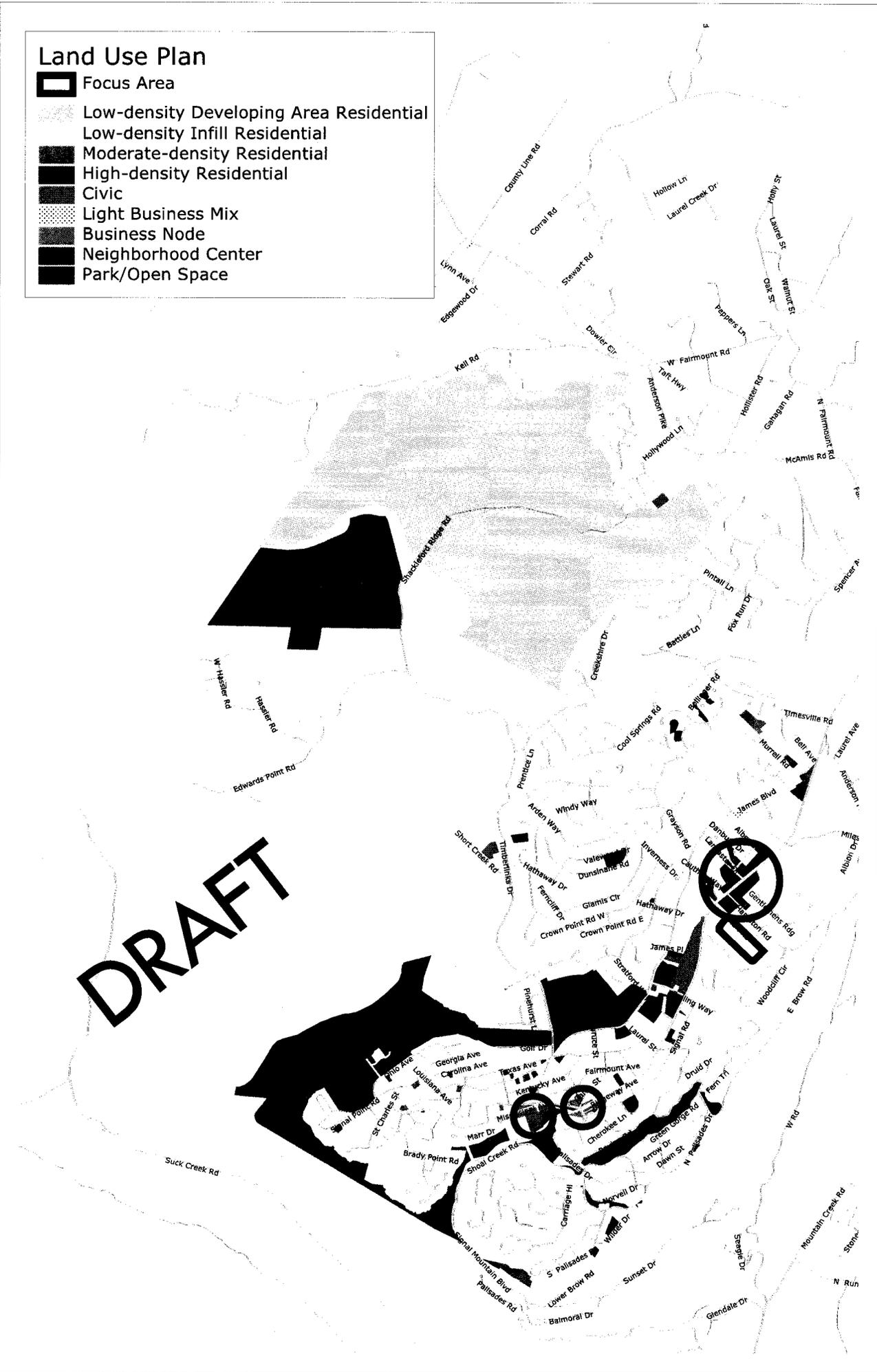


Land Use Plan

-  Focus Area
-  Low-density Developing Area Residential
-  Low-density Infill Residential
-  Moderate-density Residential
-  High-density Residential
-  Civic
-  Light Business Mix
-  Business Node
-  Neighborhood Center
-  Park/Open Space

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CHAPTER 1- PLANNING PROCESS

This plan was prepared by the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency in consultation with the Town of Signal Mountain appointed and elected officials and community stakeholders.

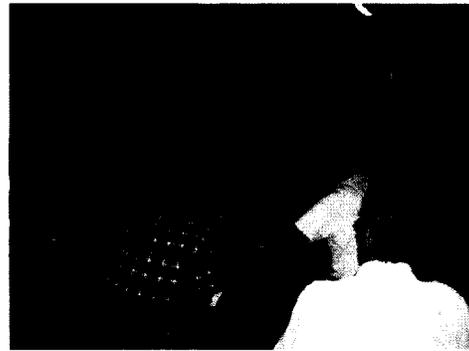
The purpose of the Regional Planning Agency is to protect the public health, safety, welfare, and morals... its quality of life. The planning process allows the community to define what their quality of life means. The plan itself states how that quality of life will be protected and improved.

A land use plan guides how, when, and where new growth, redevelopment, and preservation should occur in a particular area.

Government officials will use an adopted plan as a general policy guide when making decisions involving future community improvements and rezoning requests. A neighborhood association can use an area plan as a concise way to present its vision for the future to area residents, businesses, potential community partners, and investors.

Because an area plan is a guide, its adoption does not guarantee that community improvements or zoning changes will occur. Committed citizens and town officials must continue to work on implementing the recommendations of the plan.

The plan is reviewed and acted on by the Signal Mountain Planning Commission. State law requires that the Planning Commission have a municipal plan in place.



13-4-203. General purposes of the plan — Surveys and studies. —

In the preparation of the plan, the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and future growth of the municipality and its environs. The plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.

Why do we need a plan?

Some benefits of having a plan include the following:

A plan helps a community capitalize on its assets and develop coordinated initiatives for solving its problems.

A plan provides citizens with support for their positions on rezoning requests and capital improvements.

A plan gives developers and other investors the opportunity to work in concert with the community's established vision.

A plan can increase citizen participation in community affairs and foster community pride.

A plan can be used to support a neighborhood association's efforts to secure grants for community projects.

A plan coordinates public improvements such as roads, sewers, and parks.

13-4-201. General plan for physical development. —

It is the function and duty of the commission to make and adopt an official general plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any area outside of its boundaries which, in the commission's judgment, bears relation to the planning of the municipality. The plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive and explanatory matter, shall show the commission's recommendations for the physical development, and may include, among other things, the general location, character and extent of streets, bridges, viaducts, parks, parkways, waterways, waterfronts, playgrounds, airports and other public ways, grounds, places and spaces, the general location of public buildings and other public property, the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned, for water, light, power, sanitation, transportation, communication and other purposes; also the removal, relocation, widening, extension, narrowing, vacating, abandonment, change of use or extension of any of the foregoing public ways, grounds, places, spaces, buildings, properties or utilities; also a zoning plan for the regulation of the height, area, bulk, location and use of private and public structures and premises and of population density; also the general location, character, layout and extent of community centers and neighborhood units; also the general location, character, extent and layout of the replanning of blighted districts and slum areas. The commission may from time to time amend, extend or add to the plan or carry any part of subject matter into greater detail.

What is the difference between a plan and zoning?

An area plan differs from zoning in that a plan is an advisory document which includes a set of strategies for achieving specific community goals. These goals relate to things such as land use, transportation, resource protection, and community facilities.

Zoning on the other hand is a tool used to implement an area plan. Zoning is a legal and enforceable part of city or county code and is used to regulate the use of land and the type, scale, and intensity of development on that land.

How does this plan relate to other plans?

Data and recommendations from several of plans and studies created for and by the town have been consulted and incorporated into this document.

Those planning documents include the following:

- *Hamilton County Comprehensive Plan 2030*
- *Town of Signal Mountain, TN Zoning Regulations*
- *Walden's Ridge Plateau Area Plan, 1997*
- *Town of Signal Mountain Subdivision Regulations*
- *Planning documents related to Hamilton County's Urban Growth Plan*
- *TransPlan 2030*
- *Congestion Management Plan*
- Signal Mountain High School Business Plan (Friends of Signal Mountain High School)
- Town of Signal Mountain Land Use and Transportation Plan, 2000 (current plan)
- Mountain Vision, Strategic Planning Process

The plans or documents in italics were created and/or are administered by the Regional Planning Agency. The recommendations of this plan may also be incorporated into future plans and studies.

Mayor Paul Hendricks signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, a national initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in July 2007. As stated by the organization leading this effort, "Under the Agreement, participating cities commit to take following three actions:

- Strive to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in their own communities, through actions ranging from anti-sprawl land-use policies to urban forest restoration projects to public information campaigns;
- Urge their state governments, and the federal government, to enact policies and programs to meet or beat the greenhouse gas emission reduction target suggested for the United States in the Kyoto Protocol -- 7% reduction from 1990 levels by 2012; and
- Urge the U.S. Congress to pass the bipartisan greenhouse gas reduction legislation, which would establish a national emission trading system."

Strategies for achieving greenhouse gas reduction:

1. Inventory global warming emissions in City operations and in the community, set reduction targets and create an action plan.
2. Adopt and enforce land-use policies that reduce sprawl, preserve open space, and create compact, walkable urban communities;
3. Promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, commute trip reduction programs, incentives for car pooling and public transit;
4. Increase the use of clean, alternative energy by, for example, investing in "green tags", advocating for the development of renewable energy resources, recovering landfill methane for energy production, and supporting the use of waste to energy technology;
5. Make energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements, retrofitting city facilities with energy efficient lighting and urging employees to conserve energy and save money;
6. Purchase only Energy Star equipment and appliances for City use;
7. Practice and promote sustainable building practices using the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program or a similar system;
8. Increase the average fuel efficiency of municipal fleet vehicles; reduce the number of vehicles; launch an employee education program including anti-idling messages; convert diesel vehicles to bio-diesel;
9. Evaluate opportunities to increase pump efficiency in water and wastewater systems; recover wastewater treatment methane for energy production;
10. Increase recycling rates in City operations and in the community;
11. Maintain healthy urban forests; promote tree planting to increase shading and to absorb CO₂; and
12. Help educate the public, schools, other jurisdictions, professional associations, business and industry about reducing global warming pollution. – *U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement*

How does the planning process work?

Active citizen participation is vital to the success of any plan. When stakeholders in a community are directly involved in the planning process, they are more likely to take ownership of the plan and then play an important and much-needed role in its implementation.

This plan was prepared using a community-based approach with stakeholders providing input and recommendations through a series of public workshops. The Regional Planning Agency served as a facilitator and professional resource at these workshops. Through the planning process a set of objectives, principles, and strategies emerged for the Town of Signal Mountain.

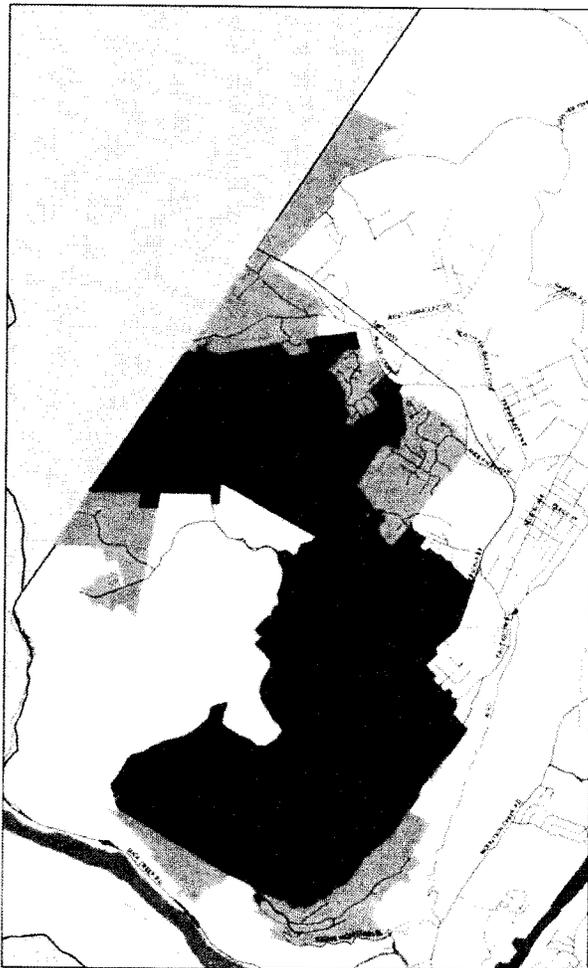
What area does this plan cover?

This plan is primarily focused on the Town of Signal Mountain and its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). The State of Tennessee passed a law in 1998—*Public Acts 1998, Chapter 1101*—requiring all Tennessee counties to develop a comprehensive 20-year growth boundary plan. In 2001, Hamilton County and its municipalities signed an interlocal agreement showing those areas that contain the corporate limits of each of the county's ten municipalities and the adjoining territory where growth is expected. Chapter 1101 expressly recognizes annexation as a legitimate municipal growth tool.

Annexation is a critical tool for most incorporated municipalities and is an effective method of controlling, managing, and directing the growth of urbanized areas.

Based on its agreement with Hamilton County and the Town of Walden the Town of Signal Mountain "shall not annex" any area within its Urban Growth Boundary north of Hwy. 127 until after January 19, 2011.

Public Acts 1998, Chapter 1101, provides for a comprehensive growth policy plan in each county that is, in theory, supposed to guide and direct new development in the county during the next 20 years. But it is probably accurate to say that in most counties the critical issue in the formation of the comprehensive growth plan was where municipalities could—and could not—annex territory during that period.- *Annexation Handbook for Cities and Towns in Tennessee II 2007, Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS)*



Chapter 2: Background

History of the Town of Signal Mountain

It is believed that the Creek, Cherokee, and other Native American tribes used Signal Point and nearby promontories to send fire and smoke signals for centuries prior to the Civil War. During the fall of 1863, the Union Army used Signal Point as a communications station to signal various locations in the Chattanooga area. These activities clearly indicate a principal and appropriate reason why the present Town should be called Signal Mountain.

The Town of Signal Mountain originated with the purchase of 4,400 acres of land in the Signal Point area by Charles E. James. Mr. James' first contact with Walden's Ridge was during the 1878 yellow fever epidemic. Mr. James led a group of people to the Signal Point area to escape the epidemic and with his purchase began plans for a residential community.

Mr. James brought the modern world to the mountain. In the eyes of many Town residents, he was a prophet of progress. Mr. James was a visionary who dreamed of railroads, dams, towns, and a fine hotel surrounded by modern homes on a remote mountaintop. He found beauty and satisfaction in bricks, mortar, blueprints and machinery. He made those dreams come true.

Thirty years elapsed before Mr. James began developing the Signal Point area. In 1913, construction of twelve miles of streetcar track was completed. The streetcar track connected Chattanooga to Signal Mountain. Signal Mountain Inn opened in 1913 and catered to those on their way to winter in Florida. Mr. James knew the hotel needed recreation beyond that of hiking trails and the mineral waters of Burnt Springs, so he constructed a casino complete with dance floor across from the hotel. Soon he added two hundred rooms to the Inn. Many of these rooms were later occupied by friends and families of soldiers stationed at Fort Ogelthorpe during World War 1. For the next six to eight years, Mr. James' principal interest was developing the area surrounding the hotel.

In 1918, the Signal Mountain Golf Course was completed. All of Walden's Ridge was open range for cattle, and farmers from Red Bank, Mountain Creek, and the surrounding areas drove their cattle up to Walden's Ridge in the spring and left them to forage until fall. Attracted to the golf course greens, the animals collected there in large numbers. When the Town was incorporated, its first ordinance prohibited running livestock within the Town limits.

On April 4, 1919, the Tennessee Legislature passed the bill that chartered the Town. The Charter required the Town to be governed by three commissioners to be elected by the Town's registered voters. The first Mayor was C. E. James. He served as Mayor from 1919-1921. When Mr. James died in 1925, two hundred houses had been built with their primary location being within a few blocks of the Signal Mountain Inn. Many of these were summer residences.

The Palisades section would remain forest for another ten years. Mr. James was instrumental in building Signal Mountain Grammar School which opened in 1927. A fire hall was built. In 1927, a Town Hall and temporary jail were added.

The Alexian Order purchased the Signal Mountain Hotel in 1936, built a monastery, and converted the hotel into a home for elderly men by 1938. In 1950 the Generalate of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers moved the headquarters to the Town. The Order opened Alexian Village of Tennessee in September, 1983, which is a total life care community for the elderly. They opened the Alexian Inn, a thirty-three unit assisted living facility, in the old hotel building in August, 1992.

In 1939 the swimming pool near the Signal Mountain Golf Course was constructed for \$8,000. Wilkes T. Thrasher Elementary School opened in 1961. By 1971, 1,294 students were enrolled in the two elementary schools and Signal Mountain Junior High. Kindergartens were in operation at both schools by 1975.

The 1970's brought many changes to the Town. Its population had grown to 4,839 residents by 1970. A library was established in 1970. A new fire hall was built. A sewer system was approved for the oldest part of the community as well as part of the Palisades Drive area, additional recreational facilities and a new Town Hall, including the Town's Administrative Offices, were built in 1979.

During the last twenty years, the Town has continued to change, grow and improve. Recreational facilities built during this period were a municipal playground, tennis courts, baseball, softball and soccer fields, and the Paul Mathes Family Center at the corner of Ridgeway and Rolling Way. A new library facility opened in 1988.

The Tennessee Legislature amended the Town's Charter to convert the Town's government to a Council/Manager form of government in May, 1990.

In May 2001, the Town signed an interlocal agreement with Hamilton County and its other municipalities outlining their Urban Growth Boundaries as part of the requirement under the state's Chapter 1101 regulations.

On May 18, 2005, Signal Mountain and Walden residents supported referendums that authorize the towns of Signal Mountain and Walden to issue \$10 million in bonds to help build a middle and high school to serve the mountain communities. Subsequently, the Hamilton County Commission agreed to issue bonds to pay for \$96 million in school construction, a plan that included a new middle and high school on Signal Mountain. The new schools are slated for opening in 2008.

Crucial portions of this section of the plan were paraphrased from Signal Mountain and Walden's Ridge by Z. Carter Patten and various other sources and taken from the Town's 2000 Land Use and Transportation Plan. Minor revisions and updates were made as part of the 2007 planning process.

Government Structure

The Town was incorporated in 1919. It operated for many decades with the Commission form of government. In 1988, a Charter Study Committee was appointed by the Town Commission to study alternative forms of governmental structures. With the assistance of the Municipal Technical Advisory Service, the Charter Study Committee recommended to the Town Commission that the Council/Manager form of government be pursued. The Town Commission voted on February 12, 1990, to adopt the Private Act approved on January 29, 1990, by the Tennessee Legislature which amended the Town Charter to convert the Town's government from the Commission form of government to the Council/Manager form.

The Council is comprised of five members elected at-large by the voters with three of the five members running every two years on even-numbered years matching the national elections. Of the three candidates that receive the largest number of votes in each election, two receive four-year terms and one (the third place finisher) receives a two-year term. This ensures that three members of the Council will be up for election every two years.

The Council sets all policies, including ordinances, resolutions, contracts, personnel policies, personnel staffing levels, purchasing policies, the budget, tax rate, and other municipal policies.

The Mayor and Vice-Mayor are selected by and from among the Councilmembers. The Mayor presides at Council meetings and otherwise provides leadership for the Council and the Town. The Vice-Mayor acts as Mayor in the Mayor's absence.

The Council appoints the Town Manager, who serves at the will of the Council. The Charter provides the Manager with powers to be the chief administrative officer, to supervise all employees (except the Town Attorney and Judge), enforce all laws and ordinances of the Council, draft a budget for Council review, prepare an annual financial statement, supervise all purchasing using the Council's purchasing policy, and make recommendations to the Council through the agenda for Council meetings. All meetings are open to the public.

The Town has a number of boards and commissions, including the Planning Commission, Recreation Advisory Board, Library Board, Parks Board, Design Review Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Condemnation Board, composed of citizen volunteers who are interested in serving their community.

Planning Commission

Planning Commission is composed of the Town mayor, one member of Town Council, and seven other members appointed by the mayor. Under state legislation, the Planning Commission is an appointed body. While state law does allow Planning Commissioners to be compensated, members of the Signal Mountain Planning Commission are unpaid.

In addition to creating and adopting an official general plan for the physical development of the municipality, Tennessee Code specifies further powers of Planning Commission. These include making advisory reports and recommendations, reviewing and commenting on public projects through the mandatory referral process, reviewing subdivision regulations and site plans, preparing and providing recommendations regarding the zoning ordinance and zoning maps, and reviewing amendments to the zoning ordinance and maps.

Signal Mountain Municipal Code further refines the local purpose and function of the Commission (Title 14, Chapter 1, Section 14-106):

(1) Purpose. Maintenance of the Town as a predominantly single-family residential community by protecting existing and future residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses and endeavoring to prevent commercial, industrial and multi-family development from impairing the property values of single-family residential areas within the Town.

(2) Functions. It shall be the duty of the Planning Commission to collect data and keep itself informed as to the best practices and the advancements made in the art of municipal planning, to the end that it may be qualified to act on matters that affect the present and future movements of traffic, the convenience and safety of persons and property, the health, recreation and general welfare and the use of buildings, structures and land for trade, industry, residence, recreation, public activities and all other needs of the Town which are dependent upon a Town plan.

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretion by education.
– Thomas Jefferson

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Demographics and Development Trends

In order to effectively plan for the future growth and development of the town, it is important to understand the historic growth patterns and assess how much growth is likely to occur in the future and whether this projected growth can be adequately accommodated.

The Regional Planning Agency's countywide Comprehensive Plan 2030 considers the study area's development form to be Outer Suburban:

Outer Suburban



The hallmark of the Outer Suburban area is the distinct separation of residential and non-residential uses. The residential developments are usually single-units which are found on larger lots. Multi-family dwellings such as apartments are also found in select areas, usually as a buffer between more intense commercial uses and lower-density dwellings. Municipal services such as sanitary sewers are present in most parts of the Outer Suburban area; however, some areas are not serviced.

The street network, although relatively dense in some locations, does not usually adhere to a grid pattern. Commercial uses are usually found along major arterial roadways while industrial uses are often concentrated in industrial parks.

In summary:

- Larger lot sizes
- Distinct, clearly-defined separation of residential and non-residential uses
- No sidewalks and no street grid
- Limited public transportation
- Single-unit residential dominates
- Little connection between subdivisions
- Greater distance between public recreational facilities
- Average Residential Density: 1.2 Dwelling Units / Acre *[this is a countywide average and is higher than the existing Town density]*

Hamilton County

The Town of Signal Mountain is one of ten municipalities within Hamilton County. The following information provides a countywide look at development trends:

- During the 2000 to 2006 period, 350 new major subdivisions were recorded throughout Hamilton County. 322 (92%) of these were residential subdivisions.
- New residential subdivisions comprised 9,510 lots, covering slightly more than 5,000 acres, with an overall average lot size of about one-half acre.
- The average lot size seems to be trending downward over the 2000 to 2006 period, going from a high of 0.8 acres per lot in 2001 to 0.4 acres per lot in 2006.

**The previous breakdowns of subdivision recordings in Hamilton County include only "major" subdivisions, which are defined as those with five or more new lots, or new subdivisions with new streets.*

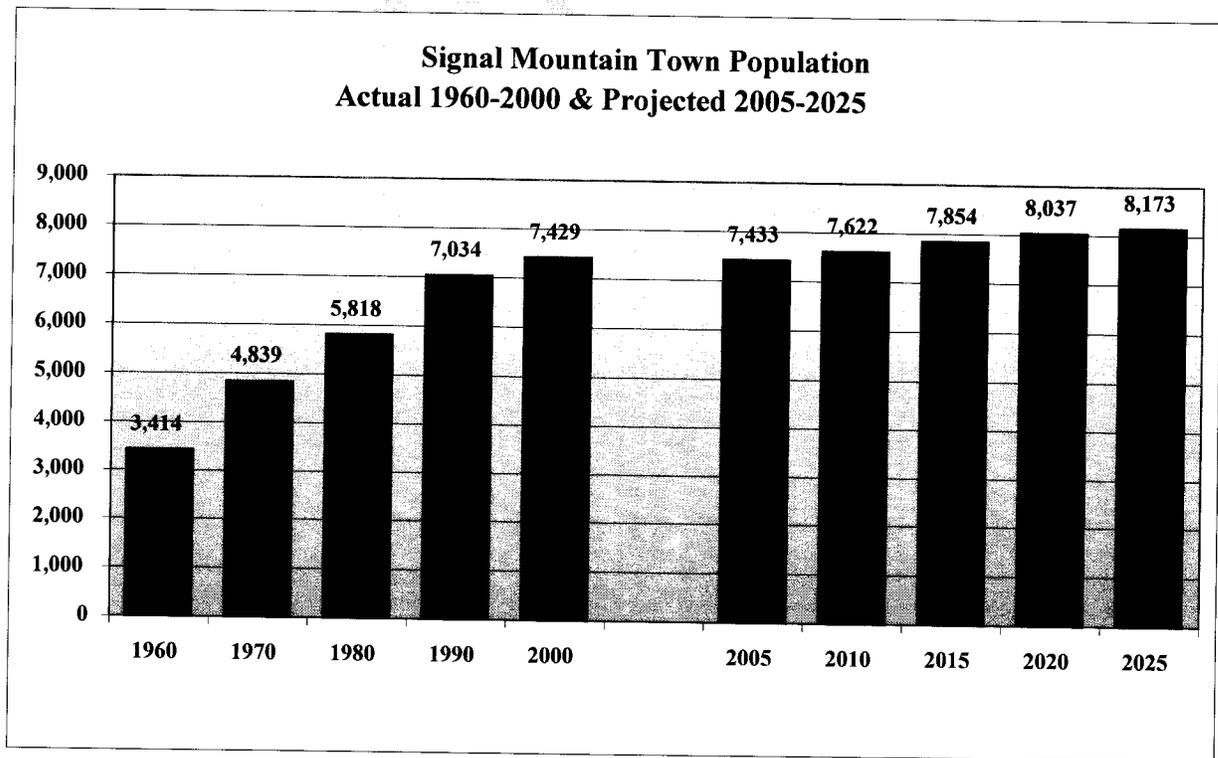
- Slightly more than 31,000 building permits were issued during the period of 2000 through 2006.
- Almost 13,000 (86%) of the permits issued for New construction were for New Residences.

**Data from Red Bank not available for analysis and not included in this data.*

Population Growth

According to the U. S. Census Bureau, the total population in the town of Signal Mountain was 7,429 in the year 2000. This figure represented an increase of 395 people or 5.6% from the previous Census in 1990, and was lower than the corresponding growth rates in several recent decades. From 1950 to 1960, population grew by 1,628 (91.2%); from 1960 to 1970 the population increased by 1,425 (41.7%); from 1970 to 1980 the town added 979 people (20.2%); and from 1980 to 1990 it grew 1,216 (20.9%). The Census Bureau's estimate for 2006 was 7,107—a decline from 2000 of 322 people or 4.3%.

The Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) have developed population projections out to the year 2025 for all counties, cities and towns in Tennessee. The 2025 projected population for the town of Signal Mountain is 8,173—an increase of 10% from the 2000 population. These projections, along with earlier Census figures earlier years, are shown in the chart below.

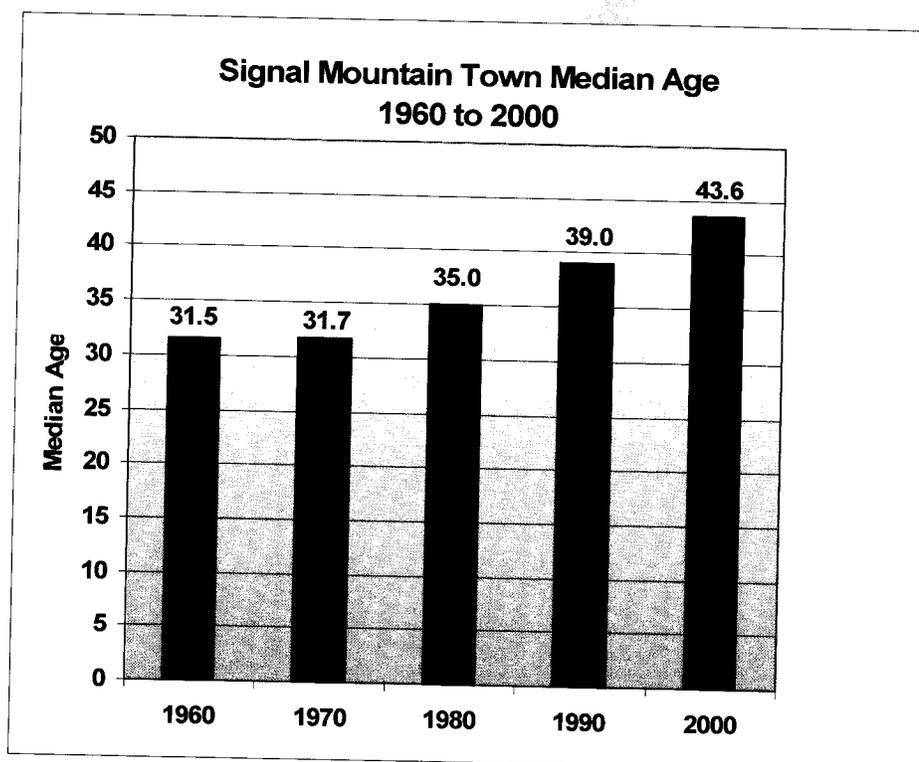


Word of Caution

Users of this data should be aware that population projections such as these rely on a number of assumptions about the continuation of past trends into the future. When using population projections such as these, people are encouraged to use them as a guide illustrating a general possible scenario of future growth patterns. Although these projections are based on a mathematical model using sound scientific principles, ultimately, the overall accuracy of these projections will depend on the extent to which future events unfold in a manner that mirrors these past observations. Different projections using different assumptions will inevitably yield different results. In addition, there may be people with specific knowledge or understanding of events and factors that may affect their local communities that could result in a more complete understanding of the growth dynamic affecting their community. **Thus, we caution users not to construe these figures as predicting a specific or inevitable future course of events.** Instead, the numbers contained within this report should be read as a likely course of future population change based on a continuation of past trends. Population projections such as these are simply one of a number of tools that planners and local community leaders should consider when envisioning the future for their communities.

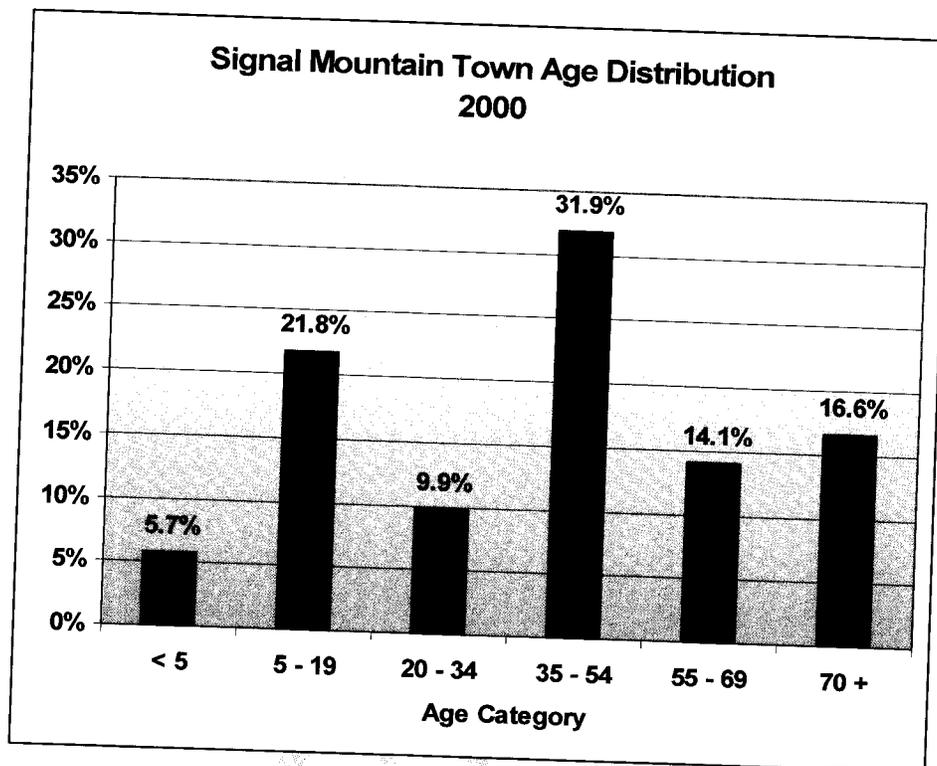
Age

Since 1960, the median age of Signal Mountain's population has increased with each Census year.



The median age of Signal Mountain's population is influenced somewhat by the older residents at the Alexian Brothers' facilities on the Mountain, which is addressed below.

In both 1960 and 1970, approximately 6% of the Town's population was 70 years of age or older. In 1980, this percentage rose to 8%. Then in 1990 it jumped to 12%, and in 2000 the figure rose to 16.6%.

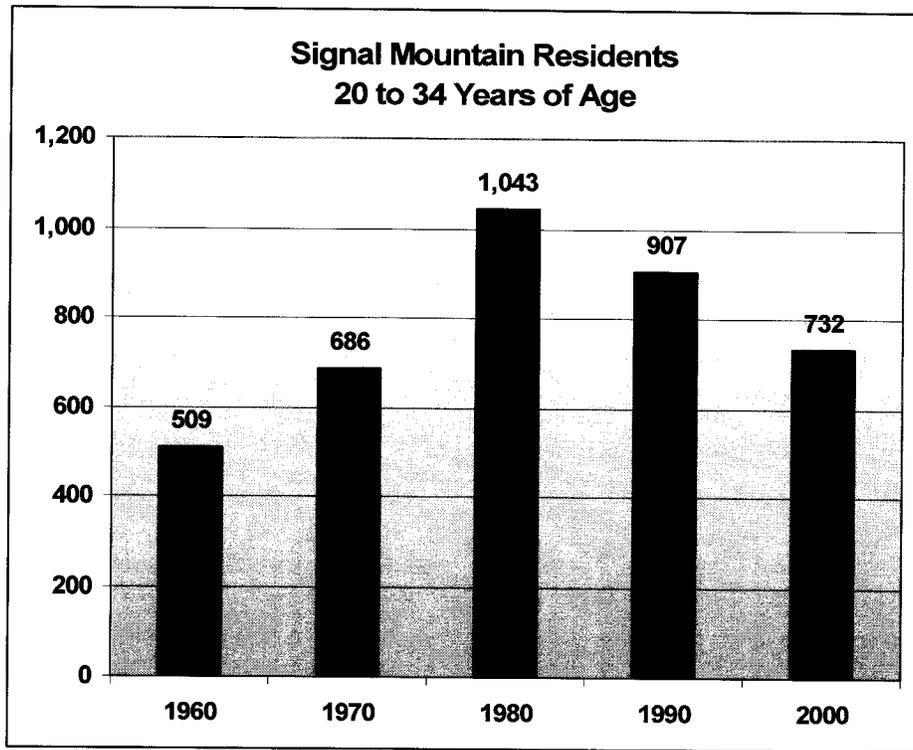


As mentioned earlier, the median age and the proportion of residents in the 70 and older age bracket are influenced by the older residents at Alexian Brothers. Figures were provided by Mr. Bill Tobin of Alexian Brothers that show the number of residents by age group at the three facilities on Signal Mountain as of September 2007.

Under 55	1
55 to 69	21
70 or older	494
Total	516

Figures for the year 2000, for comparison with the U. S. Census figures, were not available, so it is not possible to know what the exact impact would have been in 2000. But, it would seem that if the proportions in each of age group of the current Alexian residents were about the same in the year 2000, then the percentage of all other residents in Signal Mountain aged 70 or older would be lower, perhaps more in line with all of Hamilton County or the City of Chattanooga.

In another vein, it is worth noting that only 10% of the Town's population was in the 20 to 34 year age bracket, which is considered to be a major child-bearing age category. This percentage is less than one-half of the comparable percentage for the State of Tennessee, and for all of Hamilton County, and for the city of Chattanooga. The actual number in this bracket has been declining since 1980. See chart on next page.



Households and Families

In 2000, there were 2,924 households in the Town of Signal Mountain; 2,123 (73%) of these were family households, and the remaining 801 were non-family households.

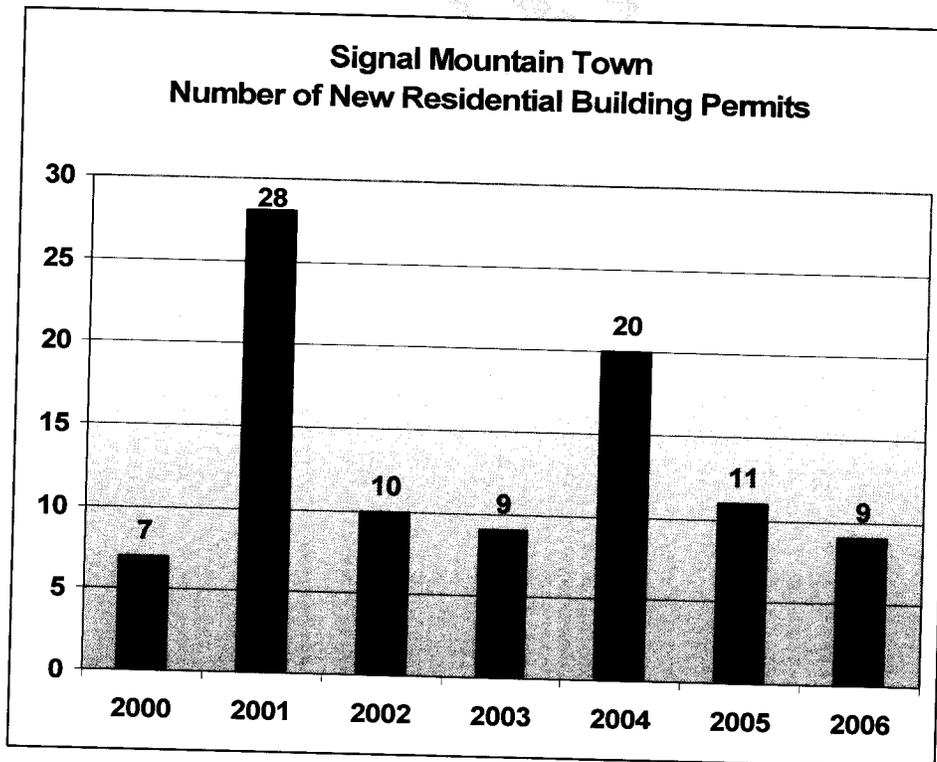
Approximately 94% (754) of these non-family households were single individuals living alone. The average household size in 2000 was 2.50 persons per household, and the average family size was 3.02 persons per family.

Among the 2,123 families, 1,928 (91%) were married-couple families, and 195 (9%) were other types of families. Overall, 989 (47%) of the families had children under the age of 18. Among these, there were 110 single-parent families with children under the age of 18.

Housing Units

In the year 2000, the Census Bureau enumerated 3,054 housing units in the Town. At that time 2,924 (96%) were occupied and 130 (4%) were vacant. Among the 2,924 occupied units, 2,364 (81%) were owner-occupied while 560 (19%) were renter-occupied. Census figures show that 263 (8.6%) of the 3,054 housing units were built from 1990 to March of 2000. Overall, 2,472 (81%) of the housing units were classified as single-unit detached housing. Another 84 (2.8%) were defined as single-unit attached structures.

During the period 2000 through 2006, 94 building permits were issued by Signal Mountain for new residential construction (excluding 1 permit for a six-story building at Alexian Brothers).



In current year dollars, the average (mean) value of the construction was \$558,958 and the median value was \$245,000. If adjusted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Housing to 2007 dollars, the values become \$624,494 (mean) and \$276,688 (median).

Based on Hamilton County Assessor records, there were 2,481 single-family residences located in the town of Signal Mountain as of July 15, 2007. Approximately 25% of the houses were valued at less than \$150,000, and another 25% were valued at \$150,000 to \$199,999.

Signal Mountain Town Appraised Value of Single-Family Houses (including land value) as of July, 2007		
	Number	Percent
Under \$50,000	8	0.3%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	110	4.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	498	20.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	635	25.6%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	494	19.9%
\$250,000 to \$299,999	272	11.0%
\$300,000 to \$349,999	153	6.2%
\$350,000 to \$399,999	96	3.9%
\$400,000 to \$449,999	48	1.9%
\$450,000 to \$499,999	47	1.9%
\$500,000 to \$749,999	91	3.7%
\$750,000 to \$999,999	20	0.8%
\$1 million and higher	9	0.4%
Total	2,481	100.0%
Mean	\$232,389	
Median	\$198,300	
<i>Source: Hamilton County Assessor records</i>		

During the period January 2006 through June 2007, 152 sales of single-family properties in the town of Signal Mountain were recorded by the Assessor's office. Approximately 71% of these sales (108) were for amounts of \$100,000 to \$299,999.

Sales of Single-family Residences in Town of Signal Mountain by Recorded Sales Consideration (Price)				
	2006 (Jan-Dec)		2007 (Jan-Jun)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under \$100,000	4	4.2%	0	0.0%
\$100,000 thru \$199,999	30	31.3%	16	28.6%
\$200,000 thru \$299,999	37	38.5%	25	44.6%
\$300,000 thru \$399,999	14	14.6%	9	16.1%
\$400,000 thru \$499,999	4	4.2%	3	5.4%
\$500,000 thru \$749,999	4	4.2%	2	3.6%
\$750,000 thru \$999,999	2	2.1%	1	1.8%
\$1 million or more	1	1.0%	0	0.0%
Total	96	100.0%	56	100.0%
Median Sales Consideration	\$223,750		\$241,000	
<i>Source: Hamilton County Assessor records</i>				

COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

During the first public meeting, residents and other stakeholder were asked to provide their thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of their community and the opportunities that exist for the town. These comments, along with their prioritization as noted by meeting attendees, have been analyzed in conjunction with past and current planning efforts to derive these community attitudes. *Refer to the Appendix for list of all comments.*

Growth and Development

There will continue to be a desire to develop on the mountaintop. Sewer development and expansion of the water system will bring urban services to previously undeveloped areas. Also, new schools are often drivers for growth. Residents desire growth that occurs to be quality, planned growth. Growth for growth's sake is neither desired nor needed. Furthermore, if growth management policies on the plateau equate to a de-facto "no growth" policy, then the unintended consequences may be to divert these development pressures into areas which do not possess the natural or man-made features that permit this development.

Limited Roadway Connectivity

The communities of the Walden's Ridge Plateau share a unique position in the broader Chattanooga region. Topographic features separate these communities from the urban areas of Chattanooga. There is a concern that increased growth on the mountaintop can equate to greater volume in traffic on transportation corridors already at capacity. New development is viewed by many as having a negative impact on the transportation system.

Interlocal Cooperation/Competition

It is clear that the Town has an infrastructure network and service system that assists its neighboring jurisdictions. Recognition of this interlocal cooperation and the elimination of interlocal competition is needed to ensure the long term efficient and cost-effective provision of infrastructure and services to the Plateau's residents. Many of the issues concerning the Town regarding growth and development are best addressed at the subregional level with the Town of Walden, Hamilton County, and even perhaps Sequatchie County.

Preservation of natural resources

Town residents feel strongly that natural resources contribute highly to quality of life and possess value ecologically. Specific natural features that were identified for protection include tree cover, water quality, streams, viewsheds, and slopes.

The themes listed above provide a foundation for this plan. However, a plan should balance fact-based research and the values expressed by a community. It is also important that sound planning principles provide the framework for the plan goals, policies, and action steps.

As mentioned previously, this plan and its recommendations build on past planning efforts and include the issues that are historically part of the physical development of the town and seek to address challenges resulting from a new high school, expansion of the sewer system, and the potential for development in the town's growth area.

There appears to be consensus among residents that the Town should carefully plan its growth and that growth should be examined based on its impact on the natural and built infrastructure. [REDACTED]

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Mission

The mission of the Town of Signal Mountain is to be a community that preserves its small town atmosphere by managing growth and requiring development to be orderly and consistent; provides services that are necessary for the well-being and general welfare of its citizens; and endeavors to be a desirable and safe place in which families may live and grow.

The overall goal of this land use and policy plan for the Town is to provide a quality living and working environment for the residents of the Town.

The following goals are general statements that reflect the desires of the citizens regarding the future development of the municipality.

- To preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life in Signal Mountain while encouraging a continued harmonious and high standard of development.
- To ensure that all residential developments provide pleasant and harmonious living environments, are served by adequate vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems and are served by adequate infrastructure.
- To provide for concentrated commercial centers serving the needs of residents.
- To provide adequate and efficient public facilities and services, and to provide a diversity of cultural and recreational opportunities.
- To provide utility services that effectively and efficiently meet the current and anticipated needs of the Town.
- To provide an efficient and effective transportation system in the Town with appropriate linkages and capacities.
- To protect the environment and natural resources of the Town.

Smart Growth principles:

- Mix land uses
- Take advantage of compact building design
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development

-Smart Growth Network

Recommendation Principles

The plan principals were derived by reviewing all of the public comments and summarizing those that were most prevalent. The following principles are a list of general underlying factors used in making the land use recommendations for this plan. Recommendations should help to...

- Provide a unique sense of community and place.
- Promote orderly development.
- Preserve and enhance valuable natural and cultural resources
- Maintain low-density while incorporating diversity of housing.
- Create "quality" commercial areas.
- Create more options and connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Facilitate intergovernmental coordination and cooperation
- Minimize negative development impacts.
- Integrate land use recommendations with transportation systems.

In an effort to integrate land use recommendations with transportation systems, it is helpful to consider the intensity of different land uses as well as appropriate locations for them. Existing and proposed infrastructure should be able to support proposed land uses.

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General Development and Growth Management

The Town is a well-organized, involved community and while some of its fundamental growth management can be addressed by town policy and implementation, some quality of life and quality of built environment issues requires detailed planning with adjoining municipalities and Hamilton County. The extension or possibility of extension of sewers and the provision of water through increased capacity of Walden's Ridge Utility District is the advent of urban services for previously undeveloped land on the plateau. Sewer provision and adequate water supply can allow more dense growth than previously permitted in some areas.

Therefore, it is the intent of this Growth Management section to prescribe overarching goals and policies which help to create and define the community character with the Land Use Plan and latter section providing strategies to implement these concepts.

Objective: something that one's efforts or actions are intended to attain or accomplish; purpose; goal
--

Goal: Preserve and enhance the small town character with a sense of place that consists of distinctive neighborhoods, open spaces, and appropriate-scale development.

Objective: Signal Mountain will use this land use plan a tool for making development decisions regarding land use, zoning, and the expansion of public infrastructure.

Objective: Open space and natural resource preservation will be promoted through a compact development pattern in the town's developing areas.

Objective: Infill residential development should preserve the integrity of existing neighborhoods and be of compatible density and form.

Objective: New non-residential development is encouraged to occur in and around existing or new activity centers.

Goal: The Town of Signal Mountain should grow and develop efficiently relative to the cost and timing of providing infrastructure and public services

Objective: Infrastructure, particularly sewer and water service and site-specific transportation improvements, should be available concurrently with new development.

Goal: Encourage intergovernmental coordination and cooperation

Objective: Continue coordination with surrounding communities regarding land use decisions, municipal services and address other issues of mutual concern.

Goal: Make development decisions fair and predictable.

Objective: Provide a development process that is clear and predictable and moves forward in a timely manner. A "fair" decision does not mean that the compromise that is reached is one with which everyone is happy.

Goal: Encourage public/private partnerships to support desired development

Objective: Continue efforts to strengthen partnerships with other local, state and regional agencies, as well as with nonprofit and private enterprises.

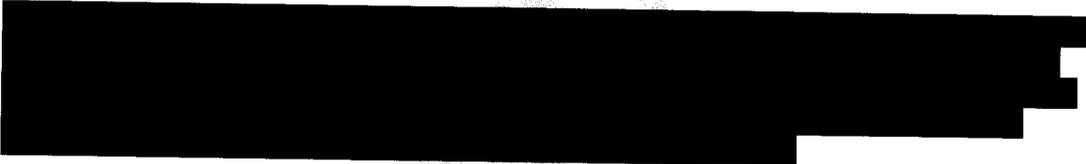
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Land Use and Function

The Land Use Plan is an attempt to integrate positive community assets and improve the quality of life for everyone. It is a description of how land should be occupied or utilized. It should serve as a guide to property owners and public decision makers for analyzing development strategies.

The Land Use classification are meant to be broad enough to give the Town and stakeholders flexibility in implementation, but clear enough to provide sufficient direction in making informed zoning decisions. The map classifications show the highest recommended use. No automatic change will be made to existing zoning. This plan will be used in part to advise individual future zoning requests.

The Town's Zoning Regulations contain more detailed provisions and standards and can be found at www.signalmtntown.org. Unless specified in this plan, more than one zoning district may be consistent with a single land use classification.



Land Use Classifications

See following section for expanded discussion on categories.

Preserve Areas

Preserve areas include undisturbed natural open space that is currently protected from development. This class includes areas under environmental protection by law, as well as land acquired for conservation through purchase or by easement.

Reserve Areas

The category includes areas of vacant, open space that are not currently protected from development under current code. Included are: steep slopes, open space, view sheds corridors intended for acquisition and required buffers should be included in this category.

Civic

This classification is primarily used to identify government properties. Typical uses in this designation include the Town hall, fire/rescue stations, the library and other government facilities.

Infill Residential

This category provides for the maintenance of the existing pattern of development. Most of this area should continue to develop with lots with a minimum size of 1/2 of an acre. New developments on larger lots, or a combination of lots, should be of the same character of the surrounding residential development. Planned Unit Development and Open Space developments are only appropriate under certain conditions.

Emerging Residential

To help preserve the scenic beauty and sensitive natural features of this area, Open Space subdivisions are the preferred method for development in these areas. Residential development should be limited to single-family detached housing unless the development is included in a PUD or an Open Space Subdivision. In this case, attached houses may be acceptable as long as the development consists primarily of single-family detached housing with an overall, low gross density.

Moderate-density Residential

This classification is primarily used to specify locations of existing moderate-density residential uses. The plan does not recommend expansion of moderate-density residential uses except in locations depicted on the map.

High-density Residential

A density of approximately 7.4 du/acre is allowed under the town's regulations. Existing high-density developments are shown on the map, but any new development of this density and/or use is shown as part of a Focus Area.

Townhouses when developed outside of cohesive PUD subdivisions are included in this class as well as patio homes, attached condominium units and smaller-scale apartment developments. This classification is most often recommended for use as a "step down" use between intense commercial development and less intense residential dwellings. This class is primarily depicted in the "Focus Area" studies at the end of this chapter.

Light Business

Single-use businesses such as offices or neighborhood serving commercial are dispersed throughout the community with very few having their use reflected in their current zoning. Expansion of these uses is discouraged.

Business Nodes

Land uses within these nodes are typically a mix of retail and office use with intensity of uses varying depending on location to higher-capacity transportation corridors.

Neighborhood Centers

Land uses within Neighborhood Activity Centers typically consist of a variety of small-scale retail shops, small drug store, convenience stores, eating establishments, offices, and personal and business service establishments with civic and institutional uses such as green space included. Higher-density housing may also be appropriate, either in mixed-use structures, or in single-use developments.

Open Space

Open space areas include a mix of undisturbed open space that is currently protected from development and unprotected vacant, open space areas. This category includes public or privately-owned land such as golf courses, parks, community lots owned by neighborhood associations or other developed sites used for recreational activities.

(See section XX that recommends reclassifying areas as Preserve or Reserve areas once further study is completed.)

Residential Land Use

As explained earlier in this document, the Town developed around the prominence and success of Signal Mountain Inn. Early development patterns were residential in character and centered on the present day Alexian Village complex. The primarily single-family residential nature of the town, in part, stems from the entire residential portion of the town being zoned R-1 which allowed only single-family development as late as the mid-1970s. Planned Unit Developments with apartments were allowed at that time but at a very low density. According to RPA planning documents of the time, by the mid-80s, rising housing costs and the aging of the population created a demand for multi-family housing. As a result, condominium townhouses at the intersection of Taft Highway and Signal Mountain Blvd. were developed. A townhouse development has also been added to the Town in conjunction with an accompanying attached and detached residential condominium development. Another recent addition to residential development is Alexian Brothers' six-story multi-unit senior living expansion.

Residential single-family lot sizes range from 15,000 sq. ft. (approximately 0.34 acres) in the Old Towne area to half acre to one acre lots in more recent subdivisions to large, rural lots in the Shackleford Ridge Road area.

Variations on the traditional single-family dwelling subdivision have been discussed in Signal Mountain as a way to expand housing opportunities while maintaining the essential character of mountain life. Cluster developments, open space zoning guidelines and other types of residential development options are seen as viable alternatives to previous development types. They will be included in the mix of housing types allowed, subject to appropriate safeguards.

Several goals of this Plan center on encouraging a balance of housing opportunities through the preservation of existing housing areas and the development of new neighborhoods. The following issues have been considered in the formulation of residential land use recommendation:

"The shifting age and family composition of households will drive changes in the types of homes and the types of home improvements most in demand. At the same time, the growing number of singles and unmarried couples, as well as the shrinking share of families with children, will drive housing demand toward multifamily units, townhouses and condominiums." (The State of the Nation's Housing 2005, Part III: Demographic Trends by Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies)

Goal: The Town will provide a range of housing opportunities and choices that contribute positively to the surrounding area.

Public meeting participants indicated a strong preference for maintaining a low-density within the town. This plan does not specify a maximum gross density for developments. However, residents did express that there is a need and opportunity for development other than single-family housing. The Town and its urban growth areas are generally developed and should continue to be developed overall at a low-density level to maintain its small-town character. Limiting residential density in this category is recommended due to several factors:

- This is the current prevailing development form.
- There is currently limited capacity on the roadways up and down the mountain. Maintaining residential growth at a lower-density level will help reduce the increase in vehicle trips on the roadways up and down the mountain.

The following residential land use classifications are intended to meet these objectives:

- Continue to protect and preserve the existing residential areas of the Town.
- Provide a variety of housing options including higher density and attached housing in appropriate areas.
- Recognize that the Town is composed of residential neighborhoods, each with its own individual character, and allow change consistent with reinforcing positive neighborhood values.
- Densities of new residential development shall be compatible with surrounding residential areas and a buffer will be provided when there is a significant difference in densities.
- Routine maintenance by private property owners is encouraged and the overall condition of the property should be upgraded where necessary to preserve neighborhood stability. When necessary, the Town shall utilize strict Codes enforcement to protect and preserve stable residential areas.
- Provide land use categories for a variety of housing densities to offer existing and future residents sufficient opportunities and choices for locating in the community.

Infill Residential

The Town's existing neighborhoods are generally low-density, residential developments of primarily detached, single-family structures with larger lots, generous setbacks, large blocks, and limited connectivity. Higher-density developments are either stand-alone (such as Jamestown) or incorporated into mixed-residential developments (such as Westfield).

These areas are expected to change very little over time with some expansion or replacement made to individual homes and limited development on single "remnant" lots in subdivisions.

In the town's residential areas, there is an expressed desire in maintain the existing pattern of development and this character should be preserved as much as possible.

New developments on larger lots, or a combination of lots, should be of the same character of the surrounding residential development. Proposed residential development which has a significantly different size, height, or mass from adjacent existing development will be discouraged if the proposed differences detract from the use and privacy of the adjacent development. Items such as setbacks, frontage, the

way buildings front on the street, garage placements, building scale and design features can help integration be seamless.

Most of this area should continue to develop with lots with a minimum size of 1/2 of an acre.

Planned Unit Developments (PUD) are allowed in Infill areas with a Special Permit and can provide a better site design and can be more sensitive to existing conditions than traditional single-family residential subdivisions. PUDs allow a density of up to 4 du/a in low-density residential areas and allow attached dwellings—townhomes and multi-family housing. This density and housing type may not match the character of surrounding development even if of similar density.

PUDs are most appropriate in Infill areas if the following conditions are met:

- The higher-density allowed under the PUD is off-set by meaningful open space.
- If a development contains attached housing in an area of predominately detached housing, the attached housing should be located to the interior of the development.
- If a development contains attached housing in an area of predominately detached housing, the development should retain a natural vegetative buffer separating the perimeter of the site from adjacent, exterior roadways and the neighboring properties.

Open Space subdivisions are also allowed in low-density Infill areas. Although attached housing is not permitted, the reduced lot size allowed under this option may not be compatible with surrounding development. This development form is appropriate if the required open space or additional landscaping is used as a buffer separating the perimeter of the site from adjacent, exterior roadways and the neighboring properties.

Survey show that 40-80% of people living in golf course developments are not golfers, they choose to live there because of open space visible from their windows.-NEMO (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials) Project.

Developing Area

Residents value the open space in their community and realize that it helps provide character. However, large lot development with structures distributed on an equal amount of acreage with large lawns and wide roads contributes to the loss of this character and do not protect wildlife habitat and water quality. To help preserve the scenic beauty and sensitive natural features of this area, Open Space subdivisions or Planned Unit Developments with substantial amounts of open space are the preferred methods of development in these areas.

In order to preserve desired natural features, the focus in this area should be providing more flexibility within regulations regarding net density, while maintaining a gross low density. This will allow better preservation of open space and environmental features.

Residential development should be limited to single-family detached housing unless the development is included in a PUD or an Open Space Subdivision. In this case,

attached houses may acceptable as long as the development consists primarily of single-family detached housing with an overall, low gross density.

Attached housing units within the PUD should be sited to the interior of the development site. In addition, PUDs within this classification should retain a substantial natural vegetative buffer separating the perimeter of the site from adjacent, exterior roadways and the neighboring properties.

Moderate-density Residential

This classification is primarily used to specify locations of existing moderate-density residential uses. The plan does not recommend expansion of moderate-density residential uses except as a "step-down" transitional use in Neighborhood Centers.

High-density Residential

A density of approximately 7.4 du/acre is allowed under the town's regulations. Existing high-density developments are shown on the map, but any new development of this density and/or use is shown as part of a Focus Area.

Townhouses when developed outside of cohesive PUD subdivisions are included in this class as well as patio homes, attached condominium units and smaller-scale apartment developments. This classification is most often recommended for use as a "step down" use between intense commercial development and less intense residential dwellings or inclusion in a mixed-use center. This class is primarily depicted in the "Focus Area" studies at the end of this section.

Residential Implementation Strategies:

- Provide zoning classifications that permit a variety of residential development types.
- Consider strategically reducing minimum lot size requirements where appropriate while keeping overall density low.
- Support the transition of existing Town-owned or non-residentially used sites (i.e. schools) as opportunities to increase housing variety.
- Use transitional areas such as linear greenbelts, landscaping, or other design elements between residential neighborhoods of differing densities, and between residential and non-residential areas in order to enhance compatibility of land uses.
- Revise existing Planned Unit Development regulations to specify an amount of required open space and the form and/or function of the open space. Existing regulations only state that onsite "usable recreation and open space shall be provided".
- Require traffic studies for new residential developments as required by the Vehicular Access ordinance (Ord. 98-5)
- Under state law, division of land of 5 acres or more do not have to meet the requirements of the subdivision regulation. Landowners and developers of these properties should be encouraged to meet the intent of this plan's recommendations.
- Use open space as a buffer to maintain the visual character of roadways in developing areas.
- To ensure that the town's existing Open Space subdivision regulations are effective, the town should review and possibly revise existing codes based on the recommendations provided by Randall Arendt and found in the Appendix.

Gross Density: The number of total dwelling units within an area divided by the total area (in acres). This includes all nonresidential land uses and private streets in the town, as well as rights-of-way of dedicated streets and dedicated open space.

Net Density: The number of total dwelling units divided by the net area (in acres). This does not include public rights-of-way and private streets, dedicated open space, parks, sidewalks, and other public facilities within the area.

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TOWNHOUSES

Definition: A townhouse is a dwelling unit attached by fireproof common walls to other similar type units, each unit having an open space in the front and rear, and each unit also on its own individual lot.

Location: Townhouses have historically been located in the more densely populated urban areas of town, thus the name "town" house. Therefore, they are most appropriate in areas that are more urban in character. Urban character areas are generally characterized by moderate and high residential density in or near commercial development and business centers.

Townhouses are also appropriate in or adjacent to commercial, high density residential, or transitional areas. Transitional areas are typically located between business districts and residential districts and act as a buffer between uses of different density, intensity or compatibility.

Townhouses are also generally more acceptable and compatible with surrounding detached low-density single-family residential development if they are part of a Unified Development and sited to the interior of that development. A Unified Development is a single development consisting mostly of detached single-family residential dwellings with a smaller attached dwelling component.

Discretion: Townhouse-only developments have been approved in predominantly single family R-1 areas. Some have been appropriate and compatible developments and some have not. Whether or not such a development fits into an R-1 area seems to depend on the quality and architectural compatibility of the townhouses as well as the degree of landscaping. Unfortunately, landscaping is the only one of these components that can be directly regulated by the zoning ordinance. Therein lies the problem in determining whether or not a townhouse development is appropriate. It is ultimately up to the developer to provide evidence of the quality of the product and to provide whatever assurances are possible as to the quality and compatibility of the proposed units.

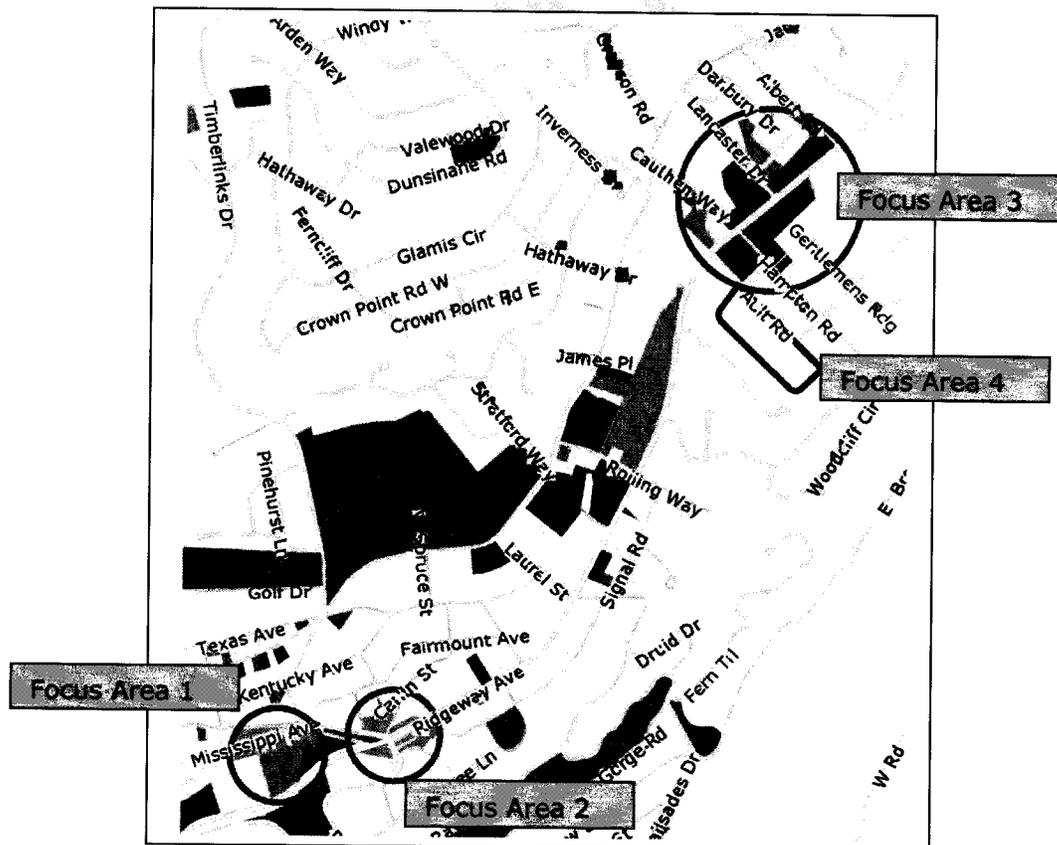
Non-Residential uses

This plan recommends some expansion of the Town's business district and identifies the possible location of a new activity center. At the initial public meeting, residents expressed that the opportunity exists for more non-residential uses (i.e. "mixed-use", "retail", "medical clinics", "quality restaurants").

If the town wishes to function as a small town, there needs to be a variety of retail and service opportunities. However, the development of new sites and the redevelopment of existing sites should occur appropriately.

The Town's current business development is centered at three locations: near the intersection of Signal Mountain Blvd. and Mississippi Ave. Ridgeway Ave. at Palisades Dr., and along Taft Hwy. between Cauthen Way and the town limits near Albert Rd. Much of the development is single-story strip development or stand-alone, single-use structures such as offices, restaurants, or banks. There is no integration of residential or civic uses and pedestrian connectivity within and between nodes is limited.

Two existing areas will continue to be classified as Business Nodes and an existing and an emerging area should develop as Neighborhood Centers. All development and redevelopment will meet the design criteria and landscaping requirements contained in the Design Manual.



Light Business Mix

Other single-use businesses such as offices are dispersed throughout the community with very few having their use reflected in their current zoning. Expansion of these uses is discouraged.

Business Nodes

These nodes have a mix of retail and office uses. Existing nodes, with a few exceptions for more recently developed uses, have smaller or shared parking facilities. Few pedestrian or bicycle amenities exist within or between nodes.

Focus Area: Signal Mountain Blvd. and Mississippi Ave.

This node contains a mix of retail and office uses. The western edge of this area is bounded by the church south of Mississippi Avenue and by the five-way intersection to the east. In order to maintain the residential integrity of this area, there should be no expansion of this node unless as identified below, other than potential conversion of some solely office uses to low-intensity, neighborhood retail uses if appropriate parking is available.

One possible location for expansion of this Neighborhood Center is the existing site of the town's transfer station. Primarily used to move garbage from Town trucks to trucks moving trash off the mountain, this five acre site does have potential for redevelopment. However, what makes this a good location for higher, intensity mixed-uses such as location away from neighborhoods and access to major corridors also makes this a preferred location for this station. Conversion to a mixed-use site is only likely to happen if a suitable site is found for the transfer station.

Focus Area: Ridgeway Ave. at Palisades.

This Business Node contains higher-intensity uses than the one located at Signal Mountain Blvd. and Mississippi Ave. This mix of uses is appropriate due to its location on Ridgeway Avenue/Hwy. 127, the number of travel lanes, and the protection offered by the traffic lights. However, no expansion of this commercial node is recommended in order to protect the integrity of the surrounding residential properties. Redevelopment of this area is encouraged to provide pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as bike racks and sidewalks, and seek to improve the appearance of this node through streetscaping.

Before bicycle, pedestrian and/or streetscaping are installed, consideration needs to be given to the existing parking layout as many businesses have back-out parking in front of their buildings. If right-of-way needs to be taken for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, an adequate amount of parking for these businesses needs to be ensured. Ideally, the Town and the property owners will seek safer alternatives to the back-out parking situation, particularly along the heavily-traveled Taft Highway corridor.

Neighborhood Centers

Land uses within Neighborhood Activity Centers typically consist of a variety of small-scale retail shops, small drug store, convenience stores, eating establishments, offices, and personal and business service establishments. Civic and institutional uses, as well as open spaces, neighborhood parks, greens, and squares should also be included.

Neighborhood activity centers should balance pedestrian and automobile needs with pedestrian access being an integral element of the commercial core and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. A continuous network of sidewalks in the commercial and residential areas encourages people to walk from their homes to retail shops, parks, and open spaces. To make the commercial core more attractive for pedestrians, landscape amenities and public open spaces should be provided.

As part of a mixed-use center, higher-density housing may also be appropriate, either in mixed-use structures, or in single-use developments. With the intention of designing a community that lets older residents remain on the mountaintop, providing a location of housing other than single-family detached near Neighborhood Centers allows older residents to remain active in the community once they no longer drive. This location will allow them to take advantage of the restaurants, banks, and other services this location can provide.

What is a mixed-use development?

-Mixed-Use Development Handbook, Urban Land Institute

Both the concept of mixed-use development and the actual product have evolved tremendously. The original definition developed in 1976, however, still holds today. Mixed-use developments are characterized by:

- Three or more significant revenue-producing uses (such as retail/entertainment,/office, residential, hotel, and/or civic/cultural/recreation) that in well-planned projects are mutually supporting;
- Significant physical and functional integration of project components (and thus a relatively close-knit and intensive use of land), including uninterrupted pedestrian connections; and
- Development in conformance with a coherent plan (that frequently stipulates the type and scale of uses, permitted densities, and related items.).

These should be places designed for people. Attractive sidewalks, small parks, and shops and restaurants that serve the community allow residents to interact with each other and help create the "small town" feel residents appreciate.

Neighborhood Activity Centers are appropriate at the intersection of major thoroughfares: for those areas divided into four quadrants by the intersection of two arterial classified streets, or the intersection of an arterial and a collector classified street.

Focus Area: Taft Hwy. at Cauthen Way to town limits

This commercial area should redevelop over time into a mixed-use center including a range of retail, office, civic, and possibly residential uses. Some expansion of this existing center is recommended to provide the town and its residents the wider range of services present in a small town. However, to avoid the "stripping" of non-residential development along Taft Highway, a firm edge needs to be established with transitional uses or distinct features such as rights-of-way.

There is possibility of expansion of this center behind the previous CVS pharmacy. Development of this area should be particularly sensitive to the sloping topography and any streams on or near the site. Additionally, any potential use and activity on this site should be directed away from the residences on Cauthen Way. Access should be either through the existing development onto Taft Highway or onto the right-of-way between the vacant pharmacy site and Suntrust Bank. No access should be allowed from Cauthen Way.

Another area identified for expansion as part of a mixed-use center is approximately four acres between Hampton Rd. and Ault Rd. Acting as more of a transitional area away from the higher-intensity uses in the core (such as Pruett's), this site could serve as an area of planned higher-density residential and neighborhood serving office or retail uses. Most appropriately developed as a whole, rather than on a parcel by parcel basis, development of this site needs to provide significant buffering from adjoining lower-density uses and provide quality public space. There is the possibility of connectivity between Ault and Hampton Roads from an existing right-of-way spur. A traffic study and discussion with the Town Engineer can help determine whether access to one or both of the adjoining local streets is most appropriate and/or if an additional curb cut may be needed on Taft Highway.

No expansion of non-residential use is recommended at this time for the properties on Cauthen Way abutting Taft Hwy. These two residential structures, located on approximately ¼ to ½ acre size lots, front on Cauthen Way and change of use could negatively impact the adjoining neighbors due to the size of lots and the proximity of neighboring residences. The property to the east of Cauthen Way appears to currently have no direct access to Taft Highway. Ingress and egress at this location onto Cauthen Way for higher-traffic generating uses may be unsafe. If some relief is desired by the property owners and development occurs across Taft Highway, these two structures may be appropriate locations for traffic-generating home occupations (currently an allowable use with a special permit by the town).

Focus Area: Shackleford Ridge Rd.

The Land Use Plan map recommends the development of a new activity center along Shackleford Ridge Road at an appropriate location and time. Development of new node is most appropriately located at the intersection of two major roadways to take advantage of the connectivity provided by two thoroughfares. This node should develop as a neighborhood activity center and be small-scale, clustered, low-intensity and relatively low traffic generating developments that support the common day-to-day demands of surrounding neighborhoods for goods and services. The size of the center will be dictated by the built and natural environment and the amount and nature of the surrounding residential development.

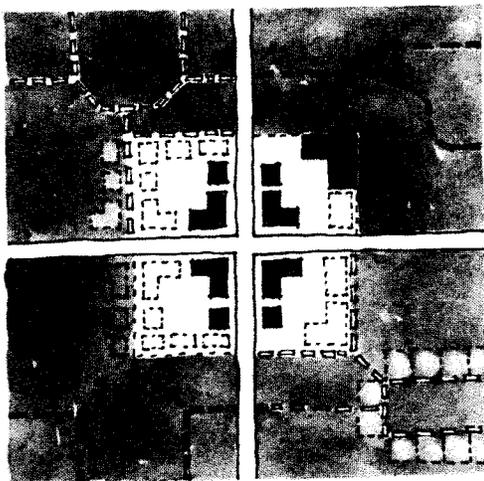
The Regional Planning Agency is often asked about "spot" zoning and whether a situation like a new mixed-use node on Shackleford Ridge Road constitutes a "spot" zoning.

Definition: The zoning of a small area of land or parcel for a use that is substantially different from the zoned land of the surrounding area.

Legality: Spot zoning in general does **not** violate any specific law or statute. However, there have been numerous court decisions which have overturned spot zoning if it was found to be arbitrary, capricious, unreasonable, or if it violated a state statute or constitutional guaranty. Any rezoning, for that matter, may be overturned for the same reasons.

Discretion: Spot zoning is normally invalid if the permitted use is very different from the surrounding area; the area involved is small; or it can be shown that it primarily promotes the private interest of the owner rather than the general public welfare.

On the other hand, it may be valid if it is made for the benefit of the community at large, as with the rezoning of corner properties for commercial use to provide services in a residential district. Spot zoning may also be valid if a land use plan calls for such zoning changes as part of the plan's implementation.



Typical Features

- Contains both Mixed-Use and Multi-Use developments.
- Commercial development is small-scale and neighborhood oriented such as personal service and eating establishments.
- Develops at the intersection of arterial and/or collector streets.
- Develops in an emerging growth area.
- Includes pedestrian connections to the surrounding development.

The intent of these recommendations is to maintain and create strong, attractive, identifiable retail and mixed-use districts. These areas contribute fiscal support for desired town services and provide a mix of retail and service opportunities. In reviewing the policies and action steps, it is important to consider the needs of businesses as well as residents when making land use and transportation decisions.

Focus Area: Middle School Site

The existing middle school site on Ault Rd. will no longer be needed by the Board of Education when the new school is opened in Fall 2008. Vacant schools in the county have been reused as senior living facilities, high-end condos, neighborhood recreation centers, and for religious and commercial purposes.

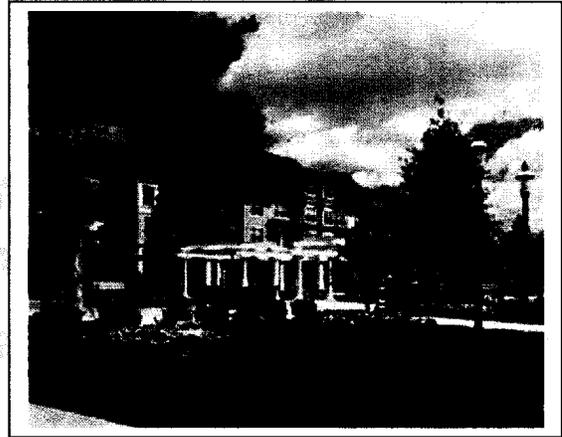
During the public process, comments directed towards the school mentioned that this site provides an opportunity for something else to occur. Among the uses listed for this location are retail, teen center, senior-targeted housing, offices, mixed-use, higher-density housing, coffee shop, and a park. This 13.5 acre site provides a good opportunity for reuse as a mixed-use center and may be one of the most viable options for increased retail and service uses, quality public spaces, and/or higher-density residential development.

This location, although off Taft Hwy., has good access via Ault Rd. As redevelopment of this site occurs, additional connectivity to Hampton Rd. may be considered. There is an existing right-of-way stub approximately 450' east of Taft Hwy. on Ault Rd. that could provide an option.

The Town should work with the Board of Education to determine how sale of this site could best occur to benefit the town and meet its goals and vision for this location. The Town may be able to either hold the property itself or work with the BOE to request development proposals.

Any potential reuse of this site should involve the neighboring property owners and residents.

NEED MORE PICTURES



9/27/2007

Principles for Quality Public Spaces.

- Quality public spaces can operate in concert with other civic uses to create centers of critical mass: new town centers, for example.
- Quality public spaces promote a sense of ownership, comfort and identity.
- Quality public spaces are for people; they should be planned by the people who will use them.
- Quality public spaces provide for a diverse range of activities important to the life of communities. The role of public spaces is not truly filled by the private spaces that take their place in the suburban environment: malls and shopping centers, mandated open space in subdivisions, and individual yards.
- Quality public spaces must be accessible and linked to the surrounding community.
- Quality public space should support a wide variety of uses and activities.
- Quality public spaces promote a sense of community by drawing people into the community life they promote.

Objective: Maintain a diversity of retail and office uses to serve both town and mountaintop residents.

Implementation Strategies:

- Encourage existing commercial nodes to incorporate suggested improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Permit a variety of retail and service uses including [zoning districts/types]
- Review existing zoning ordinance to determine if existing zones provide for the scale and form of preferred development.
- Use this Land Use Plan as a guide for directing development towards appropriate retail areas.

Objective: Make retail centers distinctive and attractive destinations.

Implementation strategies:

- Encourage the maintenance and revitalization of existing commercial centers.
- Create a plan for improved streetscapes in commercial centers.
- Review existing landscaping and parking requirements in the Design Manual and revise if needed.

Objective: Balance land use and the transportation system.

New development will generate new trips that will impact the transportation network. Generally, higher-density and intensity projects are more appropriately located along transportation corridors where capacity is greater and the system is more able to absorb the impact of these trips.

Implementation Strategies:

- Guide development towards existing nodes or the intersection of major thoroughfares in developing areas.

- Require traffic studies for all new non-residential developments for the Vehicular Access ordinance (Ord. 98-5)
- Include centers as important destinations during pedestrian and bicycle planning efforts.

Objective: Manage the transition between higher and lower-intensity land uses through landscaping or better site design. Create and enhance centers that are compatible with existing and new neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategy:

- Review existing landscaping and buffering requirements in the Design Manual and revise if needed.

Objective: Ensure landscaping standards are adequate for further development and redevelopment.

Implementation Strategy:

- The Design Manual's "statement of intent" should describe why landscaping is required in parking areas. In addition to landscaping's role in improving lot appearance and safety, its value regarding water quality protection and stormwater management should be mentioned.
- Landscaping regulations typically require a certain percentage of a parking area be vegetated. Consider the possibility of stormwater management plans incorporating these areas. For example, stormwater runoff can be directed to sunken vegetated islands (typically raised and curbed) that can filter and infiltrate stormwater (raingardens or bio-retention areas).

Objective: Ensure existing guidelines provide clear guidance on recommendations and requirements.

Implementation Strategies:

- Review existing Design Manual for areas of improvement or needed change.
- Reformat and revise Design Manual with graphics and pictures to better explain principals and standards.

Other Implementation Strategies:

- Anyone proposing a request of zoning should meet with the staff of the Regional Planning Agency and town to review the proposal in regard to the land use plan and existing zoning ordinance and other regulations.
- Review regularly and modify town codes if needed to incorporate provisions for desired new technologies like green building and Low Impact Developments.
- Reference the threatened and endangered species map and database maintained by the TDEC Division of Natural Heritage and the proposed Resource Map in making development decisions and through the rezoning process.

Purpose of the Signal Mountain Design Review Commission.

2-501. Purpose. (1) Maintenance of the town as a predominantly single-family residential community by protecting the character and integrity of existing and future residential areas through the provision of high quality design standards in new development and the protection of residential areas from encroachment by noncompatible land uses;

(2) Maintenance of a balance among land uses within the town favoring residential over commercial or industrial growth, a policy requiring the town to protect its' residential property tax base through the implementation of appropriate community appearance standards generally and, more specifically, of standards insuring that commercial, industrial and multi-family development do not impair the property values of single-family detached residential development within the town.

Industry/Manufacturing

In the Town's 2000 Land Use and Transportation Plan, there was an expressed desire to prohibit the location of heavy industrial uses in the Town with a recommendation that the Planning Commission and Council reevaluate this restriction with every plan update. Limiting high-intensity manufacturing and industrial uses seems even more appropriate with the recent restriction on the operation of trucks with three or more axles passing through town. This plan does not recommend any development of industrial or manufacturing uses.

Historic and Cultural Preservation

Historic resources provide residents with another way of connecting with their community. Historic places provide the background of where a community came from and the protection of these places saves valuable resources while providing a link to this past. According to the National Trust of Historic Preservation the style and the variety of historic places makes communities more attractive.

Other advantages of historic preservation include:

- Preservation and protection of the historical and /or architectural value and cultural heritage of buildings, landmarks, and historic districts.
- Stabilization and improvement of property values
- An increase in neighborhood pride and awareness of the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past.
- Enhancement of the area's attraction to residents, tourists and visitors through the protection and preservation of historically significant areas which serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.
- The fostering and encouragement of preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of structures, areas and neighborhoods.

The Town has many sites worthy of preservation due to their historic or cultural significance. Currently, three sites and one district are on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. The Register is part of a nationwide program to support public and private efforts to identify and protect historic and archaeological resources. It is important to note that listing on the National Register does not ensure protection of buildings from demolition or abusive alterations. Listing does not restrict the rights of private property owners. Listed site are:

- Connor Toll House: 4212 Anderson Pike, Listed 1977-08-22
 - Signal Mountain Elementary School: 809 Kentucky Ave., Listed 2001-04-19
 - Signal Mountain Historic District: Roughly along James Blvd., Brady Point Rd., and Signal Point Rd., Listed 2001-10-05
 - Topside: N of Signal Mountain off TN 8 on Wilson Ave., Listed 1973-04-11
- The W Road and Bachman School are other listed sites in the area.

It should be the goal of the Town to foster and encourage the preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of structures, areas and neighborhoods. The following principals apply:

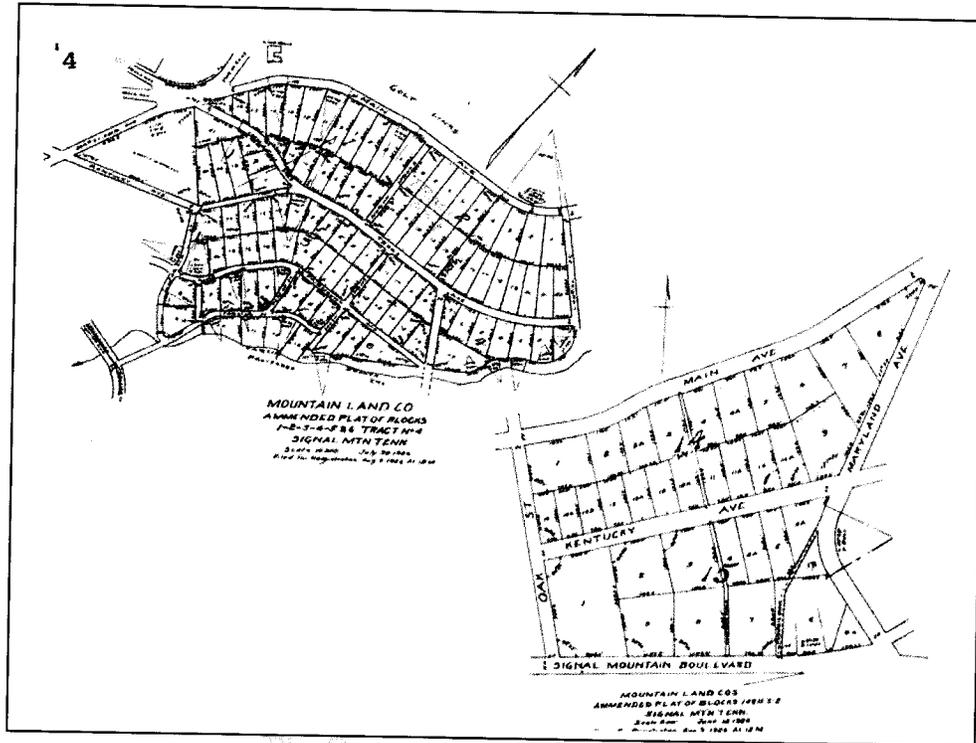
- The Town will place increased emphasis on protecting and restoring historic landscapes and settings as well as individual structures.
- Emphasis should be given to the upkeep and enhancement of publicly-owned historic features.
- The potential impacts of proposed developments on historic sites or areas should be carefully considered, and appropriate measures should be required of the owner that mitigate any adverse impacts.

Implementation Strategies:

- Inventory and establishing a comprehensive listing of historic structures and districts.
- Pursue possible designation of Local Historic Districts. Usually, the purpose of local designation is to protect historically and architecturally significant

neighborhoods and districts from insensitive alterations and demolition and to ensure that new buildings are compatible with the old. This process involves an ordinance change, the creation of a historic zoning commission, designation of local district(s), and creation and implementation of design review guidelines.

- Coordinate local preservation efforts with local, state and federal programs to broaden potential scope and impact of such programs. The Tennessee Historical Commission and Southeast Tennessee Regional Historic Planner can provide assistance with both state and federal programs and funding.



Natural Resources

The desire for a high quality of life extends to a high quality environment and landscape in which to work, live, and play. The Town of Signal Mountain will continue to be a desired location to develop, but this does not mean that unnecessary losses of natural resources and environmental quality must be the result. It is clear from the discussion emanating from the public input process of the Plan formulation that the preservation of existing natural features and the scenic beauty of the Town are paramount concerns of Town residents. These concerns extend not only to the impact on future development trends and areas, but also to the desire expressed by many residents to address the concerns of failing septic systems and water quality issues.

Currently, the Town has approximately 600 acres of land reserved for park and recreation usage. As part of that acreage, the Town has eight natural areas and three wilderness parks that serve primarily as open space. Much of the town-owned property set aside for parkland lies on or near steep slopes (defined in the Signal Mountain Zoning Regulations as 25% or greater) or waterways. Although not within the Town's municipal limits, Prentice Cooper State Forest provides 26,000 acres of open space and recreational opportunities to residents. It also contains 13 miles of the Tennessee Cumberland Trail State Park which connects to the Town's Rainbow Lake Wilderness Area.

Recently, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) imposed a moratorium on sewer hookups in the Town because the town's wastewater treatment plan had repeatedly violated environmental regulations during the previous three years. TDEC also announced contamination of three streams- Bee, Short, and Shoal Creeks- by enough E. coli to cause serious illness. The bacteria problem is related to human waste from failing septic systems, an aging sewer network, and overflow at the sewage treatment plan.

The three creeks have been on TDEC's impaired waters list since 2004. This list identifies the streams and lakes within watersheds in Tennessee that are "water quality limited" or are expected to exceed water quality standards within the following two-year period and need pollution controls. Water quality limited streams are those that have one or more properties that violate water quality standards. They are considered impaired by pollution and not fully meeting designated uses. (Year 2004 303(d) List, September, 2004, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation)

Most of the Town is in the Tennessee River watershed with a portion of the Town and its growth area in the Suck Creek watershed. Watersheds, because of their physical shape and composition, naturally filter, absorb, and direct water to rivers, streams, lakes, and/or other naturally occurring bodies of water. Land development patterns and disturbance can dramatically affect water quality in a watershed.

Important natural areas that contribute significantly to a healthy balance between land development and the environment are riparian zones which include the floodplain and floodway, hillsides and mountains formed by soil composition including rock structures, sink holes, and caves, and trees and vegetation which filter air and

water pollutants, help maintain temperature balance and provide scenic and wildlife habitat.

Policies and actions promoting the preservation of the Town's scenic beauty and natural resources are provided through recommendations in this section and in the land use plan.

Mapping Resources

It is necessary to maintain maps which identify specific natural resources within the community. The Town should identify and map sensitive resource areas and maintain a current map of these sites.

Implementation Strategy:

- Create a map of environmentally sensitive areas including slopes, native or endangered species, and riparian buffers.
- Reference the threatened and endangered species map and database maintained by the TDEC Division of Natural Heritage.
- Once resources are identified and mapped, update Parks and Open Space category on Land Use Plan map to reflect the following:

Preserve Areas

Preserve areas include undisturbed natural open space that is currently protected from development. This class includes areas under environmental protection by law, as well as land acquired for conservation through purchase or by easement. Examples of Natural Conservation areas include:

- Surface water bodies
- Protected wetlands
- Purchased open space
- Greenways and Trails
- Conservation easements

Reserve Areas

The category includes areas of vacant, open space that are not currently protected from development under current code. Included are: steep slopes, open space, view sheds corridors intended for acquisition and required buffers should be included in this category.

These areas may include public or privately owned land such as golf courses, parks, community lots owned by neighborhood associations or other developed sites used for recreational activities. Although they are expected to remain relatively undeveloped, Reserve lands still have the potential for eventual use at a higher intensity. In this case, the lands should be developed at intensity compatible with surrounding uses. Ideally, many Reserve lands will eventually gain the protected status enjoyed by Natural Conservation lands.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater is water which flows across the ground and pavement when it rains. Stormwater runoff has been identified as one of the major contributors to ongoing water quality problems in the United States (EPA Report: Our Built and Natural

Environments, A Technical Review of the Interactions between Land Use, Transportation, and Environmental Quality.) Its management is important to the community because of the volumes of stormwater being carried at a given point in time and the pollutants it carries. The need for stormwater maintenance is directly related to development. A lack of responsible development practices results in higher maintenance costs, undue health and safety risks, and a devaluation in property owner investment.

The Town was recently encouraged by TDEC to correct problems in its stormwater program. The Town has an MS4 Permit that requires the town to monitor, identify illicit discharges and impaired streams and take corrective action.

Implementation Strategies:

- Maintain communication with the Hamilton County Health Department regarding failing septic systems, appropriate remediation, and action taken.
- Aggressively enforce stormwater regulations.
- Actively and aggressively meet the requirements of the Town's current MS4 permit to avoid fines or involvement of the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Require installation, inspection, and maintenance of BMPs.
- Identify failing septic systems and prioritize remediation. If neighborhoods are a priority, educate and encourage residents to connect to the sewer system.
- Encourage educational programs and distribute Best Management Practices (BMPs) materials such as brochures and/or articles as part of stormwater management.
- Develop opportunities for increased public education at the schools or with civic groups regarding stormwater protection and the environment.
- Adopt landscaping provisions to complement existing Stormwater Management Standards.
- Encourage the use of stormwater management alternatives for street culverts such as bio-retention facilities.
- Paint "Dump No Waste - Drains to River" notices next to all stormwater drains.
- Seek local assistance (UTC, TDEC, and the Tennessee Division of Natural Heritage) in the identification of wetlands and sinkholes and with enforcement of existing state and federal regulations which specify wetlands shall not be regraded, filled, piped, diverted, channeled, built upon, or otherwise altered or disturbed except where state or federal permits have been obtained.

Riparian Buffers

TDEC defines a riparian buffer as a strip of undisturbed, original vegetation, enhanced or restored existing vegetation, or the re-establishment of vegetation surrounding an area of disturbance or bordering streams, ponds, wetlands, or lakes. The purpose is protect water quality by filtering pollutants, sediment, and nutrients from runoff, reduce storm runoff velocities, protect channel banks from scour and erosion, cool rivers and streams by creating shade, and provide food and cover for wildlife and aquatic organisms.

Implementation Strategies:

- Monitor and, if necessary, develop regulations to require riparian buffers and minimize stream bank alteration and erosion. The Tennessee Department of Conservation requirements apply only to streams with sediment or habitat impairment. A good stream buffer ordinance specifies the size and management of the stream buffer and is a specific planning tool to protect stream quality and aquatic habitat. Its primary use is to physically protect and separate a waterbody from future disturbance or encroachment.
- Promote property owners to contact TVA's Watershed Teams for information on protecting and enhancing the riparian zone in part through better landscape design and the use of native plants to help restore and protect stream quality.

Greenways

Greenways such as the North Chickamauga Greenway, while used for recreational purposes, exist predominantly for environmental protection, helping to protect the watersheds of the waterways they are located along. While greenways may have onsite restrooms or other facilities, typically greenways will have a level of infrastructure.

Objective: Institute and coordinate a program of mountain stream greenway planning.

Implementation Strategies:

- Adopt a Greenway Master Plan which includes specific recommendations on greenway locations as a method of buffering waterways.
- Develop a program in partnership with neighboring communities to enhance existing mountain stream greenways and create new greenways where appropriate.
- Sponsor stream restoration or stream clean-up projects.
- Work with the Trust for Public Land and other partners to continue expansion of the network of multi-use paths.
- As development occurs, work to secure easements for a greenway network expansion as part of the development process.
- Make mountain stream greenways a priority concern when planning future open space acquisitions, protection easements, and local land trusts, or other forms of management agreements with private land owners.

Slopes

The Town's existing zoning and land use tools for development provide little incentive or requirements for developers to practice environmentally sensitive development design. Protection of steep slopes next to streams is important due to the potential harm to water quality and aquatic habitats due to stream siltation and contamination of surface waters. Steep slope protection also prevents problems resulting from slope instability and provides for the maintenance of important view sheds and maintains an area's natural topography and drainage patterns.

Implementation Strategies:

- Define "steep" slopes. Slopes are characterized by the run over rise ratio. Defining "steep" slopes is common but varies from municipality to municipality.

- Consider developing a slope management ordinance and/or regulation encouraging development that is sensitive to steep topography.
- Identify areas appropriate for compact cluster developments adjacent to steep slopes.
- Identify ways to improve the subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance to reflect the importance of slope conservation including options such as expedited process for including protection provisions in the development site plan.

Tree Preservation

Public comments were clear that residents value the town's tree cover and concerns were expressed about the clear-cutting of development sites. Currently, there are no provisions or incentives for the prevention of extensive tree removal or tree preservation.

Benefits of Trees

-From "Building Greener Neighborhoods", American Forests and National Association of Home Builders

Energy Conservation and Air Quality

- Deciduous trees provide shade and can save 10 to 50 percent on a home's summer cooling costs.
- Deciduous trees provide evaporative cooling, lowering temperatures throughout a community.
- Evergreen trees block winter winds and can save 20 percent on a home's winter heating needs.
- Trees store carbon, offsetting the harmful by-products of burning fossil fuels.
- Trees trap air pollution particulates, cleaning air.

Storm-water Control and Water Quality

- Trees intercept and absorb storm-water, reducing runoff and soil erosion.
- Tree buffers near waterways improve water quality by acting as a filter.

Psychological and Physical Health

- Trees have a restorative effect that can improve physical wellbeing.
- Trees block and mask noise.
- Trees offer beauty and create a sense of place in the community.
- Trees provide recreational settings and wildlife habitat.

Marketability

- A well-treed development enhances property values and sales.
- Tree conservation enhances the developer's and builder's image.

Implementation Strategies:

- Assess the need for a tree coverage ordinance and and/or the creation of BMPs for tree protection.
- Consider the creation of a minimum standard for retaining existing tree cover on steep slopes.

Open Space preservation

The Town can use the acquisition of open space as a tool to protect high-priority resources. This is one method to insure that places of natural beauty and areas of wildlife habitat are preserved and maintained. There are also organizations that provide assistance to landowners to place their land in permanent conservation easements to ensure that important assets are preserved.

Objective: Use public and private open space acquisition as a method of preserving important natural resources.

Implementation Strategies:

- Prioritize areas/attributes for open space acquisition.
- Engage land trusts in conservation efforts.
- Maintain public open spaces and require private open space to be maintained.
- Use an array of techniques for open space preservation and acquisition.

Land Trusts are local, regional, or statewide nonprofit conservation organizations directly involved in helping protect natural, scenic, recreational, agricultural, historic, or cultural property. Land trusts work to preserve open land that is important to the communities and regions where they operate. They have direct involvement in land transactions. They initiate, implement, and monitor land protection devices for individual pieces of property or for larger land areas, depending on the trust's specific goals.

Other Implementation Strategies:

- Sponsor stream restoration or stream clean-up projects.
- Review erosion control plan for construction areas which have the potential for erosion during and following construction. In addition provide Best Management Practices information for proper installation erosion control devices and materials.
- Use Open Space Overlays as a method of allowing residential development while preserving sensitive natural areas, where appropriate.
- Consider adoption of maximum parking standards, instead of the minimum requirement found in the current zoning ordinance, and shared parking requirements to discourage development of vast surface parking lots and reduce impervious services.

UTILITIES

Sewer Service

The Town's 2000 Land Use and Transportation Plan contained a Sewerage Service Master Plan. Contained in the appendix, this master plan sought to address two main concerns. First, was the desire of residents to have their homes connected to the sewer system. Second, was addressing providing sewer service to the undeveloped portion of town (i.e. Shackelford Ridge Road area).

However, currently the Hamilton County Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority (WWTA), not the Town of Signal Mountain, is responsible for the public sewer system in the town. According to information provided by WWTA, the Authority extended a partnership offer to the Town to provide sewer service in a response to a report that the Town was considering a 150% rate increase to sewer service fees. In September 2002, the Town became a member of WWTA and the Authority accepted the town's sewer system. The WWTA is governed by a Board of Commissioners composed of five members appointed by the Hamilton County Mayor according to the Act and a representative from each municipality that has joined the WWTA. The Town Manager is the current representative.

At this time, WWTA does not have a detailed plan for expansion of its services although it does have a designated service area. There is not a plan for expansion in the Town because WWTA has a policy not to provide sewers to existing subdivisions. However, if requested and if the issue of covering the cost of provision of the service is addressed, the Authority will consider system expansion to these areas. WWTA has offered to partner with the Town in developing a master sewer plan and is studying alternative routes to remove wastewater from the mountain. Currently, the main drivers for sewers in WWTA's service areas are septic tank failures and subsequent health concerns and their use as an economic development tool.

The WWTA provides sewer service to over 24,000 commercial, industrial and residential customers. WWTA will expand its current system to accommodate any needed additional flow. No public tax money is spent on sewer service although the County or other government entities may choose to contribute money to WWTA for governmental purposes. WWTA's cost to provide service depends on how far the land is from an existing line, how the property is being developed, and several other factors. Currently, the funds used to install new sewers are provided by private lending institutions and are repaid from the fees paid by each user. In instances where a developer requires sewer service for a new development, the developer funds 100% of all on-site sewer installation costs. Off-site sewer costs, if any, are funded either by the developer, or by a shared cost arrangement between the developer and WWTA. In all instances, WWTA's costs are recouped from fees paid by the users. Therefore, expansion of sewer service in the County should occur with no net long-term cost to the Authority's participating members unless members elect to take on cost.

WWTA'S MISSION: "To provide reliable, courteous, and low-cost sewer service within our service area in order to promote economic development, eliminate health problems, and protect the environment."

Septic Tanks

Subsurface sewage disposal systems are regulated by the state, with local (county) health officials responsible for enforcement. No subdivision plan may be approved locally until it has been approved and a permit has been issued by the state Department of Environment and Conservation (T.C.A. §§ 68-221-401 et seq.). The Hamilton County Health Department is responsible for siting and permitting systems and identifying failing systems. Under its stormwater permit, the Town is required to monitor, identify, and correct non-natural discharge of any water into a stream that does not meet water quality standards. So, it is the town's responsibility also to take corrective action on failing septic tanks.

Drinking Water Supply

On August 27, 2007, the Division of Water Supply with the State of Tennessee Dept. of Environment & Conservation conducted a survey of the Signal Mountain Water System. In accordance with the Sanitary Survey Manual for Community Public Water Supplies, the Signal Mountain Water Company earned the highest numerical rating of 100.

There were no deficiencies identified during the survey. The water system will remain among Tennessee's APPROVED public water supplies. The Town buys treated water from the Tennessee-American Water Company and pumps the water up the mountain to elevated storage tanks. The Town of Signal Mountain's water system has the capacity to store up to two million gallons and has pumped up to 800,000 gallons of water a day when needed. The Public Utility director does not project much growth within the system's service area with Walden's Ridge Utility District providing service to most areas in the town's growth boundary.

Walden's Ridge Utility District (WRUD) serves the Town of Walden and portions of the unincorporated mountain and also the Shackleford Ridge area. Walden's Ridge Utility District obtains its water from the Tennessee-American Water Company and currently serves about 2,600 customers.

WRUD has a 12" main on Shackleford Ridge Rd. that supplies water to the new school and surrounding area. That line was put in place by the landowners along the roadway and Hamilton County. There is a "line fee" on the water line meaning that each landowner was assessed a price during development of the line and if their property is sold a price per linear foot is required to be paid to Hamilton County.

Both systems pull their water from Tennessee-American Water which draws surface water from the Tennessee River. The Tennessee River is rated as reasonably susceptible to potential contamination based on geologic factors and human activities in the vicinity of the water source. Currently, the Town and WRUD are pursuing connecting the two water systems to provide redundancy should an emergency or contamination of a system occur.

Recommended Action Steps

- Identify failing septic systems and prioritize remediation. If neighborhoods are a priority, educate and encourage residents to connect to the sewer system.
- Maintain communication with the Hamilton County Health Department regarding failing septic systems, appropriate remediation, and action taken.

- Encourage the continuation of the current Electric Power Board street light policy and underground utility lines installation policy.

Something about sewer the preferred waste treatment option?

DRAFT

Transportation

Note: We are currently referencing the TPO transportation plan underway. This section's focus is on alternative transportation.

Multi-modal Facilities

It is important to maintain and plan for a transportation system which ensures an adequate street network capable of providing safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through the Town. This Plan recognizes that there needs to be improvements in the transportation system to provide alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel.

Accordingly, this Plan strongly encourages the development of a comprehensive, "multi-modal" transportation corridor addressing not only automobile travel, but also pedestrian, bicycle, and transit alternatives.



A population continues to grow in the Town, it is essential that a comprehensive pedestrian circulation system be established. On a basic, functional level, the system needs to accommodate safe and well-defined circulation between key destination points. On a more sophisticated level, it could provide an interfacing network of parks and green spaces through which the pedestrian would travel.

Bicycling

Like walking, the convenience of bicycling for travel is often determined by the pattern in which land is developed. As mentioned previously, most people are willing to walk for about fifteen minutes, or one-half mile, for transportation trips. In fifteen minutes, most cyclists can cover about two miles, making bicycles an even more versatile mode of travel.

Some land use patterns that encourage both bicycling and walking include:

- Development densities that allow people to live close to destinations such as schools and stores.
- Mixed-use zoning that allows commercial and residential land uses in the same area, along with standards that ensure compatible building design.
- Locating buildings close to the street, which can slow traffic and offers easier bicycle access.

Some common land development practices that discourage bicycle and pedestrian travel include:

- Segregated land uses that create long distances between destinations.
- Commercial properties set far back from the street with large parking lots in between. Such sites also typically include access and parking facilities for automobiles only.
- Large lots in residential areas that create greater distance between home and other destinations.

Bicycle facility planning should address the differing skill level of users. User types include the following:

- Class A: Expert
- Class B: Casual
- Class C: Inexperienced

Class A includes expert or experienced riders. Expert riders generally use their bicycles as transportation and desire direct connections to their destinations with minimal delay. These riders are confident riding their bicycles alongside motor vehicles and are able to negotiate high speed roadways without special bicycle facilities. In designing facilities for expert riders, adequate space should be provided so that cyclists and motorists can pass comfortably without shifting positions.

Class B includes casual or less confident riders. Most of these adult riders prefer to use roadways with fewer motor vehicles and more operating space. These casual riders also use their bicycles for transportation, but wish to avoid heavy, high-speed traffic. They prefer neighborhood streets and multi-use paths separate from roadways. Busier streets should include a designated bike lane or wide shoulder to accommodate casual riders.

Class C includes inexperienced riders, including children. Children are often confident riders with skilled bicycle handling abilities, but they lack the "traffic sense" and experience of maneuvering in high volume motor traffic. For these riders, connections are necessary to destinations including schools, convenience stores and recreational areas. Multi-use paths linking these facilities, in combination with neighborhood bike lanes can accommodate this group.

Class I Facilities include multi-use paths, more popularly known as greenways. Greenways do not allow motor vehicle traffic but they do permit a range of non-motorized travel including bicycling, walking, running and in-line skating. Although typically built in an independent right-of-way, park or easement, greenways may also be located within road rights-of-way, separated from motor vehicle traffic by open space or a structural barrier. Greenways primarily attract recreational users, but because they typically wind through a community and connect destinations, they also offer an excellent opportunity to function as nonmotorized transportation routes. They sometimes offer a more direct route to destinations than the roadway network. For children, or any cyclist not comfortable with sharing the roads with cars, trails may be the preferred facility. Greenways are an excellent training ground for building skills to ride on the road.

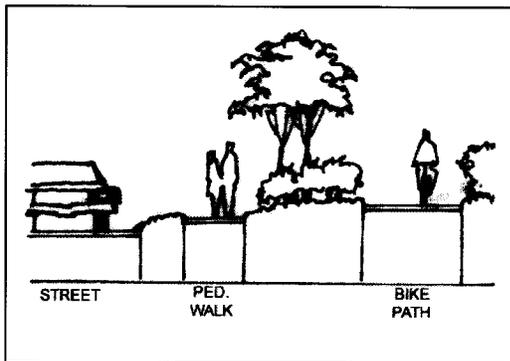
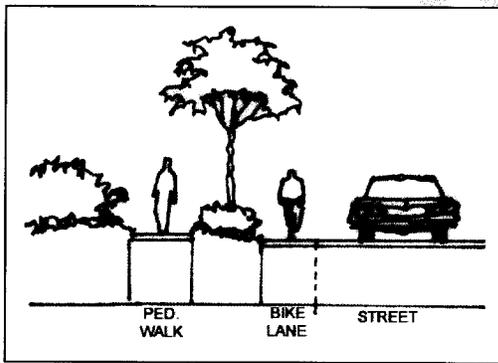
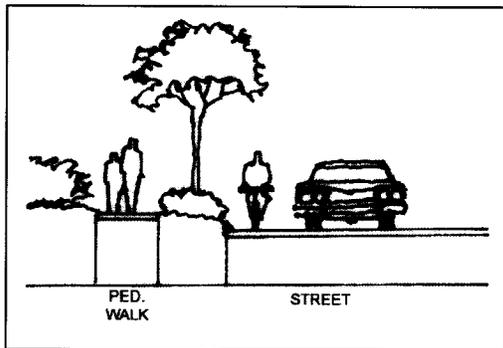
Class II Facilities include bicycle lanes and shouldered bikeways. A bicycle lane is a portion of the roadway separated from conventional travel lanes with a stripe, and designated for exclusive or preferential use by bicyclists. They are one-way facilities placed on both sides of a street in order to carry bicyclists in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. Bike lanes also help to increase the total capacity of roadways by segregating users. In addition to lane striping, pavement markings and signage identify bike lanes. Shouldered bikeways are paved shoulders separated from travel lanes with a lane stripe, and are typical for rural roadways without curbs and gutters. Pavement markings are not typically used on shouldered bikeways, since they can also be used for other functions, such as for vehicle breakdowns.

The Chattanooga Urban Area Bicycle Facilities Master Plan, adopted by the Town in 2002, recommends *Class III Facilities*, which includes bike routes, for identified roadways in the town. On a bike route, bicyclists and motorists share the same travel lanes. Except in cases where wide outside lanes are provided, motorists will typically have to move into the adjacent lane in order to safely pass a bicyclist. Bike routes function well on local and minor collector streets, where traffic volumes and speeds are typically lower than on major collector and arterial streets. There are three types of shared roadways: Wide Outside Lanes (WOLs), Shared Signed Roadways (SSRs) and Local Streets. On major collector and arterial streets, where severe physical constraints preclude bike lanes, WOLs are a desirable alternative. Because they provide less operating space than bike lanes, and are not designated for exclusive bicycle use, some cyclists will be uncomfortable using WOLs. However, WOLs allow most motor vehicles to pass bicyclists without weaving into the adjacent lane and provide a greater degree of comfort to cyclists than a typical 11' or 12' lane. SSRs are arterial or collector streets where bicycle traffic or demand is high but bike lanes or wide outside lanes cannot be provided due to severe physical constraints. SSRs are posted with appropriate speed limits and rely on signage to encourage both drivers and cyclists to be alert for all roadway users. Where appropriate, traffic calming devices can be used on collectors to further encourage appropriate travel speeds. In many cases, SSRs are a temporary solution, applied until a design solution that incorporates more appropriate bicycle facilities can be implemented.



The Chattanooga Urban Area Bicycle Facilities Master states that Local streets should be able to safely accommodate bicyclists without any special treatment. It further recommends that in cases where local streets carry more traffic at greater speeds than they were designed for, traffic calming techniques such as speed humps and pedestrian bulbs may be implemented to help ensure that bicycle and motor vehicle traffic operate compatibly.

Roads designed to accommodate bicyclists with moderate skills will meet the needs of most riders. However, children currently are using the town's roadway system and young children are primarily the bicyclists who may require special consideration, particularly on neighborhood streets, in recreational areas, and close to schools.



Pedestrian/Sidewalks

Town of Signal Mountain Code 15-303. Off street use restricted. No motorcycle, motor scooter or any other motor driven cycle or bicycle shall be ridden upon any sidewalk of the Town of Signal Mountain nor shall any such vehicle be ridden on any vacant lot, yards or privately-owned property without the written consent of the owner.
(1985 Code, § 9-303)

Everyone is a pedestrian at some point in life. Sidewalks and trails provide critical links in the transportation network by providing pedestrian access to schools, neighborhoods, businesses, and recreational and natural areas. Given the proper facilities, most people are willing to walk for about fifteen minutes, or one-half mile, for transportation trips. This distance has become a benchmark planning principle for those designing walkable communities.

Currently, the majority of sidewalks are found in Olde Town and providing connections to schools. Town residents support the addition of sidewalks in the community but commented that the poor condition of existing sidewalks were of concern. Frequently identified problems include sidewalk surfaces in poor repair, such as cracked or uneven concrete, and lack of regular sidewalk maintenance, including overhanging trees and overgrown shrubs.

From Town Code:

16-401. When owner/occupant to repair sidewalk. When any sidewalk becomes out of repair or in any manner defective, whether in the bed, pavement, or curbing thereof, the owner/occupant or agent shall cause such sidewalk to be reconstructed or put in good repair according to specifications required by the Town of Signal Mountain as to grade, dimensions, and character of said sidewalks or curbing or gutter and pavements, the material of which they shall be constructed and the manner in which they shall be laid. (as added by Ord. No. 91-5)

16-402. Specifications for construction and repair; permit required. The type of repairs to existing sidewalks shall be such as may be prescribed and approved by the town council. The owner/occupant or agent in charge of the property where such work is to be done shall apply to the town manager for specifications and instructions setting forth the manner in which the work shall be performed and for a permit authorizing such work and in doing such work shall conform to the specifications and instructions required by the Town of Signal Mountain. (as added by Ord. No. 91-5)

Town Code:16-102. Trees projecting over streets, etc., regulated. It shall be unlawful for any property owner or occupant to allow any limbs of trees on his property to project over any street or alley at a height of less than fourteen (14) feet or over any sidewalk at a height of less than eight (8) feet. (1985 Code, § 12-102)

16-107. Abutting owners, occupants to keep sidewalks clean and unobstructed. Each owner or occupant in the town, in front of or along which there is a sidewalk, shall keep such sidewalk clean and unobstructed, except for such obstructions as are permitted by this code or other ordinance. Each such owner or occupant shall cause the removal at once of all accumulations of mud, filth, snow and ice and every other substance or thing which may constitute an obstruction or impediment to pedestrians, and every thing in the nature of a nuisance. (1985 Code, § 12-107)

The Town of Signal Mountain assigns property owners the responsibility for upkeep of the sidewalks adjacent to their property even though sidewalks are a part of the public right-of-way. Citizen maintenance extends to issues such as litter removal, limb and debris removal after a storm, and removal of vegetation. If walking is to be encouraged, a clear pathway must be maintained. If, as current Town Code requires, citizens are responsible for sidewalk maintenance, landowners must be made aware of the requirements and responsible maintenance practices enforced.

Citizens often report maintenance problems. This might be the only method that the town currently has of being aware of repair needs. The town should consider other methods of identifying sidewalk concerns.

New Sidewalks

The pedestrian zone is the area of the sidewalk corridor that is specifically reserved for pedestrian travel. It should be completely free of obstacles, protruding objects, and vertical obstructions because they can be hazardous to pedestrians, particularly for individuals with vision impairments who may not be able to detect or avoid the hazard.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, the pedestrian zone should be at least five feet wide. This provides sufficient space for two pedestrians to travel side by side without passing other pedestrians, or for two people going in opposite directions to pass one another. However, because there is potential for pedestrian volumes to be much higher in commercial districts, the pedestrian zone may need to be widened to accommodate the additional users. As the pedestrian zone should still remain free of obstacles, if additional amenities are required/preferred, the planter/furniture zone should also be expanded.

The design of bicycle and pedestrian facilities can be determined by local design standards and Practices. Publications produced by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) such as the *Guide to the Development of Bicycle Facilities* and *A Objective on Geometric Design of Streets and Highways* can provide guidance.

Table 1. Guidelines for New Sidewalk Installation as recommended by the Federal Highway Administration

Roadway Classification and Land Use	Sidewalk Requirements	Future Phasing
Highway (rural/suburban - less than 2.5 d.u./hectare (1 d.u./acre))	One side preferred. Min. of 1.525 m (60 in) shoulders required.	Secure/preserve ROW for future sidewalks.
Suburban Highway (2.5 to 10 d.u./hectare (1 to 4 d.u./acre))	Both sides preferred. One side required.	Second side required if density becomes greater than 10 d.u./hectare (4

		d.u./acre).
Major Arterial (residential)	Both sides required.	
Collector and Minor Arterial (residential)	Both sides required.	1.525 m (60 in)
Local Street (Residential - less than 2.5 d.u./hectare (1 d.u./acre))	One side preferred. Min. of 1.525 m (60 in) shoulders required.	Secure/preserve ROW for future sidewalks.
Local Street (Residential - 2.5 to 10 d.u./hectare (1 to 4 d.u./acre))	Both sides preferred. One side required.	Second side required if density becomes greater than 10 d.u./hectare (4 d.u./acre).
Local Street (Residential - more than 10 d.u./hectare (4 d.u./acre))	Both sides required.	
All Streets (commercial areas)	Both sides required.	

Note: d.u. stands for dwelling unit

[Information from *Final Draft: Priorities and Guidelines for Providing Places for Pedestrians to Walk Along Streets and Highways*. FHWA (1999).]

Case studies show that the pedestrian zone should never be less than three feet wide with this minimum width providing sufficient space for most people using mobility aids (i.e. wheelchairs). However, a three foot sidewalk does not allow pedestrians to pass each other or account for two-way travel. The FHWA recommends that this minimum width is only acceptable when:

- A wider width is impossible;
- The narrow width continues for as short a distance as possible; and
- Passing spaces are provided at intervals of no more than 200 ft.

Multi-use Paths/Greenways

Multi-use paths can be an important element in a transportation network. Multi-use paths, often referred to as greenways, are discussed in the Natural Resources section as providing a variety of important environmental functions. However, these paths also provide a number of other important benefits to communities:

- **Connectivity/Transportation:** Multi-use paths can be an integral element in a regional non-motorized transportation network, offering an alternative to driving by connecting homes, parks, schools, offices, commercial areas and workplaces.
- **Recreation:** Multi-use paths provide recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages, as well as providing linkages between parks and other community facilities.
- **Health:** Multi-use paths provide opportunities for moderate exercises such as walking and bicycling, activities that when performed regularly can have significant health benefits.

- Education: Multi-use paths may incorporate natural, historic, and cultural resources along their routes into interpretive programs to educate the community.
- Economic and Quality of Life: Multi-use paths are significant community assets that increase the attractiveness and desirability of communities for current and potential residents.

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Transportation

The Town of Signal Mountain will provide a transportation system that meets the needs of all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motor vehicle drivers regardless of age or mobility level. These needs shall be accommodated and balanced in all types of transportation and development projects.

Goal: Create a walkable, bikable community for residents of all ages.

Objective: Transportation plans and projects shall provide due consideration for safety and contiguous routes for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Recommend Implementation Strategies:

Pedestrian:

Bicyclists and pedestrians shall be given due consideration in comprehensive transportation plans.

Bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways shall be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities.

Develop a pedestrian master plan in conjunction with an overall plan for pedestrian and bicycle routes and facilities. A plan can help identify needs, prioritize funding, and furnish design and implementation guidelines for projects.

Design streets, pedestrian paths, and bicycle facilities to link neighborhoods with community facilities.

Conduct a sidewalk inventory of existing facilities.

Create a maintenance plan to address existing facilities. It is recommended that a plan be developed that specifically addresses how maintenance concerns will be identified, what corrective actions will be taken, and who is responsible for maintenance of sidewalks.

Maintenance strategies should be identified in the planning stages of new construction.

Bicycle:

Bicyclists and pedestrians shall be given due consideration in the comprehensive transportation plans.

Bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways shall be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities.

Consider adoption of roadway design standards to include cross-sections that incorporate different types of bicycle facilities.

Develop a bicycle master plan in conjunction with an overall plan for pedestrian and bicycle routes and facilities. A plan can help identify needs, prioritize funding, and furnish design and implementation guidelines for projects.

Roadway:

Monitor the operation and performance of the roadway network by establishing a routine data collection program and by conducting special data collection as the need arises.

Require roadway and signal improvements for development projects to minimize decline of existing levels of service.

Study and implement physical and operation improvements to optimize roadway and intersection capacities.

Carpooling to minimize traffic impacts.

Promote the reduction of single occupant vehicle trips, and encourage an increase in the share of trips taken by other forms of travel.

Require a traffic study per the requirements set forth in Ordinance 98-5

Land use and transportation:

Review requirements of an access plan. Currently a plan is required for each new building or use of land per Ordinance 98-5.

Review existing curb-cut policy found in the Vehicular Access Ordinance 98-5.

Provide clear guidance on requirements by reviewing and rectifying the requirements found in the zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, New Street Criteria, and vehicular access ordinance.

Vehicular Access Ordinance 98-5

Minimum Length/Restrictions. All driveways for commercial, industrial, office, institutional and apartment complexes must extend a minimum of 20 feet into the property...

Driveway Width Requirements. The width of driveways shall meet the following requirements for Office, Commercial, Institutional, Apartment Complexes:

One-way Traffic, Maximum 20 ft.

Two-way Traffic, Maximum 30 ft.

Curb Cut Policies for Major Streets (Arterials and Collectors)

1. The maximum width of a driveway opening at the property line along a major street shall be 35 feet.

2. The minimum throat length of a driveway (measured from property line to the first parking aisle, driveway or intersecting street) shall be 75 feet for access to an arterial street and 60 feet for collectors.

The two examples above—one from the 2000 Land Use Plan and the other from the vehicular access ordinance—show conflicting recommendations and requirements.

Streetscaping

Trees are generally installed because they improve the pedestrian experience along the street. Trees serve as a visual and auditory buffer between pedestrians and automobile traffic. They also improve the aesthetic appearance of a street and provide shade or shelter in warm or windy regions. In urban areas, trees provide needed green space and break up the monotony of the public right-of-way. In some residential areas, large trees that extend over the street may have a traffic calming effect by creating a sense of enclosure. According to urban design research, visual enclosure is required to transform streets into pedestrian places, which results in increased comfort for pedestrians and decreased comfort for speeding motorists *-(Institute of Transportation Engineers, 1999). -Federal Highway Administration*