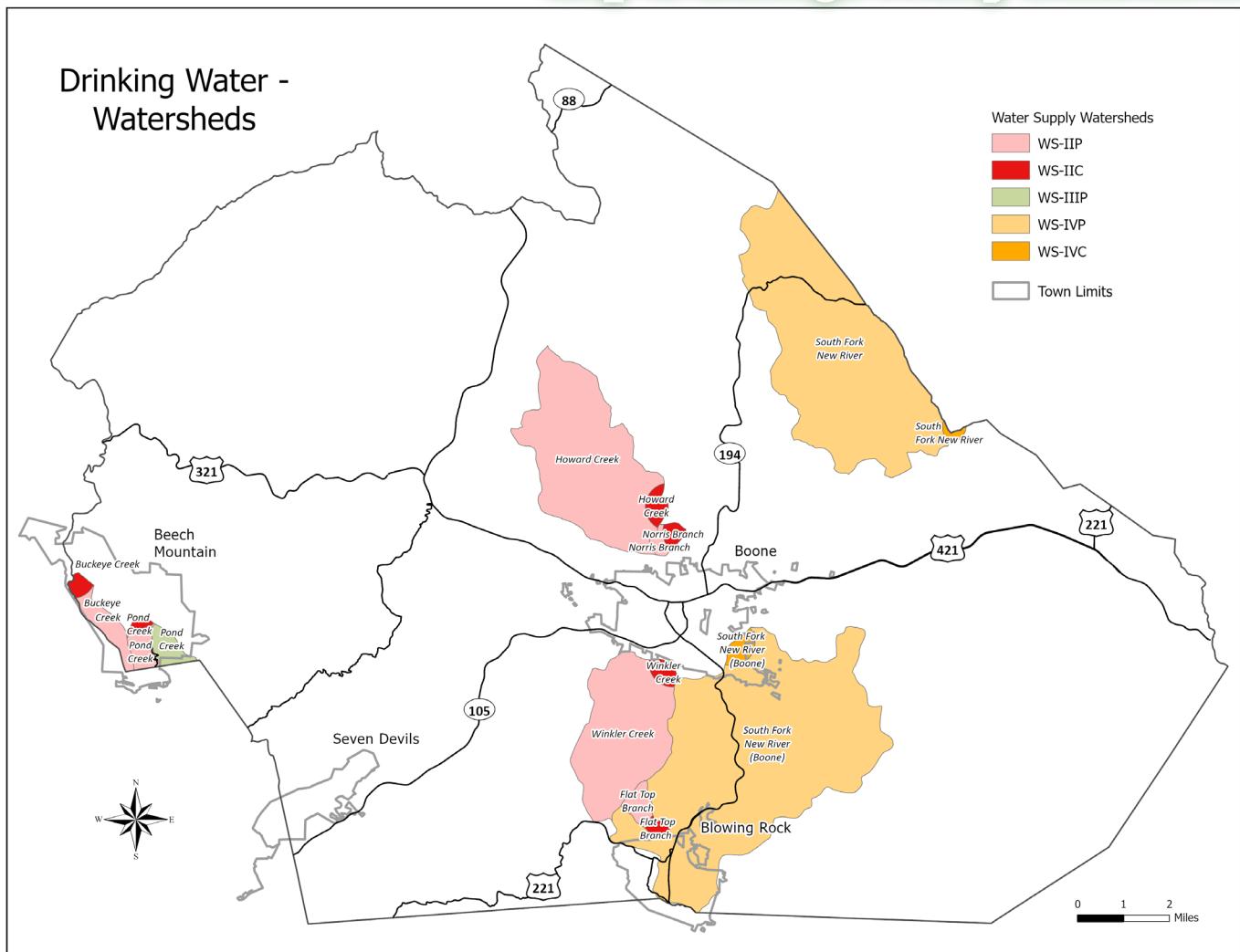
Watauga County has several sites designated by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program as natural heritage areas or significant natural areas. All have one of the following designations: national, state, regional or county significance. The following is a list of the sites in Watauga County, represented in Illustration 8 - Significant Natural Areas, along with acreages as recorded by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Parks and Recreation, Natural Heritage Program. Some of the sites enjoy protection through ownership by federal or state entities. Others are in private ownership.



NATURAL AREA	LAND OWNER	ACREAGE
APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY FOREST	SITE IS OWNED BY APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY	67.35
BEECH CREEK NATURAL AREA	PORTION OWNED BY NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION AS A STATE NATURAL AREA AND THE REMAINDER IS PRIVATELY OWNED LOCATED NEAR BEECH MOUNTAIN	131.13
BEECH CREEK SLOPES	PORTION OWNED BY NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION AS A STATE NATURAL AREA AND THE REMAINDER IS PRIVATELY OWNED LOCATED NEAR BEECH MOUNTAIN	234.80
DEEP GAP NATURAL AREA	THE SITE IS PARTLY OWNED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY AND IS A REGISTERED HERITAGE AREA AND THE REMAINDER IS PRIVATELY-OWNED LOCATED NEAR DEEP GAP.	11.08
DOE FORK SEEPS AND FORESTS	PRIVately-OWNED SITE LOCATED NORTH-NORTHWEST OF BOONE NEAR RICH MOUNTAIN.	252.04
DUN VEGAN MOUNTAIN	PRIVately-OWNED SITE NEAR THE TOWN OF SEVEN DEVILS.	144.34
DUTCH CREEK FALLS	PRIVately-OWNED SITE LOCATED NEAR THE VALLE CRUCIS COMMUNITY.	2.19
GILLEY FIELD STATION FORESTS	CURRENTLY BEING USED BY THE ANTHROPOLOGY AND BIOLOGY DEPARTMENTS AT APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY FOR FACULTY AND STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS AND OWNED BY THE ENDOWMENT FUND OF APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY LOCATED IN THE TODD COMMUNITY	201.68
GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN	A HIGH, RUGGED MOUNTAIN LOCATED ON THE BLUE RIDGE ESCARPMENT. OWNERSHIP OF GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN IS BY THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY, THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, AND PRIVATE OWNERSHIP. IN SEPTEMBER 2008, A LARGE PORTION OF GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN WAS PURCHASED BY THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA TO BECOME THE STATE'S 34TH STATE PARK.	1,845.50
GRANDVIEW OVERLOOK SLOPES	LOCATED ON THE BLUE RIDGE ESCARPMENT BETWEEN BOONE AND DEEP GAP, NEAR THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY AND PRIVATELY OWNED.	224.06
HANGING ROCK MOUNTAIN	A RUGGED MOUNTAIN LOCATED NEAR THE TOWN OF SEVEN DEVILS UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.	635.52
HOWARDS CREEK FLOODPLAIN	THE PRIVately-OWNED SITE IS LOCATED NEAR THE HEADWATERS OF HOWARDS CREEK AND TATER HILL.	51.02
JULIAN PRICE PARK WETLANDS NATURAL AREA	LOCATED IN THE JULIAN PRICE MEMORIAL PARK ON THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY AND OWNED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY.	300.46
LONG HOPE KNOB/ELK KNOB/THE PEAK	AN AMPHIBOLITE MOUNTAIN OWNED IN PART BY THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION AND THE NATURE CONSERVANCY WITH THE REMAINING PORTION UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.	4,403.77
MOSES CONE PARK/FLAT TOP MOUNTAIN	THIS SITE IS OWNED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY.	298.17
MOSES CONE PARK/RICH MOUNTAIN	SITE OWNERSHIP IS BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.	290.78
ROCKY FACE	PRIVately-OWNED MOUNTAIN LOCATED IN THE VALLE CRUCIS COMMUNITY.	18.07
SIMS CREEK OLD GROWTH FOREST	THIS SITE IS OWNED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY.	47.32
SNAKE MOUNTAIN	A HIGH MOUNTAIN TOP RIDGE LOCATED IN NORTHERN WATAUGA COUNTY AND UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.	1,043.65
SNAKEDEN MOUNTAIN	THIS SITE IS PART OF THE RICH MOUNTAIN RIDGE AND PRIVATELY-OWNED.	97.42
SOUTH FORK LAUREL CREEK/DUGGER MOUNTAIN	LOCATED ON THE EASTERN ESCARPMENT OF THE BLUE RIDGE AND PRIVATELY OWNED.	1,854.68
STONE MOUNTAIN (LOCUST GAP)	AN ELEVATED RIDGE ON THE NORTH CAROLINA-TENNESSEE STATE LINE UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.	1,100.88
TATER HILL NATURAL AREA	THIS SITE IS OWNED IN PART BY THE NORTH CAROLINA PLANT CONSERVATION PROGRAM, WITH THE REMAINDER UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.	3,229.58
THUNDER HILL	THIS SITE IS INCLUDED IN THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY BOUNDARY AND OWNED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	270.25
TRIVETTE BRANCH FORESTS AND SEEPS	PRIVately-OWNED SITE.	282.96
VALLE MOUNTAIN	THE SITE IS A SMALL MOUNTAIN WITH STEEP SLOPES LOCATED IN THE VALLE CRUCIS COMMUNITY AND PRIVATELY-OWNED BY THE VALLE CRUCIS MISSION SCHOOL.	308.09
WHITE ROCK	THE SITE IS A SMALL PRIVATELY-OWNED MOUNTAIN NORTHWEST OF THE TOWN OF SEVEN DEVILS.	24.80
SOUTH FORK AND NEW RIVER AQUATIC HABITAT	AQUATIC HABITAT	257
WATAUGA RIVER AQUATIC HABITAT	AQUATIC HABITAT	229.38

Drinking Water - Watersheds

Illustration 9 Map of Watauga County Watersheds



Protected watersheds include:

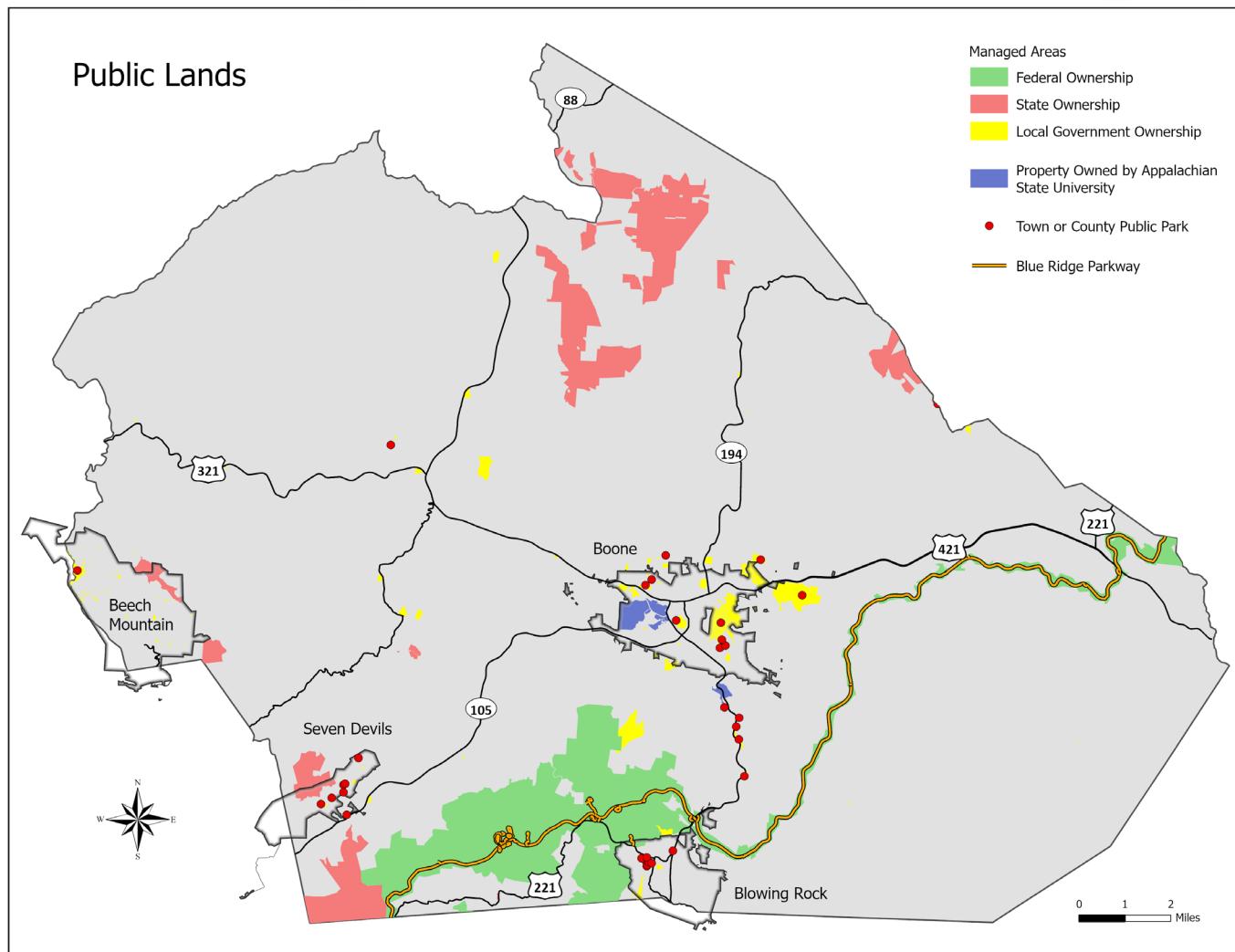
The Legislature of the state of North Carolina delegates the responsibility to Watauga County to adopt regulations that provide protection for watersheds. New development is subject to the restrictions of the watershed ordinance.

Buckeye Creek
Pond Creek
Flat Top Branch
Winkler Creek
Norris Branch
Howards Creek
South Fork New River
South Fork New River (Boone)

Public Lands

Illustration 10

Map of Public Lands and Conservation Properties



Watauga County enjoys a large amount of public land owned by the federal government. It is mostly located in the southern portion of Watauga County and is part of the Blue Ridge Parkway and properties accessed from the Parkway.

Properties owned by the state of North Carolina include Elk Knob State Park in northern Watauga County, which has the second highest peak in Watauga County, and the property around Grandfather Mountain. The state of North Carolina also owns much property in and around Boone occupied by Appalachian State University.



Watauga County owns properties that include government buildings, schools, recreation fields, gyms, swimming pools and others. A partial list of the principal County operated and/or owned properties follows:

Watauga County Government Buildings

Watauga County Schools

Brookshire Park

Howards Knob County Park

Watauga County Recreation Center

Cove Creek Park

Rocky Knob Bike Park

Sterling Creek Park (Middle Fork Greenway)

Payne Branch Park (Middle Fork Greenway)

Goldmine Branch Park (Middle Fork Greenway)

312 Trailhead (Middle Fork Greenway)

Complex Ball Fields

Watauga County Tot Lot

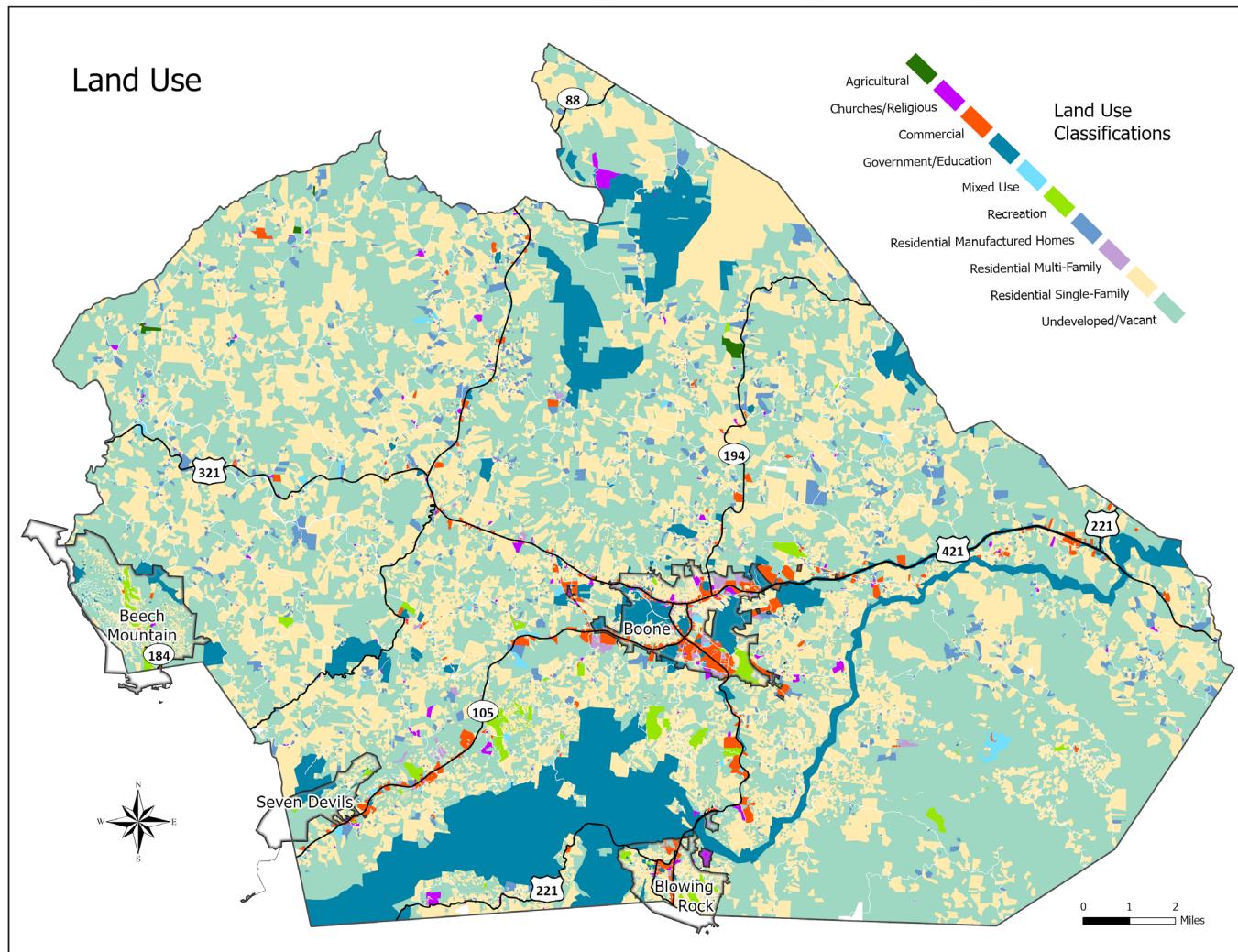
New River Access

Watauga River Accesses



Land Use Classification

Illustration 11
Land Use Map of Watauga County





Section 3

Transportation



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Preface

Watauga County's goal is to achieve an efficient and balanced transportation system that combines motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation. Specific objectives include:

- ▼ An efficient and integrated multi-modal transportation system
- ▼ A transportation system that is affordable and accessible to all users.
- ▼ A multi-modal transportation system that supports future development and preserves community character.
- ▼ A regionally integrated transportation planning process.



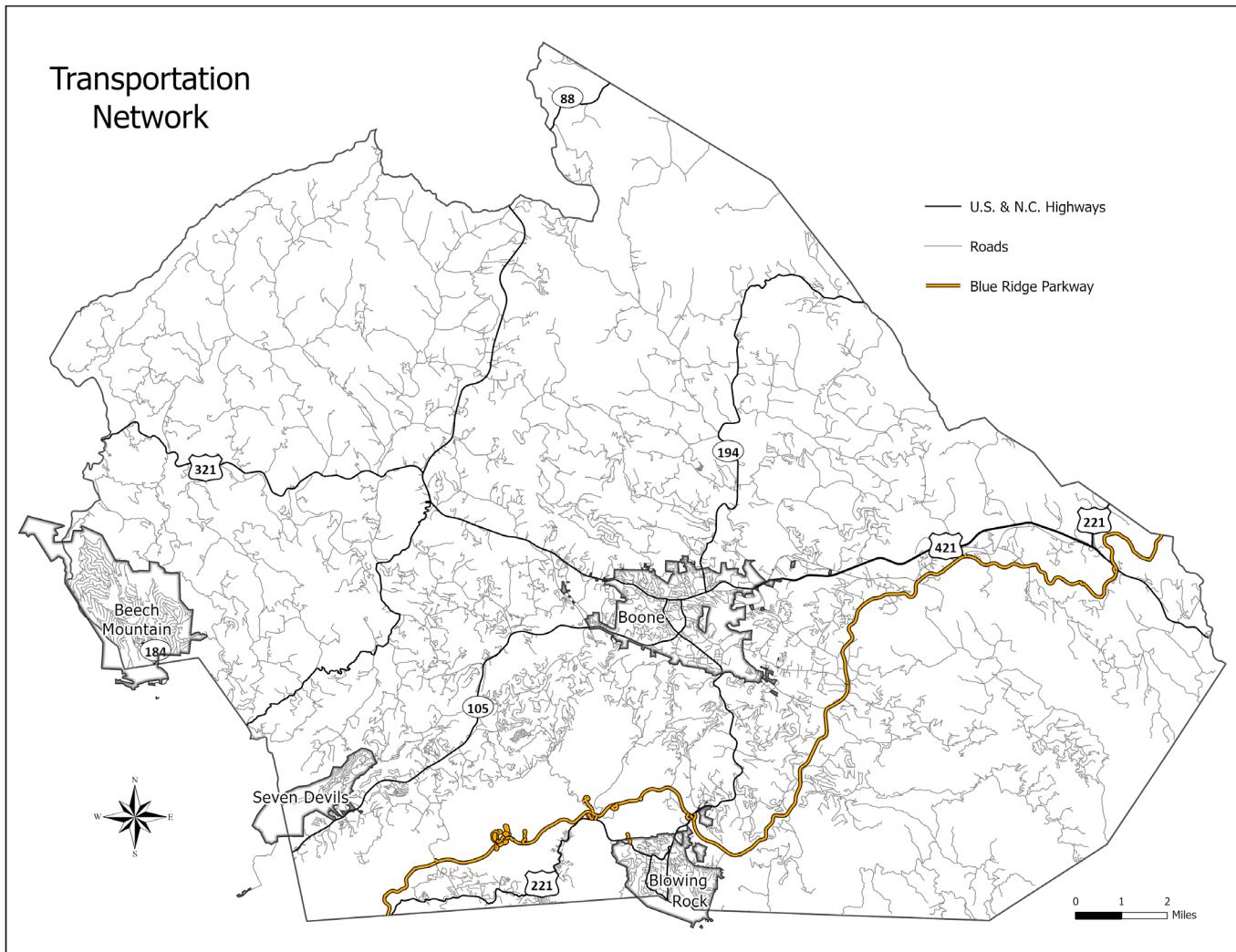
The principal highways in Watauga County are U.S. 321, U.S. 221, U.S. 421, N.C. 105, N.C. 194, and N.C. 88. These roads form the backbone of the County's transportation network (Illustration 12). In Watauga County, current transportation modes are limited to surface transportation, including vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The County does not have a public airport or any navigable waters

Public perceptions about transportation are summarized as follows:

- ▼ In a survey conducted in conjunction with the 2013 "Watauga County Comprehensive Transportation Plan", there was a desire for more non-traditional transportation options. More on-road bike lanes, greenways/off-road paths, and the expansion of sidewalks were high on the list of solutions to the County's traffic problems, with improvement of intersection design coming in a close second.
- ▼ A survey conducted for the update of this plan in 2024 found that a majority of the respondents (89%) were dissatisfied with traffic congestion in the County.
- ▼ Solutions to traffic congestion in both surveys tended to favor non-traditional transportation options (more bike lanes and pedestrian friendly paths). In addition, respondents in both surveys suggested Intersection design (more turn lanes) and widening existing roads would also improve traffic flow in problem areas.

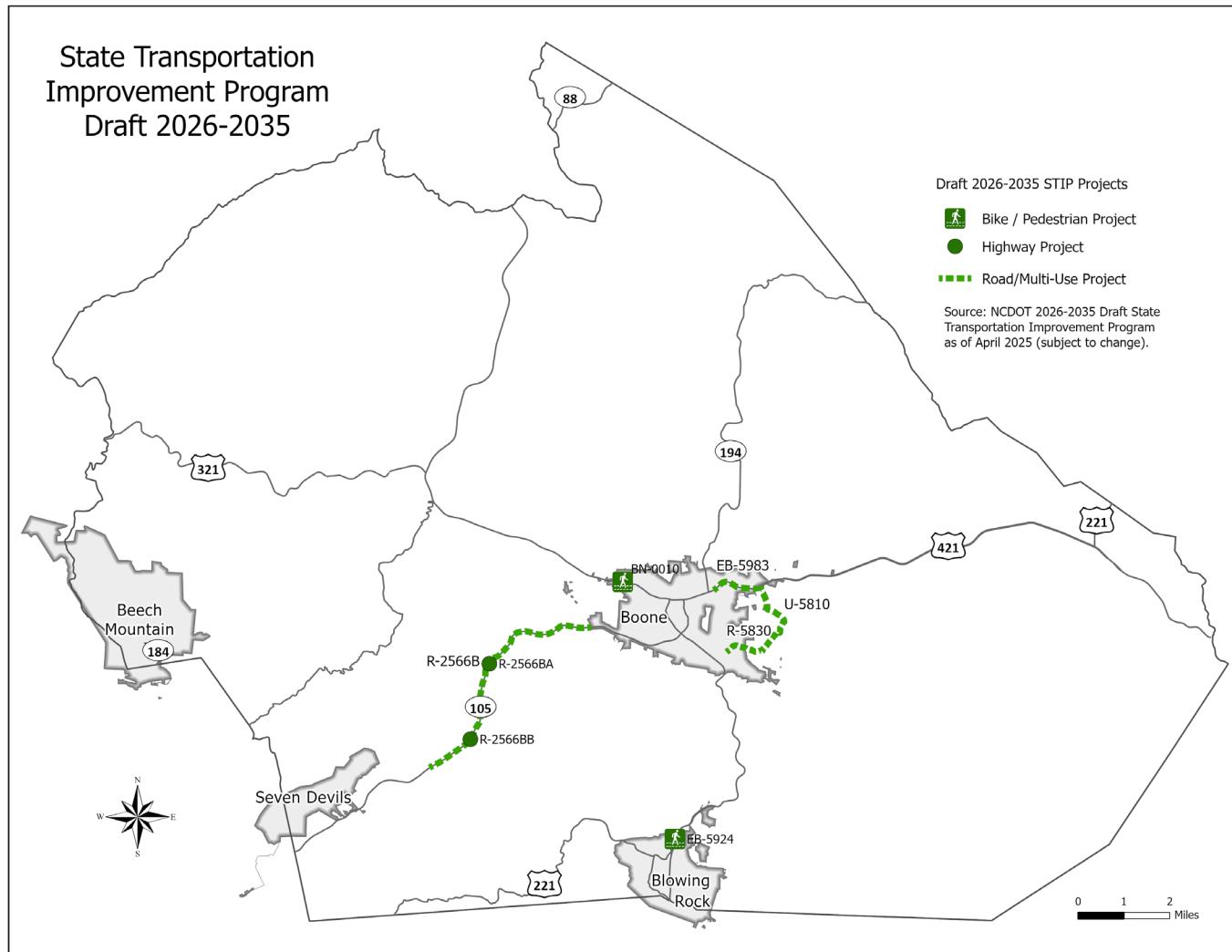
Transportation Network

Illustration 12 Road and Highway Network



Widening Projects

Illustration 13 Proposed Widening Projects





TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

In March 2010, the Transportation Planning Branch of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and Watauga County initiated a study to cooperatively develop the Watauga County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). This is a long range multi-modal transportation plan that covers transportation needs through 2040. Modes of transportation evaluated as part of this plan include highway, public transportation and rail, bicycle, and pedestrian. The current plan is scheduled to be reevaluated and updated in 2026.

Findings of the CTP study were based on an analysis of the transportation system, environmental screening, and public input. The report documents the following recommendations for improvement:

Highway

- US 221 – Widening US 221 from US 421 in Deep Gap to NC 88 in Ashe County to a four-lane boulevard. (COMPLETED)
- US 321/421 – Improving US 321/421 from the NC 105 Bypass to US 321 at Vilas to a four-lane divided, partially controlled access facility.
- US 421 Bypass (“The Boone Bypass”) – The CTP proposes a bypass south of Boone to relieve congestion on US 421, US 321, and NC 105 in Boone. This project would work in conjunction with other projects to reduce the mixed traffic on King Street, to improve linkage to major facilities, to improve traffic flow along major facilities, and to improve safety.
- NC 105 – Widening NC 105 from the NC 105 Bypass (SR1107) to Avery County to a four-lane facility with a median. (In Progress)

- NC 105 Bypass – Widening the NC 105 Bypass (SR 1107) from NC 105 to US 321/421 to a three-lane facility.
- NC 194 – Widening NC 194 from US 221/421 to Howards Creek Road (SR 13056) to a four-lane boulevard.

Public Transportation & Rail

- US 321 – A new bus route between Boone and Blowing Rock utilizing US 321.
- Park-and-Ride – The CTP proposes seven new park-and-ride locations along major routes.

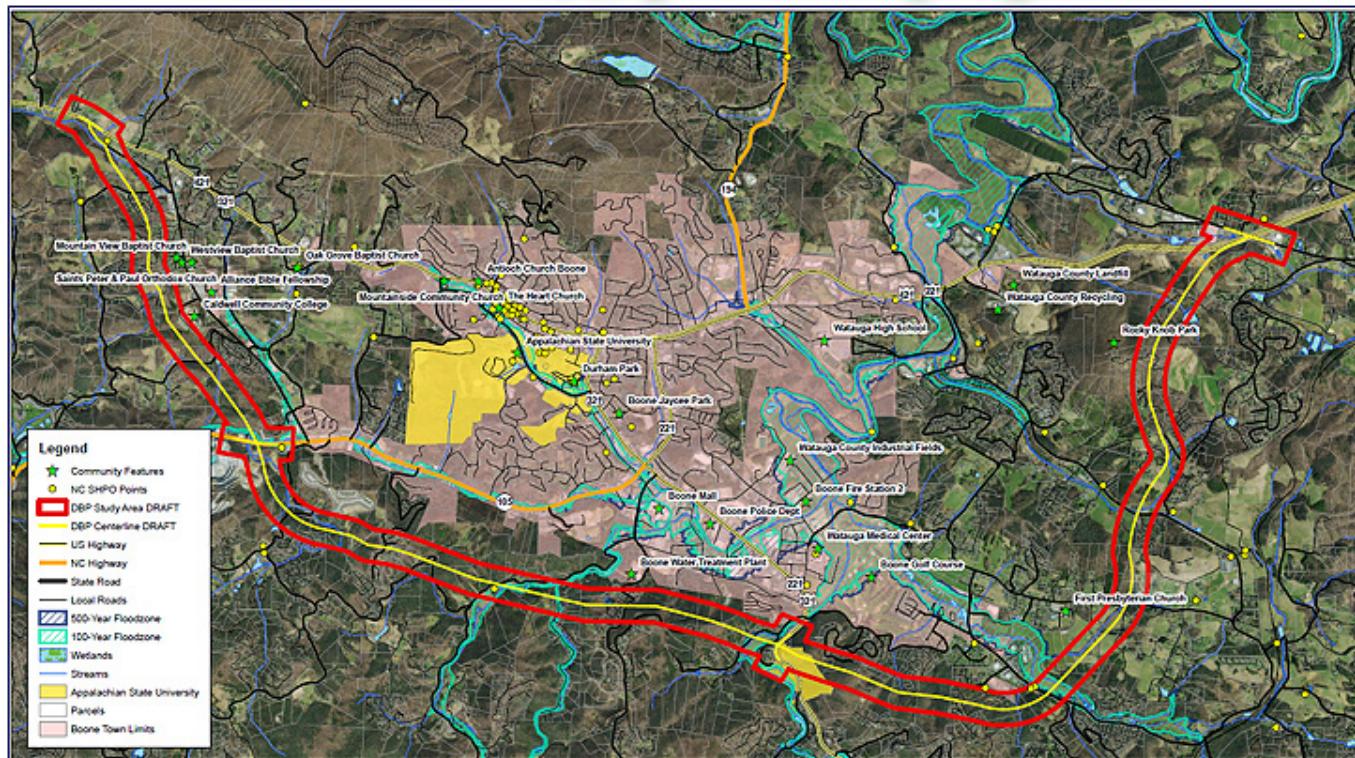
Bicycle/Pedestrian

- Middle Fork Greenway – A new multi-use path between Boone and Blowing Rock parallel to US 321. (Construction on the first section of the trail began in 2012. To date, 1.75 miles of the 6.5 mile trail are complete, with another 2.3 miles currently under construction)



Illustration 14

Daniel Boone Parkway Preliminary Alignment



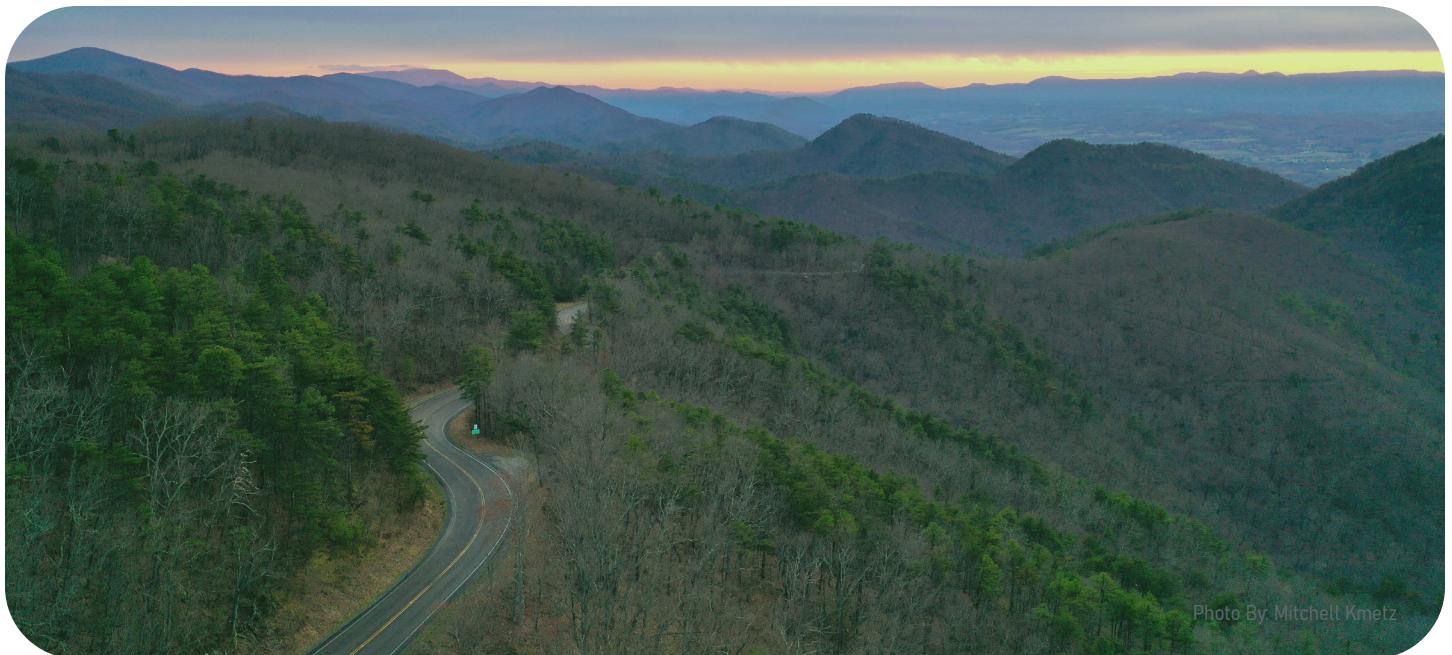
The Daniel Boone Parkway (AKA the Boone Bypass)

- Many of the issues related to transportation planning in Watauga County deal with traffic congestion, and particularly traffic congestion in Boone. Many believe a bypass around Boone is the answer to the problem. An alternate route around Boone will need to provide easy access points for those whose end destination is Boone.
- Boone also has a Thoroughfare Plan. The first plan was completed in 1964, the second in 1976, and the most recent in 1992. A major element in each of the plans was the construction of a route to bypass Boone. The NCDOT outlined possible routes in the 1992 plan.
- In 2008, a study, a "Pre-TIP Study Report US 421 Improvements TIP Project U-2703" was released. The study considered fifteen alternate routes for the Boone Bypass and narrowed it down to four low-build alternatives.
- The 2013 Watauga County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) evaluated the four Pre-TIP recommendations, and three additional alternatives were proposed.
- The CTP recommended a route that extends from US 421/321 west of the NC 105 Bypass to a new location on NC 105 further west of the existing interchange. It continues west (south of the existing US 105) intersecting with Hwy 321/221 near Fairway Drive and loops west of the headwaters of the Rocky Branch Stream.
- The CTP recommended route for the bypass was presented to the public in 2012 as part of the CTP draft. Numerous comments were made opposing the project and questioned its need according to the CTP.
- As of 2024 the project is still on the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), but only section B has been funded for preliminary engineering. Illustration 14 shows the current proposed alignment of the roadway.



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

- Watauga County's public transportation authority is the AppalCART. It serves all of Watauga County and operates as a coordinated effort between local, state, and federal governments, human service agencies and Appalachian State University. AppalCART provides numerous Boone routes free of charge and provides rural routes via van to destinations such as Zionville, Foscoe, Matney, Meat Camp, Blowing Rock, Deep Gap, and Cove Creek for a route fee. All routes are open to the public. Out-of-county routes to Winston-Salem, Hickory and Charlotte are available for residents to attend medical appointments.
- The County does not have a public airport, but there is a short, private airstrip in the Kellwood/ Bamboo area. The nearest airports providing commercial passenger service are in Charlotte, Greensboro, Asheville, North Carolina, and Blountville, Tennessee. General aviation airports with runways over 5,500 feet are located in North Wilkesboro, Morganton/Lenoir, and Hickory.
- Sunway charter provides two round trip routes from Boone daily, one to Greensboro and one to Charlotte with service to certain towns and hospitals in between.
- The Hickory "Hop" currently provides a shuttle service between Watauga County and the Charlotte airport at four scheduled times daily, seven days each week.





Recommendations

Highways

- Watauga County, Town of Boone, High Country Rural Planning Organization (RPO), NCDOT, App State and citizens groups should continue to work together to evaluate the Daniel Boone Parkway project. Further evaluation of the Daniel Boone Parkway will happen through a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) steering committee during its next update in 2026.
- Watauga County should continue to work with NCDOT officials through the High Country RPO to prioritize and advance projects identified in the Watauga County Comprehensive Transportation Plan.
- NCDOT, in conjunction with Watauga County and the High Country RPO, has prioritized the following transportation projects, scheduled for delivery in the Draft 2026-2035 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP):
 - ▼ Widen NC 105 to four lanes between NC 105 Bypass and Clarks Creek Road (SR 1136) (Right-of-way in progress) (R-2566B)
 - ▼ At NC 105 and Broadstone Road intersection, construct new bridge over the Watauga River and left-turn lane. (Construction in progress) (R-2566BA)
 - ▼ Realign intersection of NC 105 and Old Shulls Mill Road (SR 1658). (Construction in progress) (R-2566BB)
 - ▼ Upgrade Deerfield Road (SR 1522) from State Farm Road to Wilson Ridge Road (SR 1523). (Right-of-way to begin in 2025) (R-5830)
 - ▼ Modernize Bamboo Rd (SR 1514) and Wilson Ridge Road (SR 1523) from US 421/US 221 to Deerfield Road (SR 1522). (Right-of-way in progress) (U-5810)
 - ▼ Poplar Grove Connector Rd (SR1180) to Westwood Apartments. Sidewalk &

- ▼ Grove Street to Brookshire Rd. Construction of multi-use path. (EB-5983)

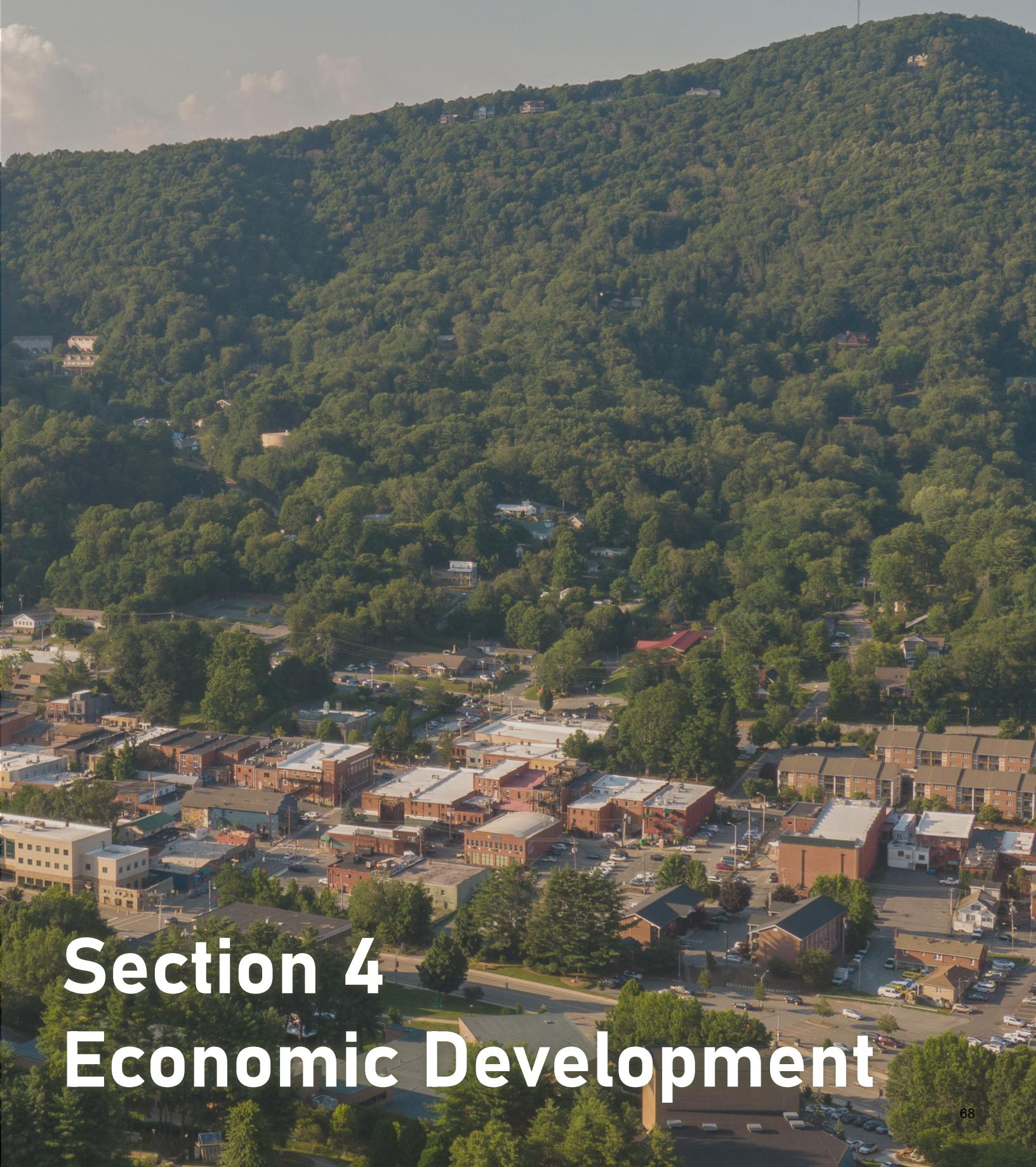
Multimodal

- Town, County, High Country Council of Governments, and NCDOT officials should place strong emphasis on creating roadways that are safe for all modes of transportation, including bicycles and pedestrians.
- Expand AppalCART rural routes and decrease the service intervals between existing stops so that more people have the opportunity to ride and waiting times are shorter.
- Expand AppalCART service to affordable housing projects as feasible.
- Create Park-n-Ride lots outside of Boone and provide AppalCART service to these lots in order to capitalize on the use of mass-transit and reduce downtown congestion.
- Boone and App State should work together to: Promote and provide more environmentally friendly, greener, safer, and sustainable transportation modes, especially for pedestrians and bicycles.
- Provide more parking areas for bicycles.

Transportation Planning

Watauga County should:

- Continue to work closely with NCDOT, The Towns of Boone, Blowing Rock, Beech Mountain, Seven Devils, App State, and the High Country RPO to identify needed transportation improvements in the County.
- Continue to develop minimum standards for new and redesigned roads that specify the creation of bicycle lanes and sidewalks that promote safe alternatives.



Section 4

Economic Development



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Preface

The economy of Watauga County is diverse. The principal economic segments that drive the County's economy include education, tourism, healthcare, finance, construction, services and agriculture. In 2024, Policom Corporation ranked Boone 47th among 543 micropolitan areas in the U.S. for economic strength.

Findings

- **Quality of Life** - The concern for preserving and improving "quality of life" is a theme that permeates all aspects of Watauga County's future. All efforts to promote economic development should focus on "better rather than bigger" and enhancing "quality of life."
- **Gateways** - Watauga County's principal transportation corridors are also its major economic corridors. They are "economic gateways" into the community. These corridors offer visitors their first perception of Watauga and they are therefore an essential element of planning for the future. The primary corridors include US 421, US 321 and NC Hwy 105. The Deep Gap area is of particular importance since it contains much of the most desirable land for development and has good transportation accessibility.

Economic Development Infrastructure

- The economic development related organizations are charged with various aspects of economic promotion and support in Watauga County. While each is important, there is a growing need to achieve a higher degree of cooperation and ensure that the array of activities collectively promote established core objectives.
- Critical Economic Sectors - Watauga County's key economic sectors are education and research, tourism and recreation, the medical services field, construction, retail, and tourism.

Education/Research

- Appalachian State University (App State) is the largest employer in Watauga County. In July 2024, it had just under 4,000 total full-time, part-time and temporary employees.

Medical/Research

- The second largest employer in the County is UNC Health - Appalachian (formerly known as Appalachian Regional Healthcare System). In 2025, it had 1,600 employees.
- UNC Health- Appalachian is the predominant regional medical center, comprised of three hospitals and thirteen medical practices.



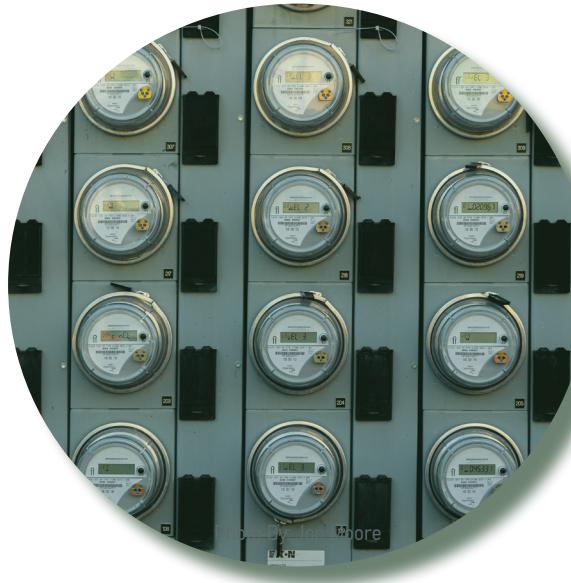
Tourism and Recreation

- ▀ Tourism has a profound effect on the economy in Watauga County. According to "The Economic Impact of Travel on NC Counties," a study prepared for Visit NC by Tourism Economics, Watauga tourism generated \$517.5 million in expenditures in 2023 and a tourism payroll of \$127.7 million for 3,064 jobholders.
- ▀ Ample recreational opportunities, including fishing, hiking, biking, skiing, rafting, canoeing, kayaking, rock climbing and App State athletic events, also add to the appeal of the County and contribute to the economy.
- ▀ Watauga County is a hub for many tourism activities that take place throughout the region. Visitors to adjoining counties make Boone the base of their activities for lodging, dining, medical services and other services.
- ▀ Watauga County's recreational opportunities are enhanced by its unique and diverse environment, which includes assets such as the Blue Ridge Parkway, Mountain to Sea Trail, Elk Knob State Park, a portion of Grandfather Mountain State Park, New River, Watauga River and many pristine streams.
- ▀ App State athletics has had a significant impact on the Watauga County Economy. A 2024 study, "Annual Economic Impact of Appalachian Athletics" by the Center for Economic Research and Policy Analysis reports that App State athletics program provides an injection of money into the regional economy in the neighborhood of \$96 million annually. This increase in economic activity translates to 643 additional jobs and \$32.7 million in additional income as well as \$3.3 million in indirect tax revenue for local governments. In 2023, more than 208,000 spectators watched six home games and spent over \$34.9 million on hotels, restaurants, and grocery stores.
- ▀ Agritourism has become a thriving industry in recent years. Picking berries and fresh flowers in the summer; apple picking, pumpkin patch/corn mazes in the fall; and choose-and-cut Christmas tree farms in the winter, lure visitors to Watauga County all year long.



Industry and Business

- ▼ Retaining and enhancing existing industry and business are fundamental to the County's economic future. Local officials actively sought to promote economic development in the County with the creation of the Watauga County Industrial Park. The Park, now filled to capacity, provides many jobs to County residents.
- ▼ Over the years manufacturing and industry have had less of an impact on Watauga County's economy. Presently there are a handful of industrial firms conducting business in the County. Most are small "home grown" businesses. The two largest are ECR Software, developing software and point of sale equipment and Goodnight Brothers, specializing in the art of dry curing hams.
- ▼ A major factor in attracting industry and business is the provision of the services they need to thrive. Services such as the provision of water, sewer, electricity and communications are very important to almost any kind of business.



Agriculture

- ▼ Watauga County residents have considerable interest in local farming practices and the availability of local foods.
- ▼ Approximately 30 growers produce Fraser Firs in Watauga County.
- ▼ Local vegetables and other crops represent an important economic segment
- ▼ The County currently has three Farmer's Markets. Two operating in the summer months and one wintertime market, and one Food Hub; all featuring food from local growers.





Recommendations

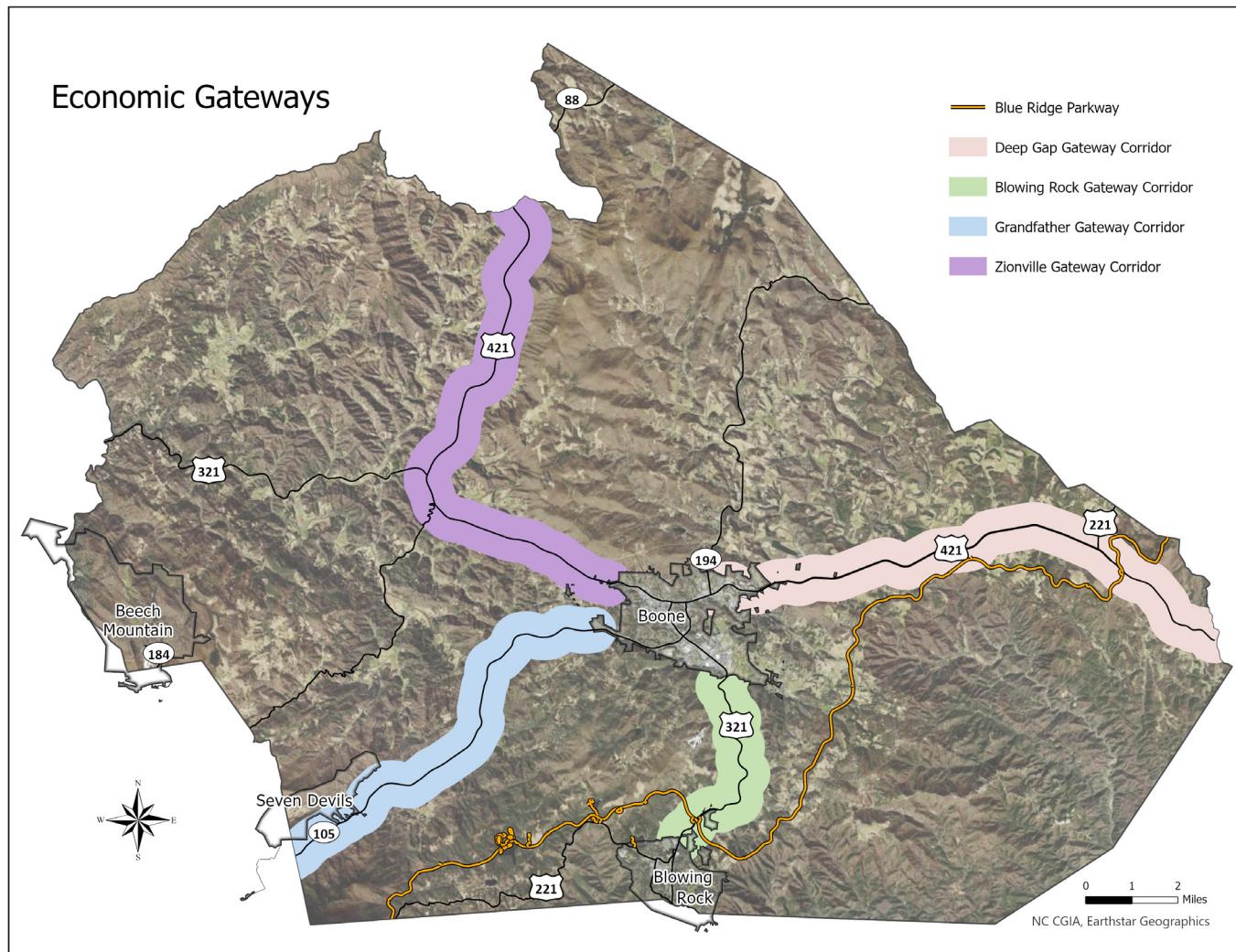
Strengthening Organization

- Strengthen the focus of Economic Development continuing to make the Watauga Economic Commission the core agency for economic planning, policy interpretation and coordination. By continuing to support this ongoing program would enable the County to have a key role in economic development. This program fosters communication, “sustainability” and innovation among existing economic programs and facilitate new initiatives that either strengthen existing programs or create new initiatives designed to generate new economic investments and employment.
- Invest in the creation of a dynamic and comprehensive economic development strategy to better explore and capitalize on potential economic opportunities.
- Encourage and facilitate the provision of essential infrastructure, such as transportation, water, sewer and natural gas, to provide an attractive business climate for potential economic development.
- Work with and coordinate the wide range of economic development resources available to the County, including Appalachian Regional Commission, App State Center for Entrepreneurship, Boone Business Exchange, High Country Young Professionals, Startup High Country, Service Corps of Retired Executives, Tourism Development Authority, Watauga County Economic Development Commission, and others to explore innovative and fresh concepts. Organize annual or semi- annual workshops with these entities to create a spirit of cooperation and focus resources.
- Where appropriate, promote regional economic development strategies beyond Watauga County that provide employment opportunities for Watauga County residents.
- Promote the development of renewable energy concepts and participation in renewable energy initiatives.

Economic Gateways

- Watauga transportation corridors are also economic “Gateways” (Illustration 15) into the County and are critical to the County’s economic future. Watauga County should guide development and protect the integrity and potential of these key strategic economic corridors.
- “Gateways” are defined as the entrances or means of access to Watauga County and are identified as the primary arterial highways (US 321, US 421, and NC Hwy 105). Providing attractive as well as functional “Gateways” into Watauga County facilitates both the positive image and economy of the community.
- The economic growth of the community is linked to the vitality and appearance of these “Gateways.”

Illustration 15 Economic Gateways Map



- ▼ The quality of life enjoyed by Watauga County citizens and visitors is directly related to the natural environment. The "Gateways" are inextricably linked to the perception of this unique environment and the rich quality of life.
- ▼ The aesthetic quality of the "Gateways" concept is vitally important to the economic future of the community. Incentives for property owners and the community should be developed to maintain attractive and compatible development that will enhance the total economic value of the "Gateways" to the community.
- ▼ Formulate an individual "Gateway Corridor" strategy for each of the four (4) designated "Gateways."



KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

Education/Research

- ▼ Work with App State to capitalize on University research opportunities.
- ▼ Strengthen the alliance with Appalachian State University and Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute to understand and attain education and skill levels needed by Watauga residents.

Medical/Research

- ▼ Watauga County should collaborate with medical professionals and UNC Health - Appalachian to facilitate a "medical cluster" concept to further develop the groundwork that has been laid in making Watauga County a regional medical center.
- ▼ Encourage Appalachian State University and Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute to explore new healthcare ventures related to the nursing programs at each institution.
- ▼ Focus on and promote activities and businesses that are involved in technology, research, education and medicine.

Tourism and Recreation

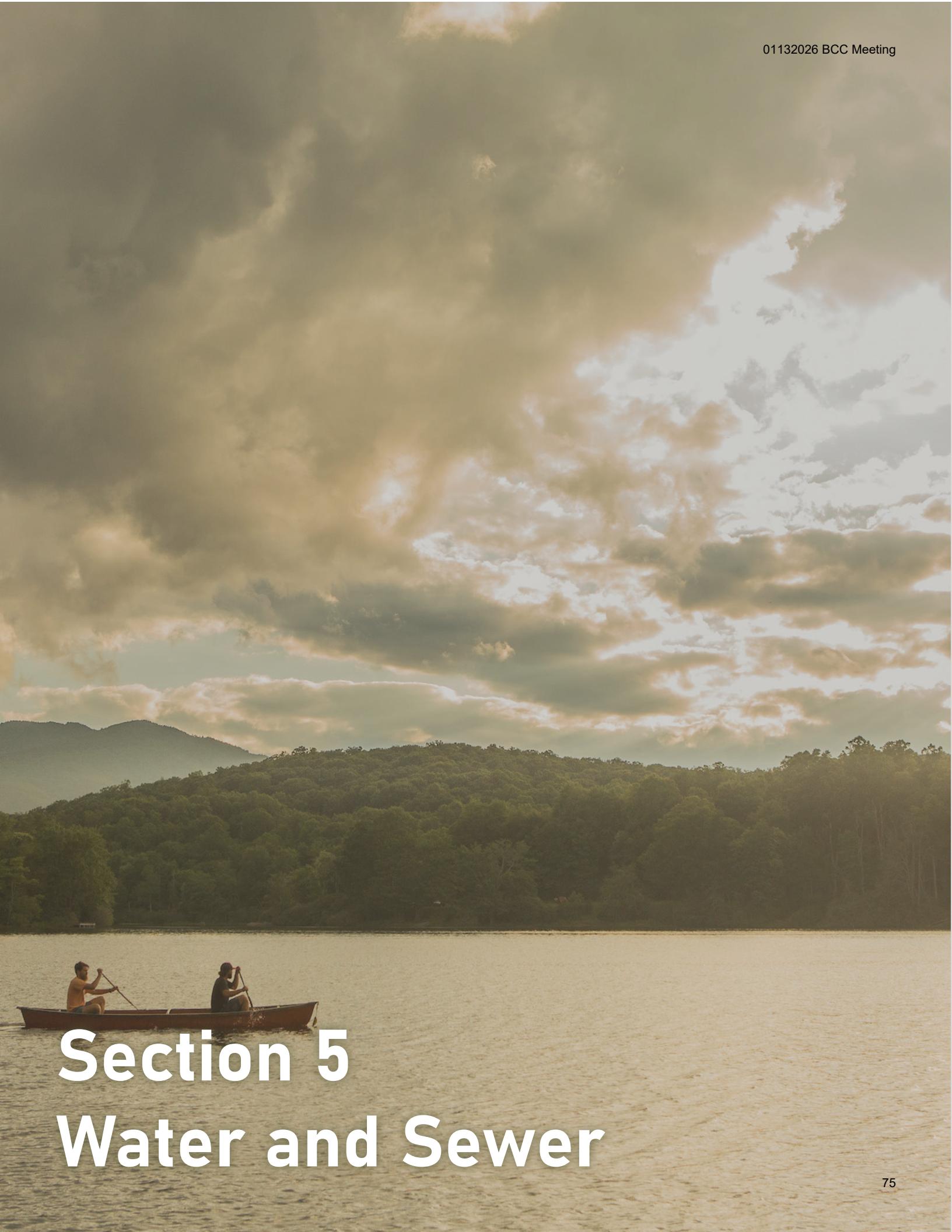
- ▼ Capitalize on existing tourism by encouraging the Tourism Development Authorities to enhance and increase strategic marketing of Watauga County.
- ▼ Fully develop and promote the greenways concept such as the greenway connector near the high school, trails, parks and other eco-tourism assets. These assets are especially important in promoting a healthy lifestyle and quality of life themes.
- ▼ Promote eco-tourism, defined as "environmentally responsible travel and visitation to natural areas," in order to
- ▼ Enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features).

Industry and Business

- ▼ Expand and strengthen support between the community and existing businesses and industry to reassure businesses that their presence is appreciated and their needs are considered.

Agriculture

- ▼ Promote the production of agricultural products to capitalize on the growing demand for local food products. Conduct relevant market research to support a marketing strategy for such products.
- ▼ Find effective ways to facilitate the local farmers markets, and related efforts of the Watauga County Cooperative Extension. The Farmer's Market has grown beyond the capacity of the initial site and a new location is warranted to enable the market to re-consolidate and continue to grow. A strategy is proposed that addresses a new location with expanded hours of operation and greater diversity of products.
- ▼ Promote and explore opportunities in niche markets of food production, such as herbs and spices, grapes (vineyards), strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and local vegetables, and promote as local foods.
- ▼ Work with local agricultural interests to create an interest group committee to promote Agritourism and sponsor demonstration projects, such as organic gardening with a living historic farm.



Section 5

Water and Sewer



WATER AND SEWER

Preface

Water is a valuable and precious resource. Stress caused by increasing population and dwindling resources due to drought, pollution and misuse should cause us to look closer at how we use and protect our water resources.

- ▼ Within the County, four municipalities provide water services and three municipalities provide sewer services. Appalachian State University provides its own water supply.
- ▼ The adequacy of water and sewer is essential for commercial or residential growth. The provision of water and wastewater to areas outside of municipalities is of strategic interest to the County.

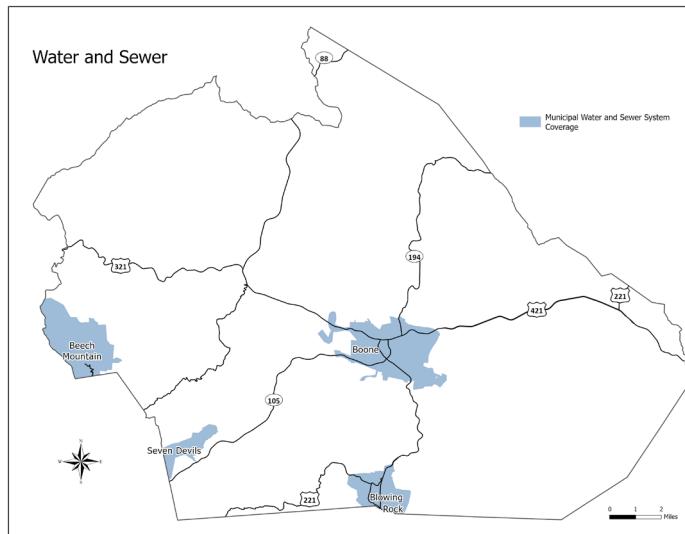
Findings – Water

- ▼ The National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) has assigned Watauga County a drought rating of D-1 meaning the County is currently in a moderate drought . The County has been designated D1, D0 (Abnormally Dry), or “none” since 2016 when the county was briefly a D2 (Severe Drought).
- ▼ As part of a USDA Raw Water Project, the town of Boone constructed the Greg Young raw water intake facility on the New River. The project, completed in 2020, along with upgrades to the existing Ricky L. Miller Water Treatment Plant, expanded the Town’s water capacity from 3.0 million gallons per day (MGD) to 4.5 (MGD).
- ▼ The Greg Young New River Intake is now Boone’s primary water source providing 99.4% of their water in 2023 per the Division of Water Resources 2023 Local Water Supply Plan. The Town has two other intakes, Southfork Intake, providing 0.4% of the Town’s water supply in 2023 and Winkler Creek Intake, used only for emergencies.
- ▼ Water and sewer lines have been installed in recent years along the NC 105 corridor to the top of Rock Crusher Hill.
- ▼ Boone and Watauga County are presently considering the development of water supply lines along the U.S. 321 and 421 corridors.
- ▼ The water supply for Beech Mountain comes from Buckeye Lake which is located within the Town limits and some 2,000 feet below and five miles away from the Town Center.
- ▼ The water supply for Seven Devils is provided by wells with storage tanks owned by the Town.
- ▼ Several large developments provide water to their residents, including Hound Ears, Echota, Mill Ridge, Blue Ridge Mountain Club, and the Ponds.
- ▼ Watauga County is currently not a purveyor of water services.

Findings – Sewer

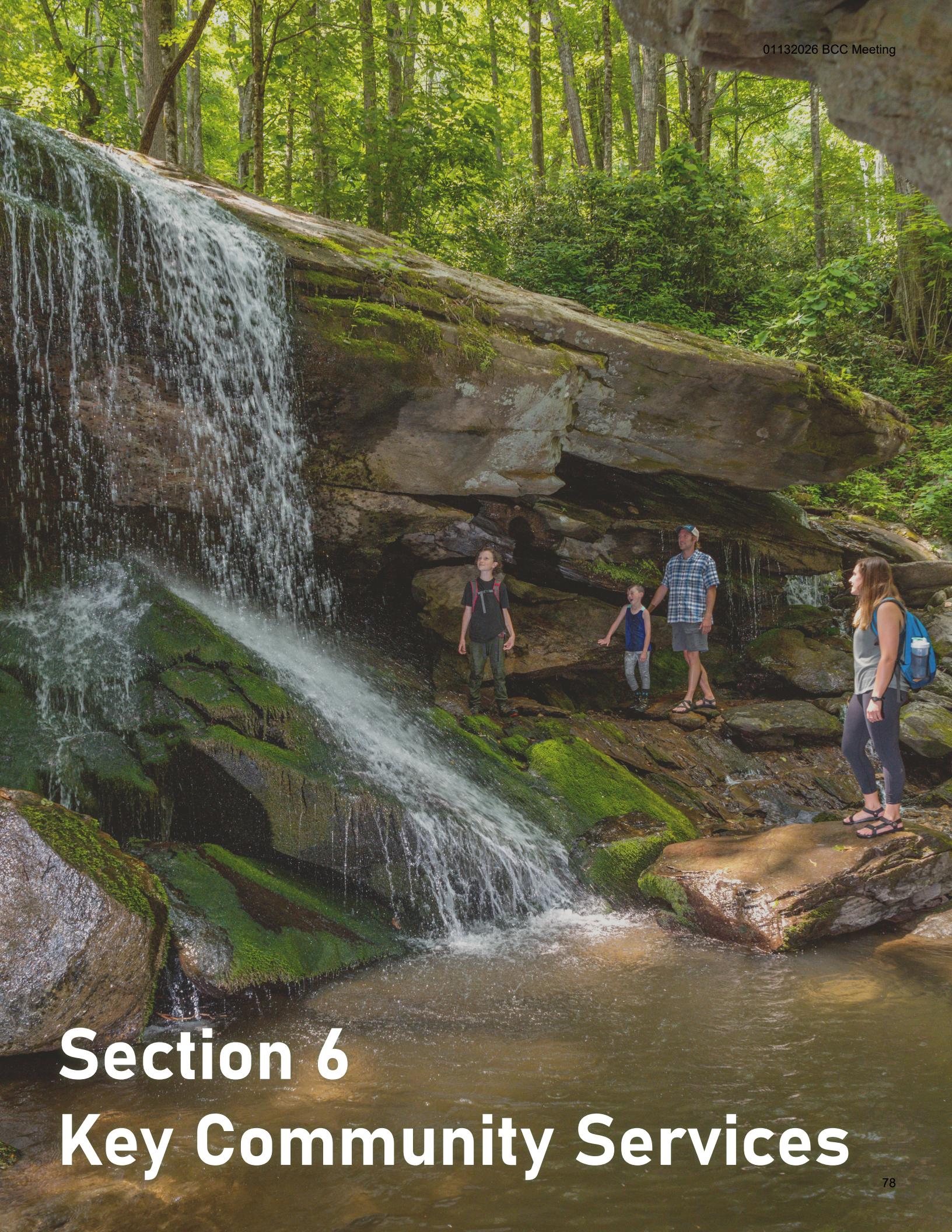
- ▼ The Town of Boone provides wastewater treatment to residents and businesses within the Town's limits.
- ▼ Appalachian State University relies upon the Town of Boone for provision of sewer service.
- ▼ The Town of Blowing Rock provides sewer services to most residents within the Town's limits, but none outside of the Town.
- ▼ Beech Mountain provides sewer services to most properties in the Town.
- ▼ Seven Devils does not provide sewer services. However, there are two private sewer systems serving certain parcels.
- ▼ Wastewater treatment systems and service are not available to most residents and businesses outside the municipalities. Private communities providing wastewater treatment include Hound Ears, Echota, Mill Ridge, Blue Ridge Mountain Club and the Ponds.

Illustration 16 Water and Sewer



Recommendations

- The County should continue in an undefined role regarding water and/or sewer projects.
- The County should promote sound water and sewer intergovernmental cooperation, facilitating needed and feasible development of infrastructure and services in areas not currently served.
- Watauga County should expect and plan for future strategic investments in the planning and the development of water and sewer infrastructure and services for areas of the County not presently served (where feasibility can be demonstrated).
- The ownership or resulting infrastructure should be assumed by existing service providers.
- Watauga County should work with municipalities to help guide water and sewer to areas targeted for economic development and affordable housing.
- Watauga County should make conservation and protection of water resources a principal goal.
- Watauga County should provide for the proper disposal of chemicals and substances likely to end up in the water supply by making disposal of such items easier and more convenient, and by increasing the frequency with which toxic substances can be disposed of at the landfill and convenience sites.
- Watauga County should encourage the use of indigenous vegetation for landscaping. Planting vegetation that is not indigenous to the area may require more water.
- Watauga County should seek grants and other funding to help with the expansion of municipal service to unserved areas.
- Watauga County should encourage an intergovernmental endeavor to develop a 10 year Capital Improvement Plan in the interest of economic development and public health.



Section 6

Key Community Services

KEY COMMUNITY SERVICES

Preface

Key community services provided by Watauga County include schools, law enforcement (Sheriff's Office), emergency services and community centers.

KEY COMMUNITY SERVICES – SCHOOLS

- ▼ Watauga County elementary schools have 3,057 students in grades kindergarten through eight. The high school enrollment includes 1,245 students in grades 9 -12 (2024 - 2025 school year) with an additional 15 enrolled in Watauga Virtual Academy, and 272 in Watauga Innovation Academy, a partnership with CCC&TI. Pre-kindergarten students also attend the elementary schools.
- ▼ A new state-of-the art building is under construction to replace Valle Crucis Elementary School with occupancy planned during the 2025-26 school year.
- ▼ Enrollment in Watauga County schools is projected to be relatively stable over the next few years, indicating no need for additional schools in the short-term.
- ▼ The eight elementary schools are located throughout the County (Illustration 17) and conveniently serve most communities. In addition, Watauga County Virtual Academy is available for grades K-8 and is intended as an opportunity to serve families who need more flexibility in delivery.
- ▼ The Watauga County School system has a Facilities Improvement Plan outlining capital improvement needs for facilities.
- ▼ Based on 2024 "End-of-Course" test results for grades 3-8, Watauga County students had a higher percentage of students in

Level 4 (Through understanding of grade-level content) and Level 5 (Comprehensive understanding) than the state average in math, reading, and science. Watauga students in grades 8-12 scored higher in Biology, English, and Math than the average of students in all North Carolina schools.

- ▼ In 2024, High school students scored an average of 1,210 on SAT exams, which combine math and critical reading. This is compared to SAT scores averaging 1,166 for all North Carolina students.
- ▼ In 2024, Watauga County high school students scored an average of 19.8 on the ACT exam, compared to the state of North Carolina average of 18.1. The ACT assesses English, math, reading, and science proficiencies.
- ▼ The Watauga County graduation rate was 90.3% in 2024 compared to 87.0% for North Carolina.



Photo By: Element5 Digital



Recommendations – Schools

- Implement the following capital improvement projects listed in the Watauga County School Facilities Improvement Plan:
 - Construct an addition to Parkway Elementary School
 - Repair the roof at Green Valley Elementary School
 - Repairs to existing facilities for more utility efficiency
 - Install air conditioning at the following schools
 - ▼ Green Valley Elementary School (2025/2026)
 - ▼ Bethel Elementary School (2025/2026)
 - ▼ Blowing Rock Elementary School (2026/2027)
 - ▼ Cove Creek Elementary School (2026/2027)
 - ▼ Mabel Elementary School (2026/2027)

Illustration 17 Schools in Watauga County

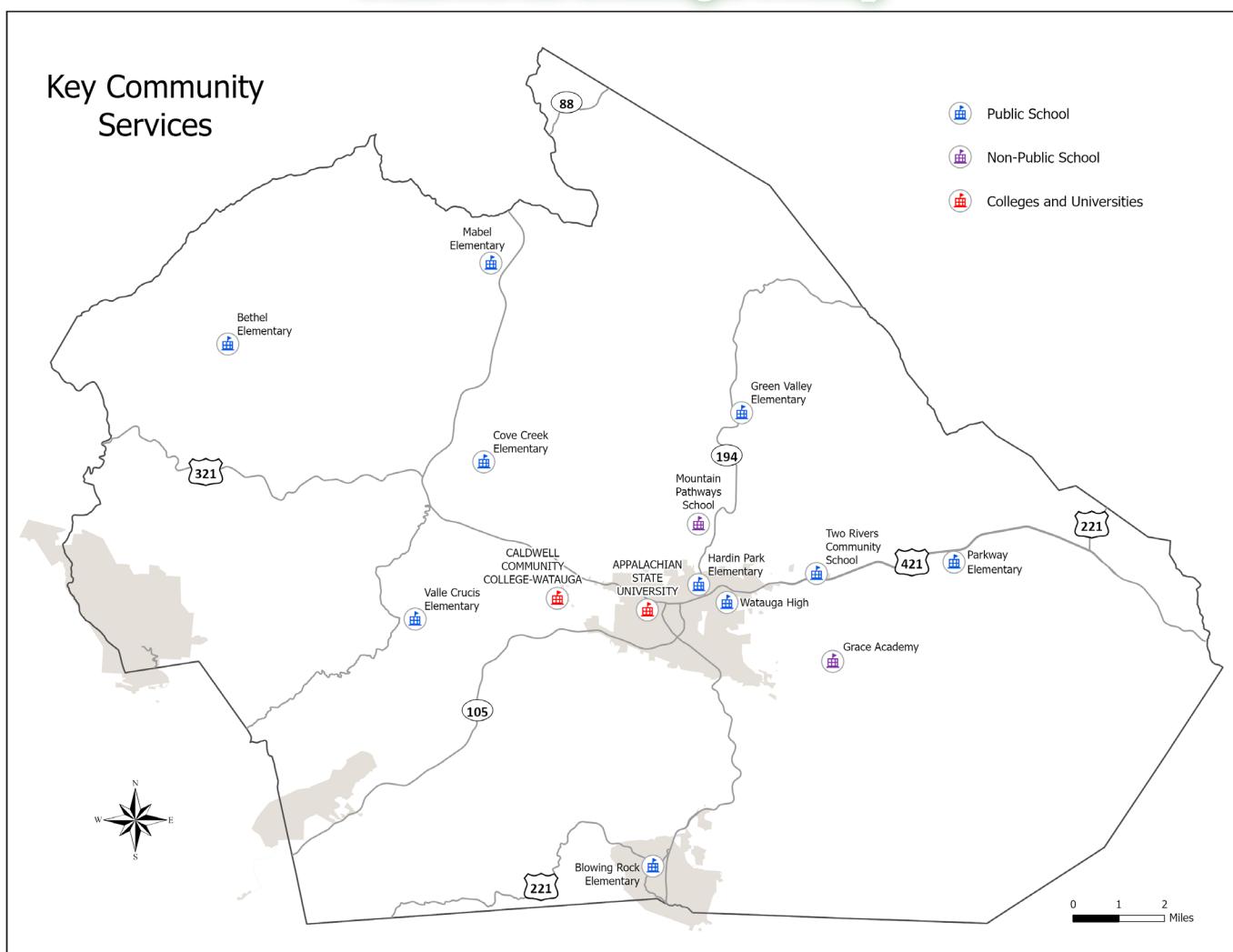




Table 22
List of County Schools with Enrollment

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			ENROLLMENT SPRING 2025
BETHEL ELEMENTARY	SUGAR GROVE	K-8	127
BLOWING ROCK ELEMENTARY	BLOWING ROCK	K-8	402
COVE CREEK ELEMENTARY	VILAS	K-8	287
GREEN VALLEY ELEMENTARY	BOONE	K-8	294
HARDIN PARK ELEMENTARY	BOONE	K-8	861
MABEL ELEMENTARY	ZIONVILLE	K-8	137
PARKWAY ELEMENTARY	BOONE	K-8	618
VALLE CRUCIS ELEMENTARY	SUGAR GROVE	K-8	331
HIGH SCHOOL			
WATAUGA COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL	BOONE	9-12	1,245
OTHER			
WATAUGA VIRTUAL ACADEMY	ONLINE	K-8	15
WATAUGA INNOVATION ACADEMY	PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN WHS & CCC&TI	9-12+ ASSOCIATE DEGREE	272
TOTAL ENROLLMENT			4,589



KEY COMMUNITY SERVICES - LAW ENFORCEMENT

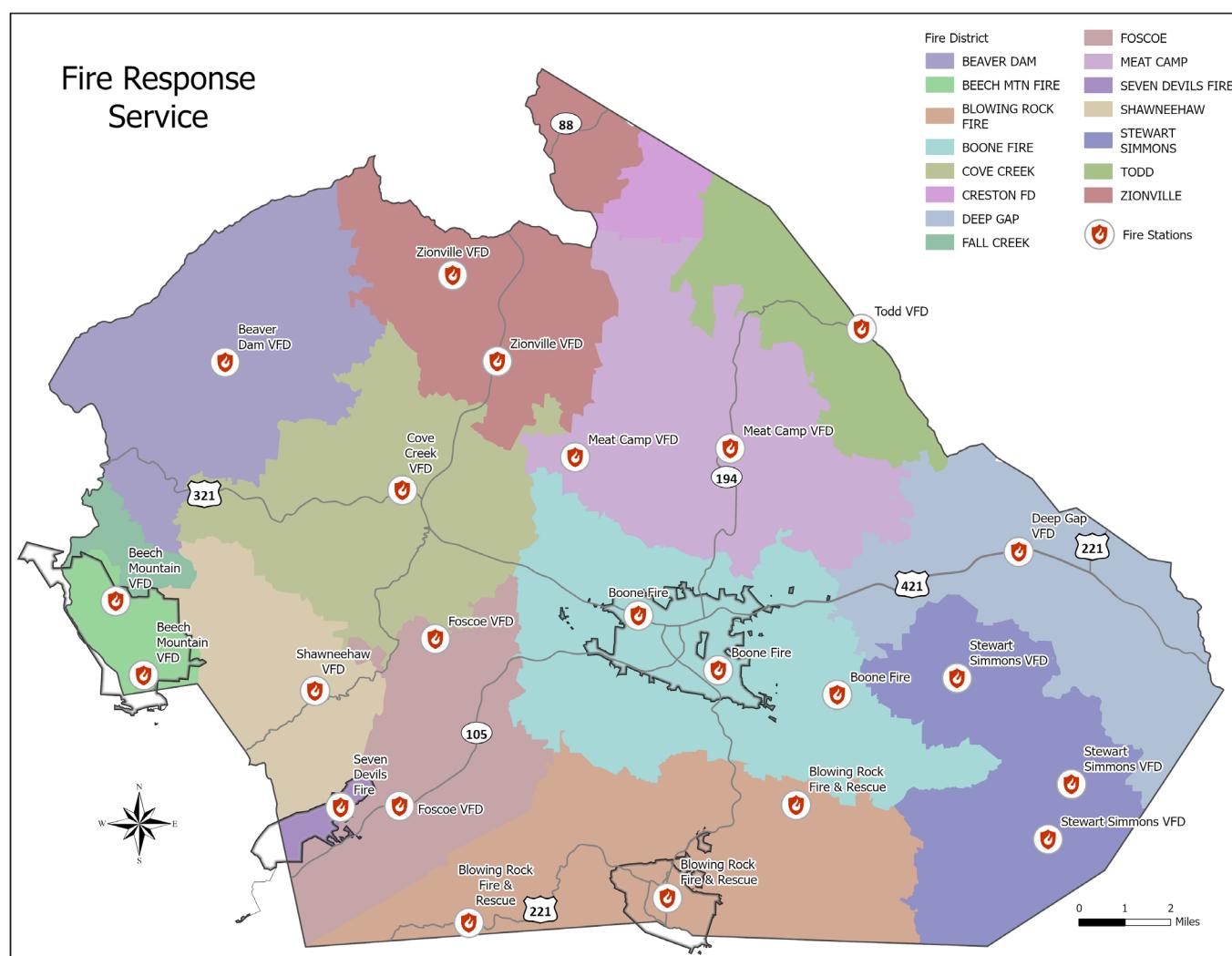
- ▼ In 2025, the Watauga County Sheriff's office had 55 sworn officers, including one sheriff, 3 captains, 15 detectives and civil officers, 22 shift deputies, and 9 school resource officers.
- ▼ In the Sheriffs' Offices 2020 report produced by the U.S. Department of Justice, the average number of sworn officers for counties with a population between 50,000 – 99,999 is 1.6 per 1,000 residents.
- ▼ Watauga County has a population of 54,784. With 55 sworn officers they are below the average of 86 expected for a county their size. The population figure does not include Watauga County's large number of seasonal residents and tourists, which should be considered in determining the adequacy of services.
- ▼ Additional Deputies have been requested in the 2025-2026 budget. The Department also applies for grants to help obtain equipment and tools used by law enforcement agencies.
- ▼ The Watauga County Detention Center has a maximum capacity of 106 and employs 28 jailers.
- ▼ A study is currently underway to plan for a medical/mental health wing at the Detention Center.
- ▼ Workspace for deputies and other staff is marginally adequate, indicating a probable need for expansion of the existing building/facility in the future. Watauga County deputies regularly respond to a wide range of calls. These include domestic disputes and family disturbances, theft, burglary, and other property crimes, as well as drug-related incidents. Deputies are often called for welfare checks and mental health crises, serving warrants, subpoenas, and other civil papers, and assisting other agencies like Boone Police or State Troopers. They also handle missing person reports in the county's rural and mountainous areas and respond to school-related incidents, whether through school resource officer duties or threats made toward educational facilities. Deputies are often assigned to special community events such as (Emergency Fest, Pill Turn In, and National Night Out) and engage in a lot of under reported community care-taking activities.
- ▼ There is now a dedicated transport officer that oversees most out of county transportation of mental commitments, prisoner transports, and pick-ups.
- ▼ The Narcotics division is dealing with narcotics entering Watauga County from a multitude of locations some from transnational organizations. Fentanyl is of great concern.
- ▼ All municipalities in Watauga County have police forces.



Recommendations - Law Enforcement

- Continue to advocate for additional deputies to meet the law enforcement needs and demands of Watauga County
- Continue to pursue the construction of a new medical/mental wing at Detention Center

Illustration 18 Watauga Fire Districts and Station Map





KEY COMMUNITY SERVICES - EMERGENCY SERVICES

- ▼ Watauga County has a total of 15 fire districts, five of those, Beech Mountain, Creston, Fall Creek, Seven Devils, and Todd are shared with adjacent counties.
- ▼ There are a total of 23 fire stations, 17 of which are in the rural areas of Beaver Dam, Beech Mountain, Cove Creek, Deep Gap, Foscoe, Meat Camp, Seven Devils, Shawneehaw, Stewart Simmons, Todd and Zionville. (Illustration 18)
- ▼ The Beech Mountain, Blowing Rock, Boone, Depp Gap, Stewart Simmons, and Foscoe Fire Departments have at least one paid staff who work with volunteer firefighters. All of the other districts are strictly volunteer.
- ▼ All fire districts outside of municipalities in Watauga County are fire tax supported districts.
- ▼ The large amount of training required to become a volunteer firefighter, the time required away from primary jobs to fight fires, and the expense of travel to and from emergency calls often hurts retention of volunteer firefighters.
- ▼ For many years Watauga County's ambulance and rescue service has been a paid, contracted service with the Watauga County Emergency & Rescue squad acting as a backup.
- ▼ In June 2025, Watauga County Board of Commissioners voted to purchase the private service with their fleet of nine ambulances and station. The transition from private to public ambulance service will occur in late 2025 and early 2026.
- ▼ Meat Camp has a new station that just opened in early 2025.
- ▼ Deep Gap has a new station planned that should be operational by the end of 2025

Recommendations - Emergency Services

- Continue to evaluate the ratio of population to emergency services
- Continue cooperation and coordination between the County and Emergency Services.
- Create an Emergency Services Master Plan for the County to address current and future needs including:
 - ▼ Evaluate the need for paid personnel in fire stations.
 - ▼ Evaluate methods to improve cooperation between the County and Emergency Services
 - ▼ Establish additional water points for retrieving water to fight rural fires.





KEY COMMUNITY SERVICES - COMMUNITY CENTERS

- Community centers help to promote community identity.
- Community centers may provide certain benefits such as, but not limited to, a library, meeting space, media center, childcare, senior programs, urgent care and recreation.
- The Western Watauga Center, operated by Watauga County, serves citizens in the Cove Creek Community.
- There are two other community centers in Watauga County. One, located at the old Seven Devils Town Hall, is only accessible to Seven Devils property owners. The other center, Foscoe-Grandfather Park and Community Center is a multi-use facility run by a non-profit and open to the public and located off NC Hwy 105 in Foscoe.
- Community centers play a vital role in the development of shared community identity, community pride, community preservation and community growth.
- In community surveys citizens expressed a desire to have a community center in eastern Watauga County.
- Schools are the main focal point and center for social activities in most Watauga communities.



Recommendations - Community Centers

- ➔ Assess the need and financial viability for a community center in eastern Watauga County similar to the Western Watauga Center.
- ➔ Establish a plan for greater cooperation between schools and communities for use of County school facilities.
- ➔ Facilitate community centers that are attractive, functional, visible, safe and accessible to their communities and reflective of each community's unique identity.

Other Human Services

- Although beyond the scope of the Plan, maintaining the "quality of life" in Watauga County must consider other human social needs, such as care for children and the elderly, health care and other fundamental human needs.
- An in-depth assessment of such needs and a plan for addressing the most pressing humanistic issues should be undertaken in the future.





Section 7 Affordable Housing/ Workforce Housing

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Preface

The rich heritage of Watauga County coupled with its physical beauty, easy lifestyle and vast number of cultural and recreational opportunities make it an inviting place to live. As the popularity of mountain properties grow, and student and seasonal populations increase, so do the prices for purchasing or renting housing. A common complaint in the County is that affordable (or workforce) housing is difficult or impossible to find.

Findings

- Making affordable housing a priority in Watauga County is not an easy task. It involves many governmental entities, regulations, competing land uses, and the developers who seek the highest return for their investments.
- Planning for affordable housing for future residents will require a proactive approach.
- Recent survey responses for the Watauga County Comprehensive Plan confirm that Watauga County citizens agree that the County needs affordable-housing, and that it is one of the top concerns for the future.
- Housing is the greatest single expense for most residents in Watauga County and is often a major consideration among people who want to relocate to the area.
- In 2022 the volunteer led Watauga Housing Forum led to the establishment of a non-profit, the Watauga Housing Council. The Watauga Housing Council meets monthly with a mission to increase the housing supply for residents who are cost burdened, through partnerships and systematic change.

- Ideal sites for affordable housing would be near towns to eliminate travel time to and from employment, merchants and services.
- Rural areas may provide the most potential for affordable housing ventures.
- Emphasis should be given to both renters and owners of affordable housing.
- Comments from County stakeholders favor more single-family and multi-family developments with a focus on workforce housing and discouraged apartment complexes and short-term rentals.





Photo By: James Heaver

Recommendations

- Ensure that subdivision regulations and other land use ordinances do not serve as barriers to the construction of affordable-housing. Rather, craft regulations and ordinances to favor affordable-housing.
- Promote mixed-land uses that incorporate housing with other uses that can be blended without sacrificing safety, health and welfare of citizens.
- Allow a broad range of housing choices in Watauga County ordinances. Encourage duplex, triplex and quadplex development. Encourage higher density multi-family housing to reduce the cost of land per unit.
- Ensure that current and future regulations provide sufficient opportunities for nursing homes and other similar care facilities.
- Develop a county wide affordable housing plan in cooperation with municipalities.
- Investigate state and federally funded programs that assist in housing rehabilitation.
- Lead in establishing an affordable housing trust fund in cooperation with municipalities and the County and seek external funding from other sources.
- Preserve existing housing stock and address substandard housing wherever possible.



Section 8

Preservation of Community

PRESERVATION OF UNIQUE COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND HERITAGE

Preface

Community identity is defined as the collection of attributes that makes a community unique and separates it from other places. In Phase 1 of the original "Citizens' Plan for Watauga," citizens expressed their interest in preserving the unique community identities and heritage of the County. Phase 1 community meetings revealed that citizens take great pride in their communities and believe, regardless of which neighborhood they live in, that theirs is the best part of Watauga County.

Citizen participants in a recent survey continued to express a desire to preserve rural areas, to be a destination remembered for its culture and history, to retain its natural beauty, and to preserve its Appalachian roots. It is important that communities preserve their culture and history for future generations.

Findings - Community Identities

- According to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, the National Register is an official listing of "buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts worthy of preservation for their significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture."
- The Valle Crucis community took steps toward preservation by creating the Valle Crucis Historic District – the first rural historic district in North Carolina. The entire community is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Valle Crucis adopted a "Historic District Ordinance" on September 1, 1990, which provides for preservation and protection of the heritage of the community, protection of properties, conservation of the district for education, pleasure and enrichment, fostering civic beauty, and improvement of the general health and welfare of the residents.
- The Todd community is on the National Register of Historic Places and has been has also been designated a Historic District.
- Watauga County has "Community Planning Guidelines" for developing a system of community planning. These guidelines were adopted in 1986.
- Several unincorporated communities in Watauga County have cultural, historical or architectural significance and contribute to the quality of life for residents and tourists. Such communities include Beaver Dam-Bethel, Cove Creek, Deep Gap, Elk, Foscoe-Grandfather, Mabel, Matney, Rutherford, Stony Fork, Sugar Grove, Todd, Triplett, Valle Crucis, Vilas, Zionville and others.
- In many communities, schools are the main focal point and center for social activities.
- Residents feel strongly that newcomers to the area would benefit from education about mountain traditions and attitudes.
- Community planning districts (Illustration 19) have been established in Foscoe, Cove Creek and Valle Crucis.
- The Watauga County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) installed a series of "wayfinding" signage along the corridors into Watauga County identifying cultural and recreational opportunities in the area.

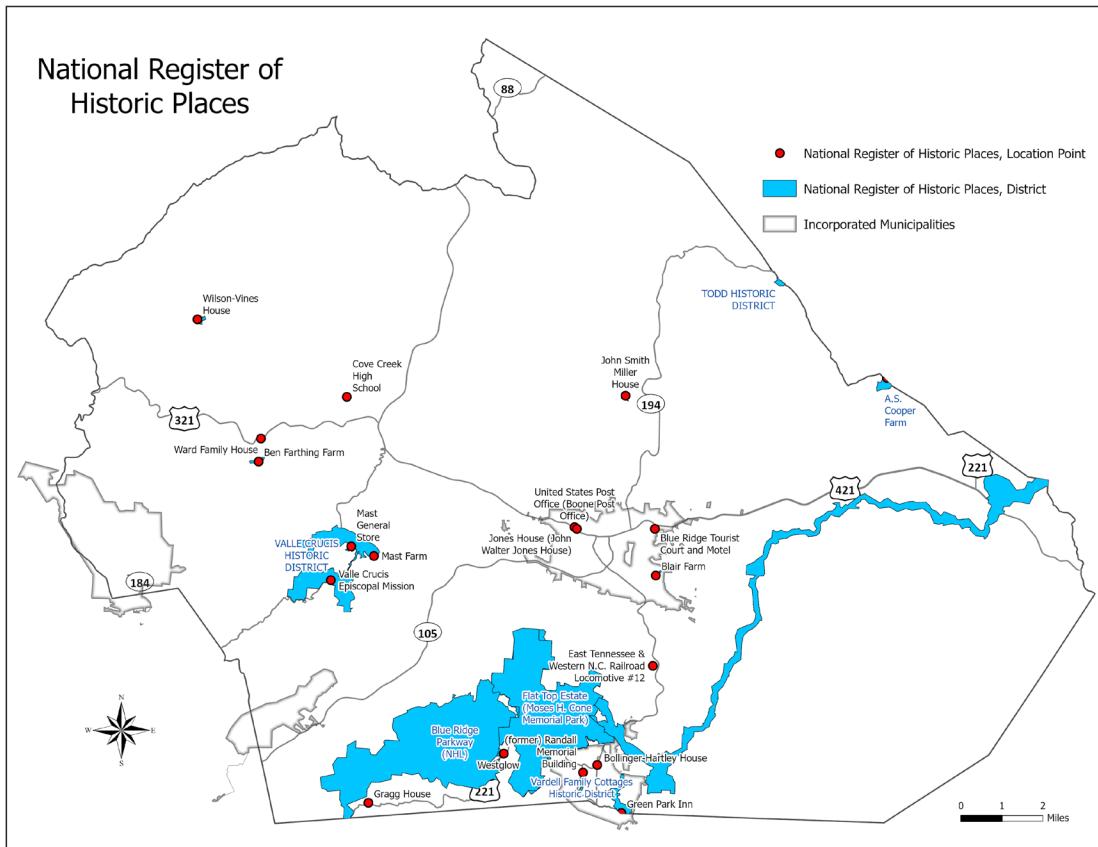
Recommendations

- Create a strategy for preservation of unique communities that identifies and promotes preservation of significant historic, scenic and cultural features. Encourage restoration and use of historic sites and community landmarks to foster community identity.
- Review the Community Planning Guidelines to determine if the guidelines are still appropriate for current needs in the County.
- Develop Small Area Planning guidelines and initiatives to guide land use, open space, transportation improvements, capital improvements and identify opportunities for preservation and revitalization.
- Enhance community-gathering points at convenient locations.
- Explore whether some school sites could be utilized to accommodate facilities necessary for other community programs, such as community center facilities, park/ school combinations, libraries and daycare.
- Design and locate public spaces and buildings to reinforce and express Appalachian Heritage/Culture.
- Implement programs for removing unattractive elements, such as illegal signs, graffiti, litter, utility poles and billboards, as feasible.
- Promote art and cultural opportunities at appropriate public and private locations in unique communities.



Illustration 19

Historical Sites and Districts



BETHEL

Wilson - Vines House (Roby Vines House)

SUGAR GROVE

Cove Creek High School
Ben Farthing Farm
Ward Family House

BOONE

The John Smith Miller House
U.S. Post Office
Jones House
Blue Ridge Tourist Court

TODD

Todd Historic District
A.S. Cooper Farm (partial)

VALLE CRUCIS

Valle Crucis Historic District
Mast Farm
Mast General Store
Valle Crucis Episcopal Mission
Blair Farm

BLOWING ROCK

Randall Memorial Building (Village Cafe)
Bollinger-Hartley House
Green Park Historic District
Green Park Inn
Gragg House
Vardell Family Cottages District
East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad Locomotive #12
Westglow
Flat Top Estate (Moses H. Cone Memorial Park)



PRESERVATION OF FARMLAND

Preface

Preserving community identity and the County's unique heritage is a worthy endeavor.

Findings

- ▀ The Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program is an instrument designed "to encourage the voluntary preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development."
- ▀ The Watauga County Board of Commissioners adopted the Farmland Preservation Program in October 2000.
- ▀ Participants in the Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program must also be participants in the Present Use-Value taxation program.
- ▀ An Agricultural Advisory Board reviews and approves applications for qualifying farmland and the establishment of voluntary agricultural districts, which consist of at least 25 acres of qualifying farmland located within one mile of each other.
- ▀ Participating landowners sign agreements to sustain, encourage and promote agriculture.
- ▀ The land must be certified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service as appropriate for the Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program.
- ▀ The Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program members are subject to a conservation agreement between the County and the landowner that prohibits non-farm use or development of that land for a period of at least 10 years.
- ▀ As of July 2025, 131 farms with a total of 8,057 acres are enrolled in the Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program.

Recommendations

- Promote the Watauga County Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program and work to ensure the Soil and Water Conservation office continues to provide education and opportunities for individuals interested in the program.
- Support the Soil and Water Conservation office in its efforts to provide information about the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP). This program is voluntary and is designed to protect water quality by installing best management practices on agricultural lands.
- Promote and educate citizens on the benefits of establishing conservation easements by involving local land conservancies and Soil and Water Conservation personnel.
- Promote the use of the Present-Use-Value taxation program.

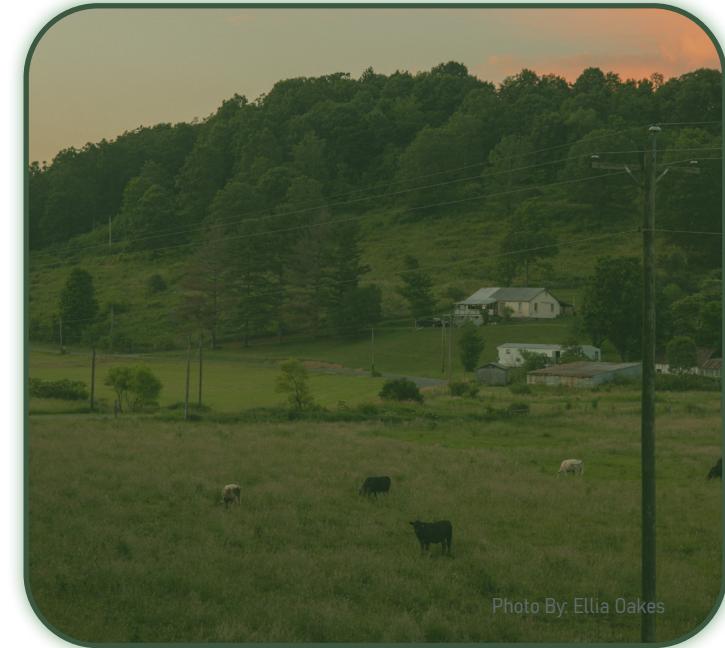
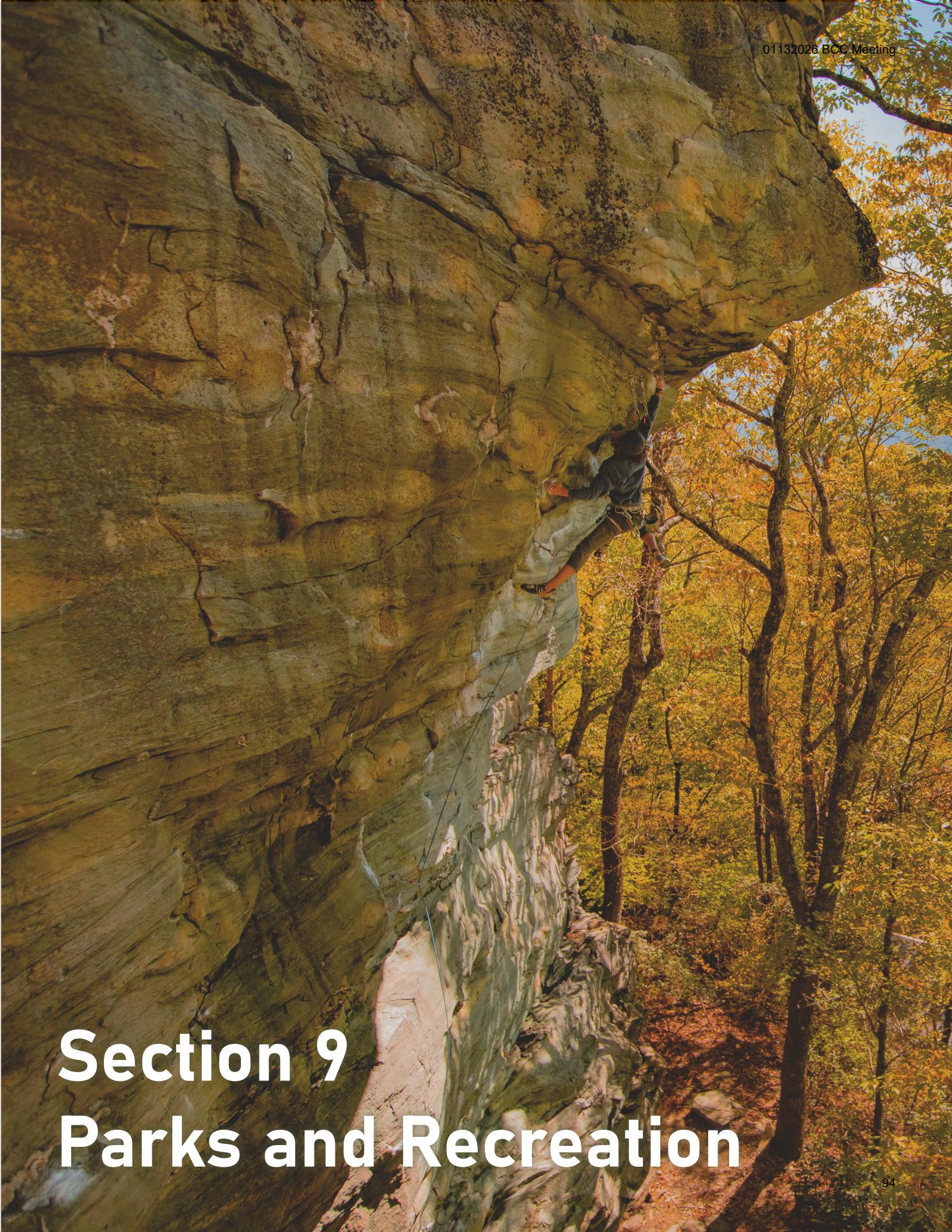


Photo By: Ellia Oakes



Section 9 Parks and Recreation



PARKS AND RECREATION

Preface

Watauga County is a wonderful place for those seeking outdoor recreational activities. Preservation and promotion of recreational endeavors is of great importance to sustaining the quality of life theme. Recreational activities are also vital to the economic well-being of Watauga County. Most of these activities relate to the natural environment. They include opportunities such as hiking, biking, fishing, rock climbing, canoeing, rafting, kayaking, hunting, skiing, sledding, snowboarding and others.

Findings

- The Parks and Recreation Department, which was formed in 1973, is advised by an 18-member Recreation Commission, and appointed by the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.
- The commission's role is to guide and advise the Parks and Recreation Department in its mission to provide for adequate recreational opportunities for all citizens of the County.
- Table 24 provides a summary of the recreation facilities that are presently operated by the County and other public organizations.
- Several of the facilities in Watauga County offer specific recreational opportunities:
 - ➔ Rocky Knob Park is a 100+ acre mountain bike park with more than 10 miles of single-track mountain bike trails.
 - ➔ The Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex offers three soccer fields and is not only used for tournament play, but also by Appalachian State University and Lees-McRae College. (HC Soccer Association)

- ➔ The Middle Fork Greenway – a multi-use trail under development. It will eventually connect Boone and Blowing Rock.
- ➔ Tot Lot – Playground for 2-12 year olds.
- ➔ New River & Watauga River Accesses – Four public access points to the rivers for tubing and kayakers.

Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department

- The Parks and Recreation staff offers both adult and youth team sports and programs and special events.
- The athletic opportunities for adults include softball, basketball, soccer, co-ed volleyball, pickleball, and dodgeball.
- Youth athletics include tball, softball, baseball, coed, girls, & boys basketball, flag football, and co-ed, girls, & boys soccer.
- In 2021 Watauga County opened the new, state-of-the-art Watauga County Recreation Center. The Center features four indoor basketball courts, two swimming pools, weight room, and workout facilities. Outside there is outdoor basketball, tennis, pickleball, playgrounds, five baseball/softball fields, picnic shelters, and access to the Boone Greenway.
- The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of summer camps each year such as Adventure Camp, Fun in the Sun Camp, Teen Extreme Camp, and Extreme Dance Camp.
- In the Watauga County Comprehensive Plan survey popular changes/upgrades to current recreational opportunities/facilities include:
 - More Greenways
 - Repair and/or upgrade to existing facilities

More hiking trails
More safe bike lanes on the roads
More public river access points (New River & Watauga River)

The mission statement of Watauga County Parks and Recreation is:

"The Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department strives to provide a wide variety of quality recreational programming opportunities in the areas of arts, youth and adult athletics, special programs, special events, special populations including Special Olympics, aquatics, and summer youth camps. The department's mission is for these programs to be enjoyable, fun, fulfilling, safe and rewarding for all Watauga County citizens."



Council of Governments, Watauga County adopted a Comprehensive Systemwide Parks and Recreation Plan. Based on the citizens' survey, community meetings, staff observations, recreation commission comments, facilities inventory, demographic trends, and stakeholder comments, the following recommendations were suggested:

Recommendations

- Construct outdoor restrooms at Complex 2 & 3 fields
- Update/revamp Old Cove Creek School outdoor amenities
- Construct an indoor practice/playing field for baseball, softball, football, soccer, etc.
- Add/replace fitness equipment in the recreation center
- Restore/preserve streambanks near the armory, Brookshire Park, and Old Cove Creek School fields.
- Upgrade Tot Lot playground with inclusive features
- Hire additional full-time staff for the recreation center
- Hire additional full-time staff for the parks and recreation department, specifically a camps/special events coordinator.
- Establish a disc golf course
- Construct outdoor bocce courts
- Integrate Middle Fork Greenway, Howards Knob Park, and outdoor recreation areas into Watauga Parks and Recreation programming.
- Construct a stand-alone building for camps, meetings, and special events.
- Construct an outdoor sand volleyball court
- Enhance the landscaping at the Watauga County Community Recreation Center
- Construct an additional multipurpose room onto the Recreation Center
- Continue to support the construction of the Middle Fork Greenway
- Continue to implement recommendations in the Howard's Knob Park Master Plan
- Support efforts to establish the Deep Gap Community Recreation Area



Table 23

Recreational Facilities Owned and/or Operated by Watauga County

Facility	Restrooms	Playground	Hiking/Walking Trails	Mountain Bike Trails	Picnic Shelters	Picnic Tables (no shelter)	Baseball/Softball Fields	Athletic/Soccer Fields	Multipurpose Field	Tennis Court	Basketball Court	Pickleball Court	Fishing	River Access	Walking Track	Gym	Swimming Pool
Watauga Community Recreation Center												4					2
Recreation Complex					3					4		2					
Industrial Fields							2										
Anne-Marie Fields						4	2										
Brookshire Park															1		
Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex																	
Rocky Knob Mountain Bike Park																	
Middle Fork Greenway																	
Watauga River Access at Guy Ford Rd																	
Watauga River Access at Watauga River Rd.																	
New River Access at Pine Run Rd																	
Watauga River Access at Valle Crucis																	
Howards Knob Park																	
Old Cove Creek School Park						4				2							
Health Department Field																	
Green Valley Elementary School Park																	
Hardin Park Elementary School Park																	
Parkway Elementary School Park			2														
Cove Creek Elementary School Park																	
Watauga High School							13	2			6						
Bethel Elementary School Park			2														
Mabel Elementary School Park										3							
Blowing Rock Elementary School Park																	
Valle Crucis Elementary School Park																	

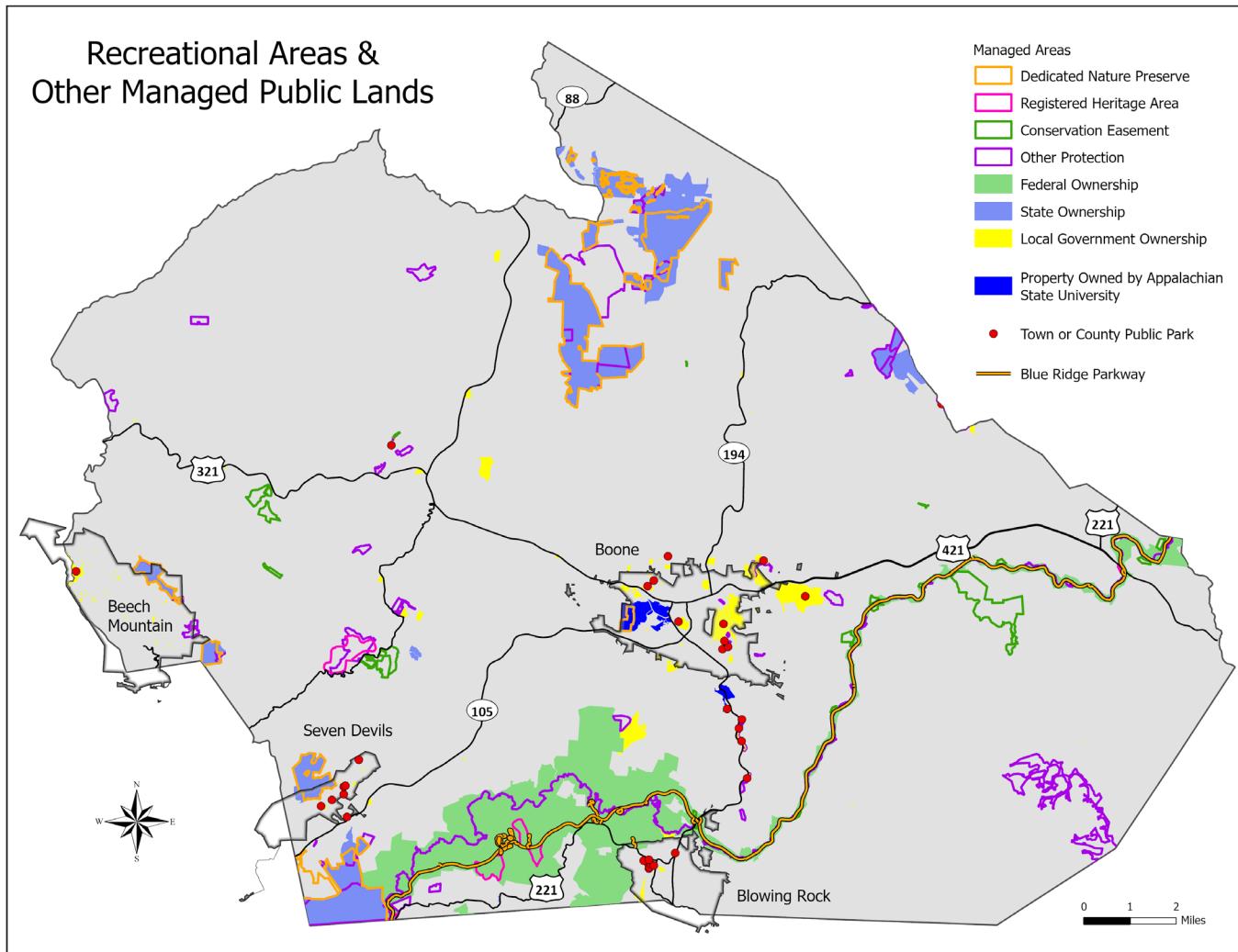
Table 24

Other Recreational Facilities Located in Watauga County

Facility	Restrooms	Playground	Hiking/ Walking Trails	Mountain Bike Trails	Picnic Shelters	Picnic Tables (no shelter)	Baseball /Softball Fields	Athletic/ Soccer Fields	Multipurpose Field	Tennis Court	Basketball Court	Pickleball Court	Fishing	River Access	Walking Track	Gym	Swimming Pool
Boone Greenway Trail																	
Jaycess Park																	
Strawberry Hill Arboretum																	
Junaluska Park																	
Clawson Burnley Park						2	24										
North Street Park																	
Jones House & Grounds																	
Rivers House Park																	
Memorial Park													2	2			
Broyhill Park																	
Davant Field																	
Robbin's Pool																	1
Annie L. Cannon Memorial Garden																	
Glen Burney Trail																	
Koerschner Memorial Garden																	
American Legion Building																	
Blowing Rock Clubhouse																	
Blowing Rock Recreation Center																	
Buckeye Recreation Center																	
Lake Coffey																	
Hayden's Park																	
Beech Mountain Hiking Trails																	
Beech Mountain Sledding Hill																	
Otter Falls Trail																	
Seven Devils Old Town Hall																	
Black Bear Family Park													2	2			
Alpine Meadows Mini Park																	
Valle Crucis Community Park		2				2	9										
Mountaineer Ruritan Club Field																	
Green Valley Community Park																	
Foscoe/Grandfather Community Center & Park																	
Elk Knob State Park																	
Grandfather Mountain State Park																	
Blue Ridge Parkway (within Watauga County)																	
Cone Park Carriage Trails																	
Price Park Picnic Area							100										
Price Park Trails																	
Tanawha Trail																	
NC Mountain-to-Sea Trail																	

Parks and Recreation

Illustration 20 Parks and Recreation



The map shows the distribution of parks and recreation sites in Watauga County that are owned and managed by federal, state and conservation organizations.

Section 10

Managing Change in Watauga County

PREPARING FOR CHANGE

Natural Limitations

Understanding the interrelationship among the various natural or physiographic and other factors that influence future growth and change is an essential step in the process of preparing for managing change. The initial step in this process is to view these physiographic influences in terms of their collective capability to withstand change created by various levels of land use or future development:

- ▼ Using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, one is able to layer the various maps showing the components.
- ▼ The series of natural limitations are interrelated.
- ▼ They build on one another to present a composite view of the overall capacity of land within Watauga County to withstand or support changes.
- ▼ Understanding these relationships is fundamental to managing such change in the future

MANAGING CHANGE IN WATAUGA COUNTY

Preface

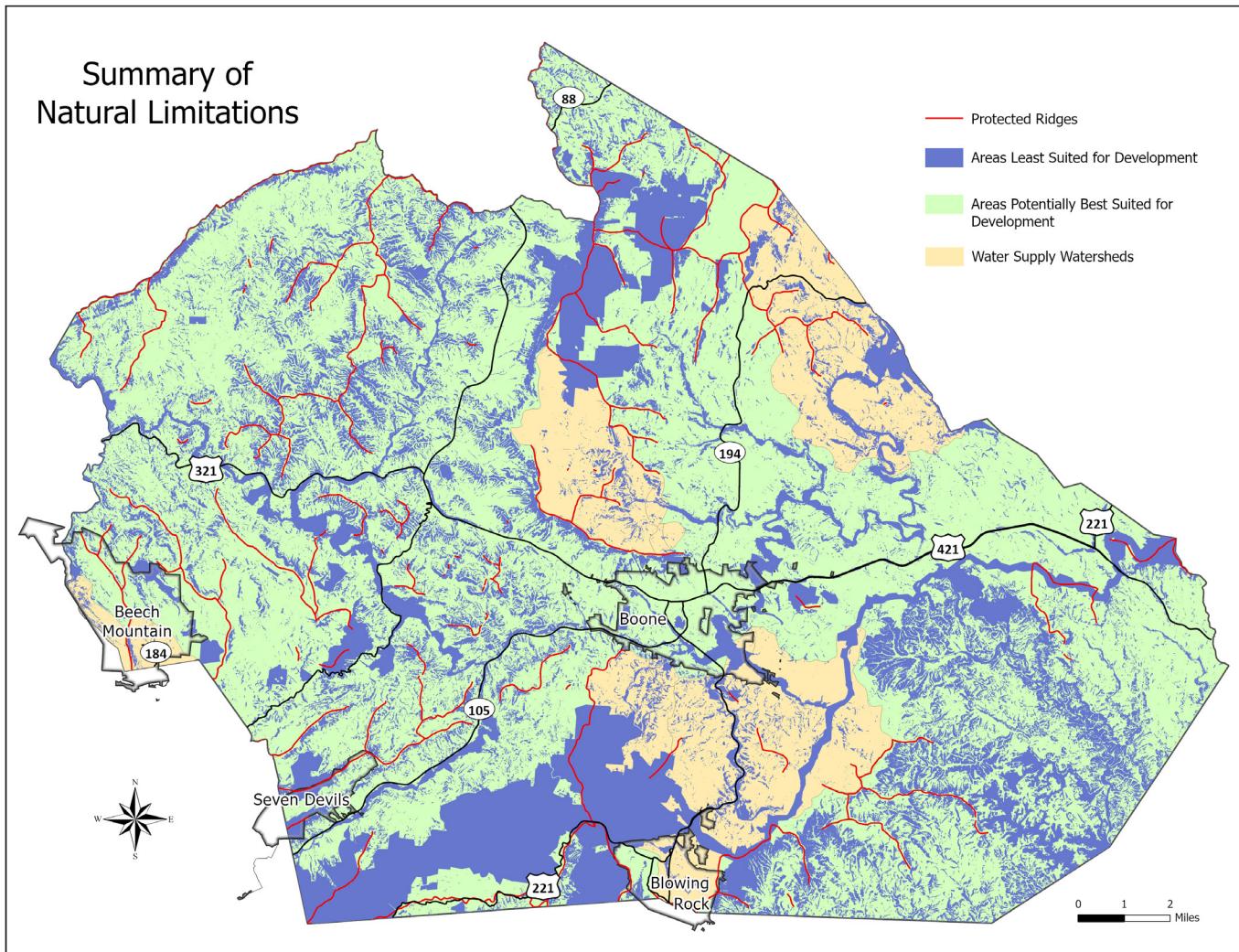
Change is inevitable in Watauga County; however, future change can be influenced by many factors, which may be altered or utilized to direct or mitigate such change. This fundamental assumption is the basis for managing change. The principal factors that influence change include:

- ▼ Transportation Routes
- ▼ Physiographic Constraints
- ▼ Public Policy
- ▼ Water and Wastewater Infrastructure
- ▼ Centers of Employment
- ▼ Proximity to Urban Centers
- ▼ Community Facilities (including schools)
- ▼ Land Use Regulations
- ▼ Public Health Regulations



The planning, placement, modification or enforcement of such influences become primary tools that are available to the community in managing change. It is therefore incumbent upon Watauga County to recognize the importance of acknowledging and managing these factors of change and deliberately planning for their impacts.

Illustration 21 Areas for Development and Unsuitied Areas



The categories of suitability of land for development for Watauga County may be explained as follows:

Areas Best Suited for Development

Land areas that have few constraints for development activity. With appropriate services, such land could best accommodate future change (Illustration 21).

Areas Least Suited for Development

Land that has limited or no development potential because of severe physiographic challenges or other impeding limitations, such as land under public ownership.

These areas also encompass protected ridge tops and flood zones.



Growth Objectives for the Community

Achieving balance between fostering change and protecting community values and important economic, environmental and cultural resources is the foundation of change management. The following objectives are intended to guide the County:

- ▼ Population growth should be concentrated in areas of Watauga County where essential services and infrastructure are adequate to meet the needs of future populations. Population and development densities should vary in accordance with the availability of such services and infrastructure, with more dense concentrations of development being directed to locations where essential services and infrastructure may be provided most efficiently.
- ▼ Extension of essential services and infrastructure should be planned to support future growth within these designated concentrations of development, with such extensions being guided by deliberate policies that acknowledge efficiency and change management strategies.
- ▼ Growth in rural areas of the community, outside of planned concentrations of development, should be managed to occur at densities that do not require inefficient investments in essential services and infrastructure.
- ▼ Growth outside of planned concentrations of development should not infringe on prevailing agricultural or rural land use patterns in such rural areas.
- ▼ Growth management in both urban and rural areas of the community should be sensitive to valuable environmental, cultural, or historic resources and assets.

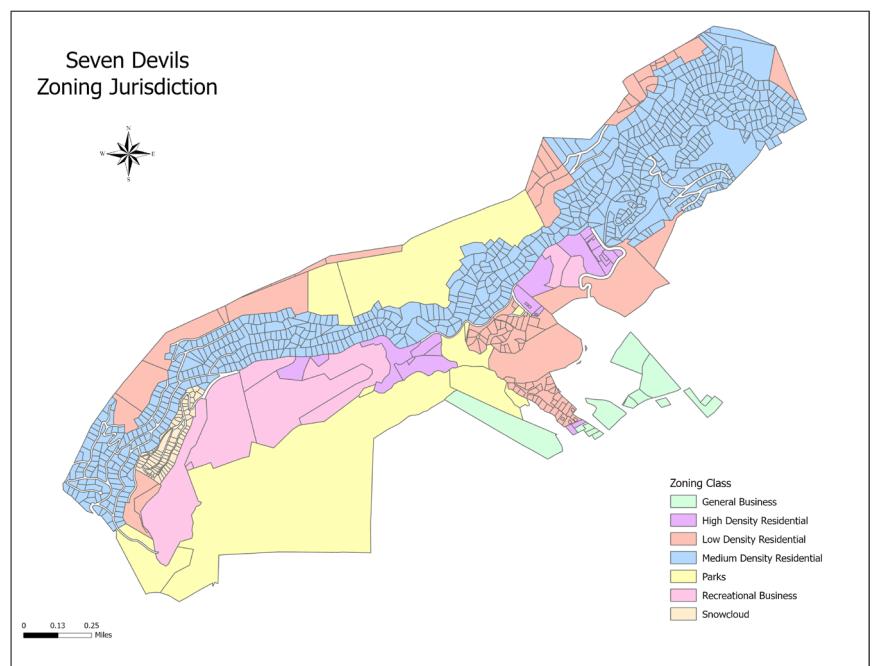
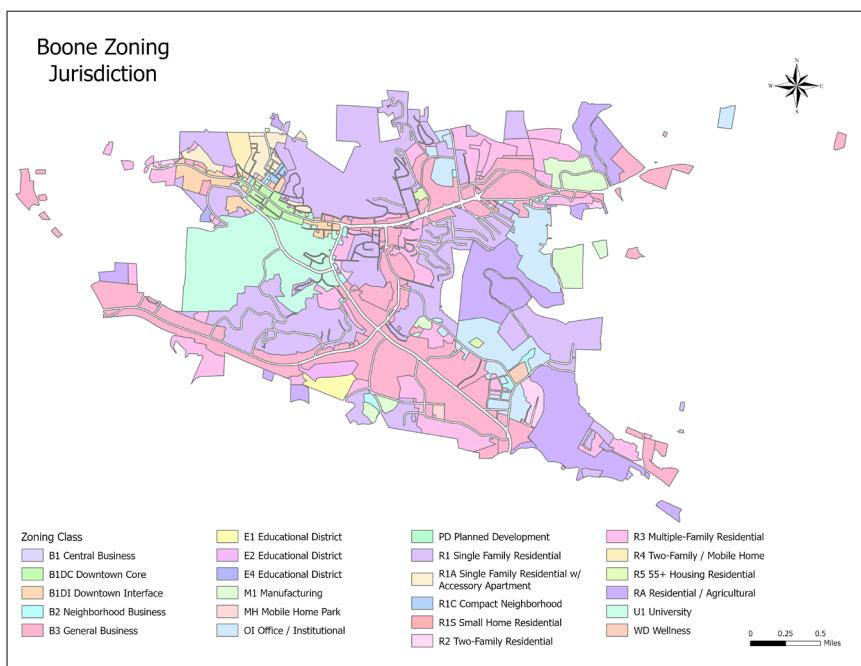
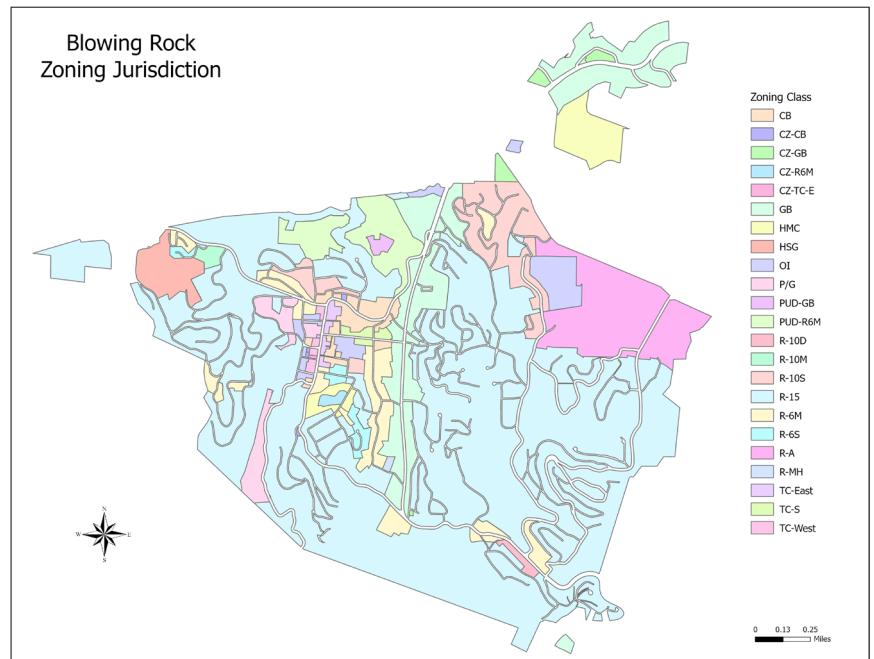
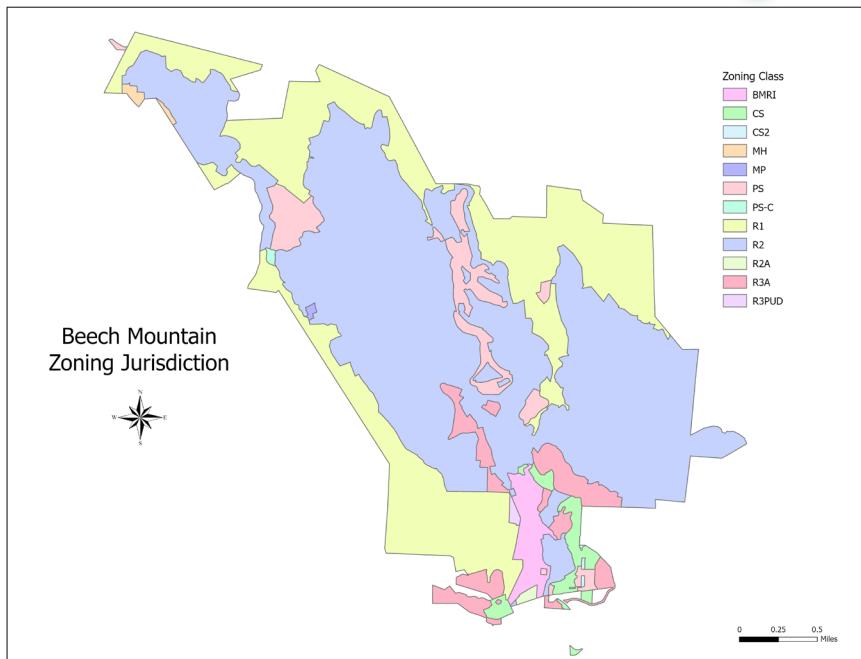
Acknowledging Municipal Planning Jurisdictions

Managing change should reflect a regional strategy. Therefore, planning for Watauga County's growth should consider similar endeavors across governmental jurisdictions. It is incumbent upon County government to consult with its political neighbors as it plans for its future growth. Its plans and policies should efficiently and effectively mesh with those of the municipalities within Watauga County.

At present, the four municipalities of Boone, Blowing Rock, Beech Mountain and Seven Devils each have land use plans, land use regulations and various other ongoing planning activities that are in place and reflect their individual objectives and policies regarding managing growth and influencing change (Illustration 22). Further, Blowing Rock and Seven Devils have extraterritorial jurisdictions within which they plan and administer land use regulations.

Illustration 22

Municipal Planning Jurisdictions





The County's Growth Management Policy should:

- ▼ Acknowledge these individual municipal planning jurisdictions.
- ▼ Reflect the current plans that have been adopted for each municipal jurisdiction.
- ▼ Strive to ensure that County plans and recommendations for those areas of Watauga County that are adjacent to municipal jurisdictions are consistent with municipal planning.
- ▼ Coordinate plans and recommendations for essential services and infrastructure with corresponding plans for the municipal jurisdictions.
- ▼ Strive for regional or countywide solutions to planning and urban services.
- ▼ In the absence of municipal plans for essential services and infrastructure, the County should coordinate its planning with the affected municipality.

MANAGING FUTURE CHANGE IN WATAUGA COUNTY

The County's strategy for managing change is developed to reflect the diversity of the community and to provide for a logical approach to addressing this diversity of needs and the wide range of factors that influence and direct growth under these unique conditions.

Watauga County is a community in transition. It has evolved from a principally rural environment into a community that is typically urban along its principal highway corridors and progressively more rural and agricultural as distances increase away from those transportation corridors. This urban / rural setting, coupled with its complex physiographic limitations, provides a great challenge.

Growth management issues in the community are complex. A single planning model for the County is probably not adequate to comprehensively address the requirements of this transitional planning environment. Therefore, multiple planning paths may better provide for the flexibility to address the range of factors and issues that are presented to the community.

Emphasis should be directed toward achieving change that reflects sustainability in future development and ensures a minimal disruption to the natural environment and maximize use of energy, land resources and other natural and community assets.

The Change Management Strategy for Watauga County divides the County into three Growth Paths, acknowledging the range of planning objectives and developmental environments throughout the community:

- ▼ The Watauga "Gateway Corridors"
- ▼ Unique Community Areas
- ▼ Rural / Agriculture Regions



Illustration 23 Community Planning Districts

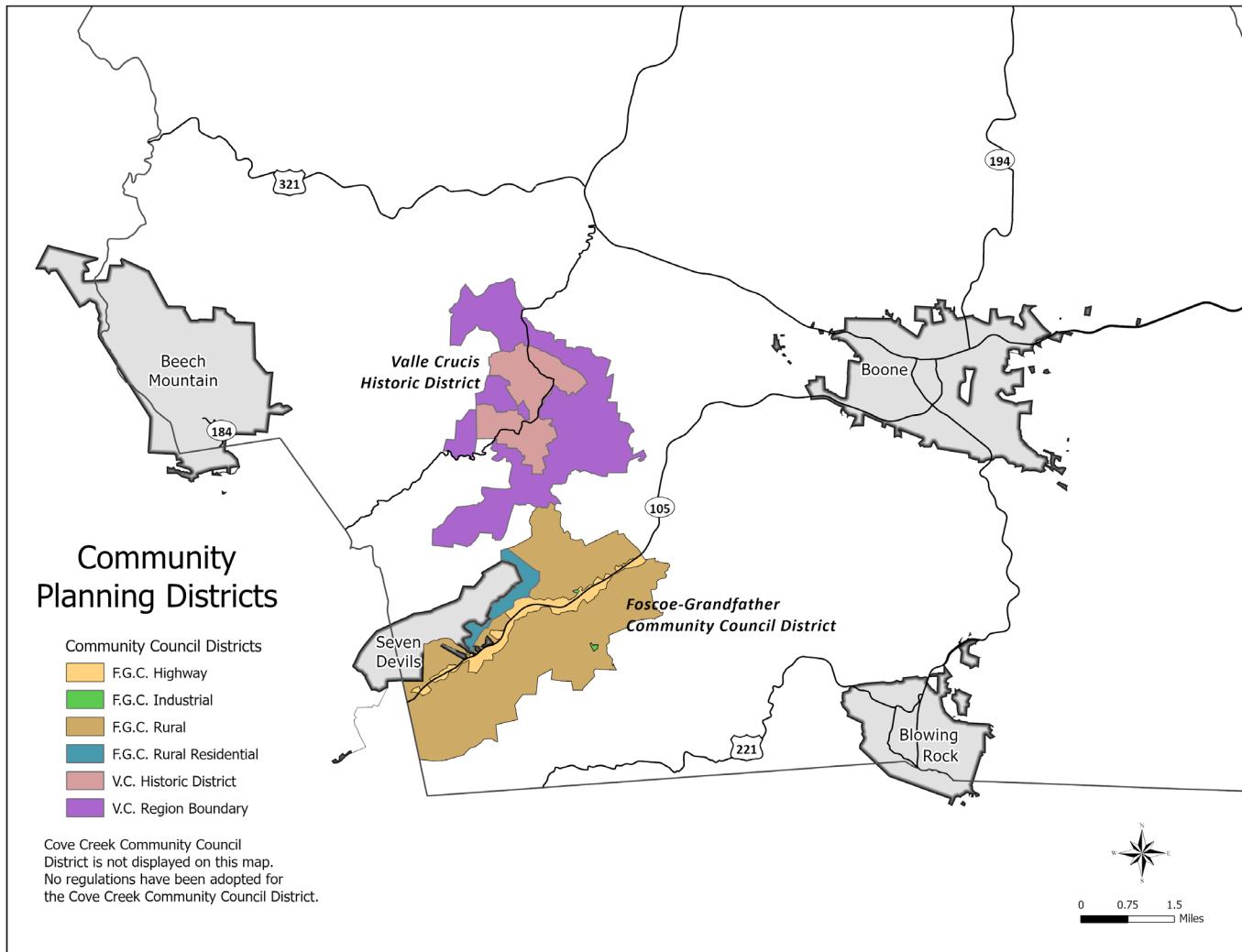


Illustration 23 presents the locations and extent of two of the three community planning districts in Watauga:

- ▼ No regulations have been adopted for the Cove Creek Community Council District.
- ▼ The Valle Crucis Community Council District is primarily dedicated to historic preservation. It contains a designated historic district zone.
- ▼ The Foscoe-Grandfather Community Council District is divided into four zones, as shown on Illustration 23.



WATAUGA GATEWAY CORRIDORS

Watauga County is characterized by distinct and constantly changing primary transportation corridors, which include key segments of highways 421, 321 and 105. These corridors are considered the strategic or key Gateways to the community and managing change within these so called "Gateway Corridors" should be guided by the following principles:

Population

- ▼ The average population densities achieved in these "Gateway Corridors" are, or will in the future, be substantially higher than other regions of the County and generally fall into a range of 500 to 900 persons per square mile.

Land Use Patterns

- ▼ Land use patterns will be generally more complex with wide ranges of residential densities, substantial commercial concentrations, as well as industrial and institutional complexes.
- ▼ Within these "Gateway Corridors," the County and its municipalities should aggressively avoid conflicting land uses and maintain minimum standards of quality for development.

Economic Development

- ▼ The County's economic development activities should be aggressively pursued within the Watauga "Gateway Corridors."
- ▼ Care should be taken to protect areas identified as prime industrial land or key economic assets.
- ▼ Appropriate infrastructure should be developed to sustain this ongoing and planned economic development program. However, investments in public infrastructure should be cost-effective,

with economic benefits to the Community outweighing the costs of new investments in infrastructure.

- ▼ A formula should be developed to assess this cost/benefit ratio, and the County should utilize a concise policy to guide in its future capital investments in economic development related services and infrastructure.

Essential Services

- ▼ Development within these "Gateway Corridors" would be accessible by highways and streets, which are developed to urban standards, having capacities to accommodate increasingly complex volumes of traffic.
- ▼ Development within this growth path should be served by water and sewer infrastructure, except for areas that are deemed infeasible to receive such services due to excessive cost, incompatible slopes, or factors, which serve to isolate certain areas from essential services.
- ▼ Transportation, water and sewer planning should be conducted within a regional framework, with active participation by all units of local government. The County should assume a leadership role in such planning activities.

Environmental Considerations

- ▼ Managing change initiatives should acknowledge the presence of sensitive natural areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, unique natural assets and areas exhibiting excessively steep topography, and strive to protect these areas from development, which would damage such resources or diminish their integrity.
- ▼ Planning initiatives should attempt to

incorporate natural assets into future preservation projects, such as greenways, parks, conservation easements and other ventures, which would serve to protect such areas from serious damage or destruction.

- ▀ The County's growth management policies and regulations should be reviewed and revised as required to ensure that new growth is both sustainable and minimizes the consumption of valuable resources and energy.
- ▀ The "quality of life" theme should be reflected in all aspects of planning.

Planning and Organizational Structure

- ▀ Much of this "Gateway Corridors" growth path would fall within municipal planning jurisdictions and be managed within the provisions of urban scale guidelines and regulations, including zoning, subdivision regulations, stormwater ordinances, floodplain regulations, local erosion control ordinances, and other such municipal land use standards and guidelines.
- ▀ Planning for areas that fall outside of such municipal planning jurisdictions should be coordinated with municipal programs.
- ▀ Tools used for managing change for areas falling within the County's jurisdiction should be comparable and compatible in approach and intensity to planning conducted within the various municipal jurisdictions, except where the County determines that its requirements should vary from those of adjacent municipalities.
- ▀ A permanent mechanism for ensuring coordination and consistency in planning in this "Gateway Corridor" setting should be implemented to ensure that planning, growth management activities, transportation, water, sewer, schools, housing and other

essential services are conducted within a regional framework. Such a vehicle might be viewed as a Cooperative Planning Council. It would be assigned a formal agenda, by way of an interlocal agreement, for intergovernmental coordination among the local governments that have a direct interest in the "Gateway Corridors".





UNIQUE COMMUNITY AREAS

Beyond the designated "Gateway Corridors" there are other significant areas of Watauga County that are recognized as established rural communities which exhibit unique characteristics worthy of preservation. Although these areas may be isolated from the more developed "Gateway Corridors," their service needs are not typical of the most rural regions of the County, primarily due to the density of development or other unique circumstances. At present, these unique Rural Communities include Deep Gap, Todd, Valle Crucis, Cove Creek, Foscoe, Matney, Bethel, Zionville and Mabel.

Some of these unique places are located within the designated "Gateway Corridors," including Deep Gap, Foscoe-Grandfather, and portions of Cove Creek and Zionville. Change in these unique communities would be managed within the parameters established for the "Gateway Corridors."

Managing change within these Unique Community Areas shall be guided by the following principles:

Population

► The average development density may be higher than other typically rural regions of the County but would be substantially lower than urban concentrations of population within "Gateway Corridors."

Land Use Patterns

► Land use patterns should be managed with conscious efforts to prevent incompatible land uses, maintain low population densities, and preserve the integrity of the Unique Community Areas.
► The nature of such communities tends to encourage the mixing of land uses, with

limited commercial and service activities inter-dispersed among residential land uses. Unique Community Areas should be more tolerant of mixed land uses, as might be seen in more densely developed areas of the County.

- As growth continues in these unique communities, commercial development should be encouraged to concentrate in nodes, becoming more isolated from residential concentrations.
- However, incompatible industrial or other land uses should be avoided in favor of the predominant residential character of these communities.

Economic Development

- New economic development activities should not be encouraged within the boundaries of Unique Community Areas, which would demand levels of urban services that are not currently present in the community.
- The natural evolution of commercial activities in Unique Community Areas should not be prohibited, except where such development is incompatible with the character of the community and would tend to damage property values and disrupt the community.

Essential Services and Infrastructure

- The extent of development in these existing unique communities may dictate certain essential services, including water and sewer, where such services are economically feasible.
- Such infrastructure should be developed as self-sustaining enterprise funds, which can be supported without subsidy by the larger community.



Environmental Considerations

- ▼ County regulations should acknowledge the presence of sensitive natural areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, unique natural assets and areas exhibiting excessively steep topography, and strive to protect these areas from development.
- ▼ Planning initiatives should attempt to incorporate such natural assets into future preservation projects, such as greenways, parks, conservation easements and other ventures, that would serve to protect such areas from serious damage or destruction.

Planning and Organizational Structure

- ▼ The County should endeavor to establish some level of ongoing community planning within these individual areas, which would reflect a degree of self-determination in decisions relating to planning and services. Such planning structure should be incorporated into the structure of the County's planning program. This level of autonomy might help to avoid future unnecessary incorporation of new municipal governments.
- ▼ The development of new Unique Community Areas should be discouraged by the utilization of planning services and regulations. New Unique Community Areas should be developed only with the provision of essential services and infrastructure by the forces which are responsible for their planning and development.
- ▼ The County should review its present community planning guidelines to ensure that the present ordinance is adequate to meet future needs related to establishing valuable and unique rural communities.





RURAL/AGRICULTURAL REGIONS

All areas that fall outside of the Watauga Gateway Corridors and designated Unique Community Areas would be contained within the designated Rural / Agriculture Regions (Illustration 24).

These areas are predominantly rural and are characterized by low-density residential development with substantial land areas devoted to agriculture and undeveloped forest lands. Growth management within Rural/ Agriculture regions is characterized by the following principles:

Population

- ▼ The average population densities within these areas would be less than the Gateway Corridors and Rural Communities growth paths.

Land Use Patterns

- ▼ Development densities should be substantially lower than those for the Watauga Gateways Corridors, so as to avoid future pressures for extending urban services and infrastructure.
- ▼ Development that tends to increase pressure on County government for the provision of essential urban services should be discouraged by policy and by the absence of such urban services and infrastructure.
- ▼ Some mixing of residential and non-residential land uses should be encouraged and provided for in future planning and management of growth. Rural service centers providing limited shopping and services should be encouraged within prescribed guidelines.

Economic Development

- ▼ Except for agricultural business activity, no new large-scale economic development activities, such as industrial parks or shopping centers, should be encouraged within the boundaries of such regions of the County.
- ▼ The natural evolution of economic activity in Rural/Agriculture Regions should not be prohibited, except where such development is incompatible with the character of the area and would tend to damage property values or be incompatible with the predominant agricultural or residential land uses.

Essential Services and Infrastructure

- ▼ No water and sewer services would be promoted or provided by local government within these areas, due to the inefficiencies of providing such services and their ultimate impacts on rural areas. However, this does not preclude the provision of water and sewer services by private providers for specific areas of development that are self-sustaining.
- ▼ Highway transportation would be accomplished principally by two-lane roads that are typically not consistent with urban design standards, except for state highways, which traverse certain areas of the community.



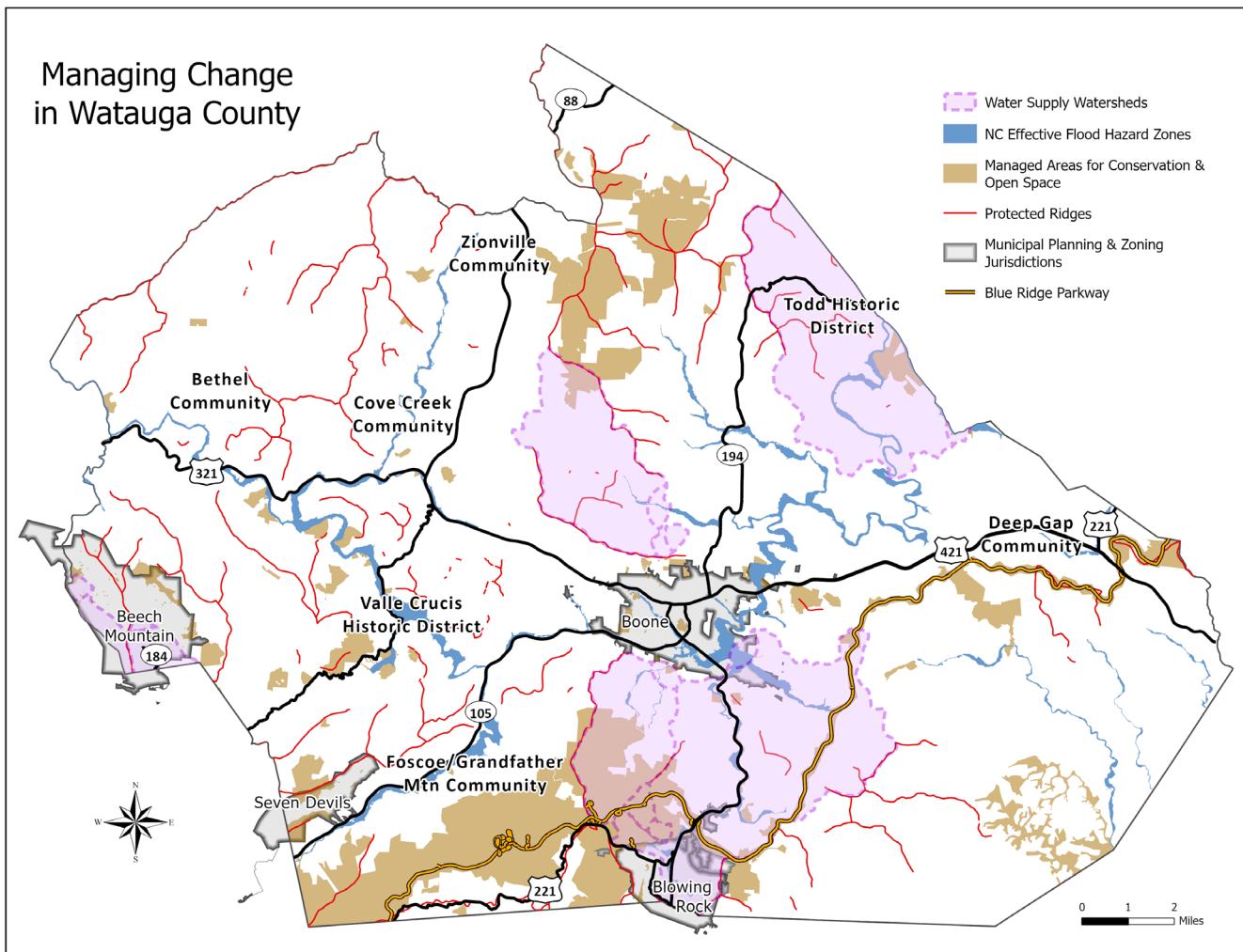
Environmental Considerations

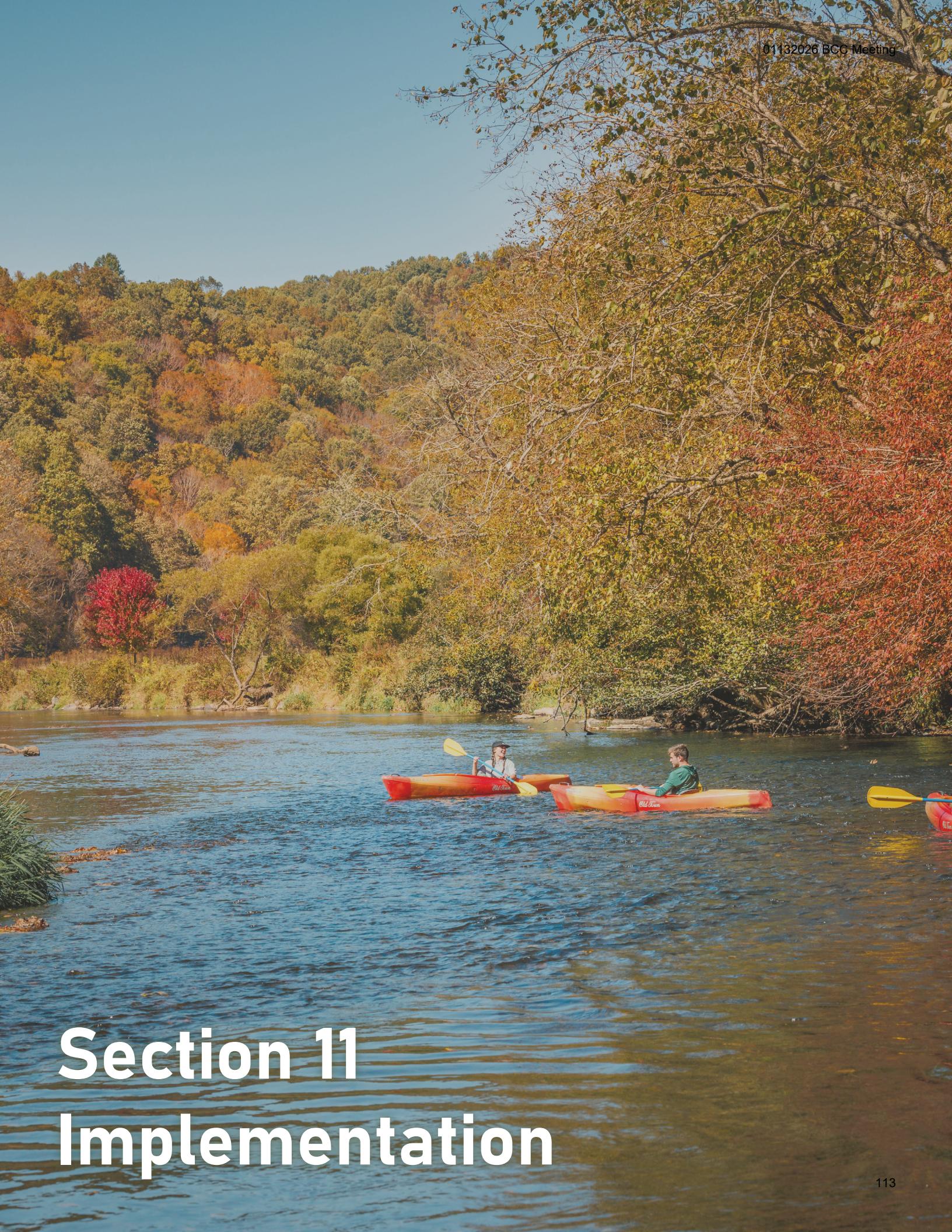
- ▼ Extraordinary care should be taken in these areas to preserve their rural character and to protect valuable farmlands, as well as environmental and cultural resources.
- ▼ The suitability of land within these regions of the County should be a principal consideration in determining appropriate developmental densities and segregation of incompatible land uses.

Planning and Organizational Structure

- ▼ Planning for these regions of the community should be managed within the structure of the Watauga County Planning Board and the County Board of Commissioners.

Illustration 24 Change in Watauga County





Section 11 Implementation



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WATAUGA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The "Watauga County Comprehensive Plan" should be the beginning point in a process that carries the community forward into a continuum of deliberate strategies and actions designed to understand, anticipate and manage changes that will occur in the future and to ensure that such change is consistent with the will of the Watauga citizenry and compatible with the fragile natural environment that is the essence of Watauga County.

Public Involvement

The public must be involved in this essential process. This element of awareness and participation is fundamental to the successful implementation of this strategy for managing change.

This Comprehensive plan must be followed by many subsequent initiatives that are necessary to deal with the multitude of details and actions that are intended to carry out the vision. The public must understand that this process is continual and that its role in this process is the most essential ingredient for its success.

Intergovernmental Coordination

► A key consideration in achieving a successful process for plan implementation is meaningful and deliberate cooperation among the local governments, and their management and planning staffs, within Watauga County. Mistrust and competition must not be permitted to delay the creation of a productive and innovative solution to achieving a desirable level of information sharing and collaboration among the County, the four municipalities and

Appalachian State University. Suggestions for continuing this important involvement process include:

- Establish a "Comprehensive Plan" newsletter that would be published quarterly on the County's website and further distributed in the community. The newsletter would post news related to important planning and change management initiatives and summarize information and events that relate to this theme.
- Create a "Watauga County Comprehensive Plan" Forum composed of a cross-section of community leaders and citizens in Watauga County, including elected officials, businesspeople, institutional representatives, retirees, youth and others who have stake in managing change in Watauga County. Cultivate an environment in which participation in this forum is both prestigious and meaningful. Meet periodically with this group and present the progress of the preceding year and formulate at least five (5) concrete objectives for the subsequent year.
- Take planning and information about managing change in Watauga County into the schools. The future of Watauga County rests with our children. They must understand and accept this immense responsibility.



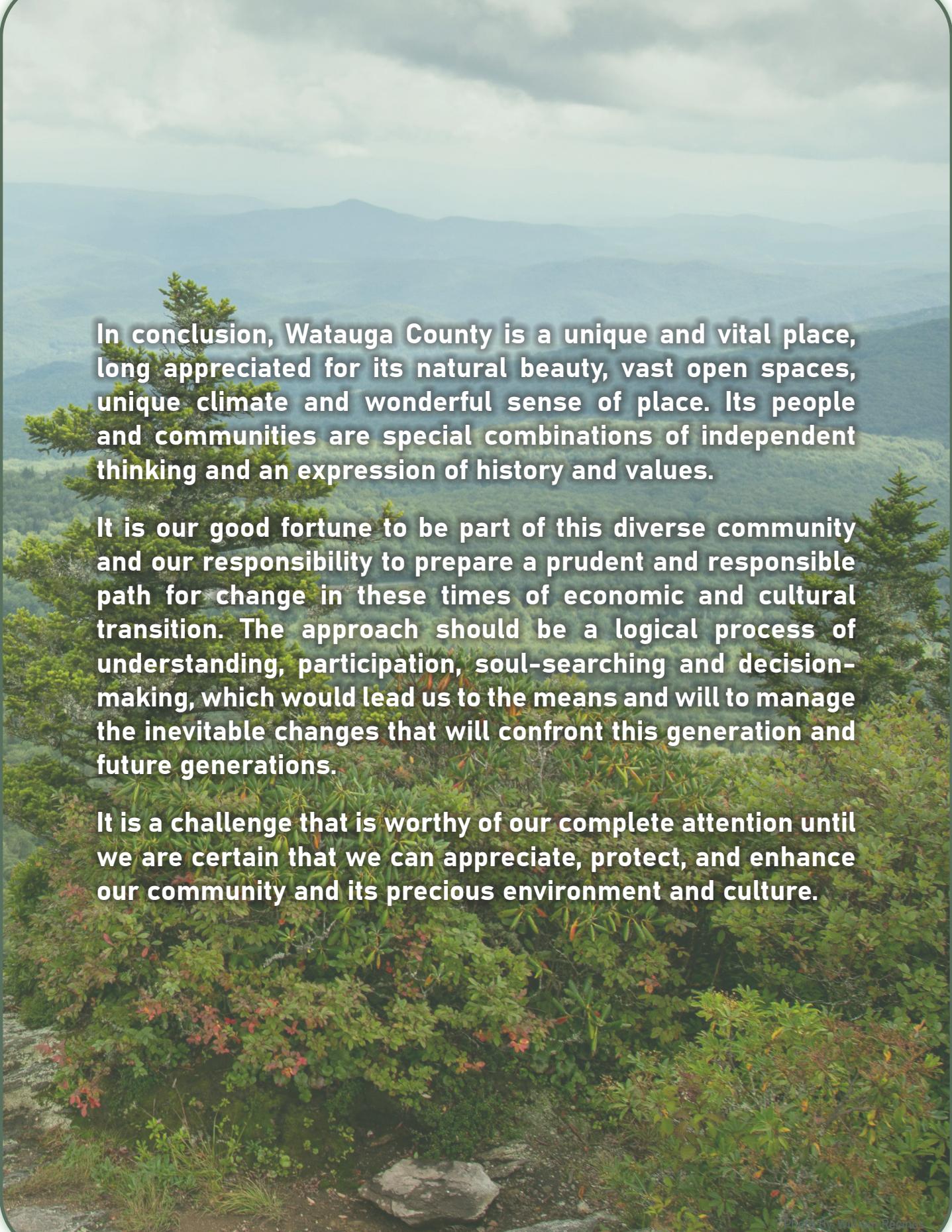
ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ▼ Formalize and enhance the planning consortium among the local governments and App State to foster intergovernmental collaboration on key planning issues that are both current and prominent to the community.
- ▼ Establish quarterly status retreats of the consortium that are managed by a facilitator that rotates annually among the five governments.
- ▼ Formulate specific annual objectives related to plan implementation and sponsor joint participation in work tasks that are of mutual interest to the participants.
- ▼ Assign responsibilities among the participants for staffing and participation in the annual "Watauga County Comprehensive Plan" Forum.
- ▼ Facilitate coordinated involvement in strategic public participation events and processes.

An impression derived during the course of preparing the "Watauga County Comprehensive Plan" is that the County's planning program has accomplished many objectives and achieved a great deal of success despite limited funding and little notoriety during its brief history. However, there are many recommendations and issues raised within this plan that will bring new pressures and demands to bear on this very streamlined program, which presently assumes responsibility for many aspects of Watauga County government.

This raises the question of how this efficient program will evolve and expand to meet these new stresses and demands. Attention should be given to:

- ➔ Assessing the overall programmatic needs associated with the ongoing planning program and the new initiatives that are associated with this plan.
- ➔ Evaluating alternative organizational options that could address the increased workload demands, to ensure that the program continues to be a viable and creative mechanism for managing change in Watauga County.
- ➔ Establishing an organizational model that would be implemented in phases in the coming years, as the need for growth and change is evident.



In conclusion, Watauga County is a unique and vital place, long appreciated for its natural beauty, vast open spaces, unique climate and wonderful sense of place. Its people and communities are special combinations of independent thinking and an expression of history and values.

It is our good fortune to be part of this diverse community and our responsibility to prepare a prudent and responsible path for change in these times of economic and cultural transition. The approach should be a logical process of understanding, participation, soul-searching and decision-making, which would lead us to the means and will to manage the inevitable changes that will confront this generation and future generations.

It is a challenge that is worthy of our complete attention until we are certain that we can appreciate, protect, and enhance our community and its precious environment and culture.

Photo By: William Reynos

A G E N D A I T E M 6 :

PUBLIC HEARING TO ALLOW CITIZEN COMMENT ON WATAUGA COUNTY'S AMBULANCE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT WITH APPALACHIAN REGIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Manager's Comments:

A public hearing has been scheduled to allow citizen comment on Watauga County's ambulance franchise agreement with Appalachian Regional Healthcare System. The term of the agreement is 1 year and shall be automatically renewed for continuing one-year terms unless either party provides a written thirty (30) day notice.

Direction from the Board is requested.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF WATAUGA
AMBULANCE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

THIS AMBULANCE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT (hereinafter "Agreement") is made and entered onto this the 16th day of January 2026 by and between **WATAUGA COUNTY**, a body politic, organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of North Carolina (hereinafter "County"), and **APPALACHIAN REGIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM**, a North Carolina non-profit corporation, (hereinafter "Franchisee"). For the purposes of this Agreement, Franchisee means the Ambulance Service of Appalachian Regional Healthcare System, Inc.

WHEREAS, effective October 4, 1999, the Watauga County Board of Commissioners, by authority contained in NC.G.S, 153A-250, adopted titled Watauga County Ambulance Franchise Ordinance (hereinafter "the Ordinance"), and

WHEREAS, Appalachian Regional Healthcare System D/B/A UNC Health Appalachian is requesting permission to start a hospital-based ambulance for the primary purpose of transporting patients to our hospitals from another hospital or to another hospital when the needed care is not available at our operated facilities, and

WHEREAS, Appalachian Regional Healthcare System (ARHS) operates Watauga Medical Center, Cannon Memorial Hospital, and Appalachian Regional Behavioral Health Hospital. ARHS is requesting to start service with one ambulance that will be outfitted to the critical care level. This will include the ability to transport patients on ventilators and with special equipment such as the Intra-Aortic Balloon pump. Future ambulances also outfitted to the critical care specialty transport level may be added based on transport volumes upon approval of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners, and

WHEREAS, Staffing will always consist of at least one EMT and the second crew member will be a Paramedic, Registered Nurse, or Respiratory Therapist. The ambulance will be available 24/7 for intra-facility transports as needed. Medical direction will be provided by Dr. Deborah Rogers who also serves as an assistant Medical Director for the Watauga EMS system, and

WHEREAS, The ambulance will be based and stored at Watauga Medical Center at all times when not in use. Crews will be based inside the hospital in a location to allow expeditious response times when needed, and

WHEREAS, Watauga County Emergency Services agrees to incorporate the ARHS ambulance(s) into computer aided dispatch (CAD), automated vehicle location (AVL), and radio communications as part of the overall EMS System plan. Additionally, ARHS will provide back-up 911 transport services in the event that the County's primary and secondary transport providers are unavailable as available based on unit staffing and availability of paramedic intercept. As such, ARHS will maintain the ability for the ambulance crew to communicate with Communications via radio on the County's assigned frequency or talkgroup, and,

WHEREAS, Watauga County Emergency Services retains the first right of refusal for all interfacility transports with the following exceptions:

- Transports originating outside of Watauga County
- Transports requiring critical care-level support such as ventilator support, IABP support, or other services meeting the NCOEMS definition of Specialty Care, and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises and the mutual benefits and obligations set forth below, the County and the Franchisee agree as follows:

1. The County does hereby grant unto Franchisee a non-exclusive franchise for the operation of an ambulance service for the provision of emergency and non-emergency medical transport services, in accordance with the Ordinance and this Agreement for a period of one (1) year.
2. This franchise may not be sold, assigned or transferred nor may it in any way vest in any person, firm or corporation, other than the Franchisee and any such sale, transfer or assignment shall cause this franchise to terminate immediately, at the opinion of Watauga County.
3. Any change in legal or equitable ownership of Franchisee its corporate shares, or any of its equipment shall immediately terminate the Franchise, at the option of Watauga County.
4. The initial term of the Franchise shall be from 12:00 AM. on January 14th, 2026 and through and including the 31st day of January, 2027. Either party, for any reason, may with or without cause terminate this agreement and the Franchise upon 30 days written notice to the other party to provide an opportunity for remediation, unless sooner terminated for reasons set forth in the Ordinance or by agreement of the parties hereto.
5. At the end of the aforesaid term, unless the parties agree otherwise in writing or either party has given notice of termination as aforesaid, the Franchise and all of the terms of this Agreement (subject to any amendments as may be entered into) shall be automatically renewed for continuing one-year terms.
6. The Franchise shall provide all personnel, vehicles, supplies and equipment to provide emergency and non-emergency interfacility medical transport service as necessary in all parts of Watauga County on a 24 hour per day, 7 day per week basis.
7. Upon execution of this agreement, all ambulances purchased henceforth shall be fully equipped, licensed, units that are available for service at all times subject to routine maintenance down time. Franchisee is currently authorized one ambulance at time of execution. Franchisee shall maintain the set amount of ambulances as specified by the County's budget ordinance for the most current fiscal year for future fiscal years. No ambulance placed into initial service shall have more than 50,000 miles on the chassis.

8. The Franchisee shall maintain one base at Watauga Medical Center. The Franchisee must bear all utilities, maintenance, medical supplies, equipment and other necessary expenses associated with said facilities.
9. Each ambulance used by Franchisee must be in compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws relating to personnel, health, safety, equipment, vehicle design, and sanitation. Franchisee shall keep the County provided with a copy of the current State certification for each ambulance owned or operated by Franchisee.
10. The Franchisee shall be responsible for all future capital purchase and all operational, including (but not limited to) salaries, employee benefits and expenses, insurance, mobile operational costs, and all other fees, expenses, and charges necessary to remain in compliance with the County's ordinance and the franchise granted to the Franchisee.
11. The Franchisee shall provide the county with a list of all of its equipment which is in service, on not less than an annual basis, and the Franchisee shall assure that all of its equipment in use will be removed from service once it becomes obsolete or needs to be replaced due to normal wear and tear.
12. Each ambulance of Franchisee shall be equipped with a multi-channel radio capable of talking to dispatch centers and other agencies. Frequencies shall be assigned by the Communications Center designated by the County. Franchisee shall relay all ambulance movements to the Communications Center designated by the County, via two-way radio. The County agrees to provide dispatch services to include coordination and tracking of the ambulance, documentation of information in the County's CAD system, and sharing of the data with the Franchisee for business purposes.
13. Watauga County Emergency Services retains the first right of refusal for all interfacility transports with the following exceptions:
 - Transports originating outside of Watauga County
 - Transports meeting the NCOEMS definition of Specialty CareProof of this coordination shall be documented in the report generated by the Watauga County Communications at time of transport in an agreed upon manner by both parties.
14. The Franchisee shall at all times meet the following performance standards:
 - a. Call data may not be deleted or redacted, however explanations may be given for extended response times such as weather, road closures, etc.
 - b. Due to safety and liability concerns, an employee of the Franchisee shall not work greater than 36 hours consecutively without a minimum of 12 hours between shifts. Working additional EMS shifts for another

agency during this rest period would be a violation of this provision
(Exception: The County is under a State of Emergency)

- c. The Franchisee shall engage in and follow all provisions put forth by the County's Medical Director for quality assurance, peer review, and training standards.

15. The Franchisee understands they are an agency operating under the County EMS System Plan including all policies, procedures, and protocols established therein except as approved by the Medical Director.

16. The Franchisee shall not allow any medical staff to practice in Watauga County until he or she has passed an oral examination given by a panel approved by the County's Medical Director along with any other reasonable standards as set forth by the Medical Director.

17. The Franchisee shall make its resources available to Watauga County Emergency Management Office during its emergency activities, and during any declared State of Emergency shall work in conjunction with the Emergency Operations Center.

18. The Franchisee shall operate on a fee for services based on the approved fee schedule in the County's annual budget ordinance. The Franchisee shall provide their fee schedule for review no later than the 15th of May each year for consideration in the budget approval process. No other fees, expenses, or charges may be made without prior approval of the County's Board of Commissioners. For the initial agreement, the Franchisee agrees to compensate Watauga County \$500 per month, due no later than the 15th of each month for the following month, for dispatch services. Payments for dispatch services beyond the initial agreement shall be as approved in the annual budget of the County as agreed upon by both parties.

19. The Franchisee shall be responsible for billing and collection of its fees, charges and expenses. The Franchisee must submit for payment from, third party payers and accept assignment of Medicare and Medicaid. Franchisee shall maintain accurate records of all charges and reimbursements from Medicare and other sources of all charges pursuant to the forgoing authorized increases, and shall compile and maintain such information in a form useful to the County, which information shall be shared from time to time with the County, as the County may desire.

20. Franchisee shall maintain all records required by the Ambulance Franchise Ordinance and shall submit to the County by the 15th of the month following each quarter. The Franchisee shall submit an annual report containing all of the information required by the Ambulance Franchise Ordinance by the 15th day of the month following the last quarter of each year. The Franchisee shall maintain the aforesaid records in an organized fashion, and allow the county full access to said information as the County deems appropriate. Within ninety (90) days of the end of the Franchisee's fiscal year, the Franchisee shall furnish the County a full and complete certified audit of Franchisee's operations conducted by a CPA in

accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of Franchisee's operations, which shall include a fully audited financial statement of the Franchisee. The Franchisee's fiscal year shall be from 1 July to 30 June of each year.

21. Each year, Franchisee shall provide the County a detailed explanation of its billing policies, sufficient to allow County to fully understand the billing methods and practices of the Franchisee.
22. Franchisee shall fully allow the County to inspect all records, premises and equipment of the Franchisee at any time in order to confirm and insure compliance with the ordinance and the franchise granted herein.
23. In providing ambulance service as described herein the Franchisee shall comply with all laws of the United States, the State of North Carolina and the County of Watauga, including rules and regulations promulgated by the Medical Care Commission, the North Carolina Medical Board, the North Carolina Office of EMS, and resolutions and ordinances of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners. Further, the Franchisee shall abide by all applicable US and North Carolina labor laws, including, but not limited to, Occupational Safety and Health regulations, Fair Labor Standards Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act and regulations pursuant thereto. The County shall have the right to inspect all records pertaining to these labor laws and ensure compliance by the Franchisee. The Franchisee shall maintain records on all employee training conducted pursuant to Occupational Safety and Health regulations and shall make these available to the County upon request.
24. Franchisee shall at all times during the existence of the Franchise, keep in full force and effect the insurance coverage as required by the Ambulance Franchise Ordinance and all insurance required by law, including liability insurance on its vehicles and workers' compensation coverage for its personnel. Franchisee shall provide proof of coverage to the county and to assure that each insurance policy contains provisions that assure that the County receives at least 90 days prior notice from each carrier of any lapses, cancellations, denials, changes or limitations in coverage. The County shall be shown as an additional insured on all of Franchisee's liability insurance.
25. The Franchisee shall indemnify and hold harmless the County and its officers and employees from and against all suits, actions, liability, claims, demands, judgments, recoveries or expenses, including court costs and attorney's fees, against or incurred by the County on account of or in any way connected with or arising from any claim of injury, loss or damage which arises out of or is in any manner connected with Franchisee's operations; including, but not limited to any claim or injury, loss or damage, suit, action, liability, claim, demand, judgment, recovery, or expense caused or alleged to be caused in whole or in part by any negligent act, omission, error, professional error, mistake, accident or other fault of the Franchisee, any subcontractor of the Franchisee, or an officer, employee or agent of the Franchisee.

26. Franchisee is to provide ambulance service as an independent contractor and neither Franchise nor any of its personnel shall be an employee, agent or representative of the County in any way.
27. The Franchisee and its agents, contractors and subcontractors shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, religion or disability in any policy or practice and Franchisee shall assure that any agreements or practices it enters into or engages in expressly provide for such nondiscrimination.
28. Should any portion of this Agreement be ruled or determined invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the enforceability of the remaining portions hereof. This Agreement shall not be amended or modified except in writing, signed by all parties hereto, with the County's consent to such modification to be only by prior resolution of its Board of Commissioners.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the said parties hereto have hereunto caused this instrument to be signed in their names by their duly authorized officers.

WATAUGA COUNTY

By: _____
Chairman- Watauga County
Board of Commissioners

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

By: _____
President

Attest: _____
Clerk to the Board

Attest: _____
Corporate Secretary

A G E N D A I T E M 7 :

PROJECT ON AGING MATTERS

A. *Request for Acceptance of FY 2026 Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) Grant/Contract*

Manager's Comments:

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, will request the Board accept a Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) Grant from the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP). The grant is in the amount of \$3,379 with no local match required.

Action is required to accept the MIPPA Grant in the amount of \$3,379 to expand low income subsidy outreach and supplies.



Watauga County Project on Aging

132 Poplar Grove Connector, Suite A • Boone, North Carolina 28607

Website: www.wataugacounty.org/aging angie.boitnotte@watgov.org

Telephone 828-265-8090 Fax 828-264-2060 TTY 1-800-735-2962 Voice 1-800-735-8262 or 711

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deron Geouque, County Manager

FROM: Angie Boitnotte, Director

DATE: January 2, 2026

SUBJ: Acceptance of the FY26 MIPPA Grant/Contract

The Project on Aging is eligible to receive a MIPPA (Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act) grant from the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) which is a division of the North Carolina Department of Insurance. The grant amount is \$3,379 and does not require a local match.

The funds are to be used to expand Low Income Subsidy (LIS) outreach and enrollment in the county by conducting a minimum of four enrollment clinics, in non-traditional locations such as libraries, local pharmacies, or senior housing complexes throughout the community. Remaining monies will be used for supplies and equipment for LIS outreach and education.

I recommend acceptance of these funds and will be present for questions or discussion.



State of North Carolina

County of Wake

Federal Award Agency: US Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Community Living

Grant Information

<u>Contract Type</u>	<u>Cdfa #</u>
MIPPA Govt	93.071
<u>Federal Award Date</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>
09/19/2025	2025-2026
<u>Performance Period Start Date</u>	<u>Performance Period End Date</u>
09/01/2025	08/31/2026
<u>Grant Award #</u>	<u>Award Amount</u>
2501NCMISH-00	\$ \$3,379.00

Award Total Amount
\$ \$3,379.00

Subrecipient Information

<u>Subrecipient Business Name</u>	<u>Subrecipient Address (incl. City, State, Zip)</u>	<u>Subrecipient Telephone #</u>
Watauga County Project on Aging/LE Harrill Sr Ctr	814 W. King St, Rm 216 Boone, NC 28607	(828) 265-8090

List of Required Subrecipient Statement of Work activities

1. Expand Low Income Subsidy (LIS) outreach and enrollment in the county by conducting a minimum of four enrollment clinics, virtually or in person, during the period 9/1/2025 through 8/31/2026; clinics are to be held in non-traditional locations, i.e., library, church, senior housing complex, etc.;
2. Display Monthly Prevention and Wellness Campaign Posters in your respective agency and at SHIIP outreach events during the reporting period, i.e., health fairs, awareness events, etc.;

3. Submit Beneficiary Contact, Group Outreach and Education, and Media Outreach and Education forms through the Federal reporting system by the 15th of the following month the events took place; and
4. Work with the Area Agency on Aging in your area to conduct outreach events in the county.

Subrecipient Statement of Work and Line Item Budget Information

Attachment B - Statement of Work Items

Provide a narrative response for each question within the Statement of Work. *

We will expand Low Income Subsidy outreach and enrollment in Watauga County by conducting a minimum of four enrollment clinics during the period 9/1/2025 through 8/31/2026. We will hold these clinics in non-traditional locations such as the Watauga County Public Library, senior living apartment complexes, and the local pharmacy;

We will display the Monthly Prevention and Wellness Campaign Posters in our senior centers and at outreach events and health fairs in the community;

We will submit Client Counseling Contact and Public & Media Outreach forms in a timely manner through the STARS website; and

We will continue to work with the High Country Area Agency on Aging to conduct outreach events in Watauga County.

Attachment C - Line Item Budget and Budget Narrative

All fields must be completed. Zero dollar amount is an acceptable answer. Must agree to the award amount.

<u>Contractual Amount *</u>	<u>Construction Amount *</u>	<u>Supplies Amount *</u>
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
<u>Equipment Amount *</u>	<u>Other Amount *</u>	<u>Travel Amount *</u>
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<u>Personnel Amount *</u>	<u>Fringe Amount *</u>	<u>Award Total</u>
\$2,379.00	\$0.00	\$3,379.00
<u>Total Project Amount *</u>		
\$3,379.00		

Written Description of Planned Expenditures *

We plan to use \$1,000.00 of the grant funds to purchase paper, printer toner, and other supplies useful for holding events and outreach, as well as to conduct counseling. We also plan to purchase approved items for handouts and door prizes for outreach events such as tote bags, medicine organizers, magnifiers, and other similar items.

We plan to use \$2,379.00 of the grant funds for personnel salary for time spent working on SHIP duties

After filling out this required Statement of Work responses and Line Item Budget information:

1. Press the **Ctrl** key and the letter **P** key at the same time. This will open a new screen to print out this information.
2. The printed document needs to be signed by your financial officer.
3. Scan the signed document so that it can be digitized for uploading.
4. Upload the signed document by pressing the "Select files" button at the Attach Pre-Audit document area shown below.

Does your County require a pre-audit? *

Yes

Attach Pre-Audit document *

Subrecipient Reviewer (person completing the questions and budget) Decision *

The information that you enter will get merged into the Contract document when you press the Submit button below.

Attachment C

For the period 9/1/2025 – 8/31/2026

Line-Item Budget and Budget Narrative

Provide a budget and short narrative on the use of the funding amount reflected on the contract. Please provide details of all expenses including routine charges. These expenditures may include telephone, postage, salary, equipment purchases, internet services etc. Upon termination of contract as a SHIIP Coordinating Site, any equipment or property less than five (5) years old purchased by Subrecipient with grant funds to perform SHIIP functions shall be returned to the Recipient in good working order.

Subrecipient Name: Watauga County POA/LEH Senior Center Award Amount: \$3,379.00

Budget	Amount
Contractual	
Construction	
Supplies	\$1,000.00
Equipment	
Other	
Travel	
Personnel	\$2,379.00
Fringe	
Total	\$3,379.00

(Pre-Audit Signature Below)

Signature

Date

Written description of planned expenditures:

We plan to use \$1,000.00 of the grant funds to purchase paper, printer toner, and other supplies useful for holding events and outreach, as well as to conduct counseling. We also plan to purchase approved items for handouts and door prizes for outreach events such as tote bags, medicine organizers, magnifiers, and other similar items.

We plan to use \$2,379.00 of the grant funds for personnel salary for time spent working on SHIIP duties including Medicare counseling, volunteer coordination, required trainings, media and publicity engagement, and other outreach efforts.

A G E N D A I T E M 7 :

PROJECT ON AGING MATTERS

B. FY 2026 Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) Grant/Contract

Manager's Comments:

Ms. Boitnotte will request the Board accept the grant from the Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) which is a division of the North Carolina Department of Insurance. The grant is in the amount of \$4,538 and does not require any County match.

Board action is required to accept the grant from the Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) in the amount of \$4,538 with no County match.



Watauga County Project on Aging

132 Poplar Grove Connector, Suite A • Boone, North Carolina 28607

Website: www.wataugacounty.org/aging angie.boitnotte@watgov.org

Telephone 828-265-8090 Fax 828-264-2060 TTY 1-800-735-2962 Voice 1-800-735-8262 or 711

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deron Geouque, County Manager

FROM: Angie Boitnotte, Director

DATE: January 2, 2026

SUBJ: FY 2026 SHIIP Grant/Contract

The Project on Aging is eligible to receive a grant from the Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) which is a division of the North Carolina Department of Insurance. The grant amount is \$4,538 and does not require a local match.

The funds are to be used to conduct outreach events, provide open enrollment for Medicare Part D, coordinate a volunteer recognition event, provide counseling clinics, expand Low Income Subsidy (LIS) outreach and enrollment, and to cover the cost of the SHIIP Coordinator's attendance at the SHIIP Coordinator's Training Conference.

I recommend acceptance of these funds and will be present for questions or discussion.



State of North Carolina

County of Wake

Federal Award Agency: US Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Community Living

Grant Information

<u>Contract Type</u>	<u>CDFA #</u>
SHIIP Govt	93.324
<u>Federal Award Date</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>
05/22/2025	2025-2026
<u>Performance Period Start Date</u>	<u>Performance Period End Date</u>
07/01/2025	06/30/2026
<u>Grant Award #</u>	<u>Award Amount</u>
90SAPG0144-01-01	\$ \$4,538.00

Award Total Amount
\$ \$4,538.00

Subrecipient Information

<u>Subrecipient Business Name</u>	<u>Subrecipient Address (incl. City, State, Zip)</u>	<u>Subrecipient Telephone #</u>
Watauga County Project on Aging/LE Harrill Sr Ctr	814 W. King St, Rm 216 Boone, NC 28607	(828) 265-8090

List of Required Subrecipient Statement of Work activities

1. Initiate and develop relationships with local community partners such as, Community Health Centers, Chambers of Commerce, Realtor Associations, Food Banks/Pantries, Local Senior Games, Area Agency on Aging, Parks & Recreation Departments, other Aging Programs, etc.... that support/align the overall Administration for Community Living (ACL) Performance Measures including hard-to-reach populations of Low-Income, Rural, and English as Second Language to promote SHIIP's toll-free number and services provided by SHIIP;

2. Provide ongoing Medicare counseling and enrollment assistance, including telephonic, virtual and/or in-person throughout the grant period and ensure your agency offers ongoing counseling and enrollment assistance during the Medicare Open Enrollment Period of 10/15/25 through 12/07/25 and the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period of 01/01/26 through 03/31/26;
3. Conduct a minimum of two (2) presentations in person or virtual – at least one (1) New to Medicare or Medicare 101 presentation to the general public and one (1) Medicare Education presentation to a disability group including information on the Senior Medicare Patrol Program, Medicare Fraud; and represent SHIIP at a minimum of two (2) health fairs/senior fairs/special events utilizing local certified SHIIP counselors;
4. Submit Beneficiary Contact, Group Outreach and Education, and Media Outreach and Education forms by the 15th of the month following the counseling session or event through the Federal reporting system STARS website for the date range of 4/1/2025 through 3/31/2026;
5. Counsel at least three (3) percent of the county's Medicare population and report in the Federal reporting system STARS for the date range of 4/1/2025 through 3/31/2026;
6. Reach out to 50 percent of the county's total population for Group Outreach and Education events and Media Outreach and Education events along with reporting in the Federal reporting system STARS for the date range of 4/1/2025 through 3/31/2026 (Group Outreach and Education events include: health fairs, senior fairs, interactive presentation to the public and enrollment events. Media Outreach and Education events include: television, radio, local newspapers, health fairs, promoting SHIIP on Agency website, newsletters, magazines, emails, flyers, digital banners, etc.);
7. Coordinate a county volunteer recognition event during the grant period providing volunteers with appreciation items from the North Carolina SHIIP office and engage your Regional Manager;
8. Coordinators will provide program information to county volunteers, including emails, SHIIP News and other materials received from the North Carolina SHIIP office;
9. Coordinators will utilize current SHIIP marketing materials or get approval for created marketing materials;
10. Coordinators will dispose outdated items to ensure accuracy of information and be responsible for maintaining and utilizing all assigned marketing materials including banners, tablecloths and other materials (these will be passed to current coordinating site);
11. Sub-recipient must provide assurances that the agency, staff, and certified volunteers acting on behalf of SHIIP/SMP have no conflict of interest;
12. Coordinators will ensure that agency promotes SHIIP services on/through agency website and social media platforms; and
13. Participate in monthly Coordinator webinars/conference calls, follow-up meetings, SHIIP network trainings, and statewide and/or regional conferences during the reporting period. Funds should be allocated for possible phone costs, travel and/or meal reimbursement per agency guidelines.

Subrecipient Statement of Work and Line Item Budget Information

Attachment B - Statement of Work Items

Provide a narrative response for each question within the Statement of Work. *

1. During this grant period, we will initiate and develop relationships with community partners such as High Country Area Agency on Aging, High Country Community Health, local pharmacies, Watauga County Parks and Rec, and other agencies to promote the services offered by SHIIP. These partners support and align the ACL Performance Measures including SHIIP services promotion to diverse, hard to reach populations of low income, rural, and ESL community members;
2. We agree to continue to provide Medicare counseling and enrollment assistance throughout the grant period through in person, telephonic, and virtual means;
3. We agree to conduct no less than 2 presentations during this grant period to help Medicare beneficiaries, at least 1 Medicare 101 presentation to the general public and 1 educational presentation to a disability group which includes information about Senior Medicare Patrol and Medicare Fraud. We will also represent SHIIP at a minimum of 2 community events such as health fairs utilizing local, certified SHIIP counselors;
4. We agree to submit Beneficiary Contact, Group and Media Outreach and Education forms by the 15th of the month following the counseling session or event through STARS throughout the grant period;
5. We will counsel at least 3% of Watauga County's Medicare population and report it in STARS as required;
6. We will reach out to 50% of Watauga County's total population for Group and Media Outreach and Education events and will report this in STARS as required throughout the grant period. We will accomplish this through local radio, social media, Medicare 101 presentations, community events and newsletters;
7. We will coordinate our annual volunteer appreciation event during the grant period and provide volunteers with appreciation items provided by the state office with our regional manager;
8. We will provide program information to our volunteers, including forwarding all relevant emails, SHIIP updates, and other materials from the NC SHIIP office;
9. We will only utilize current SHIIP marketing materials and we will get approval if we wish to create materials for SHIIP marketing;
10. We will dispose of all outdated items to ensure information accuracy and will maintain and utilize all assigned marketing materials responsibly;
11. We will provide all assurances that our agency, staff, and certified volunteers acting on behalf of SHIIP/SMP have no conflict of interest;
12. We will promote SHIIP services on our agency website and through our social media platforms;
13. We will participate in the monthly Coordinator webinars/conference calls, follow up meetings, SHIIP network trainings, and statewide conferences during the reporting/grant period as possible.

Attachment C - Line Item Budget and Budget Narrative

All fields must be completed. Zero dollar amount is an acceptable answer. Must agree to the award amount.

<u>Contractual Amount *</u>	<u>Construction Amount *</u>	<u>Supplies Amount *</u>
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
<u>Equipment Amount *</u>	<u>Other Amount *</u>	<u>Travel Amount *</u>
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
<u>Personnel Amount *</u>	<u>Fringe Amount *</u>	<u>Award Total</u>
\$1,738.00	\$0.00	\$4,538.00

\$4,538.00

Written Description of Planned Expenditures *

We plan to use \$300 of grant funds for travel and accommodations for our county coordinator to attend the annual SHIIP Coordinator Conference.

We plan to use \$2,500 of grant funds to purchase paper, ink, pens, and other supplies needed to hold events and outreach, as well as to conduct counseling and trainings. We also intend to purchase promotional items such as tote bags, pill boxes, etc. for outreach and education events.

We plan to use \$1738 or any remaining funds for personnel salary for time spent working on SHIIP required activities including Medicare counseling, volunteer coordination, trainings, media engagement, and education outreach.

After filling out this required Statement of Work responses and Line Item Budget information:

1. Press the **Ctrl** key and the letter **P** key at the same time. This will open a new screen to print out this information.
2. The printed document needs to be signed by your financial officer.
3. Scan the signed document so that it can be digitized for uploading.
4. Upload the signed document by pressing the "Select files" button at the Attach Pre-Audit document area shown below.

Does your County require a pre-audit? *

Yes

Attach Pre-Audit document ***Subrecipient Reviewer (person completing the questions and budget) Decision ***

The information that you enter will get merged into the Contract document when you press the Submit button below.

Attachment C

For the period 7/1/2025 – 6/30/2026

Line-Item Budget and Budget Narrative

Provide a budget and short narrative on the use of the funding amount reflected in the contract. Please provide details of all expenses including routine charges. These expenditures may include telephone, postage, salary, equipment purchases, internet services etc. Upon termination of contract as a SHIIP Coordinating Site, any equipment or property less than five (5) years old purchased by Subrecipient with grant funds to perform SHIIP functions shall be returned to the Recipient in good working order.

Subrecipient Name: Watauga County POA/LEH Sr. Ctr. Award Amount: \$4,538.00

Budget	Amount
Contractual	
Construction	
Supplies	\$2,500.00
Equipment	
Other	
Travel	\$300.00
Personnel	\$1,738.00
Fringe	
Total	\$4,538.00

(Pre-Audit Signature Below)

Signature

Date

Written description of planned expenditures:

We plan to use \$300 of grant funds for travel and accommodations for our county coordinator to attend the annual SHIIP Coordinator Conference.

We plan to use \$2,500 of grant funds to purchase paper, ink, pens, and other supplies needed to hold events and outreach, as well as to conduct counseling and trainings. We also intend to purchase promotional items such as tote bags, pill boxes, etc. for outreach and education events.

We plan to use \$1738 or any remaining funds for personnel salary for time spent working on SHIIP required activities including Medicare counseling, volunteer coordination, trainings, media engagement, and education outreach.

A G E N D A I T E M 8 :

PARKS AND RECREATION MATTERS

A. Approval to Submit PARTF Helene Recovery Fund Grant

Manager's Comments:

Ms. Keron Poteat, Parks and Recreation Director, will request permission to apply for a \$988,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grant to assist with the Old Cove Creek Park Project. High Country Council of Governments is currently helping with the application. The grant requires a 50% (\$494,000) local match.

Board action is required to authorize the application for the PARTF Grant as presented.



WATAUGA COUNTY

PARKS & RECREATION

01132026 BCC Meeting



231 Complex Drive • Boone, NC 28607
Phone : (828) 264-9511
Fax : (828) 264-9523

www.wataugacounty.org

To: Watauga County Board of Commissioners
Watauga County Manager, Deron Geouque
From: Watauga County Parks & Recreation Director, Keron J Poteat
Subject: Agenda Inclusions
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026

Please consider including the following two items on the Board of Commissioners' Agenda for the Tuesday, January 13th, 2026 Meeting:

1. Approval to Submit PARTF Helene Recovery Fund Grant: Kelly Coffey with the High Country Council of Governments is currently working on the application. The grant, if awarded, will assist with the Old Cove Creek Park Project. In addition to approval to submit, the attached documents require Mr. Egger's signature, as the Chairman of the Board. [Helene Recovery Fund for PARTF | NC State Parks](#)
2. Presentation of Watauga County Outdoor Spaces Report: Joy James, a Recreation Commission Member and App State Professor has gathered the information, and will present this to the Board of Commissioners. During the December 17, 2025 Recreation Commission, Ms. James presented this to the members. A motion was approved to present this to the Watauga County Commissioners. The presentation is for informational purposes only. No motion or approval required. The Power Point is included in the packet.

Helene Recovery Fund for PARTF 2025-2026

Non-Recurring Funding SL 2025-26, House Bill 1012

Environmental Sustainability: To assist the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) in being good stewards of the environment, please print your application documentation double-sided on 30% post-consumer recycled paper.

The Division of Parks and Recreation does not discriminate against anyone based on race, sex, color, national origin, age, or disability and is an equal opportunity employer. If anyone feels that he/she has been discriminated against, a complaint may be filed with either DNCR or the Equal Opportunity Office, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

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Helene Recovery Fund for PARTF

Grant Cycle Schedule

October 1, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;">Announcement</p> <p>The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR) announces the availability of Helene Recovery Fund matching grants to local governments.</p>
January 30, 2026	<p style="text-align: center;">Application Deadline</p> <p>Applications are due, either via paper submission or online in SharePoint by 5pm. Paper submissions should be postmarked by January 30 to be eligible for consideration.</p>
March 27, 2026	<p style="text-align: center;">Selecting Grant Recipients</p> <p>The Parks and Recreation Authority meets to select grant recipients at Lake James State Park. A streaming option will be made available as well.</p>
May 1, 2026, to April 30, 2029	<p style="text-align: center;">Anticipated Project Period for Helene Recovery Fund projects.</p>

Helene Recovery Fund

Requirements and Resources

Overview

The Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 (SL 2025-26, House Bill 1012) was ratified on June 27, 2025, allocating \$4,158,875 to the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for eligible uses in the affected area for local governments. Per statute, the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority shall not impose the maximum grant size set forth in NCAC Subchapter 13K .0100 with respect to funds provided by this subdivision. The Helene Recovery Fund has been allocated to the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), so the grant program will be administered through the PARTF administrative code. This application includes references to PARTF throughout as well.

Applications are due, either via paper submission or online in SharePoint by 5pm. Paper submissions should be postmarked by January 30 to be eligible for consideration.

Program Summary

Eligible Applicants: North Carolina counties and incorporated municipalities are eligible for Helene Recovery through PARTF grants. Two or more local governments may apply jointly with one serving as the primary sponsor.

Public authorities, as defined by GS 159-7, are also eligible if they are authorized by N.C. general statutes to acquire land and develop recreation facilities for public use.

Per SL 2025-26, House Bill 1012, eligible counties are listed below and include counties designated before, on, or after the effective date of this act under a major disaster declaration by the President of the United States under the Stafford Act (P.L. 93-288) as a result of Hurricane Helene.

Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Forsyth, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Iredell, Jackson, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Nash, Polk, Rowan, Rutherford, Stanly, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Union, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, and Yancey.

A map of the eligible counties is also available online: https://gis.fema.gov/maps/disaster/dec_4827.png

Eligible Projects: Eligible applicants can apply to acquire land for parks and build recreational facilities for use by the public in the affected area.

Maximum Request: There is no maximum request for this grant.

Dollar-for-Dollar Match: An applicant must match the grant at least dollar-for-dollar. The appraised value of land to be donated to the applicant can be used as matching funds. The value of in-kind services, such as the applicant's force account labor or volunteer work, cannot be used as part of the match. The grantee is required to provide all matching funds within the three-year grant period.

Prioritization. Projects damaged or affected by Helene are eligible to prioritization if from counties that (i) were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene and (ii) have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer. To seek this prioritization, applicants must attest that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

Site Control: For development projects, the applicant must have legal control of the park property where PARTF facilities will be located at the time of application.

Public Use: Parks and trails must be open and accessible to the public with no restrictions such as membership. Facilities built or renovated with a PARTF grant are to be used for public recreation for at least 25 years. Facilities still under a PARTF 25-year restriction are not eligible for assistance through the Helene Recovery Fund grant.

Incomplete and Ineligible Applications will not be considered for funding. Only information received or postmarked by January 30, 2026 will be accepted. Mailed applications must include a tracking number.

The **Application Checklist** (page 9) contains the list of documents needed for a complete application.

Evaluation of Applications: The PARTF staff evaluates each application. The evaluation includes the Helene Recovery Fund scoring system included in this application, an on-site inspection by RRS, and a review of the applicant's previous grant history.

Selecting Recipients: The Parks and Recreation Authority, a board appointed by the Governor and the General Assembly, selects grant recipients for funds allocated to PARTF. The factors that the Authority members consider include the following:

- the applicant's description and impact narrative for the project
- the application's ranking based on the scoring system
- the geographic distribution of grants across the eligible Hurricane Helene affected area
- the distribution of grants to local governments with small, medium, and large populations
- the applicant's administration of previous grants
- the amount of grant funds that the applicant is requesting
- the amount of grant funds available

Additional Information is available on the [N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation website](#).

Assistance for Completing the Application

Read the entire application and understand how each application is evaluated. Start early to assemble all items on the checklist for submitting a complete application.

The Division of Parks and Recreation provide technical assistance to local governments through the Recreation Resources Service (RRS) at N.C. State University. Contact your [regional consultants](#) to discuss your application or project.

To Help Plan Facilities for Public Recreation

Making Facilities Accessible: All facilities funded by PARTF must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). Applicants are encouraged to include the costs of access routes to the accessible facilities in the grant application. For design guidelines, go to:

- [ADA Standard - index](#)
- [About ADA Standards](#)
- [Guidelines for Recreation Facilities](#)

Playground Safety Guidelines: PARTF encourages all applicants to adhere to the guidelines established by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for [Public Playground Safety](#) (publication #325).

Place Utility Lines Underground: All utility lines funded with a grant from PARTF must be placed underground.

DOT, FERC & FEMA Permitting for Facilities

For any project requiring a DOT, FERC, or FEMA permit, PARTF strongly recommends that the local government obtain the approved permit before applying. Examples include bridges and dams.

To Help Complete Environmental Review

If assistance is needed in creating maps from online resources, contact these agencies as early as possible.

Wetlands: The Regulatory Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can assist in identifying [wetlands](#).

Floodplains: <https://fris.nc.gov/fris/Home.aspx?ST=NC> has the most recent Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain data. The permitting process before construction of facilities will determine the applicable storm water requirements for the project.

Cultural Resources: North Carolina's [State Historic Preservation Office](#) can assist in identifying historical and archaeological resources.

Sites Funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Reference these [lists of North Carolina's LWCF projects](#) to determine if your proposed project site has previously received LWCF funding.

If this is an LWCF site, list the LWCF grant number on the Basic Facts and Assurances grant template (page 29)

Proposed projects at LWCF-funded sites must comply with guidelines set forth by the National Park Service in the [LWCF Manual](#).

Projects on School Property

Eligible Facilities: Only recreational facilities not generally provided at schools are eligible.

Joint-Use Agreement: A local government and a school system must include an executed joint-use agreement with their application. The agreement describes how the school site will be used for public recreation. PARTF must approve the agreement before the application can be considered. Contact your RRS regional consultant to receive a sample agreement.

Submitting Your Application

There are two ways to submit your Helene Recovery application:

- 1) Contact your RRS consultant to request a SharePoint folder to place your digital files in by 5pm on January 30, 2026
- 2) Submit one complete paper copy of the application as well as a flash drive containing the digital files in PDF format. Use the "Checklist to Submit a Complete Application." (page 28)

For paper submissions, only application packets postmarked or received by January 30, 2026, will be accepted.

Applications may be:

Mailed to: NC Division of Parks and Recreation
Attention: PARTF Program
1615 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1615

Delivered no later than 5 p.m. January 30 to: NC Division of Parks and Recreation
Nature Research Center, 3rd Floor
121 West Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

If You Receive a Grant

When to Start: To receive PARTF grant funds, a grantee must sign a contract before beginning a PARTF project.

Two exceptions:

- Some planning costs can be incurred before applying.
- DPR can approve a waiver allowing an applicant to acquire land before a grant is approved.

Signing the Contract: A grantee signs a contract that describes the project and the conditions for receiving a PARTF grant. This is a legally binding agreement between the local government and the State of North Carolina.

Project Costs submitted in the application will be part of the contract and serve as the budget for the project (page 32).

Reimbursements: PARTF grants are paid as reimbursements of documented expenses. Grantees may submit invoices for reimbursement on a quarterly basis. The PARTF program will reimburse grantees for up to 50 percent of their expenditures for the project.

Audits and Inspections: PARTF staff will conduct periodic site inspections of each PARTF project to inspect the progress as well as the financial records. All PARTF grantees must maintain accounting records for the project that are supported by documentation such as invoices and contracts.

Completing a PARTF Project: A local government has three years to complete a PARTF project, as specified in the contract.

Checklist to Submit a Complete Application

All items listed are required documents. Complete and submit all items, including the checklist, using the application templates provided in Appendix III of this packet. Keep a copy of the application for your files.

- Electronic Submission - Applications are submitted through an electronic folder in Microsoft SharePoint. Applicants should contact their Recreation Resources Service regional consultant to request access to the SharePoint folder. Applicants are encouraged to request access early in the process to allow for technical support, as needed. Use the file names shown in the table below.
- Paper Submission – Must include Hard Copy and Digital Copy on flash drive
 - Hard Copy: Paper clip the pages and copies of each item on the checklist together. **Do not use staples.**
 - Digital copy: Submit a flash drive with individual files for the documents on the checklist. Use PDF format. Label the flash drive with the local government name. Use the file names shown in the table below.

<p><i>Required for All Applications – See Appendix III for Application Templates</i></p> <p>Use the (file name) shown for each item.</p>	
1.	Checklist for Submitting a Complete Application (Checklist)
2.	Applicant's Basic Facts and Assurances (Basic facts)
3.	Project Description (Description)
4.	Project Justification (Justification)
5.	Site Plan (Site plan)
6.	Site Vicinity Map (Site vicinity)
7.	Project Costs (Project costs)
8.	Source of Matching Funds (Matching funds)
9.	Attorney's Certification of Site Control (Site control)
10.	Environmental Review (ENV review)
11.	Prioritization (Prioritization) <i>OPTIONAL</i>
12.	Resiliency Planning (Resiliency) <i>OPTIONAL</i>
13.	Applicant Self-Scoring System (Self Scoring)

Project Description

Use the Project Description template to submit a short project description. This description will be published and/or used publicly.

You will describe your project in 3-5 sentences. Be concise and discerning, including recreation facilities being added, renovated or replaced, acres acquired, and whether the facility renovation is due to damage sustained during Hurricane Helene.

Project Justification

Use the Impact Narrative template to submit a project narrative. This narrative will be used in application evaluation and will be provided to the Authority to consider in their selection.

This narrative may not exceed one page, font size 10 points or larger.

This narrative should address why the project is needed and how the repair, replacement or addition of parks and trails projects will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following damage or effects from Hurricane Helene. It will be used in application evaluation and will be provided to the Authority to consider in their selection.

Site Plan

Submit 1 copy on a one-page color-coded site plan. Use the examples on the following pages as a guide. Include the items and color coding listed below. Use either 8½" x 11" or 11" x 17" paper using landscape orientation if possible. Do not use card stock or similar paper. Include 1 copy of a floor plan if your project includes a community center or similar large building to be used for recreation.

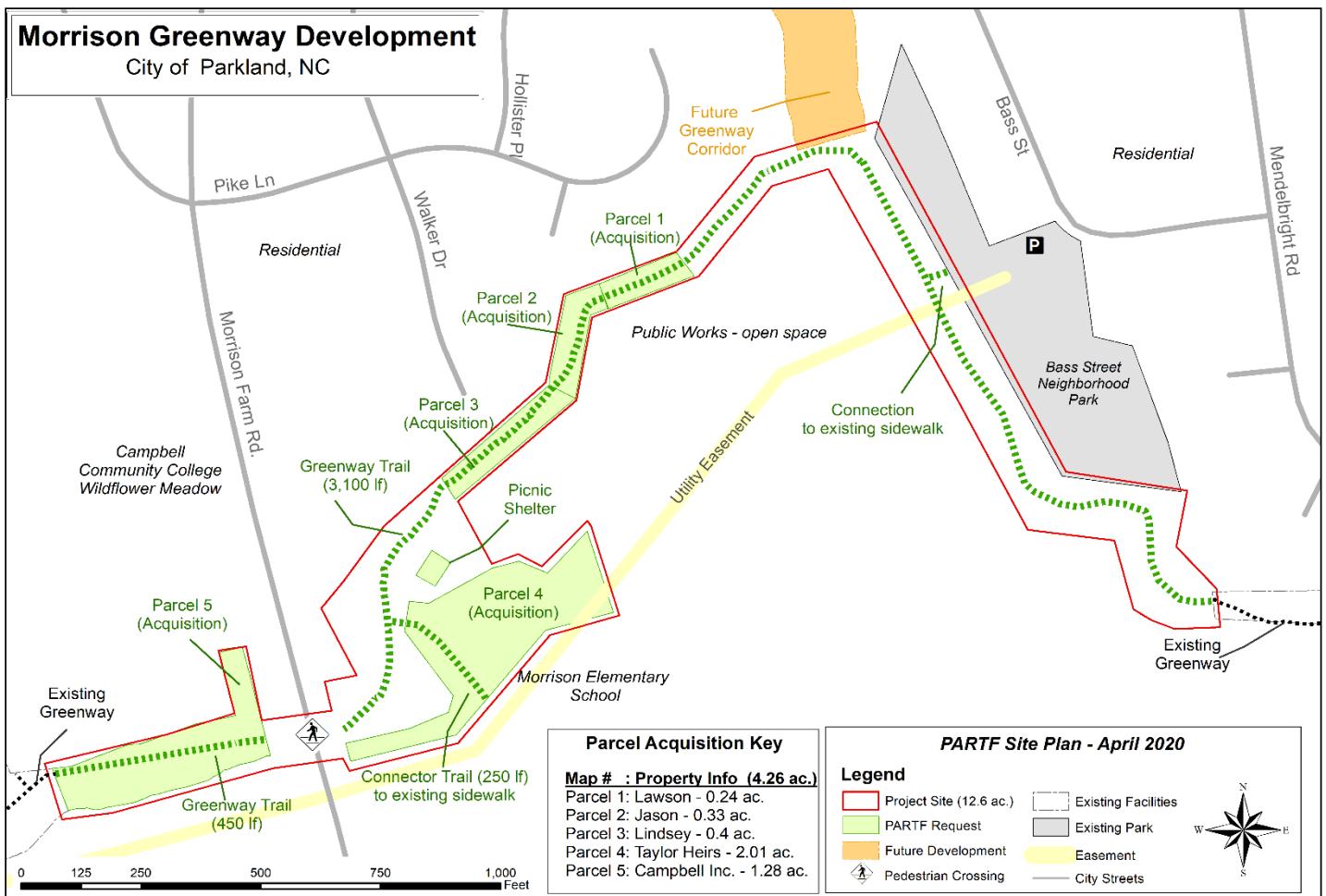
Include the following items and color-codes on the site plan for both non-linear and linear parks:

- Title: Name of project and applicant
- Acreage
- Elements of the proposed PARTF project: light green. Include land to be acquired, recreational and support facilities.
- Known streams, lakes, and wetlands
- Park boundaries: red for existing boundaries/ green for new land to be acquired
- Existing facilities: white
- Future facilities: orange
- Utility easements (power, sewer, and water lines): yellow
- Entrance and access roads to the site
- Names of adjacent roads
- Uses of adjacent property
- Legend showing color coding
- North arrow
- Date the map was prepared
- Scale

Example site plan of a non linear park



Example site plan of a linear park

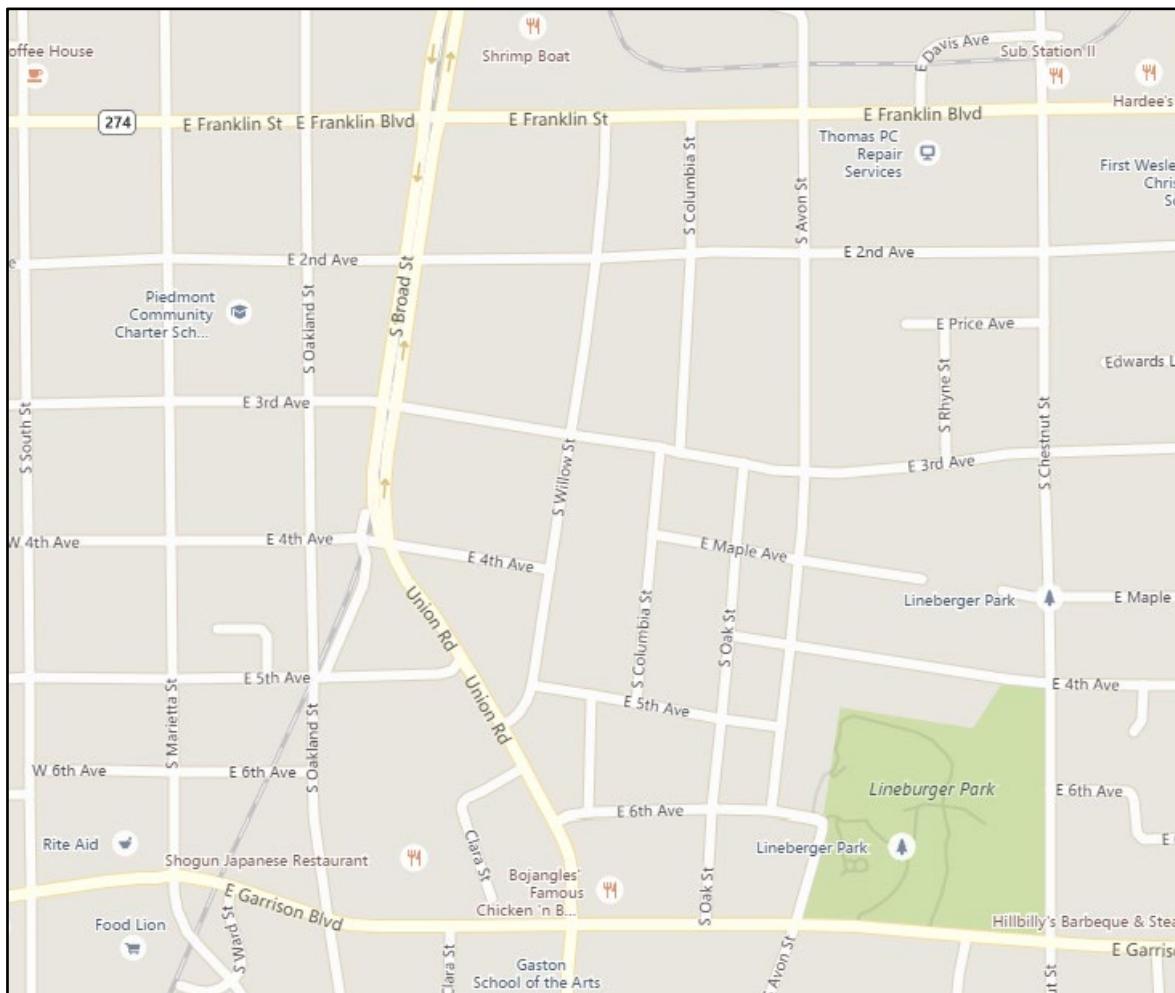


Site Vicinity Map

Please provide 1 copy of an 8½" x 11" map showing the location of the proposed project. Include the following items on the map:

- Title of the project
- The name of the road a visitor uses to get to the park entrance
- The closest major highway/road
- Legible street names
- North arrow
- Physical address (such as a street address)
- Latitude/longitude coordinates of the central point in the site

Sample: Site Vicinity Map
Lineburger Park
632 Garrison Blvd.
Gastonia, NC
Latitude / Longitude: 35°15'16.8"N / 81°10'19.7"W



Project Costs

- **Project costs submitted in the application will become the grant's budget.** List all proposed project elements and the estimated cost of each element. All elements included in the project costs must be shown on the site plan, except for items such as grading, utilities, and planning. Round project costs to the dollar.
- **Accurate Cost Figures are Important:** If the actual costs are more than those listed in the application, the local government will need to cover the increased costs.

Costs to Build or Renovate Facilities

- **How to be More Accurate:** Get cost figures from contractors, landscape architects, or planners who develop parks and recreational facilities.
- **Consider the impact of inflation.** Construction may be delayed as permitting and planning are completed. Construction costs can increase in the interim
- **Be Specific:** Include specific units (sizes, numbers, lengths, etc.) for each element in the project costs. Include dimensions or square footage of all indoor or sheltered facilities. Also, include utilities and other infrastructure.
- **Contingency:** A contingency of five percent of the total cost to build or renovate a project (up to \$50,000, whichever is less) may be included.
- **ADA Accessible Routes:** Be sure to include accessible routes and ADA signs in your project costs.
- **Ineligible Items:** Sports equipment (balls, bats etc.), tools, maintenance equipment, office equipment and indoor furniture are not eligible. All items must be permanently secured. Exception: items that are typically portable, such as soccer goals, picnic tables and bleachers, must remain at the project site.

Planning and Incidental Costs

- **Planning Costs:** For projects to build or renovate facilities, the following costs are eligible: architectural and engineering fees, site plans, design and construction drawings, construction management, and preparing project costs. Park master plans and system-wide plans are not eligible for reimbursement.
 - These costs are eligible if they are incurred after January 30, 2024 (two years before the application deadline) and before the end date for the PARTF contract. Include these costs in the Project Costs for the project and keep copies of the invoices to submit for reimbursement.
- **Limit on Planning and Incidental Land Acquisition Costs:** The sum of planning costs, incidental land acquisition costs, and the cost of preparing an application cannot exceed 20 percent of the total cost of the project or \$200,000, whichever is less.

Sample - Project Costs

Applicant: Town of Parkland

Project Name: Green Park Redevelopment

Project Elements (Include specific units - sizes, numbers, lengths, etc. - for each item.)	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Building and/or Renovating Costs			
Picnic Shelter (2 grills, 4 tables, and 2 trash receptacles) and Rest Room Renovation - 20 x 30 feet	Lump Sum	\$147,000	\$147,000
Playground (play structure and accessible surfacing)	Lump Sum	\$80,200	\$80,200
Walking Trail - 6 feet wide, trail with 1 bench	1,500 linear ft.	\$32 / linear foot	\$48,000
Ballfield with irrigation, dugouts, fencing, and benches	Lump Sum	\$239,000	\$239,000
Accessible Routes (paved, 6 feet wide)	400 linear ft.	\$45 / linear foot	\$18,000
Parking Lot - paved for 45 cars	Lump Sum	\$72,800	\$72,800
Site Preparation (clearing, grading, and erosion control)	4 acres	\$23,750	\$95,000
Utilities	Lump Sum	\$40,000	\$40,000
Cost to Build or Renovate			\$740,000
Contingency for the Cost of Building / Renovating			
Contingency (not to exceed 5% or \$50,000 of the cost to build, whichever is less)	5%		\$37,000
Land Value – (Indicate Purchase or Donation)			
Land Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donation	5 acres	\$14,600	\$73,000
Planning and Incidental Land Acquisition Costs			
Construction management, site planning, preliminary design, survey and appraisals, or the cost of preparing the application (not to exceed 20% or \$200,000 of the cost of the project, whichever is less)	8%	\$74,000	\$74,000
Total Project Cost			\$924,000
Total PARTF Grant Request			\$400,000
Total Local Match			\$524,000

Sources of the Applicant's Matching Funds

Use the format below to describe the sources of the applicant's matching funds. Indicate if these funds are currently available or are the funds yet to be approved. If funds are yet to be approved, list the date for approval. Matching funds must be available during the three-year grant period.

Sample

Sources of the Applicants Matching Funds

Applicant: Town of Parkland

Project Name: Green Park Redevelopment

Type of Matching Funds	Amount of Funds	Funding Source	Availability
Cash	\$ 16,000	Private Donation	In Hand
	\$ 402,570	Town's Budget or Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)	Town's Approved CIP
Fee Simple Land Donation	\$ 56,400	Value of Donated Property	Pending PARTF Grant Approval
State Grant*	\$ 100,000	NC Land and Water Fund	Pending DNCR Approval by September 2023
Total Matching Funds	\$574,970		

*PARTF allows other state and federal funding to be used as local match. PARTF cannot be used as a match for the Helene Recovery Fund.

Attorney's Certification of Site Control

The applicant's attorney should review the Site Plan for the project (as described on page 9). An attorney must certify that the local government has control of the entire site of a proposed development project for providing public recreation by January 30, 2026.

The project must be located on a single contiguous site.

Please contact your regional consultant about linear parks and greenways.

Important: The application can be declared ineligible without this certification.

Environmental Review

All applicants who are proposing any development (roads, buildings, ball fields, etc.) with a PARTF grant must provide the following information to help determine the proposed project's impact on the environment. Project design should minimize adverse impacts on the environmentally sensitive features of the site. Each item must be accurately and adequately addressed to allow the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to determine if the proposed project will comply with the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

Some projects will require an additional evaluation called an “environmental assessment” if they are selected for funding. For any project that meets *all three* of the following criteria, an environmental document must be prepared:

An expenditure of \$10 million in funds provided by the state of North Carolina for a single project or action or related group of projects or action

Or

land-disturbing activity of equal to or greater than 10 acres of public lands resulting in substantial, permanent changes in the natural cover or topography of those lands (or waters)

An action by a state agency, and

Has a potential detrimental environmental effect upon natural resources, public health and safety, natural beauty, or historical or cultural elements, of the state's common inheritance.

The PARTF program will notify the applicant if an environmental assessment is required. If needed, the grantee must complete the environmental assessment before signing the PARTF contract and beginning the project.

Resiliency Planning

Resilience is more than reducing the impact of hazards. The North Carolina Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan (NC Resilience Plan, 2020) defines resilience as “the capacity of a community or business to prevent, withstand, respond to, and recover from a disruption.” It encompasses the characteristics that enable a community to survive and thrive when disasters happen. Resilience helps us build the future that we want – it helps us bounce forward after a disaster, not just bounce back. The NC Resilience Plan also tells us that “a resilient North Carolina is a state where our communities, economies, and ecosystems are better able to rebound, positively adapt to, and thrive amid changing conditions and challenges, including disasters and climate change; to maintain quality of life, healthy growth, and durable systems; and to conserve resources for present and future generations.” (Source: [NC Resilient Communities Planning Guide](#))

How is this project incorporating resiliency planning?

Damage assessment and Recovery

- What specific damage did your parks and trails sustain during Hurricane Helene?
- Have you completed a formal damage assessment? If so, please attach documentation (photos, engineering reports, etc.).
- What immediate recovery actions were taken to stabilize or secure the site?

Resiliency Planning and Design

- How has your community incorporated resilience into the design of the proposed project?
 - Examples: elevated structures, permeable surfaces, native vegetation, flood-tolerant materials.
- Does your project include nature-based solutions (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens, living shorelines) to mitigate future storm impacts?
- Have you updated your master plan or hazard mitigation plan to reflect lessons learned from Hurricane Helene?

Community and Interagency Coordination

- What role did your parks play in community response or recovery during/after the hurricane?
 - Shelter, distribution site, cooling center, etc.
- Have you coordinated with local emergency management or public health agencies in your recovery or planning efforts?

Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring

- What strategies are in place to maintain and monitor the resilience features of your project?
- How will you ensure that future maintenance budgets account for climate-related wear and tear?

Supporting documentation

- Show resilient design features on the site plans.
- Hazard mitigation plans or climate adaptation strategies.
- Letters of support from emergency management or public health partners.

Resiliency Planning Resources:

[Overview of the Steps | U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#)

[NC Resilient Communities Planning Guide](#)

[NC Resilience Exchange Actions Database](#)

[RISE Regional Resilience Portfolios](#)

[NC DOA Uniform Floodplain Management Policy For State Construction](#)

[FEMA National Resilience Guidance](#)

[DOI Nature-Based Solutions Roadmap](#)

[The Power of Parks to Address Climate Change: A Special Report](#)

Case Studies

- [Town of Black Mountain addresses streambank erosion with restoration efforts](#)
- [Hoke Community Forest institutes a prescribed burn program](#)
- [New Bern project grows natural stormwater resilience while improving native ecosystems](#)
- [Incorporating climate change into a new forest management plan](#)

Prioritization

Projects damaged or affected by Helene are eligible to prioritization if from counties that (i) were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene and (ii) have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer.

To seek this prioritization, applicants must attest that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

HUD Report: <https://www.commerce.nc.gov/2025-04-17hud-action-plandbg-drapproved/download?attachment>

State Demographer County Population Estimates:

https://demography.osbm.nc.gov/explore/assets/historical-certified-estimates-2010_2024/

Scoring System for Helene Recovery Fund Grants

A. Project Justification (up to 10 possible points)

This narrative should address why the project is needed and how the community will be impacted. If seeking prioritization, please include how the replacement of damaged or affected parks and trails will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following Hurricane Helene.

B. Resiliency Planning (up to 20 possible points)

1. Resiliency Planning (4 possible points)
2. Damage & Damage Assessment and Recovery (4 possible points)
3. Resiliency Planning and Design (4 possible points)
4. Community and Interagency Coordination (4 possible points)
5. Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring (4 possible points)

C. Acquisition (up to 15 possible points)

Identify and provide justification for the acquisition type and impact to protect the unique natural resources. Select one of the following three options and explain why land acquisition will create a positive impact on the community. (Possible 10 points)

- The site is a significant, unique, and threatened natural resource that will be used for other development purposes if not acquired. The recommendation is to conserve/ protect the resource while providing low-impact passive recreation, education, and conservation opportunities. (10 points)
- The site is an excellent natural resource that will be protected in addition to providing active and passive outdoor recreational opportunities and supports education and conservation efforts. (7 points)
- The site is an average natural resource that will be used to provide predominantly active outdoor recreation opportunities and support the education and conservation efforts. (5 points)

Justification for selection:

Number of acres of land acquired - parcel acres or linear acquisition for greenway/ trails (Possible 5 points)

- 5 acres or less (3 points)
- Medium acquisition, 6-25 acres (4 points)
- Large acquisition, 26 or more acres (5 points)

Documentation Required: Site plan should include acreage and any highlighted resources.

D. Public Recreational Facilities (up to 45 possible points)**1. New, like, or renovated facilities to be provided: (30 points)****A maximum of 30 total points will be awarded for the sum of 1a, 1b and 1c.**

a. The project will provide (check one):

- 3 or more types of new recreational facilities (20 points)
- 2 types of new recreational facilities (15 points)
- 1 type of new recreational facility (10 points)

List the new types of recreational facilities:

b. The project will add recreational facilities at the park that are like the facilities that exist at the park. The project will add (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (12 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the types of recreational facilities:

c. The project will provide major renovation of (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (6 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the recreational facilities to be renovated and why each renovation is needed:

2. The project will provide a trail or greenway (1/4 mile or longer) that links to existing recreation area(s), school(s), downtown businesses, and/or communities located outside of the park. (5 points)

- Yes
- No

Site plan must show trail linkage to receive points. Identify by name and location the existing trail and areas to be linked by the proposed trail:

E. Commitment to Operation & Maintenance (15 possible points)

1. The applicant has a full-time parks and recreation department that will manage the project site to provide programming and to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (15 points)
2. The applicant has a full-time staff, such as a public works, who will manage the project site to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (8 points)
3. The applicant will manage the project site with part-time staff or by contractual agreement to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (4 points)
4. An organized volunteer group, such as a civic group or youth sports association will operate and maintain the site. (2 points)

Provide the name of the organization that will operate and maintain the site:

If the applicant is not going to operate the site with full-time staff, (see items #3 & #4), describe how and when the site will be open to the public.

F. Availability of Other Funds for the Project (up to 5 possible points)

- Limited Funds (5 points)**
- Average Funds (3 points)**
- Significant Funds (1 point)**

G. Additional Points (10 possible points +/-)

- Project is applicant's only park (Possible +3 points)
- The applicant provides maximum access to outdoor recreation opportunities (Possible +3 points)
- Project provides public access to public waters (such as river, ocean, sound, or lake). (Possible +2 points)
- Project provides a trail connection that links daily destinations i.e. bus stop, retail, existing recreation area(s), school(s), businesses, and/or communities located outside of the project site. (Possible +2 points)
- Poor application documentation (unclear maps or incomplete site plan, instructions not followed, missing documentation, unrealistic budget, inconsistencies, etc.) (Possible -4 points)

H. Prioritization (10 possible points)

County designated by HUD as most impacted and distressed:

County Population per 2023 State Demographer Report:

- Applicant attests that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid (page 40).

Definitions

1. **Recreational Facility:** The following list provides examples of projects that will qualify as recreational facilities or areas.
 - A. **Examples of Recreational Facilities and Areas:**
 - Adult and youth sports facilities including tennis courts, soccer fields, ballfields, running tracks, volleyball courts and basketball courts.
 - Fishing and boating facilities including man-made lakes or ponds, docks, launching ramps, piers, overlooks/observation facilities, boardwalks, and marinas.
 - Swimming facilities including swimming pools, spray-grounds, wave-making pools, wading pools, and swim beaches.
 - Trails within a park with a minimum continuous length of 1/4 mile including nature trails, hiking trails, bicycling trails, and equestrian trails.
 - Greenways - linear open spaces connecting parks or other public areas that are 1/4 mile or longer and usually contain a multi-purpose trail.
 - Camping facilities including cabins, group camps, and tent and trailer campgrounds.
 - Picnic facilities including picnic shelters with tables and grills, or picnic areas with groups of tables, grills, and trash receptacles.
 - Indoor recreational facilities including recreation centers, fitness centers, multi-purpose rooms, arts and crafts centers, nature centers, weight rooms, aquatic centers, handball courts, gymnasiums, and community centers. One building may include more than one recreational facility. For example, a new recreation center could contain a gymnasium, a weight room, and a multi-purpose room.
 - Playgrounds / Tot Lots: one or more areas with multiple play structures for children that are sometimes differentiated by the age of the child.
 - Amphitheaters
 - Court and lawn games: One or more areas with equipment for informal games such as horseshoes, bocce, corn hole, and volleyball.
 - B. **Support facilities** are **not** recreational facilities: Support facilities include parking lots, roads, lighting, bleachers, restrooms, concession buildings, fencing, landscaping, site preparation, bridges, utilities, sidewalks, stairways, drinking fountains, and maintenance buildings. Recreational programs, such as sports activities, classes, or lessons, are not facilities.
2. **Renovation:** The extensive reconstruction of a facility to restore or improve its usefulness to its original purpose. A renovation project will not be awarded points under the scoring system if the facility's deterioration is due to inadequate maintenance during its reasonable lifetime. Renovating a recreational or non-recreational facility for a new recreation use would apply to new and/or like recreational facilities.

Appendix I: Eligible Counties List

On October 15, 2024, [FEMA](#) added twelve counties to the list of North Carolina counties adversely affected by Hurricane Helene. As of October 18, 2024, the following counties in North Carolina are Disaster Counties:

Alexander	Clay	Lincoln	Stanly
Alleghany	Cleveland	Macon	Surry
Ashe	Forsyth	Madison	Swain
Avery	Gaston	McDowell	Transylvania
Buncombe	Graham	Mecklenburg	Union
Burke	Haywood	Mitchell	Watauga
Cabarrus	Henderson	Nash	Wilkes
Caldwell	Iredell	Polk	Yadkin
Catawba	Jackson	Rowan	Yancey
Cherokee	Lee	Rutherford	

Those projects seeking Prioritization:

Projects damaged or affected by Helene are eligible to prioritization if from counties that (i) were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene and (ii) have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer.

To seek this prioritization, applicants must attest that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

HUD-Identified MID Areas:	Full Counties: Ashe; Avery; Buncombe; Burke; Haywood; Henderson; McDowell; Mitchell; Rutherford; Transylvania; Watauga; Yancey Full Counties Based on HUD-Identified zip code: Caldwell (zip code 28645); Cleveland (zip code 28150); Madison (zip code 28753); Polk (zip code 28782) Partial Counties Based on HUD-Identified zip code: Mecklenburg (zip code 28214)
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Appendix II: Recreation Resources Service (RRS)

RRS provides grant administration as part of its duties for the NC Division of Parks and Recreation. Your RRS Consultant is the first point of contact for questions or assistance related to the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), non-recurring grants administered by the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund, and the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). For Grant assistance, contact the regional consultant assigned to your County.

West	Central North	Central South	Northeast	Southeast
Blake Covington bwcovinge@ncsu.edu (919) 513-5885	Trey Fouché jfouche2@ncsu.edu (919) 513-3644	Terri Stowers tlstower@ncsu.edu (919) 513-4083	Scott Payne rrspayne@ncsu.edu (919) 513-3937	Brittany Shipp bwshipp@ncsu.edu (919) 513-5951

go.ncsu.edu/rrs



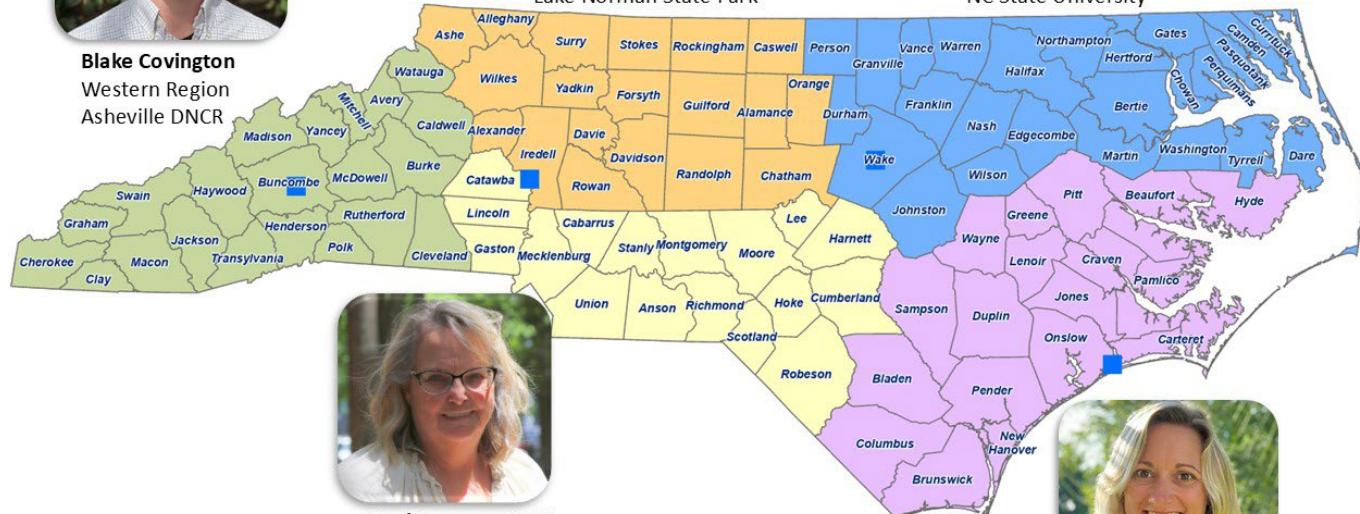
Blake Covington
Western Region
Asheville DNCR



Trey Fouché
Central North Region
Lake Norman State Park



Scott Payne
Northeast Region
NC State University



Terri Stowers, CPRP
Central South Region
Lake Norman State Park



Brittany Shipp, CPRP
Southeast Region
Hammocks Beach State Park

Meet The Team

Appendix III: Grant Application Templates

Applicants should use the following templates when submitting their applications to ensure their application is eligible for consideration.

Checklist to Submit a Complete Application

All items listed are required documents. Complete and submit the checklist with your application. Keep a copy of the application for your files.

- Paper Submission – Must include Hard Copy and Digital Copy on flash drive
 - Hard Copy: Paper clip the pages and copies of each item on the checklist together. **Do not use staples.**
 - Digital copy: Submit a flash drive with individual files for the documents on the checklist. Use PDF format. Label the flash drive with the local government name. Use the file names shown in the table below.
- Electronic Submission - Applications are submitted through an electronic folder in Microsoft SharePoint. Applicants should contact their Recreation Resources Service regional consultant to request access to the SharePoint folder. Applicants are encouraged to request access early in the process to allow for technical support, as needed. Use the file names shown in the table below.

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

<i>Required for All Applications</i> Use the (file name) shown for each item.	Included ✓
Checklist for Submitting a Complete Application (Checklist)	
Applicant's Basic Facts and Assurances (Basic facts)	
Project Description (Description)	
Project Justification (Justification)	
Site Plan (Site plan)	
Site Vicinity Map (Site vicinity)	
Project Costs (Project costs)	
Source of Matching Funds (Matching funds)	
Attorney's Certification of Site Control (Site control)	
Environmental Review (ENV review)	
Prioritization (Prioritization) <i>OPTIONAL</i>	
Resiliency Planning (Resiliency) <i>OPTIONAL</i>	
Applicant Self-Scoring System (Self Scoring)	

Helene Recovery Fund 2025-2026 Basic Facts & Assurances

Local Government Name:	County:
Federal Employer I.D. Number: 56-	
Local Government Contact Person for the Grant: Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Title: Organization: Mailing Address: City/State/Zip: Telephone: E-mail: (must be an employee of the sponsoring local government)	Local Government Manager: Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Title: Mailing Address: City/State/Zip: Telephone: E-mail:
Chief Elected Official: Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Title: Mailing Address: City/State/Zip:	
Site Control (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Owned by local government <input type="checkbox"/> Leased by applicant for 25 years or more <input type="checkbox"/> Easement <input type="checkbox"/> Owned by school board	Costs rounded to nearest dollar: <i>(Should match project budget)</i> Grant funds requested: \$ _____ .00 Local government's matching funds: \$ _____ .00 Total cost of project \$ _____ .00
Project Name:	
Is this an LWCF-funded park on these lists of NC projects ? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, list the grant number(s):	
Certification and Approval by Local Governing Board	
I hereby certify the information contained in the attached application is true and correct and the required dollar-for-dollar matching funds will be available during the project period. This application has been approved by the local governing board.	
Chief Elected Official	
(Print or Type Name and Title)	(Signature)
If two local governments are applying together, this form must be completed and signed by each local government. One applicant must be identified by adding "primary sponsor" in the "Local Government Name" section.	
This form must be complete in its entirety for your application to be considered	

Project Description

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Describe your project in 3-5 sentences. Be concise and discerning, including recreation facilities being added, renovated or replaced, acres acquired, and whether the facility renovation is due to damage sustained during Hurricane Helene.

Project Justification

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Explain why the project is needed and how the repair, replacement or addition of parks and trails projects will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following damage or effects from Hurricane Helene.

Project Costs

Applicant: _____

Project Name: _____

Date Prepared _____

Project Elements (Include specific units - sizes, numbers, lengths, etc. - for each item.)	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Building and/or Renovating Costs			
Cost to Build or Renovate			
Contingency for the Cost of Building / Renovating			
Contingency (not to exceed 5% of the cost to build or renovate or \$50,000 - whichever is less)			
Land Value – (Indicate Purchase or Donation)			
Land Acquisition - <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase <input type="checkbox"/> Donation			
Planning and Incidental Land Acquisition Costs			
Construction management, site planning, preliminary design, survey and appraisals, or the cost of preparing the application (not to exceed 20% of the cost of the project or \$200,000 - whichever is less)			
Total Project Cost			
Total Grant Request			
Total Local Match			

Sources of the Applicant's Matching Funds

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Type of Matching Funds	Amount of Funds	Funding Source	Availability
Total Matching Funds			

Attorney's Certification of Site Control

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Instructions: Review the Site Plan for the project. An attorney must certify that the local government has control of the entire site of a proposed development project for providing public recreation by January 30, 2026. The project must be located on a single contiguous site. Please contact your regional consultant about linear parks and greenways.

Important: The application can be declared ineligible without this certification.

1. TYPE OF SITE CONTROL: Indicate the type(s) of control the applicant has for the project site.	
TYPE OF CONTROL Check all that apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Simple Title	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Site. <input type="checkbox"/> Portion of site
<input type="checkbox"/> Lease (25 years or longer)	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Site. <input type="checkbox"/> Portion of site
<input type="checkbox"/> Easement	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Site. <input type="checkbox"/> Portion of site
2. LIMITATIONS, CONDITIONS OR ENCUMBRANCES:	
<input type="checkbox"/> No limitations, conditions, or encumbrances <input type="checkbox"/> Limitations, conditions, or encumbrances Attach additional pages describing any conditions or limitations in current or proposed leases, easements or use agreements. Include restrictions on the local government's use of the site or the rights to be reserved by the landowner that may impact the local government's ability to complete the project in a timely manner and/ or provide for public recreational use for at least 25 years. Attach additional pages if needed.	
3. ATTORNEY'S CERTIFICATION	
I have reviewed the site of the proposed project identified on this page and certify that the information provided above is accurate to the best of my knowledge. The proposed project will be on one contiguous site.	
NAME (Printed/Typed) _____	
TITLE _____	
SIGNATURE _____ Date _____	

Environmental Review

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

- 1. Site Description:** Describe in detail the existing or proposed park property including the park acreage (for land and water), topography, streams, lakes, and any significant natural resources that are on or adjacent to the site. Attach a separate page if needed.
- 2. Past/Current Property Use:** What are the past and/or current uses of the property? Examples: Urban/developed, forest, agricultural, industrial site, landfill, water, or wetland. Attach a separate page if needed. **Important:** If the property has been contaminated (examples: brownfield sites), all cleanup actions must be completed before a PARTF contract is executed and the project can begin. Use this space to describe any cleanup actions that are in progress or proposed. The PARTF program recommends that local governments wait until cleanup is completed before applying.
- 3. Streams on Site:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this website: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7073e9122ab74588b8c48ded34c3df55?views=Stream-Details>
- 4. DWR Riparian Buffer:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this website: <https://arcg.is/0Ojj8D>
- 5. Floodplains:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this website: <https://fris.nc.gov/fris/Home.aspx?ST=NC>.
- 6. Archaeological or historical sites:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this site: [NC HPOWEB 2.0](https://fris.nc.gov/fris/Home.aspx?ST=NC). Additional review will be required if ground disturbance occurs within study list or historic district (per HPOWEB), if federal funds will also be used, or if a 404 permit is needed.

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

How is this project incorporating resiliency planning?

Damage assessment and Recovery

- What specific damage did your parks and trails sustain during Hurricane Helene?
- Have you completed a formal damage assessment? If so, please briefly describe here and attach documentation (photos, engineering reports, etc.)
- What immediate recovery actions were taken to stabilize or secure the site?

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Resiliency Planning and Design

- How has your community incorporated resilience into the design of the proposed project?
Examples: elevated structures, permeable surfaces, native vegetation, flood-tolerant materials.
- Does your project include nature-based solutions (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens, living shorelines) to mitigate future storm impacts?
- Have you updated your master plan or hazard mitigation plan to reflect lessons learned from Hurricane Helene?

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Community and Interagency Coordination

- What role did your parks play in community response or recovery during/after the hurricane?
Examples: shelter, distribution site, cooling center, etc.

- Have you coordinated with local emergency management or public health agencies in your recovery or planning efforts?

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring

- What strategies are in place to maintain and monitor the resilience features of your project?

- How will you ensure that future maintenance budgets account for climate-related wear and tear?

Supporting documentation

- Show resilient design features on the site plans.
- Hazard mitigation plans or climate adaptation strategies.
- Letters of support from emergency management or public health partners.

Helene Recovery Fund for PARTF

2025-2026

Prioritization Attestation

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

To qualify for the Western NC Prioritization, applicants must be from counties that were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene

Applicant County: _____

To qualify for the Western NC Prioritization, applicants must have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer.

County Population per the State Demographer 2023 Report: _____

Applicant attests that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

Certification and Approval by Local Governing Board I hereby certify the information contained in the attached application is true and correct	
Print Name / Title	Signature

NOTICE:

Receipt of Allocations: A recipient of State funds under S.L. 2025-26 shall use best efforts and take all reasonable steps to obtain alternative funds that cover the losses or needs for which the State funds are provided, including funds from insurance policies in effect and available federal aid. State funds paid under S.L. 2025-26 are declared to be excess over funds received by a recipient from the settlement of a claim for loss or damage covered under the recipient's applicable insurance policy in effect or federal aid.

Remittance of Funds: If a recipient obtains alternative funds, the recipient shall remit the funds to the State agency from which the State funds were received. A recipient is not required to remit any amount in excess of the State funds provided to the recipient under this act.

Scoring System for Helene Recovery Fund Grants

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Project Justification (up to 10 possible points)

This narrative should address why the project is needed and how the community will be impacted. If seeking prioritization, please include how the replacement of damaged or affected parks and trails will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following Hurricane Helene.

Applicant Self Score for Justification: _____

Resiliency Planning (up to 20 possible points)

1. Resiliency Planning (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

2. Damage & Damage Assessment and Recovery (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

3. Resiliency Planning and Design (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

4. Community and Interagency Coordination (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

5. Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

Applicant Self Score for Resiliency Planning Total: _____

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Acquisition (up to 15 possible points)

Identify and provide justification for the acquisition type and impact to protect the unique natural resources. Select one of the following three options and explain why land acquisition will create a positive impact on the community. (Possible 10 points)

- The site is a significant, unique, and threatened natural resource that will be used for other development purposes if not acquired. The recommendation is to conserve/ protect the resource while providing low-impact passive recreation, education, and conservation opportunities. (10 points)
- The site is an excellent natural resource that will be protected in addition to providing active and passive outdoor recreational opportunities and supports education and conservation efforts. (7 points)
- The site is an average natural resource that will be used to provide predominantly active outdoor recreation opportunities and support the education and conservation efforts. (5 points)

Justification for selection:

Number of acres of land acquired - parcel acres or linear acquisition for greenway/ trails (Possible 5 points)

- 5 acres or less (3 points)
- Medium acquisition, 6-25 acres (4 points)
- Large acquisition, 26 or more acres (5 points)

Applicant Self Score for Acquisition: _____

Public Recreational Facilities (up to 45 possible points)**3. New, like, or renovated facilities to be provided: (30 points)****A maximum of 30 total points will be awarded for the sum of 1a, 1b and 1c.**

d. The project will provide (check one):

- 3 or more types of new recreational facilities (20 points)
- 2 types of new recreational facilities (15 points)
- 1 type of new recreational facility (10 points)

List the new types of recreational facilities:

e. The project will add recreational facilities at the park that are like the facilities that exist at the park. The project will add (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (12 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the types of recreational facilities:

f. The project will provide major renovation of (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (6 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the recreational facilities to be renovated and why each renovation is needed:**4. The project will provide a trail or greenway (1/4 mile or longer) that links to existing recreation area(s), school(s), downtown businesses, and/or communities located outside of the park. (5 points)**

- Yes
- No

Site plan must show trail linkage to receive points. Identify by name and location the existing trail and areas to be linked by the proposed trail:**Applicant Self Score for Facilities: _____**

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Commitment to Operation & Maintenance (15 possible points)

1. The applicant has a full-time parks and recreation department that will manage the project site to provide programming and to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (15 points)
2. The applicant has a full-time staff, such as a public works, who will manage the project site to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (8 points)
3. The applicant will manage the project site with part-time staff or by contractual agreement to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (4 points)
4. An organized volunteer group, such as a civic group or youth sports association will operate and maintain the site. (2 points)

Provide the name of the organization that will operate and maintain the site:

If the applicant is not going to operate the site with full-time staff, (see items #3 & #4), describe how and when the site will be open to the public.

Applicant Self Score for Operation & Maintenance: _____**Availability of Other Funds for the Project (up to 5 possible points)**

- Limited Funds (5 points)
- Average Funds (3 points)
- Significant Funds (1 point)

Applicant Self Score for Availability of Funds: _____**Additional Points (10 possible points +/-)**

- Project is applicant's only park (Possible +3 points)
- The applicant provides maximum access to outdoor recreation opportunities (Possible +3 points)
- Project provides public access to public waters (such as river, ocean, sound, or lake). (Possible +2 points)
- Project provides a trail connection that links daily destinations i.e. bus stop, retail, existing recreation area(s), school(s), businesses, and/or communities located outside of the project site. (Possible +2 points)
- Poor application documentation (unclear maps or incomplete site plan, instructions not followed, missing documentation, unrealistic budget, inconsistencies, etc.) (Possible -4 points)

Applicant Self Score for Additional Points: _____

Prioritization (10 possible points)

County designated by HUD as most impacted and distressed:

County Population per 2023 State Demographer Report:

Applicant attests that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

Applicant Self Score for Prioritization: _____

Applicant Total Score: _____

Additional Comments:

A G E N D A I T E M 8 :

PARKS AND RECREATION MATTERS

B. Presentation of Watauga County Outdoor Spaces Report

Manager's Comments:

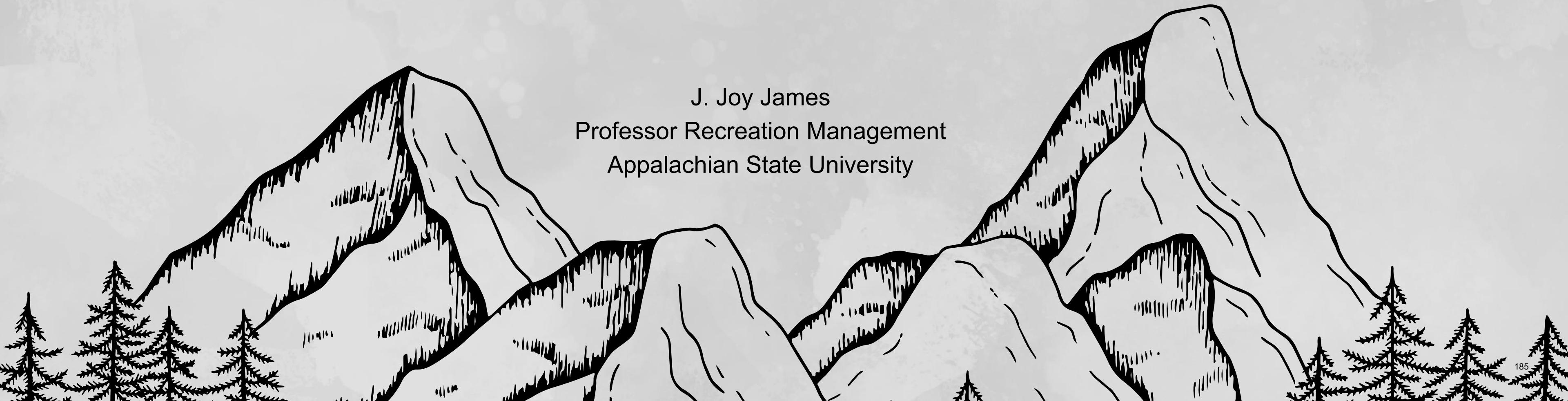
Mrs. Joy James, a Recreation Commission Member and App State Professor, will present the Watauga County Outdoor Spaces Report.

The report is for information only; therefore, no action is required.



PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCE POSITIONS

J. Joy James
Professor Recreation Management
Appalachian State University



Parks are living infrastructure generating multiple benefits

Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation 2012:

- Trees valued at \$0.29–\$0.51 per tree per year
- Forest land is valued up to \$94 per acre annually
- Clean water benefits range from \$58 to \$747 per acre per year
- Air pollution absorption, worth nearly \$4 million annually, according to a Trust for Public Land study
- Stormwater runoff reduction, valued at close to \$19 million annually

INTRODUCTION

Watauga County's open spaces, trails, and natural areas are foundational to:

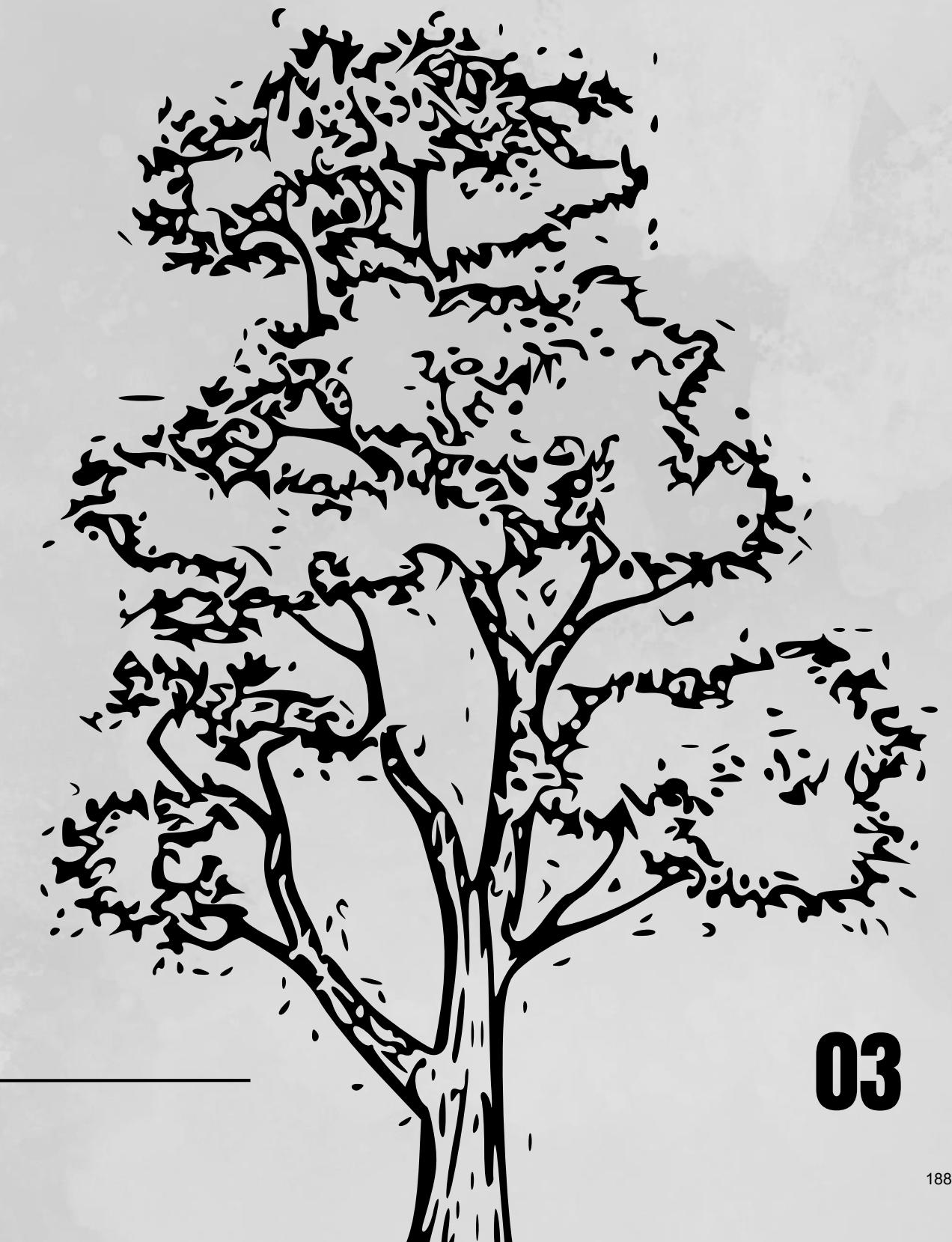
- Community health
- County identity
- Economic vitality

Current assets:

- River access points (Boone, Roby Green, Pine Run, Castleford, Green Park, Todd Island Park, Watauga Gorge, and Guy Ford Road).
- Parks: Brookshire Park, the Complex Ballfields, Howard Knob Park, Old Cove Creek Park, Rocky Knob Park, and the Tot Lot Playground.
- Middle Fork Greenway Trails

WHY OPEN SPACE MATTERS?

- **Open spaces are infrastructure:** They provide clean air, clean water, flood protection, and recreation — just like roads and schools.
- **Community identity:** Trails, parks, and river access points are part of Watauga's cultural fabric and civic pride.
- **Health & safety:** Well-maintained spaces reduce accidents, improve public health, and encourage active lifestyles.



CURRENT CHALLENGES



- **Deferred maintenance** = escalating costs: Cautionary Tale from Blowing Rock, Glen Burney Trail's \$354,900 reconstruction is a cautionary tale.
- **Fragmented oversight:** Without dedicated staff, opportunities for grants and partnerships are missed.
- **Liability risks:** Unsafe conditions expose the County to accidents and lawsuits.

Opportunity

- **Return on investment:** Ecosystem services in Mecklenburg County were valued at \$23M annually - Watauga can capture similar benefits.
- **Tourism & economy:** Safe, attractive natural areas drive visitation and strengthen local businesses.
- **Cost avoidance:** Preventive care is far cheaper than emergency reconstruction.



Solution

- **Open Space Manager:** Provides strategic leadership, grant procurement, and partner coordination.
- **Natural Resource Technician:** Ensures daily stewardship, trail maintenance, and volunteer engagement.
- **Clear accountability:** Embedding these roles in Parks & Recreation ensures efficiency and public trust.



FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

Position	Estimated Salary	+Benefits	Total Cost
Open Space Manager	\$55,000	\$33,571	\$88,571
Natural Resource Technician	\$45,000	\$28,939	\$73939



Return on Investment

- **Asset protection:** Professional oversight prevents deterioration.
- **Public safety:** Systematic hazard management reduces accidents.
- **Tourism & Quality of Life:** Enhances Watauga's appeal to residents and visitors.
- **External funding:** Dedicated staff can secure grants and partnerships, multiplying local investment.



Call to Action

- **Act now:** Every year of delay increases costs and risks.
- **Pilot program or phased implementation:** Start small, prove value, then expand.
- **Legacy framing:** This is about protecting Watauga's natural & economic heritage for generations.

Questions?

THANK YOU



A G E N D A I T E M 9 :

**APPROVAL TO APPLY FOR THE NORTH CAROLINA HELENE RECOVERY
RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE (HRRI) GRANT PROGRAM****Manager's Comments:**

Mr. Chris Marriott, Operations Services Director, requests Board approval to submit a grant application to North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for recycling infrastructure. The purpose of the grant is to restore, rebuild, or enhance recycling operations and material recovery in the 39 North Carolina Counties that received a FEMA disaster declaration as a result of Tropical Storm Helene. The requested grant funds of \$268,437.00 would be used for roll-off containers to increase recycling capacity, a metal pre-crusher and mini-excavator to enhance efficiency of the scrap metal recycling program, as well as the installation and electrical services required to operate the pre-crusher. No local match is required.

Board action is requested to authorize the submission of the HRRI grant application in the amount of \$268,437.



WATAUGA COUNTY

**SANITATION
DEPARTMENT**

336 Landfill Road – Boone, NC 28607 – (828) 264-5305
TDD 1-800-735-2962 – Voice 1-800-735-8262 – FAX (828) 264-3230

January 6, 2026

To: Deron Geouque, County Manager

From: Chris Marriott, Operations Services Director

Subject: Sanitation-Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure Grant Submittal

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is soliciting proposals for recycling infrastructure. The grants are being administered by the Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS) through funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The purpose of the grants is to restore, rebuild, or enhance recycling operations and material recovery in the 39 North Carolina Counties that received a FEMA disaster declaration as a result of Tropical Storm Helene. Grant funding for projects is available up to \$5,000,000 per submittal and a total of \$25,000,000 is available in the impacted counties. There is no cash match for these grants, but grantees are responsible for covering any project costs that exceed the awarded grant amount or fall outside of the list of eligible expenses.

The first submittal for grant consideration is January 30, 2026. Subsequent phases will be released until the earlier of the funding being depleted or March 1, 2029. Watauga County has worked with Kessler Consulting, Inc. to prepare a grant proposal for the first round of funding consideration.

In our submittal, we are requesting roll-off containers to increase recycling capacity, a metal pre-crusher and mini-excavator to enhance efficiency of our scrap metal recycling program as well as the installation and electrical services required to operate the pre-crusher. A line-by-line breakdown of the Department's request is provided in the table below.

Project Elements	Requested Grant Funds
4 x 30-yard roll-off containers	\$39,820
4 x 40-yard roll-off containers	\$42,412
Metal Pre-Crusher (5 cubic yard)	\$73,738
Pre-crusher off-loading & installation	\$11,000
Meter Installation & Electrician Services	TBD
Mini-excavator	\$101,467
Total Grant Project Budget	\$268,437

Staff is requesting a 2-year project term on any awarded grant. This will give sufficient time to procure the items, complete installation, and complete the required reporting. Any awarded funding will have to

be paid with County funding and then reimbursed with the grant funding upon completion of the project. Staff recommends that the retained earnings account from the Sanitation Department be utilized for the purchasing and installation costs and that the account be reimbursed upon grant award payments.

Staff requests Board of Commissioner's approval to submit a proposal to the North Carolina Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure Grant as outlined above.

The Request for Proposals from NC DEQ-DEACS is included for review. Also included is a DRAFT of the Proposal.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Ms. Bethany Jewell Gray, a resident of Bethel, with Kessler Consulting is also here if there are process questions regarding the grant.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.



**HRRI Grant Proposal:
Watauga County Recycling Resiliency
and Operational Improvements**



Applicant Contact Information

Chris Marriott, Operations Services Director
Watauga County Sanitation
336 Landfill Road
Boone, NC 28607
Chris.Marriott@watgov.org
Office: (828) 268-2324

Date of Proposal Submittal:

January XX, 2026

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Background – Watauga County Sanitation Current Operational System

Watauga County Sanitation operates a progressive solid waste and recycling program that manages residential and commercial municipal solid waste (MSW) and recycling generated county-wide in a mountainous area in Western North Carolina. Current operations include a transfer station, an inert debris landfill (LCID), a vegetative waste processing/mulching facility, and a comprehensive Recycling Center that includes processing facilities for bulk metals and white goods, used tires, electronics, household hazardous waste (HHW), and traditional recyclables. The County also operates a network of 10 staffed residential Convenience Centers, as further described herein. Figure 1 provides an aerial map of Watauga County Sanitation operations occurring at the County's main complex located on Landfill Road in Boone, NC.

Figure 1. Watauga County Sanitation Services Aerial View



The current operating system serves over 56,000 full-time residents (over 33,000 housing units with 66 percent single family) across approximately 312 square miles. Boone, the county seat, is home to Appalachian State University, with a 2025 student population of nearly 22,000.¹ Boone, along with other municipalities within the County — Blowing Rock, Beech Mountain, and Seven Devils—are popular

¹ [Appalachian Today \(September 5, 2025\), 21, 798 Mountaineers enroll at App State for Fall 2025.](#)

recreation areas, attracting more than 500,000 tourists annually.² Thus, County operations must be designed to accommodate fluctuating capacity needs based on a student and tourist economy. A breakdown of generators utilizing solid waste services is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Watauga County Sanitation Estimated Customer Base by Generator Sector

Est. Total Population ¹	Est. Municipal Population ¹	Est. Unincorporated Population ¹	Total Est. Single Family Households ²	Total Est. Businesses ³
56,175	22,839	33,336	21,187	1,930

Sources:

¹ NC Office of State Budget & Management, [Estimates of Municipal and Non-Municipal Population of North Carolina and North Carolina Counties for July 1, 2024.](#)

² U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 5-Year estimates* (2023). Retrieved from [Census Reporter Watauga County, NC Profile.](#)

³ Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, [Number of Private Establishments for All Industries in Watauga County, NC \(ENU3718920510\) | FRED | St. Louis Fed.](#) First Quarter 2025.

Collection System

Currently, residential materials are collected in unincorporated areas of the County either through a series of 10 convenience centers (as identified in Table 2) or through an open market curbside system (i.e., residential customers directly contract private haulers for curbside collection).

Table 2: Watauga County Sanitation Convenience Center Locations

Site	Address
Aho	5645 Hwy. 321 South, Blowing Rock
Bethel	4859 Bethel Rd., Sugar Grove
Deep Gap	5753 Old US Hwy 421, Deep Gap
Green Valley	6165 Hwy. 194 North, Boone
Valle Crucis	5400 Hwy. 194 South, Banner Elk
421 West/Zionville	8600 Hwy. 421 North, Zionville
221 South	5600 Hwy. 221 South, Blowing Rock
Landfill	336 Landfill Rd., Boone
Triplett	125 Jake's Mountain Rd., Deep Gap
Foscoe	151 Vineyard Ln., Banner Elk

All Convenience Centers accept bagged MSW and a comprehensive list of traditional household recyclables source-separated under a system to ease preliminary processing conducted by County staff at the Recycling Center (prior to transferring to various processing/end-market facilities). Traditional recyclables collected include glass (all colors), corrugated cardboard (OCC), plastics (1-7), mixed paper,

² [Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce \(2025\), Who We Are.](#)

tin, and aluminum. The sites also have small collection areas for batteries and light bulbs, as well as a reuse area where residents may drop gently used household items.

Under the HRRI grant and as further described in Section 1, the County seeks to replace containers damaged during Hurricane Helene to establish more uniformity among the Convenience Centers in how recyclables are source-separated, as well as increase the collection capacity through larger container sizing for more efficient operations. As depicted in tonnage data of Table 6, in Fiscal Year (FY) 24-25 the County increased comingling of materials at some sites, while others required separation. This resulted in inconsistent messaging that led to resident questions regarding the actual recovery of commingled collections. Since the County's collection system has been designed to maximize recovery and minimize cost under the fluctuating recycling market, the comingling of materials that occurred in the past is now shifting back to source separation to obtain higher values, better recovery rates on recyclables, and improve resident confidence in the County's material recovery system.

Currently, most sites consist of either eight-cubic-yard dumpsters or compactors for garbage collection, 30-cubic-yard roll-off containers with dividers and gabled or slide lids for glass, aluminum, tin, and mixed paper, 30-cubic-yard roll-off containers or compactors for OCC, and eight-cubic-yard dumpsters for mixed plastics. Recently, the County determined that due to market conditions, commingled bales of mixed paper and plastics (being sold to a regional commingled materials recovery facility (MRF) improves efficiency and streamlines operations across the 10 Convenience Centers. As further described in Section 1, an HRRI grant award will replace damaged containers from Hurricane Helene and assist the County in implementing this change.

Municipal residential garbage and recyclables collection systems vary among the jurisdictions as presented in Table 3 and are tipped either at the County's Transfer Station or Recycling Center.

Table 3: Municipal Residential Collection Systems

Municipality	Level of Service	Current Provider / Contractor
Beech Mountain (Town of)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x week garbage • Recyclables drop-off at Town operated convenience center 	Town of Beech Mountain
Boone (City of)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x week garbage • Every other week recyclables¹ 	Republic Services
Blowing Rock (Town of)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x week garbage • 1 x week recyclables collection 	Town of Blowing Rock
Seven Devils (Town of)	N/A ²	Open market

Notes:

¹Residential curbside recycling is currently voluntary and not mandatory.

²Curbside collection only offered via an open-market system. The County's Foscoe Convenience Center is located approximately one mile from the town.

In addition to the County's ongoing collection system, special event collection support is offered throughout the year. This includes large-scale community events such as the Boonerang Music and Art Festival (Boone, NC), Valle Country Fair, and the Doc & Rosa Lee Watson MusicFest which attract thousands of attendees annually.³ Additional roll-off inventory would provide the County with the ability

³ High Country Press (2022) [First Ever Boonerang Music & Arts Festival in Boone Attracts Thousands of Attendees](#); The Daily Reflector (2025) [Valle Country Fair welcomes for than 12,000 patrons](#); Watauga Democrat (2023) [Doc and Rosa Lee Watson MusicFest 2023 draws crowds to Sugar Grove](#).

to extend recycling services on an as-needed basis, helping capture recyclable materials generated during short-term, high-volume events while still maintaining regular collection services.

Transfer and Disposal System

As stated earlier, Watauga County Sanitation is responsible for the management and operations of all MSW collection and disposal services in Watauga County. Currently, all MSW and Construction/Demolition (C&D) waste is tipped at the Watauga County Transfer Station and commingled for transfer to WM EcoSafe Landfill in Blountville, Tennessee. Each County residence (verified by valid State identification listing a County address) may tip up to 2,000 pounds of MSW annually, paid for under a non-ad valorem tax assessment. All non-residents and businesses, as well as County households that exceed 2,000 pounds, are subject to a tipping fee of \$62 per ton for MSW and C&D waste, as well as vegetative waste and inert debris that are processed and disposed (respectively) on site. Figure 2 presents images from daily operations at the Watauga County Transfer Station.

Figure 2. Watauga County Transfer Station Operations



Description (left to right): (1) Scale House; (2) Transfer Station exterior; (3) Tipping Floor

Annual tonnages for the past five years from the Watauga County Transfer Station, inert debris landfill and vegetative waste mulching facility are presented, respectively, in Tables 4 and 5. Note: FY period is from July 1 to June 30.

Table 4: Inert Debris Landfill and Transfer Station Annual Reported Tonnages

Material Type	FY 21-22 ¹	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY25-26 YTD ²
LCID (Landfill)	655	1,200	685	490	549
MSW / C&D (Transfer Station)	50,823	53,376	52,590	60,201	26,993

Notes:

¹Period running from July 1 until June 30 for each year listed.

²In FY25-26 the County began tracking MSW and C&D materials separately. As of YTD, C&D equates to over half of the total tons being processed through the Transfer Station.

Table 5: Vegetative Waste Mulching Facility Annual Reported Tonnages

Material Type	FY 21-22 ¹	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY 25-26 YTD
Vegetative Waste	2,870	4,516	4,214	6,070	3,042

Note:

¹Period running from July 1 until June 30 for each year listed.

Recycling Center

Watauga County Sanitation operates a Recycling Center that provides separation and pre-processing services for traditional recyclables collected at all Convenience Centers, as well as a drop-off location for

scrap metal, white goods, tires, and HHW. Since the County's collection system is source separated, traditional recyclables are baled or consolidated for transport to processing facilities. Current pre-processing operations include baling of OCC, aluminum, and tin, as well as commingled baling of plastics and mixed papers (currently collected as "commingled recyclables" at Convenience Centers). Additionally, staff consolidate materials such as tires, white goods, scrap metals, and HHW (accepted during specific HHW collection events). Figure 3 provides images of current Recycling Center operations. Table 6 presents annual tonnages of different materials pre-processed.

Figure 3. Watauga County Recycling Center Operations



Description (left to right): (1) Recycling Facility exterior; (2) Scrap Metal Area; (3) Extra Bays for Overflow; (4) White Goods Area; (5) Tire Area; (6) Electronics Consolidation and Packaging Area

Table 6: Recycling Center Annual Reported Tonnages

Material Type	FY 21-22 ¹	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	2025 YTD
Commingled Recyclables ²	608	357	144	971	334
Glass	517	487	465	335	188
OCC	1,029	2,189	655	1,620	806
White Goods	218	249	269	204	79
Scrap Metal	533	374	400	825	317
Electronics	12	16	13	12	7
HHW	39	39	19	28	unavailable
Tires	786	747	694	849	304

Notes:

¹Period running from July 1 until June 30 for each year listed.

²Commingled recyclables include aluminum, tin, mixed paper, and plastics (1-7). These have been separated into different commingled categories over the past five years to obtain highest commodity values and explain the annual fluctuations.

Materials collected at the Recycling Center are transported to various processors and/or end-markets. Due to the County's location, transport time to these destinations can slow operations. Thus, increased efficiency in consolidation and packaging of the recyclables is vital. *Under this proposal the County would also utilize HRRI grant funding to acquire a dedicated mini-excavator and metals pre-crusher, as further described in Section 1.*

Section I. Project Description

1. Proposed Project Description and Requested Equipment

Watauga County Sanitation (WCS), the County's department for providing solid waste materials management services, experienced both infrastructure and operational impacts from Hurricane Helene.

Two Convenience Centers received direct impacts related to flooding, tree damage, fence damage and loss of containers. The 421 West Convenience Center, located near the North Carolina–Tennessee border, experienced extreme flooding that destroyed recycling containers and disrupted normal collection operations. Fortunately, most infrastructure loss (minus the loss of dumpsters) has been recouped through County insurance policies and the U.S Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). However, even sixteen months post storm, many operational impacts remain as community cleanup efforts continue.

Volunteer cleanup groups such as Mountain True continue to pull materials from rivers and streams throughout the region. WCS gratefully accepts these materials, as seen in the doubling of scrap metal tonnages processed at the Recycling Center from FY23-24 to FY24-25, as well as a nearly 20 percent increase in tires related to cleanup events. Additionally, as an immediate result of Hurricane Helene and subsequent recovery activities, OCC tonnage increased from 655 tons in FY23–24 to 1,620 tons in FY24–25, reflecting a substantial surge in packaging and recovery-related materials.

Figure 4. 421 West Convenience Center



In response to these sustained post-storm operational pressures, Watauga County is seeking HRRI grant funding to enable the County to acquire new equipment that will enhance operational efficiency, expand system capacity, and improve the long-term resiliency of its recycling program.

Increased Collection Capacity and Collection Standardization

The County seeks to purchase new containers that will allow for uniformity in the collection systems at all Convenience Centers, while increasing capacity through larger container sizing. Specifically, the County seeks to purchase four new 40-cubic-yard roll-offs and deploy them at the four Convenience Centers with the highest OCC volumes, replacing the currently deployed 30-cubic-yard roll-offs. This will allow the currently deployed units to be repurposed for standardizing the commingled collection system across all Convenience Centers. Additionally, the County seeks to purchase four new 30-cubic-yard roll-offs to supplement this new commingled collection system. Collectively, these eight new containers will provide an additional 280 cubic yards of capacity to assist in handling increased volumes and provide for a reduced rate of transfer (i.e., the number of transports needed from the Convenience Centers to the Recycling Center). Operational efficiencies gained include reduced truck mileage, equipment wear-and-tear, fuel costs, and highway/infrastructure impacts.

The additional roll-off containers will also provide the County with greater operational flexibility to support recycling at special community events, enabling temporary deployment of segregated containers to manage short-term volume increases and improving overall diversion outcomes.

Scrap Metal Operation Improvements

The County's current metals recycling operation faces several inefficiencies that limit productivity and increase transportation costs and have been exacerbated by increased tonnages with Hurricane Helene. Metals and white goods are tipped on an open concrete pad and loading activities rely on the availability of the WCS Transfer Station's dedicated track loader. All tipped scrap metals accumulate on the concrete pad until the track loader is available to travel an estimated quarter mile to the metals area and load the recyclables into the County's dedicated trailer. Due to the increased tonnages being managed since Hurricane Helene, this inefficient process creates a backlog of MSW at the Transfer Station and many operational challenges.

Additionally, the increase in tonnages has highlighted further operational inefficiencies in how the scrap metals are loaded and transported. Currently, scrap metals are lifted into a transport trailer via a grapple tool attachment on the track loader and transported to a metals recycler via a 92-mile round-trip. County staff are currently averaging two to three trips per week.

Leveraging HRRI grant funding will allow the County to acquire a dedicated mini-excavator and pre-crusher for the metals pre-processing that will allow metals to be compacted and efficiently loaded to maximize trailer space. This system change is estimated to minimize transport trips from two to three per week to an average of once per week.

It is important to note that the County has already invested in multiple improvements to operations for pre-processing scrap metals due to the influx of tonnages and management needs of the materials. The concrete pad and transport truck/trailer are new additions at an estimated cost of over \$200,000. HRRI grant funding will maximize these improvements, bringing greater efficiencies to the operations.

HRRI Equipment Needs

The list below presents the equipment proposed and the operational issue to be addressed:

30-Cubic-Yard Roll-Offs



Four (4) 30-cubic-yard roll-off containers for mixed plastics and paper recyclables. These will replace Hurricane Helene-damaged units, standardize collection practices across Convenience Centers, and reduce resident confusion while improving recovery rates.

40-Cubic-Yard Roll-Offs



Four (4) 40-cubic-yard roll-off containers for OCC. Larger containers will accommodate surging volumes, reduce hauling frequency, and improve efficiency in response to post-storm and seasonal recovery peaks.

Mini-Excavator

One (1) mini-excavator dedicated to loading bulky metals and white goods into a metal pre-crusher, eliminating delays caused by reliance on transfer station machinery and improving material handling efficiency.

Metal Pre-Crusher

One (1) metal pre-crusher to compact metals before transport, increasing payload efficiency and reducing long-distance transport trips by up to 50 percent.

Overall, the proposed HRRI-funded improvements directly address impacts from Hurricane Helene, improve existing collection and processing systems, and position Watauga County with resilient waste diversion pathways capable of supporting the community in both everyday operations and post-storm recovery efforts.

2. Ensuring Long-Term Resiliency of Watauga County Recycling Operations

The Watauga County *Recycling Resiliency and Operational Improvements* project is designed to build long-term resilience by strengthening the capacity of Watauga County's recycling infrastructure in the face of population growth, seasonal tourism fluctuations, and future extreme weather events. Impacts sustained from Hurricane Helene underscore the need for additional equipment and more efficient operations.

a. Anticipated Service Life For Proposed Equipment

The equipment to be purchased consists of industrial-grade assets with an anticipated service life of 10-15 years. Roll-off containers are constructed of heavy-gauge steel designed to resist corrosion and withstand prolonged outdoor exposure, while the mini-excavator and pre-crusher are engineered for continuous use in demanding environments. As further discussed in Section II, the County has identified existing vendors for whom they have existing long-term relationships for warranty and maintenance needs.

b. Community Impact and Longevity

Equipment awarded under this proposal will provide WCS operational improvements that will impact the community and provide long-term material recovery efficiencies. Increased collection capacity using new, larger capacity roll-offs will impact not only the community, but larger material diversion/recovery efforts of the State. Additionally, obtaining more containers will allow for adjustments to the current collection system that will establish a uniform collection system across the 10 WCS operated Convenience Centers.

This is expected to reinforce public confidence in the County's waste diversion system, which post-Hurricane Helene has waned due to a decrease in the availability of containers and changes that led to some Convenience Centers having source separation at the container level, while others were collected via a consolidated "single-stream" system.

Beyond immediate increased capacity and uniformity at the collection point, these improvements will also ensure greater efficiency in operations. The pre-crusher will compact metals more effectively, allowing for efficient space-saving loading and reducing the number of transport trips to distant processors. Overall

impacts from an HRRI grant award will streamline material handling, improve diversion rates, and lower labor, fuel, and equipment wear costs. Collectively, these enhancements create a resilient, cost-efficient recycling system capable of accommodating higher volumes and supporting long-term waste reduction goals.

c. Operational and Financial Sustainability After HRRI Grant

Following the grant contract term, the County will sustain the project through its established funding system, which is supported by Transfer Station tip fees and a non-ad valorem tax assessment for residents. *This fund will cover equipment maintenance, fuel, and labor, ensuring that the new assets remain fully operational.* Additionally, the efficiency gains—fewer transport trips, reduced fuel consumption, extended vehicle service life, and lower labor costs (operational savings are quantified in Section I.5)—will generate ongoing savings that can be reinvested into future operational improvements.

3. Strengthening Recycling and Waste Reduction Services Following Hurricane Helene

Environmental stewardship has always been a foundational part of the County's operations as depicted in North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's (NCDEQ's) statewide County rankings for per-capita recycling rates. For many years the County was in the top five and recently dropped from third to sixth and aims to return to the top tier by expanding capacity, standardizing Convenience Center collection streams, and improving operational efficiencies.

This HRRI grant project will create a new service for Watauga County that was impacted by the loss of containers during Hurricane Helene at the 421 West Convenience Center. By purchasing a total of eight new containers, WCS operations will establish uniform household recyclables collection system across all 10 of the WCS Convenience Centers, as well as increase the collection capacity by utilizing larger sized containers. Specifically, the County seeks to purchase four new 40-cubic-yard roll-offs and deploy them at the four Convenience Centers with the highest OCC volumes, replacing the currently deployed 30-cubic-yard roll-offs. This will allow the currently deployed units to be repurposed for standardizing the commingled collection of paper and plastic across all Convenience Centers. Additionally, the County seeks to purchase four new 30-cubic-yard roll-offs to supplement this standardized commingled collection system. Collectively, these eight new containers will provide an additional 280 cubic yards of total capacity to assist in handling increased volumes and provide for a reduced rate of transfer (i.e., the number of transports needed from the Convenience Centers to the Recycling Center).

Additionally, this HRRI grant project will address key operational inefficiencies in the County's metals recycling operation that have been intensified post Hurricane Helene, enhancing existing service. Currently, scrap metal and white goods are tipped on an open concrete pad, and loading activities rely on the availability of the Transfer Station's track loader, which is not dedicated to the metals program. All tipped metals accumulate on the concrete pad until the track loader can be diverted from Transfer Station operations and driven approximately one-quarter mile to the metals area to load material into the County's dedicated transport trailer.

Since Hurricane Helene, increased metal tonnages have intensified this inefficiency, creating operational bottlenecks and contributing to material backlogs at the Transfer Station. Scrap metals are currently lifted using a grapple attachment and hauled to a metals recycler via a 92-mile round trip, with County staff averaging two to three trips per week. By leveraging HRRI grant funding to acquire a dedicated mini-excavator and metal pre-crusher, metals can be compacted and loaded more efficiently, allowing trailers to be filled more effectively and reducing the number of required transport trips. This system improvement is estimated to reduce hauling frequency to approximately one trip per week, yielding significant labor, fuel, and equipment savings while improving overall operational reliability.

These proposed investments will restore lost capacity, improve diversion, and strengthen the County's ability to manage both routine operations and future extreme weather and disaster-related surges in material generation, resulting in a more resilient and effective waste reduction system for Watauga County.

4. Households and Businesses Served by the Proposed Project

As presented in the Background section of this proposal, Watauga County Sanitation's operating system serves over 56,000 full-time residents (over 33,000 housing units with 66 percent single family) across approximately 312 square miles. Boone, the county seat, is home to Appalachian State University, with a 2025 student population of nearly 22,000.⁴ Boone, along with other municipalities within the County — Blowing Rock, Beech Mountain, and Seven Devils — are popular recreation areas, attracting more than 500,000 tourists annually.⁵ This large, geographically dispersed, and highly variable service population underscores the importance of a cost-effective recycling system that can efficiently manage fluctuating volumes while maintaining consistent service levels.

A breakdown of the customer base utilizing solid waste services is presented in Table 1 (See section titled Background). Collectively, these residents, businesses, students, and visitors represent a broad user base over which the proposed HRRI funds will be leveraged, lowering operational costs while maximizing the quantity and quality of recyclables recovered.

In addition to the households and businesses served year-round, the Watauga County *Recycling Resiliency and Operational Improvements* project will provide Watauga County Sanitation with greater operational flexibility and resilience to handle fluctuations in recycling demand. By increasing the overall availability of roll-off containers within the County's system, the proposed HRRI investment will allow the County to accommodate temporary, high-volume recycling needs associated with special events and festivals, such as the Boonerang Music and Art Festival (Boone, NC), Valle Country Fair (Banner Elk, NC), and the Doc & Rosa Lee Watson MusicFest (Sugar Grove, NC) noted earlier in this proposal. Expanding system capacity in this manner will not only enable the capture of high-volume recyclable materials but will also strengthen the County's ability to respond to seasonal surges, special events, and future unexpected demands, improving cost efficiency and supporting a more resilient, effective waste reduction system.

5. Projected Diversion Impacts and Operational Cost Savings

Based on historical tonnage data, post-Hurricane Helene recovery trends, and the operational efficiencies enabled by the proposed equipment, WCS estimates that the project will result in the diversion of at least an estimated 2,202 additional tons of recyclable material per year and savings of approximately \$40,000 per year in operating costs. These estimates reflect incremental increases in recovered cardboard (OCC), scrap metal, and other HRRI-targeted recyclables attributable to expanded container capacity and additional roll-off inventory, improved metals compaction, and more efficient recyclables transport.

Observed OCC tonnage trends indicate that the post-Hurricane Helene increase reflects both temporary recovery-related material and a structurally higher baseline for cardboard generation. OCC tonnage increased from 655 tons in FY23–24 to 1,620 tons in FY24–25, an increase of nearly 1,000 tons. As of mid-FY25–26, the County has processed 806 tons of OCC in six months, which annualizes to approximately 1,600 tons, indicating that elevated OCC recovery levels are continuing beyond the immediate post-storm period. The transition to 40-cubic-yard roll-off containers at the highest-volume Convenience Centers will provide incremental capacity gains that will help ensure recovery levels can be maintained efficiently. Using Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) volume-to-weight conversion factors for flattened, loose

⁴ [Appalachian Today \(September 5, 2025\), 21, 798 Mountaineers enroll at App State for Fall 2025.](#)

⁵ [Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce \(2025\), Who We Are.](#)

OCC,⁶ the additional capacity per container is conservatively estimated to accommodate approximately 500 additional pounds (0.25 tons) of OCC per container per pull, yielding approximately 50 additional tons per year which is reflected within the sustained recovery estimate of 1,600 tons.

Further increases in recycling diversion are expected due to the expansion of roll-off inventory, with the acquisition of additional containers enhancing flexibility to handle short-term, high-volume recycling needs at community events. Special event recycling can be difficult to project, but at least **two tons** per year could be collected if the County were able to support large scale events such as the Boonerang Music and Art Festival, Valle Country Fair, and the Doc & Rosa Lee Watson MusicFest. This conservative estimate is based on documented recent event attendance (19,200 total attendees), and an assumption of 1.25 pounds of waste generated per person and a 20 percent recycling capture rate.⁷

The proposed dedicated mini-excavator and metal pre-crusher are expected to increase metals recovery by an estimated **600 tons** per year by eliminating backlogs, improving throughput, and enabling consistent handling of metals. Current trends indicate this level of recovery is achievable: scrap metal tonnage doubled from 400 tons in FY23–24 to 825 tons in FY24–25, reflecting a post-Hurricane Helene surge of 425 additional tons. This increase was achieved under existing operational constraints, demonstrating that the system can process substantially higher volumes than its historical baseline. Current year-to-date data further support the expectation that elevated recovery levels will continue; as of mid-FY25–26, the County has processed 317 tons in six months, which annualizes to approximately 630 tons by fiscal year end under current conditions. This projected level exceeds pre-storm recovery by more than 50 percent and suggests that a significant portion of the post-storm increase represents sustained diversion rather than a one-time anomaly. The proposed equipment will also allow metals to be compacted more effectively and loaded more efficiently into transport trailers, increasing payload efficiency and reducing the number of long-distance transport trips.

In addition to increasing waste diversion, the proposed HRRI-funded equipment will generate measurable operational cost savings by reducing the frequency of material transfers and improving hauling efficiency. *The eight new recycling and OCC roll-off containers will add approximately 280 cubic yards of additional collection capacity across the Convenience Center system.* This expanded capacity will allow the County to consolidate higher volumes per container, reducing the number of haul trips required between Convenience Centers and the Recycling Center. Fewer transfers directly translate to reduced truck mileage, lower fuel consumption, decreased equipment wear-and-tear, and reduced labor hours, resulting in ongoing cost efficiencies while maintaining or increasing diversion performance.

Operational savings are particularly significant for scrap metal handling and transport. Scrap metal is currently hauled to a recycler via a 92-mile round trip, with County staff averaging two to three trips per week due to inefficient loading and limited compaction. The proposed mini-excavator and metal pre-crusher will allow metals to be compacted and loaded more efficiently, maximizing trailer payloads and reducing the number of required trips.

County staff estimate that these improvements will reduce metal transport trips by approximately 50 percent, yielding substantial fuel and labor savings. Using the County's current methodology for calculating

⁶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2006). Standard Volume-to-Weight Conversion Factors.

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-03/documents/conversions.pdf>

⁷ Estimated waste generation per event attendee is based on data shared in the *Best Management Practices Guidebook for Special Event-Generated Waste in Rural Communities*, produced by the Northeast Recycling Council, Inc. (2006). The 20% recycling capture rate estimate is based on industry expertise provided by Kessler Consulting, Inc.

the marginal cost of self-hauling scrap metal, annual operational savings are estimated at approximately \$39,600 (\$3,300 per month).⁸

Collectively, these waste reduction and cost-efficiency gains strengthen the County's long-term operational resilience, ensuring that increased recycling volumes—whether driven by population growth, tourism, or future storm recovery—can be managed sustainably and cost-effectively.

6. Project Partnerships

Watauga County is submitting a one-party proposal.

Section II. Special Requirements

The Watauga County *Recycling Resiliency and Operational Improvements* project will include installation and meter set-up for the metals pre-crusher, the addition of the mini-excavator, as well as the placement of new roll-off containers at designated Convenience Center sites. Upon acceptance of an HRRI award, the County will make the following acknowledgements and attestations:

Build America, Buy America (BABA) Compliance

Watauga County attests that all proposed equipment and associated installation work funded under this project will comply with the applicable requirements of the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act. Watauga County attests that it has contacted all vendors who have provided equipment quotes for this project to confirm compliance with the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act. Fleet Genius (roll-offs and pre-crusher vendor) and James River Equipment (John Deere mini-excavator supplier) have confirmed that they will provide the appropriate manufacturers' documentation certifying BABA compliance prior to the equipment's use.

Davis-Bacon and Related Acts Compliance

Watauga County acknowledges that the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA) terms and conditions are applicable to this project. The County affirms its understanding of DBRA requirements and its commitment to full compliance for all applicable contracts under this HRRI grant. Any electrical work required for the installation of the pre-crusher will be performed by a licensed electrician in accordance with Davis-Bacon wage requirements, and that all applicable DBRA terms and conditions will be fully adhered to for all portions of the project involving contract labor.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance

Watauga County attests that requirements related to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are not applicable to this project. All equipment funded under this project will be deployed or installed at existing County-owned facilities and convenience center sites, with no expansion of site boundaries, ground disturbance, or change in land use.

⁸ The County calculates the marginal cost of self-hauling scrap metal based on fuel and driver labor costs. Fuel costs are estimated using the following assumptions: 5.67 gallons per hour \times 4.5 hours per load \times 30 loads per year \times \$3.50 per gallon, resulting in an annual fuel cost of approximately \$2,679. Driver labor costs are estimated as 30 loads per year \times 4.5 hours per load \times \$29.16 per hour, resulting in an annual labor cost of approximately \$3,937. The combined estimated annual baseline hauling cost is \$6,616, exclusive of vehicle maintenance, depreciation, and equipment wear.

Accessibility

Watauga County hereby attests that all installation activities associated with this project, including the placement of equipment, will be implemented to be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, in accordance with applicable federal accessibility requirements. In the event that a regulatory exemption applies, the County will provide appropriate documentation consistent with 40 CFR § 7.70.

Public or Media Events

Watauga County hereby attests that, in the event of any public or media activities associated with significant installation milestones or project accomplishments funded under this agreement, the County will notify North Carolina's Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS) Grant Manager, who will coordinate notification with the EPA Project Officer. Such notification will be provided with no less than twenty working days' advance notice to allow for attendance and participation by federal representatives.

Signage

Watauga County attests that the signage requirements associated with construction activities are not applicable to this project. The proposed HRRI-funded activities do not include construction; rather, they involve the purchase, delivery, and installation of equipment at existing County facilities. As such, no construction sites will be established that would require placement of EPA or NCDEQ signage.

Section III. Project Term

The preferred contract term for the Watauga County *Recycling Resiliency and Operational Improvements* project is two years covering three calendar years. This timeline provides sufficient time for procuring, shipping, installing, and the full integration of the requested equipment into the County's operations. The County has sourced pricing from local vendors and anticipates immediate implementation once the equipment is delivered and installed.

Section IV. Timeline

The anticipated timeline for the Watauga County *Recycling Resiliency and Operational Improvements* project, including anticipated dates for major milestones, quarterly status reports and a comprehensive report, over the course of the project term is provided below. This timeline provides adequate time to maximize operational efficiency gains and achieve the County's waste diversion and recycling objectives.

Note: All anticipated delivery dates are based on either current vendor quotes or vendor discussions. Timeline formatting has been structured to meet requirements set forth in the HRRI grant Request for Proposals (RFP).

- Calendar year 2026
 - ✓ July 1, 2026: Contract start date.
 - ✓ August 1, 2026: Roll-off containers, mini-excavator, and metal pre-crusher ordered.
 - ✓ September 1, 2026: Mini-excavator delivered from local vendor to Watauga County Sanitation complex. Immediate deployment in white goods and metals handling.
 - ✓ October 1, 2026: Submit first quarterly report to DEACS.
- Calendar year 2027
 - ✓ January 1, 2027: Submit second quarterly report to DEACS. Roll-off containers and metal pre-crusher delivered to Watauga County Sanitation complex.

- ✓ March 1, 2027: Installation and commissioning of roll-off containers completed, full integration into Convenience Centers. Installation of pre-crusher at County Recycling Center completed, begin operational use.
- ✓ April 1, 2027: Submit third quarterly report to DEACS.
- ✓ October 1, 2027: Submit fourth quarterly report to DEACS.
- Calendar year 2028
 - ✓ January 1, 2028: Submit fifth quarterly report to DEACS.
 - ✓ May 31, 2028: Submit all invoices and draft comprehensive Final Report to DEACS.
 - ✓ June 30, 2028: Contract end date; submit final report to DEACS.

Section V. Project Budget

The proposed budget for the Watauga County *Recycling Resiliency and Operational Improvements* project is provided below in Table 7. Grant funding requests are based on price quotes received from local equipment vendors, Fleet Genius (roll-offs, pre-crusher, installation/off-loading) and James River Equipment (mini-excavator). Equipment costs include a 10 percent contingency buffer to account for potential price increases if quoted rates expire prior to purchase.

Table 7: Watauga County *Recycling Resiliency and Operational Improvements* Project Budget

Project Elements	Requested Grant Funds	Additional Funds Covered by Grantee	Total Grant Project
4x 30-yard Roll-Off Containers with Octagon Roof	\$39,820	N/A	\$39,820
4x 40-yard Roll-Off Containers	\$42,412	N/A	\$42,412
Metal Pre-Crusher- 5 Cubic Yard	\$73,738	N/A	\$73,738
Pre-Crusher Off-Loading & Installation	\$11,000	N/A	\$11,000
Meter Installation & Electrician Services		N/A	
Mini-Excavator	\$101,467	N/A	\$101,467
Total Grant Project Budget	\$268,437	N/A	\$268,437

Section VI. Certification

The County certifies to the best of County staff's knowledge and belief that the information provided herein is true, complete, and accurate. County staff remain aware that the provision of false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact may subject staff to criminal, civil, or administrative consequences including, but not limited to violations of U.S. Code Title 18, Sections 2, 1001, 1343 and Title 31, Sections 3729-3730 and 3801-3812.

North Carolina Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure Grant

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

N.C. Department of Environmental Quality
Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service

The purpose of this grant program is to assist Hurricane Helene-impacted local governments with the implementation, expansion, recovery, and improvement of waste reduction programs in western North Carolina. The Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS) administers the Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure (HRRI) grant program through funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Grant D1-05D52025, Hazardous Waste Management State Program Support (66.801) through the American Relief Act of 2025. Successful applicants to the Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure grant program will enter into contracts with NCDEQ (the pass-through entity) to become subrecipients of the EPA grant. This Request for Proposal (RFP) and the resultant grant contract include applicable federal requirements that pass down to the grantee as a subrecipient of EPA funding, as outlined at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-subaward-cross-cutter-requirements>.

With the release of this RFP, DEACS is seeking proposals that help western North Carolina communities build lasting capacity to divert materials from the waste stream and improve the resiliency of the region's waste reduction infrastructure. Applicants should carefully read this entire RFP prior to submitting a proposal.

Grant Funding: Up to \$5,000,000

Match: None required

Phase 1 Application Period: Open through January 30, 2026

Project Period: Up to 3 years

Contact: Matt James at matt.james@deq.nc.gov or 919-707-8142
Sandy Skolochenco at sandy.skolochenco@deq.nc.gov or 919-707-8147

What Types of Projects are Eligible?

DEACS seeks viable, well-planned proposals from North Carolina local governments impacted by Hurricane Helene (eligible counties found on page 3) for projects that will expand, rebuild, or improve waste reduction, composting, and recycling programs. Grant money may be used to build infrastructure and facilities, purchase equipment, and conduct related feasibility studies or engineering designs to divert materials from the waste stream.

Examples of HRRI grant projects include but are not limited to:

- Construct, improve, or repair a transfer station or material recovery facility for the handling, sortation, and marketing of recyclable materials;
- Build a new or enhance an existing hub and spoke model for the collection and aggregation of recyclables in bulk;
- Construct, improve, relocate, or repair convenience center infrastructure to more efficiently collect household recyclables or special recyclables (e.g., electronics, batteries, motor oil, antifreeze, white goods);

- Build a new or enhance an existing household hazardous waste (HHW) program;
- Implement a new or expand an existing composting program for yard waste, food scraps, or biosolids;
- Build an aerated static pile, windrow, or other composting system to enhance food waste diversion efforts; or
- Purchase collection infrastructure such as trucks, containers, and carts to improve residential or commercial recycling programs.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Approved uses of HRRI grant funds include infrastructure improvements, construction of new facilities to handle recyclable materials, reconstruction of recycling facilities damaged by Hurricane Helene, site development costs, related feasibility studies or engineering designs, equipment or vehicle purchases, equipment installation costs, and educational materials such as signs, mailers, handouts, or brochures.

Grant funds may not be used for employee salaries, administrative expenses such as overhead, utility costs, contracted collection costs, and / or payment for other contracted recycling services such as payment to a vendor for operating a household hazardous waste collection event.

How Grant Funds Work

All HRRI grant funds are distributed on a reimbursement basis. Purchases must be made during the grant contract period and requests for reimbursement can be made after the grantee has completed and paid for grant purchases. State and local sales taxes are not reimbursable and should be excluded from grant expenditure totals. DEACS will continue to reimburse grantees until 90% of the award amount has been expended, withholding 10% of funds until receipt of an approved final report.

Available Funding

Applicants may request any amount of grant funding up to a maximum of **\$5,000,000** per project. The total available funding for the HRRI grant program is \$25,000,000, and DEACS will accept proposals in phases until funding is depleted, or until March 1, 2029.

Cash Match

HRRI grants do not require a cash match, but the grantee is responsible for covering any project costs that exceed the awarded grant amount or fall outside the list of eligible expenses.

Contract Period:

Successful grant applicants will be required to enter a grant contract with NCDEQ and will become a subrecipient of the EPA funding. The contract period may be one, two, or three years depending on the scope and timeline of the proposed project. All projects must be completed no later than June 30, 2030. Grantees must expend funds within the contract period unless the grant contract end date is extended by written agreement between the applicant and NCDEQ. Extensions are possible but not guaranteed and may not extend beyond June 30, 2030. All purchases must be made within the grant contract period. Any purchases made prior to the start of the grant contract or after the end date of the grant contract will not be reimbursed.

Who is Eligible?

Local governments, defined as counties, municipalities, councils of governments and solid waste authorities, with a Tropical Storm Helene FEMA disaster declaration ([D-4827](#)) are eligible to apply for funding from the HRRI grant program. These counties include:

Alexander County	Gaston County	Nash County
Alleghany County	Graham County	Polk County
Ashe County	Haywood County	Rowan County
Avery County	Henderson County	Rutherford County
Buncombe County	Iredell County	Stanly County
Burke County	Jackson County	Surry County
Cabarrus County	Lee County	Swain County
Caldwell County	Lincoln County	Transylvania County
Catawba County	Macon County	Union County
Cherokee County	Madison County	Watauga County
Clay County	McDowell County	Wilkes County
Cleveland County	Mecklenburg County	Yadkin County
Forsyth County	Mitchell County	Yancey County

Communities outside the counties listed above *are not eligible for funding* through this grant program. Federal and state agencies, universities and colleges, and non-profit organizations *are not eligible for funding* through this grant program.

Conditions on Submittals

- *At this time, only one proposal per eligible entity will be accepted.* Applicants may combine funding requests for multiple types of projects into one proposal. Available funding limits still apply.
- Joint proposals, in which multiple local governments partner on a project, are encouraged. For instance, two bordering counties may establish a hub and spoke model collection in which drop-off sites supply recyclables to a central transfer station for aggregation. Any local government participating in a joint project may not submit additional proposals at this time.

How to Submit Proposals:

One electronic copy of the proposal must be submitted by email to matt.james@deq.nc.gov. Please submit Microsoft Word (preferred) or Adobe (PDF) files. Receipt of all acceptable proposals will be acknowledged by email. *If you do not receive a confirmation, contact Matt James at 919-707-8142 as soon as possible.* It is the responsibility of anyone submitting a proposal to contact DEACS if they do not receive a confirmation. Please contact Matt James if submittal of an electronic version of a grant proposal presents a hardship.

Proposal Due Date:

DEACS will accept proposals in phases. Proposals may be submitted to DEACS at any time within the first phase of the grant application period ending January 30, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. DEACS may award grant funding to successful proposals prior to the first phase cutoff date. Subsequent phases will be announced after evaluation of the first phase is complete, depending on funding availability.

Word of Advice for Grant Writing:

Funding is limited, and it is anticipated that the HRRI grant proposals will be highly competitive. For this reason, it is important that projects are well-planned and that applicants provide all information as outlined in the Required Proposal Format section. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Matt James (matt.james@deq.nc.gov, 919-707-8142) or Sandy Skolochenko (sandy.skolochenko@deq.nc.gov, 919-707-8147) to discuss potential grant projects prior to submitting a proposal.**

Required Proposal Format:

The following outline indicates what applicants *must* include in their proposal for it to be considered complete. Proposals that fail to provide all the required information or that fail to follow this format may not compete well and may not be considered for funding.

- Project Title
- Applicant Contact Information to include:
 - ✓ Name and title of main contact
 - ✓ Organization
 - ✓ Address
 - ✓ Phone number
 - ✓ Email address
- Date of Proposal Submittal
- Project Description

Provide responses to each of the following prompts below. Applicants are encouraged to provide a clear project description and consider the award criteria as they describe the project elements.

(Relevant award criteria listed below; see page 8 for award criteria description and point values)

1. Describe the proposed project and identify specifically what items (and how many) you intend to purchase with grant funds. If the project will implement a new recycling/composting program or improve an existing recycling/composting program, provide a list of the materials that will be accepted and indicate where they will be taken for processing or marketing. If the proposed project will replace or repair equipment and/or infrastructure lost or damaged during Hurricane Helene, describe how the new equipment and/or infrastructure will improve the community's waste reduction system.
(Planning)
2. Describe how the project will ensure the long-term resiliency of the region's waste diversion system. What is the anticipated service life for the items or materials to be purchased with grant funds? Estimate how long the project will continue to serve the community and how you will financially and operationally sustain the project after the grant ends.
(Planning; Efficiency/Cost Effectiveness)
3. How was the community's recycling or compost-related infrastructure impacted by Hurricane Helene? How does the proposed project address a specific recycling or waste reduction need for the community? Will the grant project create a new service or enhance or expand an existing service?
(Demonstration of Need)
4. How many households or businesses will be impacted by or have access to the recycling/composting services associated with the proposed project?
(Demonstration of Need; Efficiency/Cost Effectiveness)
5. Estimate the number of tons of waste expected to be reduced annually as a result of the proposed project. Explain how you came up with the estimate.
(Waste Reduction Impact)
6. Describe any partnerships associated with the proposed project. Please include documentation of support from any partner entities.
(Joint Effort)

- Special Requirements: Construction projects and electronics recycling projects must include additional information as stipulated in the Special Requirements section below.

- Project Term: Indicate the preferred contract term of the project: one-year, two-year, or three-year.
- Timeline: Provide a simple bulleted list showing approximate dates for major project milestones. The timeline must show milestones over the course of the proposed project term and include quarterly status reports and a comprehensive final report. Please follow the example below:
 - ✓ July 1, 2026: Contract start date.
 - ✓ September 1, 2026: Collection truck and carts ordered.
 - ✓ October 1, 2026: Submit quarterly report to DEACS.
 - ✓ November 1, 2026: Collection truck, carts and educational materials purchased, and recycling program launched.
 - ✓ January 1, 2026: Submit quarterly report to DEACS.
 - ✓ April 1, 2026: Submit quarterly report to DEACS.
 - ✓ May 31, 2026: Submit all invoices and draft Final Report to DEACS.
 - ✓ June 30, 2026: Contract end date. Submit Final Report to DEACS.
- Project Budget: Please submit a table following the example below. The project budget table should include an itemized list of intended expenditures and estimated costs. Total row should reflect the total grant project cost and indicate if additional funds will be provided by the applicant.

Project Elements	Requested Grant Funds*	Additional Funds Covered by Grantee	Total Grant Project
Recycling Carts for Residential Recycling Program	\$ 600,000		\$ 600,000
Labels for Carts and Signs for Recycling Sites	\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000
Automatic Side Load Truck for Recycling Collection	\$ 300,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 335,000
Program Brochures (Printing)	\$ 5,000		\$ 5,000
Yearly salary for recycling truck driver**		\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Total Grant Project Budget	\$ 915,000	\$ 85,000	\$ 1,000,000

* State and local sales taxes are not reimbursable expenditures and should not be included as part of proposed grant budgets.

**Salaries are not eligible grant expenditures and must be covered by the grantee.

- Certification: Include the following certification in accordance with 2 CFR 200.415(b):
“I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the information provided herein is true, complete, and accurate. I am aware that the provision of false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative consequences including, but not limited to violations of U.S. Code Title 18, Sections 2, 1001, 1343 and Title 31, Sections 3729-3730 and 3801-3812.”

Special Requirements for Electronics Recycling Projects

Any community seeking grant funds to support an electronics recycling program must use an R2 or e-Stewards certified recycler and make themselves eligible to receive funds distributed from the state's Electronics Management Program. More information available at:

<https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/waste-management/solid-waste-section/special-wastes-and-alternative-handling/electronics-management/electronics-information-nc-local-governments>.

Applicants should indicate if they are already eligible and have received Electronics Management Fund distributions in the past. If not, explain how the community will make themselves eligible to receive funds in the future.

Note: municipal applicants may decide whether or not to request Electronics Management Funds directly or allow the county to receive funds. If the county will be receiving funds, please explain the electronics recycling partnership with the county government.

Special Requirements for Construction Projects:

The HRRI grant is funded by EPA and all awarded contracts involving construction are subject to applicable federal requirements. Applicants seeking funding for projects involving construction must acknowledge the following:

- Build America, Buy America: All construction work or contracted construction work shall comply with all applicable provisions of the [Build America, Buy America \(BABA\) Act](#). Materials including iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials must be produced in the United States, consistent with BABA provisions. Subrecipient will ensure appropriate documentation and certification of compliance is obtained.
- Davis-Bacon Related Acts: By accepting an offered award, subrecipient acknowledges and agrees to the terms and conditions provided in the [Davis-Bacon Related Acts requirements for EPA subrecipients](#) (see additional information below).
- National Environmental Policy Act: The subrecipient will identify and comply with all requirements related to the National Environmental Policy Act (see additional information below).
- Accessibility: All new facilities or alterations to existing facilities must be designed and constructed to be readily accessible and useable by persons with disabilities or will provide documentation for a regulatory exemption per [40 CFR 7.70](#).
- Public or Media Events: The subrecipient agrees to notify the DEACS Grant Manager, who will notify the EPA Project Officer, of public or media events publicizing the accomplishment of significant events related to construction projects as a result of this agreement and provide the opportunity for attendance and participation by federal representatives with at least twenty (20) working days' notice.
- Signage Requirements: The subrecipient agrees to place a sign at construction sites supported under this award displaying the EPA and NCDEQ logos in a manner that informs the public that the project is funded in part or wholly by the EPA and supported by NCDEQ (see additional information below).

Davis-Bacon and Related Acts:

Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA) is a collection of labor standards provisions administered by the Department of Labor, that are applicable to grants involving construction. These labor standards include the:

- Davis-Bacon Act, which requires payment of prevailing wage rates for laborers and mechanics on construction contracts of \$2,000 or more;
- Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act, which prohibits a contractor or subcontractor from inducing an employee into giving up any part of the compensation to which he or she is entitled; and

- Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act, which requires overtime wages to be paid for over 40 hours of work per week, under contracts in excess of \$100,000

When entering into and managing contracts:

- **Solicitation and Contract Requirements:**
 - Include the Correct Wage Determinations in Bid Solicitations and Contracts: Subrecipients are responsible for complying with the procedures provided in 29 CFR 1.6 when soliciting bids and awarding contracts.
 - Include DBRA Requirements in All Contracts: Include the following text on all contracts under this grant:
“By accepting this contract, the contractor acknowledges and agrees to the terms provided in the DBRA Requirements for Contractors and Subcontractors Under EPA Grants.”
- **After Award of Contract:**
 - Approve and Submit Requests for Additional Wages Rates: Work with contractors to request additional wage rates if required for contracts under this grant, as provided in 29 CFR 5.5(a)(1)(iii).
 - Provide Oversight of Contractors to Ensure Compliance with DBRA Provisions: Ensure contractor compliance with the terms of the contract, as required by 29 CFR 5.6.

National Environmental Policy Act:

- **Environmental Standards:** The subrecipient agrees to identify all impacts this award may have on the quality of the human environment and provide help to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, at 42 U.S.C. 4321, et. seq.) and to prepare Environmental Impact Statements or other required environmental documentation. In such cases, the subrecipient agrees to take no action that will have an adverse environmental impact (e.g., physical disturbance of a site such as breaking of ground) until receiving written notification of compliance with the environmental impact analysis process.
- **Endangered Species Act:** The subrecipient agrees to comply with applicable provisions of the following national policies concerning live organisms:
 - Rules of the Departments of Interior (50 CFR Parts 10-24) and Commerce (50 CFR Parts 217-227) implementing laws and conventions on the taking, possession, transport, purchase, sale, export, or import of wildlife and plants, including the: Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543);
 - Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361-1384); Lacey Act (18 U.S.C. 42); and
 - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
- **National Historic Preservation:** The subrecipient agrees to identify all property listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places that will be affected by this award, and to provide help to comply with the requirements of 16 USC 470f.
- **Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation:** The subrecipient agrees that it will comply with the following general national policy requirements: 25 USC 3001-3013.

Signage Requirements

The subrecipient is required to place a sign at construction sites supported under this award displaying the EPA and NCDEQ logo(s) in a manner that informs the public that the project is funded in part or wholly by the EPA and supported by NCDEQ. The sign must be placed in a visible location that can be directly linked to the work taking place and must be maintained in good condition throughout the construction period.

Subrecipients are required to comply with the sign specifications provided by the EPA Office of Public Affairs (OPA) available at: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/signage-required-term-and-condition>. If the EPA logo is displayed along with the logos of other participating entities, the EPA logo must not be displayed in a manner that implies that EPA itself is conducting the project. Instead, the EPA logo must be accompanied

with a statement indicating that the subrecipient received financial assistance from EPA for the project. As provided in the sign specifications from OPA, the EPA logo is the preferred identifier for assistance agreement projects and use of the EPA seal requires prior approval from the EPA. To obtain the appropriate EPA logo or seal graphic file, the recipient should send a request directly to OPA and include the EPA Project Officer in the communication. Instructions for contacting OPA are available at: <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/using-epa-seal-and-logo>.

State agencies and agencies of political subdivisions of states must comply with 2 CFR 200.323, Procurement of recovered materials when procuring signage for projects funded by EPA assistance agreement.

Signage costs are considered an allowable cost under this assistance agreement provided that the costs associated with signage are reasonable. Additionally, to increase public awareness of projects serving communities where English is not the predominant language, recipients are encouraged to translate the language on signs (excluding the EPA and NCDEQ logos) into the appropriate non-English language(s). The costs of such translation are allowable, provided the costs are reasonable.

How are Proposals Evaluated?

A selection committee will use the pre-established Award Criteria identified below to rank proposals and make award decisions. DEACS staff will review proposals upon submittal and anticipate notifying the applicant of the award decision within three months.

Award Criteria:

Applicants are encouraged to consider the following Award Criteria as they develop their grant proposals.

1. **Demonstration of Need (0-30 points):** Does the proposed project address a specific equipment or infrastructure need for the community? Will the project result in the long-term resiliency of waste reduction efforts in the region? Does the project replace or improve recycling or composting infrastructure related to the consequences of Hurricane Helene?
2. **Planning (0-25 points):** Did the Project Description include all necessary elements as outlined in the Required Proposal Format? Is the proposal accurately descriptive, well-researched, and backed by valid facts and assumptions? Is the project consistent with recycling or composting industry best management practices?
3. **Waste Reduction Impact (0-25 points):** Will the project contribute substantially toward reduction of the local waste stream, or will it substantially increase tonnage recovered through recycling or composting services? Will the project position the community with resilient waste diversion pathways to handle materials from future storm and weather events?
4. **Efficiency / Cost-effectiveness (0-15 points):** Does the project improve the long-term resiliency of the community's waste reduction program? Will the project improve the efficiency or cost-effectiveness of the local waste reduction, recycling, or composting program? Does the project reduce the operating cost of a current service, or does it adopt practices proven to be cost effective in other communities? Does the project make investments that will continue to serve the community for years to come?
5. **Joint Effort (0 or 5 points):** One-party proposals will receive zero (0) points; multi-party proposals will receive five (5) points.

If a Proposal is Selected for Funding

DEACS anticipates that applicants selected to receive grant funding will be notified within three months of proposal submission. Upon consideration of the proposals received, DEACS reserves the right to award grant amounts that are lower than the amount requested by an applicant.

DEACS will notify the applicant with a formal offer by e-mail. The applicant must accept or decline the offer. The following will occur once the offer of grant funding is accepted:

- DEACS may work with applicants to revise initially submitted proposals before entering into a grant contract. Any changes to initial proposals must be approved by DEACS and the applicant and the resultant final HRRI grant proposal will become an attachment to the grant contract.
- Successful applicants will be required to:
 - Provide their federal tax ID number.
 - Provide the federal Unique Entity Identifier. Applicants can register to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier from the System for Award Management site: <https://sam.gov/>
 - Register or confirm access to your government or organization's NCID account. For more information, visit: <https://it.nc.gov/support/accounts>.
 - Submit a Conflict of Interest Policy using the template available at the following link or submitting a copy of your organization's existing policy:
<https://www.deq.nc.gov/divisions/environmental-assistance-and-customer-service/recycling/programs-offered/grants-local-governments>.
 - Submit a No Overdue Taxes Certification with notarized signature using the form available at: <https://www.deq.nc.gov/divisions/environmental-assistance-and-customer-service/recycling/programs-offered/grants-local-governments>.
 - Submit a Substitute W-9 form, if necessary, as required by the North Carolina Finance System: <https://www.ncosc.gov/state-suppliers>.
- All applicants selected for funding will undergo a risk assessment which evaluates factors such as prior experience in managing grants, previous audits, personnel, and policies or procedures for execution and oversight. Applicants will be required to complete a Risk Assessment Questionnaire to collect necessary information. The results of the risk assessment, along with the scope and complexity of the approved project, will determine the level of monitoring throughout the course of the project, subject to adjustments at the discretion of the DEACS grant manager.
- All applicants selected for funding will undergo a compliance review to ensure that they do not have an outstanding Notice of Violation (NOV) related to North Carolina solid waste statutes and rules. Any outstanding NOVs must be corrected to the satisfaction of the N.C. Division of Waste Management (DWM) prior to any grant being awarded. Applicants with outstanding NOVs are responsible for providing DEACS with information from DWM indicating that the community is in compliance and that the NOVs have been corrected before a grant contract can be initiated.
- DEACS will submit a request through the NCDEQ contract processing system for a grant contract. Grantees must act to execute the resultant grant contract without excessive delay.

Other General Terms and Conditions:

All grantees are subject to the following terms and conditions. Most of these terms and conditions will be outlined in the grant contract.

- **Project status updates and site visits:** grantees should expect frequent communication with their DEACS grant manager and site visits from DEACS and/or EPA staff. Grantees should be able to provide project status updates upon request.
- **Quarterly reports:** quarterly status reports will be required throughout the duration of the contract period. DEACS grant manager will provide a report template.

- **Final reports:** a comprehensive final report is required at the end of the project. A draft must be submitted to DEACS at least 30 days prior to the contract end date and a final report must be submitted by the contract end date. DEACS grant manager will provide a report template.
- **Certifications:** subrecipients must certify to DEACS whenever applying for funds, requesting payment, and submitting financial reports: “I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the information provided herein is true, complete, and accurate. I am aware that the provision of false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative consequences including, but not limited to violations of U.S. Code Title 18, Sections 2, 1001, 1343 and Title 31, Sections 3729-3730 and 3801-3812.”
- **Reimbursement:** distribution of grant funds is on a reimbursement basis and instructions will be provided by the DEACS grant manager. Reimbursement requests must include copies of invoices and proof that the grantee has made payment. Proof of payment may include copies of canceled checks or other financial reports showing that funds were spent. State and local sales taxes are not reimbursable, may not be counted towards expenditure requirements, and should be excluded from reimbursement requests. The amount of actual grant payments may be prorated for projects and / or project elements that come in under budget. Purchases made before a grant contract is signed by both NCDEQ and the grant recipient will not be reimbursed.
- **Final 10 Percent of Funds:** DEACS will continue to reimburse grantees until 90 percent of the grant award amount has been expended, withholding 10 percent of grant funds until receipt of an approved final report. The final report must be received and approved prior to the end date of the contract.
- **Publications:** all documents and publications associated with a grant contract should be sent to the DEACS grant manager for review and approval prior to printing or publishing and should be printed on recycled paper containing at least 30 percent post-consumer content.
- **Use of EPA and NCDEQ Logos:** If the EPA and/or NCDEQ logo(s) are appearing along with logos from other participating entities on websites, outreach materials, or reports, it must not be prominently displayed to imply that any of the subrecipient's activities are being conducted by the EPA and/or NCDEQ. Instead, the EPA and/or NCDEQ logo(s) should be accompanied with a statement indicating that the [Subrecipient NAME] received financial support from the EPA under a NCDEQ Assistance Agreement. More information is available at:
<https://www.epa.gov/stylebook/using-epa-seal-and-logo#policy>
- **Extensions / Amendments:** no-cost time extensions are possible but not guaranteed for grant contracts. Grantees seeking no-cost time extensions should submit a request for a time extension at least sixty (60) days prior to the contract end date. Extensions beyond June 30, 2030 are not possible.

A G E N D A I T E M 1 0 :

TAX MATTERS

A. *Monthly Collections Report*

Manager's Comments:

Mr. Tyler Rash, Tax Administrator, will present the Monthly Collections Report for December 2025, and be available for questions and discussion.

The report is for information only; therefore, no action is required.

Monthly Collections Report***Watauga County***

Bank deposits of the following amounts have been made and credited to the account of Watauga County. The reported totals do not include small shortages and overages reported to the Watauga County Finance Officer

Monthly Report December 2025

	<u>Current Month</u> <u>Collections</u>	<u>Current FY</u> <u>Collections</u>	<u>Current FY</u> <u>Percentage</u>	<u>Previous FY</u> <u>Percentage</u>
<u>General County</u>				
Taxes 2025	12,410,638.31	35,152,889.42	78.16%	80.73%
Prior Year Taxes	77,388.92	346,513.99		
Solid Waste User Fees	1,022,019.59	3,016,545.67	77.87%	80.27%
 Total County Funds	\$13,510,046.82	\$38,515,949.08		
<u>Fire Districts</u>				
Foscoe Fire	176,932.79	569,994.80	80.25%	82.20%
Boone Fire	305,351.86	1,069,293.92	78.17%	79.68%
Fall Creek Service Dist.	4,628.28	10,858.11	75.56%	81.84%
Beaver Dam Fire	38,090.58	108,483.50	75.70%	78.22%
Stewart Simmons Fire	112,907.55	355,351.05	76.85%	80.59%
Zionville Fire	36,488.32	121,951.64	75.24%	77.06%
Cove Creek Fire	83,810.02	277,498.15	76.32%	76.86%
Shawneehaw Fire	34,607.22	133,632.93	77.30%	79.85%
Meat Camp Fire	81,153.16	254,743.48	76.90%	80.46%
Deep Gap Fire	72,119.74	223,396.23	78.49%	80.95%
Todd Fire	16,676.13	62,555.16	78.14%	81.24%
Blowing Rock Fire	191,206.23	595,860.43	79.28%	81.61%
M.C. Creston Fire	2,712.47	6,295.03	79.79%	66.79%
Foscoe Service District	22,704.73	89,176.05	80.15%	81.54%
Beech Mtn. Service Dist.	765.94	1,297.34	44.99%	54.74%
Cove Creek Service Dist.	12.00	336.65	100.00%	14.39%
Shawneehaw Service Dist	2,405.91	6,570.66	74.56%	75.39%
 Total Fire Districts	1,182,572.93	3,887,295.13		
<u>Towns</u>				
Boone	4,077,363.80	7,465,904.44	77.49%	83.97%
Municipal Services	130,872.35	189,811.54	63.26%	89.09%
 Total Town Taxes	\$4,208,236.15	\$7,655,715.98		
 Total Amount Collected	\$18,900,855.90	\$50,058,960.19		

Regina Houck Tax Collections Director

Tyler Rash Tax Administrator

A G E N D A I T E M 1 0 :

TAX MATTERS

B. Refunds and Releases

Manager's Comments:

Mr. Tyler Rash, Tax Administrator, will present the Refunds and Releases for December 2025, and be available for questions and discussion.

Board action is requested to accept the December 2025 Refunds and Releases Report.

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1641368 AFFORDABLE HOUSING OF MID FLORIDA INC PO BOX 2071 BANNER ELK, NC 28604	RE 2025 1878-15-3083-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	7703	12/10/2025	C04	12595	0 G01	111.30
1640836 APPALACHIAN REALTY INC P O BOX 597 VALLE CRUCIS, NC 28691	RE 2025 1981-21-5551-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	25161	12/11/2025	F07	12612	0 F07 G01	15.75 100.17 ----- 115.92
1782403 BARNES, AMY A 618 GEORGIA AVE STATESVILLE, NC 28677	RE 2025 2819-52-1374-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	35074	12/10/2025	F12	12589	0 F12 G01	17.30 110.03 ----- 127.33
1782403 BARNES, AMY A 618 GEORGIA AVE STATESVILLE, NC 28677	RE 2025 2819-52-2327-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	35081	12/10/2025	F12	12588	0 F12 G01	16.60 105.58 ----- 122.18
1596134 BLUE RIDGE PLASTIC SURGERY GROUP, PLLC/DAMON ANAGNOS, MD 141 DOCTORS DRIVE BOONE, NC 28607	PP 2025 596134999 TAX RELEASES BUSINESS CLOSED	3095	12/01/2025	C02	12546	0 G01 C02	118.74 149.36 ----- 268.10
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2022 2848-56-8902-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL WAS DEACTIVATED IN 2021.	32539	12/12/2025	F05	12625	0 F05 G01	546.81 2,045.69 ----- 2,592.50
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2022 2858-18-8684-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL WAS INCORRECTLY CREATED IN 2022.	33034	12/17/2025	F05	12633	0 F05 G01	37.06 138.65 ----- 175.71
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2023 2848-56-8902-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL WAS DEACTIVATED IN 2021.	32429	12/12/2025	F05	12624	0 F05 G01	546.81 2,045.69 ----- 2,592.50

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE	CHARGE	AMOUNT
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2023 2858-18-8684-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL WAS INCORRECTLY CREATED IN 2022.	32933	12/17/2025	F05	12632	0 F05 G01	37.06 138.65	175.71
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2024 2848-56-8902-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL WAS DEACTIVATED IN 2021.	32377	12/12/2025	F05	12623	0 F05 G01	546.81 2,045.69	2,592.50
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2024 2858-18-8684-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL WAS INCORRECTLY CREATED IN 2022.	32878	12/17/2025	F05	12631	0 F05 G01	37.06 138.65	175.71
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2025 2848-56-8902-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL DEACTIVATED IN 2022.	39442	12/11/2025	F05	12622	0 F05 G01	546.81 2,045.69	2,592.50
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2025 2857-88-7289-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	39880	12/10/2025	F05	12584	0 F05 G01	88.49 331.04	419.53
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2025 2857-98-0558-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	39889	12/10/2025	F05	12587	0 F05 G01	84.07 314.50	398.57
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2025 2857-98-1402-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	39890	12/10/2025	F05	12586	0 F05 G01	127.76 477.95	605.71
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2025 2858-18-8684-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL WAS INCORRECTLY CREATED IN 2022.	39945	12/17/2025	F05	12630	0 F05 G01	37.06 138.65	175.71

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1638505 BR DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC REYNOLDS CAPITAL GROUP 3050 PEACHTREE RD NW STE 370 ATLANTA, GA 30305	RE 2025 2858-61-8247-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	40153	12/11/2025	F05	12599	0 F05 G01	99.11 370.79 ----- 469.90
1853489 BROOME, STEPHEN D 888 BENJAMIN DR BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2921-64-7655-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL WAS DEACTIVATED IN 2024.	51342	12/05/2025	F02	12560	0 F02 G01	20.76 110.03 ----- 130.79
1852613 BROOME, STEPHEN DANIEL 888 BENJAMIN DR BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2921-64-6264-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL WAS DEACTIVATED IN 2024.	51340	12/05/2025	F02	12561	0 F02 G01	34.50 182.85 ----- 217.35
1860082 BUB TEEMS BOONE LLC 606 SOUTHSTONE DR MATTHEWS, NC 28104	RE 2025 2920-09-6177-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	50095	12/11/2025	C02	12604	0 C02 G01	52.00 41.34 ----- 93.34
1860082 BUB TEEMS BOONE LLC 606 SOUTHSTONE DR MATTHEWS, NC 28104	RE 2025 2920-09-6331-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	50096	12/11/2025	C02	12605	0 C02 G01	977.60 777.19 ----- 1,754.79
1860082 BUB TEEMS BOONE LLC 606 SOUTHSTONE DR MATTHEWS, NC 28104	RE 2025 2920-09-7187-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	50099	12/11/2025	C02	12606	0 C02 G01	337.60 268.39 ----- 605.99
1860082 BUB TEEMS BOONE LLC 606 SOUTHSTONE DR MATTHEWS, NC 28104	RE 2025 2920-09-7251-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	50101	12/11/2025	C02	12607	0 C02 G01	146.40 116.39 ----- 262.79
1858760 BURFORD, ROBERT EDWARD SCOTT, TRUSTEE BURFORD, CONNIE JO, TRUSTEE 4210 PATRIOTS WAY GASTONIA, NC 28056	RE 2025 1897-64-2677-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	12563	12/11/2025	F12	12600	0 F12 G01	47.00 298.92 ----- 345.92
1847122 CLARK, WILLIAM H JR CLARK, WILLIAM H III 4732 PORCHAVEN LN APEX, NC 27539	RE 2025 1950-03-4584-000 TAX RELEASES HOME ASSESSED ON INCORRECT PARCEL.	17928	12/10/2025	C05	12567	582,500 G01	1,852.35

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1858542 DESTINATION BY DESIGN PLANNING, LLC 136 FURMAN DR STE 6 BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2910-72-1506-005 TAX RELEASES CLERICAL ERROR. WRONG # OF UNITS TAXED.	47034 C02 12640	12/31/2025		641,510 C02 G01	2,566.04 2,040.00 4,606.04	
1859069 DREW, MICHAEL K. RUSSELL, JENNIFER M. 10094 165TH ST N JUPITER, FL 33478	RE 2025 1899-05-3684-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	13270 F01 12575	12/10/2025		0 F01 G01	15.50 98.58 114.08	
1859069 DREW, MICHAEL K. RUSSELL, JENNIFER M. 10094 165TH ST N JUPITER, FL 33478	RE 2025 1899-05-3784-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	13271 F01 12574	12/10/2025		0 F01 G01 SWF	276.05 1,755.68 115.00 2,146.73	
1421262 DUCKWORTH, RONNIE MITCHELL 421 SEVEN DEVILS RD BANNER ELK, NC 28604	PP 2025 838623400 TAX RELEASES BILLING FOR 2 SWF FEES-ONLY 1 MH	3518 F01 12641	12/31/2025		0 SWF	115.00	
1761029 ECHOTA ON THE RIDGE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION INC 151 MR. BISH BLVD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 1889-11-2852-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS COMMON AREA. EXEMPT FOR 2025.	11205 F01 12626	12/12/2025		0 F01 G01	37.50 238.50 276.00	
1633554 EGGERS, JOHNNY BLAINE (LIFE EST) EGGERS, JOHN DAVID 3108 US HIGHWAY 421 N BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 1991-74-5254-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	28403 F02 12596	12/10/2025		0 F02 G01	18.12 96.04 114.16	
1814599 FARTHING, LEN B C/O LEN B FARTHING PO BOX 88 VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2025 1963-28-6164-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	22283 F04 12571	12/10/2025		0 F04 G01	.20 1.27 1.47	
1536306 FLETCHER, BRENDA ET AL PERRY, ESTHER FLETCHER 2089 SILVERSTONE RD ZIONVILLE, NC 28698	RE 2025 1984-91-6492-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	26942 F06 12576	12/10/2025		0 F06 G01	21.00 133.56 154.56	

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1052356 FLETCHER, RUBY C/O LINDA Y MCCOY 38210 SOUTH ST WILLOUGHBY, OH 44094	RE 2025 1984-91-4648-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	26941	12/10/2025	F06	12577	0 F06 G01 ----- 110.66	17.40 128.06
1811108 FULLER, LORETTA K 6090 LEXINGTON AVE. PORTAGE, IN 46368	RE 2025 1983-81-1427-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	26518	12/11/2025	F07	12614	0 F07 G01 ----- 108.44	17.05 125.49
1055532 FURMAN, RICHARD 16740 BLUE RIDGE PKWY BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2829-98-2905-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	38029	12/10/2025	F02	12578	0 F02 G01 ----- 174.26	32.88 207.14
1055532 FURMAN, RICHARD 16740 BLUE RIDGE PKWY BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2829-98-3571-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	38031	12/10/2025	F02	12579	0 F02 G01 ----- 155.50	29.34 184.84
1055532 FURMAN, RICHARD 16740 BLUE RIDGE PKWY BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2829-98-8416-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	38035	12/10/2025	F02	12580	0 F02 G01 ----- 62.96	11.88 74.84
1773709 GAMBILL, HOBERT RANDAL GAMBILL, BARBARA ANNETTE 636 NIGHTSHADE RD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2858-91-1285-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	40284	12/01/2025	F05	12544	0 F05 G01 SWF ----- 115.00	1,024.76 3,833.81 4,973.57
1625626 GLOWIENKA, TIMOTHY 7711 COPPER OAKS DR EDMOND, OK 73025	RE 2025 2858-91-4412-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	40286	12/01/2025	F05	12543	0 F05 G01 ----- 518.66	138.64 657.30
1621697 GROSS, BRADLEY D GROSS, LINDA B 6104 BROOK SHADOW CT GREENSBORO, NC 27410	RE 2025 2818-15-3465-000 REFUND RELEASE 2ND STRUCTURE INCORRECTLY ADDED FOR 2025	33748	12/15/2025	F12	12629	51,700 F12 G01 ----- 164.41	25.85 190.26
1854794 HENDLEY, DICKSON BEATTIE HENDLEY, AMBER R 188 TRAIL RIDGE DR BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2930-17-8350-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	52758	12/11/2025	F02	12616	0 F02 G01 ----- 566.04	106.80 672.84

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1854794 HENDLEY, DICKSON BEATTIE HENDLEY, AMBER R 188 TRAIL RIDGE DR BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2930-27-1511-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	52836	12/11/2025	F02	12615	0 F02 G01 SWF	187.50 993.75 115.00 ----- 1,296.25
50390 HIVELY, EDWIN KENT PO BOX 64 BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2910-19-6597-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	45676	12/29/2025	C02	12637	0 C02 G01	214.00 170.13 ----- 384.13
1847351 HOLLIDAY REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS, LLC 5020 FURMAN AVE COLUMBIA, SC 29206	RE 2025 2858-61-8452-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	40155	12/11/2025	F05	12642	0 F05 G01	109.48 409.58 ----- 519.06
1823680 HOWARD, CARSON D. HOWARD, JEFFREY C. 3130 CORNWALL RD DURHAM, NC 27707	RE 2025 2817-65-9521-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	33419	12/11/2025	C3F2	12610	0 F12 G01 SWF	190.55 2,423.80 115.00 ----- 2,729.35
1512584 HUTCHINS, WILLIAM LYTHE HUTCHINS, CONNIE JO 1777 PINE CHANNEL DR SUMMERLAND KEY, FL 33042	RE 2025 2901-79-3948-000 TAX ADJUSTMENTS SWF CHARGED ON LAND AND PP BILL	43683	12/04/2025	F09	12559	0 SWF	115.00
1501123 ISAACS, JOHN ED AND GLENDA LIF E ISAACS, JOHN G 888 FLETCHER BRANCH RD VILAS, NC 28692-9101	RE 2025 1973-75-4483-000 TAX RELEASES HOME & LAND HAD HELENE DAMAGE. ADJ MADE	24057	12/29/2025	F07	12638	102,900 F07 G01	51.45 327.22 ----- 378.67
1791733 KING, LEWIS H. KING, LAUREN S. 10008 WHITESTONE RD RALEIGH, NC 27615	RE 2025 1972-99-7741-000 REFUND RELEASE HOME DAMAGED FROM HELENE. REPORTED AFTER BILLS WERE MAILED.	23850	12/10/2025	F07	12569	85,100 F07 G01	42.55 270.62 ----- 313.17
1856980 KITTS, MELISSA S 151 MAN O WAR S VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2025 1981-21-2315-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	25157	12/11/2025	F07	12611	0 F07 G01 SWF	388.65 2,471.81 115.00 ----- 2,975.46

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	YEAR	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	VALUE		AMOUNT
						REF NO	CHARGE	
1860092 LEE, JEANETTE 2294 GEORGE HAYES RD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2828-99-3870-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	36624	12/11/2025		F02	0 F02 G01 SWF	242.34 1,284.40 115.00	----- 1,641.74
1766972 LOOMIS ARMORED US LLC 1401 MCKINNEY STREET, STE 1200 HOUSTON, TX 77010	PP 2025 2066 REFUND RELEASE NO EQUIPMENT IN WATAUGA CTY	690	12/12/2025		C02	0 C02 G01	99.44 79.05	----- 178.49
1768652 MAGNAN, DAVID L MAGNAN, SANNE D J 5214 OCEAN DR EMERALD ISLE, NC 28594	RE 2025 2903-30-2982-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	44467	12/11/2025		F09	0 F09 G01	84.15 535.19	----- 619.34
1768652 MAGNAN, DAVID L MAGNAN, SANNE D J 5214 OCEAN DR EMERALD ISLE, NC 28594	RE 2025 2903-41-1895-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	44483	12/11/2025		F09	0 F09 G01	95.95 610.24	----- 706.19
1849802 MANTOOTH PROPERTIES, LLC 894 PARKCREST RD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 1878-76-4532-000 TAX RELEASES SEPARATE PARCEL WAS INCLUDED IN BILL. RELEASING VALUE OF SEP. PARCEL.	8589	12/03/2025		F01	14,300 F01 G01	7.15 45.48	----- 52.63
1818564 MCGINNIS, TED CARLOS, LIFE ESTATE MCGINNIS, DEANNA H, LIFE ESTATE 1186 OLD US HWY 421 SUGAR GROVE, NC 28679	RE 2025 1982-07-2375-000 REFUND RELEASE HOME IS UNLIVEABLE. CORRECTED HOME VALUE	25672	12/02/2025		F07	13,200 F07 G01	6.60 41.98	----- 48.58
1810875 MIXON, JAMES N 3031 MOUNTAIN DALE RD VILAS, NC 28692-9410	RE 2025 1965-32-0955-000 TAX RELEASES HOUSE DEMOLISHED PRIOR TO 1/1 SWFREMOVED	22651	12/10/2025		F04	0 SWF	115.00	
1743235 NICASTRO, NATALIE 2123 LINVILLE CREEK RD VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2025 1982-70-1516-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	26048	12/10/2025		F07	0 F07 G01 SWF	6.30 40.07 115.00	----- 161.37

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1743235 NICASTRO, NATALIE 2123 LINVILLE CREEK RD VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2025 1982-70-1664-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	26049	12/10/2025	F07	12583	0 F07 G01 SWF	69.75 443.61 115.00 ----- 628.36
1850997 NOOE, GRETA A 142 EDNA ST BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2819-58-2622-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	35190	12/11/2025	F02	12621	0 F02 G01	11.16 59.15 ----- 70.31
1850997 NOOE, GRETA A 142 EDNA ST BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2819-58-2711-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	35192	12/11/2025	F02	12620	0 F02 G01 SWF	159.36 844.61 115.00 ----- 1,118.97
1763960 ORLOWSKI, SHARON ORLOWSKI, RONALD 170 POPLAR RDG BANNER ELK, NC 28604	RE 2025 1888-05-3436-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	10203	12/10/2025	F01	12590	0 F01 G01	6.90 43.88 ----- 50.78
1763960 ORLOWSKI, SHARON ORLOWSKI, RONALD 170 POPLAR RDG BANNER ELK, NC 28604	RE 2025 1888-05-4456-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	10217	12/10/2025	F01	12591	0 F01 G01	.50 3.18 ----- 3.68
1763960 ORLOWSKI, SHARON ORLOWSKI, RONALD 170 POPLAR RDG BANNER ELK, NC 28604	RE 2025 1888-05-5407-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	10229	12/10/2025	F01	12592	0 F01 G01	6.90 43.88 ----- 50.78
1763960 ORLOWSKI, SHARON ORLOWSKI, RONALD 170 POPLAR RDG BANNER ELK, NC 28604	RE 2025 1888-05-5560-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	10231	12/10/2025	F01	12593	0 F01 G01	.70 4.45 ----- 5.15
1763960 ORLOWSKI, SHARON ORLOWSKI, RONALD 170 POPLAR RDG BANNER ELK, NC 28604	RE 2025 1888-05-6529-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	10240	12/10/2025	F01	12594	0 F01 G01	6.90 43.88 ----- 50.78

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1857636 OWENS, MARK VANCE 1180 DIANA AVE NAPLES, FL 34103	RE 2025 1950-24-2773-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	18752 C05	12/10/2025		12572	0 G01	55.33
1857636 OWENS, MARK VANCE 1180 DIANA AVE NAPLES, FL 34103	RE 2025 1950-24-2823-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	18753 C05	12/10/2025		12573	0 G01	69.01
1539162 PADGETT, JOHN LLOYD 573-1 DECK HILL RD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2910-20-0345-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	45690 F02	12/09/2025		12563	0 F02 G01	.72 3.82 ----- 4.54
1564440 PARSONS, JUDY KELLER 1849 WINKLERS CREEK RD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2809-78-0929-000 TAX RELEASES BILLED FOR 3.7 INSTEAD OF 2.7 ACRES.	31965 F02	12/02/2025		12547	7,900 F02 G01	4.74 25.12 ----- 29.86
1526027 PHILLIPS, H WAYNE 1029 RAINBOW TRAIL BOONE, NC 28607-6965	RE 2025 1990-54-4380-000 TAX RELEASES HOME DESTROYED BY HELENE. CONDEMNED.	27577 F02	12/30/2025		12639	33,920 F02 G01	20.35 107.86 ----- 128.21
1793918 REECE, PATOSHA YVONNE 804 FORGE CREEK CIR MOUNTAIN CITY, TN 37683	RE 2025 1983-22-3893-000 REFUND RELEASE PROPERTY SUFFERED HELENE DAMAGE.	26258 F07	12/12/2025		12628	7,700 F07 G01	3.85 24.48 ----- 28.33
1788862 REEDER, RONALD TODD REEDER, HANNAH SPENCER 567 DECK HILL RD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2910-20-2521-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	45698 F02	12/09/2025		12562	0 F02 G01	186.60 988.98 ----- 1,175.58
1137272 ROARK, ARCHIE 749 WILLETT MILLER RD TODD, NC 28684-9597	RE 2025 2924-95-5564-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	52532 F11	12/03/2025		12558	0 F11 G01 SWF	73.15 332.31 115.00 ----- 520.46
1612177 ROARK, ARCHIE D ROARK, VIRGINIA BLANCHE LENTZ 749 WILLETT MILLER RD TODD, NC 28684-9597	RE 2025 2924-95-5528-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	52531 F11	12/03/2025		12557	0 F11 G01	2.59 11.77 ----- 14.36

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1612484 ROARK, ARCHIE LIFE ESTATE ROARK, VIRGINIA LIFE ESTATE 749 WILLETT MILLER RD TODD, NC 28684-9597	RE 2025 2924-95-4520-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	52528	12/03/2025	F11	12556	0 F11 G01 -----	37.10 168.54 205.64
1523534 ROARK, KEVIN L 787 WILLETT MILLER RD TODD, NC 28684-9597	RE 2025 2924-95-7455-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	52533	12/03/2025	F11	12555	0 F11 G01 -----	19.11 86.81 105.92
1859979 SAGEKEEPERS, LLC P.O. BOX 4261 MOORESVILLE, NC 28117	RE 2025 2808-05-0953-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	31306	12/10/2025	F12	12581	0 F12 G01 SWF -----	282.40 1,796.06 115.00 2,193.46
1859979 SAGEKEEPERS, LLC P.O. BOX 4261 MOORESVILLE, NC 28117	RE 2025 2808-06-1025-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	31328	12/10/2025	F12	12582	0 F12 G01 -----	14.60 92.86 107.46
1162189 SAUNDERS, MARGARET MARIE 3494 POPLAR GROVE RD S BOONE, NC 286077376	PP 2025 162189999 TAX RELEASES REMOVED 1 SWF-NO LONGER HAS TWO SINGLE WIDE MOBILE HOMES	2006	12/29/2025	F02	12636	0 SWF	115.00
1810490 SCHUMAN, DAVID R 17260 EAGLE VIEW LN CAPE CORAL, FL 33909	RE 2025 1950-37-0244-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	19340	12/11/2025	C05	12598	0 G01	52.15
1810490 SCHUMAN, DAVID R 17260 EAGLE VIEW LN CAPE CORAL, FL 33909	RE 2025 1950-37-1340-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	19347	12/11/2025	C05	12597	0 G01 SWF -----	1,078.02 115.00 1,193.02
1799731 SENGEL, DAVID E, TRUSTEE WINTERS, SUSIE B, TRUSTEE 195 DAY DR BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2941-22-5379-000 TAX RELEASES ACREAGE ALREADY BILLED ON SEPARATE PARCEL	54693	12/10/2025	F10	12570	0 F10 G01 -----	18.75 119.25 138.00

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1509174 STANTON, VERNON STANTON, SHERRY 185 SMITH HENSON RD SUGAR GROVE, NC 28679	RE 2025 1953-14-1497-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	20875	12/11/2025	F04	12603	0 F04 G01 ----- 19.40 123.38 142.78	
1279553 TESTER, JANICE COOK 293 MARTHA DRIVE BOONE, NC 28607-8930	RE 2025 2819-46-4784-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL WAS DEACTIVATED IN 2024.	35044	12/17/2025	F02	12634	0 F02 G01 ----- 42.72 226.42 269.14	
1164136 TRIVETTE, GRAYSON TRIVETTE, PHYLLIS 1049 MEAT CAMP ROAD BOONE, NC 28607-7255	RE 2025 2913-22-8790-000 TAX RELEASES BRIDGE DESTROYED BY HELENE. ADJUSTING VALUE DUE TO ACCESS.	49194	12/23/2025	F09	12635	10,000 F09 G01 ----- 5.00 31.80 36.80	
9999999 UNKNOWN TAXPAYER WATAUGA COUNTY COURTHOUSE BOONE, NC 28607-	RE 2020 1878-76-5348-000 TAX RELEASES UNKNOWN OWNER UNABLE TO COLLECT.	17274	12/03/2025	F01	12553	0 F01 G01 ----- 4.10 33.05 37.15	
9999999 UNKNOWN TAXPAYER WATAUGA COUNTY COURTHOUSE BOONE, NC 28607-	RE 2021 1878-76-5348-000 TAX RELEASES UNKNOWN OWNER UNABLE TO COLLECT.	1737	12/03/2025	F01	12552	0 F01 G01 ----- 4.10 33.05 37.15	
9999999 UNKNOWN TAXPAYER WATAUGA COUNTY COURTHOUSE BOONE, NC 28607-	RE 2022 1878-76-5348-000 TAX RELEASES UNKNOWN OWNER UNABLE TO COLLECT.	1738	12/03/2025	F01	12551	0 F01 G01 ----- 7.15 45.47 52.62	
9999999 UNKNOWN TAXPAYER WATAUGA COUNTY COURTHOUSE BOONE, NC 28607-	RE 2023 1878-76-5348-000 TAX RELEASES UNKNOWN OWNER UNABLE TO COLLECT.	1723	12/03/2025	F01	12550	0 F01 G01 ----- 7.15 45.47 52.62	
9999999 UNKNOWN TAXPAYER WATAUGA COUNTY COURTHOUSE BOONE, NC 28607-	RE 2024 1878-76-5348-000 TAX RELEASES UNKNOWN OWNER. UNABLE TO COLLECT.	1749	12/03/2025	F01	12549	0 F01 G01 ----- 7.15 45.47 52.62	
1762940 VERTICAL BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT LLC 2800 POST OAK BLVD STE 4200 HOUSTON, TX 77056	PP 2025 4934 TAX RELEASES UTILITY BILL CREATED IN ERROR.	1000104		F04	*****	0 F04 G01 ----- 131.45 836.02 967.47	

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	YEAR BILL	EFF DATE JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1762940 VERTICAL BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT LLC 2800 POST OAK BLVD STE 4200 HOUSTON, TX 77056	PP 2025 4934 TAX RELEASES UTILITY BILL CREATED IN ERROR.	1000104 F04 12566	12/10/2025	0 F04 G01	131.45 836.02 ----- 967.47	
1762940 VERTICAL BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT LLC 2800 POST OAK BLVD STE 4200 HOUSTON, TX 77056	PP 2025 4935 TAX RELEASES UTILITY BILL CREATED IN ERROR.	1000105 F02 12565	12/10/2025	0 F02 G01	54.09 286.68 ----- 340.77	
1762940 VERTICAL BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT LLC 2800 POST OAK BLVD STE 4200 HOUSTON, TX 77056	PP 2025 4935 TAX RELEASES UTILITY BILL CREATED IN ERROR.	1000105 F02 *****		0 F02 G01	54.09 286.68 ----- 340.77	
1701849 WHITE, JOHN 588 DICK WATSON RD DEEP GAP, NC 28618	RE 2025 2951-52-7834-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	55816 F10 12617	12/11/2025	0 F10 G01 SWF	316.40 2,012.30 115.00 ----- 2,443.70	
1816417 WHITE, JOHN M WHITE, BRITTANY P 588 DICK WATSON RD DEEP GAP, NC 28618	RE 2025 2951-53-4251-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	55830 F10 12643	12/11/2025	0 F10 G01 SWF	58.50 372.06 230.00 ----- 660.56	
1736536 WHITE, JOHN MICHAEL 588 DICK WATSON RD DEEP GAP, NC 28618-9553	RE 2025 2951-52-5804-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	55813 F10 12618	12/11/2025	0 F10 G01	11.15 70.91 ----- 82.06	
1736536 WHITE, JOHN MICHAEL 588 DICK WATSON RD DEEP GAP, NC 28618-9553	RE 2025 2951-53-6097-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	55835 F10 12619	12/11/2025	0 F10 G01	7.65 48.65 ----- 56.30	
1178425 WILLIAMS, FRANK AND EARLENE 337 KIRBY BRANCH RD ZIONVILLE, NC 28698	RE 2025 1984-51-4750-000 TAX RELEASES PROPERTY SUFFERED HELENE DAMAGE.	26825 F06 12564	12/10/2025	121,500 F06 G01	60.75 386.37 ----- 447.12	
1810587 WILLIS, BERKLEY KEITH WILLIS, MONTE FAIL 177 SILVERWOOD DR BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2920-23-6084-000 REFUND RELEASE PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	50261 F02 12608	12/11/2025	0 F02 G01 SWF	294.12 1,558.84 345.00 ----- 2,197.96	

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1810587 WILLIS, BERKLEY KEITH WILLIS, MONTE FAIL 177 SILVERWOOD DR BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2025 2920-23-7167-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL IS DEACTIVATED.	50263 F02	12/11/2025		12609	0 F02 G01	8.04 42.61 ----- 50.65
1774842 WOMBLE, RICHARD S WOMBLE, SANDRA S 314 SPRUCE PINE TRL BLOWING ROCK, NC 28605	RE 2025 1897-63-7624-000 TAX RELEASES PARCEL WAS DEACTIVATED IN 2023.	12541 F12	12/01/2025		12545	0 F12 G01 SWF	269.20 1,712.11 115.00 ----- 2,096.31
DETAIL SUMMARY	COUNT: 103		RELEASES - TOTAL			1,672,230	65,398.67

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

RELEASES - CHARGE SUMMARY FOR ALL CLERKS

YEAR	CAT	CHARGE	AMOUNT	
2020	RE	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE	4.10
2020	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	33.05
			2020 TOTAL	37.15
2021	RE	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE	4.10
2021	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	33.05
			2021 TOTAL	37.15
2022	RE	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE	7.15
2022	RE	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	583.87
2022	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	2,229.81
			2022 TOTAL	2,820.83
2023	RE	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE	7.15
2023	RE	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	583.87
2023	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	2,229.81
			2023 TOTAL	2,820.83
2024	RE	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE	7.15
2024	RE	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	583.87
2024	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	2,229.81
			2024 TOTAL	2,820.83
2025	RE	C02	BOONE RE	4,293.64
2025	RE	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE	358.10
2025	RE	F02	BOONE FIRE RE	1,411.93
2025	RE	F04	BEAVER DAM FIRE RE	19.60
2025	RE	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	2,256.18
2025	RE	F06	ZIONVILLE FIRE RE	99.15
2025	RE	F07	COVE CREEK FIRE RE	601.95
2025	RE	F09	MEAT CAMP FIRE RE	185.10
2025	RE	F10	DEEP GAP FIRE RE	412.45
2025	RE	F11	TODD FIRE RE	131.95
2025	RE	F12	BLOWING ROCK FIRE RE	863.50
2025	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	40,520.26
2025	RE	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE	2,415.00
2025	PP	C02	BOONE PP	248.80
2025	PP	F02	BOONE FIRE PP	108.18
2025	PP	F04	BEAVER DAM FIRE PP	262.90
2025	PP	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY PP	2,443.19
2025	PP	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE	230.00
			2025 TOTAL	56,861.88
			SUMMARY TOTAL	65,398.67

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

RELEASES - JURISDICTION SUMMARY FOR ALL CLERKS

JUR	YEAR	CHARGE	AMOUNT
C02	2025	C02	BOONE PP
C02	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY PP
			4,542.44
			3,611.23
			C02 TOTAL <u>8,153.67</u>
C04	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
			111.30
			C04 TOTAL <u>111.30</u>
C05	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
C05	2025	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE
			3,106.86
			115.00
			C05 TOTAL <u>3,221.86</u>
C3F2	2025	F12	BLOWING ROCK FIRE RE
C3F2	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
C3F2	2025	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE
			190.55
			2,423.80
			115.00
			C3F2 TOTAL <u>2,729.35</u>
F01	2020	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE
F01	2020	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F01	2021	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE
F01	2021	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F01	2022	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE
F01	2022	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F01	2023	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE
F01	2023	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F01	2024	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE
F01	2024	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F01	2025	F01	FOSCOE FIRE RE
F01	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F01	2025	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE
			4.10
			33.05
			4.10
			33.05
			7.15
			45.47
			7.15
			45.47
			7.15
			45.47
			358.10
			2,277.51
			230.00
			F01 TOTAL <u>3,097.77</u>
F02	2025	F02	BOONE FIRE PP
F02	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY PP
F02	2025	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE
			1,520.11
			8,056.60
			805.00
			F02 TOTAL <u>10,381.71</u>
F04	2025	F04	BEAVER DAM FIRE PP
F04	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY PP
F04	2025	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE
			282.50
			1,796.69
			115.00
			F04 TOTAL <u>2,194.19</u>
F05	2022	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE
F05	2022	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F05	2023	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE
F05	2023	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F05	2024	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE
F05	2024	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
F05	2025	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE
F05	2025	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE
			583.87
			2,184.34
			583.87
			2,184.34
			583.87
			2,184.34
			2,256.18
			8,440.67

RELEASES - 12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025

RELEASES - JURISDICTION SUMMARY FOR ALL CLERKS

JUR	YEAR	CHARGE	AMOUNT
F05	2025	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	115.00
		F05 TOTAL	<u>19,116.48</u>
F06	2025	F06 ZIONVILLE FIRE RE	99.15
F06	2025	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	630.59
		F06 TOTAL	<u>729.74</u>
F07	2025	F07 COVE CREEK FIRE RE	601.95
F07	2025	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	3,828.40
F07	2025	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	345.00
		F07 TOTAL	<u>4,775.35</u>
F09	2025	F09 MEAT CAMP FIRE RE	185.10
F09	2025	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	1,177.23
F09	2025	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	115.00
		F09 TOTAL	<u>1,477.33</u>
F10	2025	F10 DEEP GAP FIRE RE	412.45
F10	2025	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	2,623.17
F10	2025	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	345.00
		F10 TOTAL	<u>3,380.62</u>
F11	2025	F11 TODD FIRE RE	131.95
F11	2025	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	599.43
F11	2025	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	115.00
		F11 TOTAL	<u>846.38</u>
F12	2025	F12 BLOWING ROCK FIRE RE	672.95
F12	2025	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	4,279.97
F12	2025	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	230.00
		F12 TOTAL	<u>5,182.92</u>
		SUMMARY TOTAL	<u>65,398.67</u>

A G E N D A I T E M 1 1 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Change Order Request #3 for Howard Knob Park

Manager's Comments:

Staff will request the Board to approve Change Order Request #3 for the Howard Knob Park in the amount of \$8,249.64. The Change Order is to change from seeding to sod, primarily for the area between the sidewalk and overlook. Funding is being provided through grants and the TDA.

Board approval is required to accept Change Order Request #3 in the amount of \$8,249.64.


AIA® Document G701® – 2017

Change Order

PROJECT: (Name and address)	CONTRACT INFORMATION:	CHANGE ORDER INFORMATION:
Howard Knob Boone, 28607	Contract For: Date: 08-28-2025	Change Order Number: 003 Date:
OWNER: (Name and address)	ARCHITECT: (Name and address)	CONTRACTOR: (Name and address)
Watauga County 814 West King Street Boone, 28607	Destination by Design Studios, PLLC 136 Furman Rd, Suite 6 Boone, 28607	MBI Builders, LLC 529 Main Street North Wilkesboro, 28659

THE CONTRACT IS CHANGED AS FOLLOWS:

(Insert a detailed description of the change and, if applicable, attach or reference specific exhibits. Also include agreed upon adjustments attributable to executed Construction Change Directives.)

Change remaining areas to be seeded (primarily the area between the sidewalk and overlook) to sod.

The original Contract Sum was	\$ 2,144,729.00
The net change by previously authorized Change Orders	\$ 24,270.00
The Contract Sum prior to this Change Order was	\$ 2,168,999.00
The Contract Sum will be increased by this Change Order in the amount of	\$ 8,249.64
The new Contract Sum including this Change Order will be	\$ 2,177,248.64

The Contract Time will be unchanged by (0) days.

The new date of Substantial Completion will be

NOTE: This Change Order does not include adjustments to the Contract Sum or Guaranteed Maximum Price, or the Contract Time, that have been authorized by Construction Change Directive until the cost and time have been agreed upon by both the Owner and Contractor, in which case a Change Order is executed to supersede the Construction Change Directive.

NOT VALID UNTIL SIGNED BY THE ARCHITECT, CONTRACTOR AND OWNER.

ARCHITECT (Signature)	CONTRACTOR (Signature)	OWNER (Signature)
BY: Case Neal, Landscape Architect <i>(Printed name, title, and license number if required)</i>	BY: John Fesperman, Project Manager <i>(Printed name and title)</i>	BY: Deron Geouque, County Manager <i>(Printed name and title)</i>
<i>Date</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Date</i>



Change Order

12/15/2025
CO # 901-3
Howard Knob Park

Architect: Destination By Design

Case Neal
136 Furman Rd, Suite 6
Boone, NC 28607

Contractor: MBI Builders Inc.

311 10th Street
North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
336-973-3402 OFFICE

CO#3 - Change Seeded closest to bridge area to Sod

		QU
General Contractor	Labor	\$ -
	Concrete	\$ -
	Excavator	\$ -
	Total (L,M,E)	\$ -
Sales Tax	Material	\$ -
	Equipment	\$ -
	Total M&E	\$ -
	Sales Tax	0.00%
	GC Sales Tax	\$ -
Labor Burden	Labor	\$ -
	Labor Burden Percentage	0%
	GC Labor Burden	\$ -
Overhead & Profit	Total (L,M,E)	\$ -
GC	Sales Tax	\$ -
	Labor Burden	\$ -
	Subtotal	\$ -
	GC OH&P	0%
	OH&P GC Total	\$ -
Subcontractor	Subcontractors 1st Tier	\$ 8,249.64
	GC OH&P on Subcontractor Work	0%
	GC OH&P on Subcontractor Work	\$ 8,249.64
Subtotal	GC Total (L,M,E)	\$ -
	GC Sales Tax	\$ -
	GC Labor Burden	\$ -
	GC OH&P on Self Performed Work	\$ -
	Subcontractors Total	\$ -
	GC OH&P on Subcontractor Work	\$ 8,249.64
	Total Without Performance & Payment Bond	\$ 8,249.64
Performance & Payment	Total Without Performance & Payment Bond	\$ 8,249.64
	Performance & Payment Bond Percentage	0%
	Performance & Payment Bond	\$ -
Proposed Change Order Total	Total without Performance & Payment Bond	\$ 8,249.64
	Performance & Payment Bond	\$ -
	Proposed Change Order	\$ 8,249.64

Extended Contract Time Requested 0 Days

Architect

Authorized by

Date

Contractor

Tanner Curtis 12/15/25

Authorized by Date

A G E N D A I T E M 1 1 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

B. Furniture Bid Award for EMS Facility

Manager's Comments:

Staff will present the bids for furniture for the new EMS facility. Two bids were received with 1 bidder being disqualified upon follow-up review. Staff will request the Board to award the bid to PBI as the lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$315,146.26. The items are on state contract pricing. The bid is within the budgeted amount for the new EMS facility.

Board action is required to award the bid to PBI in the amount of \$315,146.26 for furniture for the new EMS facility.



Invitation for Bid (IFB)
Watauga County Emergency Services Facility Furniture
Bid Evaluation & Tabulation
12-12-25



December 12, 2025

Watauga County
814 West King Street
Suite 205
Boone, NC 28607

Attn: Mr. Deron Geouque

RE: Watauga County Emergency Services Facility Furniture

Dear Deron,

On December 10th, 2025, we received bids on the above noted project. Attached to this letter is the Bid Evaluation and Bid Tab as received by our office. As indicated in the Bid Tab, PBI is the apparent low bidder. Their bid is shown below.

Bid	\$ 315,146.26
------------	---------------

As a reminder, based on the project schedule and lead times, it is important to award the bid and get the product ordered quickly.

This is very exciting for your County. The new Watauga County Emergency Services Facility will have furnishings that will enhance the contemporary design of the interior spaces while offering maximum durability and function. If you should have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
CLARK NEXSEN

Melanie Dover Goodson CID, IIDA, WELL AP
Senior Certified Interior Designer

Attachments: Bid Evaluation
Bid Tabulation



301 College Street, Suite 300
Asheville, NC 28801
clarknexsen.com

CLARK NEXSEN
A JMT Company

Bid Package Evaluation for Qualification

Name of Bidder	Reason for Disqualification (if any)			
	Bid Contained Unapproved Substitutions <i>(Section 7.2 of IFB)</i>	Incomplete Bid Form (No Bid Items) <i>(Section 7.2 of IFB)</i>	Incomplete Bid Package <i>(Section 7.2 of IFB)</i>	Notes
PBI				
WJ Office <i>(Disqualified)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<i>Bid included unapproved substitutions.</i>

Bid Tabulation

Name of Bidder	Bid Amount
PBI	\$315,146.26
WJ Office <i>(Disqualified)</i>	\$329,279.88

Upon approval from Watauga County, PBI will be awarded the project.

Tabulation of Qualified Bids

IFB Watauga County Emergency Services Facility Furniture Bid Form

PBI						
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	MANUFACTURER	APPROVED SUBSTITUTION INCLUDED	QTY.	PRICE	TOT. PRICE
A1	Table Lamp	AIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 102.00	\$ 816.00
A2	3 Hook Hanging Rack	Safco	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	\$ 35.50	\$ 426.00
A3	Mirror	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 195.12	\$ 1,560.96
A4	Ping Pong Table	Poppin'	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 669.50	\$ 669.50
A5	Shower Curtain	Inpro	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	\$ 192.35	\$ 384.70
A6	Laundry Cart	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 507.49	\$ 507.49
B1	Fold Down Bench	Spec	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	\$ 352.84	\$ 705.68
B2	Bench	Spec	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 1,891.43	\$ 1,891.43
BD1	Bed with Storage	RT London	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 2,100.42	\$ 16,803.36
C1	Training Task Chair; Nesting	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	83	\$ 403.51	\$ 33,491.33
C2	Task Chair; Offices; with Arms	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 574.41	\$ 6,318.51
C3	Café Chair; Armless	Falcon	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	\$ 331.57	\$ 3,315.70
C4	Lounge Chair; Reclining	Firehouse Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	\$ 2,832.51	\$ 8,497.53
C5	Lounge Chair	Paul Brayton	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	\$ 765.55	\$ 1,531.10
C6	Counter Height Stool; Armless	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	\$ 213.96	\$ 1,497.72
C7	Counter Height Stool; Armless	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 213.96	\$ 855.84
C8	Café Chair; Armless	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 141.16	\$ 564.64
C9	Dining Chair; Armless	Grand Rapids Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	\$ 504.39	\$ 5,043.90
C10	Counter Stool; Armless	Grand Rapids Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	\$ 508.78	\$ 2,543.90
D1	Desk System	OFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 5,363.37	\$ 58,997.07
D2	Desk	RT London	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 259.14	\$ 2,073.12
RWS1	Roller Window Shade; Manual	Mecho Shade Systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22	\$ 226.22	\$ 4,976.84
S1	Bookcase	OFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 1,017.51	\$ 11,192.61
S2	Heavy Duty Storage Cabinet	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	22	\$ 1,078.05	\$ 23,717.10
S3	Key Lock Box	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 198.56	\$ 198.56
S4	Heavy Duty Open Shelving	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	\$ 564.88	\$ 5,648.80
S5	Storage; Lateral File	OFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 858.71	\$ 9,445.81
S6	Storage; Locker	Scranton Products	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12	\$ 719.27	\$ 8,631.24
S7	Heavy Duty Shelving; Open	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	17	\$ 535.61	\$ 9,105.37
S8	Heavy Duty Storage Cabinet	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 482.93	\$ 482.93
T1	Square Café Table	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 928.23	\$ 928.23
T2	Training Table; Nesting	OFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	24	\$ 1,596.93	\$ 38,326.32
T3	Rectangle Table; Height Adjustable	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 675.91	\$ 675.91
T4	Rectangle Table	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 655.86	\$ 655.86
T5	Rectangle Table	Spec	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 3,044.64	\$ 3,044.64
T6	Height Adjustable Laptop Table	Teknion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 431.52	\$ 1,726.08
T7	Occasional Table	ERG International	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 1,970.64	\$ 1,970.64
VDU1	Mobile Markerboard	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 455.83	\$ 1,823.32
VDU2	Markerboard	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 348.88	\$ 3,837.68

FURNISHINGS SUB-TOTAL	\$ 274,883.42
Freight & Delivery	\$ 5,835.56
Installation	\$ 14,500.00
Project Management	\$ -
Tax	\$ 19,927.28
FURNISHINGS TOTAL	\$ 315,146.26

IFB Watauga County Emergency Services Facility Furniture Bid Form

WJ Office (Disqualified)						
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	MANUFACTURER	APPROVED SUBSTITUTION INCLUDED	QTY.	PRICE	TOT. PRICE
A1	Table Lamp	AIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 91.20	\$ 729.60
A2	3 Hook Hanging Rack	Safco	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	\$ 31.74	\$ 380.88
A3	Mirror	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 178.78	\$ 1,430.24
A4	Ping Pong Table	Poppin'	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 645.87	\$ 645.87
A5	Shower Curtain	Inpro	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	\$ 212.35	\$ 424.70
A6	Laundry Cart	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 592.00	\$ 592.00
B1	Fold Down Bench	Spec	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	\$ 340.39	\$ 680.78
B2	Bench	Spec	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 1,824.67	\$ 1,824.67
BD1	Bed with Storage	RT London	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 2,471.08	\$ 19,768.64
C1	Training Task Chair; Nesting	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	83	\$ 367.64	\$ 30,514.12
C2	Task Chair; Offices; with Arms	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 554.14	\$ 6,095.54
C3	Café Chair; Armless	Falcon	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	\$ 319.87	\$ 3,198.70
C4	Lounge Chair; Reclining	Firehouse Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	\$ 2,732.54	\$ 8,197.62
C5	Lounge Chair	Paul Brayton	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	\$ 738.53	\$ 1,477.06
C6	Counter Height Stool; Armless	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	\$ 206.41	\$ 1,444.87
C7	Counter Height Stool; Armless	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 206.41	\$ 825.64
C8	Café Chair; Armless	Sit-On-It	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 136.18	\$ 544.72
C9	Dining Chair; Armless	Grand Rapids Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	\$ 486.59	\$ 4,865.90
C10	Counter Stool; Armless	Grand Rapids Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	\$ 490.82	\$ 2,454.10
D1	Desk System	OFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 5,126.70	\$ 56,393.70
D2	Desk	RT London	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	\$ 304.87	\$ 2,438.96
RWS1	Roller Window Shade; Manual	Mecho Shade Systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22	\$ 122.22	\$ 2,688.84
S1	Bookcase	OFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 523.64	\$ 5,760.04
S2	Heavy Duty Storage Cabinet	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	22	\$ 982.22	\$ 21,608.84
S3	Key Lock Box	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 216.42	\$ 216.42
S4	Heavy Duty Open Shelving	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	\$ 544.94	\$ 5,449.40
S5	Storage; Lateral File	OFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 823.86	\$ 9,062.46
S6	Storage; Locker	Scranton Products	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	\$ 1,175.00	\$ 14,100.00
S7	Heavy Duty Shelving; Open	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	17	\$ 765.16	\$ 13,007.72
S8	Heavy Duty Storage Cabinet	Global Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 535.53	\$ 535.53
T1	Square Café Table	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 578.14	\$ 578.14
T2	Training Table; Nesting	OFS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	24	\$ 1,914.02	\$ 45,936.48
T3	Rectangle Table; Height Adjustable	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 420.99	\$ 420.99
T4	Rectangle Table	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 420.99	\$ 420.99
T5	Rectangle Table	Spec	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 2,937.17	\$ 2,937.17
T6	Height Adjustable Laptop Table	Teknion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 729.53	\$ 2,918.12
T7	Occasional Table	ERG International	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$ 1,692.66	\$ 1,692.66
VDU1	Mobile Markerboard	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	\$ 421.80	\$ 1,687.20
VDU2	Markerboard	MooreCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$ 212.51	\$ 2,337.61

DISQUALIFIED

FURNISHINGS SUB-TOTAL	\$ 276,286.92
Freight & Delivery	\$ 10,996.98
Installation	\$ 21,175.00
Project Management	\$ -
Tax	\$ 20,820.98
FURNISHINGS TOTAL	\$ 329,279.88

A G E N D A I T E M 1 1 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS***C. State Employees' Credit Union ATM Lease*****Manager's Comments:**

The State Employees Credit Union is requesting to renew the ATM lease located at the Human Services Parking Lot which expired on December 31, 2025. The monthly amount is \$250.00 with a three (3) year term. No other changes have been made to the current agreement. The Credit Union was actually looking to remove the ATM, however, staff provided information regarding the present location of the ATM. The current site is the only location for state and local government employees to utilize on the western side of the County. Also, the location allows for employees at the Human Services Building and Health Department access without traveling across town. Upon conversations with staff, the Credit Union agreed to renew the lease.

The Credit Union has been a good steward and staff would recommend the Board approve the lease agreement for \$250.00 a month for a three (3) year period contingent upon County Attorney review.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF WATAUGA

Resolution of Watauga County Board of County Commissioners

Pursuant to NCGS 160A-272, notice is hereby given that at the regular commissioner meeting of the Watauga County Board of County Commissioners on January 13, 2026, the Watauga County Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution which authorized Deron T. Geouque, County Manager, of Watauga County to lease to State Employees' Credit Union property (the "Leased Premises") located at 132 Poplar Grove Road Connector, Boone, NC 28607 (the "Property") in Watauga County, North Carolina, for a term of three (3) years, with the lease terminating with at least ten (10) days written notice. The rent to be paid by State Employees' Credit Union to Watauga County during the term of the lease is two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) per annum on or before the first of each month. The lease shall become effective January 1, 2026, which will be at least ten (10) days after the publication of this notice and formal adoption of the lease by the Board of Commissioners.

ADOPTED this the 13st day of January, 2026.

Braxton Eggers, Chairman
Watauga County Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

Monica Harrison, Deputy Clerk to the Board

North Carolina

Watauga County

LEASE AGREEMENT

This lease agreement, made and entered into this _____ day of, _____ 2026 by and between, Watauga County, hereinafter referred to as "Lessor"; and State Employees' Credit Union, a North Carolina credit union, hereinafter referred to as "Lessee."

WITNESSETH:

That subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set out, Lessor does hereby let and lease unto Lessee, and Lessee does hereby accept as tenant of Lessor that certain tract or parcel of land located at 132 Poplar Grove Road, Boone, County of Watauga, State of North Carolina, and as more fully described and/or depicted in Exhibit A (the "Leased Premises").

The terms and conditions of this Lease Agreement are as follows:

- 1) The term of this Lease Agreement shall be for a period of three (3) years beginning on the FIRST day of January, 2026 and ending on the LAST day of December, 2028, unless extended or terminated under the other provisions of this Lease Agreement. If Lessee does not provide notice of its intent to extend the term of this Lease Agreement pursuant to Section 12 below, at the expiration of the term of this Lease Agreement, this Lease Agreement shall automatically renew as a month-to-month lease unless and until a party provides at least ten (10) days written notice to the other party that this Lease Agreement shall not renew.
- 2) As rental for said premises, Lessee shall pay to Lessor at the address noted below, and without notice or demand therefore, the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) per month, payable monthly in advance on the first day of each calendar month. The rental payments shall be made payable to Watauga County and sent to the following address: 814 West King Street Room 216, Boone, NC 28607.
- 3) Lessee shall use and occupy the premises for the purpose of constructing and operating a kiosk ATM, and Lessee shall have exclusive control and possession of the Leased Premises for the entire term of this Lease Agreement.
- 4) Lessor shall be responsible for the repair and/or maintenance of the parking lot area on or immediately surrounding the Leased Premises including but not limited to repairing any potholes, removing any debris, and performing all landscaping such as maintaining and trimming any shrubs and trees in close proximity of the ATM. In addition, Lessor shall ensure that reasonably adequate lighting, parking, and access are available for the Leased Premises at all times. Upon written notice from Lessee to Lessor requesting any repairs and/or maintenance described above on the Leased Premises, Lessor shall perform any requested repairs and/or maintenance within thirty (30) days. If Lessor fails to perform any requested repairs and/or maintenance within thirty (30) days, then Lessee has the option to provide a forty-five (45) day written notice of its intent to terminate this Lease Agreement (such 45-day window to include the 30-day repair and maintenance window). Except as otherwise agreed to in writing by both parties, Lessee will be responsible for the construction of the ATM and any necessary upkeep, repairs, and

maintenance of the ATM during the term of this Lease Agreement. Upon termination of the Lease Agreement, Lessee will be responsible for removing the ATM and the structure from the "Leased Premises" and will restore the premises back to substantially the same condition as existed prior to the installation of the ATM.

- 5) During the term of this Lease Agreement, Lessee shall maintain comprehensive general liability insurance on an occurrence basis with minimum limits of liability in the amount of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) for property damage, bodily injury, personal injury or death to any one person; Lessee shall also maintain excess liability coverage with a per occurrence limit of at least One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00); and Lessee shall keep the kiosk structure on the Leased Premises together with the equipment in the structure insured against loss or damage by fire or other casualties.
- 6) Lessee shall neither use nor occupy the Leased Premises or any part thereof for any unlawful or hazardous purpose.
- 7) Lessor shall pay prior to delinquency all taxes and assessments of every kind and nature which may be imposed or assessed upon or with respect to the Leased Premises.
- 8) If the Leased Premises are wholly or partially destroyed by fire or other casualty, rental payments shall abate in proportion to the loss of use thereof, and Lessee shall, at its own expense, promptly restore the Leased Premises to substantially the same condition as existed before damage or destruction, whereupon full rental shall resume. Should Lessee elect not to repair or replace the ATM, then Lessee shall provide to Lessor at least thirty (30) days written notice of its intent to terminate this Lease Agreement. Upon such termination, Lessee shall restore the premises to substantially the same condition as existed prior to the installation of the ATM. After the premises are restored, Lessee and Lessor shall not have any responsibility to each other under the terms of the Lease Agreement.
- 9) If the whole of the Leased Premises, or such portion thereof as will make the Leased Premises unsuitable for use contemplated hereby, shall be taken under the power of eminent domain (including any conveyance in lieu thereof), then the term hereof shall cease as of the date possession thereof is taken by the condemner, and rental payments shall be accounted for as between Lessor and Lessee as of that date.
- 10) All applications in connection with necessary utility services on the Leased Premises shall be made in the name of Lessee only, and Lessee shall be solely liable for utility charges as they become due, including those for electricity, gas, and telephone/data services. Lessor shall reasonably cooperate with Lessee's efforts in furtherance of this provision, including, but not limited to, promptly responding to any requests for information or access by a utility provider.
- 11) Lessee shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless Lessor from and against any claims, damages, or expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees), whether due to damage to the Leased Premises, claims for injuries to persons or property, or administrative or criminal action by governmental authority, where such claims, damages, or expenses result from the negligence or misconduct by Lessee, its agents, or employees. Lessor shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless Lessee from and against any claims, damages, or expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) where such claims, damages, or

expenses result from the negligence or misconduct by Lessor, its agents, employees or invitees.

- 12) Lessor hereby grants unto Lessee the option to extend the term of this Lease for an additional one (three) year period(s) commencing at the expiration of the primary term hereof at a monthly rental of two hundred and fifty Dollars (\$250.00) per month payable monthly on or before the first day of each calendar month, provided Lessee or Lessor shall provide at least ninety (90) days prior to the expiration of the primary term written notice of its intention to extend or terminate.
- 13) It is expressly understood and agreed that if any monthly installment of rent as herein called for shall remain overdue and unpaid for thirty (30) days, Lessor may, at its option, at any time during such default, declare this Lease Agreement terminated and canceled and take possession of the Leased Premises, and require the Lessee to remove the structure from the premises and restore the Leased Premises back to substantially the same condition as existed prior to the installation of the ATM.
- 14) If Lessee shall pay the rent and perform and observe all the other covenants and conditions to be performed and observed by it hereunder, Lessee shall at all times during the term hereof have the peaceable and quiet enjoyment of the premises without interference from Lessor or any person lawfully claiming through Lessor.
- 15) All notices provided for in this Lease Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been given when sent by registered or certified mail addressed to Lessor at:

Watauga County
814 West King Street
Boone, NC 28607

and to Lessee at:

State Employees' Credit Union
Attn: SVP, ATM Management
PO Box 26807
Raleigh, NC 27611

- 16) This Lease Agreement shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina without regard to any conflict of laws provisions.
- 17) This Lease Agreement shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the parties hereto and their respective successors and assigns. In addition, this Lease Agreement may be assigned by Lessee, without further consent or approval required, to a third party that is regularly in the business of operating ATMs.
- 18) This Lease Agreement contains the complete agreement of the parties regarding the terms and conditions of the lease of the premises, and there are no oral or written conditions, terms, warranties, understandings or other agreements pertaining thereto which have not been incorporated herein. This Lease Agreement may be modified only

by written instrument duly executed by both parties or their respective successors in interest or assigns.

- 19) If any provision of this Lease Agreement shall be declared invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Lease Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.
- 20) Nonperformance of either party shall be excused to the extent that performance is rendered impossible by strikes or other labor problems, fire, flood, civil unrest, pandemics, acts of terror, war, governmental acts or orders or restrictions, failure of suppliers, or any other reason where failure to perform is beyond the reasonable control of the non-performing party.

THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

In testimony whereof, the parties have caused this Lease Agreement to be executed as of the day and year first above written.

Lessor:
Watauga County

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____

North Carolina:
_____ County:

This is the _____ day of _____, 2026, before me, _____, a Notary Public, personally came _____, who, being duly sworn, says that she/he is a duly authorized officer of the foregoing entity and that the foregoing was signed and sealed by her/him on behalf of the said entity by its authority duly given, and acknowledged the said writing to be the act and deed of said entity.

Witness my hand and notarial seal, this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

Lessee:
State Employees' Credit Union

By: _____

D. Craig Campbell
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
ATM, BRANCH EQUIPMENT AND LEASE
MANAGEMENT

North Carolina:
Wake County:

This the _____ day of _____, 2026, before me,
a Notary Public, personally came D. Craig Campbell, who,
being duly sworn, says that he is Senior Vice President, ATM, Branch Equipment and Lease
Management of State Employees' Credit Union and the said writing was signed and sealed by
him on behalf of the said credit union by its authority duly given and the Senior Vice President,
ATM, Branch Equipment and Lease Management acknowledged the said writing to be the act
and deed of said credit union.

Witness my hand and notarial seal, this the _____ day of _____, 2026.

Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

Exhibit A



A G E N D A I T E M 1 1 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

D. Proposed Dates for Annual Pre-Budget Retreat

Manager's Comments:

The proposed dates for the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat are February 26th and 27th with times proposed from 12–7 P.M. and 9 A.M.–1 P.M. Two days are required for the Retreat and should the Board wish, times and dates may be adjusted accordingly.

Direction from the Board is requested to set the dates of the Retreat.

**TENTATIVE RETREAT AGENDA
WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**COMMISSIONERS BOARD ROOM
WATAUGA COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, BOONE, NC**

FEBRUARY 26 & FEBRUARY 27, 2026

TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER	PAGE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026			
12:00 PM	OPENING REMARKS AND LUNCH	MR. DERON GEOUQUE	
1:00 PM	FY 2026 REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF FY 2027 BUDGET	MS. MISTY WATSON	
	A. Revenues B. Expenditures C. Debt Service Report D. Budget Calendar E. Special Appropriations		
1:30 PM	REVIEW OF CURRENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)	MR. DERON GEOUQUE & MR. ROBERT MARSH	
	A. Current CIP Status Report B. 911/Medic/Emergency Services Facility C. Emergency Communications D. Library E. School Facilities		
2:00 PM	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES WEBSITE UPDATE	MR. DREW EGGERS	
2:15 PM	BREAK		
2:30 PM	CALDWELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE & TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	DR. MARK POARCH	
3:00 PM	SCHOOL BOARD FUNDING ISSUES	DR. LESLIE ALEXANDER & SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS	
	A. FY 2027 Funding Needs B. School's Capital Improvement Plan		
4:30 PM	PLANNING & INSPECTIONS MATTERS	MR. JASON WALKER	
	A. Watauga County Comprehensive Plan B. Planning and Development Ordinances Update		
5:15 PM	WATAUGA COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS	MR. WILL HOLT MR. JUAN BOWEN	
	A. Update on Transition from Watauga Medics B. EMS Plans C. Communications Updates D. Franchise Ordinance Updates		
5:45 PM	COUNTY MANAGER'S SUMMARY	MR. DERON GEOUQUE	
6:00 PM	RECESS UNTIL FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27 AT 9:00 AM		
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2026			
8:30 AM	BREAKFAST		
9:00 AM	EDC/CHAMBER FOUNDATION REPORT	MR. DAVID JACKSON MR. JOE FURMAN	
9:30 AM	MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY UPDATE	MS. WENDY PATOPRSTY	

9:45 AM	WATAUGA TDA	MR. MATT VINCENT MR. WRIGHT TILLEY
10:00 AM	APPALACHIAN DISTRICT HEALTH	MS. JENNIFER GREENE
10:15 AM	TAX MATTERS A. 2027 Revaluation Update B. Tax Software	MR. TYLER RASH
11:30 AM	MISCELLANEOUS & COMMISSIONER MATTERS A. State Issues B. Commissioner Matters	MR. DERON GEOUQUE
11:55 AM	WRAP UP, GOALS & OBJECTIVES, BOARD DIRECTIVES	
12:00 PM	ADJOURN	

A G E N D A I T E M 1 1 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

E. Proposed Dates for Budget Work Sessions

Manager's Comments:

The Board holds two budget work sessions each year. The work sessions are scheduled after the Manager's proposed budget is presented at the first meeting in May. The proposed dates for the budget work sessions are May 7th and 8th, with times proposed from 12–8 P.M. for the first day and 9 A.M.–1 P.M. for the second day. Should the Board wish, times and dates may be adjusted accordingly.

Direction from the Board is requested to set dates for the budget work sessions.

A G E N D A I T E M 1 1 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

F. Boards and Commissions

Manager's Comments:

Watauga Economic Development Commission

The terms of Lee Rankin, Virginia Wallace, and Suzanne Livesay on the Watauga Economic Development Commission expired at the end of 2025. Each was appointed to a three-year term and are eligible to serve two consecutive terms.

Virginia Wallace and Suzanne Livesay have expressed a willingness to serve another term if reappointed. These items were previously presented as a first reading on December 2, 2025.

Staff seeks direction on the appointments of Virginia Wallace and Suzanne Livesay to the Watauga Economic Development Commission.

Watauga Economic Development Commission

The term of Lee Rankin on the Watauga Economic Development commission expired at the end of 2025. Lee Rankin is unable to serve another term. Blake Brown and James Milner have submitted applications to serve on this board.

These are first reading; however, the Board may waive the first reading requirement and proceed with an appointment at this time if it so chooses.

**Volunteer Application
Watauga County Boards And Commissions**

01132026 BCC Meeting

If you are a Watauga County resident, at least 18 years old, and willing to volunteer your time and expertise to your community, please complete the application below and click on Print Form. Please sign and mail or fax to:

**Watauga County Commissioners' Office
814 West King Street, Suite 205
Boone, NC 28607
Phone: (828) 265-8000
Fax: (828) 264-3230**

Name: Alvin Blake Brown

Home Address: 217 Daniel Drive

City: Boone **Zip:** 28607

Telephone: (H) 8284061908 (W) _____ (Fax) _____

Email: blake.brown@bfrventures.com

Place of Employment: Farm, Shiner's Stash, Inc., BFR Meats, (Retired NC State University)

Job Title: Owner/CFO

In Order To Assure County wide Representation Please Indicate Your Township Of Residence:

<input type="radio"/> Bald Mountain	<input type="radio"/> Stony Fork	<input type="radio"/> Watauga
<input checked="" type="radio"/> New River	<input type="radio"/> Brushy Fork	<input type="radio"/> Cove Creek
<input type="radio"/> Beaver Dam	<input type="radio"/> Meat Camp	<input type="radio"/> Shawneeshaw
<input type="radio"/> Blue Ridge	<input type="radio"/> Blowing Rock	<input type="radio"/> Laurel Creek
<input type="radio"/> Elk	<input type="radio"/> North Fork	<input type="radio"/> Boone

In addition, Please Indicate If You Live In One Of The Following Areas:

<input type="radio"/> Foscoe-Grandfather Community	<input type="radio"/> Valle Crucis Historic District
<input type="radio"/> Howards Creek Watershed	<input type="radio"/> Winklers Creek Watershed
<input checked="" type="radio"/> South Fork New River Watershed	<input type="radio"/> Extraterritorial Area

We Ask Your Help In Assuring Diversity Of Membership By Age, Gender, And Race, By Answering The Following Questions

Gender

Male
 Female

Ethnic Background

African American Hispanic
 Caucasian Other
 Native American

Please List (In Order Of Preference) The Boards/Commissions On Which You Would Be Willing To Serve.

1. Economic Development Commission

2. _____

3. _____

Volunteer Application
Watauga County Boards And Commissions
(Continued)

01132026 BCC Meeting

Please list any work, volunteer, and/or other experience you would like to have considered in the review of your application.

**Work
Experience:**

I am a retired Professor of Agricultural Economics at NC State University where my chief responsibilities were policy analysis for farm organizations, legislators, industry organizations and agri-businesses. I also was administrator for an agricultural leadership program and executive farm management program. I served as a senior economist with the Council of Economic Advisors in the Executive Office of the U.S. President in 2018/19 and currently do consulting with Corporate Clients and the NC Chamber. I also serve on the board of directors of AgCarolina Farm Credit and chair the Budget and Economy Committee of American Farm Bureau Federation.

I and my family own and run a beef cattle farm near Boone, Corbett's Craft Meats and Produce Market in Deep Gap and Shiner's Stash, Inc., a food manufacturing facility in North Wilkesboro.

**Volunteer
Experience:**

I serve on the Board of Directors for Watauga County Farm Bureau as well as teach in my local church, Mount Vernon.

**Other
Experience:**

I would like to become more involved in and contribute to my local community. Thank you for this opportunity.

**Other
Comments:**

Signature:



Date:

12-11-25

Print Form

Reset Form

**Volunteer Application
Watauga County Boards And Commissions**

01132026 BCC Meeting

If you are a Watauga County resident, at least 18 years old, and willing to volunteer your time and expertise to your community, please complete the application below and click on Print Form. Please sign and mail or fax to:

**Watauga County Commissioners' Office
814 West King Street, Suite 205
Boone, NC 28607
Phone: (828) 265-8000
Fax: (828) 264-3230**

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ **Zip:** _____

Telephone: (H) _____ **(W)** _____ **(Fax)** _____

Email: _____

Place of Employment: _____

Job Title: _____

In Order To Assure County wide Representation Please Indicate Your Township Of Residence:

<input type="radio"/> Bald Mountain	<input type="radio"/> Stony Fork	<input type="radio"/> Watauga
<input type="radio"/> New River	<input type="radio"/> Brushy Fork	<input type="radio"/> Cove Creek
<input type="radio"/> Beaver Dam	<input type="radio"/> Meat Camp	<input type="radio"/> Shawneehaw
<input type="radio"/> Blue Ridge	<input type="radio"/> Blowing Rock	<input type="radio"/> Laurel Creek
<input type="radio"/> Elk	<input type="radio"/> North Fork	<input type="radio"/> Boone

In addition, Please Indicate If You Live In One Of The Following Areas:

<input type="radio"/> Foscoe-Grandfather Community	<input type="radio"/> Valle Crucis Historic District
<input type="radio"/> Howards Creek Watershed	<input type="radio"/> Winklers Creek Watershed
<input type="radio"/> South Fork New River Watershed	<input type="radio"/> Extraterritorial Area

We Ask Your Help In Assuring Diversity Of Membership By Age, Gender, And Race, By Answering The Following Questions

Gender

<input type="radio"/> Male
<input type="radio"/> Female

Ethnic Background

<input type="radio"/> African American	<input type="radio"/> Hispanic
<input type="radio"/> Caucasian	<input type="radio"/> Other
<input type="radio"/> Native American	

Please List (in Order Of Preference) The Boards/Commissions On Which You Would Be Willing To Serve.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**Volunteer Application
Watauga County Boards And Commissions
(Continued)**

01132026 BCC Meeting

Please list any work, volunteer, and/or other experience you would like to have considered in the review of your application.

**Work
Experience:**

**Volunteer
Experience:**

**Other
Experience:**

**Other
Comments:**

Signature: 

Date: 12/22/25

A G E N D A I T E M 1 2 :

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

A G E N D A I T E M 1 3 :

BREAK

A G E N D A I T E M 1 4 :

CLOSED SESSION

- Acquisition of Real Property per G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5)
- Attorney-Client Matters per G. S. § 143-318.11(a)(3)
 - *Including Case No. 5:25-cv-157, Watauga County Voting Rights Task Force v. Watauga County Board of Elections*