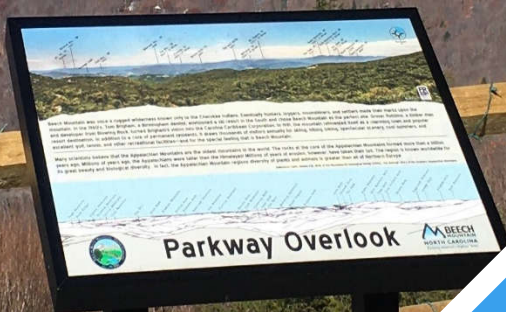


HOUSING REGULATORY STUDY

High Country, North Carolina

2023



BOWEN
NATIONAL
RESEARCH

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

NC REALTORS® retained Bowen National Research in September of 2022 for the purpose of conducting a Housing Regulatory Study for the High Country Region of North Carolina. Specifically, the High Country Region consists of Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, and Watauga counties.

The primary objective of this study is to provide an overview of existing government housing policies and regulations of local and county jurisdictions that may ultimately influence residential development in the subject markets. Toward that end, this report intends to:

- Provide a summary of key demographics of the area. This summary will provide insight on population and household characteristics and trends, as well as the housing product types, characteristics, and trends.
- Provide an overview of residential zoning, property maintenance codes, residential building codes, residential permitting processes and fees, housing incentives, and previously completed residential studies for local and county jurisdictions within the High Country Region.
- Conduct a survey and/or interviews of targeted stakeholders in the High Country Region to include local building, zoning, and planning departments, private sector developers, elected officials, and housing advocacy groups.
- Conduct a best practices evaluation featuring communities in the southeastern United States. This best practices evaluation will highlight housing programs and policies within these communities that may serve as possible guidance or models for implementation in the High Country Region.

By accomplishing the study's objectives, government officials and area stakeholders can: (1) better understand the Region's evolving demographics and housing characteristics and (2) modify, expand or introduce local government housing policies to meet the area's current and future housing needs.

B. REPORT LIMITATIONS

The intent of this report is to collect and analyze significant levels of data for towns, villages, and counties within the Region. Bowen National Research relied on a variety of data sources to generate this report. These data sources are not always verifiable; however, Bowen National Research makes a concerted effort to assure accuracy. Bowen National Research is not responsible for errors or omissions in the data provided by other sources.

We have no present or prospective interest in any of the properties in the subject area and we have no personal interest or bias with respect to the parties involved. Our compensation is not contingent on an action or event resulting from the analyses, opinions, or use of this study. Any reproduction or duplication of this study without the expressed approval of NC REALTORS® or Bowen National Research is strictly prohibited.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

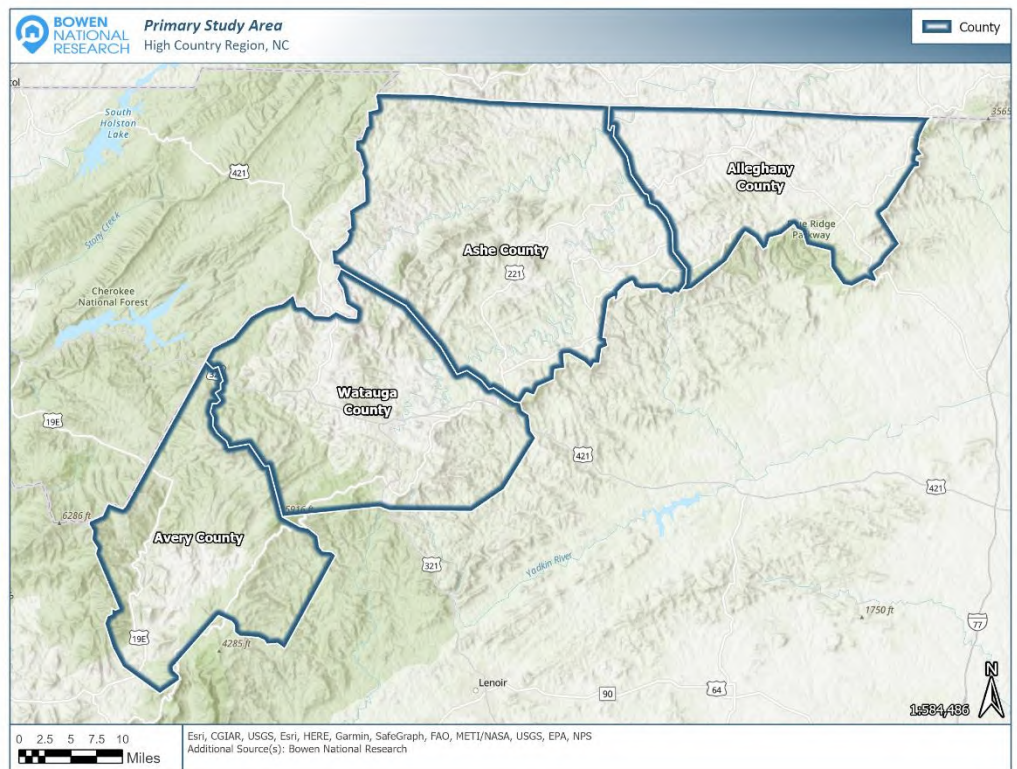
The purpose of this report is to present the existing government housing policies and regulations of local jurisdictions in the High Country Region of North Carolina. While details are provided on existing policies and we provide key observations of such policies, recommendations are not provided. Instead, this report is intended to inform the reader. To that end, we conducted a Housing Regulatory Study that considers the following:

- Demographic characteristics and trends, with an emphasis on occupied housing types.
- Housing policies and regulations within town, village and county jurisdictions, as well as a review of land use controls.
- Best practices of college-influenced markets outside the Region that can be used as a guide for possible implementation or improvements within the High Country Region.
- Stakeholder engagement.

Based on these metrics, decision-makers and housing advocates within the High Country Region can make informed decisions regarding existing housing policies or introduce new housing policies that help to address residential development and preservation within the study area.

Geographic Study Areas

This report focuses on the Primary Study Area (PSA), which consists of the four-county High Country Region, including Alleghany, Ashe, Avery and Watauga counties, as well as selected communities within these counties. A map illustrating the overall study area is shown on the right. Various enlarged maps, including those illustrating the locations of individual communities, are included starting on page III-3 of this report.



Demographics – In an effort to give context as to the housing and household composition of communities considered in this report, we provided and evaluated various demographic data sets. Key demographic findings include:

- Four of the 10 communities studied in the Region experienced positive household growth between 2010 and 2021, which added to a growing demand for housing.
- Region-wide, the majority of housing is occupied by owners (43.7%), while a smaller portion is occupied by renters (17.7%). The remaining units (38.6%) are vacant, which is primarily influenced by seasonal/recreational housing that is prominent in this tourist-influenced region.
- Most housing units are in structures with four or fewer units, often consisting of single-family homes or mobile homes. The non-multifamily housing units represent 67.0% of all occupied *rental* units and 99.3% of all *owner*-occupied units. As such, with the exception of the Boone and Jefferson communities, multifamily housing is not a common housing alternative in the Region.
- The town of Boone, the largest incorporated community by population in the Region, had a population density of over 2,800 persons per square mile in 2021. The relatively high density within the town of Boone, coupled with the gradual increase in population density since 2000, suggests possible additional demand for multifamily housing units. It is worth pointing out that notable population density increases between 2010 and 2021 occurred in the communities of Lansing, Banner Elk, Sugar Mountain and Beech Mountain. This should be taken into account as future housing policy is considered.

Housing Regulations, Processes and Fees - While numerous strategies exist to encourage or influence residential development activity (e.g., a reduction or waiving of regulatory fees, expediting the permitting process for selected residential projects, donation or discounted sale price of land, or assistance with infrastructure), residential zoning plays a significant role in the support and direction of residential development. Based on our review of zoning and building regulations for towns, villages, and counties within the High Country Region, it is evident that ordinances establishing residential zoning districts vary greatly between communities, with some communities offering specific regulatory provisions while other communities lack specific zoning districts.

The following table summarizes residential use types that are permitted within the jurisdictions considered in this report. The 10 communities considered in this report have either specifically designated zoning districts with corresponding permitted residential uses or provide some level of land use provisions that guide development. It is important to note that our determination of whether or not a *specific* residential use applies to the *general* zoning categories used in the following table are based on the *primary* permitted residential use identified through our research. Therefore, it is possible that some specific residential uses may be permitted within selected communities under a broader residential use designation; however, such uses may be

excluded from the following table. Lastly, for the purposes of the following table, we denote with an “X” residential uses allowed, regardless if it is Permitted by Right, Permitted by Special Use, or through some other designation. Users of this report should refer to Section V of this report to review specific residential uses permitted within the individual jurisdictions of the High Country Region.

Permitted Residential Uses by Community										
Residential Use Type	Community									
	Sparta	Jefferson	West Jefferson	Banner Elk	Seven Devils	Sugar Mountain	Beech Mountain	Blowing Rock	Boone	Foscoe-Grandfather
Accessory dwelling/apartment				X				X	X	
Cluster development	X	X		X	X	X	X			X
Family care home	X			X					X	
Manufactured/mobile home parks	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Manufactured/mobile homes	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mixed-use facility	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	
Modular home	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Multifamily dwellings (over 4 units)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Planned residential developments/PUDs	X			X	X	X	X			
Residential care facility				X	X	X			X	
Rooming houses/boarding houses			X		X			X	X	
Single-family detached dwellings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Single-family attached dwellings	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Two- to four-unit dwellings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Vacation/short-term rental			X				X	X	X	

X – indicates that residential use type is either permitted by right, by special use, or on a conditional basis within at least one zoning district.

Note: Residential use types are only marked with an “X” if the use is specifically stated in the zoning ordinance.

Based on the preceding table, all jurisdictions permit the residential development of single-family homes and some level of multifamily development, although zoning districts allowing larger multifamily development with more than four units within a structure appears to be limited or lacking in some jurisdictions, unless it is permitted by special use. Some jurisdictions specifically address residential uses such as accessory dwelling units, modular homes, and mixed-use development (that includes residential uses), while other jurisdictions do not specifically cite such uses. Some communities may benefit from specific adoption of zoning districts or language within existing ordinances that address residential development types currently lacking from their current policies.

The following table lists the entities responsible for residential building permits and the general fees associated with such permitting.

Residential Permit Entities and Corresponding Fees		
Community	Permitting Entity Website	Standard Residential Building Permit Fees
Sparta	Alleghany County Planning & Inspection	\$385 for first 1,000 sq. ft. heated area \$10 per each additional 100 sq. ft.
Jefferson West Jefferson	Ashe County Building Inspections	\$360 for first 1,000 sq. ft. heated area \$10 per each additional 100 sq. ft.
Banner Elk Seven Devils Sugar Mountain	Avery County Inspections Department	\$150 for first 1,000 sq. ft. heated area \$0.14 to \$0.24 per additional sq. ft. based on dwelling size.
Beech Mountain	Town of Beech Mountain Planning & Inspection Department	\$0.30 per square foot of heated area
Blowing Rock	Town of Blowing Rock Planning and Inspections	\$0.50 per square foot of heated area (includes all trade fees)
Boone	Town of Boone Planning & Inspections	\$491 up to 2,500 sq. ft. of heated area
Foscoe-Grandfather	Watauga County Planning and Inspections	\$0.30 per square foot of heated area

As the preceding table illustrates, there are seven government entities that cover residential building permit activity within the 10 jurisdictions considered in this report. Note that communities in Alleghany, Ashe, and Avery counties have building permit fees assessed at the county government level, while communities in Watauga County, with the exception of the Foscoe-Grandfather community, have building permit fees assessed at the local level. Residential building permit fees in these areas vary based on the size and type of residential use. Based on the preceding fee structures, Avery County appears to have a lower fee structure for smaller dwellings based on its lower minimum building permit fee, while some communities in Watauga County have higher overall fees of \$0.30 to \$0.50 per square foot depending on location. However, communities with higher building permit fees per square foot may include trade fees that are individually assessed within other jurisdictions. It is our opinion that these fees do not appear to be unusually high when compared with other counties we have studied in western North Carolina. Regardless, communities may want to consider fee waivers, reductions or credit applied toward certain permitted uses to encourage specific product types (e.g., affordable rental housing) that meet specific goals of the community.

Stakeholder Input – Despite attempts to gather input from local sources knowledgeable of local residential regulatory requirements, we were unable to get a sufficient number of responses to draw reliable conclusions. However, it should be noted that a survey of county stakeholders was also conducted as part of the original Housing Needs Assessment of the High Country Region in fall 2021. A portion of this survey asked questions regarding barriers to development in the High Country Region. The largest share of respondents (nearly 95%) noted that development costs were a barrier or obstacle that limits residential development in the Region, while nearly 90% of respondents noted that cost of labor/materials and cost of land were barriers or obstacles. Over 90% of respondents to this stakeholder survey also noted that collaboration between public and private sectors could potentially reduce or eliminate barriers to development in the Region. Based on this stakeholder survey, there are several existing issues in the High Country Region that often stand in the

way of residential development. By comparison, local and county housing regulatory restrictions do not appear to present significant barriers to development. However, such regulations may be modified or expanded to support specific goals of each community.

Key Observations & Conclusions

The following summarizes key observations we have made regarding residential zoning designations across the Region.

- Of the communities studied in this report, the communities of Blowing Rock and Boone appear to have the most comprehensive and diverse zoning district designations. While the provisions of the existing zoning districts in these two communities may benefit from modifications, some zoning district ordinances within these communities may serve as models for some of the other communities in the Region if such zoning is applicable or appropriate. Additionally, some of the communities studied in this report do not have zoning or ordinances that address specific land uses. In such cases, it may benefit these communities to consider adoption of more specific zoning district ordinances to accommodate certain residential development and preservation goals for each community.
- While *most* communities studied in this report with specific zoning district ordinances have front lot setback requirements of 20 to 40 feet and maximum building height limits typically around 35 feet within their residential zoning districts, the minimum lot sizes allowed vary greatly between communities. It does appear that several communities have zoning in place that favors low-density and single-family residential development. Such zoning impacts the type of housing that is ultimately built, making higher density projects (e.g., multifamily apartments or condominiums) less likely in some communities. Therefore, communities may want to explore how current zoning in their respective communities may be impacting the development of multifamily housing or other residential product that could be beneficial to the community.
- Some communities studied in this report have specific zoning district language that specifies land characteristics and access to infrastructure as they relate to residential uses. Examples include language that addresses the percentage or degree of topographical slope of land or access to public water and sewer services. While such provisions may serve as a guide for refinement of zoning district language in other communities, communities with these provisions may want to revisit these ordinances to make certain they fit the latest goals of the community.

III. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND STUDY AREAS

A. HIGH COUNTRY OVERVIEW

This report focuses on housing regulations within the High Country Region of North Carolina. For the purposes of this report, the High Country Region consists of Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, and Watauga counties in the northwest portion of North Carolina, including towns and villages within each county. The High Country Region borders Virginia to the north, Tennessee to the west, and portions of the Blue Ridge Parkway to the southeast. The town of Boone, which represents the commercial, educational, and cultural center of the High Country Region, is approximately 85.0 miles northeast of Asheville, North Carolina and approximately 101.0 miles northwest of Charlotte, North Carolina

The High Country Region is home to approximately 109,692 people in 2021, increasing by 2,380 people or by 2.2% since 2010. Among individual counties, Watauga County has the largest population among counties in the Region, followed by Ashe County, Avery County, and Alleghany County. The town of Boone is the largest incorporated community in the Region and is home to Appalachian State University, a public university with an enrollment of over 20,000 students. The town of West Jefferson, in Ashe County, features several newer retailers and parcels of available land ready for development. Several towns in the Region, including Blowing Rock, Sugar Mountain, Banner Elk, and Beech Mountain, are noted tourism areas near ski resorts and recreational facilities. The towns of Sparta (Alleghany County), Jefferson (Ashe County), Newland (Avery County), and Boone (Watauga County) serve as county seats of government within their respective counties.

B. STUDY AREAS – MARKET AREA DELINEATIONS

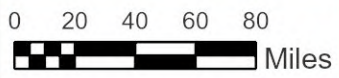
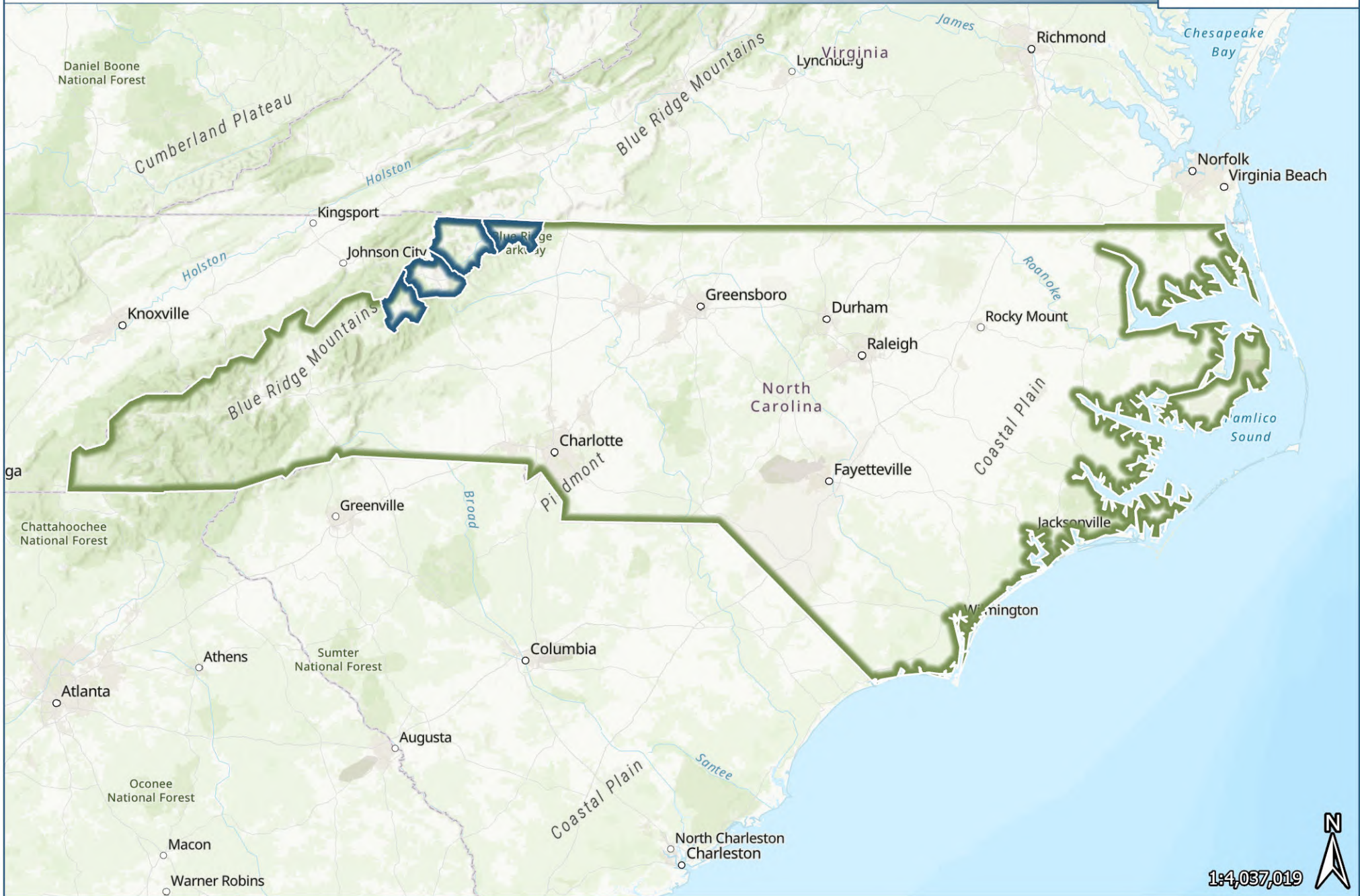
This report addresses the housing regulations within the four-county High Country Region. Additionally, because of the unique characteristics that exist within certain areas of the Region, we provide supplemental analysis for various towns and villages within the four counties to understand trends, attributes and housing policies that affect these designated areas. In order to provide an additional base of comparison, we have provided select data on the overall state of North Carolina, when applicable. The following summarizes the various study areas used in this analysis.

Primary Study Area – The Primary Study Area (PSA) is the High Country Region which consists of Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, and Watauga counties.

The following table summarizes the additional study areas used in this analysis.

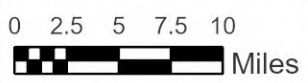
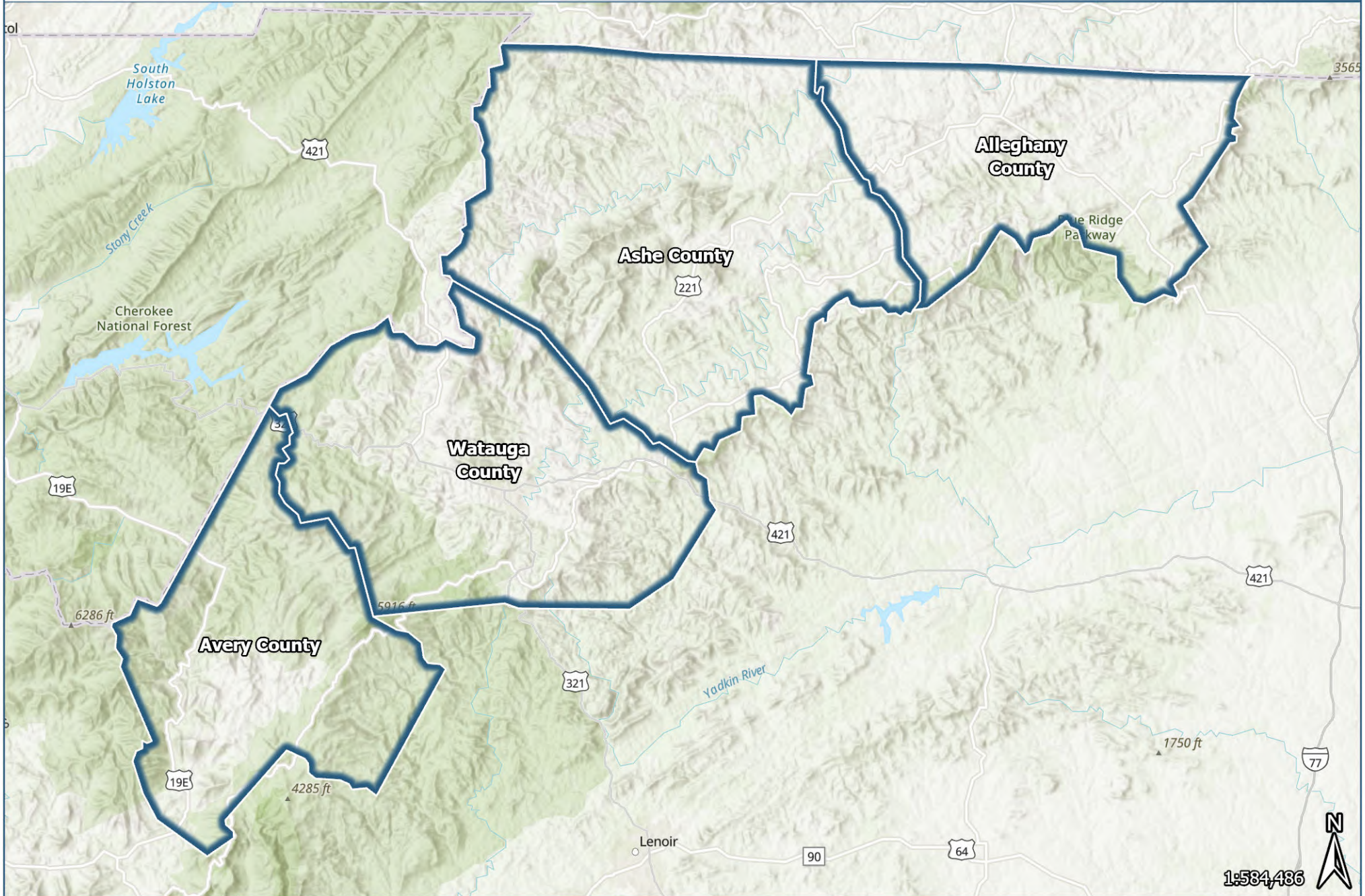
Alleghany County
Sparta
Ashe County
Lansing Jefferson West Jefferson
Avery County
Banner Elk Beech Mountain (part) Newland Seven Devils Sugar Mountain
Watauga County
Beech Mountain (part) Blowing Rock Boone Foscoe-Grandfather

Maps delineating the boundaries of the various study areas are shown on the following pages.





Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, NPS, Esri, USGS
Additional Source(s): Bowen National Research

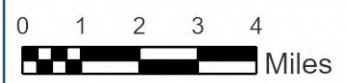
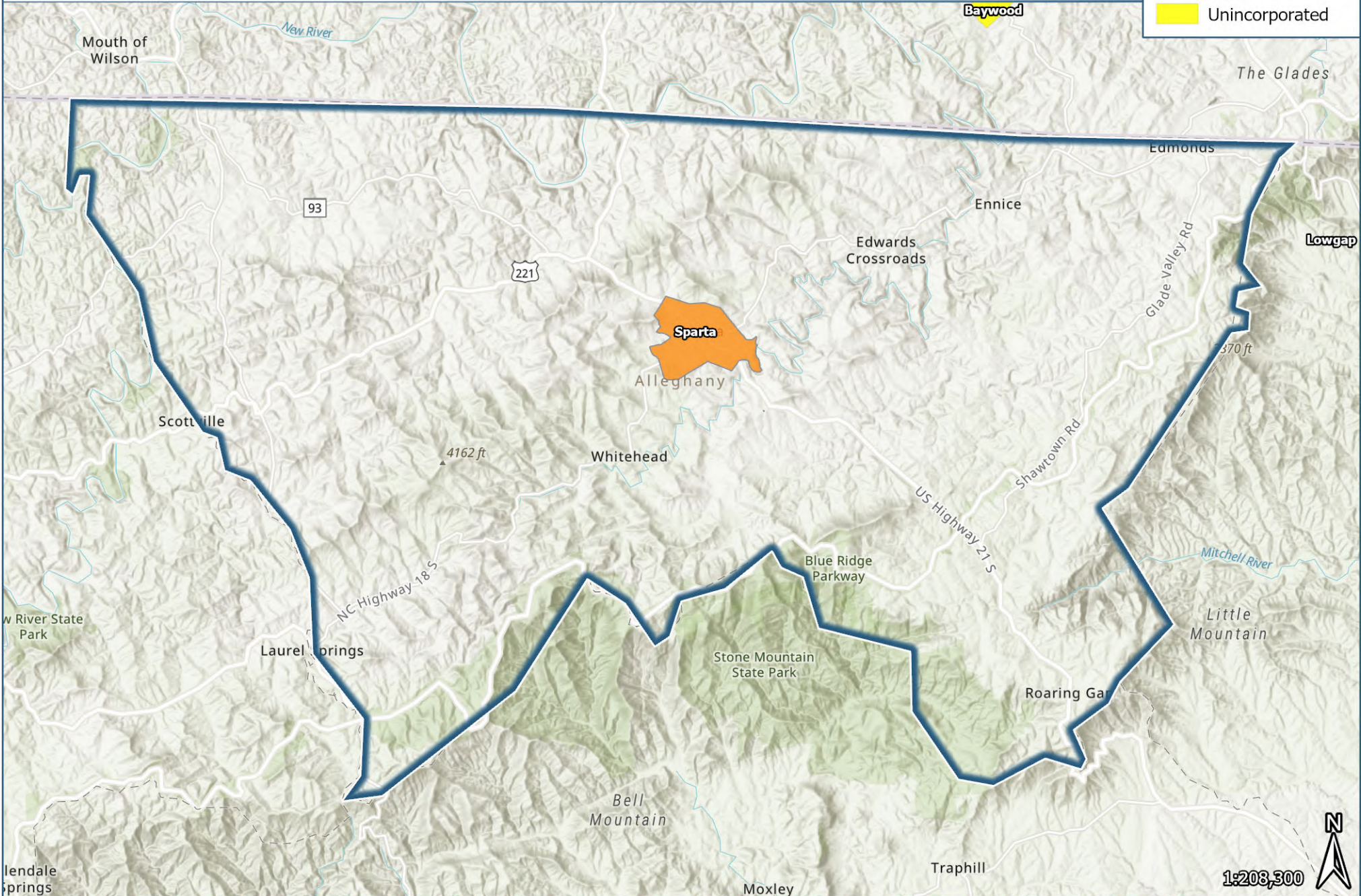




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Additional Source(s): Bowen National Research

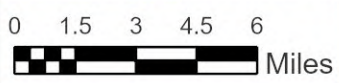
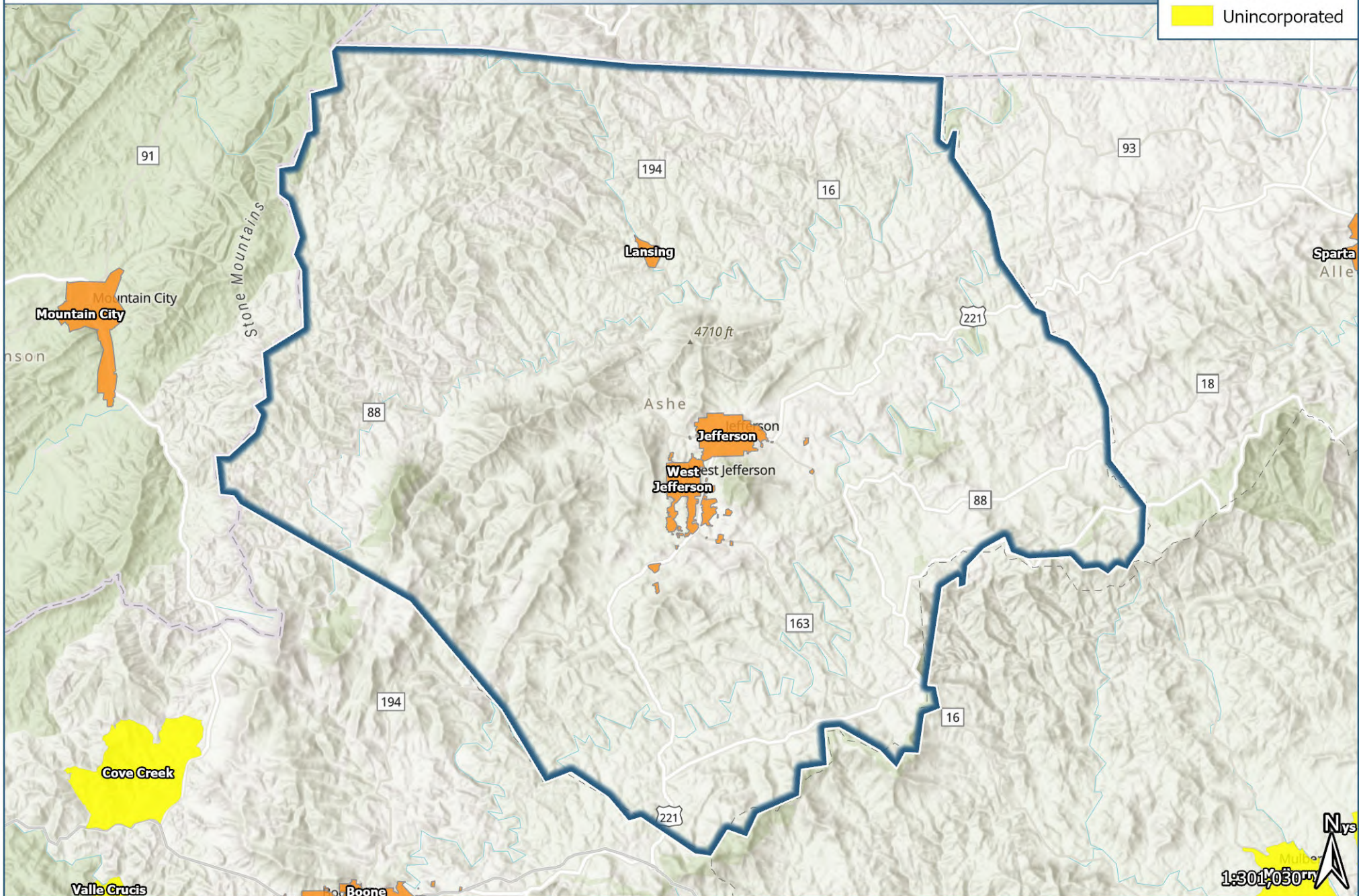


-  Alleghany County
-  Town
-  Unincorporated

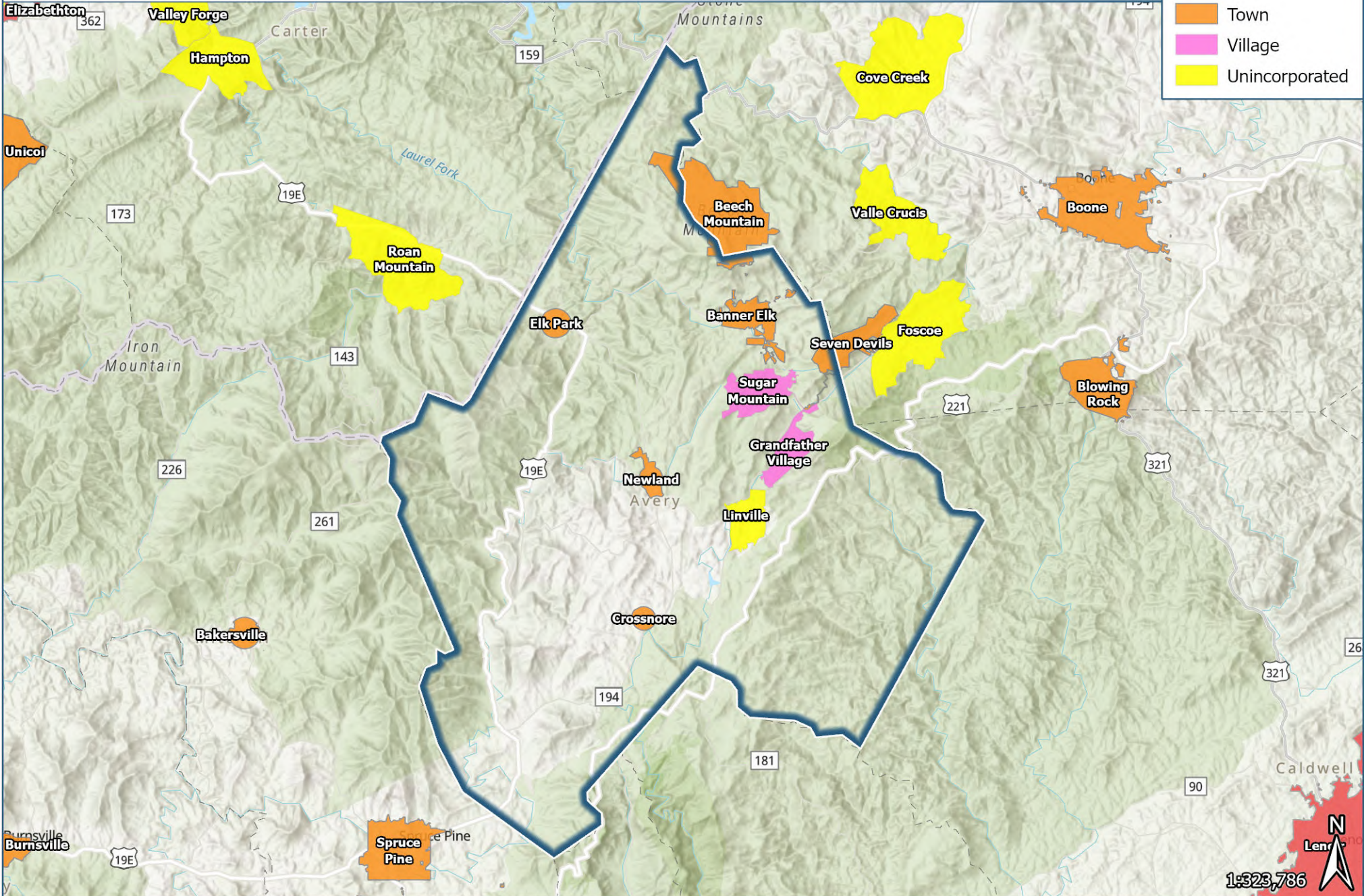


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Additional Source(s): Bowen National Research





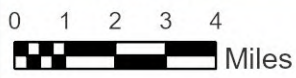
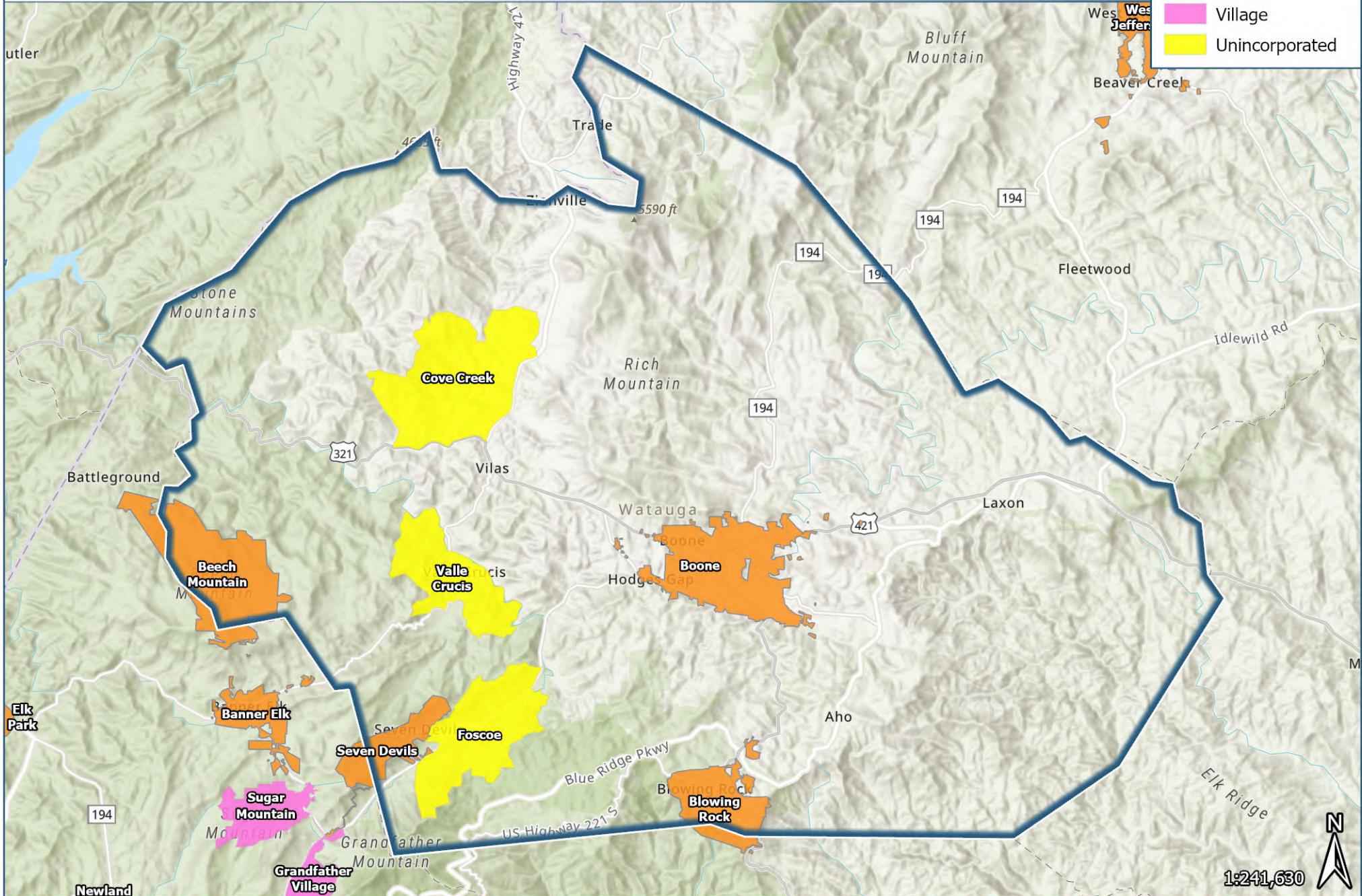
-  Avery County
-  City
-  Town
-  Village
-  Unincorporated



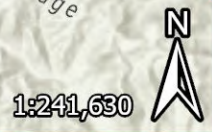
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Additional Source(s): Bowen National Research



- Watauga County
- Town
- Village
- Unincorporated



Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS
Additional Source(s): Bowen National Research



IV. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

A. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report evaluates key demographic characteristics for the High Country Region, which is referred to as the Primary Study Area (PSA) for this report. This section will also evaluate key demographic characteristics for each of the four individual counties within the Region (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, and Watauga), select towns and villages within the four counties, and North Carolina (statewide). Note that demographic data for the communities of Seven Devils and Foscoe-Grandfather were not included in this report. Through this analysis, unfolding trends and unique conditions are often revealed regarding populations and households residing in the selected geographic areas. Demographic comparisons among these geographies provide insights into the human composition of housing markets.

This section is comprised of three major parts: population characteristics, household characteristics, and demographic theme maps. Population characteristics describe the qualities of individual people, while household characteristics describe the qualities of people living together in one residence. Demographic theme maps graphically show varying levels (low to high concentrations) of a demographic characteristic across a geographic region.

Note that 2000, 2010, and 2021 demographics are based on U.S. Census and/or American Community Survey five-year data estimates. It should also be noted that some total numbers and percentages may not match the totals within or between tables in this section due to rounding.

B. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Population by numbers and percent change (growth or decline) for selected years are shown in the following table:

	Total Population						
	2000 Census	2010 Census	Change 2000-2010		2021 Estimated	Change 2010-2021	
			Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Alleghany County							
Sparta	1,817	1,770	-47	-2.6%	1,924	154	8.7%
Alleghany County	10,680	11,155	475	4.4%	10,910	-245	-2.2%
Ashe County							
Lansing	151	158	7	4.6%	274	116	73.4%
Jefferson	1,422	1,611	189	13.3%	1,630	19	1.2%
West Jefferson	1,081	1,299	218	20.2%	1,446	147	11.3%
Ashe County	24,384	27,281	2,897	11.9%	26,958	-323	-1.2%
Avery County							
Banner Elk	811	1,028	217	26.8%	1,350	322	31.3%
Newland	704	698	-6	-0.9%	761	63	9.0%
Sugar Mountain	226	198	-28	-12.4%	451	253	127.8%
Avery County	17,167	17,797	630	3.7%	17,747	-50	-0.3%
Watauga County							
Beech Mountain*	310	320	10	3.2%	796	476	148.8%
Blowing Rock	1,317	1,241	-76	-5.8%	1,072	-169	-13.6%
Boone	14,451	17,128	2,677	18.5%	18,055	927	5.4%
Watauga County	42,695	51,079	8,384	19.6%	54,077	2,998	5.9%
Region / North Carolina							
High Country Region	94,926	107,312	12,386	13.0%	109,692	2,380	2.2%
North Carolina	8,049,313	9,535,483	1,486,170	18.5%	10,367,022	831,539	8.7%

Source: 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2017-2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates; Bowen National Research

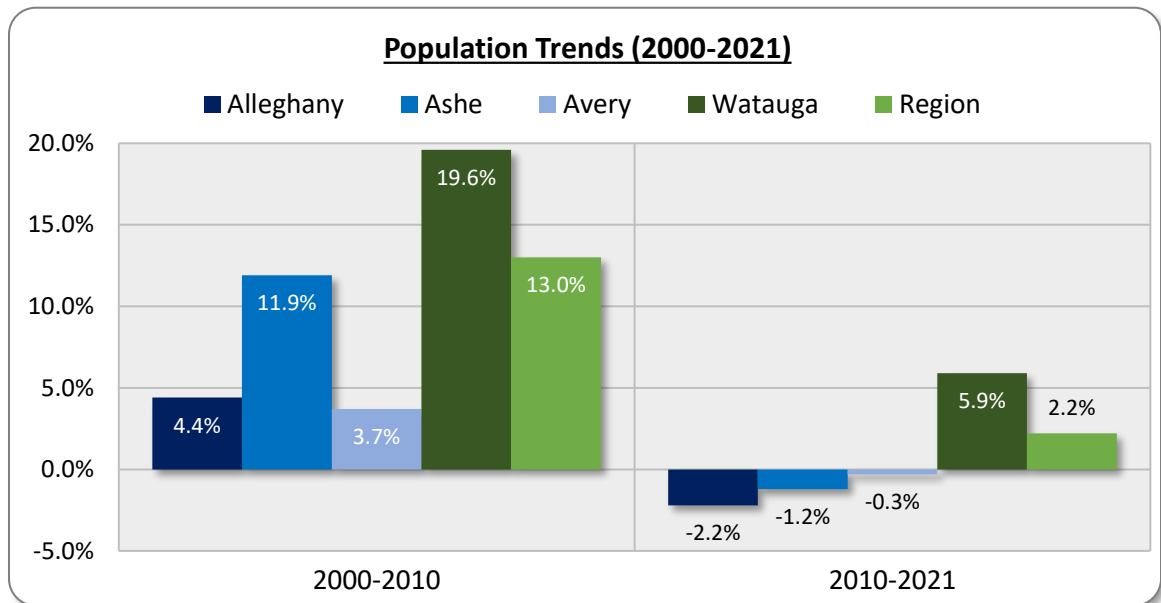
*A portion of Beech Mountain extends into Avery County

Noteworthy observations from the preceding table include:

- According to 2021 estimates, nearly one-half (49.3%) of the High Country Region population resides within Watauga County. Ashe County had the second largest population (26,958) among the four counties in the Region, representing nearly 25% of the Region population. Note that the town of Boone, with a total estimated population of 18,055, had a greater number of people than Alleghany County (10,910) and Avery County (17,747).
- The High Country Region experienced positive population growth between 2000 and 2021. The Region's population increased by 12,386 (13.0%) between 2000 and 2010 and by 2,380 (2.2%) between 2010 and 2021. A significant portion of this increase was attributed to population growth in Watauga County. Note that the remaining three counties in the Region each experienced an overall decrease in population between 2010 and 2021.

- Several smaller towns and villages in the four-county Region experienced significant population growth between 2010 and 2021. The population in the town of Beech Mountain and village of Sugar Mountain more than doubled between 2010 and 2021, while the towns of Lansing (73.4%) and Banner Elk (31.3%) also experienced significant population growth during this period. Boone, the largest municipality in the High Country Region, increased its population by 18.5% between 2000 and 2010 and by 5.4% between 2010 and 2021.

The following graph compares the percent change in population since 2000 for the PSA (High Country Region) and each individual county within the Region.



Population densities for selected years are shown in the following table:

		Population Densities		
		2000	2010	2021
Alleghany County				
Sparta	Population	1,817	1,770	1,924
	Area in Square Miles	2.36	2.36	2.36
	Density	769.9	750	815.3
Alleghany County	Population	10,680	11,155	10,910
	Area in Square Miles	235.84	235.84	235.84
	Density	45.3	47.3	46.3
Ashe County				
Lansing	Population	151	158	274
	Area in Square Miles	0.35	0.35	0.35
	Density	431.4	451.4	782.9
Jefferson	Population	1,422	1,611	1,630
	Area in Square Miles	2.12	2.12	2.12
	Density	670.8	759.9	768.9
West Jefferson	Population	1,081	1,299	1,446
	Area in Square Miles	2.15	2.15	2.15
	Density	502.8	604.2	672.6
Ashe County	Population	24,384	27,281	26,958
	Area in Square Miles	428.18	428.18	428.18
	Density	56.9	63.7	63.0
Avery County				
Banner Elk	Population	811	1,028	1,350
	Area in Square Miles	1.92	1.92	1.92
	Density	422.4	535.4	703.1
Newland	Population	704	698	761
	Area in Square Miles	0.7	0.7	0.7
	Density	1005.7	997.1	1087.1
Sugar Mountain	Population	226	198	451
	Area in Square Miles	2.46	2.46	2.46
	Density	91.9	80.5	183.3
Avery County	Population	17,167	17,797	17,747
	Area in Square Miles	247.51	247.51	247.51
	Density	69.4	71.9	71.7
Watauga County				
Beech Mountain*	Population	310	320	796
	Area in Square Miles	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Density	46.3	47.8	118.8
Blowing Rock	Population	1,317	1,241	1,072
	Area in Square Miles	3.06	3.06	3.06
	Density	430.7	405.8	350.3
Boone	Population	14,451	17,128	18,055
	Area in Square Miles	6.33	6.33	6.33
	Density	2,283.6	2,706.6	2,852.3
Watauga County	Population	42,695	51,079	54,077
	Area in Square Miles	313.32	313.32	313.32
	Density	136.3	163.0	172.6
Region / North Carolina				
High Country Region	Population	94,926	107,312	109,692
	Area in Square Miles	1,224.85	1,224.85	1,224.85
	Density	77.5	87.6	89.6
North Carolina	Population	8,049,313	9,535,483	10,367,022
	Area in Square Miles	49,336.79	49,336.79	49,336.79
	Density	163.2	193.3	210.1

Source: 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2017-2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates; Bowen National Research

*A portion of Beech Mountain extends into Avery County

Noteworthy observations from the preceding table include:

- The PSA (High Country Region) had a population density of 89.6 in 2021, a much lower population density compared with the state of North Carolina (210.1). Watauga County had the highest population density (172.6) among all four counties that make up the High Country Region. The town of Boone, the largest incorporated community by population in the Region, had a population density of over 2,800 persons per square mile in 2021. The relatively high density within the town of Boone, coupled with the gradual increase in population density since 2000, suggests possible additional demand for multifamily housing units. It is worth pointing out that notable population density increases between 2010 and 2021 occurred in the communities of Lansing, Banner Elk, Sugar Mountain and Beech Mountain. This should be taken into account as future housing policy is considered.

C. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Households by numbers and percent change (growth or decline) for selected years are shown in the following table:

	Total Households						
	2000 Census	2010 Census	Change 2000-2010		2021 Estimated	Change 2010-2021	
			Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Alleghany County							
Sparta	825	908	83	10.1%	833	-75	-8.3%
Alleghany County	4,596	4,778	182	4.0%	4,772	-6	-0.1%
Ashe County							
Lansing	69	90	21	30.4%	106	16	17.8%
Jefferson	582	604	22	3.8%	752	148	24.5%
West Jefferson	527	622	95	18.0%	550	-72	-11.6%
Ashe County	10,411	11,755	1,344	12.9%	11,723	-32	-0.3%
Avery County							
Banner Elk	215	246	31	14.4%	328	82	33.3%
Newland	334	387	53	15.9%	370	-17	-4.4%
Sugar Mountain	121	252	131	108.3%	238	-14	-5.6%
Avery County	6,532	6,664	132	2.0%	6,378	-286	-4.3%
Watauga County							
Beech Mountain*	145	280	135	93.1%	365	85	30.4%
Blowing Rock	633	622	-11	-1.7%	583	-39	-6.3%
Boone	4,683	5,756	1,073	22.9%	5,304	-452	-7.9%
Watauga County	16,540	20,403	3,863	23.4%	20,805	402	2.0%
Region / North Carolina							
High Country Region	38,079	43,600	5,521	14.5%	43,678	78	0.2%
North Carolina	3,132,013	3,745,144	613,131	19.6%	4,179,632	434,488	11.6%

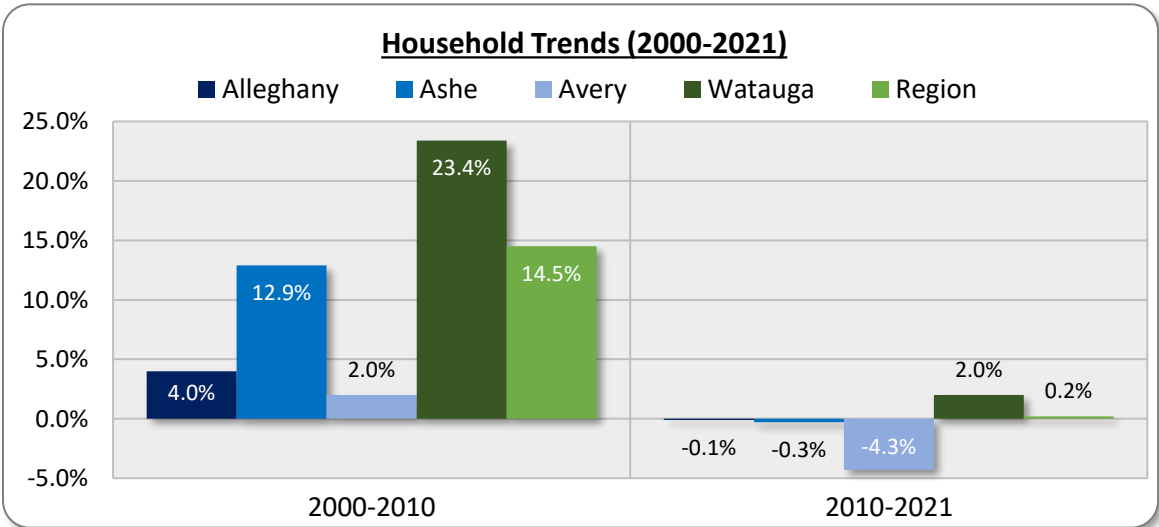
Source: 2000, 2010, 2020 Census; American Community Survey (Five-Year Estimates); Bowen National Research

*A portion of Beech Mountain extends into Avery County

Noteworthy observations from the preceding table include:

- From 2000 to 2010, the number of households in the PSA (High Country Region) increased by 5,521, or 14.5%. The state of North Carolina had a 19.6% increase in total households during this period. Watauga County had the largest increase (23.4%) in households between 2000 and 2010, while Avery County and Alleghany County each had household increases of less than 5%.
- Among towns and villages in the High Country Region, total households in the town of Boone increased by 22.9% between 2000 and 2010, nearly matching the countywide increase in Watauga County during this period. The town of Blowing Rock experienced a household decrease (1.7%) during this period. The village of Sugar Mountain (108.3%) and town of Beech Mountain (93.1%) experienced the largest *rate* of household growth in the High Country Region between 2000 and 2010.
- Between 2010 and 2021, the number of households in the PSA increased by only 0.2%, a lower rate of growth compared with the state of North Carolina (11.6%). Households in Watauga County increased by 2.0% during this period. The remaining three counties decreased in overall households between 2010 and 2021.
- The towns of Banner Elk and Beech Mountain each experienced household increases of over 30.0% between 2010 and 2021, while Jefferson (24.5%) and Lansing (17.8%) also experienced notable household growth during this period. The towns of Boone and Blowing Rock each experienced household decreases between 2010 and 2021.

The following graph compares the percent change in households between 2000 and 2021 for the PSA (High Country Region) and each individual county within the Region.



Households by tenure for 2021 are shown in the following table:

		Households by Tenure - 2021				
		Total Occupied	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant	Total
Alleghany County						
Sparta	Number	833	530	303	145	978
	Percent	85.2%	54.2%	31.0%	14.8%	100.0%
Alleghany County	Number	4,772	3,790	982	2,949	7,721
	Percent	61.8%	49.1%	12.7%	38.2%	100.0%
Ashe County						
Lansing	Number	107	61	46	8	115
	Percent	93.0%	53.0%	40.0%	7.0%	100.0%
Jefferson	Number	752	339	413	129	881
	Percent	85.4%	38.5%	46.9%	14.6%	100.0%
West Jefferson	Number	550	251	299	118	668
	Percent	82.3%	37.6%	44.8%	17.7%	100.0%
Ashe County	Number	11,723	9,243	2,480	5,283	17,006
	Percent	68.9%	54.4%	14.6%	31.1%	100.0%
Avery County						
Banner Elk	Number	328	218	110	419	747
	Percent	43.9%	29.2%	14.7%	56.1%	100.0%
Newland	Number	370	171	199	89	459
	Percent	80.6%	37.3%	43.4%	19.4%	100.0%
Sugar Mountain	Number	238	194	44	1,412	1,650
	Percent	14.4%	11.8%	2.7%	85.6%	100.0%
Avery County	Number	6,378	5,078	1,307	7,465	13,843
	Percent	46.1%	36.7%	9.4%	53.9%	100.0%
Watauga County						
Beech Mountain*	Number	365	324	41	1,938	2,303
	Percent	15.8%	14.1%	1.8%	84.2%	100.0%
Blowing Rock	Number	583	381	202	1,376	1,959
	Percent	29.8%	19.4%	10.3%	70.2%	100.0%
Boone	Number	5,304	1,243	4,061	905	6,209
	Percent	85.4%	20.0%	65.4%	14.6%	100.0%
Watauga County	Number	20,805	12,970	7,835	11,797	32,602
	Percent	63.8%	39.8%	24.0%	36.2%	100.0%
Region / North Carolina						
High Country Region	Number	43,678	31,081	12,604	27,494	71,172
	Percent	61.4%	43.7%	17.7%	38.6%	100.0%
North Carolina	Number	4,034,684	2,660,519	1,374,165	639,249	4,673,933
	Percent	86.3%	56.9%	29.4%	13.7%	100.0%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey; Bowen National Research

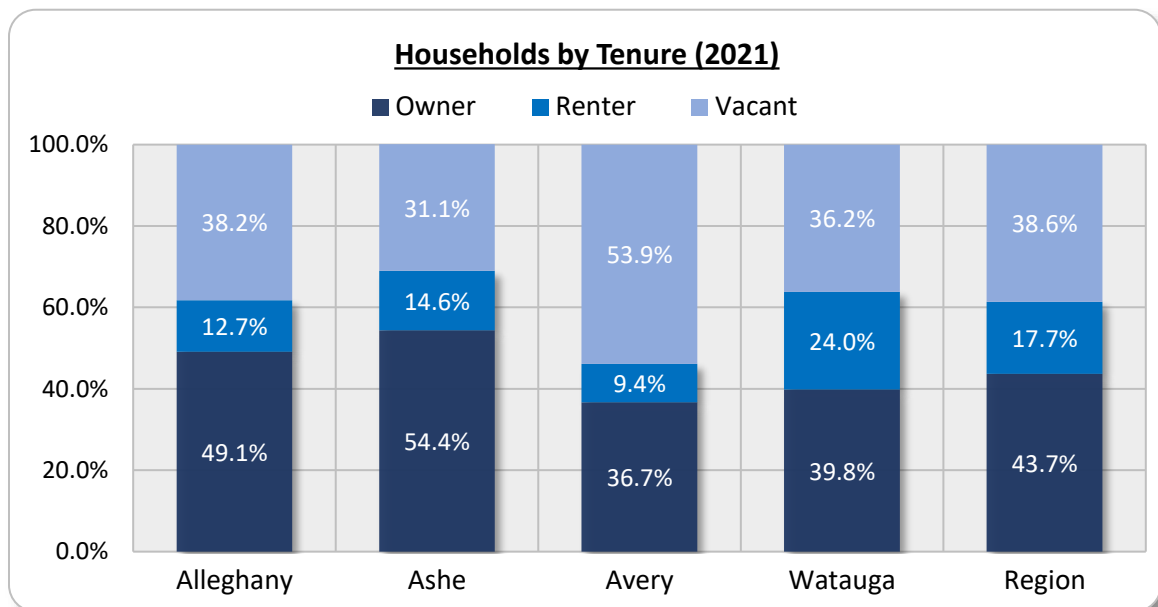
*A portion of Beech Mountain extends into Avery County

Noteworthy observations from the preceding table include:

- In 2021, less than half (43.7%) of housing units in the High Country Region were owner occupied, while 38.6% of housing units were classified as vacant. Note that vacant housing units include vacation homes and short-term rentals. Less than 20% of housing units in the Region were renter occupied. The share of owner-occupied housing in the Region was lower than the state of North Carolina (56.9%).

- Avery County had the largest share (53.9%) of vacant units among counties in the High Country Region. The village of Sugar Mountain, located in Avery County, had over 85.0% of its units classified as vacant, while the town of Banner Elk had 56.1% of its units classified as vacant. The remaining three counties in the Region had at least 60.0% of their housing units occupied. Note that units classified as vacant include seasonal residences and short-term rentals. Both Sugar Mountain and Banner Elk are adjacent to or near ski areas that attract significant tourist traffic and are also popular locations for second-home ownership.
- Ashe County had the highest share (54.4%) of owner-occupied housing units and Watauga County had the highest share (24.0%) of renter-occupied housing units in the Region. Note that the higher share of renter-occupied housing units in Watauga County was likely primarily due to the student population at Appalachian State University in Boone.

The following graph illustrates household tenure within the PSA (High Country Region) and each individual county within the Region.



Based on 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS) data, the following table illustrates the distribution of all occupied housing by units in structure by tenure (renter or owner) for the PSA, submarkets, and the state.

		Renter-Occupied Housing by Units in Structure				Owner-Occupied Housing by Units in Structure			
		4 or Fewer	5 or More	Mobile Home/ Other**	Total	4 or Fewer	5 or More	Mobile Home/ Other**	Total
Allegheny County									
Sparta	Number	172	127	4	303	517	0	13	530
	Percent	56.8%	41.9%	1.3%	100.0%	97.5%	0.0%	2.5%	100.0%
Allegheny County	Number	512	127	343	982	3,253	0	537	3,790
	Percent	52.1%	12.9%	34.9%	100.0%	85.8%	0.0%	14.2%	100.0%
Ashe County									
Lansing	Number	37	0	9	46	56	0	5	61
	Percent	80.4%	0.0%	19.6%	100.0%	91.8%	0.0%	8.2%	100.0%
Jefferson	Number	181	232	0	413	328	0	11	339
	Percent	43.8%	56.2%	0.0%	100.0%	96.8%	0.0%	3.2%	100.0%
West Jefferson	Number	138	143	18	299	246	0	5	251
	Percent	46.2%	47.8%	6.0%	100.0%	98.0%	0.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Ashe County	Number	1,667	499	314	2,480	7,403	11	1,829	9,243
	Percent	67.2%	20.1%	12.7%	100.0%	80.1%	0.1%	19.8%	100.0%
Avery County									
Banner Elk	Number	71	21	18	110	218	0	0	218
	Percent	64.5%	19.1%	16.4%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Newland	Number	108	53	38	199	142	0	29	171
	Percent	54.3%	26.6%	19.1%	100.0%	83.0%	0.0%	17.0%	100.0%
Sugar Mountain	Number	25	19	0	44	144	50	0	194
	Percent	56.8%	43.2%	0.0%	100.0%	74.2%	25.8%	0.0%	100.0%
Avery County	Number	847	223	237	1,307	4,149	69	853	5,071
	Percent	64.8%	17.1%	18.1%	100.0%	81.8%	1.4%	16.8%	100.0%
Watauga County									
Beech Mountain*	Number	31	10	0	41	305	17	2	324
	Percent	75.6%	24.4%	0.0%	100.0%	94.1%	5.2%	0.6%	100.0%
Blowing Rock	Number	121	81	0	202	368	4	9	381
	Percent	59.9%	40.1%	0.0%	100.0%	96.6%	1.0%	2.4%	100.0%
Boone	Number	1,213	2,741	107	4,061	1,146	66	31	1,243
	Percent	29.9%	67.5%	2.6%	100.0%	92.2%	5.3%	2.5%	100.0%
Watauga County	Number	3,898	3,311	626	7,835	11,487	131	1,352	12,970
	Percent	49.8%	42.3%	8.0%	100.0%	88.6%	1.0%	10.4%	100.0%
Region / North Carolina									
High Country Region	Number	6,924	4,160	1,520	12,604	26,292	211	4,571	31,074
	Percent	54.9%	33.0%	12.1%	100.0%	84.6%	0.7%	14.7%	100.0%
North Carolina	Number	709,821	500,086	164,258	1,374,165	2,339,349	30,264	290,906	2,660,519
	Percent	51.7%	36.4%	12.0%	100.0%	87.9%	1.1%	10.9%	100.0%

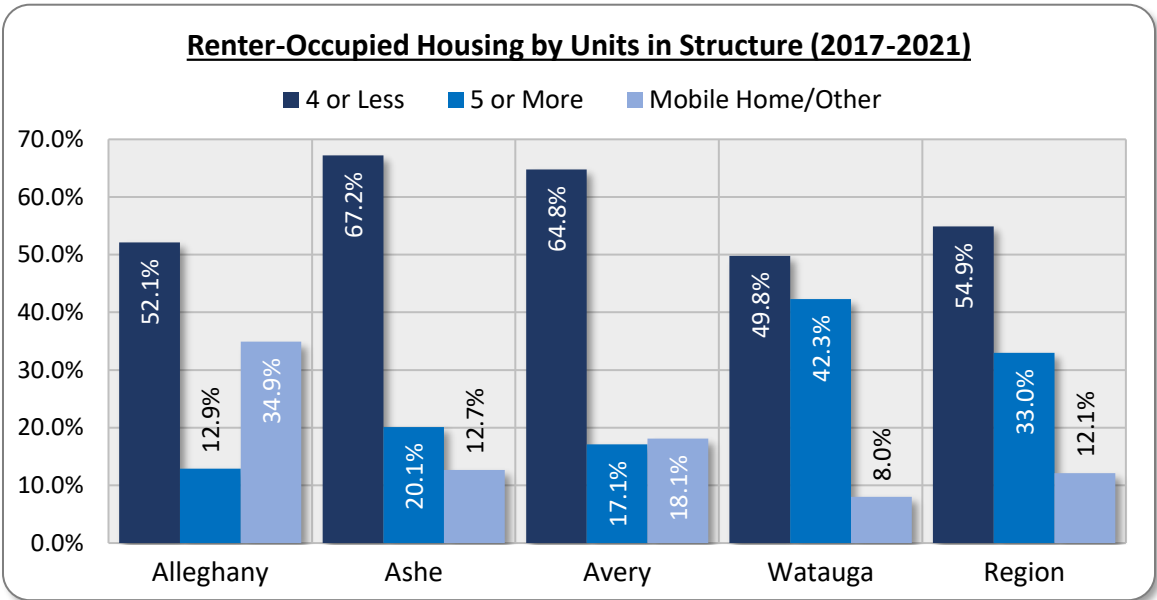
Source: American Community Survey 2017-2021; Bowen National Research

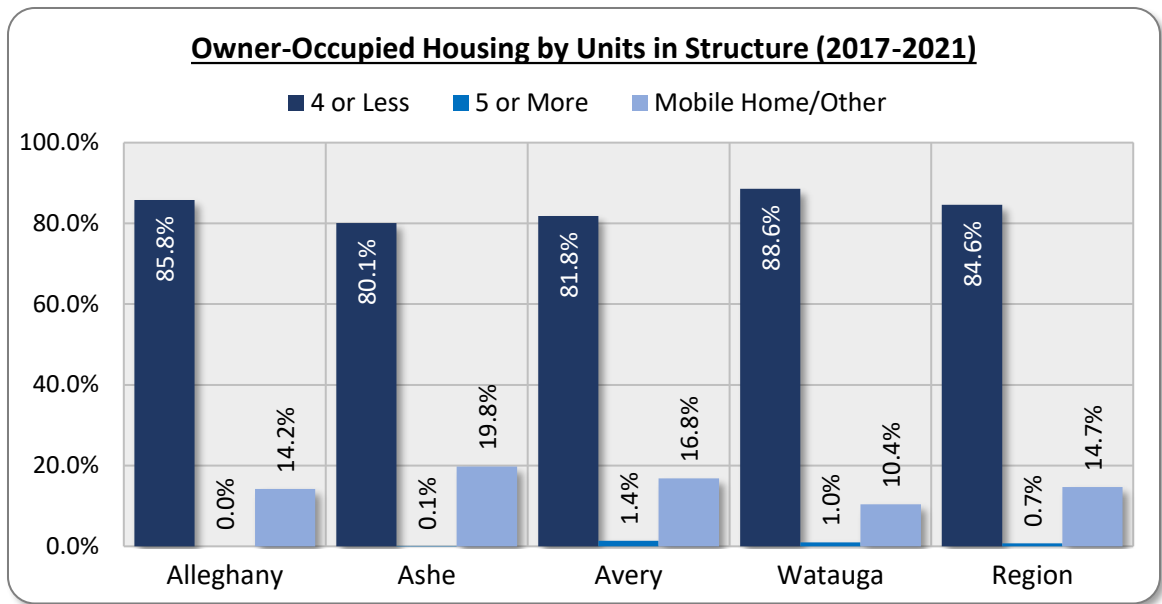
*A portion of Beech Mountain extends into Avery County

**Other structures include boats, RVs, and vans.

Noteworthy observations from the preceding table include:

- Nearly 55.0% of *renter-occupied* units in the High Country Region were within structures of four or fewer units, a slightly higher share than the state of North Carolina (51.7%). Among individual counties in the Region, Ashe County and Avery County each had over 60.0% of rental units contained in structures that consist of four or fewer units. Watauga County had the largest share (42.3%) of rental units contained in structures consisting of five or more units. Note that over two-thirds of rental units in the town of Boone were also within structures containing five or more units. The rental housing configurations in Boone and Watauga County are influenced by the presence of a university. The town of Lansing and the village of Beech Mountain each had at least 75.0% of rental units within smaller structures (four units or fewer).
- Nearly 85.0% of *owner-occupied* units in the High Country Region were within structures of four or fewer units, a slightly lower share than the state of North Carolina (87.9%). The Region also had a higher share (14.7%) of owner-occupied mobile homes and other structures compared to North Carolina (10.9%). Each of the four counties in the Region had at least 80.0% of owner-occupied units within structures containing four or fewer units and at least 10.0% of owner-occupied units within mobile homes or other structures. Among towns and villages in the High Country Region, only the village of Sugar Mountain had a notable share (25.7%) of owner-occupied units within structures of five or more units. Several towns and villages in the Region did not have *any* owner-occupied structures consisting of five or more units. Based on this data, it does not appear multifamily homeownership, such as condominium housing, is common in the region.



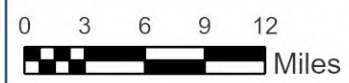
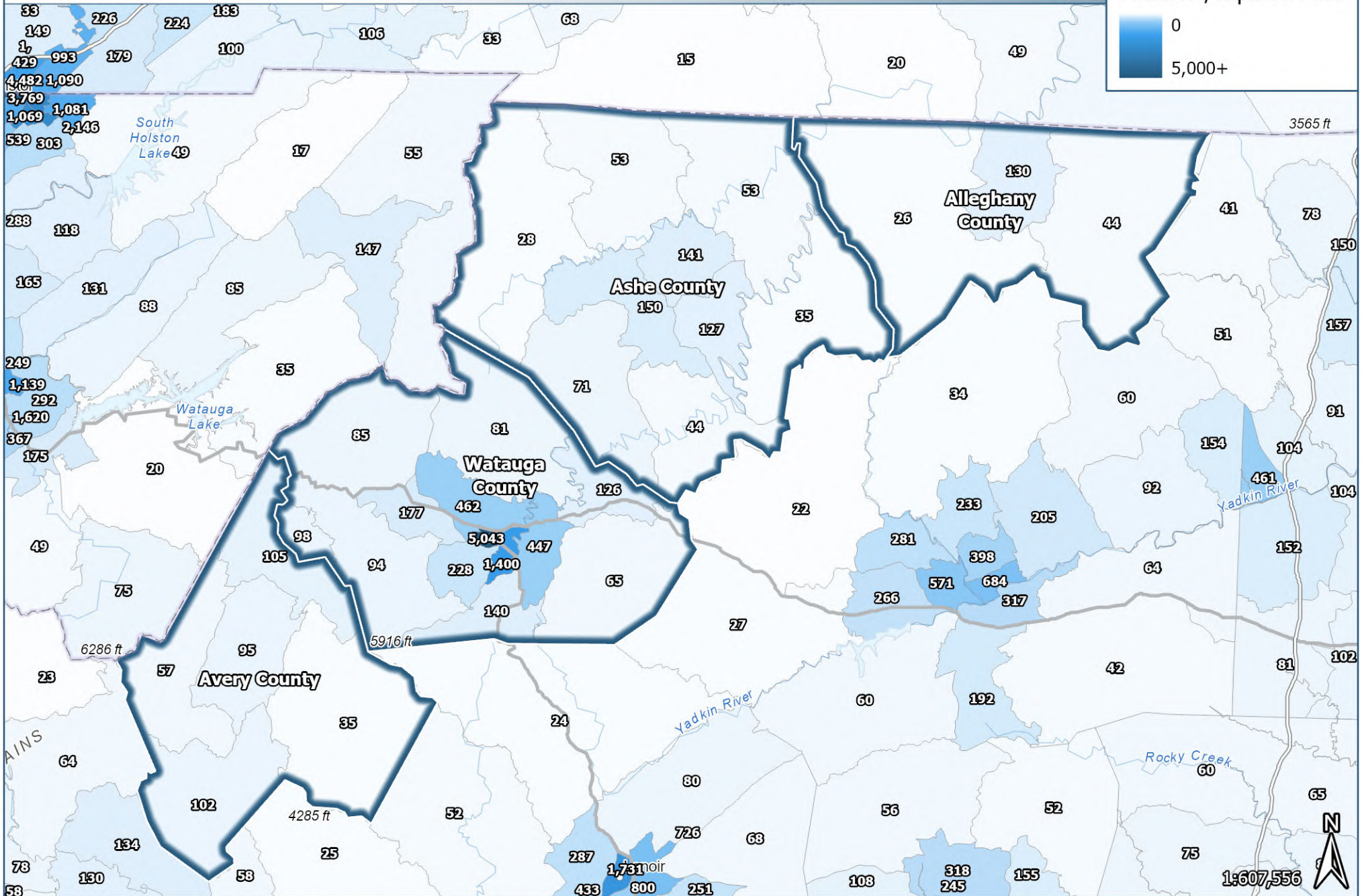
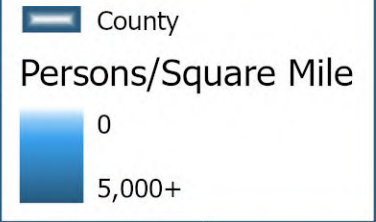


D. DEMOGRAPHIC THEME MAPS

The following demographic theme maps for the study areas are presented after this page:

- Population Density
- Housing Units in Structure

The demographic data used in these maps is based on U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS) and ESRI data sets.



Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS
Additional Source(s): Bowen National Research

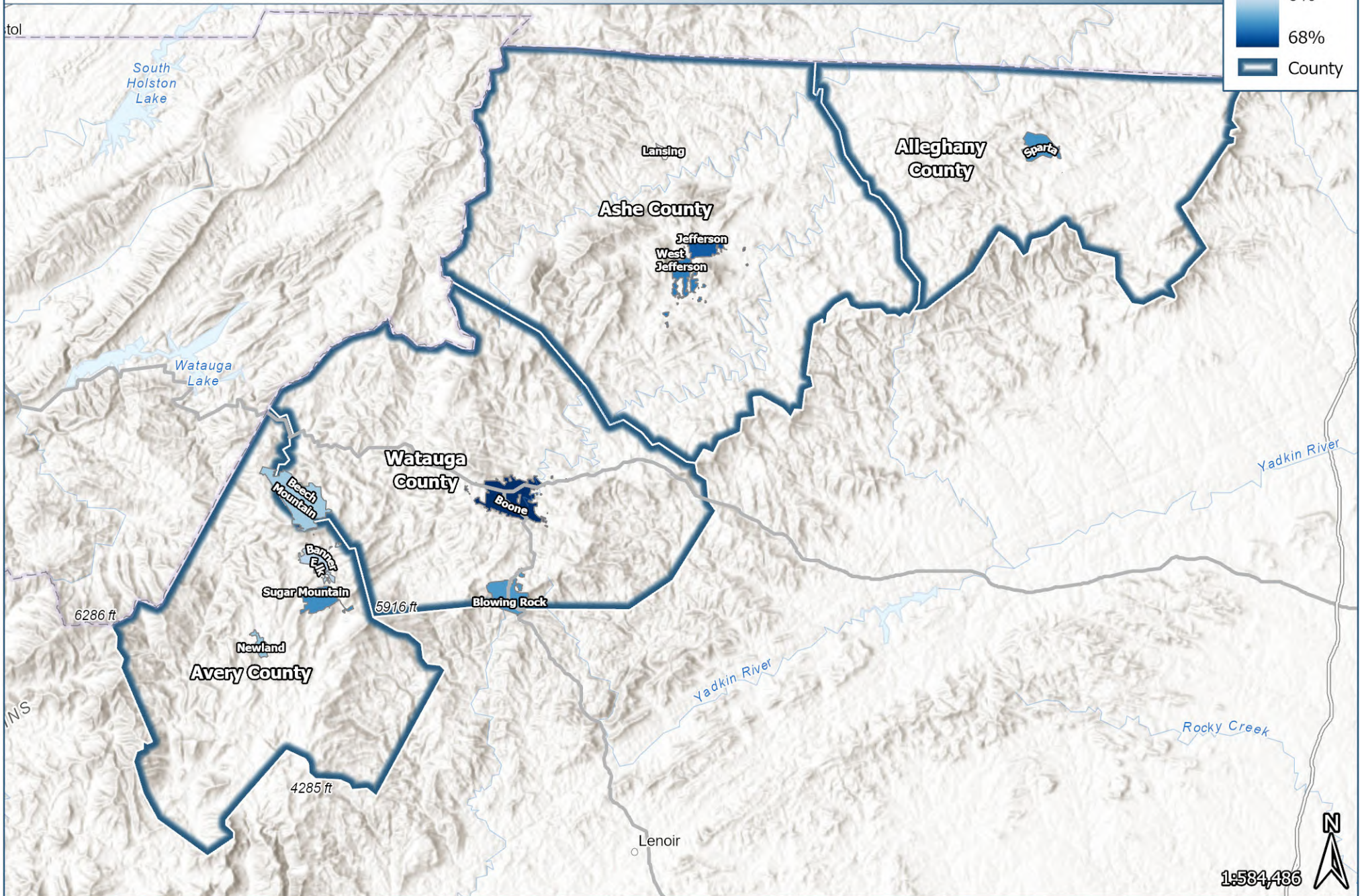


5+ Units

0%

68%

County



1:584,436

0 2.5 5 7.5 10
Miles

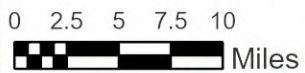
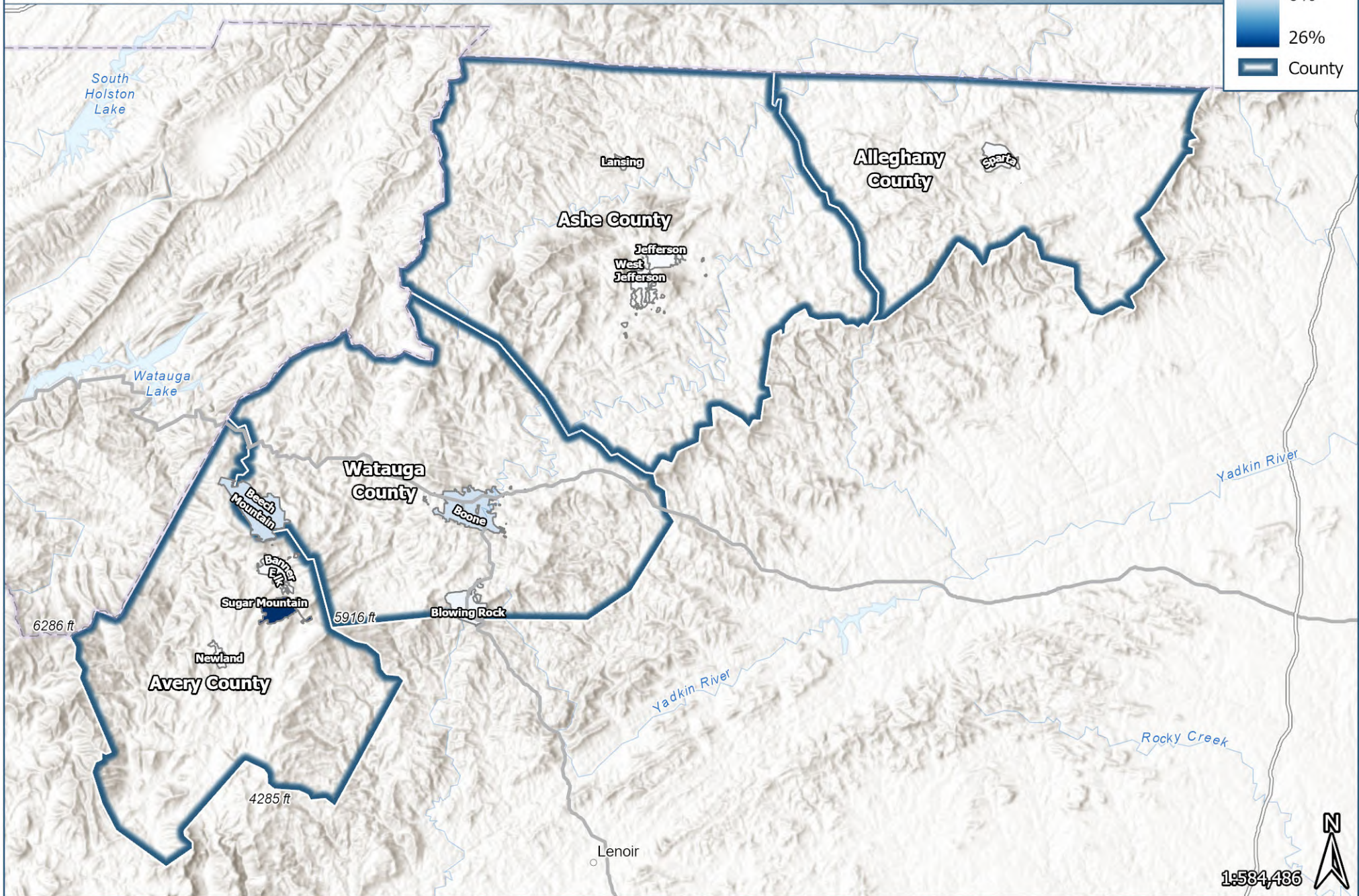
Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS
Additional Source(s): Bowen National Research

5+ Units

0%

26%

County



V. HOUSING POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Housing policies and regulations within town, village and county jurisdictions greatly influence residential development, housing choices, and market strength. As part of this report, a review of government policies and land use controls was conducted that may help to determine if there are any notable barriers to residential development within the High Country Region. A summary of regulatory factors influencing housing development decisions in the Region is provided in this section. It is important to note that this section is intended to inform readers of this report and does not include any recommendations on possible changes to housing policies or regulations in the market.

The following topics will be covered within this section:

Residential Zoning

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Housing Reference Manual, *zoning is essentially a means of ensuring that a community's land uses are compatible with the health, safety, and general welfare of the community.* In the High Country Region, there are several municipalities that have a residential zoning code:

Alleghany County
Town of Sparta
Ashe County
Town of Jefferson Town of West Jefferson
Avery County
Town of Banner Elk Town of Seven Devils Village of Sugar Mountain
Watauga County
Town of Beech Mountain (part) Town of Boone Town of Blowing Rock Foscoe-Grandfather Community

An examination of residential zoning districts for each of these locations will be included as part of this report.

Residential Permitting Process and Fees

Town and county jurisdictions in the High Country Region have their own residential permitting process for the construction and renovation of properties. Some municipalities in the Region set their own permit fee schedule for projects, while others defer to the county for permit inspections and associated fees. A discussion of the residential permitting process and associated fees for municipalities and counties in the High Country Region is included in this section.

Residential Building and Maintenance Codes

North Carolina establishes code enforcement of buildings and structures via the North Carolina State Building Code. According to North Carolina General Statutes 143-139(b), which covers general building regulations, enforcement of the state building code pertains to *plumbing, electrical systems, general building restrictions and regulations, heating and air conditioning, fire protection, and the construction of buildings*. The most recent edition of the North Carolina State Building Code, published in 2018, is based on the 2015 International Residential Code. The state building code also follows the standards of several additional codes for residential properties. These codes include, but are not limited to, the International Building Code, the National Building Code, National Electric Code, and the National Fuel Gas Code. All town, village, and county jurisdictions in the High Country Region adhere to the North Carolina State Building Code.

Review of Previously Completed Studies

Per Chapter 160D-501 of the North Carolina General Statutes, local jurisdictions must maintain a comprehensive plan or land use plan in order to adopt or enforce zoning regulations (Source: [Coates' Canons NC Local Government Law](#)). As part of this report, we will review previously completed comprehensive plans or land use plans for each jurisdiction within the four-county High Country Region. This review will be limited to reports that have been completed within the last 10 years.

Note that information obtained for towns, villages, and counties within this section was primarily obtained through online information sources, most notably municipal and county government websites. These jurisdictions vary in the amount of published information each has on respective websites. In addition, some jurisdictions follow building and zoning regulations at the local level, while others follow building regulations at the county and/or state level. Therefore, the amount and type of information obtained varies by jurisdiction.

A. ALLEGHANY COUNTY

The town of Sparta is the only incorporated municipality in Alleghany County. A summary of zoning districts, residential building codes, and associated policies for Sparta are listed as follows:

Zoning Districts – Town of Sparta

Town of Sparta – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
RA Residential Agricultural District	Principal land use for low-density residential or agricultural purposes. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, modular dwellings, and mobile homes. Agricultural businesses are also permitted.
R-20 Single-Family Residential District	Principal land use for medium density single-family residences. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings and modular units. Home occupations permitted as an accessory use. Planned developments permitted as a conditional use.
R-12 Residential District	Principal land use for medium density single-family and two-family residences. Permitted uses include single-family attached and detached dwellings, two-family dwellings, and modular units. Home occupations permitted as an accessory use. Planned developments permitted as a conditional use.
R-8 Residential District	Principal land use for medium density single-family residences, two-family residences and mobile homes on single lots. Permitted uses also include single-family attached dwellings and modular homes.
R-MF High Density Residential District	Permitted uses include single-family, two-family, and multifamily dwellings. This zoning district targets areas that need new housing stimulation.
OI Office and Institutional District	Primary land use for hospitals, public health offices, clinics and associated medical offices. Multiple-family dwellings meeting development standards are permitted within this zoning district.
CB Central Business District	Established as the centrally located trade and commercial service area of the community. Allows for concentrated development of permitted commercial uses. This zoning district also permits mixed-use development as a conditional use, provided that not more than one-half of usable floor area is dedicated to residential uses.
LI Light Industrial	Established to provide for industries which have little or no adverse effect upon adjoining properties. A variety of commercial and light industrial land uses are permitted. This zoning district also allows seasonal dwellings for housing migrant farm workers and employees as a conditional use.

Source: Town of Sparta Ordinances (Chapter 156 – Zoning)

The Town of Sparta has several zoning districts that permit residential development. According to the preceding table, the R-MF, OI and CB zoning districts represent the most likely development opportunities for high-density residential structures such as apartment buildings. The RA and R-20 zoning districts allow for lower-density residential development (primarily single-family homes) that do not require connections to municipal water and sewer, while the R-12 and R-8 zoning designations generally allow for medium-density development that includes two-family dwellings and attached single-family units. Note that the Central Business District (CB) also permits mixed-use development as a conditional use.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

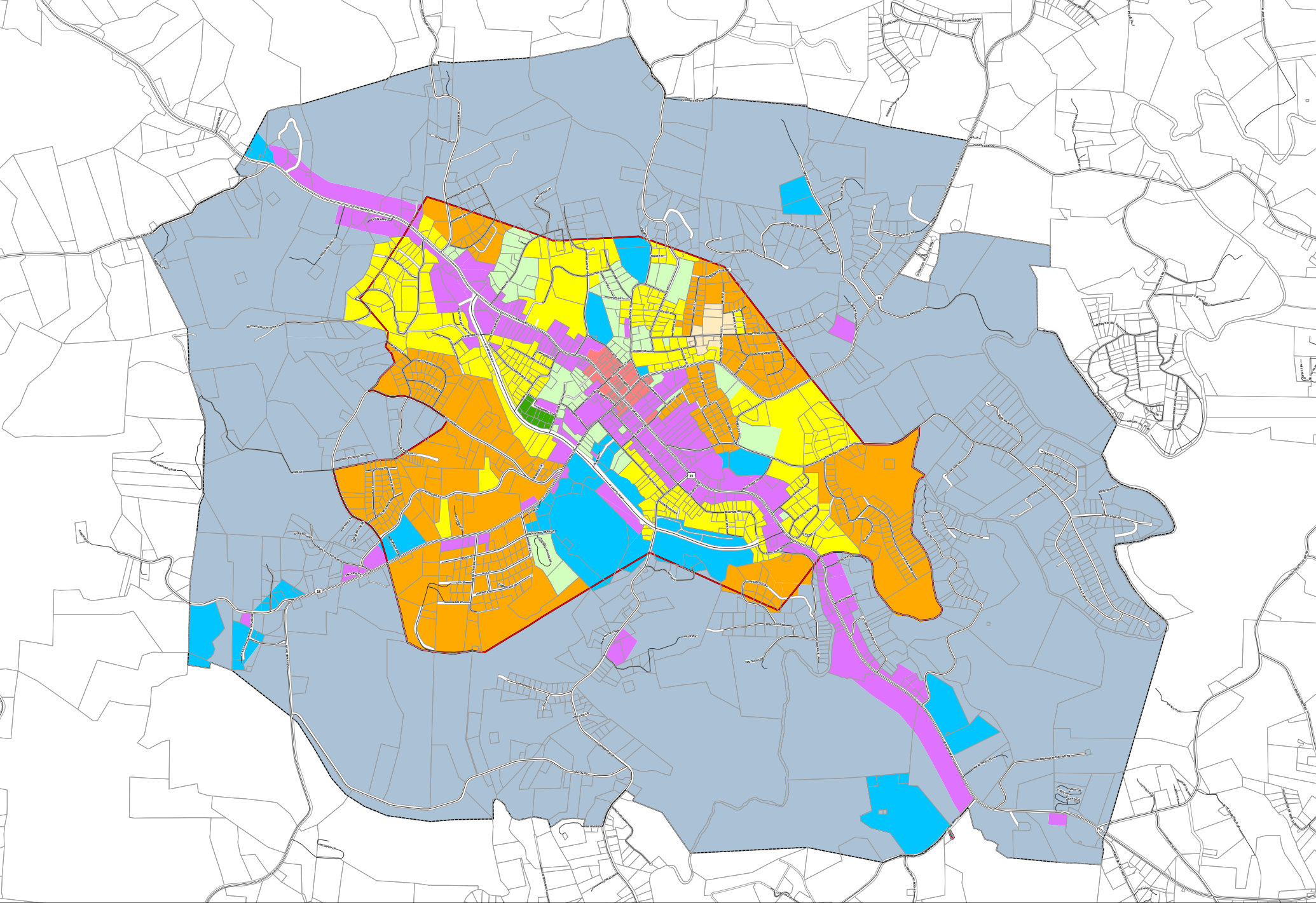
Town of Sparta – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
RA Residential Agricultural District	15,000 – 30,000*	50 ft.	15 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft.
R-20 Single-Family Residential District	20,000 – 30,000*	50 ft.	15 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft.
R-12 Residential District	12,000	50 ft.	12 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
R-8 Residential District	8,000	50 ft.	12 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
R-MF High Density Residential District	8,000	50 ft.	12 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
OI Office and Institutional District	8,000	50 ft.	10 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
CB Central Business District	None	None	None	20 ft.	35 ft.
LI Light Industrial	None	50 ft.	50 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.

Source: Town of Sparta Ordinances (Chapter 156 – Zoning)










*Minimum lot area of 30,000 sq. ft. for dwellings without public water and sewer





Minimum lot areas and setbacks in Sparta were established based on overall density and the availability of water and sewer connections. The minimum lot areas established in the RA and R-20 districts, which generally permit low-density residential development, have a higher minimum lot area for properties that do not have access to municipal water and sewer service. Setbacks within the R-12, R-8, and R-MF residential zoning districts are generally similar; however, these medium- and high-density districts permit lower side yard and rear yard setbacks. Note that the Central Business District (CB) does not require a minimum lot area or front and side yard setbacks. The CB zoning district, which also permits mixed-use development as a conditional use, appears to allow for a greater mix of property types due to the lack of a minimum lot area or front and side yard setbacks. In general, properties located in commercial zoning districts (OI and CB) appear to be more flexible regarding the type of structures that can be built. Note that maximum building heights are 35 feet for all zoning districts in the town. A higher maximum building height in commercial districts that allows residential and/or mixed-use development may permit a greater mix of properties to be developed in these areas.

A zoning map of Sparta is included on the following page.



Zoning Classifications

 C-B	 O-1	 R-8
 L-1	 R-12	 RMF
 N-B	 R-20	 R-A

-  Streets
-  Parcel Boundary
-  Municipal Boundary
-  ETJ Boundary

ZONING MAP
TOWN OF SPARTA, N.C.

ALLEGANY COUNTY



This map was produced for digital reference and printing uses only. It is not for survey or legal use. The Town of Sparta reserves its responsibility for the accuracy of the Allegheny County parcel boundary information. If changes are made in zoning district boundaries or other matters pertinent to the Zoning Map, such changes shall be made on the Zoning Map after the amendment has been adopted. Zoning Map was produced by High Country Council of Governments in April 2022 for the Town of Sparta.



Property Rights Protection Ordinance – Alleghany County

Alleghany County does not have a zoning ordinance for properties located in unincorporated areas. However, Alleghany County established a [Property Rights Protection Ordinance](#) in 2006. While this ordinance does not include zoning districts or restrictions, it does establish development standards and requirements for buildings and structures. Under this ordinance, the majority of land uses are allowed as conditional uses, which require review and approval by the county’s Planning Commission. Exempt land uses include single-family dwellings on an individual lot, agricultural uses, and existing uses as of the date of the ordinance. Certain land uses are also described as a use-by-right, including expansion of existing facilities that a) do not exceed 60% of existing floor area and b) identify a new use by the same NAICS two-digit code as the previous use, unless the new use requires a building permit or additional land area. This ordinance was also created to be used in conjunction with the Alleghany County Land Development Plan (ACLDP). A community compatibility assessment is also conducted using NAICS codes to determine whether a proposed land use will impact existing properties within 2,000 feet of a new or expanding building. The Alleghany County Planning Board has the authority to grant conditional use permits as part of this ordinance.

Development standards created as part of the Property Rights Protection Ordinances are listed in the following table:

Alleghany County – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Land Use Type					
Land Use Type	Maximum Lot Coverage	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
Duplex	40%	40 feet	15 feet	25 feet	40 ft.
Multifamily	40%	40 feet	15 feet	25 feet	40 ft.
Commercial/Industrial/Institutional	75%	TBD	TBD	TBD	80 ft.

Source: Property Rights Protection Ordinance (Alleghany County)

Note – Corner lots require a 25 feet setback for duplex and multifamily land uses

TBD – Setbacks for commercial/industrial/institutional land uses determined by Planning Board

Residential Permitting Process and Fees

The Town of Sparta Zoning Department issues zoning certificates for residential, commercial, and industrial projects within the town limits. In Sparta, the town manager is authorized as the zoning enforcement officer per chapter 156.120 of the Town Ordinances. Chapter 156 of the Town Ordinances also states that a zoning permit is required in order for a building or structure to be *erected, moved, added to or structurally altered*. A certificate of occupancy is also required before the building can be occupied.

The Alleghany County Inspections Department assesses permit fees for construction projects in Sparta and the remaining unincorporated areas of the county. A building application for construction projects is available on the [Alleghany County website](#) and must be submitted prior to the issuance of a building permit. Residential permit fees for one-family and two-family dwellings are

assessed based on square footage. The fee for *unheated* square footage within residential projects is \$100 for the first 1,000 square feet and \$8 for each additional 100 square feet. The fee for *heated* square footage is \$385 for the first 1,000 square feet and \$10 for each additional 100 square feet. Commercial permit fees are assessed based on total construction cost of the project, which is \$8 per \$1,000 of construction cost (minimum fee of \$265). Additional permit fees are charged for electrical, plumbing, and mechanical work.

Review of Previously Completed Residential Studies

Alleghany County and the Town of Sparta completed a Strategic Economic Development Plan in 2014. The primary focus of this plan was job creation and retention. However, while housing issues were not the focus, the infrastructure section of this plan recommends that the county land development plan be updated as part of a long-term strategy. This plan notes that a lack of natural gas service and direct interstate access limits the county's ability to attract larger industries. Extension of natural gas service would have to be conducted through the North Carolina Utilities Commission. Note that the Town of Sparta held a public hearing on its proposed comprehensive land use plan in July 2022. A final copy of this plan has not been made available as of November 2022.

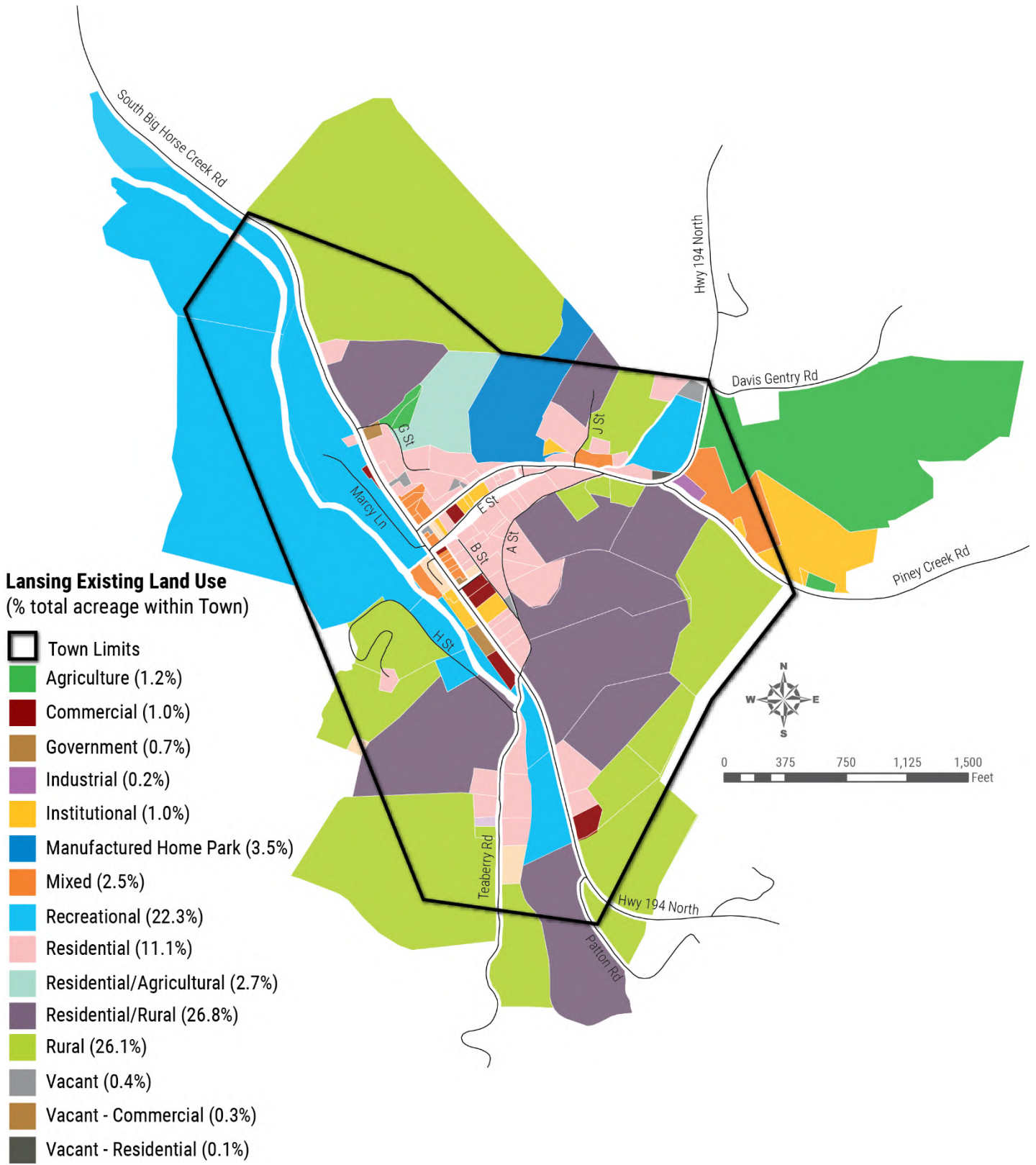
B. ASHE COUNTY

The towns of Lansing, Jefferson, and West Jefferson are the three incorporated municipalities in Ashe County. A summary of zoning districts, residential building codes, and associated policies for each of the three municipalities are listed as follows:

Town of Lansing

According to the most recent Land Use Plan, the Town of Lansing does not have zoning or subdivision regulations. Unincorporated land in Ashe County is subject to subdivision regulations. The Land Use Plan includes a stakeholder survey with questions pertaining to land development within the town. Several questions specifically mention zoning issues (e.g., should the town observe setback requirements for new construction). Ashe County also issues building permits for structures built in the town. Town officials may want to consider allowing zoning districts or similar land use regulations in order to better plan for and guide future development.

A land use map of Lansing is included on the following page.



Zoning Districts – Town of Jefferson

Town of Jefferson – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
RA-15 Residential Agriculture Low Density	Permitted uses include single-family dwellings and modular homes. Apartments and duplexes permitted as a conditional use.
RA-10 Residential Agriculture Intermediate Density	Principal use of land for single-family and two-family residences. Modular homes also permitted. Cluster developments permitted as a conditional use.
RA-8 Residential Agriculture Medium Density	Principal use of land for single-family, two-family, and multifamily residences. Manufactured homes and modular homes are also permitted. Multifamily dwellings permitted as a conditional use.
D-B Downtown Business	Established as a centrally located retail trade and consumer service uses district. Mixed-use development permitted.
HB Highway Business	Principal use of land is for the retailing of durable goods, commercial services to industrial areas, and tourist services businesses. Multifamily dwellings permitted as a conditional use.
M-1 Industrial	Principal use of land is for industrial and warehousing uses. This zoning district also allows land uses permitted in residential, downtown business, or highway commercial districts.

Source: Town of Jefferson Zoning Ordinance

Jefferson allows for residential development within residential, commercial, and industrial zoning districts. Higher-density residential development such as multifamily and mixed-use buildings are permitted in the RA-8, D-B, and HB zoning districts.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Town of Jefferson – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
RA-15 Residential Agriculture Low Density	15,000	30 ft.	10 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft.
RA-10 Residential Agriculture Intermediate Density	10,000	25 ft.	10 ft.	20 ft.	35 ft.
RA-8 Residential Agriculture Medium Density	8,000	25 ft.	10 ft.	20 ft.	35 ft.
D-B Downtown Business	None	6 ft.	None*	None*	50 ft.
HB Highway Business	None	30 ft.	None**	None**	50 ft.
M-1 Industrial	None	50 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	50 ft.

Source: Town of Jefferson Zoning Ordinance

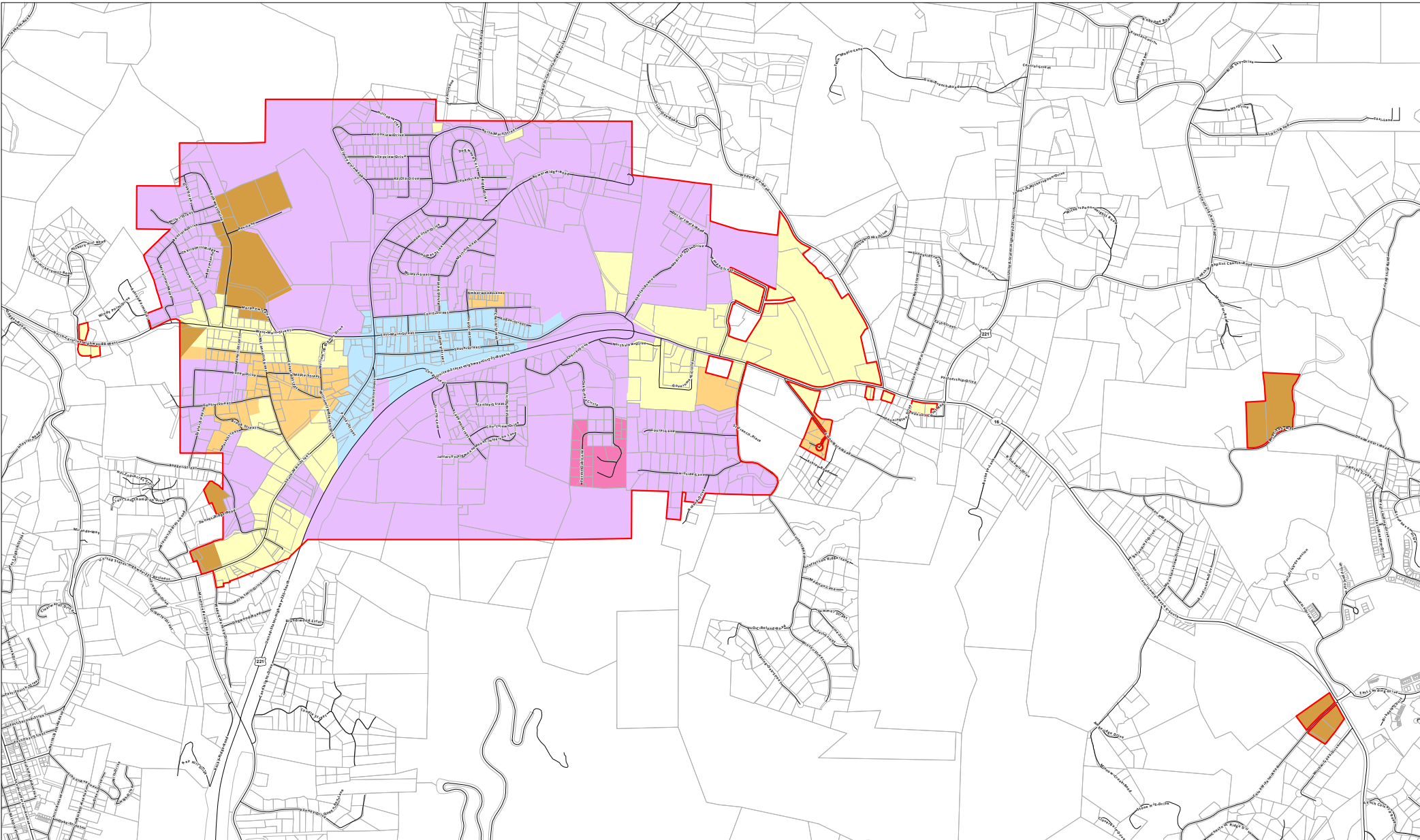
Note: Maximum building heights can be exceeded using a ratio of one foot of additional front setback for every two feet of additional building height

*Side yard and/or rear yard setbacks of 15 feet required for lots that are adjacent to a residential district

**Side yard and/or rear yard setbacks of 20 feet required for lots that are adjacent to a residential district

Setbacks for zoning districts within the town of Jefferson are in place for residential districts, with the RA-15 zoning district requiring the largest minimum lot size and greater setbacks compared to the RA-10 and RA-8 zoning districts. Note that the D-B and HB zoning districts do not require side and rear yard setbacks unless the property is located adjacent to a residential zoning district. Maximum building heights in the D-B, HB, and M-1 zoning districts are also higher (50 feet) compared to the residential zoning districts (35 feet).

A zoning map of Jefferson is included on the following page.

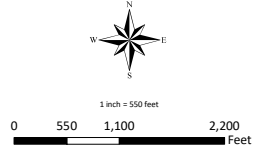


- Zoning**
- D-B: Downtown Business District
 - H-B: Highway Business District
 - M-1: Industrial District
 - R-A15: Low Density Residential District
 - R-A10: Medium Density Residential District
 - R-A8: High Density Residential District
- Town Limits
 - Parcels
 - Roads

Town of Jefferson

Zoning Map

September 2021



This map was produced by High Country Council of Governments 9/16/2021 for the Town of Jefferson. It was created to display zoning districts, within town limits. The Town of Jefferson assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the parcel boundary information.

If changes are made in zoning district boundaries or other matters portrayed on the Zoning Map, such changes shall be made on the Zoning Map after the amendment has been adopted.

Zoning Districts – Town of West Jefferson

Town of West Jefferson – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
R-A Residential Agricultural District	Designed to maintain agricultural nature of land. Agriculture uses exempt from ordinances that apply to this zoning district. Single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and manufactured (mobile) homes are permitted.
R-15 Low-Density Residential District	Intended to be a low-density residential neighborhood with access to municipal water facilities. Single-family dwellings are permitted within this zoning district. Apartments and duplexes are permitted by obtaining a special use permit.
R-7 Medium-Density Residential District	Principal use of land is for single-family, two-family, and multifamily residences with access to municipal water and sewer facilities. Twin homes are also permitted.
M-H Manufactured (Mobile) Home District	Principal use of land for manufactured (mobile) homes. Mobile home parks are also permitted in this zoning district.
C-S Community Shopping District	Established as a district for centrally located retail trade and consumer service uses. Mixed-use development is permitted within this zoning district. Single-family dwellings, short-term rentals and manufactured (mobile) homes are permitted by obtaining a special use permit.
H-C Highway Commercial	Principal use of land for retailing of durable goods, commercial services targeting industrial areas, and commercial services targeting tourists. Mixed-use development is permitted within this zoning district. Single-family dwellings and manufactured (mobile) homes permitted by obtaining a special use permit.
N-S Neighborhood Service District	Provides suitable locations for limited, neighborhood oriented, professional, commercial, and service activities near major residential neighborhoods. Single-family residences, duplexes, and multifamily buildings of up to six units are permitted.
M-1 Industrial District	Principal use of land is for industrial and warehousing uses. Mixed-use development is permitted within this zoning district.
C-D Conditional District	A voluntary procedure which allows for the reclassification of property subject to specific conditions which ensure compatibility of use relative to neighboring properties.

Source: Town of West Jefferson Zoning Ordinance (Article V)

The town of West Jefferson has several residential and commercial zoning districts that allow for a wide variety of development types. There are a total of four residential zoning districts in the town, one of which (M-H) is set aside specifically for manufactured homes. Commercial and industrial zoning districts in West Jefferson also allow for mixed-use and/or multifamily residential development. In addition, West Jefferson has a Conditional District (C-D) which allows for the reclassification of property that is compatible with surrounding land uses.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Town of West Jefferson – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
R-A Residential Agricultural District	20,000 – 40,000*	40 ft.	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
R-15 Low-Density Residential District	15,000	30 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
R-7 Medium-Density Residential District	7,000	25 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
M-H Manufactured (Mobile) Home District	7,000	25 ft.	10 ft.	20 ft.	Not listed
C-S Community Shopping District	None	6 ft.	None**	None**	50 ft.
H-C Highway Commercial	None	15 ft.	None***	None***	50 ft.
N-S Neighborhood Service District	None	15 ft.	10 – 15 ft.	15 ft.	Not listed
M-1 Industrial District	None	40 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	Not listed
C-D Conditional District	None listed				

Source: Town of West Jefferson Zoning Ordinance (Article V)

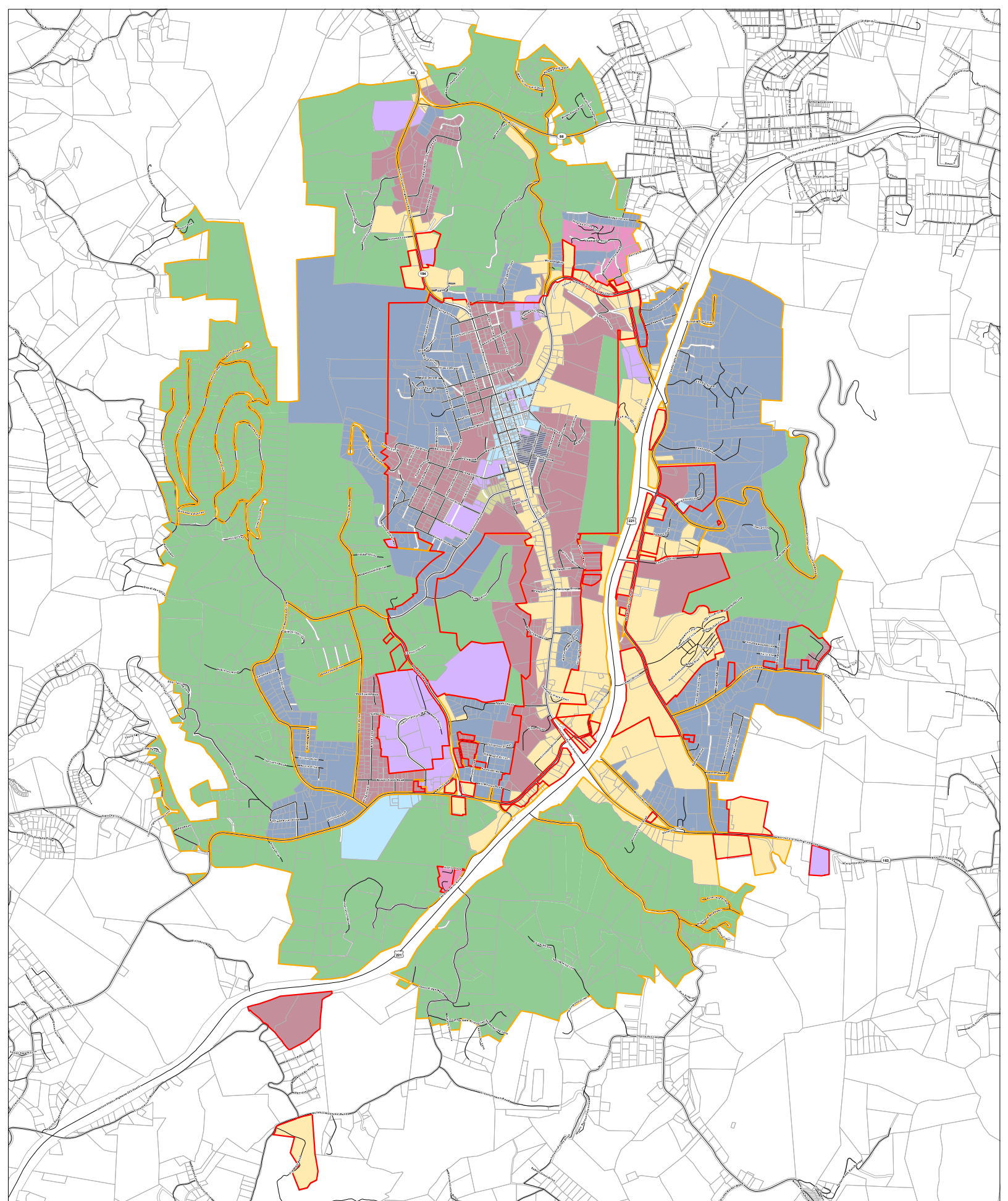
Note: Maximum building heights can be exceeded using a ratio of one foot of additional front setback for every two feet of additional building height

*Higher minimum lot area for R-A District applies to properties on a septic system within a designated watershed

**Side yard setbacks of six feet and rear yard setbacks of 15 feet required for lots that are adjacent to a residential district

While residential zoning districts in the town of West Jefferson adhere to minimum lot areas and setback requirements, commercial and industrial zoning districts do not include minimum lot area requirements. Minimum lot areas for residential zoning districts range from 7,000 square feet for the M-H and R-7 districts to 40,000 square feet for residential properties on a septic system within a designated watershed in the R-A zoning district. The C-S and H-C zoning districts are not subject to side and rear yard setback requirements unless properties are adjacent to a residential district. In addition, the typical maximum building heights are 35 feet for properties in residential zoning districts and 50 feet for properties in commercial zoning districts. However, the listed maximum building heights can be exceeded if these buildings utilize additional front setbacks.

A zoning map of West Jefferson is included on the following page.

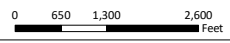


- Zoning Class**
- Community Shopping District, C-S
 - Highway Commercial District, H-C
 - Industrial District, M-1
 - Industrial District-Conditional, M-1 C
 - Low Density Residential District, R-15
 - Medium Density Residential District, R-7
 - Neighborhood Service District, N-S
 - Residential Agricultural District, R-A
 - Mobile Home District, M-H
 - ETJ (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction)
 - Town Limits
 - Roads
 - Parcels

Town of West Jefferson

Zoning Map

Zoning Current as of August 2022



This map was produced by High Country Council of Governments 8/31/2022 for the Town of West Jefferson. It was created to display zoning districts within town limits and the extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The Town of West Jefferson assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the parcel boundary information.

If changes are made to zoning district boundaries or other matters contained on the Zoning Map, such changes shall be made on the Zoning Map after the amendment has been adopted.



Residential Permitting Process and Fees

The [Ashe County Inspection Department](#) issues building permits and assesses permit fees for building construction in the county. Permit application information for construction projects is available on the county website and an application must be submitted prior to the issuance of a building permit. Residential permit fees for one-family and two-family dwellings are assessed based on square footage. The fee for *unheated* square footage within residential projects is \$100 for the first 1,000 square feet and \$6 for each additional 100 square feet. The fee for *heated* square footage is \$360 for the first 1,000 square feet and \$10 for each additional 100 square feet. Commercial permit fees are assessed based on total construction cost of the project, which is \$7 per \$1,000 of construction cost (minimum fee of \$250). Additional permit fees are charged for electrical, plumbing, and mechanical work. The Towns of Jefferson and West Jefferson Zoning Departments each issue zoning certificates for residential, commercial, and industrial projects within the town limits.

Review of Previously Completed Residential Studies

The Town of Lansing published the most recent version of its [Land Use Plan](#) in 2019. Several topics discussed as part of this plan are directly related to housing issues. A stakeholder survey conducted as part of this plan asked what the general appearance was of most homes in Lansing. Half of the respondents noted the general appearance as “good” and half of the respondents noted the appearance as “fair.” In addition, approximately one-third of respondents stated that they would not like to see apartments built in the town. However, most respondents also noted that *“more development of apartments would be good for Lansing and that demand existed for them. Of those that supported apartments, some felt that mixed-use apartments would be more appropriate for Town than stand-alone apartments.”* Mixed-use development also received “broad support” among stakeholders surveyed.

Ashe County published a draft copy of its [Comprehensive Plan](#) in June 2022. This plan includes a discussion of goals, strategies, and recommendations pertaining to future land use in the county. A summary of these goals, strategies, and recommendations is including in the following table.

Future Land Use Goals and Strategies – Ashe County	
Goal	Encourage an adequate and reasonably priced housing stock and plan for residential needs.
Objective	Maintain an understanding of changing conditions and communicate these changes to policy makers.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track areas of development and monitor the location of new home construction and subdivisions. Provide data to elected officials to help guide policy decisions.
Objective	Encourage a variety of housing types to meet the needs of all.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage housing in areas where public utilities are available to achieve higher densities and lower development costs. Track housing costs and communicate changes with policy makers.
Objective	Review and modernize ordinances if necessary to keep up with current development trends and provide consistent enforcement.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review development standards and fees with adjoining jurisdictions to ensure reasonableness of development costs. Allow for flexibility and innovation in any ordinance updates to encourage housing affordability and respond to the demand for residential housing. Review and update, if necessary, the permitting process for new development. Educate the public on what ordinances exist, including any changes, and how they (the public) can communicate with the county to report any concerns.
Objective	Foster relationships with community partners and develop cooperative strategies for addressing housing concerns.
Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instate a local housing task force made up of county officials and community partners to meet regularly to discuss strategies for addressing these concerns

Source: Ashe County Comprehensive Plan (Future Land Use – Goals & Strategies)

C. AVERY COUNTY

Incorporated towns and villages in Avery County with zoning regulations include the Town of Banner Elk, Town of Seven Devils, and the Village of Sugar Mountain. The Town of Newland does not have a zoning ordinance but observes building regulations and a basic set of minimum setback regulations. Linville Land Harbor, a private development that has its own unified development regulations, is also discussed in this section. Note that most of the town of Beech Mountain is located in Watauga County. Therefore, a detailed discussion of housing regulations in this town will be addressed in the Watauga County section of this report. A summary of zoning districts, residential building codes, and associated policies for the remaining municipalities in Avery County are listed as follows:

Zoning Districts - Town of Banner Elk

Town of Banner Elk– Zoning Districts	
Zoning District	Description
R-1 Low Density Residential District	Principal use is for single-family dwellings on large parcels of land. This zoning district also allows flexibility to accommodate conditional residential uses.
R-1-U Single-Family Residential District	Principal use is for single-family dwellings on traditional residential subdivision lots.
R-2 General Residential District	Principal use of land is for residential purposes. Allows for multifamily housing through special use permit.
M-U Mixed Use District	Encourages integration of mixed land uses (residential and commercial) to promote high-density, low-impact development with an emphasis on alternative modes of transportation (walking and biking). Single-family homes, accessory dwellings/apartments, multifamily dwellings containing four or fewer units, and planned residential developments permitted by special use permit.
C-2 General Business District	Provide for concentrations of general and commercial activity along major thoroughfares and at other convenient points in the area. Planned residential developments permitted by special use permit.
M-E Medical Educational District	Provide for specific circumstances and needs of medical and educational institutions within the town. Single-family homes and modular homes permitted by right. Multifamily dwellings containing four or fewer units permitted by special use permit.
RC Resort Commercial District	Provide for a rural, rustic setting for resort commercial activities. Single-family homes, modular homes, and accessory dwellings/apartments permitted by right. Planned residential developments permitted by special use permit.

Source: Town of Banner Elk Codified Ordinances (Chapter 152 – Zoning)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential land uses were excluded from this analysis

The town of Banner Elk has a variety of zoning districts that reflect the importance of its residential, educational, and tourism industries. Residential zoning districts in the town primarily favor single-family development, although the R-2 zoning district does allow for multifamily dwellings by special use permit. The town also has a zoning district (M-U) specifically for mixed-use properties in an effort to promote high-density low-impact development. The establishment of this mixed-use zoning district is important, as commercial zoning districts in the town generally do not permit a wide range of residential development.

The following table illustrates permitted residential uses for each of the zoning districts.

Permitted Residential Uses within Zoning Districts Town of Banner Elk							
Residential Use Type	Zoning Districts						
	R-1	R-1-U	R-2	M-U	C-2	M-E	RC
Accessory dwelling/apartment	P	P	P	S	--	--	P
Cluster subdivisions	P	--	P	--	--	--	--
Manufactured home parks	--	--	S	--	--	--	--
Manufactured homes on individual lots (doublewide)	S	S	S	--	--	--	--
Modular home	P	P	P	S	--	P	P
Multifamily dwellings not exceeding four dwelling units per building			S	S		S	
Planned residential and craft developments	--	--	S	S	S	--	S
Planned residential developments	--	--	S	S	--	--	S
Single-family detached dwellings	P	P	P	S	--	P	P

Source: Town of Banner Elk Codified Ordinances (Chapter 152 – Zoning)

Legend: P – Permitted by right, S – Permitted by Special Use, -- Use Type Prohibited

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Town of Banner Elk – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
R-1 Low Density Residential District	10,000 – 20,000*	20 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
R-1-U Single-Family Residential District	10,000 – 20,000*	20 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
R-2 General Residential District	10,000 – 20,000*	20 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
M-U Mixed Use District	None	30 ft.	15 ft.	20 ft.	35 ft.
C-2 General Business District	10,000	30 ft.	15 ft.	20 ft.	35 ft.
M-E Medical Educational District	40,000	35 ft.	20 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
RC Resort Commercial District	8 acres	20 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.

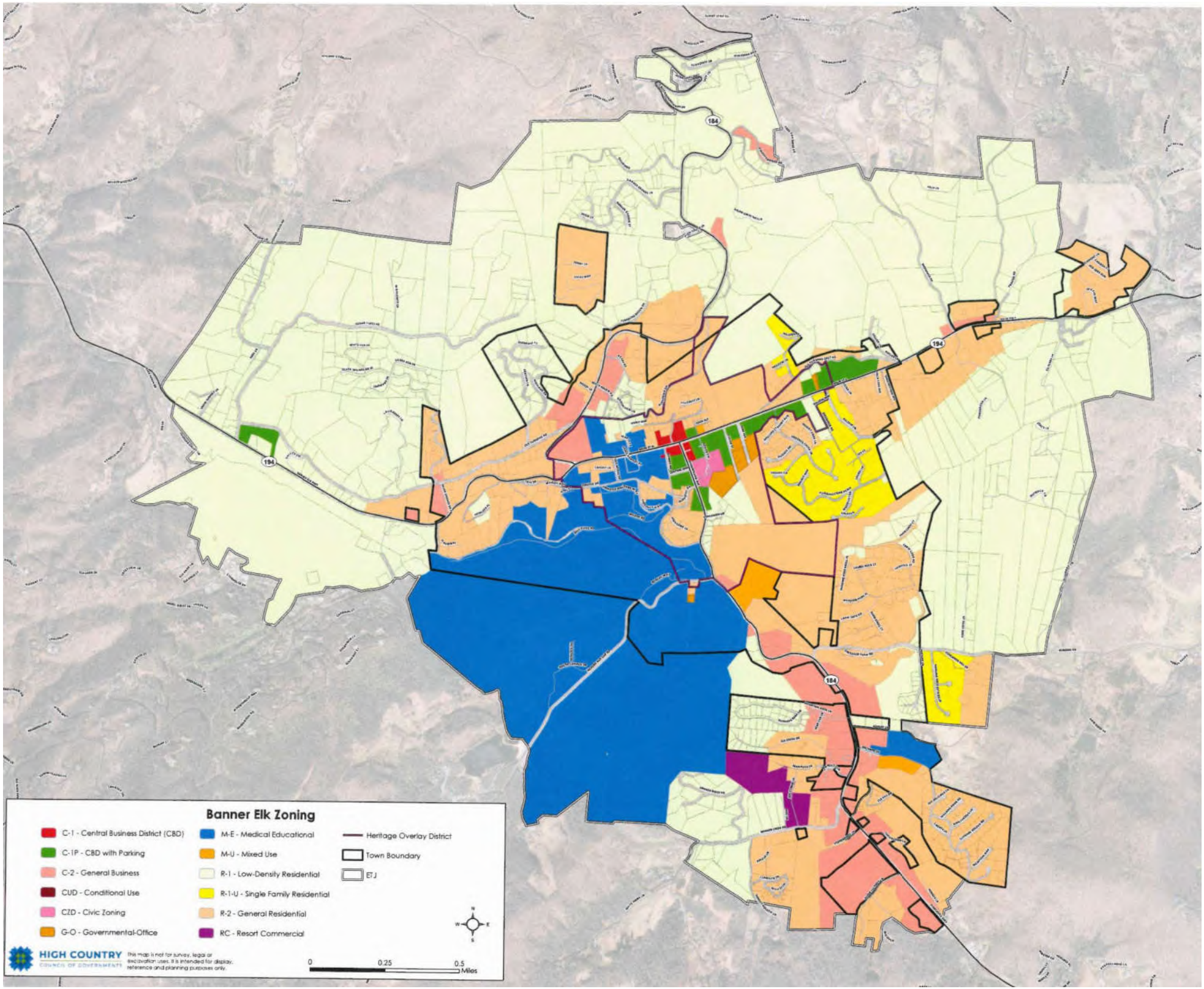
Source: Town of Banner Elk Codified Ordinances (Chapter 152 – Zoning)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

*Minimum lot area based on whether lot is served by public water and/or sewer

Minimum lot areas for residential zoning districts in Banner Elk largely reflect single-family development, as minimum lot sizes range from 10,000 to 20,000 square feet depending on the availability of municipal water and/or sewer service. Note that multifamily residential buildings up to four units are permitted as a special use in the R-2, M-U, and M-E zoning districts. The M-U (Mixed Use) district is the only district allowing residential development that does not require a minimum lot size. Maximum building heights for all listed zoning districts in the town is 35 feet.

A zoning map of Banner Elk is included on the following page.

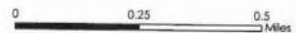


Banner Elk Zoning

- C-1 - Central Business District (CBD)
- C-1P - CBD with Parking
- C-2 - General Business
- CUD - Conditional Use
- CZD - Civic Zoning
- G-O - Governmental-Office
- M-E - Medical Educational
- M-U - Mixed Use
- R-1 - Low-Density Residential
- R-1-U - Single Family Residential
- R-2 - General Residential
- RC - Resort Commercial
- Heritage Overlay District
- Town Boundary
- ETJ



This map is not for survey, legal or excavation uses. It is intended for display, reference and planning purposes only.



Zoning Districts – Town of Seven Devils

Town of Seven Devils – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
LDR Low-Density Residential District	Established to provide a zone of low-density single-family homes. Cluster developments are also permitted within this zoning district.
MDR Medium Density Residential District	Established to provide a zone of single-family homes at a greater density than permitted in the LDR zoning district.
HDR High Density Residential District	Established to provide a zone of higher-density residential development. Permitted uses include single-family homes and multifamily residential structures containing four or fewer units.
SC Snowcloud Residential District	Established to apply to the existing Snowcloud subdivision in order to make zoning requirements consistent throughout this residential development. Single-family homes are permitted in this zoning district.
RB Recreational Business District	Established as a zone of commercial development intended to provide and support recreation opportunities. Mixed-use facilities are permitted by special use permit.
GB General Business District	Established to allow a larger group of commercial uses than the RB zoning district. Single-family homes, duplexes, multifamily dwellings, and manufactured home communities are permitted within this zoning district. Mixed-use facilities are permitted by special use permit.

Source: Town of Seven Devils Unified Development Ordinance (Article 4 – Zoning Districts)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

The town of Seven Devils has residential zoning districts for low-, medium-, and high-density projects. Multifamily dwellings up to four units are permitted within the High Density Residential District (HDR), while larger multifamily buildings are permitted in the General Business District (GB). Seven Devils also has a zoning district in place specifically for the Snowcloud subdivision, which only permits single-family dwellings.

Permitted residential land uses within zoning districts in the town of Seven Devils are listed below.

Permitted Land Uses within Zoning Districts Town of Seven Devils						
Land Use Type	Zoning Districts					
	LDR	MDR	HDR	SC	RB	GB
Dwelling, 1 Unit (Single-Family)	P	P	P	P	--	P
Dwelling, 2 Unit (Duplex)	--	--	P	--	--	P
Dwelling, 3 to 4 Units	--	--	P	--	--	P
Multifamily dwelling (Maximum of 3 stories, 6 units per story)						P
Cluster Development	P	--	--	--	--	--
Mixed-Use Facility	--	--	--	--	S	S
Manufactured Home Community	--	--	--	--	--	P

Source: Town of Seven Devils Unified Development Ordinance (Article 5 – Use Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

Legend: P – Permitted, S – Permitted by Special Use, -- Use Type Prohibited

Single-family dwellings are permitted in all zoning districts with the exception of the Recreational Business District (RB). The General Business District (GB) allows for the greatest variety of residential land uses in the town of Seven Devils.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Town of Seven Devils – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)*	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
LDR Low-Density Residential District	43,560	30 ft.	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
MDR Medium Density Residential District	14,500	30 ft.	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
HDR High Density Residential District	21,500	30 ft.	12 ft.	12 ft.	35 ft.
SC Snowcloud Residential District	--	**	**	**	35 ft.
RB Recreational Business District	5,000	30 ft.	12 ft.	12 ft.	50 ft.
GB General Business District	5,000	30 ft.	10 ft.	12 ft.	50 ft.

Source: Town of Seven Devils Unified Development Ordinance (Article 7 – Intensity Regulations)

*Minimum lot areas can be relaxed by up to one-third with Zoning Administrator approval if lot slope is greater than 19.99%

**Structures shall be located no less than 15 feet from another structure and no less than five feet from a road or adjacent residential subdivision

Minimum lot areas within residential zoning districts favor larger lot sizes. The Low-Density Residential District has a minimum lot size of 43,560 square feet (one acre). Commercial zoning districts allow for a much smaller minimum lot area (5,000 square feet). Note that minimum lot area can be reduced by up to one-third in instances where lot slope is greater than 19.99%. Front, side, and rear yard setbacks are fairly consistent among residential and commercial zoning districts in the town of Seven Devils. Maximum building heights of 35 feet in residential zoning districts and 50 feet in commercial zoning districts are also consistent with towns of similar size in the High Country Region.

A zoning map of Seven Devils is included on the following page.

OFFICIAL ZONING MAP



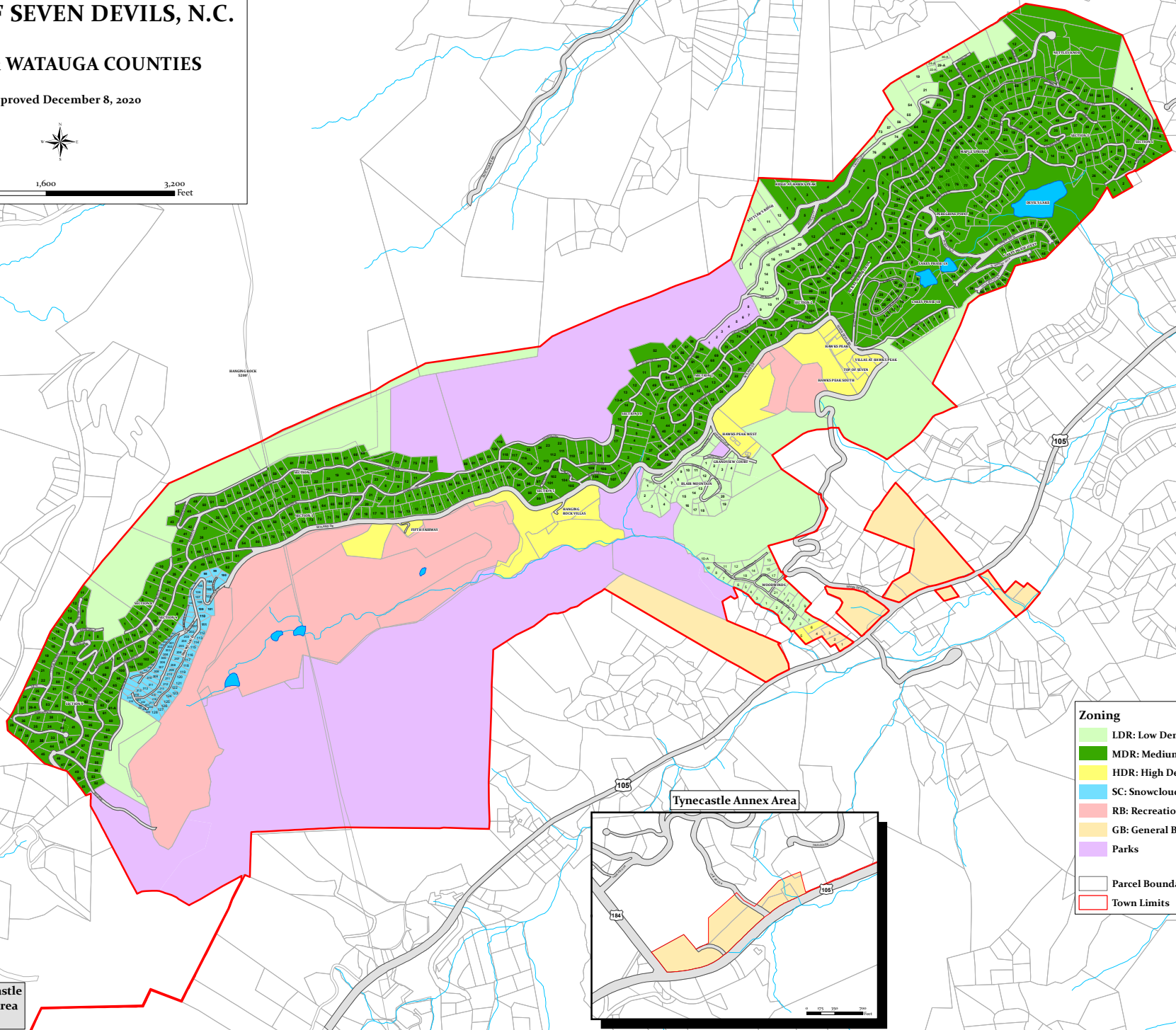
TOWN OF SEVEN DEVILS, N.C.

AVERY & WATAUGA COUNTIES

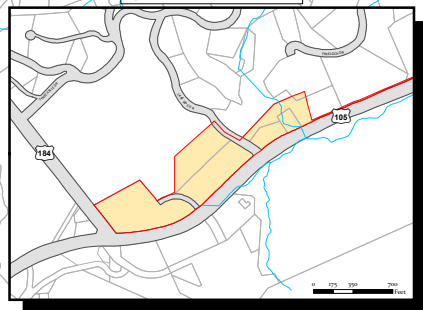
Approved December 8, 2020



0 800 1,600 3,200 Feet



To Tynecastle Annex Area



- Zoning**
- LDR: Low Density Residential
 - MDR: Medium Density Residential
 - HDR: High Density Residential
 - SC: Snowcloud
 - RB: Recreational Business
 - GB: General Business
 - Parks
 - Parcel Boundaries
 - Town Limits

This map was created based on Avery and Watauga County tax parcel data. The Town of Seven Devils assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the parcel boundary information.
If changes are made to zoning district boundaries or other matters pertinent to the Official Zoning Map, such changes shall be made on the Official Zoning Map after the amendment has been adopted.
Original Zoning Map was produced by Highland Mapping in 2008 and maintained by High Country Council of Governments. Last updated December 8, 2020.

Zoning Districts – Village of Sugar Mountain

Village of Sugar Mountain – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
R-1 Low Density Residential District	Principal use of land is for single-family dwellings.
R-2 Medium Density Residential District	Principal use of land is for single-family dwellings.
R-3 Multifamily Residential District	Primary use of the land is for multifamily residential purposes. Single-family dwellings are also permitted within this zoning district.
R-4 Residential Estate District	Principal use of land is for single-family dwellings on large lots.
R-C Resort Commercial District	Principal uses of land are for commercial recreational and residential purposes. Planned unit developments (commercial and residential) are permitted by special use permit.
M-U Multiple Use District	Primary use of land for single-family residential, multifamily residential, and agricultural purposes. Multifamily dwellings of up to four units permitted. Residential planned unit developments, which include multifamily dwellings containing five or more units, are permitted by special use permit.

Source: Village of Sugar Mountain Ordinance (Chapter 154 - Zoning)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

The village of Sugar Mountain has residential zoning districts for a variety of project types, including multifamily dwellings and residential estates. The only commercial zoning district that allows residential development in the village (Resort Commercial District) allows planned unit developments by special use permit. The Multiple Use District (M-U) allows for a wide variety of development types, including multifamily buildings up to four units. Note that larger multifamily buildings containing five and more units are permitted by special use.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Village of Sugar Mountain – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
R-1 Low Density Residential District	43,560	30 ft.	20 ft.*	25 ft.*	35 ft.
R-2 Medium Density Residential District	17,424	30 ft.	15 ft.*	25 ft.*	35 ft.
R-3 Multifamily Residential District	43,560	30 ft.	20 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
R-4 Residential Estate District	130,680	60 ft.	50 ft.	60 ft.	35 ft.
R-C Resort Commercial District	174,240	30 ft.	20 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
M-U Multiple Use District	17,424	30 ft.	20 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.

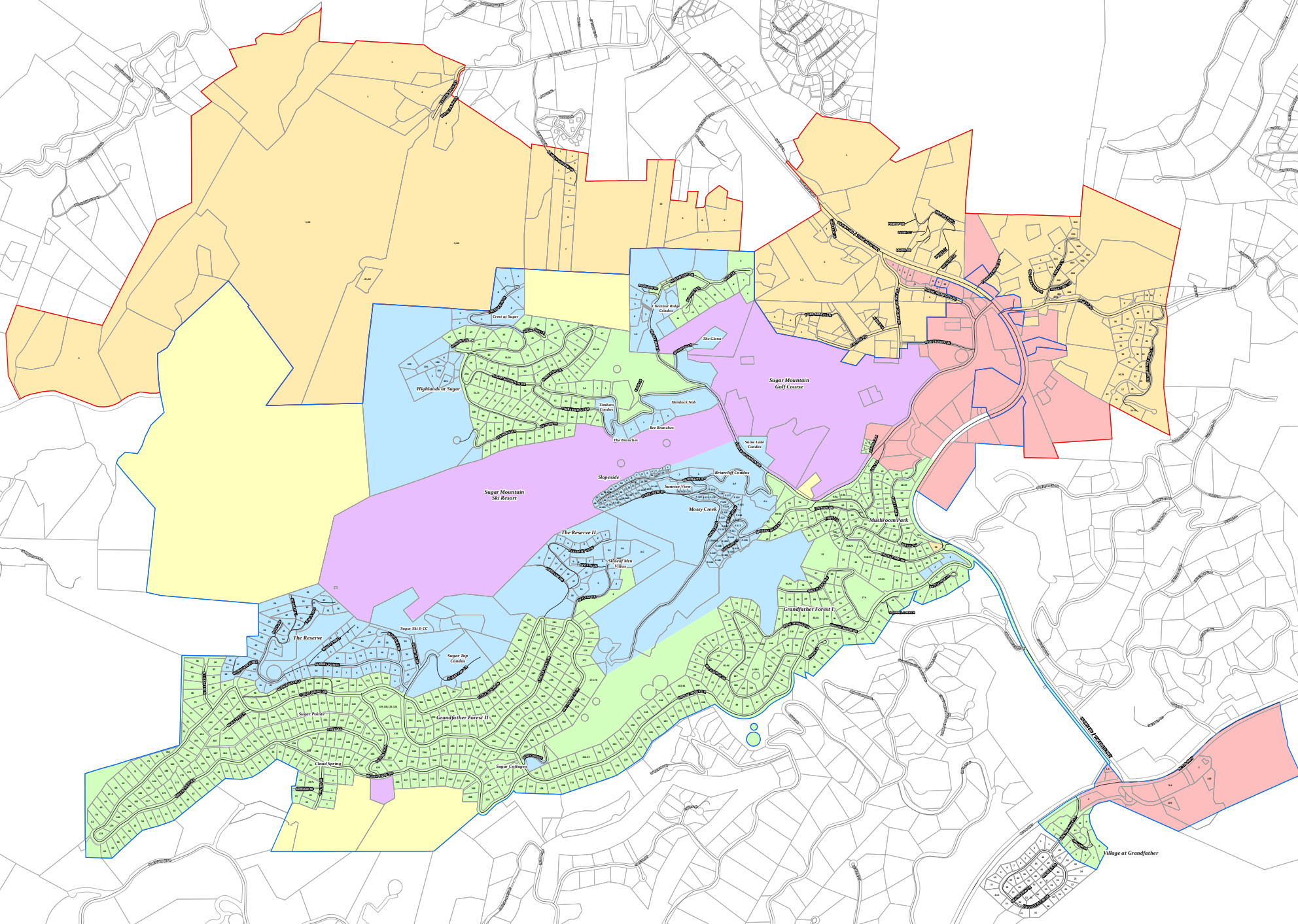
Source: Village of Sugar Mountain Ordinance (Chapter 154 - Zoning)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

*Setbacks on any adjacent public roadside frontage in R-1 and R-2 zoning districts shall be 30 feet

Sugar Mountain has very large minimum lot areas and increased setback requirements compared to other villages and towns in the High Country Region. Three of the four residential zoning districts require at least 43,560 square feet of lot area (one acre) for projects, while the Residential Estate District (R-4) requires a minimum lot area of 130,680 square feet (three acres). The Resort Commercial District (R-C), which allows residential planned unit developments, has a minimum lot area of 174,240 square feet (four acres). The R-2 and M-U zoning districts, by comparison, allow for a much smaller minimum lot size (17,424 square feet). Maximum building height is 35 feet within all zoning districts in the village.

A zoning map of Sugar Mountain is included on the following page.

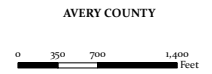


Zoning Districts

- C-B Commercial Business
- R-2 Medium Density Residential
- M-U Multiple Use
- R-3 Multi-Family Residential
- R-1 Low Density Residential
- R-C Resort Commercial

- Roads
- Village Limits
- Extra Territorial Jurisdiction
- Parcels

OFFICIAL ZONING MAP
VILLAGE OF SUGAR MOUNTAIN, N.C.



Official Zoning Map Adopted May 21, 2019

Dennis Lacey, Mayor
Susan Phillips, Zoning Administrator

This map was created based on Avery County tax parcel data. The Village of Sugar Mountain assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the parcel boundary information.
If changes are made in zoning district boundaries or other matters pertinent to the Zoning Map, such changes shall be made on the Official Zoning Map after the amendment has been adopted.
Zoning Map was produced by High County Council of Government in March 2019 for the Village of Sugar Mountain.

Town of Newland

The Town of Newland, which is the county seat of Avery County, does not have a zoning ordinance. However, it does observe building regulations along with a basic set of building setbacks and area minimums as described in the [Town ordinances](#). Building code enforcement for structures in the town is provided by Avery County. A partial list of building setbacks and area minimums include the following:

Town of Newland – Notable Building Regulations – Codified Ordinances	
Category	Description
Setbacks for buildings and structures	All structures should be at least 25 feet from a public right-of-way and at least 10 feet from any property line.
Dwelling size	Any dwelling should be a minimum of 784 square feet.
Home site/lot size	Any home site must have a minimum of 5,000 square feet.
Density	Density of dwellings limited to four dwelling units per acre.

Source: Town of Newland Ordinances (Chapter 91 – Home Site and Dwelling)

Linville Land Harbor

Linville Land Harbor is a 750-acre development located approximately 6.0 miles southeast of the town of Newland in the southern portion of Avery County. This development consists of over 1,500 properties and over 90% of properties were built as of 2019. This development also maintains its own full-time police force and a recreation department among its amenities. Linville Land Harbor operates a Property Owners Association (POA) that charges residents an annual fee which includes, but is not limited to, police protection, water and sewer facilities, trash removal, recycling centers, and maintenance of roads and facilities.

The Linville Land Harbor POA Board operates and enforces unified development regulations. All new construction projects, as well as repair and remodeling projects, require a building permit or approval from the community development coordinator. Linville Land Harbor does not allow for the subdivision of existing lots and maintains that no more than one residential unit may be built on a lot. Multifamily dwellings are prohibited within this development. This development includes sections for RVs, combination RV/house sites, and cottage site (house) sections.

Residential Permitting Process and Fees

The [Avery County Inspections Department](#) issues building permits and assesses permit fees for building construction in the county. Permit application information for construction projects is available on the county website and an application must be submitted prior to the issuance of a building permit. A building permit fee schedule is provided by the Avery County Inspections Department. For residential projects, the minimum fee is \$150 for structures up to 1,000 square feet. Residential structures over 1,000 square feet are assessed the minimum \$150 fee plus an additional fee based on square footage. These additional fees range from \$0.14 per square foot for residential structures between 1,000 and 2,000 square feet of

finished area to \$0.24 per square foot for residential structures exceeding 10,000 square feet of finished area. Note that unfinished area is assessed at a lower fee per square foot ranging from \$0.07 to \$0.12 based on the size of the structure. Multiuse buildings, defined as having combined residential and commercial uses, are assessed a minimum \$150 fee for up to 1,200 square feet. Multiuse buildings larger than 1,200 square feet are assessed the minimum \$150 fee plus \$0.16 per additional square foot for finished space and \$0.08 per additional square foot for unfinished space. Overall, building permit fees for a 3,000 square foot single-family home are lower in Avery County compared to other counties in the High Country Region.

Review of Previously Completed Residential Studies

Avery County published the most recent version of its [Land Use Plan](#) in 2012. One of the purposes of formulating this plan was to *offer insight and direction in future decisions concerning land use management, development, and economic growth*. This plan also noted the significant population of those who maintain a part-time residence in Avery County, which brings the population during the summer months up to an estimated 60,000 people. However, this plan also noted that the tourism industry in Avery County is not as seasonal as it once was due to diversification of recreational activities within different seasons (e.g., skiing and golfing). Mobility patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic may have also increased the year-round population of the county, as households that may have been considered part-time residents in the county may have moved here permanently due to remote work arrangements. A section of this plan also references development constraints in the county. The most prevalent development constraint in Avery County is topographic slope (grade). The plan notes that a large portion of the county is impacted by steep slopes, defined as having slopes greater than 25%. Note that nearly half of land area in the county has a slope of greater than 25%. By comparison, only 27% of land area in the county has a prevailing slope of less than 15%, which can better support development. Additional development constraints cited in the Plan are water supply watersheds, floodplains, and federal lands. Taking these development factors into consideration, it appears that most of the county's land area is impacted by one or more development constraints.

D. WATAUGA COUNTY

The Town of Beech Mountain, Town of Blowing Rock, Town of Boone, and the Foscoe-Grandfather community are each subject to zoning regulations. A discussion of each community is as follows.

Zoning Districts - Town of Beech Mountain

Town of Beech Mountain – Zoning Districts	
Zoning District	Description
R-1 Low Density Single-Family Residential District	Primarily intended to provide locations for low-density development in areas where public water and sewer service are not available. Single-family homes and vacation rentals are permitted within this zoning district.
R-2 Single-Family Residential	Primarily intended to provide locations for single-family residential uses in areas where public water and sewer service are available or will likely be provided in the future. Residential vacation rentals are also permitted within these zoning districts.
R-2A Single-Family Residential	
R-3A Multifamily High Density Residential District	Intended for a variety of residential uses, including single-family houses, duplexes, and multifamily buildings. Areas within this zoning district without public water and sewer are suitable for single-family development. Planned Unit Developments are permitted by special use permit.
R-3B Multifamily High Density Residential District	
MH Mobile Homes/Manufactured Homes	Intended for mobile homes and manufactured homes. Residential vacation rentals are also permitted within this zoning district.
CS-1 Commercial Service District	Primarily intended to provide suitable locations for clustered commercial development and encourage commercial development in areas with access to major traffic arteries. Single-family homes and residential vacation rentals are permitted in both zoning districts. Mixed-use residential/commercial properties are also permitted in the CS-1 zoning district.
CS-2 Commercial Service District	
BMR Beech Mountain Resort District	Primarily intended to be an area used as a ski resort, theme park, or similar recreation area. Single-family homes, multifamily dwellings, cluster developments, and residential vacation rentals are permitted in this zoning district. Planned Unit Developments are permitted by special use permit.

Source: Town of Beech Mountain Code of Ordinances (Chapter 154 – Zoning)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential land uses were excluded from this analysis

The town of Beech Mountain, located primarily in Watauga County, has several zoning districts designated for a wide variety of residential land uses. These residential zoning districts are designated for single-family homes in areas with or without municipal water and sewer service as well as higher-density land uses such as multifamily buildings. The town also has a zoning district (MH) specifically for mobile homes and manufactured housing. Commercial zoning districts allow for some residential land uses including single-family homes and residential vacation rentals.

The following table illustrates permitted residential uses within the town of Beech Mountain.

Permitted Residential Uses within Zoning Districts Town of Beech Mountain									
Residential Use Type	Zoning Districts								
	R-1	R-2	R-2A	R-3A	R-3B	MH	CS-1	CS-2	BMR
Single-family residential	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P
Multifamily residential				P	P				P
Planned Unit Developments				S	S				S
Cluster developments									P
Mobile homes						P			
Mixed-use residential/commercial							P		
Residential vacation rental	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Source: Town of Beech Mountain Code of Ordinances (Chapter 154 – Zoning)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

Legend: P – Permitted, S – Permitted by Special Use

Note that all of the listed zoning districts in the town, with the exception of the MH zoning district, permits development of single-family dwellings. Multifamily residential development is only permitted in the R-3A, R-3B, and BMR zoning districts. Note that the BMR zoning district also allows the greatest range of residential development in the town.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Town of Beech Mountain – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
R-1 Low Density Single-Family Residential District	40,000	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
R-2 Single-Family Residential	15,000	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
R-2A Single-Family Residential	4,000	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	***	***	35 ft.
R-3A Multifamily High Density Residential District	15,000*	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
R-3B Multifamily High Density Residential District	15,000*	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
MH Mobile Homes/Manufactured Homes	15,000	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	15 ft.	15 ft.	35 ft.
CS-1 Commercial Service District	21,780	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
CS-2 Commercial Service District	10,980	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
BMR Beech Mountain Resort District	None	20 ft. or 32 ft.**	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.

Source: Town of Beech Mountain Code of Ordinances (Chapter 154 – Zoning)

*Minimum lot area for single-family uses located outside of cluster development or planned unit development

**Minimum setback of 20 feet from the lot line or 32 feet from the road center line (whichever is greater)

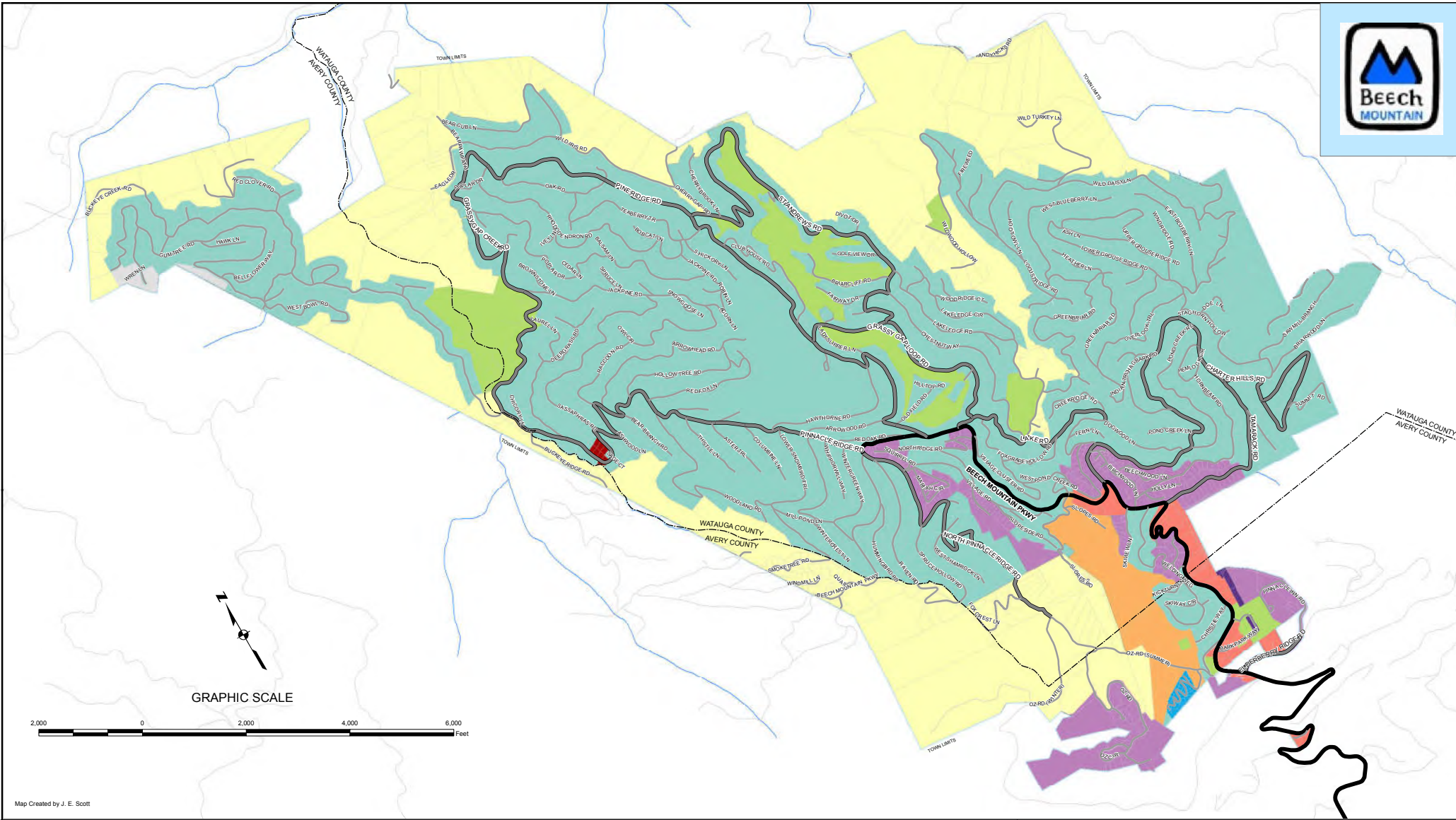
***Structures in the R-2A zoning district shall be at least 10 feet apart

Lots subdivided prior to October 12, 1982, not subject to minimum lot areas described in table above

Residential zoning districts in the town of Beech Mountain have a wide range of minimum lot sizes, which potentially allow for a greater variety of residential land uses. Single-family zoning districts have minimum lot sizes that range from 4,000 to 40,000 square feet. Minimum lot sizes for the two commercial service districts (CS-1 and CS-2) range from 10,980 square feet to 21,780 square feet. The Beech Mountain Resort District (BMR), which allows the widest range of residential

development, does not have a minimum lot size requirement. Front yard setbacks for zoning districts in the town may be applied based on lot line location or road center line location. Maximum building height is 35 feet for all zoning districts.

A zoning map of Beech Mountain is included on the following page.



Map Created by J. E. Scott

LEGEND

Beech Mountain Resort	Commercial Services 2	Multi- Purpose	R1 (Low Density Residential)	R2A (SF Residential Cluster)	Town Boundary
Commercial Services	Manufactured Housing	Private-Public Services (Parks, Schools, Emergency Services, etc.)	R2 (Single Family Residential)	R3A (Multi Family High Density Residential)	county_line
					Property Parcel Boundaries

TOWN OF BEECH MOUNTAIN
 AVERY & WATAUGA COUNTIES
ZONING AND LAND USE MAP

NOTES: BASE MAPPING FROM TOWN OF BEECH MOUNTAIN GIS MAPPINGS; OFFICIAL ZONING MAP IS ON FILE AT THE BEECH MOUNTAIN PLANNING AND INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Zoning Districts – Town of Blowing Rock

Town of Blowing Rock – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
R-A Residential Agricultural District	Designed to accommodate residential uses and a wide variety of plant and animal-related uses. Single-family residences with/without an accessory apartment and rooming/boarding houses are permitted within this zoning district.
R-15 Low-Density Residential District	Intended to be a low-density residential district in which single-family residences constitute the predominate use.
R-10S Medium-Density Residential District	Intended to be a medium-density residential district in which single-family residences constitute the predominate use. Single-family residences with an accessory apartment are also permitted within this zoning district.
R-10D Medium-Density Residential District	Intended to be a medium-density residential district in which two-family residences constitute the predominate use. Single-family residences with/without an accessory apartment and rooming/boarding houses are permitted within this zoning district. Duplexes and townhouses are permitted by special use permit.
R-10M Medium-Density Residential District	Intended to be a medium-density residential in which multifamily residences constitute the predominate use. Single-family residences with/without an accessory apartment and rooming/boarding houses are permitted within this zoning district. Duplexes, townhouses, and multifamily residences are permitted by special use permit.
R-6S High-Density Residential District	Intended to be a higher-density residential district in which single-family residences constitute the predominate use. Single-family residences with an accessory apartment and rooming/boarding houses are also permitted within this zoning district.
R-6M High-Density Residential District	Intended to be a higher-density residential district in which two-family and multifamily residences constitute the predominate use. Single-family residences with/without an accessory apartment and rooming/boarding houses are permitted within this zoning district. Duplexes, townhouses, and multifamily residences are permitted by special use permit.
R-MH Mobile Homes	Designed primarily to accommodate mobile homes and mobile home parks. Single-family residences are also permitted within this zoning district. Multifamily residences are manufactured home parks permitted by special use permit.
CB Central Business District	Designed to accommodate a wide variety of commercial activities that will result in the most intensive and attractive use of the town’s central business district. Particular emphasis is placed on pedestrian-oriented commercial businesses. Single-family residences and short-term rental properties permitted in this zoning district. Duplexes, townhouses, multifamily residences, and rooming/boarding houses permitted by special use permit.
TC Town Center District	Designed to protect the historic character of the downtown core, primarily along Main Street. Single-family residences and short-term rental properties permitted in this zoning district. Single-family residences, duplexes, townhouses, multifamily residences, and rooming/boarding houses permitted by special use permit.
GB General Business District	Designed to accommodate the widest range of commercial activities permitted within the town. Particular emphasis is placed on automobile-oriented businesses. Single-family residences and short-term rental properties permitted in this zoning district. Single-family residences, duplexes, townhouses, multifamily residences, and rooming/boarding houses permitted by special use permit.

Source: Town Code of Blowing Rock (Article 9 – Zoning Districts)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

(Continued)

Town of Blowing Rock – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
OI Office/Institutional District	Designed to accommodate a narrow range of commercial and institutional activities. Single-family residences and short-term rental properties permitted in this zoning district. Single-family residences, duplexes, townhouses, multifamily residences, and rooming/boarding houses permitted by special use permit.
HMC Hospital/Medical Complex District	Designed to accommodate the hospital and related offices and facilities that provide a continuum of care. Single-family residences, duplexes, and rooming/boarding houses permitted in this zoning district. Townhouses permitted by special use permit.

Source: Town Code of Blowing Rock (Article 9 – Zoning Districts)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

The town of Blowing Rock has several residential and commercial zoning districts designed to accommodate low-, medium- and high-density residential land uses. Certain residential zoning districts are designed for duplexes and multifamily dwellings, while the R-MH zoning districts is specifically designated for mobile homes. Commercial zoning districts in the town, while primarily designated for specific commercial activities, also accommodate a wide variety of residential land uses.

The permitted residential land uses within the town’s zoning districts are shown in the following tables.

Permitted Land Uses within Zoning Districts Town of Blowing Rock								
Land Use Type	Zoning Districts							
	R-A	R-15	R-10S	R-10D	R-10M	R-6S	R-6M	R-MH
Single-Family Residences	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
Manufactured Homes	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Z
Single-family residence with accessory apartment	Z	--	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	--
Duplex	--	--	--	S	S	--	S	--
Two-family conversion	--	--	--	S	S	--	S	--
Townhouses	--	--	--	S	S	--	S	--
Multifamily residences	--	--	--	--	S	--	S	S
Manufactured home parks	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S
Multifamily conversion	--	--	--	--	S	--	S	--
Rooming houses/boarded houses	Z	--	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	--
Short-term rental (residential)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Major subdivision	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Minor subdivision	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z

Permitted Land Uses within Zoning Districts Town of Blowing Rock					
Land Use Type	Zoning Districts				
	CB	TC	GB	OI	HMC
Single-Family Residences	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
Manufactured Homes	--	--	--	--	--
Single-family residence with accessory apartment	--	S	S	S	--
Duplex	S	S	S	S	Z
Two-family conversion	S	S	S	S	Z
Townhouses	S	S	S	S	S
Multifamily residences	S	S	S	S	--
Manufactured home parks	--	--	--	--	--
Multifamily conversion	S	S	S	S	Z
Rooming houses/boarded houses	S	S	S	S	Z
Short-term rental (residential)	Z	Z	Z	Z	--
Major subdivision	S	S	S	S	S
Minor subdivision	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z

Source: Town Code of Blowing Rock (Article 10 – Permissible Uses)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

Legend: Z – Zoning Permit Required, S – Special Use Permit Required, -- Use Type Prohibited

All zoning districts listed in the preceding tables allow single-family residential dwellings, while most zoning districts allow accessory dwellings either by zoning permit or special use permit. Note that short term rentals are permitted in nearly all commercial zoning districts but are prohibited in any of the residential zoning districts. In general, commercial zoning districts allow for a greater range of residential land uses compared to the residential zoning districts, which have a narrow range of permitted uses primarily due to density requirements.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Town of Blowing Rock – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Front Yard Setback	Side Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
R-A Residential Agricultural District	21,780	25 ft.	12 ft.	12 ft.	35 ft.
R-15 Low-Density Residential District	15,000	30 ft.	12 ft.	12 ft.	35 ft.
R-10S Medium-Density Residential District	10,000	30 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
R-10D Medium-Density Residential District	10,000	30 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
R-10M Medium-Density Residential District	10,000	30 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	35 ft.
R-6S High-Density Residential District	6,000	25 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	35 ft.
R-6M High-Density Residential District	6,000	25 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	35 ft.
R-MH Mobile Homes	6,000	25 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	35 ft.
CB Central Business District	None	15 ft.*	5 ft.	5 ft.	30 – 40 ft.
TC Town Center District	None	15 ft.*	5 ft.	5 ft.	30 – 40 ft.
GB General Business District	None	20 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	35 – 50 ft.
OI Office/Institutional District	None	15 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	50 ft.
HMC Hospital/Medical Complex District	None	15 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	50 ft.

Source: Town Code of Blowing Rock (Article 12 – Density and Dimensional Regulations)

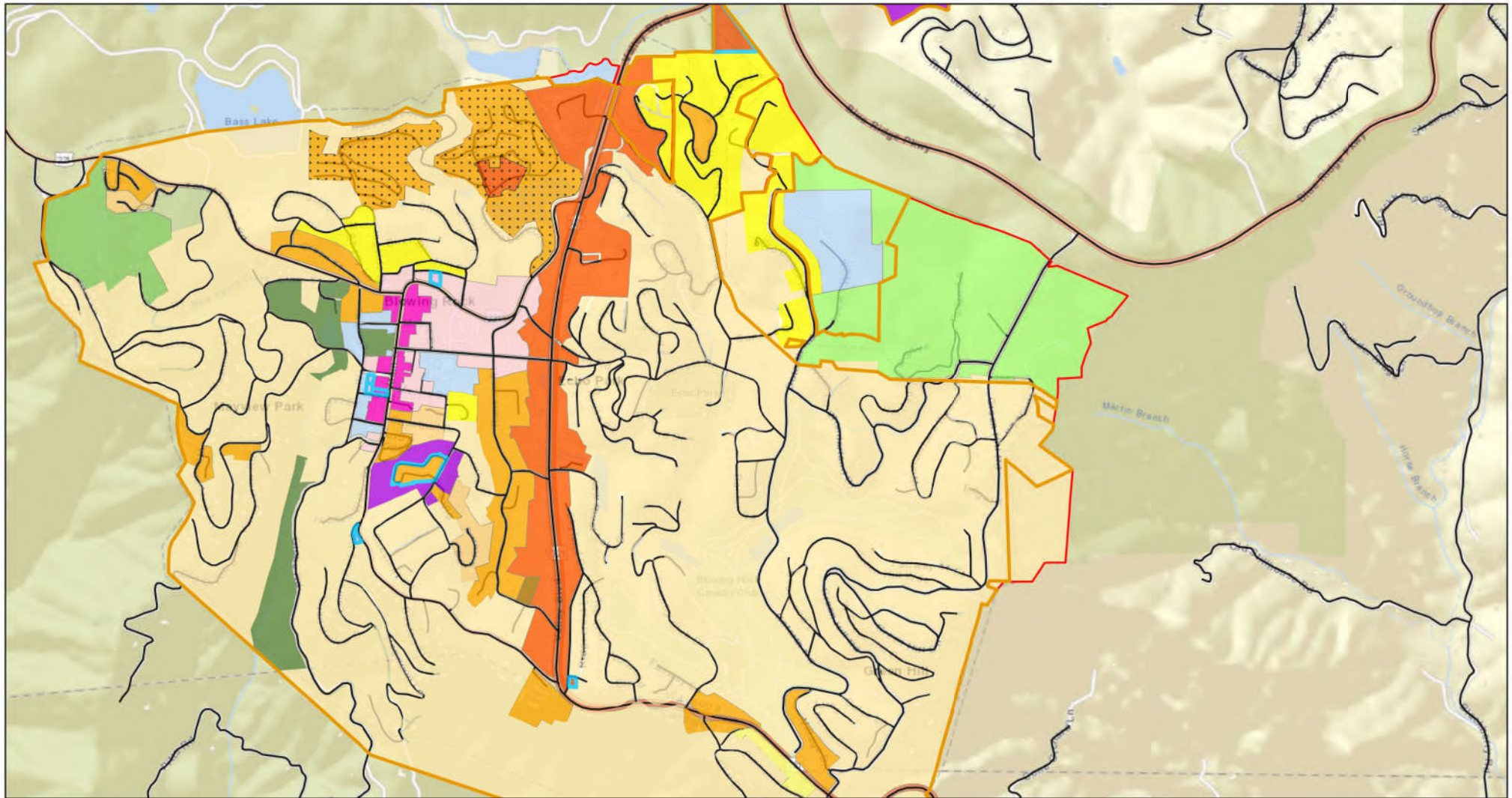
*Front yard setbacks for the CB and TC zoning districts are 15 feet or 15% of the average lot depth (whichever is less)

Maximum building heights can be increased to 40 feet in CB and TC zoning districts and 50 feet in GB zoning district with increased setbacks

Zoning districts in the town of Blowing Rock generally permit a wider range of minimum lot sizes, setback requirements, and maximum building heights compared with towns of similar size in the High Country Region. Minimum lot requirements in residential zoning districts range from 6,000 square feet in the high-density and mobile home districts to 21,780 square feet (one-half acre) in the Residential Agricultural District (R-A). None of the commercial zoning districts have a minimum lot area requirement. In addition, commercial zoning districts have reduced setback requirements compared to the residential zoning districts in the town. Maximum building height requirements range from 30 feet to 50 feet depending on zoning district. Note that ranges in maximum building height requirements in the CB, TC, and GB zoning districts reflect increased setback requirements.

A zoning map of Blowing Rock is included on the following page.

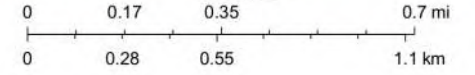
Town of Blowing Rock Zoning Map (GIS)



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- Corporate Limits
- Planning & Zoning Jurisdiction (ETJ)
- Zoning**
- R-15, Single-family
- R-10S, Single-family
- R-10D, Duplex
- R-10M, Multi-family
- R-6S, Single-family
- R-6M, Multi-family
- R-MH, Mobile Home
- R-A, Residential-Agriculture
- TC, Town Center
- CB, Central Business
- GB, General Business
- HMC, Hospital/Medical Complex
- HSG, Horse Show Grounds
- P/G, Parks/Greenspace
- OI, Office-Institutional
- PUD-R6M
- PUD-GB
- Conditional Zoning, GB
- Conditional Zoning, CB
- Conditional Zoning, R-6M
- Conditional Zoning, TC
- Roads

1:18,056



State of North Carolina DOT, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NGA, USGS

Zoning Districts – Town of Boone

Town of Boone – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
R1 Single-Family Residential District	Established to provide a low-density living area consisting of only single-family dwelling units and other related uses. Homestay rentals are permitted subject to limitations.
R1S Small Home Residential District	Established to provide a medium density living area consisting of detached single-family dwellings at a higher density than other residential zoning districts. Homestay rentals are permitted subject to limitations.
R1A Single-Family Residential with Accessory Dwelling District	Established to provide a low-density living area consisting of single-family dwelling with or without accessory dwellings. Homestay rentals and accessory dwelling units are permitted subject to limitations.
RR Residential Rehabilitation District	Designed to recognize the need to preserve existing housing stock for low-income occupants through rehabilitation efforts. Single-family homes are permitted within this zoning district. Homestay rentals, accessory dwelling units, and Class A manufactured homes are permitted subject to limitations.
R2 Two-Family Residential District	Established to provide a medium density living area consisting of single-family and two-family dwellings along with other related uses. Homestay rentals, accessory dwelling units, and Class A manufactured homes are permitted subject to limitations.
R3 Multiple-Family Residential District	Established to provide a high-density area consisting of three or more dwelling units per lot plus limited service use. One duplex building and an adult living community are permitted in this zoning district. Multiple duplex buildings per lot, townhouses, multifamily dwellings, boarding houses, vacation rentals, homestay rentals, and accessory dwelling units are permitted with limitations.
R4 Two-Family/Manufactured Home Residential District	Established to provide a medium density area consisting of two-family uses and manufactured homes on single lots. Single-family dwellings and one duplex building per lot is permitted in this zoning district. Townhouses, homestay rentals, accessory dwelling units, and Class A manufactured homes are permitted with limitations.
R5 55+ Housing Residential District	Established to provide a medium to high-density area consisting of residential housing for persons who are age 55 and older. Adult living communities are permitted within this zoning district. Homestay rentals are permitted with limitations. Residential care facilities are permitted via conditional district guidelines.
RA Residential Agricultural District	Established as a district in which the principal use of land is for low-density residential and agricultural purposes. Low-density commercial and service uses that are compatible with the surrounding area are also permissible. Single-family dwellings and one duplex building per lot are permitted. Homestay rentals, vacation rentals, and manufactured homes (Class A and B) are permitted with limitations.
MH Manufactured Home Park District	Established to provide fair standards and beneficial requirements for the siting, operation, and maintenance of manufactured homes. Manufactured homes (Class A and B), manufactured home parks and homestay rentals are permitted with limitations.

Source: Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance (Article 14 – Zoning District Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

(Continued)

Town of Boone – Zoning Districts – Codified Ordinances	
Zoning District	Description
B1 Central Business District	Central Business District consists of the Downtown Core (DC) and Downtown Interface (DI) Districts. Homestay rentals, vacation rentals, accessory dwelling units and mixed-use multifamily dwellings up to 30 bedrooms are permitted with limitations. Mixed-use multifamily dwellings ranging from 30 to 100 bedrooms are permitted under conditional district guidelines.
B2 Neighborhood Business District	Intended to accommodate low-intensity office, retail, and personal service uses along with upper story residential uses. Homestay rentals, vacation rentals, accessory dwelling units and mixed-use multifamily dwellings up to 30 bedrooms are permitted with limitations.
B3 General Business District	Primarily intended to accommodate a wide range of office, restaurant, retail, service, and multifamily residential uses in a mixed-use environment. Residential care facilities are permitted within this zoning district. Homestay rentals, vacation rentals, accessory dwelling units, boarding houses, and mixed-use multifamily dwellings are permitted with limitations.
WD Wellness District	Promote a mix of medical, education, office, retail, and residential uses within a compact, pedestrian-oriented area located around the local hospital. Residential care facilities are permitted within this zoning district. Homestay rentals and mixed-use multifamily dwellings are permitted with limitations.

Source: Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance (Article 14 – Zoning District Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

The town of Boone, which is the largest municipality in the High Country Region, also has the highest number of residential zoning districts compared to other municipalities in the Region. Residential zoning districts in the town were specifically created for small homes, homes with accessory dwellings, areas that house older adults (age 55 and older), mobile homes mixed with duplexes, and mobile home parks. Zoning districts were also created for two-family and multifamily dwellings, many of which are occupied by the town’s student population. Commercial zoning districts were also created with residential land uses in mind, as many of these zoning districts permit multifamily uses and/or mixed uses.

Permitted residential land uses within the town of Boone are listed in the following tables.

Permitted Land Uses within Zoning Districts Town of Boone							
Land Use Type	Zoning Districts						
	R1	R1S	R1A	RR	R2	R3	R4
Single-family dwelling	P	P	P	P	P		P
Homestay rental	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Accessory dwelling unit			L	L	L	L	L
Manufactured home (Class A)				L	L		L
Manufactured home (Class B)							
Manufactured home park							
Duplex (one building per lot)					P	P	P
Duplex (more than one building per lot)						L	
Townhouse						L	L
Multifamily dwelling						L	
Multifamily dwelling (mixed-use)							
Adult Living Community						P	
Boarding House						L	
Vacation rental						L	
Residential care facility							

Permitted Land Uses within Zoning Districts Town of Boone								
Land Use Type	Zoning Districts							
	R5	RA	MH	B1-DC	B1-DI	B2	B3	WD
Single-family dwelling		P						
Homestay rental	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Accessory dwelling unit					L	L	L	
Manufactured home (Class A)		L	L					
Manufactured home (Class B)		L	L					
Manufactured home park			L					
Duplex (one building per lot)		P						
Duplex (more than one building per lot)								
Townhouse								
Multifamily dwelling								
Multifamily dwelling (mixed-use up to 30 bedrooms)				L	L	L	L	L
Multifamily dwelling (mixed-use 30-100 bedrooms)				CD	L		L	L
Multifamily dwelling (mixed-use over 100 bedrooms)					L		L	L
Adult Living Community	P							
Boarding House							L	
Vacation rental		L		L	L	L	L	
Residential care facility	CD						P	P

Source: Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance (Article 14 – Zoning District Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

Note: Blank cell indicates use type is prohibited

Legend: P – Permitted, L – Permitted Subject to Limitations, CD – Conditional District

The preceding tables list permitted residential land uses according to specific criteria for the town of Boone. Single-family dwellings are permitted in most residential zoning districts, while homestay rentals are permitted with limitations in all residential and commercial zoning districts. Vacation rentals are mainly restricted to commercial zoning districts, as only two residential zoning districts (R3 and RA) allow vacation rentals. Mixed-use multifamily dwellings are permitted based on limitations or by number of total bedrooms in the project. Note that the B1-DC zoning district requires mixed-use multifamily dwellings between 30 and 100 bedrooms to be part of a conditional district.

Setback and building height restrictions for each zoning district that allows residential development are listed in the following table:

Town of Boone – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Minimum Lot Width	Street Setback	Interior Setback	Maximum Building Height
R1 Single-Family Residential District	8,000	70 ft.	20 ft.	12 ft.	3 stories
R1S Small Home Residential District	5,000	35 ft.	20 ft.	7 ft.*	1 story
R1A Single-Family Residential with Accessory Dwelling District	8,000	70 ft.	20 ft.	14 ft.	3 stories
RR Residential Rehabilitation District	6,000	70 ft.	20 ft.	13 ft.	3 stories
R2 Two-Family Residential District	6,000	70 ft.	20 ft.	13 ft.	3 stories
R3 Multiple-Family Residential District	20,000	80 ft.	20 ft.	13 ft.	3 stories
R4 Two-Family/Manufactured Home Residential District	6,000	70 ft.	20 ft.	13 ft.	3 stories
R5 55+ Housing Residential District	10,000	70 ft.	20 ft.	17 ft.	4 stories
RA Residential Agricultural District	10,000 – 20,000**	65 – 100 ft.**	20 ft.	14 – 18 ft.**	3 stories
MH Manufactured Home Park District	87,120	None	20 ft.	20 ft.	35 feet
B1 Central Business District	2,500 – 5,000	25 – 50 ft.	0 – 15 ft.	0 ft.*	30 – 33 ft.
B2 Neighborhood Business District	5,000	50 ft.	20 ft.	17 ft.	3 stories
B3 General Business District	5,000	50 ft.	20 ft.	17 ft.	3 stories
WD Wellness District	10,000	50 ft.	0 – 20 ft.	***	2 – 6 stories^

Source: Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance (Article 14 – Zoning District Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not allow residential development were excluded from this analysis

*If lot is adjacent to a different zoning district, interior setback for the adjacent zoning district applies

**Smaller minimum lot sizes, lot widths, and setbacks permitted for lots with access to public water and sewer facilities

***Interior setbacks in WD zoning district based on minimum fire separation standards between buildings

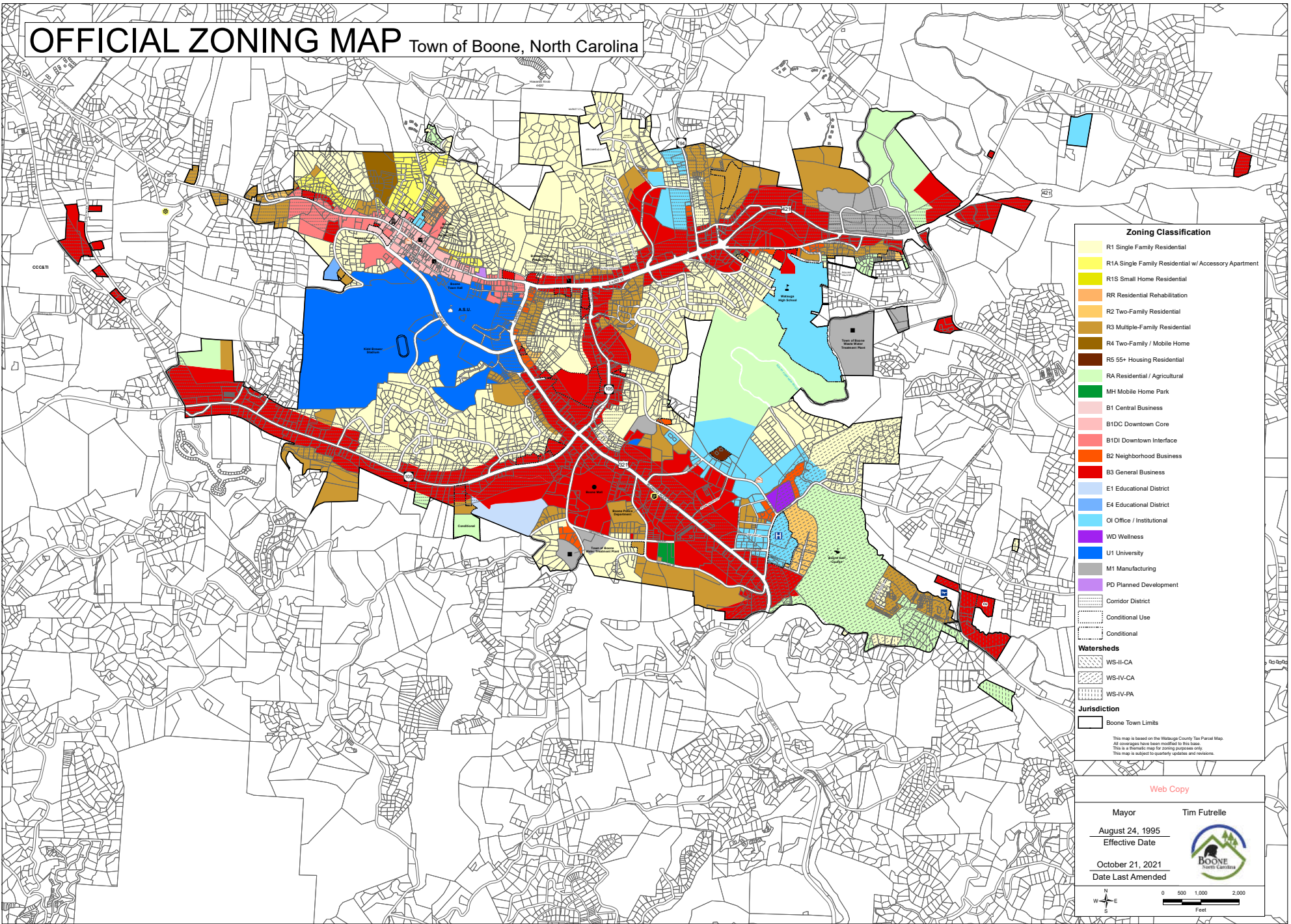
^Buildings above four stories in WD zoning district are required to have reduced building facades along the 5th and 6th stories

Residential minimum lot sizes in Boone are generally smaller than in other municipalities in the High Country Region, reflecting its higher population density. Most residential zoning districts in the town have a minimum lot size of under 10,000 square feet. In particular, the Small Home Residential District (R1S) has a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet and a minimum lot width of 35 feet, which would allow for higher density single-family residential development. The remaining residential zoning districts have minimum lot widths ranging from 65 to 100 feet. Commercial zoning districts in Boone have smaller minimum lot sizes, minimum lot width, and reduced setback requirements compared to residential zoning districts. Maximum building height requirements typically range from three to four stories depending on zoning district. Note that the Wellness District (WD)

allows building heights up to six stories. However, buildings taller than four stories in the WD districts are required to have the upper floors tapered (i.e., full stories are not permitted above the fourth floor).

A zoning map of Boone is included on the following page.

OFFICIAL ZONING MAP Town of Boone, North Carolina



Zoning Classification

- R1 Single Family Residential
- R1A Single Family Residential w/ Accessory Apartment
- R1S Small Home Residential
- RR Residential Rehabilitation
- R2 Two-Family Residential
- R3 Multiple-Family Residential
- R4 Two-Family / Mobile Home
- R5 55+ Housing Residential
- RA Residential / Agricultural
- MH Mobile Home Park
- B1 Central Business
- B1DC Downtown Core
- B1DI Downtown Interface
- B2 Neighborhood Business
- B3 General Business
- E1 Educational District
- E4 Educational District
- OI Office / Institutional
- WD Wellness
- U1 University
- M1 Manufacturing
- PD Planned Development
- Corridor District
- Conditional Use
- Conditional

Watersheds

- WS-II-CA
- WS-IV-CA
- WS-IV-PA

Jurisdiction

- Boone Town Limits


This map is based on the Watauga County Tax Parcel Map. All coverages have been modified to this base. This is a thematic map for zoning purposes only. This map is subject to quarterly updates and revisions.


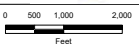
Web Copy

Mayor **Tim Futrelle**

Effective Date
August 24, 1995

Date Last Amended
October 21, 2021



Foscoe-Grandfather Community

Watauga County administers zoning regulations for the [Foscoe-Grandfather](#) unincorporated community. A table of zoning districts for the Foscoe-Grandfather community is listed below.

Foscoe-Grandfather Community – Zoning Districts – Planning & Development Ordinance	
Zoning District	Description
Rural District	Principal use of land for low-density residential and agricultural purposes. Single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and manufactured homes permitted. Multifamily dwellings, clustered dwellings, and manufactured home parks permitted as a special use.
Rural/Residential District	Principal use of land for low-density conventional residential structures. Single-family dwellings are permitted. Multifamily dwellings and clustered dwellings permitted by special use.
Highway District	Intended to provide offices, personal services, and retail goods along the major throughfare. Single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and manufactured homes permitted. Multifamily dwellings, clustered dwellings, and manufactured home parks permitted as a special use.

Source: Watauga County Planning & Development Ordinance (Article V – District Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential development were excluded from this analysis

The Foscoe-Grandfather community adheres to a basic set of zoning districts that delineate rural, residential, and commercial land uses. Single-family dwellings are permitted in all zoning districts. Note that multifamily dwellings and clustered dwellings are permitted in all zoning districts as a special use, thus allowing flexibility for future development.

Permitted residential uses within the Foscoe-Grandfather community are listed in the following table.

Permitted Residential Uses within Zoning Districts Foscoe-Grandfather Community			
Residential Use Type	Zoning Districts		
	Rural District	Rural Residential District	Highway District
Single-family dwellings	P	P	P
Two-family dwellings	P		P
Manufactured homes	P		P
Manufactured home parks	S		S
Multifamily dwellings	S	S	S
Clustered dwellings	S	S	S

Source: Watauga County Planning & Development Ordinance (Article V – District Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential development were excluded from this analysis

Legend: P – Permitted, S – Permitted by Special Use

Setbacks and building height requirements by zoning district are listed in the following table:

Foscoe-Grandfather Community – Setbacks and Building Height Requirements by Zoning District					
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Width	Front Yard Setback	Side/Rear Yard Setback	Maximum Building Height
Rural District	1 acre	100 ft.	30 ft.	15 ft.	40 ft.
Rural/Residential District	1 acre	100 ft.	30 ft.	15 ft.	40 ft.
Highway District	½ acre*	100 ft.**	30 ft.**	15 ft.**	40 ft.

Source: Watauga County Planning & Development Ordinance (Article V – District Regulations)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential development were excluded from this analysis

*Minimum lot size in Highway District is one acre for residential structures that require an erosion control plan

**Minimum lot width and setbacks listed for residential structures

Minimum lot area and lot widths in the unincorporated Foscoe-Grandfather community are generally larger and wider compared to incorporated municipalities in the High Country Region. Minimum lot area is one acre within residential zoning districts and one-half acre within the Highway District. Minimum lot widths, setback requirements, and maximum building heights are the same within all zoning districts.

Residential Permitting Process and Fees

The following table shows fees assessed by jurisdictions in Watauga County:

Permit and Tap Fees by Town and County				
Fee Type	Beech Mountain	Blowing Rock	Boone	Watauga County
Zoning Permit Fee (Basic)	\$130	\$50	\$236	\$40
Special Use Permit (Base fee)	\$600	\$1,000	\$770	--
Building Permit Fee (Basic – Residential)	\$0.30/sq. ft.	\$0.50/sq. ft.	\$491 up to 2,500 sq. ft.	\$0.30/sq. ft.
Building Permit Fee (Basic – Commercial)	\$0.25/sq. ft.	\$0.70/sq. ft.	\$622 plus \$0.273/sq. ft.	\$0.30/sq. ft.

Each of the incorporated towns in Watauga County is responsible for issuing zoning certificates for residential, commercial, and industrial projects within their town limits. Zoning permit fees range from \$40 in unincorporated portions of Watauga County to \$236 in the town of Boone. Building permit fees are primarily billed according to the heated square footage of the structure, ranging from \$0.25 per square foot for commercial structures in Beech Mountain to \$0.70 per square foot for commercial structures in Blowing Rock. Note that multifamily buildings larger than two units may be considered commercial properties for the purpose of building permit fee assessment.

Water and sewer tap fees were also obtained for the towns of Beech Mountain and Blowing Rock. Water and sewer tap fees in Beech Mountain are \$1,000 each. In Blowing Rock, the water tap fee is \$2,000, while the sewer tap fee is \$1,600. Note that the listed water and sewer tap fees reflect the smallest, most typical connection sizes. Larger structures that require multiple connections may require higher tap fees. The town of Boone does not publish a fee schedule for water and sewer taps within its jurisdiction. Instead, water and sewer tap fees in Boone are calculated on an individual basis by the town’s water department.

Review of Previously Completed Residential Studies

The Town of Beech Mountain published the most recent version of its Comprehensive Plan in 2019. As part of its vision statement, Beech Mountain notes that it has *maintained and retained its sense of place and its identity as a unique resort community*. Chapter five of this plan specifically outlines land use issues in the town. Goals outlined within the land use chapter are heavily weighted toward maintaining the natural environment that allows the town to function as part of a resort area. Notable goals outlined in the land use chapter of the plan include focusing development toward existing commercial and residential areas and prioritizing recreational land use.

Town of Beech Mountain Land Use Goals, Policies and Strategies	
Goal	Encourage land use that maintains the quaint mountain-town character of Beech Mountain.
Policy	Follow smart growth principles.
Strategies	Develop smart growth strategies for Beech Mountain. Continue to update the permitted use table in ordinance code. Revise and improve the Town’s subdivision regulations.
Goal	Conserve Beech Mountain’s natural resources and open spaces.
Policy	New development will continue to be built in a manner that respects natural resources and wildlife habitat.
Strategy	Review and continue to improve ordinances that govern construction practices.
Policy	Develop a land use conservation plan.
Strategy	Prioritize land parcels for conservation.
Policy	Encourage private-funded land conservation by local residents.
Goal	Focus development toward existing commercial and residential areas.
Policy	Infill and redevelopment will occur in appropriate areas as designated by the Town.
Strategies	Identify infill opportunities and encourage development in these locations through development incentives. Target public investment to preferred infill and redevelopment areas.

Source: Beech Mountain Comprehensive Plan 2020-2035 (Chapter 5: Land Use)

Town of Beech Mountain Community Design Goals, Policies and Strategies	
Goal	Preserve, protect, and continually enhance the friendly small town resort “character” of Beech Mountain.
Policy	Improve and strengthen community relations, including the Town’s zoning ordinance.
Strategy	Maintain and continually review the Town’s development and zoning regulations.
Policy	Create and utilize community design regulations/guidelines to maintain and improve the appearance, functionality, and character of the built environment.
Strategies	Utilize alternative zoning methods to ensure that development in the town’s commercial districts is aesthetically pleasing and functionally appealing. Review and improve architectural standards for new development in the commercial district.
Policy	Restore or replace the decaying and aging structures in Beech Mountain.
Strategies	Diligently and equitably enforce condemnation proceedings when necessary The Town should take steps to see that housing problems are addressed before reaching the level of condemnation. Develop rehabilitation programs and incentives for decaying structures. Continue to judiciously enforce building codes.
Policy	Ensure that the Town of Beech Mountain leads by example in matters involving community design and appearance
Strategies	Consider aesthetics as a vital component of all capital improvement projects. Create small area plans to best utilize town properties in ways that enhance community character.

Source: Beech Mountain Comprehensive Plan 2020-2035 (Chapter 6: Community Design, Image, and Character)

Land use and community design goals outlined in the Town of Beech Mountain Comprehensive Plan refer to the importance of zoning regulations in order to achieve the stated goals. In particular, the goals, policies, and strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan note the importance of adjusting current zoning regulations in order to achieve stated goals in the Plan.

The Town of Blowing Rock adopted the most recent version of its [Comprehensive Plan](#) in 2014. This plan focuses on comprehensive plan elements, development focus areas, and implementation of plan aspects. This plan also exists as a *10-year framework for achieving immediate, mid-range, and long-term strategies that will ensure implementation*. Comprehensive plan elements include land use and community character, which are important factors to future development in the town.

A summary of land use and community character goals listed in the Comprehensive Plan are included on the following table.

Town of Blowing Rock Land Use and Community Character Goals and Strategies	
Goal	Refocus growth on Blowing Rock’s core through policies and actions that encourage both infill development and the redevelopment of properties that are not being utilized for their highest and best use.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine existing policies, ordinances, and regulations and remove any regulatory barriers that discourage the reuse or redevelopment of underutilized properties. • Examine the official zoning map annually to identify underutilized properties in growth areas. • Amend watershed regulations to foster higher density development in the town’s core area. • Amend the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) provisions in the land use code to encourage development of vertically mixed-use structures. • Amend the land use code to institute a maximum surface/unstructured parking ratio to encourage the most effective use of land.
Goal	Protect the character of established residential neighborhoods from the potentially negative impacts of incompatible infill development.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and adopt standards for Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts in the land use code. • Promote availability of Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts. • Develop and adopt a Residential Architectural Design Manual that establishes best practices for designing and constructing residential structures. • Utilize this residential design manual to facilitate infill development and redevelopment of underutilized properties.
Goal	Expand the range of housing options available in Blowing Rock to accommodate the needs of the community and its residents.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the land use code to allow at least eight multifamily dwelling units per acre by right in the most intensive residential zoning district. • Develop and implement an incentive-based approach by which residential density can be increased above allowed maximums by preserving a certain percentage of developed units at price points targeting working families. • Develop a target area map identifying locations in the community where density bonus incentives could be applied to encourage housing opportunities for working families. • Amend the land use code to allow multifamily residential development as a use by right in additional base zoning districts.
Goal	Promote compatibility between new growth and existing development with a special emphasis on ensuring the compatibility of commercial and mixed-use development with established residential neighborhoods.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize zoning and use transitions between higher intensity uses and lower intensity uses to promote compatibility. • Identify areas of transition between high intensity and low intensity development. Amend zoning map to implement sound transitional land use regulations. • Review the land use code to ensure that incompatible uses are not allowed within the same zoning district without providing intervening buffers. • Promote the rezoning of entire blocks or contiguous tracts of similarly zoned land when zoning map amendments are proposed. • Review the land use code to ensure that adequate regulations exist to address ongoing impacts of non-residential uses in close proximity to residential uses or neighborhoods.

Source: Blowing Rock Comprehensive Plan

Note: Goals and strategies were summarized from original text obtained from the Comprehensive Plan.

Land uses goals put forth in the Town of Blowing Rock Comprehensive Plan mention infill development, mixed-use development, and a review of existing zoning districts to permit higher-density development. As this plan was published eight years ago, it is possible that steps have been taken to implement several of these goals and strategies outlined. The next comprehensive plan may indicate whether these stated goals and strategies were successful or if these goals and strategies need to be revisited.

The Town of Boone and NC Growth published a [Housing and Business Resiliency](#) study in November 2021. A portion of this report was dedicated to a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis involving stakeholder interviews. These stakeholder interviews noted that strengths included adequate supply for student housing, while weaknesses included added costs due to development regulations and a lack of a town-wide housing strategy. Opportunities included available Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) funding for future residential projects and the availability of funding mechanisms for public-private affordable housing developments. Threats included mistrust between Boone and the development community and the perception among some that Boone is “anti-development.” A section of this report also discusses housing availability and affordability in the town. In reference to the large share of rental properties targeting the student population, this report notes that *truly increasing resiliency (in the housing market) will require the community to adjust regulations and work with developers to help increase the stock of available housing for non-students.* This report also notes that a large share of those employed in Boone (over 85%) live outside the town due to the high cost of housing relative to adjacent counties. In addition, this report indicated that most housing units in town are either single-family detached or multifamily residential buildings consisting of 10 or more units. Affordable units such as smaller apartment buildings consisting of less than 10 units (typically duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes) are less common housing choices in the town.

VI. STAKEHOLDER INPUT ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

To gain information, perspective and insight about High Country Region housing issues and the factors influencing housing decisions by its residents, developers and others, Bowen National Research conducted a targeted survey of stakeholders in the community as part of the original Housing Needs Assessment in fall 2021. The goal of this community engagement was to gather feedback from local representatives that are knowledgeable of area housing policies and regulations and to learn how such regulations influence the community, identify any barriers or limitations such regulations create, determine possible revisions to existing policies and identify potential new policies that should be considered/introduced that could support local housing objectives. Stakeholders surveyed at that time represented a broad field of expertise and included local building, zoning and planning departments, private sector developers (profit and nonprofit), elected officials (town and county representatives), and housing advocacy groups (Watauga County Housing Council, Habitat for Humanity, etc.).

Of the 17 stakeholders that provided responses for this survey, a significant portion noted barriers to development impacting areas of the High Country Region. A summary of barriers to development identified by stakeholders is listed below:

- The largest share of respondents (nearly 95%) noted that development costs were a barrier or obstacle that limits residential development in the region.
- Nearly 90% of respondents noted that cost of labor/materials and cost of land were barriers or obstacles.
- Over 90% of respondents to this stakeholder survey noted that collaboration between public and private sectors could potentially reduce or eliminate barriers to development in the region.

Based on this stakeholder survey, there are several existing issues in the High Country Region that often stand in the way of residential development. However, local and county regulatory restrictions do not appear to present significant barriers to development.

ADDENDUM A: QUALIFICATIONS

The Company

Bowen National Research employs an expert staff to ensure that each market study includes the highest standards. Each staff member has hands-on experience evaluating sites and comparable properties, analyzing market characteristics and trends, and providing realistic recommendations and conclusions. The Bowen National Research staff has national experience and knowledge to assist in evaluating a variety of product types and markets.

Primary Contact and Report Author



Patrick Bowen, President of Bowen National Research, has conducted numerous housing needs assessments and provided consulting services to city, county and state development entities as it relates to residential development, including affordable and market-rate housing, for both rental and for-sale housing, and retail development opportunities. He has also prepared and supervised thousands of market feasibility studies for all types of real estate products, including housing, retail, office, industrial and mixed-use developments, since 1996. Mr. Bowen has worked closely with many state

and federal housing agencies to assist them with their market study guidelines. Mr. Bowen has his bachelor's degree in legal administration (with emphasis on business and law) from the University of West Florida and currently serves as Trustee of the National Council of Housing Market Analysts (NCHMA).

Housing Needs Assessment Experience		
Location	Client	Completion Year
Dublin, GA	City of Dublin Purchasing Departments	2018
Evansville, IN	City of Evansville, IN - Department of Metropolitan Development	2018
Beaufort County, SC	Beaufort County	2018
Burke County, NC	Burke County Board of REALTORS	2018
Ottawa County, MI	HOUSING NEXT	2018
Bowling Green, KY	City of Bowling Green Kentucky	2019
Evansville, IN	City of Evansville, IN - Department of Metropolitan Development	2019
Zanesville, OH	City of Zanesville Department of Community Development	2019
Buncombe County, NC	City of Asheville Community and Economic Development Department	2019
Cleveland County, NC	Cleveland County Government	2019
Frankstown Twp., PA	Woda Cooper Companies, Inc.	2019
Taylor County, WV	Taylor County Development Authority	2019
Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation, WI	Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College	2019
Owensboro, KY	City of Owensboro	2019
Asheville, NC	City of Asheville Community and Economic Development Department	2020
Evansville, IN	City of Evansville, IN - Department of Metropolitan Development	2020
Youngstown, OH	Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC)	2020

(continued)

Housing Needs Assessment Experience		
Location	Client	Completion Year
Richlands, VA	Town of Richlands, Virginia	2020
Elkin, NC	Elkin Economic Development Department	2020
Grand Rapids, MI	Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce	2020
Morgantown, WV	City of Morgantown	2020
Erwin, TN	Unicoi County Economic Development Board	2020
Ferrum, VA	County of Franklin (Virginia)	2020
Charleston, WV	Charleston Area Alliance	2020
Wilkes County, NC	Wilkes Economic Development Corporation	2020
Oxford, OH	City of Oxford - Community Development Department	2020
New Hanover County, NC	New Hanover County Finance Department	2020
Ann Arbor, MI	Smith Group, Inc.	2020
Austin, IN	Austin Redevelopment Commission	2020
Evansville, IN	City of Evansville, IN - Department of Metropolitan Development	2021
Giddings, TX	Giddings Economic Development Corporation	2021
Georgetown County, SC	Georgetown County	2021
Western North Carolina (18 Counties)	Dogwood Health Trust	2021
Carteret County, NC	Carteret County Economic Development Foundation	2021
Ottawa County, MI	HOUSING NEXT	2021
Dayton, OH	Miami Valley Nonprofit Housing Collaborative	2021
High Country, NC (4 Counties)	NC REALTORS	2022
Evansville, IN	City of Evansville, IN - Department of Metropolitan Development	2022
Barren County, KY	The Barren County Economic Authority	2022
Kirksville, MO	City of Kirksville	2022
Rutherfordton, NC	Town of Rutherfordton	2022
Spindale, NC	Town of Spindale	2022
Wood County, WV	Wood County Development Authority & Parkersburg-Wood County Area Development Corporation	2022
Yancey County, NC	Yancey County	2022
Cherokee County, NC	Economic and Workforce Development, Tri-County Community College	2022
Rowan County, KY	Morehead-Rowan County Economic Development Council	2022
Avery County, NC	Avery County	2022

The following individuals provided research and analysis assistance:

Christopher Bunch, Market Analyst, has more than a decade of experience in conducting both site-specific market feasibility studies and broader housing needs assessments. He has conducted on-site market research of a variety of housing product, conducted stakeholder interviews and completed specialized research on housing market attributes including the impact of military personnel, heirs and estates and other unique factors that impact housing needs.

Desireé Johnson is the Director of Operations for Bowen National Research. Ms. Johnson is responsible for all client relations, the procurement of work contracts, and the overall supervision and day-to-day operations of the company. Ms. Johnson also coordinates and oversees research staff and activities. She has been involved in the real estate market research industry since 2006. Ms. Johnson has an Associate of Applied Science in Office Administration from Columbus State Community College.

Pat McDavid, Research Specialist, has conducted housing research for housing needs assessments completed throughout the country. Additionally, he is experienced in analyzing demographic and economic data in rural, suburban and metropolitan communities. Mr. McDavid has been a part of the development of market strategies, operational and fiscal performance analysis, and commercial, industrial and government (local, state, and federal) client consultation within the construction and manufacturing industries. He holds a bachelor's degree in Secondary Earth Science from Western Governors University.

Gregory Piduch, Market Analyst, has conducted site-specific analyses in both metropolitan and rural areas throughout the country. He is familiar with multiple types of rental housing programs, the day-to-day interaction with property managers and leasing agents and the collection of pertinent property details. Mr. Piduch holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Rhetoric from the University of Albany, State University of New York and a Master of Professional Studies in Sports Industry Management from Georgetown University.

Jody LaCava, Research Specialist, has nearly a decade of real estate research experience. She has extensive experience in surveying a variety of housing alternatives, including rental, for-sale, and senior housing. She has experience in conducting on-site research of real estate, evaluating existing housing properties, conducting interviews, and evaluating community services. She has been involved in industry leading case studies, door-to-door resident surveys and special needs housing research.

In-House Researchers – Bowen National Research employs a staff of in-house researchers who are experienced in the surveying and evaluation of all rental and for-sale housing types, as well as in conducting interviews and surveys with city officials, economic development offices and chambers of commerce, housing authorities and residents.

No subconsultants were used as part of this assessment.

ADDENDUM B: BEST PRACTICES

The Best Practices section of this Housing Regulatory Study focuses on jurisdictions outside of the High Country Region. Specifically, this section outlines various housing programs and policies within these jurisdictions and objectives that may serve as possible models for implementation within the Region.

As part of this Housing Regulatory Study, we have provided a summary of zoning practices and housing initiatives from communities and/or counties in the southeastern United States. These housing initiatives may serve as a model to follow by communities in the High Country Region, which can benefit from learning of efforts to address housing issues made by communities highlighted in this section. To that end, we compiled information on best practices incorporated by other communities that include such things as establishing goals, providing incentives and assistance, providing/promoting development opportunities, and conducting education and outreach efforts.

A summary of Best Practices is provided for the following cities and counties:

Asheville, North Carolina

The city of Asheville, the largest city and seat of government for Buncombe County, is located approximately 85.0 miles southwest of Boone, North Carolina. Asheville is the economic and cultural center of the western North Carolina region. Asheville had a 2021 estimated population of 93,272 according to the American Community Survey. The University of North Carolina Asheville is located in the city with an estimated enrollment of 2,914 students in the fall of 2022.

Zoning Categories and Districts

The City of Asheville [Development Services Department](#) administers the development process for properties within the city limits. This department is responsible for processing permits and performing inspections for properties in various stages of the development process. A list of development projects in the city can also be accessed via the [SimpliCity website](#), created to allow citizens easy access to development projects and information in Asheville. The Development Department also publishes a Unified Development Ordinance that classifies types of large-scale development projects within the city limits. As part of its services, the Development Services Department also has a Zoning Hotline in which citizens can call or email the department to have zoning inquiries addressed.

A summary of Asheville zoning districts that permit residential development is in the following table:

City of Asheville, North Carolina – Zoning Categories and Districts	
Category	Zoning Districts
Residential (Single-Family)	Residential Single-Family Low Density District (RS-2) Residential Single-Family Medium Density District (RS-4) Residential Single-Family High Density District (RS-8)
Residential (Multifamily)	Residential Multifamily Low Density District (RM-6) Residential Multifamily Medium Density District (RM-8) Residential Multifamily High Density District (RM-16)
Commercial	Neighborhood Business District (NB) Office I District (OFF I) Office II District (OFF II) Community Business I District (CB I) Community Business II District (CB II) Regional Business District (RB) Central Business District (CBD)
Mixed-Use	Office/Business District (OB) Commercial Industrial District (CI) Urban Village District (UV) Neighborhood Corridor District (NCD) Urban Residential District (URD)

Source: City of Asheville Unified Development Ordinance (Chapter 7 – Development)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential development not included in table.

The city of Asheville has single-family residential and multifamily residential zoning districts for low-, medium-, and high-density development. The city also has several commercial zoning districts that permit residential development, as well as several additional mixed-use districts that allow for a combination of residential and commercial development. In regard to zoning enforcement, Asheville maintains [The Asheville App](#), a mobile application which allows citizens to report issues such as zoning code violations and nuisances.

Asheville also has a classification system in place to identify types of large-scale development, which are summarized in the following table:

Classification of Large-Scale Development Types – City of Asheville		
Development Type	Parameters	Public Participation
Level I	Downtown – 500 to 19,999 sq. ft. Outside Downtown – 3 to 19 residential units or 500 to 34,999 square feet of commercial space	None
Level II	Downtown – 20,000 to 99,999 square feet. Outside Downtown – 20 to 49 residential units or 35,000 to 99,999 square feet.	Neighborhood meeting Design review* Planning and Zoning Commission (Downtown) Historic Resources Commission meeting**
Major Subdivision	Creation or extension of a road. Creation of new residential lots.	Neighborhood meeting Historic Resources Commission meeting**
Conditional Zoning	Requires a zoning change. 50+ residential units. 99,999 square feet or larger.	Neighborhood meeting Design review* Planning and Zoning Commission (Downtown) Historic Resources Commission meeting** City Council hearing
Conditional Use Permit	Defined by Section 7-16-2 of Unified Development Ordinance.	Neighborhood meeting Design review* Planning and Zoning Commission (Downtown) Historic Resources Commission meeting** City Council hearing

Source: City of Asheville (SimpliCity)

*Design review outside of downtown only needed if property located along French Broad River.

**Meeting only required if property is in a historic district or involves a historic landmark.

The classification system for large-scale projects allows the public to better identify and track these projects through the development process. Most classifications also allow for public participation in the development process via meetings conducted by the City of Asheville. The City of Asheville Development Services Department also publishes a [Fees and Charges Manual](#) that outlines each of the development related fees that Asheville assesses for projects.

Minimum Housing Code

According to the City of Asheville Development Department, the purpose of the Minimum Housing Code is the intention to *remedy and prevent the decay and deterioration of places of human habitation by providing minimum requirements for the protection of life, health, welfare, safety, and property. All dwellings in the city must be maintained to the minimum standards set forth in the code.* This minimum housing code also stipulates that the City can exercise its powers to *repair, close, or demolish* dwellings unfit for human habitation per Article 19, Chapter 160A of North Carolina General Statutes. This housing code also stipulates that owners of rental property that reside outside of Buncombe County must authorize a person to serve as an agent on the property owner’s behalf. Minimum standards for housing in the city include, but are not limited to, the following: visible street address, functioning smoke detector, fire barrier between floors of a dwelling, adequate ingress/egress, at least one window in each habitable room, and year-round operating mechanical ventilation (i.e., conditioned air systems). Minimum standards are also established for structural, mechanical, and plumbing systems within a building or structure.

Housing Programs and Resources

Specific housing programs and initiatives administered by the City of Asheville include the following:

City of Asheville, North Carolina – Housing Programs and Resources	
Program/Initiative	Summary
Housing Trust Fund	The City of Asheville provides low-cost financial assistance to incentivize the development and preservation of city-owned land for affordable housing within the city limits. This program is available to for-profit or nonprofit developers who plan to construct new affordable for-sale or rental housing, rehabilitate existing multifamily housing, or convert property to affordable housing. The maximum loan amount available to each developer from the Housing Trust Fund is \$20,000 per affordable unit, and the maximum loan per project is \$1,000,000. A minimum of 20% of the total project units must be affordable for the proposed development to be eligible for financing.
Fee Rebate Program	A rebate of development fees is available for developers of affordable housing in the city of Asheville. To qualify, all development fees for a project must be paid in advance. Developers can qualify to receive fee rebates ranging from 50% to 100% based on specific criteria. The types of fees that would qualify for rebates include site development fees, planning and zoning fees, and plan review/building permit fees.
Land Use Incentive Grant (LUIG)	LUIG is a point-based development incentive program that provides monetary incentives to developers of affordable housing in the city of Asheville. The maximum score available for a project is 200 points, with every five points worth a rebate of one year of city property taxes above a property's pre-developmental total. The maximum grant amount is \$80,000 per affordable unit. As part of a 20/80/20 housing policy, 20% of a development's units must meet the city's affordability standards for households earning 80% or less of the area median income for a 20-year period. At least 10% of the units must accept rental assistance, including Housing Choice Vouchers.
Expedited Plan Review	The Development Services Department offers expedited plan review to affordable housing projects that meet certain terms and conditions. To qualify for expedited plan review, affordable rental and for-sale projects must offer at least 20% of units to households that earn at or below 80% of area median income. Rental projects must also remain affordable for a minimum of 20 years. Expedited Plan Review is available to developers that utilize the Housing Trust Fund Program, Fee Rebate Program, and/or the Land Use Incentive Grant (LUIG).
Development Notification Tool	The Development Notification Tool is an online resource and information hub that tracks development in the city of Asheville. The website, which operates through the City of Asheville's SimpliCity portal, allows residents to understand the development process and how they can get involved. The website breaks down large-scale developments into five categories to help further residents' understanding of projects planned or under construction in the city.

The housing programs and initiatives listed in the table above are intended to aid development of affordable housing in the city of Asheville. The combination of fee rebates, grants, and financing programs available to developers of affordable housing provided by Asheville demonstrates a commitment to the development and preservation of housing for residents earning less than 80% of area median income.

Johnson City, Tennessee

Johnson City is located in the eastern portion of Tennessee, approximately 56.0 miles west of Boone, North Carolina. Johnson City is part of the Tri-Cities region which includes the nearby cities of Kingsport and Bristol. The 2021 estimated population of Johnson City was 71,278 according to the American Community Survey. Johnson City is the home of East Tennessee State University, which had a fall 2022 enrollment of nearly 14,000 students.

Zoning Categories and Districts

The Johnson City [Development Services Department](#) administers planning, building codes, and code enforcement services within the city limits. Johnson City also maintains an [interactive GIS website](#) that includes information on zoning districts searchable by street address. The Development Services Department also maintains CityView Portal, a municipal website for builders, developers, and contractors working on construction projects in the city. CityView Portal allows users to apply for a building permit, upload revisions to existing projects, apply for a contractor license, and apply for land use modifications. This website also has a property search function that allows users to search property information by street address.

A summary of Johnson City zoning districts that permit residential development is in the following table:

Johnson City, Tennessee – Zoning Categories and Districts	
Category	Zoning Districts
Residential	Agricultural District (A-1) Low Density Residential District (R-1, R-2, R-2A, R-2B, R-2C) Medium Density Residential District (R-3, R-4) High Density Residential District (R-5) Manufactured Home Park Districts (RM-3, RM-4, RM-5)
Commercial	Neighborhood Business District (B-1) Central Business District (B-2) Supporting Central Business District (B-3)
Mixed-Use	Planned Residential Districts (RP-2, RP-3, RP-4, RP-5) High Density Residential-Professional Office District (RO-1) Medium Density Residential-Professional Office District (RO-2) Mixed Use District (MX) Mixed Use Neighborhood (MX-1) West Walnut Street District (WWD)

Source: Johnson City Zoning Ordinance (Article VI – Use Requirements by District)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential development not included in table.

Several zoning districts in Johnson City define setbacks by street type. Defined setbacks are deeper for arterial streets and collector streets compared to all other streets within this zoning district. The intent of the Supporting Central Business District (B-3) includes residential uses for downtown employees. Johnson City also has a location-specific zoning district for the West Walnut Street corridor.

The Johnson City Municipal Code includes provisions for Building and Utility Codes ([Title 12](#)) and Property Maintenance Regulations ([Title 13](#)). Building and Utility Codes implemented by Johnson City include the adoption of several national and international building codes, including (but not limited to) the International Building Code, International Residential Code, International Mechanical Code, International Plumbing Code, and National Electric Code. The Building and Utility Code regulations also include the creation of a Board of Building Codes, which has the ability to issue certification to tradespersons that work in the city, hear appeals and variances to the building code, as well as recommend building code changes implemented by the city. The Board of Building Codes is made up of city residents with at least five years of experience in the building and construction trades, including an engineer, electrical contractor, plumbing contractor, mechanical contractor, residential and commercial building contractors, and a registered architect.

The Property Maintenance Regulations define blighted areas, identify dilapidation of buildings and structures within the city limits, and establish minimum standards for housing. These regulations also establish a Board of Dwelling Standards and Review. This board determines whether dwellings are fit for human habitation and requires specific remediation measures necessary for dwellings designated as unfit. The Board meets on a monthly basis during the months of January through October, while special meetings could be held during November and December. Based on code enforcement staff recommendations, the board will determine whether or not a property is unfit for human habitation and recommend vacating and/or closing the property if no action is taken by the property owner. These decisions are made based on previous inspections conducted by building code staff members. Dwelling owners are typically sent an initial letter informing the owner that code violation(s) are present at the property, with an itemized list of violations. Johnson City also manages a Code Enforcement Complaint Line, which allows citizens to call in and report complaints about a property which may be in violation of city code. The Johnson City website also publishes a code violation list which includes definitions and associated descriptions of property, vehicle, and zoning violations.

Lynchburg, Virginia

The city of Lynchburg is located in the central portion of Virginia, approximately 222.0 miles northeast of Boone, North Carolina. Lynchburg had an estimated 2021 population of 79,009 according to the American Community Survey. Lynchburg has a significant undergraduate and graduate student population due to its five college and university campuses. The student population in Lynchburg is estimated to be over 20% of the overall city population.

The City of Lynchburg [Community Development Department](#) provides planning, zoning, building inspection, and code compliance services within the city limits. The Zoning and Natural Resources Division of the Community Development Department maintains and enforces Lynchburg's zoning ordinance. A summary of zoning categories and districts is included in the following table.

City of Lynchburg, Virginia – Zoning Categories and Districts	
Category	Zoning Districts
Residential	Conservation District (R-C) Low Density Residential District (R-1) Low-Medium Density Residential District (R-2) Medium Density Residential District (R-3) High Density Residential District (R-4)
Commercial	Limited Business District (B-1) Community Business District (B-3) Urban Commercial District (B-4) General Business District (B-5)

Source: City of Lynchburg Code of Ordinances (Chapter 35.2 – Zoning Ordinance)

Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential development not included in table.

The City of Lynchburg has a limited set of zoning districts compared to cities of similar size in the southeastern United States. The Conservation District (R-C) listed in the residential zoning category is intended for very-low density land uses in areas that do not have access to water and sewer facilities. Single-family dwellings, modular homes, manufactured homes, and short-term rentals are permitted uses within this zoning district. The High Density Residential District (R-4) also has density bonuses which allow for an increase in dwelling units per acre if certain guidelines are met. For example, density for a project built in the R-4 zoning district can be increased by two dwelling units per acre if the property is adjacent to a covered bus stop.

Housing Programs and Resources

Specific housing programs and resources provided in the city Lynchburg include the following:

Affordable Housing Resource Program – This guide is published by the Lynchburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority to help area residents locate housing, employment, and transportation. The most recent edition of this guide was published in June 2022. The guide includes a list of income-based housing options, housing assistance programs, community resources, employment programs, and transportation options in the Lynchburg area.

Vacant Building Registration Program - The Code Compliance Division of the City of Lynchburg administers a [vacant building registration program](#) in an effort to prevent blighted buildings and structures in the city. The criteria for determining a vacant building is listed in Section 11-191 of the City Code. Owners of properties containing vacant buildings are required to register with the City on an annual basis.

The City of Lynchburg published a [2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice \(AI\)](#) report in May 2020. This report is, in part, a review of *laws, regulations, administrative policies, procedures, and practices* impacting the local housing market, with a particular emphasis on Fair Housing Choice. The report concludes that there is high priority for access to community employment and opportunities as well as for the location and type of affordable housing made available in the city. In particular, the report states that a large share of multifamily apartment buildings are located near college and university campuses and are therefore targeting the student population

instead of low- or moderate-income households that are not students. In addition, nearly half of the single-family detached units in the city are renter occupied, meaning that there may not be an adequate supply of more affordable multifamily rental units in the market. This report also notes that affordable housing should target all segments of the city’s diverse population, including students, low- and moderate-income households, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. Lastly, the report noted achievements gained since the last AI report was published in 2015. Accomplishments noted include the allocation of funds to create additional affordable housing in targeted census tracts and the rehabilitation of public housing units in the city.

Bowling Green/Warren County, Kentucky

The city of Bowling Green is located in the western portion of Kentucky, approximately 365.0 miles west of Boone, North Carolina. Bowling Green had a 2021 estimated population of 73,529 and is the third largest city in Kentucky. Bowling Green is home to Western Kentucky University, which had a fall 2021 enrollment of 16,750 students.

Zoning in the city of Bowling Green is governed by the [City-County Planning Commission](#). Note that this planning commission administers zoning regulations county-wide, including the city of Bowling Green and unincorporated portions of Warren County.

A summary of zoning districts in Bowling Green/Warren County that permit residential development is in the following table:

Bowling Green/Warren County, Kentucky – Zoning Categories and Districts	
Category	Zoning Districts
Residential (Single-Family)	Agriculture District (AG) Residential Estate District (R-E) Rural Residential District (RR) Single-Family Residential Districts (RS-1A, RS-1B, RS-1C, RS-1D) Mobile Home Park (MHP)
Residential (Multifamily)	Two-Family Residential District (RM-2) Townhouse/Multifamily Residential District (RM-3) Multifamily Residential District (RM-4)
Commercial	Neighborhood Business District (NB) General Business District (GB) Central Business District (CB) Highway Business District (HB) Office and Professional – Residential (OP-R) Office and Professional – Commercial (OP-C)
Special Purpose	Planned Unit Development District (PUD)

Source: Warren County Zoning Ordinance (Article 4 – Zoning Districts)
Note: Zoning districts that do not permit residential development not included in table.

The Warren County zoning ordinance is structured for urban and suburban areas of Bowling Green as well as outlying areas in unincorporated portions of the county. The Rural Residential District (RR) only applies to unincorporated areas of Warren County and is intended for the development of large lots. Warren County also has separate mixed-use zoning districts for office and professional land uses favoring residential and commercial development. Residential zoning districts must also adhere to parking standards that limit how much of the front yard can be used for parking. Parking standards limit parking areas to up to 25% of the front yard in the low density RR zoning district to 50% of the front yard in the higher density RS-1D zoning district. Zoning regulations also specify different sets of off-street parking requirements for multifamily buildings based on proximity to the Western Kentucky University campus. Multifamily buildings within one mile of campus should generally have 1.0 to 1.5 parking spaces per bedroom, while multifamily buildings at least one mile from campus may require one parking space per bedroom or two parking spaces per unit based on zoning district.

Housing Programs and Resources

Specific housing programs and resources provided in Bowling Green and/or Warren County include the following:

Brownfields Program - The City of Bowling Green implements a Brownfields Program for the redevelopment of distressed and/or abandoned commercial and industrial properties. In order to assist with redevelopment of these properties, Bowling Green will use grant funds to pay for necessary site assessments. Note that the Brownfields Program is available for eligible properties citywide. However, several census tracts in the western portion of the city (referred to as the Bowling Green Reinvestment Area) have been designated a priority area for this program.

Flexible Neighborhood Grant – The City of Bowling Green Neighborhoods Services Division offers up to a \$7,500 [flexible neighborhood grant](#) for projects and neighborhood improvements within specified areas of the city. For the current grant cycle, Bowling Green is only awarding grants to portions of the city within the Reinvestment Area or areas of the city that were damaged by tornadoes in December 2021 and January 2022.