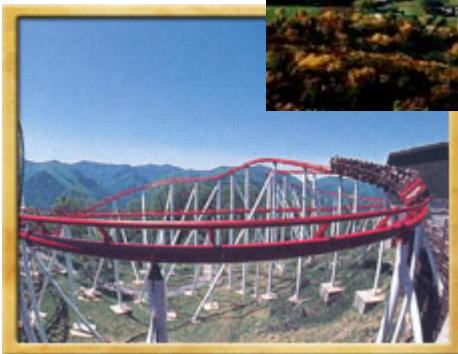


# Maggie Valley

## Land Use Plan

November 2007



# Maggie Valley Land Use Plan

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Maggie Valley is a tourist destination. Much of the housing is seasonal and there is currently no grocery store within its boundaries. The tourism industry has overcome the closing of its largest attraction, Ghost Town, in 2003, which re-opened in May 2007. Smaller attractions have located to Maggie Valley since the closing of Ghost Town; however, Ghost Town's reopening is expected to create a boom in the number of visitors that will be visiting in the future.

Maggie Valley is approximately five miles long, generally encompassing only two major roads, Soco Road (US-19) and Jonathan Creek Road (US-276). Development along Soco Road is primarily made up of land uses that cater to the seasonal or tourist crowds. There are approximately 35 motels, hotels, and inns in Town. There are a number of large campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks in the area as well. Most of the housing that is currently being constructed is seasonal. Tourism is the primary employer and is the lifeblood of Maggie Valley.

In the last ten years, Maggie Valley has experienced a rapid increase in development, partly as a result of a growing demand for second and retirement homes in western North Carolina. This has caused the community to reflect upon itself to determine how and where growth will occur, and what type of town they would like to be.

The Maggie Valley Land Use Plan is meant to further the work completed through *Driving Miss Maggie, A Comprehensive Plan for Growth and Change*.<sup>1</sup> The Land Use Plan will identify future land use patterns, establish recommendations for directing and managing growth, and preserve areas of environmental importance. Town residents, the Planning Board, and the Town Board of Aldermen were included in the development and design of the Land Use Plan.

## II. BACKGROUND

### Historic Development

Most of the non-residential development in town has occurred along Soco Road, which is on the sections of Town with the least elevation change. Residential development has generally been constructed on the sides of the mountains, some of which are very steep. There is very little "flat" land that has not already been developed. This has a two pronged effect in relation to non-residential development. The first is that because the land has already been developed, it will be difficult to implement new guidelines. Most of the commercial development has taken place with little respect to design. In many cases, major retrofitting of existing sites will be required if more stringent standards are adopted. The second effect is that the scarcity of vacant land makes it more difficult to recruit larger businesses that could provide basic goods and services (grocery store, pharmacy, etc.) that are now found only in Waynesville.

Residential development is occurring more rapidly on steeper slopes. One of the Town's primary assets is the view of the mountains. The continued development of mountainside property will likely change those vistas. Currently, existing conditions make it impossible to stop this type of growth and measures must be taken to address the visual, environmental, and public safety issues that will inevitably arise.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted in September 2004, Garry V. Cooper Associates

In 2004, as a result of several hurricanes and storms that hit the state, western North Carolina experienced over 140 landslides. Because of their steep slopes the mountains are prone to these occurrences, however as development continues to manipulate the slopes, these occurrences may become more likely. This has prompted many NC counties to implement slope ordinances and/or guidelines. In the next two years, the state will be developing maps of Haywood County that will identify historic landslide occurrences, potential areas of concern, and down slope hazards areas. Once completed, this data should be utilized by the Town in its review of future development.

### **Identity**

Largely because of the population base, the Town lacks a downtown, or a “Town Center”. Until the development of the Festival Grounds, there had been no place for community gatherings. Maggie Valley is in need of a destination that offers pedestrian-oriented shopping and eating, a municipal presence, and general places to sit and get away from the automobile dominated parts of Maggie Valley.

The Town is looked upon as having a seasonal population. This population has been driving housing prices up due to the demand for more upscale second homes. It is becoming increasingly difficult for young couples, and those with a moderate income, to locate in town. Without year round residents, it will be difficult for Maggie Valley to overcome this image and the reality of pricing itself out of becoming anything other than a tourist dominated community.

### **Transportation**

Soco Road (US-19) is one of the Town’s biggest assets, but also one of its liabilities. On one hand, the four (4) lane thoroughfare is needed to adequately handle the traffic that is generated by the attractions in town. On the other, it is difficult to cross the highway at any given point. The road does have sidewalks on both sides, which decreases the need to travel by car for every need. However, the Town is over five (5) miles in length and getting from one end to the other can be tedious, and generally will not occur on foot or by bike.

Jonathan Creek Road (US-276) is another well developed thoroughfare, but does not contribute to Maggie Valley other than providing a way of getting people in and out of town. Opposite from Soco Road, Jonathan Creek Road is not directly associated as being an integral part of the overall Maggie Valley persona.

## **III. POPULATION AND HOUSING**

Maggie Valley is the smallest community in Haywood County. The Town’s population has fluctuated since 1970, but began to grow in the 1990’s (Table 1.1). The recorded population of the Town does not reflect the actual number of people that live in the area. There are far more homes located in developments directly adjacent to the Town limits than the number that are found within the Town.

**Table 1  
Maggie Valley Population Growth**

Maggie Valley		Change	
Year	Population	Total Change	% Change
1970	159		
1980	202	43	27.04%
1990	185	-17	-8.42%
2000	607	422	228.11%
2005*	741	134	22.08%

\*estimate as of July 2005

Source: Census Bureau

As shown in Table 1, Maggie Valley's population has fluctuated since 1970. From 1970 to 1980 the population grew by roughly 27 percent. From 1980 to 1990 the population fell by about nine percent. From 1990 to 2000 Maggie Valley's population increased dramatically from 185 to 607 persons, an increase of over 228 percent. The July 2005 population estimate for Maggie Valley is 741 persons, an increase of about 22 percent.

**Table 2  
County Population Growth**

Haywood County		Change	
Year	Population	Total Change	% Change
1970	41,710		
1980	46,495	4,785	11.47%
1990	46,942	447	0.96%
2000	54,033	7,091	15.11%
2005*	57,097	3,064	5.67%

\*estimate

Source: LINC<sup>2</sup>

Maggie Valley's population trends are similar to the County as a whole. Haywood County experienced steady growth, at a rate of over 11 percent, from 1970 to 1980. Although the population did not decline from 1980 to 1990, it grew at its slowest rate of less than one percent. Like Maggie Valley, the highest population growth was from 1990 to 2000 when it increased by over 15 percent. The 2005 population estimate predicted population growth at a modest rate of between four and six percent through 2005 (see Table 2).

**Table 3  
Municipal Population Growth**

Canton		Change		Clyde		Change		Maggie Valley		Change		Waynesville		Change	
Year	Pop	Total Change	% Change	Year	Pop	Total Change	% Change	Year	Pop	Total Change	% Change	Year	Pop	Total Change	% Change
1980	4,631			1980	1,008			1980	202			1980	8,576		
1990	3,790	-841	-18.16%	1990	1,041	33	3.27%	1990	185	-17	-8.42%	1990	8,436	-140	-1.63%
2000	4,029	239	6.31%	2000	1,324	283	27.19%	2000	607	422	228.11%	2000	9,232	796	9.44%
2002	4,037	8	0.20%	2002	1,356	32	2.42%	2002	625	18	2.97%	2002	9,348	116	1.26%
2003	4,080	43	1.07%	2003	1,373	17	1.25%	2003	787	162	25.92%	2003	9,482	134	1.43%
2004	4,122	42	1.03%	2004	1,386	13	0.95%	2004	1,122	335	42.57%	2004	9,536	54	0.57%
2005	4,166	44	1.07%	2005	1,401	15	1.08%	2005	1,134	12	1.07%	2005	9,637	101	1.06%

Source: Haywood County Economic Development Commission

<sup>2</sup> LINC or Log Into North Carolina is a web resource for NC statistical data.

Maggie Valley is the smallest municipality in Haywood County; however, it is growing at the fastest rate. Although Canton had a 1980 population of 4,631, a drastic decline of over 18 percent between 1980 and 1990 and a slow growth rate since has resulted in an estimated 2005 population below 1980 figures. Clyde experienced a growth rate of over 27 percent from 1990 to 2000 but has experienced roughly a one percent growth rate since. Waynesville also lost population between 1980 and 1990 and experienced its largest growth rate from 1990 to 2000. But like Clyde, it has only grown at about a one percent rate since. Maggie Valley, with the lowest total population, grew at much higher rates of roughly 26 percent between 2002 and 2003 and roughly 43 percent between 2003 and 2004. The bulk of the population growth, percentage-wise, occurring in the County appears to be happening in the Town of Maggie Valley (See Table 3).

### Seasonal Population Figures

Population growth in Maggie Valley is deceiving because Census data does not count seasonal numbers, making a significant portion of Maggie Valley's population hard to quantify. The Census Bureau defines vacant, seasonal, and occupied housing units (this information will be discussed in more detail in the housing section of the plan), but does not define vacant or seasonal residents. Maggie Valley has a large tourist population that visits area attractions such as Ghost Town and the Cataloochie Ski Area. Additionally, Maggie Valley has many seasonal residents who own second homes in town and may only reside in town a few weeks of the year.

**Table 4**  
**Population Breakdown by Age**

Age	1990	% of pop	2000	% of pop
under 5	9	4.86%	18	2.97%
5 to 9	2	1.08%	24	3.95%
10 to 14	8	4.32%	24	3.95%
15 to 19	9	4.86%	28	4.61%
20 to 24	8	4.32%	22	3.62%
25 to 34	13	7.03%	61	10.05%
35 to 44	37	20.00%	80	13.18%
45 to 54	24	12.97%	109	17.96%
55 to 59	16	8.65%	55	9.06%
60 to 64	15	8.11%	41	6.75%
65 to 74	28	15.14%	84	13.84%
75 to 85	13	7.03%	52	8.57%
85 and older	3	1.62%	9	1.48%
TOTAL	185	100.00%	607	100.00%

Source: Census Bureau

As shown in Table 4, the largest population cohort in 1990 was the 35 to 44 year old age group, making up 20 percent of the total population. The second largest cohort was the 65 to 74 year old group, revealing a significant older population and likely a lot of retirees. These trends continue to strengthen through 2000. After aging 10 years the largest cohort group in 1990 (ages 35 to 44) became the 45 to 54 year old age group in 2000, and again the largest cohort. This cohort includes about 18 percent of the total population. Again, the second largest cohort was the retirees, ages 65 to 74. This data reveals an aging population in Maggie Valley, with the majority of the population reaching retirement age or already in retirement.



Maggie Valley's tourist population differs from the full time residents. Many of Maggie Valley's attractions, including Ghost Town, are designed with the family in mind. In addition to being a desirable place for retirees, Maggie Valley would also like to attract vacationing families year after year and residents and visitors of neighboring towns such as Waynesville.

**Table 5**  
**Racial Composition**

Race	1990	2000
White	184	585
Black	0	8
American Indian and Alaska Native	1	4
Asian	0	4
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0	0
Hispanic or Latino	0	1
Some other race	0	1
Two or more races	0	5
TOTAL	185	608

Source: Census Bureau

Table 5 reveals that Maggie Valley has a homogeneous population. In 1990, all but one person in town classified themselves as white. By 2000, the population had diversified slightly, with persons identifying themselves as Black, Asian, Hispanic, of another race, and of more than one race living in town in very small numbers.

**Table 6**  
**Maggie Valley Population Projections**

Maggie Valley		Change	
Year	Pop	Total Change	% Change
2000	607		
2004*	1,100	493	81.22%
2010*	1,362	262	19.24%
2020*	1,971	609	30.90%

\*estimate

Source: Driving Miss Maggie,  
A Comprehensive Plan for Growth and Change

As mentioned above, the Census Bureau estimated the July 2005 population in Maggie Valley at 741 persons. Projections that were done on a more local level reveal population estimates and projections significantly higher than Census estimates.

According to estimates produced in the Driving Miss Maggie Plan, annexations occurred in 2004 that kept population growth high. Population grew over 80 percent in four years, from 607 persons in 2000 to 1,100 persons in 2004. The population is projected to continue to grow through 2020, but at slower rates than experienced from 1990-2004.

The State Demographer with the Office of State Budget and Management prepared population estimates for municipalities across the state as of July 1, 2005. According to his estimates, Maggie Valley's official municipal estimate in July 1, 2005 was 1,131 persons. The State Demographer's July 2005 estimate is slightly higher than the December 2004 projection provided in the Driving Miss Maggie Plan, revealing a strong

consistency between the projections done on the local level. Therefore, the Driving Miss Maggie 2010 and 2020 projections are believed to be an accurate depiction of expected future population growth. As shown in Table 6, population projections indicate a 2010 population of 1,362 persons and a 2020 population of 1,971 persons.

**Table 7  
Haywood County Population Projections**

Haywood County		Change	
Year	Pop	Total Change	% Change
2005	57,097		
2010	60,066	2,969	5.20%
2015	62,906	2,840	4.73%
2020	65,779	2,873	4.57%
2025	68,380	2,601	3.95%

Source: LINC

As shown in Table 7, Haywood County as a whole is expected to see population growth, but at much slower rates than Maggie Valley. On average, Haywood County population is expected to grow by about four or five percent every five years, compared with growth more than twice that in Maggie Valley.

### Housing

As defined by the Census Bureau, households are all persons who occupy a housing unit. Family households are defined as a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. As shown in Table 8, roughly 60 percent of the households in Maggie Valley are family households and 40 percent are non-family households. The average household size in Maggie Valley is 2.04 persons and the average family size is 2.56 persons.

**Table 8  
Households by Type in 2000**

	Number	%
total households	297	100.0
family households	179	60.3
non-family households	118	39.7
average household size	2.04	-----
average family size	2.56	-----

Source: Census Bureau

**Table 9  
Housing Structure**

	1990	2000	Total Change	% Change
Total Housing Units	156	565	409	262.18
Occupied	89	297	208	233.71
Owner-occupied	68	210	142	208.82
Renter-occupied	21	87	66	314.29
Vacant	67	268	134	200.00
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	54	165	111	205.56

Source: Census Bureau

The number of housing units increased over 260 percent between 1990 and 2000, from 156 units in 1990 to 565 units in 2000. As indicated earlier in the population section, Maggie Valley is experiencing the bulk of the growth in Haywood County, and this growth partially explains the large increase in housing units.

Although the population is growing, housing units are being added at a much faster rate. This information, combined with an over 200 percent increase in “for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” housing units indicates that a lot of these units are not the owners’ permanent residence, but instead a second or third home or vacation home. These large increases in “for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” housing units reveal the growing retirement nature of the town.

Table 9 also indicates a high percentage of vacant homes in Maggie Valley. In 1990, 67 out of 156 housing units were vacant (about 43 percent) and in 2000, 268 of 565 housing units were vacant (about 47 percent). Overall, vacant housing units increased by 200 percent from 1990 to 2000.

An analysis of ownership patterns conducted in the Driving Miss Maggie report reached similar conclusions. Using postal zip codes to analyze ownership patterns, it was discovered that less than 50 percent of Maggie Valley property owners have a Maggie Valley zip code. The majority of property owners reside in Florida (26 percent to 33 percent) or elsewhere in North Carolina (15 percent to 36 percent), with smaller percentages residing in the neighboring states of South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia.

**Table 10**  
**Maggie Valley Building Permit Data**

<b>Building permit data</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006*</b>
single family (includes log and stick homes)	66	49
mobile home	5	9
Commercial	6	4
residential add-on	20	21

*\*2006 data only through mid September*

*Source: Town of Maggie Valley*

As indicated earlier, there was a tremendous increase in housing units in Maggie Valley from 1990 to 2000 (409 units built in 10 years). Building permit data available for Maggie Valley from 2005 and 2006 shows that this trend is continuing, possibly even at a faster rate. Single family homes are the most common, mostly in the form of new log homes. Construction has taken place in several subdivisions including Crockets Meadow, Campbell Woods, Smokey Mountain Retreat, Linson Ridge, Rovingwood Drive, Anglers Ridge, Eagles Nest, Brannon Forest, Tanner Trail, Panoramic Loop, and Trinity Cove. Houses in these subdivisions varied dramatically in price, ranging from the low to mid \$200,000’s to well over a million dollars.

The Maggie Valley Club specifically has brought a relatively high amount of growth and development to the Town of Maggie Valley. The club includes three neighborhoods: Persimmon Point, Persimmon Woods, and Scarlet Oaks. Persimmon Point consists of twenty-four (24) condominiums while Persimmon Woods includes nine (9) condominium units. Scarlet Oaks includes two (2) phases, with twenty-three (23) total home sites and six (6) cottages in the neighborhood to date. A total of approximately two hundred (200) condominium units and one hundred (100) home sites/cottages are planned.

**Table 11**  
**Maggie Valley Home Ownership, 1990-2000**

Year	Owned	% of units	Rented	% of units	Mobile homes	% of Units
1990	88	42.11%	20	9.57%	31	14.83%
2000	210	37.17%	87	15.40%	94	16.64%

Source: LINC

In 2000, about 37 percent of residents in Maggie Valley owned their own home, down from about 42 percent in 1990. Slightly less than 10 percent of residents rented in 1990. The number of renters increased to 15.4 percent in 2000. Mobile home occupancy increased from just below 15 percent in 1990 to close to 17 percent in 2000.

**Table 12**  
**Median Value of Housing Units**

Maggie Valley		Haywood County	
1990	\$ 65,000	1990	\$ 59,100
2000	\$ 101,700	2000	\$ 99,100

Source: LINC

The median value of housing units in Maggie Valley almost doubled from 1990 to 2000, increasing from \$65,000 to \$101,700. The median value of housing units in Maggie Valley is slightly above the median value in the County. These numbers reveal that the new construction taking place in Maggie Valley is catering to high-end customers.

**Table 13**  
**Selected Monthly Owner Costs  
as a Percentage of Household Income in 1999**

	number	%
less than 15 percent	85	50.3
15 to 19 percent	23	13.6
20 to 24 percent	11	6.5
25 to 29 percent	4	2.4
30 to 34 percent	10	5.9
35 percent or more	33	19.5
not computed	3	1.8

Source: Census Bureau

As shown in Table 13, in 1999 about half of homeowners in Maggie Valley spent less than 15 percent of their income on housing. Most important to note, however, is that the second largest group of individuals, close to 20 percent of homeowners, spent 35 percent or more of their household income on housing.

These numbers are dated; however, and it appears that this may not continue to be the case in Maggie Valley. The people purchasing second and third homes have higher disposable incomes, and are unlikely to struggle financially as a result of owning a home.

**Table 14**  
**Median Household Age**

1990	53.9
2000	49.0

Source: Census Bureau

**Table 15**  
**School Enrollment in Maggie Valley**

Year	# enrolled	% change
1996	382	
1997	448	17.28%
1998	470	4.91%
1999	435	-7.45%
2000	457	5.06%
2001	423	-7.44%
2002	414	-2.13%
2003	403	-2.66%
2004	387	-3.97%
2005	400	3.36%

Source: Town of Maggie Valley  
Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

The median household age in Maggie Valley in 2000 was 49.0 years, down from 53.9 years in 1990 (Table 14). At first glance, this statistic was striking because it seemed to contradict the data presented in Table 4 which revealed a growing percentage of older residents in Maggie Valley. But after reviewing annexation dates and changes in school enrollment, it is believed that the drop in median household age in 2000 could largely be attributed to past annexations in Maggie Valley. The areas annexed into town included many residents with young children, which naturally skews the median. As show in Table 15, in the late 90's school enrollment increased roughly 20 percent from 1996 to 2000. These trends do not appear to continue into the 2000's, so the rapid increase in school enrollment (and population growth of the younger age cohorts) would appear to be the result of annexations in town.

**Table 16**  
**Economic Indicators**

	Maggie Valley		Haywood County		North Carolina		United States	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
median household income in 1999	29,808		33,922		40,729*		41,994	
median family income in 1999	40,417		40,438		49,339*		50,046	
per capita income in 1999	17,211		18,554		22,519*		21,587	
families below poverty level	20	9.8	1,311	8.1		11.7*		9.2
individuals below poverty level	82	11.7	6,112	11.5		15.1*		12.4

Source: Census Bureau  
\*in 2005 inflation-adjusted dollars

Although housing unit costs are rising substantially in Maggie Valley, residents' median household income in 1999 was \$29,808, lower than the county, state, and country. The median family income in Maggie Valley was slightly less than that of the county, and about \$10,000 less than both the state and country. The per capita income in Maggie Valley was also the lowest when comparing it to that of the county, state, and country.

Although the median household income, median family income, and per capita income in Maggie Valley is lower than that of the county, state, and country, the families and individuals below the poverty level in Maggie Valley are comparable to those of other jurisdictions. Maggie Valley has 9.8 percent of families below the poverty level and 11.7 percent of individuals below the poverty level.

Like the percentage of income spent on housing data in Table 13, the economic indicator data is also outdated. With affluent individuals moving into town it is likely that economic indicator figures will increase, closing the disparity between the town and county or even surpassing county figures.

The numbers shown in Table 15 illustrate the growing disparities in Maggie Valley. New residents and seasonal residents are extremely wealthy, buying million dollar homes and increasing housing and property values. The influx of affluent residents will affect locals who have lived in Maggie Valley their entire lives. Permanent residents are not seeing the income advances or job opportunities necessary to withstand the increases in housing prices and land value. The increases in the number of renters and mobile homes as well as the amount of people spending more than 35 percent of their income on housing are all indicators of the growing income disparities in Maggie Valley.

Although residents are excited about the types of businesses and services the higher incomes will attract, there is a strong concern about affordable housing and the ability for older residents and young families to afford to live in Maggie Valley.

### **Housing Projections**

The Driving Miss Maggie Plan estimated that the town will need to accommodate approximately 427 new households by 2020 (assuming just moderate growth). That is a total of 724 total households in 2020 compared with 297 total households in 2000, an increase of roughly 144 percent. Because housing projections are based off of population projections, and the population projections provided in the Driving Miss Maggie Plan are believed to be accurate, the housing projections are also believed to be accurate.

## **IV. DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS**

Maggie Valley faces four major development constraints: steep slopes, flood prone areas, water supply watersheds, and soils. Information included in the Driving Miss Maggie Plan detail, and provides maps of the areas discussed in this section.

### **Steep Slopes**

Maggie Valley is a part of the larger Appalachian mountain system. The town ranges in elevation from 2,632 feet to a high of 6,186 feet, with an average elevation of 4,000 feet. The majority of the terrain is hilly, steep, and mountainous with Jonathan Creek, Campbell Creek, and Soco and Jonathan Creek Roads bisecting the parts of town that have the least amount of elevation change.

Steep topography is the greatest development constraint facing Maggie Valley. Approximately 80 percent of the Town has slopes of 25 percent or greater. As mentioned earlier, development on steep slopes increases the potential of landslides and increases erosion and sedimentation. Most of the flattest land in Maggie Valley has already been developed, but some vacant parcels remain on Soco, Jonathan Creek, and Campbell Creek Roads.

## **Floodplains**

The areas of lowest risk for erosion in Maggie Valley are at the highest risk for flooding. Although several small watersheds and coves exist in Maggie Valley, the major water features include Jonathan Creek and Campbell Creek. Large portions of the banks surrounding these creeks are in floodplains. Although there are restrictions, development is permitted in the floodplain, and because these areas are the flattest and easiest to develop in Maggie Valley these areas are largely developed with both commercial and residential properties.

## **Water Supply Watersheds**

Maggie Valley is located in the French Broad River Basin. As mentioned earlier, the two major water features in Maggie Valley include Jonathan Creek and Campbell Creek. Both are classified as WS-III, however, Campbell Creek is considered to be a critical area. The WS-III classification means that the watershed is generally low to moderately developed. Under WS-III classification, allowable development in the Jonathan Creek area is two (2) dwelling units per acre or a maximum amount of built-upon area of 24 percent if the developer uses a low density option or 50 percent with a high density option. Because Campbell Creek is in a critical area, development restrictions are more stringent. The maximum allowable development is one (1) dwelling unit per acre or 12 percent built-upon area with a low density option or 30 percent maximum built-upon area with a high density option.

Maggie Valley must adhere to regulations established in the Haywood County Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance which was created to regulate certain land-disturbing activity to control accelerated erosion and sedimentation in order to prevent the pollution of water features by sedimentation.

## **Soils**

Besides slope, soil type also plays a role in erosion susceptibility. Soils with high silt content are easily detached, tend to crust, and produce high rates of runoff. Soils that produce moderate runoff are medium textured soils including silt loam. The soils with the lowest runoff are coarse textured soils composed of clay or sand. In parts of town where development is questionable because of slope, soil type should also be analyzed to determine if there are increased risks for erosion and landslides.

## **V. COMMUNITY ISSUES**

As part of the overall information gathering portion of this project, a survey was submitted to the Planning Board, and they identified the following problems as the greatest concern to the future of Maggie Valley:

1. Accelerated development of property on steep slopes
2. Poorly planned development
3. Aesthetic issues
4. Short supply of buildable, vacant land
5. Lack of affordable housing
6. Lack of economic diversity
7. Lack of public access to the creek and other natural areas
8. Traffic/transportation problems
9. Lack of a "Town Center"

### **1. Accelerated development of property on steep slopes**

Over the last decade or so development has increased on steeply sloping properties. Development on steep slopes has increased because the demand for homes in mountain towns including Maggie Valley has grown exponentially; however, few large tracts of relatively flat bottomland remain. Additionally, the type of buyers building these upscale homes can afford, and are willing, to pay the construction costs associated with obtaining the views achieved with development at these elevations.

Development on steep slopes increases the likelihood of landslides, accelerating the threat to lives and property. For example, in 2004, as a result of several hurricanes and storms that hit the state, western North Carolina experienced over 140 landslides. This prompted many North Carolina counties to implement slope ordinances and/or guidelines. In the next two years, the state will be developing maps of Haywood County that will identify historic landslide occurrences, potential areas of concern, and down slope hazard areas. This data should be utilized by the Town in its review of future subdivision development.

Additionally, development on steep slopes increases erosion and sedimentation into waterways. Portions of Jonathan Creek and Campbell Creek are sources of water supply for Maggie Valley and water quality could be impacted as a result of increased erosion and sedimentation. Finally, this type of development detracts from the views of those residents living in the valley. One of the primary assets of Maggie Valley is the mountain views, and the continued development of property will detract from those views. Although it is impossible to stop this type of growth, measures must be taken to address the visual and public safety issues that will inevitably arise.

### **2. Poorly planned development**

Development in Maggie Valley has occurred with little to no future plan. First, the location and types of businesses permitted in Maggie Valley are often incompatible or undesirable to residents. A current land use inventory revealed no clustering or strategy behind the location and/or type of businesses in town which has created inefficiencies in the amount of both amenities for residents and activities for tourists. The development has also visually scarred the landscape detracting from the surrounding natural setting. Development has also gone against the lay of the land, following man-made features like sewer lines instead of ridgelines creating an artificial feel throughout the valley.

### **3. Aesthetic issues**

Aesthetic issues are of the greatest concern along Soco Road. Little to no landscaping or buffering (particularly of parking areas) has occurred at businesses fronting the town's major arterial. Signs, billboards, and crisscrossing power lines have created visual clutter or "eyesores" along the street, detracting from the natural setting. Lack of enforcement and abandoned buildings have resulted in several buildings falling into disrepair.

### **4. Short supply of buildable, vacant land**

There is very little "flat" land in Maggie Valley that has not already been developed. The Driving Miss Maggie Plan estimates that roughly 80 percent of the terrain has slopes 25 percent or greater. This has a two pronged effect in relation to non-residential development. First, because the land is developed, it will be difficult to implement new guidelines. Most of the commercial development has taken place with little respect to design. Second, the scarcity of vacant land makes it more difficult to recruit larger businesses that could provide basic goods and services now found only in Waynesville. With the reopening of Ghost Town in 2007, residents feel that the remaining vacant



parcels will be developed quickly and haphazardly without a clear plan for their future use.

#### **5. Lack of affordable housing**

Developers build houses in response to market demands, and the demand in Maggie Valley is for large second and third homes and retirement homes. Demand for this type of housing is only anticipated to increase. Although the development occurring in Maggie Valley will likely increase the property values of current residents, those who cannot afford to own a home in Maggie Valley now will likely never be able to afford a home. This will have a particularly hard impact on many younger couples and those with a moderate income. In the last decade median housing values and property values for existing homes have skyrocketed and new construction prices commonly reach into the millions.

#### **6. Lack of economic diversity**

The impacts resulting from the closing of Ghost Town in 2003 accentuated Maggie Valley's dependence on a minimal number of businesses in a narrow amount of industries, primarily services and trade. Maggie Valley needs to promote additional business and a larger variety of full-time businesses to persuade tourists to return year after year and seasonal residents to settle in Maggie Valley full-time. Specifically, Maggie Valley needs to diversify its shopping opportunities to compete with neighborhood towns and increase the family activities available throughout the year and during inclement weather conditions.

#### **7. Lack of public access to the creek and other natural areas**

According to the Haywood County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan, Maggie Valley has about twenty (20) acres of existing park facilities including the community center, the festival grounds, the Maggie Valley Greenway, and a waterfall. A parkland

needs assessment done by the County revealed that Maggie Valley has more than enough parkland to meet current and future population needs.

However, before the recent addition of Parham Park, the only public access points to the creek were located at the Maggie United Methodist Park and the Town of Maggie Valley Festival Grounds. Additionally, the Villa L'Abri Waterfall lacks public facilities and safe transportation access.

The Planning Board has expressed concern over increased creek side development reducing public access to the creek. They would like to see the town provide more public creek access, better facilities at existing parks, and generally more passive recreational areas for residents. They would also like to connect and expand the Maggie Valley Greenway.

#### **8. Traffic/transportation problems**

Soco Road is one of the town's biggest assets, but also one of its liabilities. On one hand, the four lane thoroughfare is needed to adequately handle the traffic that is generated by the attractions in town. On the other, it is a relatively flat, straight stretch of road, which lends itself to increased speeding and can create dangers for pedestrians. Soco Road does have sidewalks on both sides, however, minimal traffic calming devices including crosswalks, flashing lights, traffic lights and speed bumps exist to reduce speeds and make it safer for pedestrians to travel through town on foot. Additionally, the town is over five (5) miles in length and the location of businesses and services along Soco Road

makes it impossible to reach amenities without a car and residents and visitors must drive several places to get everything they need. Additionally, parking is a problem in Maggie Valley when tourists come to town. The reopening of Ghost Town is anticipated to increase traffic counts in Maggie Valley, and currently no alternative transportation modes are available to combat the congestion expected along Highway 19. Jonathan Creek is another well developed thoroughfare, but does not contribute to the Town other than a way of getting people in and out of town. Opposite from Soco Road, Jonathan Creek Road is not directly associated as being an integral part of the overall Maggie Valley persona.

### **9. Lack of a “Town Center”**

Largely because of the population base, Maggie Valley lacks a downtown, or “Town Center.” Until the development of the Festival Grounds, there had been no place for community gatherings. The town is in need of a destination that offers pedestrian-oriented shopping and eating, a municipal presence, and general places to sit and get away from the automobile dominated Soco Road.

Maggie Valley residents strongly believe the heart of Maggie Valley is the western end of Soco Road, the older, more established part of town. Residents want to encourage shops, restaurants, and attractions to locate in this area of town and make this area the central location for gatherings and street life. Another recommendation is to provide a concentration of these types of uses in the form of a planned development in this area, possibly at the vacant area behind Joey’s Pancake House.

## **VI. LAND USE VS. ZONING**

A land use plan is a tool prepared and used by a local government to assist them in making decisions regarding the future development of the town. The local government refers to the plan when making future development decisions to determine if the proposals are compatible with surrounding land uses and the town’s future vision and goals. The plan considers land use on broad and general terms and is not law, but rather a guide for decision-makers to use when making decisions related to growth, quality of life, and capital investments.

Zoning, on the other hand, is a legally binding regulatory tool used to regulate and enforce plans. Zoning is specific in nature, examining the town on a parcel by parcel basis.

These tools should be used together for effective land management. Having a land use plan provides the local government with a framework upon which to base its zoning decisions. The governing board weighs its future decisions against the plan to ensure that the decisions are reasonable, consistent with the plan, and in the public interest. Then the governing board approves a statement describing their decision. According to NC General Statute § 160A-383, the statement is not subject to judicial review.

The plan should be a somewhat flexible, dynamic document, and should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the changes in existing community conditions.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations specifically address various subjects pertaining to land development. These recommendations are meant to help the Town address growth and move forward in a systematic manner when dealing with future requests. Implementation strategies are shown in the following section.

### A. Future Land Use

Future land use categories and the future land use map (FLUM) help guide future growth into patterns that create a more livable community. Future land use is largely shaped by existing land use and transportation patterns and is designed to balance environmental, social, and economic values of the town.

The recommended future land use provides a general description of the uses allowed in town and the intensity to which land in town should be developed. The mixture of land uses and densities in town are broken down into the following categories: residential, mixed-use, and commercial.

#### RESIDENTIAL

- **Rural Residential**  
This land use category provides for very low density residential development. It includes large lot sizes of at least two acres and is designed to protect established residences from encroachment of uses of incompatible densities. It is also designed to protect agricultural uses, steep slopes, and scenic view sheds. This category should be located in very steep areas and/or areas on the “outskirts” of town.
- **Existing Residential**  
This land use category is for primarily built out residential areas on small lots. Because the area is subdivided into such small lots, no major transformations are anticipated in this area. Development in this land use category will largely include additions, accessory uses, and infill development.
- **Low Density Residential**  
This land use category provides for low density residential development, at a density of one to two dwelling units per acre. This category is the most common residential district and is respectful of the constraints of the surrounding topography. Areas identified as landslide hazard areas should be developed at densities no greater than allowed in this land category.
- **Medium Density Residential**  
This land use category provides for medium density residential development, (two to four dwelling units per acre) in areas of town that can support higher densities. This category provides a larger range of housing options and prices than seen in the lower density residential areas.
- **High Density Residential**  
This land use category supports the highest density residential development (five to twelve dwelling units per acre) in town. This category should be

located in areas where slopes are minimal, access is easy and safe, and water and sewer are available or could be easily provided.

- **Seasonal Residential**  
This land use category is established to provide accommodations for RV's and campers. This provides another overnight accommodation option in addition to cabin rentals, bed and breakfasts, condos, and hotels/motels/inns. This designation is designed to accommodate visitors who want to stay in Maggie Valley longer than a night or two, but still frequent town on a short-term, temporary basis.

## **MIXED USE**

- **Moody Farm Road Mixed Use**  
Because of Moody Farm Road's location, close to the geographical center of town, running parallel to Soco Road in a relatively flat and undeveloped portion of town, this area has the potential to support higher densities and more uses than currently exist along Moody Farm Road. This category was designed to develop predominantly as a medium density residential district, but higher density development and limited business and professional services shall be promoted on larger lots. Nonresidential uses typically found in residential areas are permitted, but because of the large residential component in this area it is important that development integrate with and complement the residential appearance and scale of the area.
- **Soco Road Mixed Use**  
The Soco Road Mixed Use category promotes a mixture of residential and commercial uses at higher densities and intensities than allowed in the Moody Farm Road Mixed Use District. This category incorporates high density residential and medium intensity commercial uses that are typically compatible within a residential setting.
- **Mixed Use Attraction**  
This land use category encompasses development primarily centered around large attractions, such as Ghost Town, which would incorporate various land use types that are directly linked together internally, but which do not conform easily to other existing zoning districts. Development would be on a larger scale, and although everything may not be developed at once, there would most likely be a master plan for the entire area to ensure linkage between land uses.

## **COMMERCIAL**

- **Neighborhood Business**  
This land use category is designed to encourage nodal development of businesses that would serve the residents, both seasonal and permanent, of Maggie Valley. This category should be concentrated at major intersections where residential development is prevalent. The purpose of the district is to efficiently provide the services residents need on a daily basis. Residents can drive down the mountain and have multiple services available at the main intersection without traveling to multiple destinations.

- **Maggie Valley Commercial Gateway**  
 This land use category is a major gateway into the community and largely defines the first image a visitor has of the town. This category shall be the setting for high intensity commercial land uses that meet not only the commercial needs of the Maggie Valley residents but the needs of surrounding areas as well. Uses permitted in this category will reduce the number of trips residents must take to neighboring towns to get goods, and will draw residents of neighboring towns because of additional shopping opportunities.
- **Community Attraction**  
 The civic and cultural center for the town, the Community Attraction category is designed to preserve traditional tourism related businesses and activities that have been a staple in the Town's economy since it was chartered. This land use category should promote family-oriented establishments and attractions, and uses that support and complement these establishments. Commercial infill opportunities respecting the historic fabric of the area are envisioned.
- **Open Air Commercial**  
 This land use category would allow predominantly open air uses such as dealerships, model home sales, and businesses with outdoor storage needs. These uses would be concentrated in areas on the outskirts of town, outside of the main gateway into town, where aesthetic impacts are at a minimum.
- **Town Center**  
 The purpose of this land use category is to provide for a localized community gathering place in town. This category should include a mix of shops, restaurants, public and open space, and activities for families and tourists. It should include a project(s) done on a larger scale, with uniform design, signage, and façade requirements. Although the recommended future land use map only reveals one location for a town center, other areas with few large parcels and relatively flat land could also support this type of use.

Map 1 on page 22 reveals the recommended future land use map for the Town of Maggie Valley.



## **B. Zoning**

The Maggie Valley Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1998, and is in need of revisions. To adequately address the changes that will be occurring in the Town, it will be necessary to bring the ordinance up to date and make it more meaningful. The following are recommendations that address specific changes to the Zoning Ordinance, changes to the Zoning Map, or overall policies that relate to land development.

### ***Recommendations***

**1. *Add a table of permitted uses with associated Supplemental Regulations.***

This will make the Zoning Ordinance easier to navigate and amend. In addition, it will easily allow for the inclusion of supplemental regulations.

**2. *Expand the number of zoning districts.***

The Town currently has a limited number of zoning districts. This has the effect of allowing many uses in areas where they may not be compatible. By expanding the number of districts, and changing the uses that are permitted in the existing districts, it will be easier to regulate where compatible land uses will occur, and to better mitigate the impacts between uses. The zoning districts are designed to fit the land use categories shown on the FLUM.

The following is a proposed list of zoning districts that fall under three main categories:

### **RESIDENTIAL**

- **R-0 (Rural Residential)**  
This zoning district would be the lowest density residential development district in Maggie Valley. It includes large lot sizes of at least two acres and is intended to protect established residences from encroachment of uses of incompatible densities. It is also designed to protect agricultural uses, steep slopes, and scenic view sheds. This district should be located in very steep areas and/or areas on the “outskirts” of town. This zoning district includes single family detached dwelling units.
- **R-1 (Low Density Residential)**  
This zoning district is also low density, but not quite as low density as the rural residential district (with a maximum of one to two dwelling units per acre). This district is the most common residential district, and allows residential development but is respectful of the constraints of the surrounding topography. Areas identified as landslide hazard areas should be developed at densities no greater than allowed in this land category. This zoning district includes single family detached dwelling units. It is also the intent of this district to allow for certain types of nonresidential community facilities that would not be detrimental to the residential character of the district.
- **R-2 (Medium Density Residential)**  
The intent of this zoning district is to support higher density residential development (with a maximum of four (4) dwelling units per acre) in areas

of town where development constraints are low. This district provides a larger range of housing options and prices than seen in the lower density residential areas. This zoning district includes single family attached dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes. It is also the intent of this district to allow for certain types of nonresidential community facilities that would not be detrimental to the residential character of the district.

- **R-3 (High Density Residential)**  
This zoning district supports the highest density residential development (with a maximum of twelve (12) dwelling units per acre) in town. This zoning district is intended to be located in areas where slopes are minimal, access is easy and safe, and water and sewer are available or could be easily provided. This zoning district includes multi-family dwelling units and condos. It is also the intent of this district to allow for certain types of nonresidential community facilities that would not be detrimental to the residential character of the district.
- **SR (Seasonal Residential)**  
The intent of this zoning district is to provide accommodations for RV's and campers. This district offers another overnight accommodation option in addition to cabin rentals, bed and breakfasts, condos, and hotels/motels/inns. This designation is intended to accommodate visitors who want to stay in Maggie Valley longer than a night or two, but still frequent town on a short-term, temporary basis.

## **MIXED USE**

- **MF-MU (Moody Farm Road Mixed Use District)**  
This district was designed to develop predominantly as a medium density residential district. Higher density development and limited business and professional services shall be promoted on larger lots. Nonresidential uses typically found in residential areas are permitted, however, development in this district is intended to integrate with and complement the residential appearance and scale of the area.
- **S-MU (Soco Road Mixed Use)**  
The Soco Road Mixed Use District is intended to promote a mixture of residential and commercial uses at higher densities and intensities than allowed in the Moody Farm Road Mixed Use District. This zoning district incorporates high density residential and medium intensity commercial uses that are typically compatible within a residential setting.
- **MU-A (Mixed Use Attraction)**  
This proposed district is intended to encompass development primarily centered around a large attraction, such as Ghost Town, which would incorporate various land use types that are directly linked together internally, but which do not conform easily to other existing zoning districts. Development would be on a larger scale, and although everything may not be developed at once, there would most likely be a master plan for the entire area to ensure linkage between land uses.



## COMMERCIAL

- **NB (Neighborhood Business)**  
The intent of this district is to encourage nodal development of businesses that would serve the residents, both seasonal and permanent, of Maggie Valley. This district should be concentrated at major intersections on Soco Road where residential development is prevalent. The purpose of the district is to efficiently provide the services residents need on a daily basis. Residents can drive down the mountain and have multiple services available at the main intersection without traveling to multiple destinations along Soco Road. Open air uses and outdoor storage is prohibited.
- **MV-CG (Maggie Valley Commercial Gateway)**  
This district is a gateway into the community and largely defines the first image a visitor has of the town. This district is intended to be a setting for high intensity land uses that address not only the commercial needs of Maggie Valley residents but the needs of surrounding areas as well. Open air uses and outdoor storage is prohibited.
- **CA (Community Attraction)**  
The civic and cultural center for the town, the Community Attraction District (CA) is designed to preserve traditional tourism related businesses and activities that have been a staple in the Town's economy since it was chartered. Commercial infill opportunities respecting the historic fabric of the area are envisioned. Residential uses (condos, lofts) may be permitted as a component of a planned development or master plan on a conditional basis.
- **OA (Open Air Commercial)**  
This district would allow predominantly open air uses such as dealerships, model home sales, and businesses with outdoor storage needs. The intent of this district is to concentrate these uses in areas on the outskirts of town, outside of the main gateway into town.
- **TC (Town Center)**  
This district is intended to provide for a localized community gathering place in town or town center. This district should include a mix of shops, restaurants, public and open space, and activities for families and tourists. The intent of this district is to provide for large scale projects, with uniform design, signage, and façade requirements. This district is intended to be located in an area with few large parcels, at least five (5) total acres in size, on relatively flat and easily accessible land. Residential uses may be permitted as a component of the center on a conditional basis.

3. ***Adopt the Conditional Use rezoning process into the Zoning Ordinance.***  
The conditional use process would allow for more flexibility in the rezoning of property. This would allow the governing board to imposed conditions on rezonings, require site plans, and have more latitude in their decisions.
4. ***Require Conditional Use Permits for certain land uses.***  
Certain land uses require additional review above and beyond a staff-level approval. Each site should be looked at on a site specific basis.
5. ***Provide Supplemental Regulations for certain uses.***  
Certain land uses necessitate mitigating requirements such as greater setbacks or more stringent buffer requirements.
6. ***Add basic aesthetic/appearance or design standards into the ordinance.***  
The Town should decide if there is a specific set of appearance characteristics that they would like to see for non-residential development. A broad set of guidelines could be included in the ordinance to move toward a specific “look.”
7. ***Reduce allowable sign sizes and develop key changes to the Sign Ordinance which would make new signs more uniform.***  
Because the commercial development in Maggie Valley is primarily located along Soco Road, an accumulation of signs are visible from many angles. The overall sign sizes are large. Although it would occur over an extended period of time, decreasing the allowable sign size would be decrease the visual impact of these signs.
8. ***Adopt slope development standards.***  
Haywood and Buncombe Counties have recently adopted hillside development ordinances. These ordinances regulate development on “steep” slopes and generally are meant to protect the public safety, the environment, and for aesthetic purposes. Because Maggie Valley is as its name implies, a valley, the activities that take place on the mountainsides have a critical impact on the rest of the Town. A slope, or hillside development, ordinance could mitigate those impacts.
9. ***Develop criteria for the protection of areas of environmental concern in Planned Unit Developments or into a “Conservation Subdivision” process.***  
Conservation developments have been developed partially to protect natural features. Generally, there is a list of features that should be considered in the overall development, and which should be preserved and/or protected. With the impacts that steep slopes carry in town, steep slopes and other areas of environmental concern should not be developed upon. However, the developer need not be penalized for this if proper allocations are made for the density of the overall development.
10. ***Amend the non-conforming uses section in the ordinance to effectively deal with increased landscaping standards.***  
To effectively address the recommendations of this ordinance, it will be necessary to put non-conforming standards in the ordinance that will be relatively strict, and require compliance with the ordinance. These standards will likely be required to withstand challenges to the Board of Adjustment.

**11. Rezone key vacant tracts before they are developed with uses that may not fit into the recommendations of this plan.**

By developing this plan, the Town has made future growth a priority. There are several significant vacant tracts in town, specifically along Soco Road. It is important to rezone these properties (administratively) to protect them from arbitrary development. Some of the recommendations found in this plan are directly related to rezoning and to implement them it will be necessary to rezone these properties, which are generally zoned C-1, to something less intensive.

**12. New development should have underground power lines to the buildings when and where possible**

Where possible, this should occur. An overall push to “clean up” the electrical wires through town would likely be an expensive and time consuming undertaking.

However, by beginning with on-site improvements, it would provide a starting point.

**13. Add buffering and screening between non-residential and residential uses into the ordinance.**

Although there are not many of these situations, there is the possibility of substantial commercial development adjacent to residential development. Screening and buffering between the two will mitigate the impacts on the residential areas.

**14. Adopt standards to accommodate Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) either as stand along regulations or as changes to the Planned Unit Development section of the ordinance.**

In the last ten years there has been an increasing number of TNDs around North Carolina. These developments promote walking, and are generally more efficiently served by the municipality. Specific requirements are needed within the zoning and subdivision ordinances to accommodate these developments.

**15. Eliminate the opportunity to construct new billboards.**

As with commercial signs, billboards are a fairly intrusive land use, with no real benefit to the town. Eliminating the ability to construct new billboards would alleviate this concern.

**16. Address housing affordability by either giving incentives for its creation, or by mandating that it occur.**

There are two ways in which to address affordable housing. There are limited locations in North Carolina that have successfully addressed this issue by mandating a certain percentage of residential development be “affordable.” The more realistic way of dealing with this problem is to develop and offer incentives for the provision of affordable housing. There are a number of specific ways to achieve this, with density bonuses probably being the most effective.

**17. Vary maximum building height restrictions based upon zoning and topography.**

This is necessary to accommodate the higher roof elevations and ceilings that are currently a market demand.

**18. Develop standards that will limit new curb cuts on Soco Road.**

Because of the high number of driveways, and potential for traffic problems on Soco Road, the number of new driveway permits should be limited. This would likely be regulated by NCDOT, however town staff can also provide input.

**19. Remove the C-2 designation along Moody Farm Road.**

Moody Farm Road is primarily a residential area that is commercially zoned. There is no compelling reason to keep this designation.

**20. Consider implementing a Roadway Protection Overlay (RPO) District<sup>3</sup> to help control growth along Soco Road.**

If there is not an inclination to amend the zoning districts, an RPO should be put in place along Soco Road to control access, aesthetics, signs, etc.

**C. Annexation and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)**

The Town currently has ETJ in relatively large, undeveloped areas on the eastern side of town. There are many areas that have development potential and should be included in the ETJ. The current process of allowing Haywood County to give preliminary (and sometimes further) approvals to new development, and then to transfer that development into Maggie Valley does not allow the Town to plan for future growth.

**Recommendations**

**1. Develop a more efficient method of dealing with residential development that begins the review process under Haywood County, then requests annexation.**

By expanding the ETJ into areas that are likely to be developed and annexed into the Town, the development can be totally controlled by Maggie Valley. This will eliminate the opportunity for non-conformities caused by differences between two ordinances or other planning documents.

**2. Expand the ETJ area to include areas that have a direct impact on Maggie Valley, such as viewsheds, parcels with future development potential, and potential landslide risks.**

Because Haywood County does not have zoning, this should be strongly considered. ETJ would be beneficial in protecting the Town from development that would be visible from its boundaries, and which could affect the public safety. In many cases this development begins under the Haywood County subdivision rules, but is annexed into the Town at a later date.

**3. Continuously update the Resolution of Consideration (ROC)<sup>4</sup> to streamline future involuntary annexations.**

In the event that the Town entertains the thought of annexation in the future, it would be beneficial to adopt a ROC. An ROC decreases by almost a year the amount of time it takes to annex property in NC.

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<sup>3</sup> A RPO primarily regulates aesthetics and traffic mitigation as they pertain to commercial development along major roadways.

<sup>4</sup> A ROC is the first step in the involuntary annexation process. It does not signify an intent to annex, only that the Town would consider annexing the area sometime in the future, if the situation were favorable, and the statutory standards could be met.

#### **D. Traffic/Transportation**

Maggie Valley is dependent upon one primary road for access. Soco Road is currently below its design capacity and generally meets the needs of the residents. However, there are questions about how the re-opening of Ghost Town will affect the road. The following recommendations pertain to traffic and transportation and how future problems may be avoided.

##### **Recommendations**

**1. *Encourage walking and biking to attractions.***

Soco Road has sidewalks on both sides. There are pedestrian crossings at certain points, which allow for access on both sides of the street. When Ghost Town begins operating in May, traffic will be a concern and alternative methods of transportation will be needed to offset some of the congestion impacts.

**2. *Ensure that pedestrian crossings are perceived to be safe through increased signage and/or lighting to help promote walking and biking.***

The existing crossings make crossing this busy road much easier. However, it is easy to be distracted by the businesses located along Soco Road and not notice the pedestrian crossings. Better signage and/or lighting would make these crossings more noticeable, and therefore safer.

**3. *Limit the number of new curb cuts on Soco Road and utilize the non-conforming section of the Zoning Ordinance to deal with changes to existing uses that do not currently meet the standards.***

The fewer curb cuts, the less congestion. Although the area is predominantly developed, over time limited curb cuts could be implemented through the non-conforming section of the ordinance.

**4. *Require connectivity between adjacent uses where possible to discourage short automobile trips that would utilize Soco Road.***

As with the previous recommendation, this would mitigate some of the traffic impacts on Soco Road.

**5. *Encourage alternative entrances and side street connections where possible.***

As with the previous recommendation, this would mitigate some of the traffic impacts on Soco Road.

**6. *Examine the possibility of providing and/or requiring shuttle services between overnight lodging establishments, Ghost Town, and other attractions.***

This would require private and/or public investment, however it would allow for a better quality visit to Maggie Valley.

**7. *Address traffic concerns through the proposed conditional use rezoning process.***

By adopting the CUD process, specific transportation issues can be addressed through the rezoning process.

**8. *The Planning Director should have the opportunity to review and approve (or not approve) all NCDOT driveway permits.***

NCDOT allows for local jurisdictions to sign off on driveway permits. This allows the local government to be aware of what is being approved, and to work with the State in administering local policies and regulations.

**9. *Require developers to dedicate easements to the Town when building on parcels adjacent to the greenway.***

The Planning Board is concerned about residents and visitors having access to the creek. Although a greenway has been started, the pieces are haphazard and disconnected, with the sidewalk serving as the path between parcels. By requiring dedications along the creek, the town can ensure a contiguous path that could serve as another attraction to tourists and visitors while in town.

**10. *Require developers to install sidewalks along Soco Road and Moody Farm Road during new construction.***

This recommendation is another way to encourage alternative modes of transportation in Maggie Valley and also ensure pedestrian safety. By requiring developers to construct sidewalks along major roads, the town can ensure that residents and visitors have a safe, contiguous path to travel throughout town.

**E. Slope Development**

***Recommendations***

- 1. Utilize the USGS data concerning landslides when considering future subdivision requests.***
- 2. Develop a slope ordinance or adopt the same or similar standards as have been implemented by Haywood County.***
- 3. Add steep slopes to a list of environmental features that should be protected to the greatest extent possible in new development.***

**F. Town Center**

The Town currently lacks a town center, a place for congregation, meetings, and shopping. The establishment of an area where this could occur would be beneficial to changing the image of the Town.

**G. Ghost Town**

Develop a mixed-use designation specifically geared toward large-scale attractions.

**H. Future Land Use**

The future land use map is used to help guide both the Planning Board and the Town Council in making land use decisions. The map should be used as a guide, and may change over time. Because of the historic pattern of development in Maggie Valley, there are places where the future land use designation may not match that of the existing land uses. Because a land use plan is not a regulatory document, this will not create nonconforming uses. However, when the existing uses change, it will be prudent to follow the plan.

The philosophy behind the future land use designations is as follows:

1. To remove the total reliance on Soco Road for all land use types,
2. To focus land uses in areas that are compatible, and have a lesser effect on congestion,
3. To preserve residential areas and to focus residential development into areas where it is compatible,

4. To protect, to the greatest extent possible, the land uses associated with the tourism industry,
5. To limit the areas in which open air sales are permitted,
6. To preserve areas where the possibility of a village and/or town center could be developed,
7. To identify parcels that could be developed for higher intensity commercial purposes,
8. To provide areas for all types of residential development, from low density to high, and
9. To designate areas where neighborhood services should be located.

## VII. IMPLEMENTATION

A land use plan is not complete when the written document is finalized. In order for the land use plan to be effective, the plan must be seen through to implementation. The town must also set time frames and establish means of achieving its goals to have a way to measure success and gauge progress. The implementation matrix on page 32 is a tool to help ensure that the town sees the plan through to implementation.

Each recommendation provided in the plan is listed in the matrix. The matrix indicates the person(s) responsible for overseeing the achievement of the recommendation as well as the cost and time frame associated with achieving the recommendation. Recommendations with a short term time frame should be completed within one (1) and five (5) years of adoption of the plan. Recommendations with an intermediate term time frame should be completed between five (5) and ten (10) years, and recommendations with a long term time frame should be achieved within ten (10) and fifteen (15) years after plan adoption. Those recommendations that are ongoing should be addressed continuously during the life of the plan. The information provided in the action item column indicates the step(s) the town must take in order to successfully achieve each recommendation.