

AGENDA
Town of Mountain City Municipal Planning Commission
September 26, 2024 at 4:30 pm
at City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Karen Cunningham
Mayor Jerry Jordan
Jamie Meade
Dustin Shearin
Richard Walsh

PUBLIC COMMENT

OLD BUSINESS

1. Approve minutes of August 22, 2024 meeting, **Page 2.**

NEW BUSINESS

1. Mr. Jason Steele to request a special exception to allow a hair salon on parcel 040M B 017.00, W. Main Street, **Page 3-4.**
2. Discussion of food trucks or food service selling food type goods within Town limits.
3. Review of 09/19/2024 meeting with Johnson City building officials regarding property ordinances and enforcement procedures in Johnson City
 - a. Property maintenance
 - b. Building code violations including unfit structures
4. Discussion of Land use and Transportation Policy Plan dated August, 2010, attached, **Page 5-64.**

ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES
MOUNTAIN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
AUGUST 22, 2024
4:30 PM

Members Present: Karen Cunningham, Chairperson
Mayor Jerry Jordan
Dustin Shearin
Richard Walsh

Members Absent: Jamie Meade

Others Present: Connor Franklin, Cory Haggard of FTDD

Old Business: None

To begin the meeting, Chairperson Karen Cunningham asked for approval of the minutes of the July 25, 2024 meeting. There were no changes requested. Mayor Jerry Jordan made a motion to accept the minutes. Dustin Shearin seconded the motion. All members present voted yes by saying “aye.”

There were no members of the public present.

New Business:

1. Mr. Jason Steele to discuss a request for a special exception to allow a hair salon on parcel 040M B 017.00, W. Main Street.

Mr. Jason Steele was present and requested that the Planning Commission grant a special request to allow the construction of a small hair salon and apartment on this parcel, which was recently subdivided from a larger parcel. The parcel is zoned R2. He described a 30x60 building with parking and the salon in the front.

Cory Haggard of First TN Development District note that the Board could amend the allowable uses in R2 to include hair salons, as it currently allows for a variety of professional businesses. He noted that the building would have to meet the setback requirements and provide a landscape buffer along the property lines. The setback is 50 feet on sides abutting residential lots. Given the lot dimensions it may be difficult to meet this requirement.

The members discussed other concerns, including that home occupation would be required for a “home based business.” Signage was discussed. The lot is along an arterial road.

After some comments, the request was denied due to lack of a motion to approve the application for a special exception. Ms. Cunningham then advised Mr. Steele to ensure that a building could be built that would satisfy his needs, and which would meet the setback requirements. He was invited to return and review his plans at the next meeting, which is September 26 at 4:30 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm, with a motion from Dustin Shearin, seconded by Mayor Jordan. All approved.

City Recorder Audra Gerty

APPLICATION FOR REZONING REQUESTS

1. Owner's name and address Jason Steele 434 Erby Johnson
LN Mtn. city TN, 37682 Phone 423-957-0856
2. Developer's name and address _____ Phone _____
3. Location of property to be rezoned Hwy 67W
(Attach a sketch on letter size paper)
4. Size of area (in acres or square feet) .67 acres
5. Existing Zone R2 Desired Zone _____
6. Existing Use R2 zoning Proposed Use Hair salon/Small
- *7. Date received by City Recorder 08/06/2024
Date at which plat is to be considered _____
8. Remarks: (List any special features which will help the Planning Commission in its decision.)
Special exception requested for hair salon.

Planning Commission Procedure for Considering Rezoning Requests:

1. All zoning amendments shall be presented in writing with the necessary information to make the proposals clear and pointing out why it is needed.
2. Zoning amendment requests shall be presented 15 days prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered in order to give the staff time to study each request.
3. No special meeting will be called to consider a zoning amendment request unless it is of a scope which seems to warrant such meeting.
4. Special persons will be asked to attend the Planning Commission meeting if they feel that additional information is necessary and that they may have some helpful information.
5. This information is to be submitted to the City Recorder of Mountain City who will immediately send copies to each member of the Planning Commission.

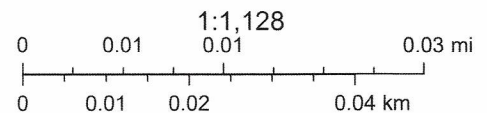
*To be filled out by City Recorder of Mountain City.

Johnson County - Parcel: 040M B 017.00



Date: August 16, 2024

County: Johnson
Owner: STEELE JASON T &
Address: WEST MAIN ST
Parcel Number: 040M B 017.00
Deeded Acreage: 0.67
Calculated Acreage: 0



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*LAND USE
AND
TRANSPORTATION
POLICY PLAN*



AUGUST 2010

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE MOUNTAIN CITY
LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY PLAN
FOR THE PLANNING PERIOD OF 2010-2030**

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee empowers municipalities to enact comprehensive plans to guide the community as outlined in Section 13-4-202 of the Tennessee Code Annotated; and

WHEREAS, the Mountain City Municipal Planning Commission recognizes the importance of successful community development best practices and its impact on sustaining economic growth; and

WHEREAS, The Land Use and Transportation Policy Plan was developed with the general purpose of guiding the City, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote the general welfare, as well as the economy; and

WHEREAS, the Mountain City Municipal Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 13, 2010 prior to the adoption of the Land Use and Transportation Policy Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mountain City Municipal Commission does hereby adopt and endorse the maps and descriptive matters contained within the Mountain City Land Use and Transportation Policy Plan for the Planning Period of 2010-2030 at a special called meeting on September 13, 2010.



Chairman
Mountain City Municipal Planning Commission

Sept 13, 2010
Date



Secretary
Mountain City Municipal Planning Commission

9-13-10
Date

**LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION
POLICY PLAN**

MOUNTAIN CITY, TENNESSEE

AUGUST 2010

**PREPARED FOR
MOUNTAIN CITY MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

PREPARED BY:

**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
UPPER EAST REGION
207 NORTH BOONE STREET, SUITE 1200
JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE 37604**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Plan

The purpose of this document is to provide Mountain City, Tennessee with a policy plan for the future development of land, transportation facilities and community facilities. These elements of the Comprehensive Plan are essential in the planning community with the primary purpose of producing an overall development plan and identifying strategies for implementing the plan. The objective of such a plan, as outlined in Section 13-4-201 of the Tennessee Code Annotated is to serve as a guide for “accomplishing: a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality which will in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare as well as efficiency and economy in the process for development.”

The Mountain City Land Use and Transportation Plan covers a planning period of approximately twenty years, 2010-2030. The information presented in this plan should be used as a framework to guide municipal and county officials, community leaders, businessmen, industrialists, and others as they make decisions which affect the future growth and development of Mountain City. The plan is not intended to supersede the responsibility or authority of local officials and department heads. Instead, it is designed to give the public and private sectors a basis to constructively use the interdependencies which exist between the various elements and organizations in the community. The development goals, objectives, and policies and the implementation strategies present in this plan should be periodically reviewed, and when necessary, updated to reflect unanticipated occurrences or trends. Mountain City, through Public Chapter 1101 of 1998, chose not to adopt an Urban Growth Boundary; therefore an officially adopted growth area is not provided for.

Scope of Plan

This Land Use and Transportation Plan is designed to formulate a coordinated, long term development program for the Town of Mountain City and its potential growth area. The preparation of a development program requires gathering and analyzing a vast array of information. The historic events, governmental structure, natural factors, and socio-economic characteristics of Mountain City are studied to determine how these have affected and will affect land use and transportation facilities. Existing uses and facilities are analyzed to identify important characteristics, relationships, patterns and trends. From these analyses, pertinent problems, needs and issues relative to land use and transportation in Mountain City are identified. An amalgamation of this information is utilized to produce a Major Thoroughfare Plan and a Development Plan. The Development Plan, as present herein, consists of two interdependent elements; the first being the identification and development of goals and objectives and the establishment of policies for achieving them, and the second being the creation of a development plan concept which visually illustrates the goals, objectives, and policies. To achieve the goals and objectives identified in the development plan, specific strategies or measures are outlined in an implementation schedule.

Community Goals, Process and Methodologies

The development of community goals and objectives is a primary project of this Land Use and Transportation Plan. Essential to the development of these goals and objectives is citizen participation. Citizen participation is necessary to identify local needs and problems perceived by the community at large. Several methodologies are available for obtaining citizen input. The methodologies utilized in this Plan included interviews and study groups. From this input, goals and objectives addressing the recognized needs and problems were identified. These goals and objectives are presented within Chapter 6 of this Plan.

Companion Planning Documents

A number of companion planning documents should be used in conjunction with the Mountain City Land Use and Transportation Plan.

They include:

The Mountain City Urban Growth Plan - 2020

The United States Census

Mountain City FEMA Documents

Tennessee Department of Transportation Function Classification Program

Tennessee Department of Transportation Traffic Flow Program

United States Department of Agriculture Soil Survey of Johnson County

History of Johnson County and Mountain City as provided in a study prepared by students of the Mountain City Elementary School

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND FOR PLANNING

Introduction

To effectively plan for any community, gathering information concerning its background is necessary. The size and location of a community are important aspects of a community. Information on a municipality's early settlement and events affecting past development assist in planning for its future development. An understanding of the community's political history and governmental structure helps to reveal the atmosphere in which future planning will take place. Background data for the Town of Mountain City is presented in this chapter.

Location and Size of Mountain City, Tennessee

Johnson County, located in the extreme northeastern part of Tennessee, abuts Virginia to the north and North Carolina to the east. The county is bounded on the north by Washington County, Virginia, on the east and southeast by Ashe, Watauga and Avery Counties, North Carolina and on the west and southwest by Carter and Washington Counties in Tennessee. Total land area of Johnson County is approximately 299 square miles or 191,360 acres. Mountain City contains approximately 2,158 acres of land or 3.2 square miles.

Mountain City, the county seat, is located approximately in the center of Johnson County. Mountain City is 40 miles northeast of Johnson City and 34 miles southeast of Bristol. At the present time, three major highways traverse Mountain City. U. S. Highway 421 is an east to west highway through Johnson County and Mountain City with connections to Boone, North Carolina in the east and Bristol in the west. State Highway 67 is a southeast to southwest highway connecting Mountain City with Elizabethton. Damascus, Virginia to the north is connected to Mountain City by State Highway 91. A location map of Mountain City is shown on Illustration 1.

Tri-Cities Regional Airport at Blountville, Tennessee serves the region with daily commercial, private, and cargo flight service, plus a newly developed U.S. Customs approved Foreign Trade Zone. Travel time from Blountville to Mountain City is approximately one hour and thirty minutes. Johnson County Airport also serves Mountain City and Johnson County in a limited capacity.

Early Settlement

Johnson County in its early history was part of the colony of North Carolina in what was called the Cherokee Territory. It later became part of the Wayne District of North Carolina. The Wayne District included the land which extended from what is now Boone, North Carolina to Greeneville, Tennessee. In 1776 it became part of Washington County which was organized at Jonesborough. Washington County was under North Carolina rule. This area was renamed Washington County in honor of George Washington.

After the American Revolution in the late 1700's many ex-soldiers were given land grants in the area that is now East Tennessee as reward for fighting for independence from England. The population of the area grew greatly because of this.

ILLUSTRATION 1 – LOCATION MAP

The State of Franklin

In 1784 the settlers declared their freedom from North Carolina. The counties of Sullivan, Washington, Greene, and Davidson broke away to form a new state. They named this new state, which included what is now Johnson County, Franklin after Benjamin Franklin.

The people elected John Sevier as the “President” of the new state. Unfortunately there was trouble between the State of Franklin and North Carolina. John Tipton carried out a court judgment to take the property of Governor John Sevier, including his slaves. Sevier put together an army of 150 men. He fought Col. George Maxwell’s and Tipton’s men. Sevier’s band was arrested along with two of Sevier’s sons.

Sevier kept fighting Indian settlements in what is now western Tennessee. When Sevier returned to Franklin he was captured for treason. Sevier escaped at his trial through a second story window onto a waiting horse. He was later pardoned in 1788.

North Carolina refused to recognize Franklin’s independence and the state collapsed in 1788. North Carolina gained back control of the area at this time. Sevier was elected senator in North Carolina. The State of Franklin existed for only four years. Later the area merged with the new State of Tennessee.

In 1796 Tennessee became a recognized state. At this time Johnson County was a part of Carter County. In 1820 the people from what is now Johnson County began a petition to build a courthouse in the center of the county. The people in Elizabethton started their own petition to leave the county seat in Elizabethton. The state legislature listened to the people from Elizabethton. In 1829 the people from Johnson County petitioned again for a more centrally located courthouse. The petition stated that people from the area that is now Johnson County had to travel 30 to 50 miles crossing the Doe River eight times and passing over steep mountains to reach the courthouse. The state legislature ruled against the petition. A movement was made to create a new county apart from Carter County.

The thought was that a person on horseback should be able to travel to the county seat and be back on the same day before dark. In 1835 Joseph Powell introduced the idea of a separate county to the senate. It would be named Johnson County after Thomas Johnson, one of its oldest settlers. Several amendments were added to the bill changing the name. Three senators meet to work out the differences. Finally everyone agreed to name the new county Johnson County. The county seat would be named Taylorsville, in honor of James P. Taylor. William Gott, Robert Reeve, and James O’Brian were appointed to purchase between 10 to 100 acres for the town. The house of the late Thomas Johnson was used as the courthouse until one could be built. Governor Newton Cannon signed the bill and Johnson County was formed in 1836. The name of the county seat was changed to Mountain City in 1885. The early settlers were mainly from North Carolina, but some were from Virginia and South Carolina. They were largely of English descent, but included some of Scotch or Irish decent. The present population consists largely of descendants of these early settlers.

Findings

Mountain City is one of the earliest settlements in Tennessee. It remains somewhat isolated from larger developed areas, but has experienced substantial growth particularly in commercial and residential areas.

Governmental Structure

The present charter of Mountain City was granted by the State of Tennessee in 1903. The Charter of Mountain City provides that the government of the Town be vested in a mayor and four aldermen elected to four years staggered terms. An election is held every two years to ensure the smooth transaction of government. The Mountain City Board of Mayor and Aldermen has full power and authority by ordinance within the city and such powers as required to provide for the health, safety, comfort, and well-being of the citizens. In addition, the charter provides for a city recorder, a marshal, and the employment of any other officers, servants, and agents as deemed necessary.

The ordinances enacted by the Mountain City's Board of Mayor and Aldermen are an extension of the charter. The Board, through the general legislative authority, has the power to pass all reasonable ordinances for regulations of public morals, the health and peace, and good order of the town conferred by the code of municipal corporations, provided they are not in conflict with the constitution and laws of the land.

These ordinances establish the general framework for the municipal operations carried out by the government. Research of the ordinance book of Mountain City revealed ordinances for the regulation of health and sanitation, motor vehicles, planning, zoning, and the conduct of citizens and visitors. Other ordinances defined the duty and authority of the various departments, commissions, and committee's that have been established to assist the governmental body in the performance of various functions of the government.

In addition to seeing that all ordinances, resolutions, and motions of the Board are duly enforced, observed, and obeyed, the person occupying the office of mayor must lay before the Board all matters that are deemed important. Also, the mayor has the power to call special sessions of the Board in order to enable it to handle items deemed expedient.

In addition to its legislative powers, the Board has full powers and authority to appoint and elect all officers, servants, and agents of the municipality, as well as set the compensation of the same. The board also exercises a supervisory role in the operation of the corporation through its power to approve budgets and make investigations.

Through the years of government operation, the Board has developed a program of services to the citizens of Mountain City. The major programs now in operation include: (1) general government administration, (2) law enforcement, (3) traffic control, (4) solid waste pick-up and disposal, (5) water and sewer distribution systems, (6) off-street parking facilities, (7) street lighting, (8) planning, (9) zoning, (10) street construction and maintenance, (11) building inspection, (12) fire protection, and (13) recreation.

Officers, Servants, and Agents

In order to accomplish the service programs established by the board, officers, servants and agents have been employed and/or appointed to carry out various functions. The government operations are structured through the office of recorder, departments and commissions, and committees, with these people directly providing services to the citizens. The general duties of these officers, servants, and agents will be discussed under the following headings: (1) The Office of Mayor, (2) The Town Recorder, (3) Departments, and (4) Commissions.

The Office of Mayor. Generally supervises town's affairs. The mayor shall have general supervision of all town affairs and may require such reports from the officers and employees as he may reasonably deem necessary to carry out his executive responsibilities. In addition, the Mayor shall execute all contracts as authorized by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Office of Town Recorder. The office is required by the charter of Mountain City and it has specific responsibilities established by the charter. These responsibilities are: (1) to keep a full and accurate account of all business transacted by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen; (2) to keep a full and accurate system of accounts and submit a statement of these accounts to the board on a monthly basis; (3) to function as treasurer of the town and receive and receipt for all revenues; (4) to maintain custody of the town seal, public records, and also papers and comments of value; and (5) to act as justice of the peace. By charter provision, the person occupying the office of city recorder is elected by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Departments. The basic services required by the citizens of Mountain City and the surrounding area are provided through departments that have been established by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. These departments are (1) public works (2) animal control (3) police department, (4) City Hall, (5) building maintenance, (6) water department, (7) water treatment plant, (8) fire department, (9) parks and recreation, (10) community center and (11) building inspector. Each department has a department head or supervisor appointed by the Mountain City Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Commissions

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Arts and Performing Arts Advisory Board.

Municipal Finances

The financial stability and capability of municipalities directly affects the ability to accomplish planning goals. An analysis of the revenue and expenditure is necessary to determine the financial stability and capability. According to the Town of Mountain City Financial Reports for the years 2004 through 2008 the municipality's total revenues have increased from \$3,978,730 in 2004 to \$4,694,568 in 2008, and for the same period the total expenditures have increased from \$3,837,722 to \$4,833,034. This represents a 17.9% increase in revenue and a 25.9% increase in expenditures.

The largest sources of revenue and the largest expenditure for the Town of Mountain City are found in the properties of water and sewer. In 2004 revenue from the service amounted to \$2,251,722 and expenditures totaled \$1,963,569. In 2008 these totals had increased to \$2,758,877 and \$2,529,938 respectively. This represents an increase in revenue of 5.4% and an increase of 4.6% in expenditures.

The second largest source of revenue for the municipality is the local sales tax. From fiscal year 2004, to fiscal year 2008, revenues from the local sales tax had increased from \$385,611 to \$446,280. This amounted to a 7.4% increase.

The third largest source of revenue for the City is the property tax levy. The current municipal tax rate which was established in 2007 is \$1.21 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of real property.

From fiscal year 2004 to fiscal year 2008, the total property tax levy had increased from \$298,922 to \$500,051 for a 67.2% increase.

Mountain City's financial standing is stable at this current time. However, it is obvious when the total income and expenditure data is examined that this could change if any major and unforeseen expenditures are incurred. Every effort should be taken to encourage new economic opportunities which would increase each revenue source.

Existing Municipal Services

The Town of Mountain City has been very successful in providing most of the urban services of a larger city. These services are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Police Protection: The Town of Mountain City operates a police department with nine (9) full time policemen. The police department has an excellent working relationship with the Johnson County Sheriff's Department and the Tennessee Highway Patrol. The current budget of the police department is \$390,304. Mountain City and Johnson County share jail facilities. This facility is currently crowded and in need of expansion. However, there is no moratorium or other State mandates on the jail.

Public Utilities:

Water: Water service is provided to approximately 3,500 customers within Mountain City. The Town's water sources are Silver Lake, Rambo Springs, and Lowe Springs. The current budget is \$1,065,262. Current water rates are as follows:

Water Rates		2009/2010 Rates
Inside City Water		
2,000 gallons minimum		\$10.07
Next 4,000 gallons		\$3.15
All over 6,000 gallons		\$3.85
Outside City Water		
2,500 gallons minimum		\$29.40
Next 2,000 gallons		\$5.30
All over 4,500 gallons		\$3.75
Wholesale Rates		
NECC to cost by contract		\$3.64
Utility District – Dry Run		\$3.64

The Mountain City water system produces 1,600,000 gallons a day and is generating at only 60% capacity. There is ample treated water capacity for the planning period and beyond. The existing water system is shown on Illustration 2.

Sewer: Sewer service is provided to the 1,006 customers in Mountain City. The current budget for the Sewer Department is \$818,491. Sewer rates are as follows:

Sewer Rates		2009/2010 Rates
Inside City Sewer		
2,000 gallons minimum		\$6.25
All over 2,000 gallons		\$3.35
Outside City Sewer		
2,500 gallons minimum		\$14.00
All over 2,500 gallons		\$5.95

The Town of Mountain City is the only provider of sewer in Johnson County. The sewer treatment plant has a treatment capacity of 750,000 gallons a day. The plant operates at 63% capacity; therefore the Town obviously has ample capacity for further growth. The existing sewer system is shown on Illustration 3.

Solid Waste: The Town of Mountain City provides solid waste collection to the residents of the Town. The budget for this service is \$215,123 for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Streets and Public Works: The Town maintains 18.9 miles of road at a cost of \$320,495 for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Street lighting is provided to the community at a cost of \$62,334.

Recreation: The Town provides superior recreation facilities for its residents. The facilities include two parks, and the Heritage Hall and the Community Center facilities. Fiscal year 2009-2010 cost for recreational use is \$187,262.

Fire Department: Fire protection for Mountain City is provided by a twenty (20) member volunteer fire department. Service is excellent. The 2009-2010 fiscal year budget is \$78,150. The fire department has an ISO rating of 6.

Municipal delivery of services provided by the Town of Mountain City are excellent. Continuing all services as they currently are being provided will meet the future needs of the Town in the foreseeable future.

ILLUSTRATION 2 – MOUNTAIN CITY WATER SYSTEM

ILLUSTRATION 3 – MOUNTAIN CITY SEWER SYSTEM

Municipal Planning Commission

On January 28, 1966, the Town of Mountain City established the Mountain City Municipal Planning Commission. Since 1966, the Mountain City Planning Commission has been very active in carrying out its functions, and in its advisory role to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. In addition to various official planning documents, including long range development plans and zoning, subdivision and floodplain regulations, the planning commission has also prepared numerous special studies, short and mid-range plans, and grant applications addressing public facilities, housing, transportation and recreation improvements.

Mountain City has been provided planning services by the Upper East Tennessee Regional Office of the Local Planning Assistance Office, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. The officers of the Planning Commission are Chairman, Vice chairman and Secretary. The regular meetings of the planning commission are held monthly at the Mountain City Town Hall.

Chapter Findings

- The Town of Mountain City is located in Johnson County, Tennessee. It is the center of commercial and industrial activity in the area. The Town continues to be somewhat isolated from major State Highway and U.S. Interstates. It appears that this will remain a major factor in economic development in the foreseeable future.
- Under the strong mayor form of government the chief executive officer can significantly influence the direction of the municipality's planning program. The current Board of Mayor and Aldermen appear to be fully supportive of the role of the planning commission. This allows the Mountain City Planning Program to operate in an atmosphere which is very conducive to effective planning.

CHAPTER 3

NATURAL FACTORS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The natural environment often dictates the pattern of land use or development in a community. The climate, air and water quality, topography, drainage and flooding, soils and the provisions of water and sewer are significant factors which affect development. Ignoring these factors can prove to be extremely costly to specific property owners as well as the entire community. Not all land is suitable for development. Therefore, as land use development occurs, natural factors, which cannot be altered, must be considered in the plans for development. The limits and type of land use should be responsive to the natural factors in order to protect the welfare of the general populace. Through increased knowledge of these natural factors and the appropriate use of land, future development can avoid the mistakes of the past. The purpose of this chapter is to review and evaluate the natural factors influencing the land use patterns in Johnson County and Mountain City.

Climate

Mountain City and Johnson County have a humid temperate climate. Its salient features are the cool summers and the lack of a distinct dry season. Precipitation is well distributed throughout the year. The difference between the average summer and winter temperature is not great. However, due to the great differences in elevation within the County, there is considerable variation in climate. The mountainous areas have about 17 inches more snow and average about ten inches more rain, and the annual temperature is about three degrees Fahrenheit less than the valley area. The climate of Mountain City and the affect that it has had on development can best be described as moderate. In general, climate has no great affect on development in the municipality.

Air Quality and Water Resources

Air Quality and Water Resources

At present, the air and water quality in Mountain City are excellent. Mountain City and surrounding Johnson County are in compliance with National ambient air quality standards according to information supplied by the Environmental Director with the First Tennessee Development District. The Environmental Protection Agency has determined Johnson County, and Mountain City, to be an attainment county. The Town of Mountain City should be able to guide development without affecting air quality impact.

The primary water resources for Mountain City are from several sources in the Town and County. These include water plants at Rambo Springs, Laurel Springs and Silverlake. According to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the Town of Mountain City is under no moratoriums due to water or wastewater treatment problems.

Air quality and water resources should not be a deterrent to sustainable development within Mountain City and Johnson County.

Physiography and Relief

Johnson County is within the Unaka Range of the Blue Ridge province, although the central part might be considered a part of the Ridge and Valley province. The county consists of two comparatively narrow lowland belts between high parallel mountain ridges.

The main lowland belt, which includes the valleys of Roan, Doe, and Laurel Creeks, extends southwestward from the Virginia-Tennessee State line and forks around Doe and Dry Run Mountains. It varies from one to four miles in width and covers approximately one-fourth of the county. The elevation ranges from about 1,800 feet to approximately 3,200 feet averaging about 2,500 feet. Stone and Forge Mountains are on the southeast and east, and the Iron Mountains are on the northwest.

Shady Valley, a cove-like valley in the northwestern part of the county, is almost completely surrounded by Iron, Cross, and Holston Mountains. It is about 2 ½ miles wide and 7 miles long, and like the other lowland belt, lies in a northeast-southwest direction. The average elevation is about 2,900 feet. Sutherland Valley, which is about three-fourths of a mile wide and over a mile long is northeast of Shady Valley along the Virginia-Tennessee State line.

Practically all of the rest of the county is mountainous. The highly dissected mountains in the eastern part are characterized by great extremes in elevation. Elevations range from about 2,400 to 5,500 feet. Slopes are very steep, and mountain crests or ridgetops, as well as the intervening valleys, are narrow. Quartzite and conglomerate underlie most of these mountains, but an old highly dissected plain in the southeastern part is underlain by granitic rocks. Snake Mountain, in the extreme southeastern corner of the county, is 5,518 feet above seal level. Forge and Stone Mountains which form the eastern and southeastern boundaries of the county, range in elevation from about 3,800 to 4,980 feet.

Holston, Cross, and Iron Mountains in the northwest part of the county, range from about 3,500 feet to 4,175 feet in elevation. Doe, Sink, Dry Run, and Little Dry Run Mountains, which are entirely within the county, range from about 2,400 to 3,800 feet in elevation and have sharp, narrow, fairly straight ridge crests with some low peaks and knobs. The slopes are steep and in many places rugged and broken. The intermountain valleys are very narrow to moderately wide. These mountains are underlain chiefly with quartzite and conglomerate.

Johnson County is drained by the Watauga and South Fork Holston River systems. The southern two-thirds of the county is drained by Roan, Doe, and Cobb Creeks, which empty into the Watauga River near Butler (now inundated). Beaver Dam and Laurel Creeks flow northeastward from the divide and enter the South Fork Holston River a few miles north of the Virginia-Tennessee state line. All of these creeks flow approximately parallel to the main valleys, but their tributaries flow transversely through the intervening ridges and knobs from all parts of the county. Drainage is good except in a few low, flat areas near some of the streams.

Additional information on these conditions can be found in the Johnson County Soil Survey produced by the United States Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station and the Tennessee Valley Authority and was published in 2000.

The quality and location of vacant land in the community is particularly important in the study of future land development potentials. It is on the community's vacant land that the major portion of its new development will take place. It is here that public and private decisions regarding land

development require the most careful coordination to assure orderly growth that will best serve the interests of the entire community. With the exception of the limitations imposed on land along Goose, Forge and Furnace Creeks, which is subject to flooding, the vacant land in Mountain City is suitable for urban type development. For some of the steeper land nearest to the mountains, moderate limitations would have to be overcome because of the topography. For example, additional pump stations may be needed to maintain water pressure for residential uses on these higher elevations. The cost of roadway improvements would be greater along the steeper terrain; however. When the demand is great enough to overcome these limitations, the land would be suitable for development.

Drainage

Johnson County is drained by the Watauga and the South Fork Holston River systems. The southern two-thirds of the county is drained by Roan, Doe and Cobb Creeks, which empty into the Watauga River near Butler (now inundated). Beaver Dam and Laurel Creeks flow north eastward from the divide and enter the South Fork of the Holston River a few miles north of the Virginia-Tennessee State line. All of these creeks flow approximately parallel to the main valleys, but their tributaries flow transversely through the intervening ridges and knobs from all parts of the county. Drainage is good except in a few low and flat areas near some of the streams.

Flooding

Flooding in Mountain City occurs primarily along Goose Creek, Forge Creek and Furnace Creek. Flooding in these drainage ways can be severe. Mountain City entered the National Flood Insurance Program on May 8, 1975 and has 40 policies in effect. In March of 2004, the State of Tennessee, through the Local Planning Assistance Office of the Department of Economic and Community Development prepared and submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) its Business Case for the implementation of the Map Modernization Program. Mountain City provided representatives with a list of priority areas in need of restudying and/or at minimum, providing base flood elevation information. This digitized information overlay used in conjunction with the Tennessee Base Mapping Program has provided more accurate flood information on a parcel by parcel basis. These new maps were official in September of 2009. Further information relative to the Map Modernization Program may be obtained through FEMA and the Local Planning Assistance Office in Johnson City, Tennessee. The Town's Board of Mayor and Aldermen adopted these maps and accompanying Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance in May, 2009. The program is well administered and enforced.

Topography

Topography is defined as the general configuration of the earth surface, including the slope, geological characteristics, and other natural factors. Mountain City is located within a valley area. Within the corporate limits 65.5 percent or 1,418 acres of land area have slopes of fifteen (15) percent or less. This enhances development opportunities. It also indicates that with the availability of land in the valley area, there should be less demand from developers to construct new projects in some challenging topographical areas. There are 514 acres or 23.7 percent of the land area which have fifteen (15) to thirty (30) percent slopes. These slope areas can still be developed, particularly those areas nearer to fifteen to twenty range. In areas having thirty (30)

percent slopes, development should have additional restraints requiring foundation analysis and drainage restoration. Private wells should be prohibited and septic tank field areas should be closely evaluated for run-off. Those land areas over thirty (30) percent slope consist of 230 acres or 10.6% of Mountain City's land area. Predominantly this area lies north of Highway 67, west of Highway 91 and west of Crossroad Drive, with smaller areas existing throughout the Town. These areas, with slopes over thirty (30) percent have moderate to several limitations for future development. These extreme slope areas should be held as open spaces or possibly utilized as recreational areas. There are 246 acres or 11.4% of the land within the corporate limits with an identified flood hazard area.

Chapter Findings

Like many communities in East Tennessee, the pattern of development within the Town of Mountain City have been significantly affected by natural factors. What is significant and perhaps unique to Mountain City is the degree and range of natural factors that have affected development. A consideration of flooding, extreme slope and topographic constraints have significantly restricted areas of growth and development in the Town. In addition, the potential growth area of Mountain City has similar natural factors affecting development. On a positive note, the soil, climate and air, and water quality in Mountain City and its growth area are favorable to development.

Areas for future development in Mountain City that are not negatively affected by natural factors are limited. Overcoming the constraints of flooding, extreme slope and topography on much of the vacant land in Mountain City will be costly in many cases. The dominant direction for future expansion of the municipal boundaries is to the west on U.S. Highway 67, to the north along U.S. Highway 91 and south on Highway 421 toward Boone, North Carolina.

ILLUSTRATION 4 – NATURAL FACTORS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 4

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

In order to understand the socio-economic factors that affect development it is necessary to look at population growth and employment patterns and to analyze past, present and future trends of Mountain City with regard to population and economic activities. These activities are then evaluated within the framework of regional, state and national trends. In order to establish a base for the analysis, it is necessary to review local factors within the area that affect population and economic activities. This chapter will present a summary of the findings on population and employment, emphasizing those population and employment trends pertinent to the preparation of this land use plan. Strategies for community development, projections of land use needs, discussions of land use issues, and the relevance of the land use plan to future planning documents, should reflect the findings of the population and employment section of this study. These findings provide future trend projections, but the trends must be understood to be of planning significance.

Trends

For the purpose of this plan the past changes in population and employment were examined for their implications for development within the Town of Mountain City. Of most significance are the projected changes in the population with Johnson County and Mountain City for the next twenty years.

Population

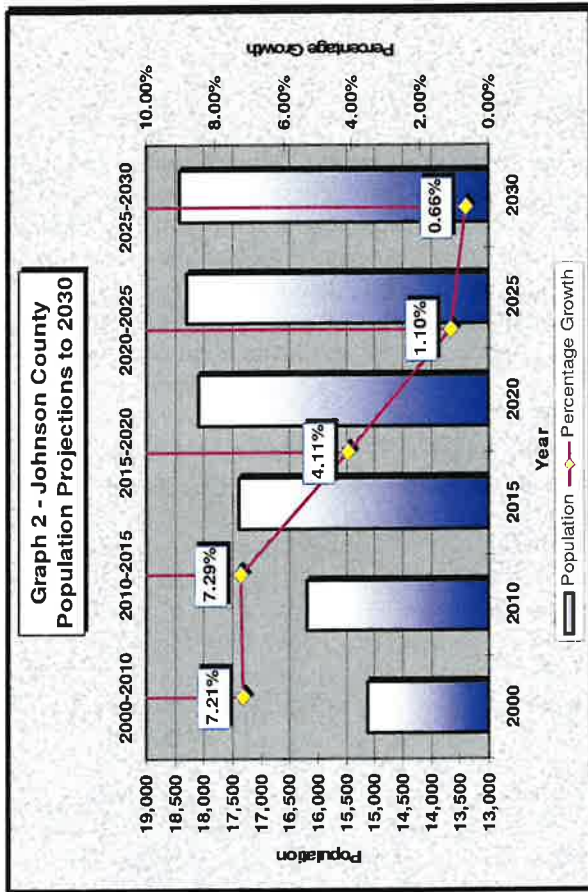
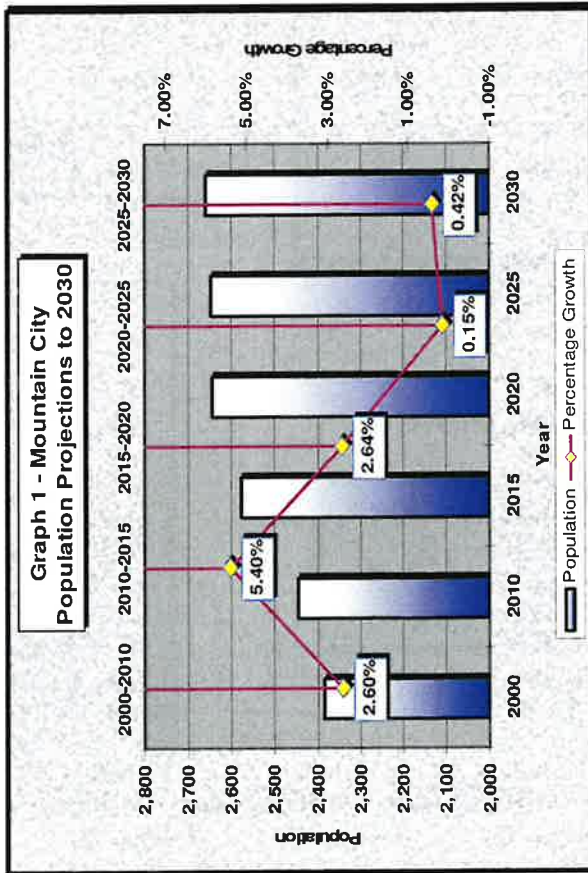
Table 1 reflects population projections for Mountain City, Johnson County and Tennessee by five and ten year increments. The population of Mountain City grew from 2,169 in 1990 to 2,383 in 2000, an increase of 9.8 percent. Graph 1 reflects this data and Graph 2 provides population projections to the year 2030. The projected increase in population from 2000 to 2030 for Mountain City is 11.6 percent. It is difficult to project population increases for the Town because of different rates of annexations in the past, and the amount of developed areas on the Town's urban infrastructure that could be annexed in the future.

TABLE 1

Population Projections to 2030

[illegible]

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1 and Population Projections for Tennessee, 2005 to 2025, Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, The University of Tennessee, Center for Business and Economic Research



Source Graphs 1 & 2: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1 and Population Projections for Tennessee, 2005 to 2025, Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, The University of Tennessee, Center for Business and Economic Research

One method to measure the potential for future growth in a community is to look at the age distribution of the population. A younger population indicates that there will be more people coming into the workforce. Unless the community is a retirement community, an aging population usually indicates that there is an out migration of the labor force. According to the 2000 U.S. Census of Population, 21.78 percent of the population in Mountain City was under nineteen years of age; 63.28 percent of the population was between the ages of twenty and sixty four; and 14.99 percent of the population was sixty-five years of age or older. These percentages appear normal when compared to the statewide percentages for age distribution. This data is shown in Tables 2 and 3, and further illustrated in Graphs 3 and 4.

TABLE 2
AGE DISTRIBUTION SPECIFIC AGES 2000

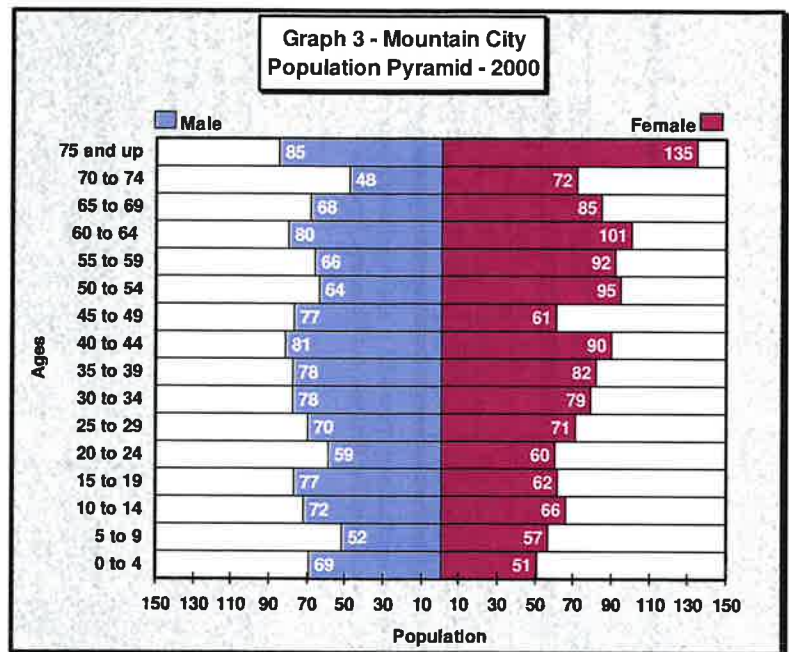
Age	Number	Percent
0 to 4	120	5.04
5 to 9	109	4.57
10 to 14	138	5.79
15 to 19	139	5.83
20 to 24	119	4.99
25 to 29	141	5.92
30 to 34	157	6.59
35 to 39	160	6.71
40 to 44	171	7.18
45 to 49	138	5.79
50 to 54	159	6.67
55 to 59	158	6.63
60 to 64	181	7.60
65 to 69	153	6.42
70 to 74	120	5.04
75 and up	220	9.23
Total Pop	2,383	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1 (P12 Sex by Age – Total Population)

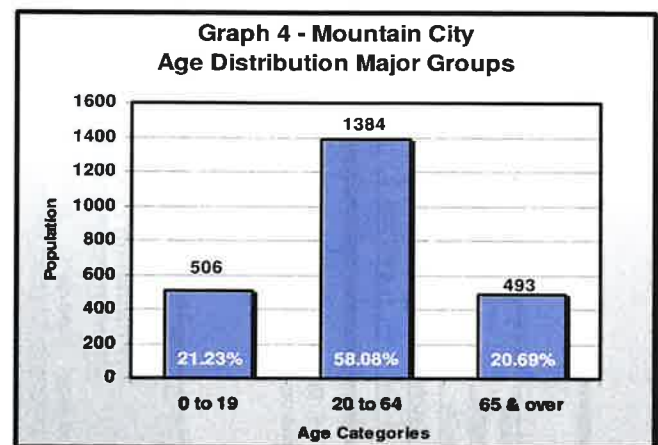
TABLE 3
AGE DISTRIBUTION MAJOR GROUPS

Age Groups	Number	Percent
0 to 19	506	21.23%
20 to 64	1,384	58.08%
65 & over	493	20.69%
Total Pop	2,383	100.00%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1 (P12 Sex by Age – Total Population)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1 (P12 Sex by Age – Total Population)

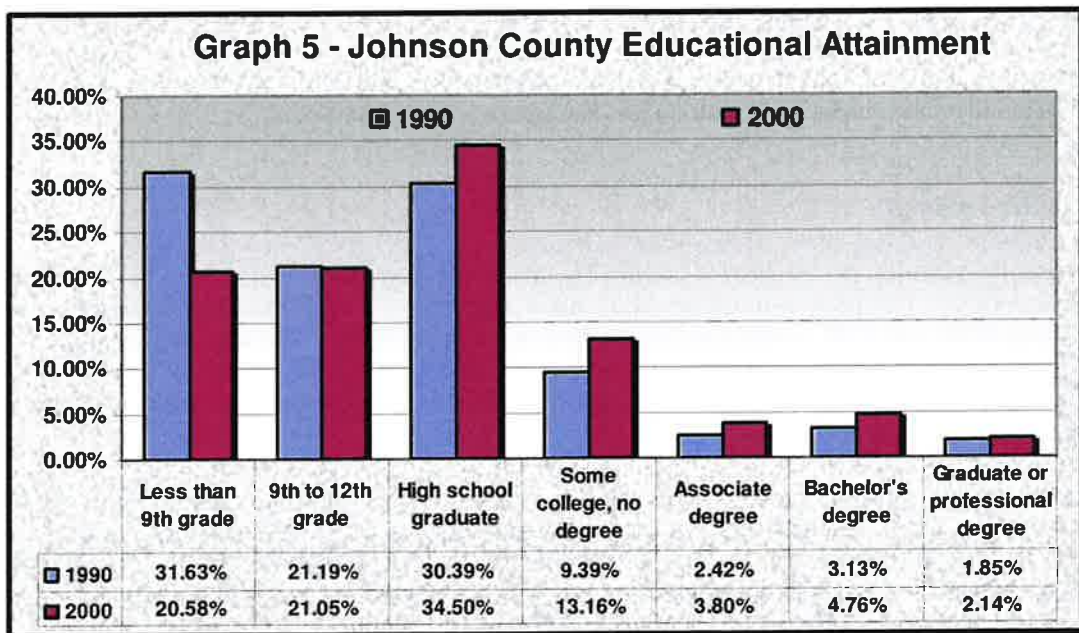


Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1 (P12 Sex by Age – Total Population)

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, population projections, the population of Mountain City is expected to increase at about the same rate as that of Johnson County for the next twenty years. Many of the population indicators such as the age distribution, and persons per household are in line with state and national trends. There are however, other indicators that the area in and around Mountain City will become more densely urbanized in the next twenty years. The corridor area between Mountain City and Boone, North Carolina is becoming more urbanized. The most logical place for new urbanization to occur is along the 421 Corridor in Mountain City and its fringe growth area.

Education

The overall educational attainment for the citizens of Johnson County and Mountain City has improved remarkably from 1990 to 2000. Specifically, persons holding graduate degrees have increased from 1.85 percent in 1990 to 2.14 percent in 2000. Persons holding bachelor degrees has increased from 3.13 percent to 4.76 percent. Those holding associates degree and those having some college have increased from 12.32 percent to 16.96 percent respectively. The most significant improvement has been the high school graduation rate having increased from 30.3 percent to 34.5 percent. This information is detailed in Graph 5.

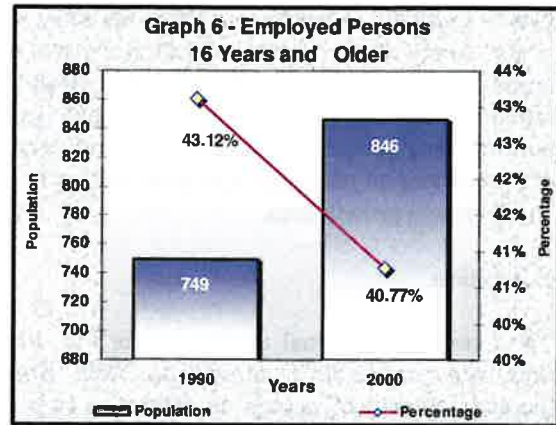


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Data Set: 1990 Summary Tape File 3 (STF 3) DP-2: Social Characteristics: 1990 and Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3), QT-P19: School Enrollment: 2000

Educational attainment in Johnson County and Mountain City have improved significantly from 1990 to 2000 and it appears they will continue to do so.

Employment

Employment in Mountain City changed minimally from 1990 to 2000. In 1990 there were 749 employed persons 16 years and older in Mountain City. The number of employed persons 16 years and older was 846 in 2000. This is an increase of 97 workers. Also there was statistically no change in commuting patterns between 1990 and 2000. The obvious factor to be gained from this data is that Mountain City has a stable workforce. These figures will change as the Town annexes into its urban fringe area. It argues that employment trend will be upward after this occurs. Further employment data is found in Graph 6.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Data Set: 1990 Summary Tape File 3 (STF 3), DP-3: Labor Force Status and Employment Characteristics: 1990 and Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3), DP-3: Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000

The overall economy of Johnson County compares favorably with state and national trends. Jobs in manufacturing and the trades are slowly declining while more opportunities are available in the services and in the wholesale and retail trades. Many of the employees living in Mountain City work in other cities including Johnson City, Kingsport, Bristol, and Boone.

Chapter Findings

During the planning period 2010-2030, the Mountain City population is projected to increase to 2,660 persons. This projection reflects an increase of only 9.87% or 337 persons from the period between 2000 and 2030. Urbanization has been moving eastward. The most logical place for new urbanization to occur is eastward along the 421 Corridor in Johnson County. This urbanization has shown limited residential growth. The 421 Corridor has experienced significant commercial development.

The Town of Mountain City fully anticipates growth and understands its importance as a part of those forces which 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 Mountain City will be that of managed growth. To guide general growth and development, the following objectives and policies are adopted.

Objective – To maximize economic opportunities within the Town and to provide for the best possible quality of life.

Policies

- To assist the County in maintaining the highest possible quality of education for the population.

-
- To work with all local, State and Federal economic development groups to use every line of assistance for economic development.
 - Provide for new and useful activities for the elderly population.
 - Maintain and expand all infrastructure.
 - Continue to maintain standards for all State and Federal mandated programs.

CHAPTER 5

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

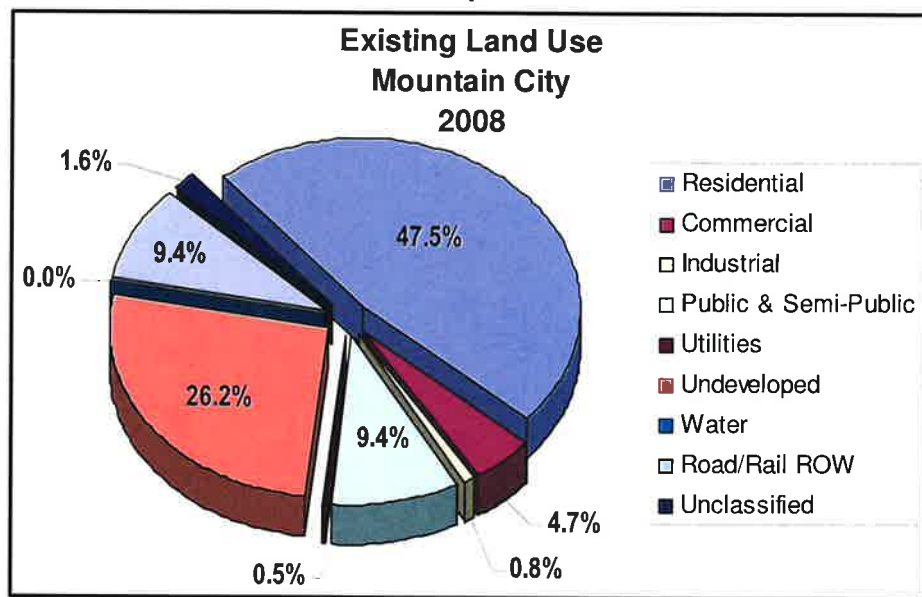
Introduction

As Illustration 5 depicts, land use in Mountain City has developed along traditional designs reflective of the grid pattern in the older portions of the municipality and the curvilinear pattern in the more recently developed areas. The portions of the potential growth area that have developed have developed in a strip fashion along Highway US-421 or in a traditional grid pattern. Natural factors, which were discussed in depth in Chapter 3, have significantly affected the location of land use in both the municipality and its potential growth area. Conflicting land uses are generally well separated from each other in the municipality and it is not yet a significant problem in the potential growth area. Most residents have easy access to the necessary public and private facilities and services.

Within the corporate limits of Mountain City, there are approximately 2,158 acres of land. Of this total land area, an estimated 73.8 percent or 1,593 acres are developed. Residential land comprises 1,024 acres or 48 percent of the total developed land. Industrial uses occupy 18 acres or 0.8% of the developed land area. Commercial uses comprise 101 acres or 4.7 percent of the total developed land. Public and semi public uses make up 203 acres of 9.4 percent of this category.

Vacant land accounts for 565 acres of land or 26.2 percent of the total land area. Much of the vacant land lacks the necessary infrastructure necessary for development. Flooding is a problem in some of this category and some of the land has excessive topographic limitations. An inventory of land uses in Mountain City is shown graphically in Graph 7 and specifically in Table 4.

Graph 7



Source: Base Mapping Program dataset, December 2008; Computer Assisted Appraisal System Database, January 2009

TABLE 4
MOUNTAIN CITY LAND USE INVENTORY

LAND USE	% of total	Acreage
Total Acreage		2,158
Residential	47.5	1,024
Commercial	4.7	101
Industrial	0.8	18
Public/ Semi Public	9.4	203
Utilities	0.5	9.8
Vacant	26.2	565
Road ROW	9.4	202
Unclassified	0.9	1.6

In Mountain City vacant land is not the predominate land use category. The predominate developed land use is in the form of residential uses. A detailed analysis of each land use category follows.

Residential

The residential land use category, like in most communities, occupies the largest portion of developed land in Mountain City. Also, like most communities, the traditional single-family detached dwelling unit is the predominate form of residential land use.

Residential development in Mountain City is primarily located on State Highway 91 in traditional grid pattern streets branching east and west and the downtown area. The oldest neighborhoods are located closest to the downtown area on lands with few physical constraints to development.

The residential areas in Mountain City occupy 47.5 percent of the total developed land, or about 1,024 acres. Most of the housing units in Mountain City are in very sound condition. There are many older homes in Mountain City which have been well maintained or renovated.

Despite a relatively older housing stock, housing in Mountain City is generally in good condition. Basically all residential properties have good access to community goods and services. There are only a limited number of vacant improved lots available. Due to the lack of available lots for residential development in Mountain City, there has been substantial residential development in the potential growth area.

Commercial Services

Historically the core of the community has been its traditional economic center - the Central Business District (CBD). The transition from a pedestrian oriented society to a vehicular oriented society has had its impacts on Mountain City. The Mountain City CBD, unlike many other

commercial business districts, remains viable, largely due to it still serving as the service center of the town and to the extensive historical development. Like many other communities, however, strip commercial development along Highway US-421 has expanded and shifted Mountain City's commercial center from the CBD to this area. There are 101 acres of developed commercial property within the existing corporate limits. This amount comprises 4.7 percent of the total developed land area in the town.

As noted, the CBD remains viable; however there is very little vacant floor space in the downtown. The CBD growth is limited to retrofitting and reuse of some of the oldest structures in the community. This is further restricted due to limited parking capacities. The absence of off-street loading space also limits the retail commercial expansion potential of this area.

The CBD is now dominated by private service uses. Future commercial development will in all probability continue along Highway US-421 both in the existing corporate limits and the urban fringe.

Industrial

The industrial land uses in Mountain City currently occupy 18 acres or 0.8 percent of the developed land area. Most of the areas are located along Highway US-421. Most existing industrial sites are occupied and there are few sites available for industrial development in the town that have the necessary infrastructure present. The urban growth fringe has substantial potential for industrial development if the necessary infrastructure is made available.

Public and Semi-Public Uses

The City of Mountain City serves as a center for public, cultural and recreational land uses in Johnson County. This very broad category covers numerous uses. The land in this classification includes all land owned by public and semi-public institutions. This includes land used by churches, parks, cemeteries, and land owned by governmental bodies. Combined these uses occupy 203 acres within the corporate limits of Mountain City. These acres represent approximately 9.4 percent of the land area in the town.

The age of the public, cultural and recreational structures tend to vary significantly, but all such facilities are in satisfactory condition and basically meet current demands. The diverse ownership of these facilities has been advantageous in meeting local public needs.

Mountain City will need to acquire additional property for recreational purposes during the planning period.

Utilities

The portion of land used for utilities in Mountain City is 9.5 acres or 5 percent of the land. With only 9.5 acres of land available for utilities, it will be necessary to acquire more land in the future.

Vacant Land

Approximately 565 acres or 26.2 percent of the total land area in Mountain City is vacant. Mountain City has a smaller percentage of land in the vacant category than most communities. Most of this land and urban fringe area could be developed with the provision of adequate

infrastructure and the provision of more comprehensive standards for development in areas of increasing slope. However, most of the land in both the current town limits and within the urban fringe area are suitable for development with the proper infrastructure. Present land use is shown in Illustration 5.

ILLUSTRATION 5 – EXISTING LAND USE

Land Use Objectives and Policies

A. Objective. To ensure highest and best use of land within Mountain City.

Policies

- Ensure that areas less suitable for development due to natural factors are developed only when appropriate remedial measures are taken.
- Decisions on development proposals shall be based on an analysis of soils, slope, depth to bedrock, and location relative to flood prone areas.
- Where the condition of the land is in doubt, and it appears that an unsuitable condition might exist, the potential developer shall have the responsibility for undertaking the necessary studies to prove the feasibility of the land to support the proposed development.
- All development proposals will be assessed for the appropriateness of engineering design and the installation of all necessary drainage facilities and appurtenances.
- In each drainage basin, the effect of future development on drainage and flooding should assist in formulating land use decisions within that basin.
- The town should not accept the dedication of drainage facilities or appurtenances which have not been designed and installed in accordance with approved standards and these development policies.
- The Planning Commission shall ensure that the pre-development run off discharge rate of any site is not increased as a result of development. Proposed future developments should not increase flooding potential, substantially alter drainage patterns, or degrade natural water quality.
- Areas located in a designated floodplain and/or the floodway should be developed only in conformance with the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Major natural drainage ways which are part of the natural system of dispersing normal flood run off in any drainage basin, should only be altered in accordance with the provisions of the Town of Mountain City and appropriate state and federal regulations.
- Groundwater shall be protected by restricting the use of septic tanks to appropriate soil types and land formations and are a very limited barrier.
- Development proposals involving soil disturbance shall be in conformance with appropriate sediment and erosion control measures.
- Areas of excessive slope should be conserved as open space if development would cause soil and/or water degradation, or where the terrain possesses special scenic or recreational value.

Transportation Analysis

A municipality's transportation system is a vital service function which is essential to its growth and development. The transportation system forms the framework upon which a community is built, and adequate traffic circulation is a prerequisite to economic activity and general community development.

Streets and highways typically occupy a significant percentage of the developed land area within a community. Within Mountain City, approximately 202 acres of land are devoted to streets, roadways, and other right-of-ways representing 9.4 percent of the total land area. All streets and state highways in Mountain City are included in this category of land use.

There are considerable design, purpose, and utilization differences between the various thoroughfares that traverse Mountain City and its potential growth areas. To better understand and analyze the overall system; these local thoroughfares have been classified by their intended use. The review of Mountain City's transportation systems includes a description of their areas' general traffic circulation pattern, major traffic generators, impediments to traffic flow, mass transit, and air/rail/port facilities. There are approximately 18.9 miles of thoroughfares in Mountain City. The unusual percentage of land used for transportation purposes is a result of the extensive road right-of-way.

Thoroughfare Classification

The primary or intended use of a thoroughfare varies for that of providing access to residential and other structures, to providing uninterrupted movement of high speed traffic. To clarify the usage, a classification has been established denoting the function served. These classifications, as shown on Illustration 6 include 1) arterial, 2) collector, and 3) local roads.

ILLUSTRATION 6 THOROUGHFARE CLASSIFICATION

Arterial: Roadways which link population centers, but often lack controlled access and traffic flow separation. Usually these are numbered U.S. Highways. US-421, TN-67 and TN-91 which can be defined as a major arterial street.

Collector: Roadways that link arterials and distribute traffic onto minor streets. These links also provide direct access to major traffic generators. Church Street is an example of this type.

Local Road: Roadways that function primarily as the means for accessing individual properties. Most often minor streets are intended for limited capacity, carrying traffic for short distances, and serving residential uses. The majority of Mountain City's streets are of this classification.

Although not shown on the major thoroughfare map, the Interstate Highway system could be of great significance to the economic development of Johnson County and Mountain City. Interstate Highways are access controlled roadways connecting major population centers devoted to serving high traffic volumes and long distance trips. Johnson County has access to Interstate 81 in Bristol, Tennessee via US-421 approximately 37 miles away and Interstate 26 via TN-67, approximately 41 miles away.

Interstate 81 begins near Dandridge, Tennessee at Interstate 40 and follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains before termination near Fishers Landing, New York. Combined with Interstates 59 and 75, Interstate 81 follows U.S. 11 from its entire journey from New Orleans to northern New York State. Interstate 81 does not enter major metropolitan areas. Instead, it serves smaller cities and provides a link between the Northeastern Megalopolis to points in the Mid-Southern states, adding to its appeal as a major trucking route.

Interstate 26 is the primary interstate route to the west and southeast. It originates in Charleston, South Carolina. Johnson County can access this Interstate in Washington County, Tennessee. Interstate 26 terminates at the Virginia state line in Sullivan County, Tennessee.

However, utilization of the interstate system would require substantial improvement to one of the existing state routes. Following is an analysis of the various state routes and their relationship to the interstate system. This discussion will provide an analysis of existing conditions and possible improvement of one or more of these routes.

State Highway 67 would appear, due to the current traffic flow to be the most logical route to improve. Significant improvements of this route however, would be very difficult due to its location parallel to Watauga Lake. Improvement of Highway State 67 would also require the expansion or replacement of Butler Bridge which is currently in the process of major repair. It should be noted at this point that selection of any route to the interstate will be a very costly project.

Another possible route would be State Highway 91 running from Mountain City to Damascus, Virginia. It should be stated that this possibility has been discussed in great detail in the past. The proposal was informally rejected due to environmental and topographical factors. State Highway 91 traverses an area lying between Laurel Creek and Forge Mountain. Any improvement would necessitate a great deal of excavation along Forge Mountain. It would appear that this expansion would be impractical and cost prohibitive. A significant reduction in cost might be realized if Highway 91 was developed into a super two lane road with passing lanes and wider shoulders instead of the four lane which has been considered.

Another possibility would be the improvement of State Highway 421 to Sullivan County. This would appear to be the most prohibitive route due to the extreme ruggedness and length of this highway. However, State Highway 421 from Mountain City to Shady Valley is a possible route. State Highway 421 to Shady Valley intersects with State Highway 133. At this intersection it would be possible to improve highway 133 to either Elizabethton with ease of connection to Interstate 81 or the extension of State Highway 133 from this intersection to Damascus Virginia which has a relatively ease of access to Interstate 81. The State of Virginia has allocated funds to improve the SR-58 from Damascus to Interstate 81. One other possibility would be the improvement of SR-67 from Mountain City to Butler and continuing a highway from Butler to Stoney Creek in Elizabethton. Details on this project are too limited to discuss the feasibility. It does appear that the project would not fall within the twenty year scope of this plan.

Use of one of the routes discussed above could be accomplished. Selection and improvements to either of these state routes would require extensive engineering studies by the State and could prove to be very costly. Studies by the University of Tennessee and the First Tennessee Development District indicate that extensive improvements to these routes are impractical at this time due to the low daily traffic counts and cost effectiveness. Any or all routes being considered would necessitate review by the Mountain City Planning Commission and the Johnson County Regional Planning Commission.

Traffic Circulation Patterns

The traffic circulation pattern in Mountain City relies heavily on TN-67 and TN-91 as the main arterial streets currently located in the municipality. US-421 is the primary north-south highway in Johnson County, and carries the highest traffic volumes in the county. The average daily traffic counts on Highway US-421 have remained steady for the years 2003 through 2008 at approximately 13,000 vehicles per day.

The grid pattern of street design dominates the minor/local street layout in Mountain City. The curvilinear pattern has been primarily utilized only where topographic constraints have limited the extension of the grid pattern. No significant circulation patterns were identified with the minor local roads in the municipality; however significant economic development could require improvements to existing circulation patterns.

Traffic Generators

There are several major traffic generators in Mountain City. These traffic generators are focal points of activity which are the origin and destination of numerous automobile trips during certain times of the day. Having an awareness of the location of these generators is necessary in planning the traffic circulation system and in preparing plans for improvement. The primary traffic generators on US-421, TN-67 and TN-91 in Mountain City, and exists in the area adjacent to the strip developments.

In essence, employment related land uses are the traffic generators in a community. The industrial, commercial, institutional and professional service use areas are the primary traffic generators. Most of these generators tend to compound traffic problems due to their relatively close proximity to each other.

Parking

The majority of the parking in the Central Business District (CBD) of Mountain City takes place within the street right-of-ways in non-metered spaces. Like most CBD areas, parking is a problem in Mountain City. Given the condition of structures and vacancy rates, it is doubtful if property could be acquired to expand the CBD parking in the future.

Other parking problems center around strip commercial areas on US-421, TN-67 and TN-91. There are cases due to topographic limitations, where commercial structures are so close to the right-of-way that portions of the right-of-way have been encroached into as part of parking spaces. This results in significant safety and congestion problems to a major thoroughfare.

So far, the development associated with the potential growth area has had sufficient land area to accommodate adequate and safe parking; therefore preventing parking problems.

Air/Rail/Port

Johnson County Airport is located within the County, but is limited in the functions it can perform. The nearest general aviation airport is located in Sullivan County. The Tri-Cities Regional Airport is located approximately 33 miles west of Mountain City. Rail service and port facilities are not available to the town.

Mass Transit

Like smaller Tennessee communities, the automobile is the preferred method of transportation. This has limited the need for public transportation facilities in the form of mass transit and due to the size of Mountain City, demand limitations for mass transit is not an issue. Mountain City does not have bus service. The nearest such service is Trailways Bus Lines in Johnson City, Tennessee, 30 miles west of Mountain City.

Pedestrian/Non-Vehicular Circulation

Sidewalks and trails provide for pedestrian circulation in Mountain City. When properly and adequately constructed, sidewalks provide a safe means for the movement of pedestrian traffic. They also serve as a border and buffer between the street and existing development. Sidewalks or other means of pedestrian circulation are especially needed in areas around schools, in downtown commercial areas, and in residential areas.

Although there are certain areas where they have deteriorated, overall, the existing sidewalks in Mountain City are in good condition. Sidewalks are present in the downtown area, and in many of the older residential areas. Sidewalks or other means of pedestrian circulation are available in the more recently developed areas of the municipality due to the requirements of the subdivision regulations.

Currently, there are a few minor bike paths, greenways, or other linear pathways to provide pedestrian or non-vehicular linkage for an internal municipal system; therefore there is increased need to develop a system of bike paths or routes to serve non-vehicular traffic.

Chapter Findings

The current land use pattern in Mountain City and in its potential growth area has been and will continue to be significantly affected by natural factors which limit or restrict areas for development. Nearly all developable areas in Mountain City, those with the necessary infrastructure and without severe natural limitations, have been developed. Future development of the majority of the vacant land areas in Mountain City will be difficult and expensive due to natural factors and the lack of infrastructure. Future economic development of Mountain City/Johnson County will require the expansion of either State Highway 67, 133, 421 or 91. Any proposal for the expansion for the improvement of these routes would require review by the local planning commissions.

CHAPTER 6

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Introduction

A primary concern for most progressive communities is whether they will be able to guide and provide for their future growth and development. The Mountain City Land Use and Transportation Policy Plan, through the Development Plan presented in this Chapter, establishes how the municipality can best accommodate spatial growth during the 20 year planning period. The Development Plan should serve as a general guide for the Town of Mountain City and its potential growth area. It is derived from an analysis made of past events affecting development, governmental structure, natural factors socio-economic factors, existing land use, and the existing transportation system. It is also directly based on several major assumptions, factors, issues and trends.

The Development Plan requires the establishment of development goals reflective of the level of the growth desired. Objectives based on the development goals, and policies to achieve these objectives, are presented in this Chapter. These goals, objectives and policies represent detailed guidelines for future development decisions. These goals, objectives and policies are further reflected in the Major Thoroughfare Plan and the Development Plan concept which is intended as a general guide for physical development decisions.

Major Assumptions, Factors, Issues and Trends

The major assumptions, findings, and trends identified in the preparation of this plan, are presented below. These assumptions represent the findings of the previous chapters, and are the forces which frame the goals, objectives, and policies of this plan. The major assumptions, factors, issues and trends identified in this plan will directly affect the future land use and transportation of the Town of Mountain City, are as follows:

- The local government will continue to support economic and community development, and the municipality will continue to have a strong planning program.
- The municipality currently has funds available, although limited, for capital budgeting and the implementation of a public improvement program.
- Natural factors, primarily flooding and topographic constraints, place some limitations on areas for development in the municipality and its potential growth area.
- Moderate population growth for the Town and the growth area are projected for the planning period.
- The elderly sector of the municipality's population is expected to increase as a significant percentage of the total population.
- Manufacturing, retail, and public and private services are projected to be the primary sources of employment for the municipality and county during the planning period.

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- Although the municipality has a predominantly older housing stock, there are no concentrations of dilapidated or deteriorated housing.
 - The municipality has little vacant commercial parcels or floor space which indicates the need for additional commercial properties.
 - The municipality's Central Business District (CBD) is a viable location for private and public service enterprises and is expected to remain so.
 - The municipality has a few industrial parcels available for development and there are few areas of undeveloped land available for large scale industrial development.
 - The fringe growth area and the remainder of the county are projected to continue to be the primary provider of locations for large scale and heavy industrial development.
 - The primary transportation problems in the municipality are traffic congestion along the strip commercial area on Highway 421 and the lack of adequate off-street parking in the CBD.
 - The municipality's water and sewer treatment capacities are adequate to meet the projected demands for future development.
 - The extension and upgrading of utility lines will be necessary to accommodate significant growth and development.
 - The municipality's aging water and sewer lines will need to be replaced and upgraded.
 - The municipality has little vacant land with the necessary infrastructure to support development, and not restricted by severe natural factors.
 - Annexation into the potential growth area is expected to provide some of the necessary lands for future residential and commercial development.
 - Annexations will require an amendment to the County 1101 Growth Plan to establish an Urban Growth Boundary, or it may be accomplished by referendum.

Development Goals

To adequately plan and allocate for its future land use, it is necessary that a community establish general developmental 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 plan for the Town of Mountain City is to provide a quality living and working environment for the residents of the municipality.

The following goals are general statements that the Town of Mountain City Planning Commission believes to be the desires of the citizens regarding the future development of the municipality:

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- To preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life in Mountain City while encouraging a more harmonious and higher standard of development.
 - To provide for adequate housing to meet the needs of all residents while ensuring 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.
 - To provide for an adequate supply of goods and commercial services with varied sites suitable for a variety of outlets.
 - To retain and expand the industrial development base to provide for the essential employment needs of Mountain City and Johnson County.
 - To provide adequate and efficient public facilities and services, and to provide a diversity of cultural and recreational opportunities.
 - To provide utility services that effectively and efficiently meet and anticipate the needs of the municipality.
 - To provide an efficient and effective transportation system with appropriate linkages and capacities.
 - To encourage the development of vacant land which has less natural restrictions and which has the necessary infrastructure.

Objectives and Development Policies

Both objectives and policies are utilized to achieve the goals established in this 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 Mountain City. 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. This section is followed by objective and policies for each of the specific land use categories.

General Development and Growth Management

Growth has always been viewed as an inherent component of urban settlements. Most cities understand that growth is necessary for long term viability and most encourage growth to varying extents. However, in more and more communities, the costs and benefits of continued growth have emerged as public issues. There is often hesitation over accommodating further development with its consequences of greater detrimental impact. The approach taken by

Mountain City will be that of managed growth to guide general growth and development. The following objectives and policies are adopted:

Objective A. – Assure the protection and integrity of the natural environment by implementing measures to minimize the adverse impact of development to soils, slope, vegetation, wetlands, floodplain and other natural factors.

Policies

1. Areas with slopes in excess of twenty percent should only be developed where engineering documentation is available to provide that no adverse affects will occur to housing construction, road stability, drainage and erosion.
2. Mature vegetation, particularly trees, should be protected and replanting should be required where existing vegetation is removed or disturbed during construction.
3. Vegetation should be used as an alternative to man-made devices for buffering, insulation, erosion control and water quality protection, whenever practical.
4. The Town should develop appropriate criteria or measures to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive and other vulnerable areas.

Objective B. – Coordination of the demand for public service with the City's capacity to service them.

Policies

1. All new development, whether public or private, shall have appropriate infrastructure which shall be properly installed at the expense of the developer.
2. All future expansions or extensions of the Town services, facilities, or utilities should be in conformance with an adopted phasing plan based on the existing municipal service section of this plan and a capital budget.
3. Services provided by the Town should be used as a tool to direct or discourage development in specific directions.
4. Availability and capacity of existing services and utilities should be used as criteria in determining the location of higher intensity uses in the city and in decisions concerning annexation.
5. To aid developers in determining those areas most conducive to development, status reports on the infrastructure system should be routinely updated.
6. Developments with requirements beyond existing levels of police and fire protection, parks and recreation, and utilities shall only be allowed to develop when such services can be adequately provided and maintained.

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7. Inventories of existing public and private recreational facilities and of community needs should be used as input for planning future facilities and prioritizing the upgrading of existing recreational areas.
 8. Appropriate infill development should be encouraged to enhance existing development and to make more efficient use of existing services and utilities.

Objective C. – Preservation of the Town’s fiscal stability.

Policies

1. Fiscal decisions concerning capital improvements and expenditures shall be based on a Municipal Services Plan and a multi-year Public Improvements Program and Capital Budget. These documents should be reviewed and updated annually by the Planning Commission and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.
2. The Aldermen should establish annexation criteria in a long range urban fringe study annexation plan through which it will consider annexation proposals.
3. Urban development proposals which are contiguous with existing development within the corporate limits, or consistent with the Town’s phasing and annexation plans, should be encouraged through the extension of utilities.
4. Services provided by the Town should be in conformance with an adopted phasing plan and shall not be provided outside the Town.
5. The Town should continue to participate in providing a permanent source of funds to provide financing for economic development.
6. The Town should encourage the preservation of the tax base through the practice of sound land use decisions.

Objective D. - Protection and enhancement of present and future livability.

Policies

The Town should establish livability standards or criteria for assessing the impacts of development projects on the continued livability of the community. For growth management these standards or criteria should assess:

1. Environmental impacts such as water quality degradation, destruction of wetlands, etc.
2. Social impacts such as public safety, availability of community services, etc.
3. Economical and fiscal impacts such as budget constraints, job creation or loss, etc.
4. Impacts to public services and facilities, and transportation, such as water production and treatment capacity, sewer treatment capacity, Average Daily Traffic (ADT) counts on major roads, etc.

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5. Land use, site planning, and urban design criteria should be utilized to promote pleasant, functional and understandable relationships between land uses.
 6. Planning for community facilities and services should be based on the principal of maintaining or increasing the current levels of service provisions.
 7. Community development should concentrate on ways to encourage young people to remain in Mountain City and Johnson County to live and work.

Residential

A large portion of the developed land in Mountain City is devoted to residential uses, consisting of single family dwellings, multi-family dwellings and mobile homes. Less than 114 units of the existing 1,250 units in Mountain City are vacant. Assuming that the community will experience minimum population growth and that the average household size will remain at 2.46 persons, approximately 232 new housing units will be needed by the year 2030. As a significant portion of the vacant land in Mountain City is not suitable for development, developers will be hard pressed to find suitable land for development to meet the demand for even minimum population growth. This will especially be true if traditional single family homes on large lots in the primary method of meeting this housing demand.

To ensure the most appropriate development of existing and future residential areas in Mountain City and its growth area, the following developmental objectives and policies are adopted:

Objective – Provide for a variety housing types and densities for a wide range of family incomes, sizes and lifestyles.

Policies

1. The Town should promote the new residential developments in environmentally safe and pleasing areas.
2. The Town should allow housing types ranging from single family structures to multi-family development, including mobile homes properly located in mobile home parks.
3. High density infill developments should be permitted only in locations that are compatible with surrounding residential densities.
4. Land use controls should be used to foster a variety of housing types compatible with the natural landscape.
5. The Town should encourage and concentrate high density housing development in the CBD fringe area and along major traffic corridors with access to retail business, pedestrian amenities, cultural activities, schools and parks.
6. The Town should encourage low density housing along local streets within proximity to service centers, which are buffered from excessive noise, traffic, and conflicting development.

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7. High density residential uses should locate in planned unit development or in close proximity to existing higher density developments.
 8. In response to erosion and drainage considerations, hillside or slope developments should reflect design consideration and densities to minimize negative impacts.
 9. The Town should ensure that the existing housing stock continues to be maintained and that new residential construction is developed to appropriate standards and guidelines.
 10. The Town should encourage the rehabilitation of existing residences that can be purchased by low and moderate income residents.
 11. The Town should encourage the preservation and revitalization of older neighborhoods.
 12. The Town should encourage sound development in suitable areas by maintaining and improving transportation facilities.
 13. New residential development shall not be allowed in those areas where infrastructure is unavailable or inadequate to support such development.
 14. New resident development should be designed to encourage neighborhood concept and should be situated to be easily accessible to collector or arterial status streets.
 15. Transitional land uses or areas (Linear Greenbelts) or other design elements should be provided between residential neighborhoods and commercial areas in order to enhance the compatibility of land uses.

Commercial and Private Services

The Central Business District (CBD) has been the focal point for commerce and private services in Mountain City since the early years of the community. Like many older communities the CBD has experienced some structural deterioration. If the Mountain City CBD is to continue as a viable area for retail and wholesale businesses and for private services, the two major problems, traffic congestion and lack of parking facilities, must be satisfactorily addressed.

Although the downtown area of Mountain City remains as a vital area for business, commerce, and professional use, the area along Highway 421 is now the major location of retail businesses. This area, unfortunately, has developed primarily in a strip commercial fashion with excessive entrance and exit points. Due to this type of development, traffic congestion has become a noticeable problem in this area.

The vital commercial areas of the community should be protected and enhanced to help ensure their continued development in a planned environment which will strengthen the economy of the entire Town. To guide the continuation and expansion of these essential commercial activities, the following objectives and policies are adopted:

Objective A. – Take appropriate measures to ensure that the Town of Mountain City remains as the center for commercial and private service land use in Johnson County.

Policies

1. Future commercial developments and re-developments shall be in compliance with a comprehensive plan for all commercial growth and development.
2. The Town should recruit and retain business and service outlets that fulfill local market demands.
3. The Town should encourage and support the expansion of existing commercial areas and those that will result in the consolidation of commercial activities at central locations.
4. The Town should promote the 421 Corridor as the commercial/private services focal point of the community.
5. The Town should encourage the adaptive reuse of existing structures in the CBD.
6. The Town should expand the off-street parking options within the CBD area.
7. To the extent feasible, landscaping or other screening shall be provided between commercial and residential land uses.
8. Neighborhood commercial areas should be provided to make convenience goods and services available to residential neighborhoods.

Objective B. – Ensure that all new commercial development meets appropriate standards and guidelines.

Policies

1. All commercial developments shall be designed in compliance with appropriate site development standards.
2. Commercial development shall be approved in only those areas where infrastructure is available and adequate to support such development.
3. Commercial development should be designed so as to minimize negative impacts to the existing transportation system.
4. Strip commercial developments should be discouraged in favor of cluster developments with limited entrance and exit points.
5. Commercial uses which are high intensity traffic generators shall be located away from the CBD and on major collector or arterial status roads.
6. All new large scale commercial developments shall be located on frontage or access roads with controlled ingress and egress points when feasible.
7. All commercial and private service developments shall be provided with an adequate number of off street parking spaces.

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8. Commercial developments should be designed so as to minimize negative impacts to residential development and to enhance the aesthetics of such developments.

Industrial

Although the Town of Mountain City is no longer the primary location in Johnson County for manufacturing and industrial uses, its industrial future in terms of employment can be significant. Coordination between the municipal and county elected officials and economic personnel should provide new opportunities for industrial development.

To guide the continuation and expansion of these essential industrial activities, the following objectives and policies are adopted:

Objective A. – Retain the existing industrial base and provide areas for light industrial development and continue to support the county for large scale and heavy industrial development.

Policies

1. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen should support improvements in the local economy by providing new industrial site locations and maintaining and improving existing industrial site locations.
2. Existing industrial parks should be provided adequate service and be expanded as needed, new industrial parks and sites should be planned and developed, and adequate public services should be provided to private industrial parks.
3. To provide for additional industrial land and employment in Mountain City, and provide Town services to those industrial activities, the Town should adopt a policy to annex additional industrial properties where it is determined that such annexations are feasible.
4. The Town should support appropriate road and traffic improvements at locations suitable for the expansion of existing industrial areas.
5. Public officials should cooperate with, and actively support, the economic development groups in their efforts to attract industrial prospects and to retain and promote the expansion of existing industrial areas.
6. Based on local developed criteria, industrial land uses known or suspected of having harmful impacts on the health, safety, and welfare of people, and those activities and uses which would degrade, retard, or otherwise harm the natural environment, or the economic potential of the community, shall be discouraged from locating in the Town.

Objective B. – Provide appropriate standards and guidelines for new industrial development and for expansion of existing industrial uses.

Policies

1. All industrial developments shall be designed in compliance with appropriate site development standards.

2. Industrial uses may locate in less hazardous flood fringe areas provided that such uses shall comply with National Flood Insurance Program requirements.
3. Industrial uses should locate near transportation facilities that offer the access required by the industry. Such uses should not be allowed to create demands which exceed the capacity of the existing and future transportation network.
4. Industrial development should locate within the Town consistent with the phasing plan for infrastructure, where the proper sizing of facilities such as water, sewer and transportation has occurred or is planned.
5. To the extent feasible, landscaping or other screening shall be provided to reduce the conflict and soften the impact between industrial uses and other land uses.

Public and Semi-Public

Even though public and semi-public facilities usually only consume a relatively small percent of an area's total development, these facilities are extremely important land uses within a community. These uses should be convenient to the population and enhance the community's appearance, while at the same time creating the least possible conflict with adjacent land uses.

It is imperative that during the site design process for public and semi-public facilities, particular attention should be paid to the following items: the location of buildings in relation to parking and service areas; the relationship of buildings to existing and proposed streets; adjoining land uses; and the natural beauty of surrounding areas. The objectives and policies to be used as guidelines for public and semi-public uses are as follows:

Objective A. – Provide adequate and efficient public services and facilities which meet appropriate standards and guidelines.

Policies

1. The Town should adhere to its Land Use and Transportation Plan based on local standards and locational criteria. This plan should be updated on a regular basis.
2. Public facilities and services should be improved and expanded in accordance with an adopted Public Improvement Program and Capital Budget.

Objective B. – Provide a diversity of quality cultural and recreational opportunities.

Policies

1. Decisions concerning the provision of recreation facilities shall be guided by the community services section of this plan for such facilities, and shall be consistent with the Capital Budget. A special recreation plan may help direct detailed attention of both recreational facilities and programs.

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2. The Town should assist the County in the development of a mechanism for public acquisition of parks and open space. This should be a key element in the Town's ongoing Public Improvement Plan and Capital Budget.
 3. The Town should promote the joint use with the County of parks and other public facilities.
 4. The Town should enhance the opportunities for passive recreation through the creation of a Town greenbelt/greenway system which includes hiking and biking trails.
 5. Community and neighborhood parks should be developed and appropriately located within the Town.
 6. The Town should maximize the use of public recreational land through close coordination with federal, state and local officials.
 7. The Town should promote efforts to document, preserve and protect historic sites and structures in Mountain City and Johnson County.
 8. The Town should recognize the cultural contributions of religious, ethnic and educational institutions, and coordinate their efforts with publicly supported cultural institutions, events and performances.
 9. The Town should support and encourage cultural festivals as vehicles for bringing the arts to the public at low cost.

Utilities

Land development without the extension of adequate utilities 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 community's development plan. Therefore, the following objectives and policies should be adopted by all agencies responsible for the operation or extension of public utilities:

Objectives A.— Provide adequate and efficient public utility facilities.

Policies

1. All new development, whether public or private, should have adequate utilities which shall be properly installed at the expense of the developer.
2. The Town should ensure that the municipal water and sewer systems are adequate to meet current and future needs.
3. The health of residents shall be protected through the production of State approved potable water and the safe and efficient collection and treatment of wastewater.
4. Through its capital improvements and budget process, the Town shall plan early for capacity expansions to its water and sewer treatment facilities to meet future needs and provide for future growth.

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

Policies

1. Adequate utilities should be extended into urbanizing growth areas on a priority basis. These extensions shall meet health and safety standards.
2. Water and sewer lines of adequate size and location shall be required in all new developments and redevelopments.
3. Underground stormwater drainage systems, where appropriate, shall be required in all new developments and re-developments.
4. The use of underground electrical utilities should be required wherever feasible.
5. The location of utility structures for storage of equipment, pumps or similar materials should be adequately buffered and landscaped so as not to detract from the surrounding area.
6. The water distribution system should be periodically evaluated to ensure that water lines are of adequate size to provide adequate pressure for fire fighting, and that a suitable number of fire hydrants is present in a developed area.
7. The Town should require appropriate maintenance and repair of any privately controlled drainage facilities or appurtenances which tie into any portion of the public or existing natural drainage systems.

Vacant Land and Open Space

The land use survey indicated that there were 565 acres of vacant land in the Town of Mountain City. As the community grows a significant amount of this land will be pressed into urban development. Unfortunately, most 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 be best utilized as open space. To guide the future development of the vacant lands in the Town of Mountain City and its projected growth area, the following objectives and policies are adopted:

Objective A. – Ensure that adequate open space is provided in the municipality to enhance its aesthetic quality.

Policies

1. Appropriately located public open spaces and general recreational uses should be provided to serve the local residents as well as visitors. These areas should be readily available and designed to serve all age groups.
2. The Town should ensure that adequate amounts of open space areas are available for future populations.

3. Open space should be included as a requirement to serve every major development.
4. Places of rare natural beauty and areas of historic interest should be preserved and maintained.
5. All publicly owned land should be examined for its potential open space or recreational use before being sold or disposed of by the Town.

Objective B. – Ensure that appropriate standards and guidelines are followed for development of vacant land and for the provision of open space.

Policies

1. Public support and approval of development proposals that result in the conversion of prime farmlands should be reserved for those developments consistent with this plan and required for urban growth and development.
2. Areas of excessive slope should be conserved as open space, when possible, if development would cause significant soil and/or water degradation, or where the terrain possesses special scenic or recreational value.
3. Vegetation should be used as an alternative to man-made devices for buffering, insulation, erosion control and water quality protection.
4. Filing and excavation in floodplains shall only be allowed when consistent with National Flood Insurance Program regulations and allowed only after careful review of appropriate alternatives.
5. 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.
6. Consistent with National Flood Insurance Program Regulations, the Town shall discourage any residential development in areas which have been officially designated as floodways.
7. Within officially designated floodways, the town should encourage light recreational and open space uses such as greenbelts.
8. The Town shall develop appropriate criteria and measures to ensure the protection and enhancement of environmentally sensitive and other valuable areas.

Transportation

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

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

Policies

1. All new development, whether public or private, should have an adequate transportation system which shall be properly installed at the expense of the developer.
2. All new major streets should be located in a manner that will minimize disruption to neighborhoods, open space recreational areas, or commercial areas.
3. All segments of the transportation system should be designed and located to meet future as well as present demands.
4. Wherever possible, off-street parking shall be required for existing land uses. All new land uses, except for commercial and private service uses in the CBD, shall be required to provide off street parking facilities.
5. On street parking for existing uses shall be permitted only where adequate street widths are available and where such parking will not reduce the current level of service of the street.
6. Sidewalks should be extended throughout the Town and should be maintained in good repair.
7. Sidewalks shall be required in new residential development.
8. A city-wide hiking and biking system should be developed.
9. Curbs and gutters shall be required on all streets in new development.
10. Older streets in the Town should be upgraded or improved through a road improvements program.

Objective B. – Provide appropriate standards and guidelines for the construction of new street and other transportation facilities.

Policies

1. Streets should be related to the topography and designed to minimize the points of traffic conflict and turning movements.
2. All new streets and other public ways shall be designed to incorporate storm water drainage systems which are adequate in size to handle runoff from anticipated developments.
3. All streets and other public ways shall be designed to as to provide the least interference with natural drainage ways.
4. All new streets and other public ways shall be designed and located in a manner which offers the maximum protection from flood and erosion damage.

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5. Future roadways should be designed to incorporate appropriate landscaping to heighten the aesthetic and functional appeal both to motorist and surrounding residents.
 6. Street signage and other safety features should be required at the time of development.

CHAPTER 7

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

In this chapter several methods for implementation of the objectives and policies developed in this plan are reviewed. Many of these methods for implementation are already being utilized by the Town of Mountain City. The Planning Commission and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen may need to examine the effectiveness of current practices or regulations in achieving the stated objectives and policies. Where the identified methods are not currently being used, the municipality should consider taking the appropriate steps to do so.

Also, in this chapter, an Implementation Schedule is presented. It is intended to provide specific strategies for implementing the objectives and policies recommended in this plan. The Implementation Schedule proposes individual strategies for each of the specific land use categories, establishes time frames for completion, and identifies those responsible for implementation.

METHODS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

There have been ten methods of plan implementation identified for Mountain City to utilize in the execution of this plan. Each of these are reviewed within this section.

Planning Commission Project Review

Under Tennessee Code Section 13-4-104, after the adoption of a plan, no public improvement project can be authorized or constructed in the municipality until and unless the location and extent of the project have been submitted to the Planning Commission for its review. This review authority enables the Planning Commission to ensure that all public improvement projects are in compliance with the plan.

The Mountain City Planning Commission has been given the opportunity to review major public improvement projects prior to the inclusion in the municipal budget. This should continue to be the Town's budgetary process and should be completed by the preparation of a public improvements program. All utility expansion, public works, drainage, and transportation projects should be reviewed by the Mountain City Municipal Planning Commission prior to incorporation into the municipality's Public Improvement Program and Capital Budget.

Zoning

Zoning is a legal mechanism that can assist the municipality in implementing a land use and transportation plan. A zoning ordinance is designed to regulate the type and intensity of land use. It divides a community into specific districts corresponding to the intended use of the land as guided by the policies of the land use plan. For each district, zoning regulates the location, height, bulk, and size of buildings and other structures. The percentage of the lot that may be occupied, the sizes of yards, courts and other open spaces, and the density of population. Zoning can assure the proper location of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. It can protect street right-of-ways so that future widening is feasible. It can also prohibit overcrowding of building lots. In addition, zoning can help stabilize property values and can help prevent deterioration of neighborhoods.

Zoning regulations were first adopted by the Town of Mountain City in 1967. The current zoning regulations were adopted in 2006. These regulations need to be reviewed and revised to ensure that the policies presented in this plan can be implemented. The following areas are of particular concern:

- Residential density requirements should be increased, where feasible.
- Site plan review provisions should be revised to provide improved buffering and landscape requirements, buffer access control regulations, better control of surface water drainage, and to ensure that adequate infrastructure is available.
- Floodplain zoning provisions should be periodically updated to meet the most current Federal Emergency Management Agency guidelines.

Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations, used in a coordinated manner with zoning, are another legal mechanism to carry out the recommendations of the Land Use and Transportation Policy Plan. Like zoning, these regulations control private development. They serve as guidelines for the conversion of raw land into building sites. Subdivision regulations provide the guide by which a Planning Commission can review all proposed plats for subdivision in an equitable manner. These controls are necessary if sound, economical development is to be achieved. Through enforcement of these regulations, the design and quality of subdivisions will be improved, resulting in better living conditions and greater stability of property values for the individual property owner. Such controls over land subdivision ensure the installation of adequate utilities that may be economically serviced and maintained. These controls are also used in providing a coordinated street system and to ensure that sufficient open space for recreation and public services is provided.

Subdivision regulations were first adopted by the Mountain City Planning Commission in 1969. The current regulations are amended through 2007. These regulations need to be reviewed and revised to ensure that any policies presented in this plan can be implemented.

Codes Enforcement

There are various types of codes that municipalities can adopt to ensure that construction standards are sufficient to protect the health and safety of occupants. The housing code is designed to ensure that existing dwellings are safe, sanitary, and fit for human habitation. Other codes, such as building, electrical, fire and plumbing codes, provide minimum standards for the construction of new buildings and facilities and the alteration of existing structures and facilities. These codes are uniform in character and are applied to the municipality as a whole.

A system of codes functions only if accompanied by an inspection system. Code enforcement ensures the adequacy of new residential, commercial and industrial structures while also detecting and preventing the deterioration of existing facilities through periodic inspection. By reducing blight, property values become more stable and tax bases protected.

The Town of Mountain City has adopted the International Building Codes for construction. The Town employs a building inspector to comply with current Tennessee law. Specific emphasis

should be directed toward the enforcement of all existing codes. The Town also enforces grading, and erosion and sediment control regulations.

Utility Extension Policies

Another significant tool for effective land use planning is the control over the extension of municipally owned and operated utility services. Utility extension policies can be used for controlling the location and timing of development in a rational, coherent and efficient fashion. Since utility services, such as water and sewer, are so important to any major development, the refusal to extend such services into an area generally assures that only limited development can occur. Within the Town of Mountain City, the extension of utilities is generally the responsibility of the developer.

Public Improvements Program and Capital Budget

A public improvements program and capital budget provides the means through which the local government can effectively undertake a properly planned and programmed approach toward utilizing its financial resources in the most efficient way possible to meet the service and facility needs of the community. The public improvements program identifies recommendations for capital improvements, estimates their costs, and identifies possible financing alternatives. The capital budget is a method of developing and scheduling a way to finance the projects identified in the public improvements program.

Infill Development

Utilization of existing, developable vacant land within a municipality is a much overlooked mechanism to implement a land use plan. In most cases, these areas tend to be served by existing infrastructure such as streets, water, sewer, electric and gas; thereby eliminating normal costs associated with additional development. An abundance of vacant developable land is a costly luxury to a municipality. It results in under utilization of infrastructure due to low density development. Infill development of serviced areas will expand the local tax base while better utilizing the infrastructure system.

Although there are only limited areas where an infill strategy can be fully utilized in the Town of Mountain City, it is recommended that a vacant land and resource development study be completed. This study should identify those areas available for immediate development and those needing certain services, facilities, or zoning amendments. A primary purpose of this study should be to promote infill development. Targeting vacant land areas that need services or facilities in the public improvements plan and capital budget will help to accomplish infill strategy.

Annexation

Historically, as the population of municipalities increased, so has that of the suburban fringe areas that surround them. Residents and businesses are attracted to these fringe areas primarily because they can reap many of the benefits which municipalities provide without having to bear the costs. Serious consequences such as public health hazards, substandard services, wasteful duplication of services, inequitable distribution of tax burdens and benefits, and undesirable development resulting from non-existent or poor planning zoning controls, and develop from a failure to annex.

Municipalities can best plan for and deliver the urban services required by fringe areas through annexation. If a municipality fails to expand its corporate limits, development will locate in the urban fringe where it will contribute little to the finances of the municipality, while increasing pressure on the facilities and services provided by the municipality.

It is recommended that a multi-year annexation schedule be prepared by the Mountain City Planning Commission and recommended to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. This will require reconsidering the current 1101 Growth Plan and the establishment of a Town Urban Growth Boundary, or, annexation by referendum.

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is an important factor in determining the success of a land use plan. An informed citizenry that is willing to work to achieve the goals, objectives and policies set forth in this plan can be a tremendous asset. Citizens can offer support for programs designed to achieve community goals. Successful citizen participation can be achieved through a public education program designed to inform the community of the various purposes and reasons for the actions of both the Planning Commission and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Specific efforts should be taken to obtain input from the general public through organizational public meetings, public hearings, and surveys. News articles should also be utilized to educate the public regarding the work activities of the Planning Commission.

Local Leadership

The Mountain City Board of Mayor and Aldermen bears most of the responsibility for the implementation of this land use plan. As the municipality's decision makers, they have the authority to adopt appropriate implementation strategies that will fulfill the goals, objectives and policies developed in this plan. It is important that the legislative body maintain a close working relationship with the Planning Commission so that the planning process is properly coordinated.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The Mountain City Land Use and Transportation Policy Plan is an advisory document intended to serve as a guide for the development of the municipality over the next twenty years. Specific strategies for policy implementation are necessary if the goals and objectives of this Plan are to be achieved. Many of the goals, policies, and objectives can be implemented by assigning existing town staff, addressing issues with legislation, or continuing existing programming.

Each year the Board of Mayor and Aldermen develops an itemized work program. The purpose of this work program is to identify and prioritize what needs to be accomplished during the fiscal year. As part of the process of establishing the itemized work program, the Board should review the goals, policies, and objectives of this plan and determine what should be accomplished and when. Timing of this schedule will require research and review amendment process for 1101 Growth Plan (2011), utility extension policy – draft a policy and present to Planning Commission and Board of Mayor and Aldermen (2011 or 2012), review of Zoning Ordinance regulations (January 2011), and Review of Subdivision Regulations (July 2011).