

TOWN OF SIGNAL MOUNTAIN

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

OCTOBER 2000

(BEING REVIEWED 4/27/07)

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CHAPTER ONE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/POLICY PLAN

OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Town of Signal Mountain (the "Town") is not the same as it was 75 years ago. It is not even the same place that it was 50 or 25 years ago. Some might say that this is unfortunate. On the other hand, our Town will not be the same as it is now after the next 25, 50 or 75 years. During recent years, our Town has experienced fairly rapid population growth and an increase in the number of businesses along Taft Highway as a result of this population growth. There is no reason to believe that either type of growth will abate. Citizens began voicing concern several years ago that the Town was in danger of losing those values that make it unique. Citizen task forces and advisory committees urged the Town's government to develop a philosophic vision and with a practical range of policies to protect that vision and manage the pace of growth in the Town.

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.

In the strategic plan that follows, Town residents have the opportunity to get a clearer understanding of Signal Mountain's development history, demographics, land use plan, potential solutions to current problems, and recommendations concerning future development. This plan is intended to enable the Town to remain true to its heritage by endeavoring to preserve its predominantly small town, family residential character for the benefit of its citizens, now and in the future.

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the major policy recommendations included in the Plan. Sections Two, Three and Four provide more detail on the background, policies and implementation tools summarized in this Executive Summary. This Summary concentrates on the major policies and directs the reader to the various sections of the Plan in which more detail can be found.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map of December 1998 for the Town of Signal Mountain, which is incorporated in this Plan by this reference (the "Map") is recorded at Town Hall and on file at the Local Planning Office. Generally, the Map forecasts new residential development in the areas along Shackleford Ridge Road with these new neighborhoods being designed and built to the same density and lot size standards of existing subdivisions in the Town.

When the Planning Commission approved the Map, it specified in the resolution approving the Map that the Planning Commission would reevaluate the Map every three years to determine whether any changes need to be made to the Map. The Town Council shall also reevaluate the Map each time that the Planning Commission reevaluates the Map.

The Map reflects that the Planning Commission and the Town Council believe that the existing developed and undeveloped commercial and other non-residential properties located on the mountaintop are sufficient to serve the needs of the residents of the mountaintop, including the Town's residents, for at least the next few years

DEVELOPMENT POLICY PLAN

Development Goals

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 the Town's Planning Commission believes reflect the desires of the citizens regarding the future development of the municipality.

1. To preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life in Signal Mountain while encouraging a continued harmonious and high standard of development.
2. 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.
3. To provide for concentrated commercial centers serving the needs of residents.
4. To prohibit the location of heavy industrial uses in the Town; the Planning Commission and the Council shall reevaluate this goal each time that they reevaluate the Town's Future Land Use Map (which is to occur every three years).
5. To provide adequate and efficient public facilities and services, and to provide a diversity of cultural and recreational opportunities.
6. To provide utility services that effectively and efficiently meet the current and anticipated needs of the Town.
7. To provide an efficient and effective transportation system in the Town with appropriate linkages and capacities.
8. To encourage the development of vacant land which has less natural restrictions and which has the necessary infrastructure.

9. To carefully review and consider development proposals on land with natural limitations to assure safety and compatibility of the proposed use of a parcel of land with the uses of other parcels of land located nearby, with no undue burden on taxpayers.

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Both objectives and policies are utilized to achieve the goals established in the plan. Objectives are more specific, measurable statements of the desired goals. Policies represent rules or courses of action that indicate how the goals and objectives of the plan will be realized.

The objectives and policies contained in this document represent the official public policy guidelines concerning land use and transportation matters for decision-making by the Town of Signal Mountain. The policies are presented as guidelines to be followed by developers, builders, neighborhood groups, civic organizations, and other private and public interests engaged in and concerned about growth and development in the community. The policies are also presented so that interested individuals and groups can better anticipate the Town's decisions on future matters.

In the following section, general growth management objectives and policies are presented, followed by objectives and policies for each of the specific land use categories. These policies are the summation of various issues and concerns discussed in greater detail later in this document. This Executive Summary is intended to categorize policies, although several policies are noted in more than one category. The various remaining sections of this Plan should be consulted for background on policy development and for detail on sub-policies and implementation.

General Development and Growth Management

The Town of Signal Mountain fully anticipates continued growth and understands its importance as a part of those forces which may beneficially affect the community's quality of life. At the other end of the spectrum, the policy of "growth at any cost" has long-term detrimental impacts and is not supported by the Town. The approach taken by the Town will be that of managed growth. To guide general growth and development, the following objectives and policies are adopted.

- A. Objective - Assure the integrity of the natural environment throughout the development process, protect and preserve the existing natural and developed features of the community that contribute to community identity, and preserve the fiscal stability of the Town relative to development and growth issues.

Policies

1. The Town shall examine the existing development plan review and approval process and site plan review/approval process to determine whether any changes need to be made to them in order to try to ensure that all proposed developments will be in harmony with their natural and developed surroundings.

B. Objective - Provide support for existing Historic Districts as well as future requests for inclusion in the Town's Historic Districts.

Policies

1. Emphasis should be given to the upkeep and enhancement of publicly owned historic features.
2. Encourage owners of private property that contain historic features to preserve those features in conjunction with any proposed development of the site and work closely with all applicable historic commission.
3. Study the development and enforcement of appropriate regulatory measures to preserve historically significant sites.
4. Consider the potential impact of development on the historic features of sites, and either require mitigation of adverse impacts where necessary or prohibit such development where such adverse impacts cannot be mitigated sufficiently.

Residential

The majority of the developed land in Signal Mountain is devoted to residential uses, consisting primarily of single-family dwellings, but also including multi-family dwellings. 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. Open space overlay zoning guidelines are seen as viable alternatives to previous development types. They will be included in the mix of housing types that may be allowed, subject to appropriate safeguards. To ensure the most appropriate development of existing and future residential areas in Signal Mountain and its projected growth area, the following development objectives and policies are adopted:

A. Objective - Provide for a variety of housing types and densities for a range of family incomes, sizes and lifestyles that reflect sensitivity to the natural environment as both an aesthetic and economic asset.

Policies

1. Open space overlay zoning guidelines have been adopted as a method of allowing residential development while preserving sensitive natural areas, where appropriate.

2. The Town has adopted and will enforce permitted densities for the various residential zones to assure continuity, appropriate respect for the natural environment, and availability of infrastructure.
3. The Town shall encourage the use of transitional land uses such as linear greenbelts of other design elements between residential neighborhoods of differing densities, and between residential and non-residential areas in order to enhance compatibility of land uses.

Utilities

The provision of adequate utilities for land development is costly to the general public. In order to achieve proper development and facilitate saving public funds, it is extremely important to coordinate the extension of utilities with the Town's development plan. Alternatives to utility extensions, such as the use of septic systems, must be carefully considered, and all relevant impacts assessed. Given the geography and topography of Signal Mountain, the use of septic systems and other alternative forms of handling wastewater is becoming more common. As such, the Town recognizes its responsibilities in assuring adequate and safe disposition of wastewater as well as the provision of the full range of municipal services. Therefore, the following objectives and policies should be or have been adopted by all agencies responsible for the operation or extension of all forms of utilities, with further detail provided later in this Plan:

- A. Objective - Provide adequate and efficient public utility facilities.

Policies

1. The Town shall develop a wastewater collection plan for undeveloped areas and for areas that are developed utilizing septic systems.
2. Promote efforts by the Electric Power Board to reduce electrical outages.
3. Develop and adopt a Master Plan for Water and Sewerage Services.
4. Require the provision of public services and facilities adequate for the type and level of planned development as a condition of development.
5. Require proper attention to stormwater management as a condition of development.

- B. Objective - Provide appropriate standards and guidelines for utility facility improvements and extensions.

Policies

1. Improved septic system standards and inspection processes have been adopted.

2. Develop an education program for the use of septic systems.
3. Encourage the continuation of the current Electric Power Board street light policy and underground utility installation policy.

Transportation

The current and future transportation system in Signal Mountain and its growth area are affected by a number of factors. These factors include the existing street pattern, traffic impediments, major traffic generators, parking needs growth trends, new street construction and the locations of new developments. Although the Town cannot control all the factors which will influence its future transportation system, it can provide direction. The following objectives and policies are presented as a guide to achieving an adequate and efficient future transportation system:

- A. Objective - Provide a transportation system that will adequately meet the future needs for growth and development.

Policies

1. Require all new developments to design and install a safe, convenient vehicular street system that functions according to the level of development proposed, and is built according to local standards.
2. Encourage the study of possible new road to the mountain.
3. Require traffic studies for all new commercial, and, where appropriate, other non-residential developments.
4. An Ordinance to control vehicle access from arterial, secondary and minor roads to undeveloped lots and lots proposed for creation by subdivision of property in all zoning districts was adopted in 1998 (Ordinance 98-5).
5. Develop a plan for consistent monitoring of the transportation network.
6. Establish appropriate standards for reviewing and approving major and minor street construction and improvements, for assessing and requiring the addition of alternative transportation methods where appropriate and standards for curb cuts.

- B. Objective - Provide for alternative manners of transportation that are safe, functional, and appropriate to the environment.

Policies

1. Encourage development of a regional bikeway and pedestrian trail system.

2. Develop a program to enhance existing mountain stream greenways and create new greenways where appropriate.
3. Evaluate new development proposals for the need for pedestrian walks/paths.

Industrial

Signal Mountain does not rely on large-scale industry on the mountain to provide employment for its residents. Due to its location, excessive truck traffic is not practical and the Town's streets are not designed to accommodate large-scale shift changes. As of October, 2000, the establishment of an industrial base is not considered critical to the Town's economy.

- A. Objective - To protect the Town from the adverse impacts associated with large-scale industrial development.

Policies

1. Maintain current practices and policies that do not allow the establishment of an industrial base in the Town. The Planning Commission and the Council shall reevaluate these practices and policies each time that they reevaluate the Town's Future Land Use Map (which is to occur every three years).

Vacant Land/Open Space

As a community grows, a significant amount of land will be pressed into urban development. Unfortunately, some of this land either cannot be developed or would be cost prohibitive to develop due to natural factors. In addition, some of this vacant land would best be utilized as open space. To guide the future development of the vacant lands in the Town, the following objectives and policies are adopted:

- A. Objective - Ensure that adequate open space is provide in the Town to enhance aesthetic concerns, and ensure that appropriate standards and guidelines are followed for development of vacant land.

Policies

1. Open space overlay zoning has been adopted as a method of allowing residential development while preserving sensitive natural areas, where appropriate.
2. Places of rare natural beauty and areas of historic interest should be preserved and maintained.
3. Mature vegetation, especially along stream banks should be protected from indiscriminate removal in order to enhance the aesthetic value of the landscape as well as to control erosion.

4. Develop a program to enhance existing mountain stream greenways and create new greenways where appropriate.

Commercial and Other Non-Residential Uses

- A. Objective - Locate new commercial and other permitted non-residential activities in pre-designated, concentrated areas to reduce adverse effects.

Policies

1. New commercial and other non-residential developments must be located in areas that are zoned for the particular commercial or other non-residential activity and are in accordance with the Town's Future Land Use Plan Map. The Planning Commission and the Council shall reevaluate these practices and policies each time that they reevaluate the Town's Future Land Use Plan Map, which is to occur every three years.
 2. Require traffic studies for all new commercial and other non-residential developments and high density residential developments.
- B. Objective - Ensure that all new commercial and other non-residential developments meet appropriate standards and guidelines.

Policies

1. Create a plan for improved streetscapes in commercial areas.
2. An Ordinance to control vehicle access from arterial, secondary and minor roads to undeveloped lots and lots proposed for creation by subdivision of property in all zoning districts was adopted in 1998 (Ordinance 98-5).

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

OVERVIEW

Introduction

Over time, change affects communities in various ways. Planning does not mean change for the sake of change. But it does mean that when change is about to occur, we will guide and direct this change in the best interest of our citizens and this community as a whole.

This plan is a compilation of policy statements, standards, and goals for guiding the economic and physical development, both public and private of our Town, for the betterment of the community. Creating this plan gave our Township an opportunity to identify issues and problems that affect our Town as well as our way of life and to examine potential solutions to those issues and problems. It will inventory our community assets and become a guide for making decisions in the future.

Mission Statement

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.

Purpose of the Plan

Over the years, our mountain township has given those who live here an important quality and "way of life." People who live in the Town of Signal Mountain believe their community to be unique. We truly value our small town atmosphere, natural environment, schools, parks, playgrounds, residential family character, and government services which provide for our safety and well-being.

During recent years, our Town has experienced fairly rapid population growth and an increase in the number of businesses along Taft Highway as a result of this population growth. There is no reason to believe that either type of expansion will abate. Citizens began voicing concern several years ago that the Town was in danger of losing those values which make it unique. Citizen task forces and advisory committees urged the Town's government to develop a philosophic vision along with a practical range of policies which protect that vision and manage the pace of growth in the Town.

The Town's elected officials realized that the Town had an opportunity to design a plan to endeavor to protect those values irrespective of the Town's future physical changes and that

creating such a plan could represent an attempt to identify problems and issues as well as establish directions and solutions.

Various surveys, workshop and advisory groups, as well as the Town Council, identified the following concerns and issues that need to be addressed: management of growth, development of a Town plan, sewer expansion and septic system issues, and road improvements.

To help formulate and assist in creating the plan, Town officials selected Barge, Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon, Inc., an engineering, planning and architectural firm from Nashville, Tennessee (the "consultants"). Working with an advisory committee selected by the Town Council, the consultants prepared a draft of this plan which was presented at two public meetings. The consultant's draft plan included a transportation and infrastructure master plan, urban design and site development guidelines, and recommends strategies for implementing the plan. The Local Planning Assistance section of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development was asked to revise the consultant's draft land use plan in accordance with policy recommendations from the Town Council and the Planning Commission.

In the strategic plan that follows, Town residents have the opportunity to get a clearer understanding of Signal Mountain's development history, demographics, land use plan, potential solutions to current problems, and recommendations concerning future development. This plan is intended to enable the Town to remain true to its heritage by endeavoring to preserve its predominantly small town, family residential character for the benefit of its citizens, now and in the future.

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. Our 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.

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. The following is a chronological listing of the dates when sections/major subdivisions were constructed or added to the Town by annexation. An asterisk indicates that the area was added in the Town by annexation.

- 1919 Town established
- 1926 Old Towne (section); Palisades (section)
- 1957 Timberlinks; Birnam Wood (lots)
- 1964 *Applewood
- 1966 Birnam Wood (first house)
- 1967 Shepherd Forest; Applewood
- 1968 Carriage Hill
- 1974 Hidden Brook
- 1975 *Shopping Center, the area north of Cauthen Way, Skyline Park, and Murrell Road
- 1976 Shoal Creek Falls
- 1982 Skyline Park
- 1984 *Autumn Way Lane
- 1985 *St. Ives
- 1987 Chestnut Oaks
- 1990 *Creekshire
- 1991 *Cool Springs
- 1993 Westfield; St. Ives
- 1994 The Orchard
- 1995 *Shackleford Ridge Road area
- 1996 Rainbow Lake; Brow View

POPULATION

Introduction

This section presents population trends from 1950 to 1990 for the Town of Signal Mountain. The section will also briefly discuss some factors which are expected to affect how the Town's population will grow in the future. Finally, projections of the Town's population through 2010 are presented.

The Town of Signal Mountain is on the southern tip of Walden's Ridge. Its elevation is approximately 1,200 feet above the City of Chattanooga. Because of the topography, there are a limited number of access roads to Signal Mountain. One, Signal Mountain Road (U.S. Highway 127), accesses the Town of Signal Mountain, while the other access road from Chattanooga, the "W Road," goes through the Town of Walden.

The Town is located within Hamilton County. Due to the limited access and other factors, there are virtually no industrial uses and limited commercial activity within the Town. Therefore, Signal Mountain may be classified as a suburb of Chattanooga, and is dependent on Hamilton County for employment and most shopping. Thus, regional events will affect the Town.

Trends

As shown in Table 1. 1, Signal Mountain had a high rate of population growth between 1950 and 1990, from under 2,000 persons to 7,034. In 1950 Signal Mountain's population was 1,786. Between 1950 and 1960 the population of the Town increased by 1,627 persons (a 91.1 percent increase). Growth of this nature is based on net in-migration of persons from outside the Town. This growth also changed the nature of the population. The median age dropped from 33.6 years of age in 1950 to 31.5 years in 1960. The Town's share of Hamilton County's population went from 0.85 percent to 1.4 percent. Hamilton County also grew by 14.24 percent during this period. Signal Mountain attracted some of this population growth.

Table 1. 1 Signal Mountain Population

Place	1950	% Chg	1960	% Chg	1970	% Chg	1980	% Chg	1990	% Chg	1995
Signal Mtn.	1,786	91.1	3,414	41.8	4,839	20.2	5,818	20.9	7,034	5.8	7,446
Ham. Co	208,253	14.2	237,905	7.22	255,077	12.77	287,643	-0.73	285,536	3.0	293,960
State of TN	3,291,718	8.37	3,567,089	10.06	3,926,018	16.94	4,591,023	6.23	4,877,185	7.6	5,246,723

Between 1960 and 1970 the Town continued to grow, although not at the same pace. The population increased by 1,426 persons, which was a 41.8 percent increase over 1960. Hamilton County's population increased by 7.2 percent during the same period.

The decade between 1970 and 1980 was a very good period for the State of Tennessee: the population of the State increased by almost 17 percent. Hamilton County's population increased by 12.77 percent. Signal Mountain's population increased by 979 people, which represented a 20.2 percent increase in the Town's population.

Between 1980 and 1990 the overall growth rate for the State was 6.23 percent, while Hamilton County had a small 0.73% population loss. The Town's population increased by 1,216 persons, a 20.9 percent increase. The Town's certified population in 1995 was 7,446, which was a 5.8 percent increase over 1990. This was 1.5 percent of Hamilton County's estimated population in 1995.

~~The Town has proved attractive to persons in the Chattanooga and Hamilton County area, with a growth rate which appears to be relatively independent from the County's. See Tables 1.2 and 1.3 for Signal Mountain's Population by Age.~~

Table 1.2 Town of Signal Mountain Population by Age 1950–1990*

Age	1950	Percent
Under4	211	11.8
&14	289	16.2
15-24	183	10.2
25-34	244	13.7
35-44	315	17.6
45-54	237	13.3
55-64	146	8.2
Over 65	161	9.0
Total	1,786	100.0
Median Age	33.6	-

Table 1.3 Town of Signal Mountain Population by Age 1960–1990*

Age	1960	Percent	1970	Percent	1980	Percent	1990	Percent
Under4	391	11.5	320	6.8	386	6.6	486	6.9
5-9	443	13.0	557	11.5	451	7.8	578	8.2
10-14	354	10.4	605	12.5	509	8.7	584	8.3
15-19	202	5.9	447	9.2	523	9.0	427	6.1
20-24	85	2.5	169	3.5	223	3.8	212	3.0
25-29	152	4.5	224	4.6	306	5.3	234	3.3
30-34	272	7.9	293	6.1	514	8.8	461	6.6
35-39	263	7.7	340	7.0	472	8.1	708	10.1
40-44	253	7.4	361	7.4	412	7.1	685	9.7
45-49	232	6.8	338	7.0	370	6.4	490	7.0
50-54	201	5.9	304	6.3	385	6.6	367	5.2
55-59	164	4.8	241	5.0	339	5.8	312	4.5
60-64	111	3.3	212	4.4	265	4.6	325	4.6
65-69	77	2.2	146	3.0	198	3.4	321	4.6
70-74	92	2.7	119	2.5	181	3.1	273	3.9
Over 75	121	3.5	163	3.4	284	4.9	571	8.1
Total	3,413	100.0	4,839	100.0	5,818	100.0	7,034	100.0
Median Age	31.5	N/A	31.7	N/A	35.0	N/A	39.0	N/A

Division of Table is the result of age bracket differences in reported census data.

Density

"Population Density" (see Table 1.4) is the average number of persons per square mile of land area. Population density is a method for comparing the relative population distribution within a common geographical area.

Table 1.4 Population Density

Place	LAND AREA SQ. MILES				POPULATION DENSITY SQ. MILES				
	1970	1980	1995	1999	1970	1980	1990	1995	1999
Signal Mtn.	4.5	N/A	7.0	7.06	1,075	N/A	1,379	1,063.7	1,061.4
Ham. Co.	542.5	542.5	542.5	542.5	470.2	5,30.2	526.3	541.9	541.9
State of TN	41219.2	41219.2	41219.2	41219.2	95.2	110.6	118.3	127.3	127.3

In the period between 1970 and 1990 the area of Signal Mountain increased from 4.5 miles to 5.1 square miles. A 1995 annexation added 1,206 acres to the Town. (Note: 259 acres is owned by the Hamilton County School Board for use as a school and recreation site.) In the same period, the population increased by 2,195 persons. Between 1990 and 1995 the estimated population increased by 412 persons.

The population density increased from 1,075 persons per square mile in 1970 to 1,379 persons per square mile by 1990. The 1990 population density approaches that for the City of Chattanooga. Signal Mountain's population density more closely approaches the City of Red Bank's population density, 1,895, than it does Walden's population density of 476. The 0.6 square mile increase in area over 20 years would indicate that most of Signal Mountain's growth has come from in-fill within the Town rather than annexation. The 1995 annexation reduced the population density to 1,063.7 per square mile, while providing new area for development.

Components of Population Change

There are a number of factors which affect the population. However, the two most important components are natural increase and migration. Natural increase is the net difference between the number of births and deaths occurring among the resident population during a decade. Migration is based on persons moving into or out of the place in question. Taken together, these two factors account for population increase.

Natural increase is calculated by subtracting deaths from births over a decade. Yearly reports of resident births and deaths are published in the Tennessee Vital Statistics at the County level. Natural increase for Hamilton County is shown in Table 1.5 below.

Table 1.5 Natural Increase

Place	1950/59	Percent	1960/69	Percent	1970/79	Percent	1980/89	Percent
Ham. Co.	37,242	17.9	25,297	10.6	18,315	7.2	14,751	5.1
St. of TN	533,358	16.2	399,130	11.2	275,724	7.0	249,707	5.4

One factor in natural increase is the age distribution of the resident population. This is reflected below in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6 Median Age (years)

Place	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Signal Mtn.	33.6	31.5	31.7	35.0	39.0
Ham. Co.	28.9	29.0	29.2	-30.5	34.7
St. of TN	27.3	28.0	28.1	30.1	33.5
U.S.A.	N/A	29.5	28.1	30.0	31.7

Signal Mountain has always had a median age level higher than that for Hamilton County.

However, in 1990 it was 4 to 6 years above the median age for Hamilton County and the State. Almost half of the Town's population is older than the child bearing age. This high median age means that population growth in Signal Mountain will be more from in-migration than natural increase.

Migration may cause population growth or loss; it is the movement of persons that is critical. Net migration is the difference between the number of persons moving into the Town and the number of persons moving out. Negative net migration indicates more persons are moving out of the Town than are moving in, resulting in a loss of population.

Without knowing the natural increase, net migration cannot be computed for the Town. However, data is available for Hamilton County and the State as shown in Table 1.7 below.

Table 1.7 Net Migration

Place	1950/59	Percent	1960/69	Percent	1970/79	Percent	1980/89	Percent
Ham. Co.	-7,592	-3.65	-8,125	-3.42	14,251	5.6	-16,858	-5.9
St. of TN	-257,987	-7.84	-40,201	-1.13	389,281	9.9	36,455	0.8

This table indicates that Hamilton County is exporting population. There is some census data which indirectly indicates migration for the Town. This is shown in Table 1.8 below.

Table 1.8 Place of Residence

	1970	1980	1990
Population	4,520	5,443	6,548
Residence in Same House	2,443	2,960	3,434
Same Co., different house	735	1,230	1,629
Same State, different house	266	225	312
Different State	802	913	1123
From Northeast	78	100	N/A
From North Central	176	162	N/A
From South		606	N/A
From West	37	45	N/A
From Abroad		115	50

In 1990, almost 25 percent of the Town's population had moved to Signal Mountain in the last five years from another part of Hamilton County. Just under five percent had moved to Signal Mountain from elsewhere in the State and 17 percent moved to the Town from an out of State location. Almost half of the Town's population moved to the Town from elsewhere between 1985 and 1990.

Population Projections

The population of the Town depends on a number of factors: natural increase, in-migration (which is a function of the regional economy) annexation, amount of land available for development, and others. Therefore, the population projections shown in Table 1.9 are based on different methods. First is a "step down" projection based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates for Hamilton County, with Signal Mountain as 2.5 percent of Hamilton County's population. The second uses the average population increase for Signal Mountain over the past five censuses. The 1999 certified population and one of the 2010 projections were compiled by the University of Tennessee Department of Business and Economic Research in March 1999 to be used in conjunction with "Public Chapter 1101."

Table 1.9 Population Projection to 2010

	1990 Census	1995 Certified	1999 Certified	2010
Step Down - Census Bureau Projection	7,034	7,446	7,494	7,971
Average Annual Increase	7,034	7,446	7,494	9,324
University of Tennessee, Center for Business and Economic Research				7,700

CHAPTER TWO BACKGROUND INFORMATION

OVERVIEW

Introduction

Over time, change affects communities in various ways. Planning does not mean change for the sake of change. But it does mean that when change is about to occur, we will guide and direct this change in the best interest of our citizens and this community as a whole.

This plan is a compilation of policy statements, standards, and goals for guiding the economic and physical development, both public and private of our Town, for the betterment of the community. Creating this plan gave our Township an opportunity to identify issues and problems that affect our Town as well as our way of life and to examine potential solutions to those issues and problems. It will inventory our community assets and become a guide for making decisions in the future.

Mission Statement

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.

Purpose of the Plan

Over the years, our mountain township has given those who live here an important quality and "way of life." People who live in the Town of Signal Mountain believe their community to be unique. We truly value our small town atmosphere, natural environment, schools, parks,

playgrounds, residential family character, and government services which provide for our safety and well-being.

During recent years, our Town has experienced fairly rapid population growth and an increase in the number of businesses along Taft Highway as a result of this population growth. There is no reason to believe that either type of expansion will abate. Citizens began voicing concern several years ago that the Town was in danger of losing those values which make it unique. Citizen task forces and advisory committees urged the Town's government to develop a philosophic vision along with a practical range of policies which protect that vision and manage the pace of growth in the Town.

The Town's elected officials realized that the Town had an opportunity to design a plan to endeavor to protect those values irrespective of the Town's future physical changes and that creating such a plan could represent an attempt to identify problems and issues as well as establish directions and solutions.

Various surveys, workshop and advisory groups, as well as the Town Council, identified the following concerns and issues that need to be addressed: management of growth, development of a Town plan, sewer expansion and septic system issues, and road improvements.

To help formulate and assist in creating the plan, Town officials selected Barge, Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon, Inc., an engineering, planning and architectural firm from Nashville, Tennessee (the "consultants"). Working with an advisory committee selected by the Town Council, the consultants prepared a draft of this plan which was presented at two public meetings. The consultant's draft plan included a transportation and infrastructure master plan, urban design and site development guidelines, and recommends strategies for implementing the plan. The Local Planning Assistance section of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development was asked to revise the consultant's draft land use plan in accordance with policy recommendations from the Town Council and the Planning Commission.

In the strategic plan that follows, Town residents have the opportunity to get a clearer understanding of Signal Mountain's development history, demographics, land use plan, potential solutions to current problems, and recommendations concerning future development. This plan is intended to enable the Town to remain true to its heritage by endeavoring to preserve its predominantly small town, family residential character for the benefit of its citizens, now and in the future.

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 I. 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. Our 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.

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. The following is a chronological listing of the dates when sections/major subdivisions were constructed or added to the Town by annexation. An asterisk indicates that the area was added in the Town by annexation.

1919	Town established
1926	Old Towne (section); Palisades (section)
1957	Timberlinks; Birnam Wood (lots)
1964	*Applewood
1966	Birnam Wood (first house)
1967	Shepherd Forest; Applewood
1968	Carriage Hill
1974	Hidden Brook
1975	*Shopping Center, the area north of Cauthen Way, Skyline Park, and Murrell Road
1976	Shoal Creek Falls
1982	Skyline Park
1984	*Autumn Way Lane
1985	*St. Ives
1987	Chestnut Oaks
1990	*Creekshire
1991	*Cool Springs
1993	Westfield; St. Ives
1994	The Orchard
1995	*Shackleford Ridge Road area
1996	Rainbow Lake; Brow View

POPULATION

Introduction

This section presents population trends from 1950 to 1990 for the Town of Signal Mountain. The section will also briefly discuss some factors which are expected to affect how the Town's population will grow in the future. Finally, projections of the Town's population through 2010 are presented.

The Town of Signal Mountain is on the southern tip of Walden's Ridge. Its elevation is approximately 1,200 feet above the City of Chattanooga. Because of the topography, there are a limited number of access roads to Signal Mountain. One, Signal Mountain Road (U.S. Highway 127), accesses the Town of Signal Mountain, while the other access road from Chattanooga, the "W Road," goes through the Town of Walden.

The Town is located within Hamilton County. Due to the limited access and other factors, there are virtually no industrial uses and limited commercial activity within the Town. Therefore, Signal Mountain may be classified as a suburb of Chattanooga, and is dependent on Hamilton County for employment and most shopping. Thus, regional events will affect the Town.

Trends

As shown in Table 1. 1, Signal Mountain had a high rate of population growth between 1950 and 1990, from under 2,000 persons to 7,034. In 1950 Signal Mountain's population was 1,786. Between 1950 and 1960 the population of the Town increased by 1,627 persons (a 91.1 percent increase). Growth of this nature is based on net in-migration of persons from outside the Town. This growth also changed the nature of the population. The median age dropped from 33.6 years of age in 1950 to 31.5 years in 1960. The Town's share of Hamilton County's population went from 0.85 percent to 1.4 percent. Hamilton County also grew by 14.24 percent during this period. Signal Mountain attracted some of this population growth.

Table 1. 1 Signal Mountain Population

Place	1950	% Chg	1960	% Chg	1970	% Chg	1980	% Chg	1990	% Chg	1995
Signal Mtn.	1,786	91.1	3,414	41.8	4,839	20.2	5,818	20.9	7,034	5.8	7,446
Ham. Co	208,253	14.2	237,905	7.22	255,077	12.77	287,643	-0.73	285,536	3.0	293,960
State of TN	3,291,718	8.37	3,567,089	10.06	3,926,018	16.94	4,591,023	6.23	4,877,185	7.6	5,246,723

Between 1960 and 1970 the Town continued to grow, although not at the same pace. The population increased by 1,426 persons, which was a 41.8 percent increase over 1960. Hamilton County's population increased by 7.2 percent during the same period.

The decade between 1970 and 1980 was a very good period for the State of Tennessee: the population of the State increased by almost 17 percent. Hamilton County's population increased

by 12.77 percent. Signal Mountain's population increased by 979 people, which represented a 20.2 percent increase in the Town's population.

Between 1980 and 1990 the overall growth rate for the State was 6.23 percent, while Hamilton County had a small 0.73% population loss. The Town's population increased by 1,216 persons, a 20.9 percent increase. The Town's certified population in 1995 was 7,446, which was a 5.8 percent increase over 1990. This was 1.5 percent of Hamilton County's estimated population in 1995.

The Town has proved attractive to persons in the Chattanooga and Hamilton County area, with a growth rate which appears to be relatively independent from the County's. See Tables 1.2 and 1.3 for Signal Mountain's Population by Age.

Table 1.2 Town of Signal Mountain Population by Age 1950 - 1990*

Age	1950	Percent
Under4	211	11.8
&14	289	16.2
15-24	183	10.2
25-34	244	13.7
35-44	315	17.6
45-54	237	13.3
55-64	146	8.2
Over 65	161	9.0
Total	1,786	100.0
Median Age	33.6	-

Table 1.3 Town of Signal Mountain Population by Age 1960 - 1990*

Age	1960	Percent	1970	Percent	1980	Percent	1990	Percent
Under4	391	11.5	320	6.8	386	6.6	486	6.9
5-9	443	13.0	557	11.5	451	7.8	578	8.2
10-14	354	10.4	605	12.5	509	8.7	584	8.3
15-19	202	5.9	447	9.2	523	9.0	427	6.1
20-24	85	2.5	169	3.5	223	3.8	212	3.0
25-29	152	4.5	224	4.6	306	5.3	234	3.3
30-34	272	7.9	293	6.1	514	8.8	461	6.6
35-39	263	7.7	340	7.0	472	8.1	708	10.1
40-44	253	7.4	361	7.4	412	7.1	685	9.7
45-49	232	6.8	338	7.0	370	6.4	490	7.0
50-54	201	5.9	304	6.3	385	-6.6	367	5.2
55-59	164	4.8	241	5.0	339	5.8	312	-4.5
60-64	111	3.3	212	4.4	265	4.6	325	4.6
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Division of Table is the result of age bracket differences in reported census data.

Density

"Population Density" (see Table 1.4) is the average number of persons per square mile of land area. Population density is a method for comparing the relative population distribution within a common geographical area.

Table 1.4 Population Density

Place	LAND AREA SQ. MILES				POPULATION DENSITY SQ. MILES				
	1970	1980	1995	1999	1970	1980	1990	1995	1999
Signal Mtn.	4.5	N/A	7.0	7.06	1,075	N/A	1,379	1,063.7	1,061.4
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One factor in natural increase is the age distribution of the resident population. This is reflected below in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6 Median Age (years)

Place	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Signal Mtn.	33.6	31.5	31.7	35.0	39.0
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Table 1.7 Net Migration

Place	1950/59	Percent	1960/69	Percent	1970/79	Percent	1980/89	Percent
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Population Projections

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Average Annual Increase	7,034	7,446	7,494	9,324
University of Tennessee, Center for Business and Economic Research				7,700

TOWN GOVERNMENT/COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Municipal Overview

The Town of Signal Mountain is a full-service community of approximately 7,500 citizens sitting atop the Signal Mountain section of Walden's Ridge, 1,200 feet above Red Bank and Chattanooga. The Town is a bedroom suburb of Chattanooga with virtually all employment being off the mountain.

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. On May 21, 1990, the Commission appointed its first Town Manager, Mr. Rick Sonnenburg, and with his swearing-in ceremony, the Commission became a Council. During the year 2000, Mr. Sonnenburg left the Town and the Council appointed Mr. Hershel Dick to be the Town Manager. During the year 2000, Ms. Diana Campbell was appointed to be the Town Recorder.

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. The Council meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall and occasionally at special sessions at other times of the month. 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. Volunteers are also encouraged to assist at the Library, Recycle Center and in the recreation leagues.

CHAPTER THREE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

OVERVIEW/ISSUES

Background

Since its beginnings in the early 1900's, the community of Signal Mountain has confronted change in a variety of forms. The seasonal splendor of Signal Mountain Inn gave way to a growing and more permanent community increasingly tied to the burgeoning Chattanooga economy. Street cars gave way to new roads which provided more efficient and independent travel for Town residents and ushered in a new wave of growth. The compact and traditional development patterns of the Old Towne area gave way to residential neighborhoods with larger lots than those in Old Towne. But throughout all of these changes, the Town has endured and maintained the quality of life and unique perspective envisioned by its founder. Across the community, neighborhoods are safe; the scenic qualities of the natural environment take center stage over the built environment; and the Town is viewed as a premier living environment in the Chattanooga region.

It is now the responsibility of this generation of Town leaders and residents to provide a continuing vision and plan for the community as it enters its second century. New challenges are to be met and unforeseen opportunities will arise. This Plan seeks to provide the guidance, certainty and vision needed for the Town as it enters the unpredictable and exciting times of a new millennium. The effects of past practices and the prospects of future opportunities require this Plan. Change is inevitable and can not be prevented. This Plan presents a common vision for the Town as it confronts this change and provides actions that will assist the Town in achieving a future that preserves the best of the past combined with the opportunities and hopes of the future.

Finally, this Plan is not intended to be a blueprint. Decisions will continue to be made day to day, month to month and year to year. Rather it is a guide to decision-making for the Town, setting out the goals, policies and desires of the community and providing tools for achieving these ends. Growth and change will come to both the Town and our region over the next twenty years. We can either plan ahead for the community we want or we can allow events to shape Signal Mountain how they will. The choice is ours.

Format of the Plan

This Plan is organized around the topics expressed in the executive summary. Each topic generates a range of policies and actions that flow from the analysis and discussion. Where possible, these policies and actions are collected and mapped to provide a summary view of the Town's vision for its future and the actions required to achieve this vision. Finally, the Plan is presented in a format that emphasizes its day-to-day importance as a policy and implementation tool for the Town over its importance in reporting all of the finding and analyses conducted during its creation. To this end, an exhaustive reporting of all analyses and findings is not

presented, but instead a summary statement of findings is created. These findings demonstrate the need and provide justification for the policies and actions recommended herein.

Definition of the Study Area

The geographic boundaries of this Plan's study correspond to the boundaries of the Town of Signal Mountain as of December 1999. The majority of the Plan's policies and actions concentrate solely on the land areas contained in these boundaries. The Plan also recognizes that the Town is a part of a larger Walden's Ridge Plateau and Chattanooga area. Therefore, portions of the Plan are devoted to describing the Town's role in this regional network of communities. Exhibit 3-1 illustrates the geographic boundaries of the planning study area. These limits correspond to the existing Town boundaries of Signal Mountain as of December 1999.

Key Issues in the Future Development of the Region

A review of past and current development and population trends and their impact of future development and land uses in the region indicate three critical issues for the mountain.

Issue No. 1: Unique Location: The communities of the Walden's Ridge Plateau share a unique position in the broader Chattanooga region. The pervasive natural environment and the topographic features separate these communities from the urban areas of Chattanooga and provide a unique living environment treasured by both past, current and future residents of the Plateau. With one main transportation corridor and limited support utilities to the area, natural or man-made events can contribute to disruptions in essential services to these communities.

Issue No. 2: Growth: It is clear that the region has been and will continue to be the focus of growth and development pressures. What is not clear is whether this future growth can be structured to enhance the Plateau versus just adding additional consumers to an already limited and finite resource base. 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.

Issue No. 3: Interlocal Cooperation/Competition: It is clear that the Town has developed 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.

General Characteristics of the Region

Over the past twenty years, the communities lying on the Walden's Ridge Plateau have been the focus of significant growth and development pressure. Between 1980 and 1990, the population of the area grew by 21.5 percent or an additional 2,300 persons over this period. Much of this growth has taken place in the Town. Population growth is expected to continue over the planning period as families continue to expand and a net in-migration occurs. Based on a review of local planning forecasts, population along the Plateau could reach a total of 19,000 persons by 2010.

Approximately 36 percent of the Town's residences are serviced by a public sewer system and virtually all residents of the Town have public water service available. The Walden's Ridge Utility District provides water service throughout the majority of the remaining areas of the region. Taft Highway (Hwy 127) provides the major transportation artery for the region, connecting the majority of the Plateau's residents to the Chattanooga area on a daily basis (approximately 90 percent of residents commute to work off the Plateau).

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map of December 1998 for the Town of Signal Mountain, Tennessee is recorded at Town Hall and on file at the Local Planning Office. The features depicted on this map provide a representation of the Town's intent and vision for future development over the next 10 to 20 years. The following features are included on the map:

1. **Land Use Areas:** The land use classifications described in this section are represented on the Future Land Use Map. Policies regarding the development of these areas are included in this section of the document, as well as in the following sections.
2. **Note References:** Specific notes are included to identify particular areas or situations in the Town to which special policies or attention should be applied. The notes are intended as graphic "reminders" for future leaders regarding the vision and policies generated during the development of this Plan.

The Town Manager and Planning Commission should be consulted to make any final interpretations of the Map prior to making any final land use decisions.

Signal Mountain's Vision of Its Future

Over the next 20 years, the Town's overall vision for its development and growth centers on the maintenance of small town atmosphere and quality of life within the developed portions of the community and the creation of stable suburban residential neighborhoods in the Shackelford Ridge Road area. To this end, the following land use issues are presented:

1. Residential development is expected to be the dominant development trend. Suburban residential densities and lot sizes are planned for the majority of undeveloped areas in the Town and the natural features and constraints existing on each particular property will

dictate the scale and nature of the development. The natural environment shall not be consumed or overrun by the built environment.

2. Existing residential areas are to be protected and preserved through the creation of sewer and transportation master plans which identify feasible means by which efficient and environmentally-sensitive infrastructure services can be provided to these areas.
3. The Commercial Land Use areas in the Town should be "neighborhood" in scale and nature (i.e. providing goods and services for Signal Mountain neighborhoods and residential areas). As new households are created within and around the Town, the creation of new shopping venues may be needed. The opportunities to create these developments are included in this Plan, but the creation of these areas shall not infringe on or endanger existing or proposed residential neighborhoods in the vicinity. Extensive commercialization of major streets is strongly discouraged.

Descriptions of certain land use classifications appear below. These descriptions will provide general characteristics of the land use category (i.e. densities, minimum lot sizes, etc.). Following these descriptions, the specific policies intended to manage growth and interpret this Future Land Use Map will be presented.

Description of Land Use Classifications on the Future Land Use Map

Residential Areas

The existing residential Land Use classifications included on the Future Land Use Map are outlined below. These characteristics are provided so that comparisons can be made among the classifications and the general nature of each classification can be identified.

General Characteristics	Land Use Classifications			
	Residential Estate	Low Density Residential	Moderate Density Residential	High Density Residential
General Nature of Classification	Rural, low-density, large lot subdivisions with public water and septic sewer	Suburban Single family neighborhoods	Suburban/Urban Residential, Single Family and two-family	Urban Residential Single family, and Multi-family
Maximum Permitted Density Range	0 to 2 units per acre (0 to 0.5 acres/unit)	1.0 to 2.0 units per acre (0-0.5 acres/unit)	2.0 to 7.0 units per acre (Varies)	2.2 to + ? (Varies)
Appropriate Zoning Districts	Existing Residential Estate	Existing Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential	Existing Moderate Density Residential, High Density Residential	Existing High Density Residential
Minimum Lot Size	Per existing Residential Estate Zoning Standards	Per existing LDR zoning standards	Per existing MDR zoning standards	Per existing HDR zoning standards

Non-Residential Areas

Outlined below are the general characteristics of non-residential land use classifications included in the Future Land Use Map.

General Characteristics	Land Use Classifications		
	Commercial	Public/Institutional	Parks/Open Space
General Nature of Classification	General retail, office and personal commercial areas	Public and institutional complexes such as Town Hall Complex, churches, schools, etc.	Major areas of public recreation and open space to maintain
Permitted Uses and Density	Per zoning standards of existing commercial districts Density not to exceed 0.25 F.A.R (Floor Area Ratio)	Public facilities, institutions of learning, etc. Density not to exceed 0.25 F.A.R (Floor Area Ratio)	parcs, golf courses, dedicated open space Density for required structures not to exceed 0.10 F.A.R (Floor Area Ratio)
Additional Provisions	Expansion of existing commercial areas discouraged. This policy is to be reevaluated every three years in conjunction with the reevaluation of the Future Land Use Plan Map.	Institutional uses along Taft Highway projected to be churches, Town facilities and schools. Redevelopment of existing area discouraged unless broader public purpose is proposed and proven to the Town's satisfaction.	Major facilities indicated are intended to Remain over planning Period. Redevelopment of existing area discouraged unless broader public purpose is proposed and proven.

Illustration 3.3

New Maximum Permitted Density Standards for Zoning Districts

The following are the maximum permitted density standards for each of the existing and proposed zoning districts within the Town.

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>Maximum Permitted Density/Floor Area Ratio</u>	
Low Density Residential	2.0 units per acre	(0.5 acres per unit)
Moderate Density Residential	2.5 units per acre	(0.4 acres per unit)
High Density Residential	4.5 units per acre	(0.22 acres per unit)
Specialty Commercial	0.25 Floor Area Ratio (“F.A.R.”)	
Community Commercial	0.35 F.A.R.	
Highway Commercial	0.35 F.A.R.	
Office Commercial	0.25 F.A.R. / 6.0 units per acre (0.17 acres per unit)	
Planned Commerce Center	0.35 F.A.R.	
Warehouse and Wholesale	0.40 F.A.R.	
Planned Unit Development		
• Low Density	4.0 units per acre	(0.25 acres per unit)
• Moderate Density	4.5 units per acre	(0.22 acres per unit)
• High Density	5.0 units per acre	(0.20 acres per unit)

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

To adequately plan and allocate for its future land use, it is necessary that a community establish general development goals. In the context of a future land use plan, a goal is a general statement reflecting the objectives in the areas of land development, transportation, and service delivery the community wants to achieve. The overall goal of this land use and policy plan for the Town of Signal Mountain is to provide a quality living and working environment for the residents of the municipality.

The following goals are general statements that the Signal Mountain Municipal Planning Commission believes to be the desires of the citizens regarding the future development of the municipality.

1. To preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life in the Town while encouraging continued harmonious development to high standards.
2. To ensure that all residential developments provide pleasant and harmonious living environments, are served by adequate vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, are served by adequate infrastructure, and are properly related to other municipal land uses.
3. To provide for a small number of concentrated commercial centers to serve the needs of Town residents.

4. To provide adequate and efficient public facilities and services, and to provide a diversity of cultural and recreational opportunities.
5. To provide utility services that effectively and efficiently meet the current and anticipated needs of the Town.
6. To provide an efficient and effective transportation system with appropriate linkages and capacities.
7. To encourage the development of vacant land which has less natural restrictions and which has the necessary infrastructure.
8. To carefully review and consider development proposals on land with natural limitations to assure safety and compatibility with the uses of nearby property, with no undue burden on taxpayers.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Introduction and Background

The Town is a small community and its most fundamental growth management problems can be resolved. But the goal of preserving and enhancing the high quality of life into the quality of the built environment requires more detailed planning and design standards than should be included in this Plan. Therefore, it is the intent of this section of the plan to prescribe overarching policies and actions which help to create and define the community character and design policies to which all developments within the Town are to be measured.

Despite the quality of much recent development in the Town, community enhancement standards are still needed for a variety of reasons. For example:

- some developments are of a lesser quality than others;
- in some areas there is little evidence of a consistent community focus in the built environment;
- the commercial areas that serve local residents are located in commercial developments that could be made more attractive.

Enhancing the quality of new and existing developments and community settings requires planning policies that are not grounded in the analysis of statistical trends and predictions. Providing solutions to these design issues relies on critical observation and evaluation of the ultimate extent of public involvement in private investments and design decisions. This section seeks to provide balance and clarity to the community character standards established by the Town in order that a better-designed community and enhanced quality of life will result.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Assure the Integrity of the Natural Environment

1. The Town shall examine the existing development plan review and approval process and site plan review/approval process to assure that all developments are in harmony with their natural and developed surroundings.
2. The Town shall support existing Historic Districts as well as future requests for inclusion in the Town's Historic Districts.

Town Historic Preservation Program

Increase emphasis on protecting and restoring historic landscapes and settings as well as individual structures by: adopting comprehensive, town-wide historic preservation legislation protecting historic resources from demolition without proper review and approval; making an inventory and establishing a comprehensive listing of historic structures and districts; and coordinating local preservation efforts with local, state and federal programs to broaden potential scope and impact of such programs.

RESIDENTIAL

GENERAL LAND USE AND INFRASTRUCTURE CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY AREA

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 around the present day Alexian Village complex. An examination of current development patterns across the Town (see Exhibit 3-2) indicates a community comprised primarily of residential neighborhoods connected by a few major transportation corridors. The overall gross density of the Town is approximately .67 units per acre, with residential single-family lot sizes ranging from approximately 15,000 square feet (or approximately 0.34 acres per lot), in the Old Towne area to half acre to an acre lots in the more recent subdivisions to larger, rural lots in the more remote portions of the Town (i.e. Shackleford Ridge).

The majority portion of the developed land in Signal Mountain is devoted to residential uses, consisting primarily of single-family dwellings, but also including multi-family dwellings. 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.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Conservation and Development of Stable and Developing Residential Areas:

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

1. **Stable Residential Areas:** The general objective is to continue to protect and preserve the existing stable residential areas of the Town. Stable residential areas exhibit a high level of maintenance and consist of a compatible mixture of land uses and housing types. The following sub-policies are recommended:
 - a. Stable residential areas shall be protected from disruptive uses such as incompatible higher density residential structures, and encroaching non-residential uses.
 - b. Routine maintenance by private property owners is encouraged and the overall condition of the property should be upgraded where necessary to preserve the stable development. When necessary, the Town shall utilize strict Codes enforcement to protect and preserve stable residential areas.
 - c. Vacant land adjoining stable areas or occupied land to be redeveloped should be utilized for residential, public, or semi-public development.
 - d. 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. Reuse of existing residential structures will be designed to occur at a density compatible with surrounding structures.

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. Existing non-residential uses that are incompatible with the residential character of stable adjoining areas are encouraged to be phased out and replaced with compatible uses. Special care should be taken to protect existing historical areas and promote the preservation of Signal Mountain's unique historical assets. Maintenance and improvements to the public infrastructure should receive attention necessary to help maintain the stable areas.

2. **Developing Residential Areas:** A large portion of the Town planning area has been planned for future residential growth. To guide this development, the following impacts will be considered:
 - A. Property owners proposing to amend this Plan, change the zoning classification of their property, or secure approval of a planned development site plan or subdivision plat shall have their proposed plans reviewed by the Planning Commission to determine whether the proposal complies with the requirements of this Plan. The Town staff will work closely with applicants of proposed developments to review the extent of impacts of their plan's elements. The evaluation of the proposal's impacts on individual elements of this Plan will be prepared and will reflect the goals, objectives, policies, and map elements

contained in this Plan and other data, criteria, and information available to the departments. The seven broad impact categories to be examined are listed below.

Impacts:

1. Land use compatibility.
2. Transportation and traffic impacts.
3. Water demands.
4. Encroachment on the natural environment.
5. Potential storm water runoff hazards.
6. Impacts on community facilities.
7. Responsibility, if any, of the Town regarding the above elements and the anticipated public cost. Residential areas should be designed, to the extent practical, as neighborhood units. The design and organization of the neighborhood units are encouraged to provide amenities for permanent residents, including parks and recreation facilities. Developing residential areas will be protected from disruptive uses. such as incompatible residential structures and encroaching non-residential uses. Densities of new residential development should be compatible with existing adjoining residential areas and a buffer will be provided when there is a significant difference in densities. New development which has a significantly different size, height, or mass from adjacent existing development will be avoided if the differences detract from the use and privacy of the existing adjoining development.

The following policies reflect the attention to these concerns:

1. The Town shall examine the existing development plan review and approval process and site plan review/approval process to assure that all developments are in harmony with their natural and developed surroundings.
2. The Town shall encourage the use of transitional land uses such as linear greenbelts of other design elements between residential neighborhoods of differing densities, and between residential and non-residential areas in order to enhance compatibility of land uses.
3. The design of new developments will make appropriate provisions, depending on the unique setting of each site, for safe and convenient pedestrian walks and paths and a safe, convenient vehicular street system.
4. Open space overlay zoning will be developed, adopted, and monitored as a method of allowing residential development while preserving sensitive natural areas, where appropriate.

Sites with Historic Areas and Significance

Because this plan supports the protection and preservation of historic features, the following policies apply to areas and sites which are historically significant. Historically significant areas or sites shall be defined as sites, structures, or areas identified on the National Register of Historic Places or any other comparable state or local register of historic places.

1. Emphasis should be given to the upkeep and enhancement of publicly owned historic features.
2. Owners of private property that contain historic features should be encouraged to preserve those features in conjunction with any proposed development of the site and work closely with any public and private historical commissions in the Town of Signal Mountain, the Chattanooga area, or the State of Tennessee.
3. Application of regulatory measures designed to support the preservation of historically significant properties should be supported.
4. 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.

UTILITIES

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ISSUES/POLICIES

Given the geography and topography of Signal Mountain, the use of septic systems and other alternative forms of handling wastewater are becoming more common. As such, the Town recognizes its responsibilities in assuring adequate and safe disposition of wastewater, as well as the full range of municipal utilities.

Master Plan for Water and Sewerage Services

This Plan recommends that Signal Mountain develop and adopt a Master Plan for Water for all areas of the Town, incorporating the following concerns:

1. Provision of adequate domestic and fire fighting water services to existing and developing areas; Indicate equitable and feasible means of financing proposed improvements; and
2. Incorporate final recommendations into Capital Improvements Budgets for respective utility funds.

Stormwater Management Policies

The potential development of the Town's northern fringe could produce significant effects on properties which are located adjacent to creeks, streams, or waterways within the area. The following policies are adopted for proposed developments within the Town:

1. For all proposed development or redevelopment sites, post-development stormwater peak run-off and water-quality must not differ significantly -from pre-development conditions.
2. No construction, whether by private or public action, shall be performed in such a manner as to materially increase the degree of flooding in its vicinity or in other areas, whether by flow restrictions, increased run-off, or by diminishing channel or over bank storage capacities.

Provision of Essential Services Concurrent with Development

In all areas, essential services which should be provided as development occurs include roadway access (both local roads and facilities serving the development), public water for both domestic use and fire protection, sanitary sewers, and storm drainage facilities.

1. The responsibility for the provision of essential services is shared by the private and public sectors. Very large "regional" facilities are clearly a public responsibility. Localized facilities benefiting primarily individual developments are a private responsibility. Sometimes, localized facilities should be designed to serve a sizable area in the vicinity of a particular development. In such cases, joint public-private participation should be encouraged to assure proper initial facility design. In all cases, however, this Plan strongly recommends that the required right-of-way (as indicated on the Town's Official Transportation Plan) of any public street be dedicated by a proposed development prior to its approval.
2. All proposed developments which involve the provision of new public or private roads should be subject to public water facilities adequate for urban fire protection, and storm drainage facilities.

3. In many predominantly rural areas recommended for eventual urbanization, pressure often occurs for development along existing public roads where required sanitary sewers and water are not available at urban standards. In such situations, low density development should be accommodated based on the following criteria: (a) such development will not adversely affect water service to existing development; (b) an acceptable on-site wastewater disposal system can be provided; and (c) lot design and site development are conducive to easy resubdivision of the property to increase densities after sewers become available. Such development should also be permitted in accordance to the above criteria where the extension of an existing water line is necessary.

Other

- a. Develop an education program for the use of septic systems.
- b. Encourage the continuation of the current Electric Power Board street light policy and underground utility lines installation policy.

TRANSPORTATION

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ISSUES

Introduction

Although the system of streets and roadways will continue to be the dominant means of transportation throughout the Town over the planning period, this Plan strongly encourages and supports a "multi-modal" system be developed to its fullest extent. Alternative modes of travel are important for two reasons: (1) the Town's street network has been and will increasingly become a major "through" route for area residents which leads to greater traffic congestion and the need for alternative travel means, and (2) alternative systems (i.e., bikeways, pedestrian trails) help to link the community together and provides a safer, more effective path for Signal Mountain's young people to travel to points of interest within the Town.

Accordingly, this Transportation Plan includes three major elements. First, **Exhibit 3-5** outlines a system of thoroughfares and roads within the Town that, when developed as planned, will accommodate the vehicular traffic associated with the addition of new homes forecasted on the land use plans outlined herein. Second, a system of bikeways and sidewalks is presented to supplement the thoroughfares and is shown on **Exhibit 3-6**. Finally, policies are presented to expound on the Transportation Policy section of the Executive Summary and to present sub-policies offering a higher degree of specificity:.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN-ROADWAYS AND THOROUGHFARES

Exhibit 3-5 graphically depicts the Official Transportation Plan for the Town of Signal Mountain over the planning period 1997-2015. The general intent of this Plan is to inform both public officials and private citizens of the roadway improvements which will be required to adequately

serve the vehicular transportation needs of the community over the next 20 years. As such, this section details the: (1) functional classification for existing roads or proposed roads in the Town (i.e., explains their purpose in the overall roadway network); (2) preliminary roadway improvement recommendations to be undertaken over the planning period (i.e., widening, intersection improvements, realignments, etc.); (3) policies related to accessing this street system; and (4) street system's relationship to the alternative transportation modes such as bikeways, trails, etc. In 1999, the Planning Commission decided to recommend against construction of the Proposed Timesville Road Extension that is shown on **Exhibit 3-5**.

Roadway Functional Classifications

This section deals with the function a particular roadway and addresses the degree to which the road serves to provide local access to abutting properties versus longer distance trips connecting more distant destinations by higher level roadways. For example, a short stretch of widened, two lane roadway within a wide right-of-way (i.e., Grayson Road) that serves as the entranceway to a residential subdivision would be shown as a "local" road on the Plan; conversely, a two-lane, unimproved rural road with a relatively narrow right-of-way (i.e., Shackleford Ridge Road) that runs continuously for miles and connects into other important roadways would be shown as a "Minor Arterial" on the Plan. The laneage and rights of-way of these roads may be similar, but their function and importance in the overall transportation network is quite different. The Transportation Plan has been prepared to indicate the required functional classifications for various roadways within the planning area to accommodate the projected land development. Formal definitions of each roadway classification and appropriate access policies are included below.

Principal Arterial

1. Provides access to major freeways and other principal arterials.
2. Provides efficient but not free or uninterrupted flow between major streets in highly developed areas through the limitation of the type and number of access points from adjacent land uses.
3. Provides major traffic movements to major generators of regional and area interest such as town centers, commercial complexes, and large employment centers.
4. Distributes large volumes of trips to and between freeways or other principal arterials emanating from lesser classified arterials and major collectors.
5. Provides routes for mass transit system to communities within the Chattanooga area.
6. Recommended right-of-way width and maximum laneage = 100 feet and 5 lanes.

Minor Arterials

1. Provides interconnection between principal and minor arterials.
2. Provides a lower level of travel mobility than principal arterials to major towns and communities
3. Provides routes for- mass transit system to communities within the area.
4. Provides a primary access to or through communities of non-residential and high density residential land areas.
5. Provides access to abutting commercial, residential, and industrial properties at predetermined locations.
6. Recommended right-of-way widths and maximum laneage = 70 feet and 4 lanes.

Collectors

1. Provides a primary access to an arterial road for one or more neighborhoods.
2. Distributes residentially-based trips to or from arterials.
3. Provides a limited amount of travel through neighborhoods which originates and terminates externally.
4. Provides direct connections to local roads and minor collectors.
5. Provides collection and distribution routes for mass transit system.
6. Carries a limited amount of through traffic, primarily local in nature.
7. Recommended right-of-way width and maximum laneage = 60 feet and 3 lanes.

Local Roads

1. Comprises all roads or residential streets not classified as arterials or collectors
2. Provides direct access to abutting land uses and higher order roadway classes except freeways.
3. Offers the lowest level of mobility of all roadway classifications and usually contains no bus routes.
4. Discourages through traffic movement.
5. Recommended right-of-way width and maximum laneage = 40 feet and 2 lanes.

Roadway Improvement Recommendations

Exhibit 3-5 depicts the location of the major street improvements as identified in the listing below. An over-all goal for reducing the burden on existing thoroughfares is the development of a new Arterial accessing the mountain. As such, this project is beyond the scope of this Plan, however, a detailed engineering study would provide information on the costs and benefits of such a major move, and would require the cooperation of the State of Tennessee and the local MPO. Until such time as a new access is built, the current transportation network should be maintained and improved for maximum efficiency. The following improvements are based on preliminary traffic analysis and intersection studies for the land used proposed and the existing system as of June 1997. More detailed traffic engineering and analysis (i.e., alignment grade and typical section plans) should be completed before final design of these improvements begins to ensure the need for additional laneage and the proper timing for these improvements. In order to provide for acceptable level of service for the area, the following major roadway improvement segments are envisioned:

Arterial Segments: The following arterial roadways will require improvement due to unacceptable levels of congestion or safety concerns:

1. Confer with the State of Tennessee regarding the widening of Signal Mountain Road from U.S. 27 to the Ridgeway Avenue/Palisades Drive intersection.
2. Confer with the State of Tennessee regarding the widening of Ridgeway Avenue and Taft Highway from the Ridgeway Avenue/ Palisades Drive intersection to Corral Road.

Road Realignments: The Plan recommends the following roadway segments or intersections be realigned to accommodate new traffic loads or provide additional safety margins.

1. Selected portions of Edwards Point Road and Shackleford Ridge Road (if not addressed previously during widening).

Intersection Improvements: The following are intersections which have geometric or sight distance deficiencies. Correction of these deficiencies will enhance both the safety and traffic capacity limitations at each location.

1. Ridgeway Avenue/Palisades Drive/Mississippi Avenue/Carlin Avenue (realignment and reworking to improve capacity and flow).
2. James Blvd at Timberlinks (realignment to improve sight distance).
3. Signal Mountain Blvd./Mississippi Avenue (realignment to improve capacity and safety).
4. Edwards Point Road at Shackleford Ridge Road (as part of Shackleford Ridge Road improvements).

Timing and Phasing of Improvements

The timing and phasing of road improvement projects in relation to land use development is a function of available funding combined with ease of construction. Priority should be given to projects which are needed to accommodate growth which has already taken place. The next area of emphasis is on those projects needed to handle growth during the next ten year period. Finally, those projects on the Transportation Plan which are needed for the 15 and 20 year planning horizon will need to be programmed.

In order to determine the timing and priority of individual projects, on-going studies of the functioning of the transportation network will need to be conducted and evaluated. An area-wide traffic counting program, as well as traffic studies of key intersections and corridors, will assist in monitoring the effect of land use and development on the highway system.

Finally, the Transportation Plan included in this report represents the roadway system which will be needed to adequately handle the traffic for the next 10 to 20 years. In many instances, the right-of-ways indicated are significantly more than what is needed according to the laneage requirements and the land uses projected. It is recommended, however, that reservations of right-of-way be based on the right-of-way widths shown on this Plan. This will ensure that for the next period beyond 20 years, the various governmental units will have sufficient land to build the roadway system which will be needed at that time.

ACCESSIBILITY POLICIES

The following are sub-policies of the major Transportation policy section outlined in the Executive Summary. These sub-policies serve as the preferred method for assessing development proposals and their accompanying traffic improvements.

Access Policies for Major Streets: The following sub-policies apply to the major street system:

1. Level of Service: The level of service of any component of the major street system (i.e., arterials collectors and locals) shall not be diminished by a proposed development below a level which shall be established by the Town Planning Commission. The Planning Commission shall have the authority to require the developer of any project to submit a traffic study, prepared by a qualified traffic engineer and containing sufficient information, which demonstrates the proposed development's impact on the operation of the surrounding street network.
2. Concurrence in Land Use-Development and Street Improvements: Any proposed development which conforms to the land use policies of this Plan, but which requires additional street improvements in order to maintain the minimum acceptable level of service of the surrounding street network, should be approved only if one or more of the following funding mechanisms are in place: (1) the needed improvements are funded by the developer; (2) the needed improvements are specifically scheduled to be funded by a local government entity within two years; or (3) the needed improvements are

specifically scheduled to be funded by the Tennessee Department of Transportation within three years.

3. Phasing of Major Street Improvements: Portions of the major street network which require extensive, staged improvements over the planning period in order to accommodate the projected population and growth should have phasing plans prepared. These plans are intended to time the provision of street improvements with the expected growth in population/employment that will depend on those improvements.
4. Access Policies for Existing Conditions: Where traffic conflicts result due to the location and/or nature of curb cuts for existing uses, this Plan strongly recommends that the burden of correcting such conflicts be placed upon the private property owner. A specific remediation plan shall be submitted to the Town Planning Commission for review and approval. Said plan shall incorporate design solutions that place the traffic carrying capacity and safety of the public thoroughfare foremost and private access issues or problems secondary.

Access Policies for Local Streets: The sole purpose of local streets is to provide access to property in a manner which befits the type and density of development served. Accordingly, the following sub-policies apply:

1. The layout of local streets shall be designed to avoid through connections on local streets between higher order streets (collector, arterial) such that a short cut route may be provided. Through traffic is considered a harmful intrusion to residential areas and could cause destabilization and deterioration of these areas.
2. The layout of local streets shall be designed so that access to higher density residential or non-residential developments is not directed through lower density residentially developed areas. Where traffic conflicts result due to the location and/or nature of curb cuts for existing uses, this Plan strongly recommends that the burden of correcting such conflicts be placed on the private property owner. A specific remediation plan shall be submitted to the Town Planning Commission for review and approval. Such plan shall incorporate design solutions that place the traffic carrying capacity and safety of the public thoroughfare foremost and private access issues or problems secondary.

Curb Cut Policies for Major Streets (Arterials and Collectors): In order to promote the safety of the motorist and pedestrian and to minimize traffic congestion and conflict by reducing the points of contact, the following sub-policies should be applied along major traffic ways:

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.

3. Driveway openings shall be so located that vehicles entering or leaving the development will not interfere with the free movement of traffic or create a hazard on the public right-of-way. Where feasible, they shall be located where there are no sharp curves and steep grades and where sight distance is adequate for safe traffic operation. They shall be so located that they will not interfere with the placement of signs, signals, or other devices that affect traffic operation. Where traffic conflicts result due to the location and/or nature of curb cuts for existing uses, this Plan strongly recommends that the burden of correcting such conflicts be placed upon the private property owner. A specific remediation plan shall be submitted to the Town Planning Commission for review and approval. Said plan shall incorporate design solutions that place the traffic carrying capacity and safety of the public thoroughfare foremost and private access issues or problems secondary.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Exhibit 3-5 outlines a road system which ensures an adequate street network capable of providing safe and efficient transportation of people and goods within and through the Town over the planning period. This Plan recognizes, however, that this street system (if developed in the future as it has been developed in the past) will not cater to alternative transportation means such as bicycles and walking.

Accordingly, this Plan strongly encourages the use of the conceptual design guidelines outlined in the next section in the development and construction of future roadway improvements in the Town. These guidelines will accommodate proposed bike paths and foot paths, thus ensuring the feasibility of using an existing street as a comprehensive, "multi-modal" transportation corridor.

Bikeways and Sidewalks

Exhibit 3-6 graphically displays a conceptual bikeways and pedestrian trail system for the Town of Signal Mountain. This system of trails, sidewalks, and bikeways serves as a parallel reliever to existing roadways and as a greenway/trail linkage throughout the community. As population continues to grow in the Town, it is essential that a comprehensive pedestrian circulation system be established, especially in the emerging development areas on the Town's northern fringe. 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. Tree-lined avenues might connect small neighborhood parks, which in turn could connect to the new bike trails along newly improved arterials and collector streets. These linkages could accommodate bicycles and joggers; but, whenever possible, would be separated from vehicular movement. Illustration No. 3.4 depicts a prototype bikeway/trail section.

In general, there exists three primary funding options to implement the bikeway/trail system. First, the federal ISTEA program provides grant funding for communities proposing alternative

transportation solutions. These funds are administered by the state, competitively awarded, and require local funds to leverage the federal funds. Second, the Tennessee Department of Conservation administers a Trails program for communities seeking to implement a master trail system. Again, these grant funds are competitively awarded and require a local match. Finally, perhaps the most reliable source of funding for the system is local funding. New sidewalks and trails can be funded along with new roadway projects in the Town. If packaged as a part of an overall roadway system improvement, the costs of implementing the trails are less daunting.

Coordinated Planning for Greenways

Institute a program of mountain stream greenway planning by which all actions to protect these areas will be coordinated.

Continuity of Greenways

Emphasize maintaining or restoring the continuity of mountain stream corridors, especially in the developing areas along Shackelford Ridge Road, since corridor continuity is vital for the ecological health of such environments. Preserved resources that are isolated and surrounded by development do not survive as healthy, balanced environments.

Implementation of Greenways

Make mountain stream greenways a priority concern when planning future open space acquisitions, protection easements, local land trusts, or other forms of management agreements with private land owners. Where special conditions prevail, secure increased buffer areas along stream valleys.

Acquisition Priority

Establish a system of greenways in which the degree of regulation or acquisition is geared to the role and significance of specific stream valleys within the overall system of streams and tributaries.

INDUSTRIAL

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ISSUES

Signal Mountain does not rely on large-scale industry on the Mountain to provide employment for its residents. Due to its location, excessive truck traffic is not practical and the Town's streets are not designed to accommodate large-scale shift changes. As of October, 2000, the establishment of an industrial base is not considered critical to the Town's economy.

- A. Objective - To protect the Town from the adverse impacts associated with large-scale industrial development.

1. Policy

Maintain current practices and policies that do not allow the establishment of an industrial base in the Town. The Planning Commission and the Council shall reevaluate these practices and policies each time that they reevaluate the Town's Future Land Use Map (which is to occur every three years).

VACANT LAND/OPEN SPACE

INTRODUCTION

The desire for a high quality of life extends to a high quality environment and landscape in which to work, live, and play. As demonstrated in previous analyses, the Town of Signal Mountain will continue to be the focus of development pressures throughout the planning period, but this does not mean that unnecessary losses of natural resources and environmental quality must be endured. 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 whose homes are not currently served by the Town's sewer system to have their homes connected to the Town's sewer system.

Policies and actions promoting the preservation of the Town's scenic beauty are provided through site design standards and regulations regarding future growth areas.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

On the whole, the community consists of mature, residential neighborhoods with large lots, towering tree canopies and little evidence of environmental problems. However, the Town Council would like to endeavor to prevent future environmental problems. Three key concerns surfaced during the analysis phase:

1. **Natural Constraints in Newly Developing Areas:** Exhibit 3-7 indicates the general location and extent of natural constraints to development in the proposed development areas along Shackelford Ridge Road. Steep slopes and inadequate septic soils are the most prevalent constraints to future development. These constraints must be addressed in the actual implementation of development proposals generated by this Plan.
2. **Existing Land Use Regulation's Impacts:** Existing zoning and land use tools for development provide little incentive for developers to practice environmentally sensitive development design. Since the majority of future development areas do not contain sanitary sewer services and existing regulations do not impede density in environmentally sensitive areas, the typical development practice is to plan and develop the smallest lots possible and spread these lots across the entire property. The practice of rewarding density on the basis of the indiscriminate use of the fullest extent of the proposed development property must be addressed. Recently, the Town's and Hamilton County's standards for septic sewer system approval, installation and maintenance were tightened.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

1. Places of rare natural beauty and areas of historic interest should be preserved and maintained.
2. Mature vegetation, especially along stream banks should be protected from indiscriminate removal in order to enhance the aesthetic value of the landscape as well as to control erosion.
3. Open space overlay zoning will be developed, adopted, and monitored as a method of allowing residential development while preserving sensitive natural areas, where appropriate.
4. Develop a program to enhance existing mountain stream greenways and create new greenways where appropriate.

COMMERCIAL

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Alternative Designs

Recognizing the importance of providing private individuals freedom to express their design ambitions and provide their contributions to the overall design fabric of the community, the Town shall review and may approve alternative designs which may not meet all the exact requirements of the community design standards but, on the whole, fulfill the intent of the standards by providing safe, efficient and aesthetically pleasing projects. Consistency and compatibility with current design standards are desired, but identical designs to existing-buildings or neighborhoods are not required.

Public Facilities in Commercial Developments

Seek sites within or adjacent to existing or future commercial developments when such facilities will be compatible with the businesses within such centers, when such locations will increase the accessibility of public services to the local population, and when such sites will improve the cost effectiveness of the development and operation of such facilities (e.g., shared parking or shared utility infrastructures).

Civic Design

Locate and design public buildings to stress their civic role (e.g., use them as landmarks at the joining of streets or as an edge to the clearly defined, centrally located public space).

Location

New commercial and other non-residential developments must be located in areas that are zoned for the particular commercial or other non-residential activity and are in accordance with the Town's Future Land Use Plan Map. The Planning Commission and the Council shall reevaluate these practices and policies each time that they reevaluate the Town's Future Land Use Plan Map, which is to occur every three years.

Traffic Studies

Require traffic studies for all new non-residential developments.

Design Standards

Establish and adopt design standards for site layout, signage, architectural and landscape design for the potential redevelopment of existing non-residential centers.

Public Space

Look for sites at key locations within commercial areas that redevelopment could change into more usable public space and green space.

Cooperation for Revitalization

1. Promote joint solutions to common problems where small separate businesses predominate (e.g., shared parking and shared activities such as common sign detailing and landscape design). Encourage the creation of local commercial improvement associations to help implement and manage such changes.
2. Encourage creation of commercial improvement associations.
3. Prepare and adopt a commercial establishment street access ordinance.
4. Encourage the development of a program to distribute grant monies from the Town to the Chamber of Commerce for improved storefronts and streetscapes.
5. Create a plan for improved streetscapes in commercial areas.

Community Design Standards & Guidelines

Develop and adopt a comprehensive set of community design standards and guidelines that will be required of new developments in all districts within the Town. These standards shall require safe, efficient and visually-appealing designs which are consistent with the overall design character of the community.

CHAPTER 4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

There are several methods available for implementation of the objectives and policies developed in this Land Use Plan. A schedule for implementation is prepared that provides strategies for such implementation through establishment of time frames for completion, and identifying those responsible for specific actions. The implementation actions are grouped by land use category.

General Development

1. Site plan review process - Planning Commission to review and decide recommendation to Town Council for any possible zoning amendments (September 2000).
2. Support Historic Districts - Planning Commission and Council to provide on-going non-monetary support to Old Town Historic District and others as requested.
3. Future Land Use Map-Adopted December 1998
4. Annexation agreements/urban fringe study - monitor UGB process; Planning Commission to authorize annexation study/urban fringe study (July 2000).

Residential

1. Open Space Design Overlay Zone Regulations - Adopted January, 2000
2. Residential Densities - On-going review by Planning Commission.
3. Greenbelts/Buffering - On-going review by Planning Commission.

Commercial

1. Traffic Studies for new developments - Ordinance has been approved.
2. Commercial streetscapes - Referred to DRC in December, 1999.

3. Commercial Improvement Associations - Mayor to write to Chamber branch to encourage Chamber to promote two area associations (north and south area of Town).
4. Grants for improved storefronts/streetscapes - After DRC recommendations, refer to Chamber branch for discussion with businesses; Chamber to study and submit recommendations to Council for funding; Council to consider approving any funding which may exist in budget; Town transfers funds to Chamber for grant approval.

Public/Semi-Public Facilities

1. Promote construction of high school - Develop plan for bond issue paid by sales tax revenues (Calendar year 2001); assist citizen committee's private fund-raiser (on-going).
2. Second fire station - After UGB adoption, conduct fire station location study (Planning Commission); negotiate for option/purchase of property (Town Council); build the station.

Utilities

1. Promote EPB efforts to reduce outages - Mayor to write to EPB requesting EPB's written plan (August, 2000); Staff to monitor EPB plan (on-going).
2. Adopt septic system standards - In place.
3. Education program on septic tank usage - Town to continue distribution of County "How To" septic system pamphlets to new residents; place "How To" in mountain newspaper on semi-annual basis.
4. Support EPB underground utility policy - Mayor to request written EPB policy (July, 2000); on-going monitoring of implementation.

Vacant Land/Open Space

1. Open Space Zoning - Adopted January, 2000.
2. Preservation of historic areas - on-going Planning Commission review.
3. Erosion control/stream banks - Planning Commission review, possible Subdivision Regulation amendments (September, 2000).
4. Enhancement of mountain stream greenways - referred to Parks Board (December, 1999); receive Parks Board report (September 2000); Town Council to determine action.

Transportation

1. New Road to Mountain - Town Council to approval Resolution in support of new road (March 2000); Mayor to send Resolution to T.D.O.T. and legislative delegation (April 2000).
2. Improve and widen Taft Highway - Mayor to contact T.D.O.T. to confirm information on widening Taft Highway to four lanes from Key Street north (July 2000); Lobby T.D.O.T. to keep this action a priority.
3. Intersection improvements - Council to review T.D.O.T. study options for US 127 at Palisades and request MPO funds for selected option (March 2000); James at Timberlink: request T.D.O.T. review (March 2001); Signal Mountain Boulevard at Mississippi/Edwards Point at Shackelford Ridge Road: request T.D.O.T. review (March 2001).
4. Traffic studies for new commercial developments - Ordinance approved.
5. Commercial establishment street access ordinance - Ordinance approved.
6. Encourage development of regional bikeway/pedestrian trail system - Town Council to create special study committee (March 2000); Committee to conduct study (January 2001); Council to determine funding and policy issues for FY 2002 budget (May 2001).
7. Greenway enhancement - referred to Parks Board (December, 1999); receive Parks Board report (September 2000); Town Council to determine action.