

**BLOUNT COUNTY, TENNESSEE**



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2024

DRAFT

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# INTRODUCTION



# 01



## INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan serves as the foundation of Blount County's long-term planning strategy, the framework for zoning regulations, a guide to local government decisions, and a resource for developers and property owners. The Plan represents the interests of many contributors, including County staff, a steering committee and, most importantly, the County's residents. The Comprehensive Plan is periodically reviewed to ensure the data and analysis of various chapters are accurate and still reflects the community's needs and desires.

This Comprehensive Land Use Plan is organized into eight chapters:

- 1.0 The first chapter is Land Use which provides current and future land use data, population projections, and a discussion of future land use categories.
- 2.0 The second chapter is Transportation and analyzes the transportation network and infrastructure in and around the County.
- 3.0 The third chapter is Infrastructure which provides data and analysis as it relates to critical infrastructure and public services provided by the County.
- 4.0 The fourth chapter is Housing which discusses housing inventory, affordability, and future needs.
- 5.0 The fifth chapter is Parks and Recreation and discusses park and open space facilities throughout the County.
- 6.0 The sixth chapter is Conservation and provides information regarding the environment and protected lands in and around the County.
- 7.0 The seventh chapter outlines the Goals and Policies of the plan. These actionable items aid in the implementation of each chapter, integrate the guiding principles developed through public input, and projects a timeline for each.
- 8.0 The final chapter is the Appendix which provides information summarizing previous planning documents and public engagement throughout this planning process.

# LAND USE



2022



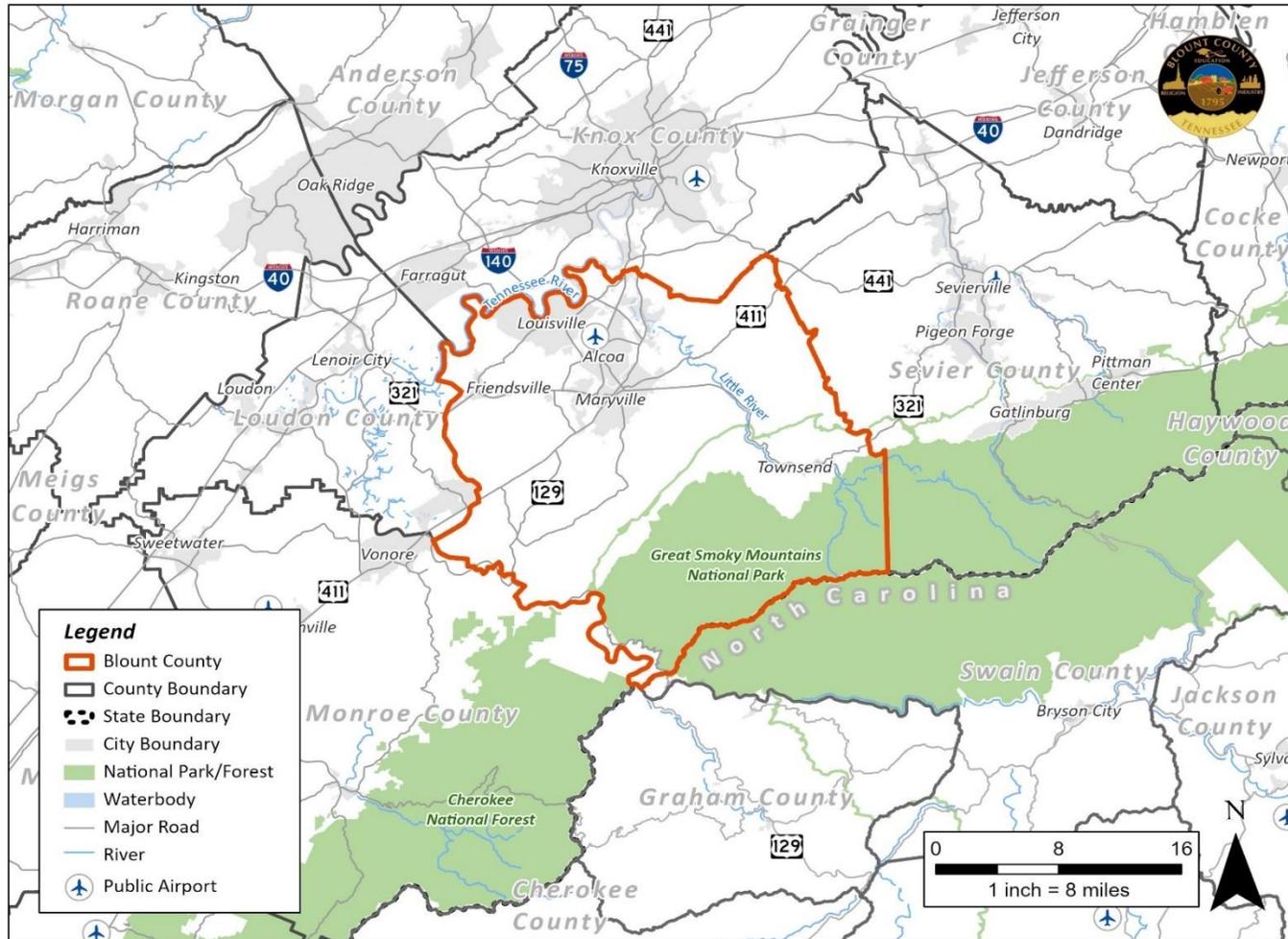
## INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use chapter is intended to designate future land use patterns that will best accommodate the projected population and development while minimizing adverse impacts on natural resources and maintaining essential public facilities and services. The County has several urban growth boundaries (UGBs) which are associated with each of the municipal areas. These boundaries delineate areas which are available for annexation and certain types of growth. Cities are not able to annex territory in another city's UGB. Annexation is achieved through 1 of 2 methods: resolution for annexation by referendum or resolution for annexation by owner consent. For either of these methods to occur the land to be annexed must be contiguous to the City's boundary, have water and sewer provided, and notarized consent to be included in the new boundary. This is important context for the contents of this chapter due to large areas of Blount County operating under municipal water and sewer systems from Alcoa and Maryville.

The chapter consists of an inventory and analysis of existing land use data and patterns, the projection of future land needs, as well as a land use map series. The Future Land Use Map and associated policies will guide development in a 20-year planning horizon. Land development regulations and other tools will be used to implement the plan.

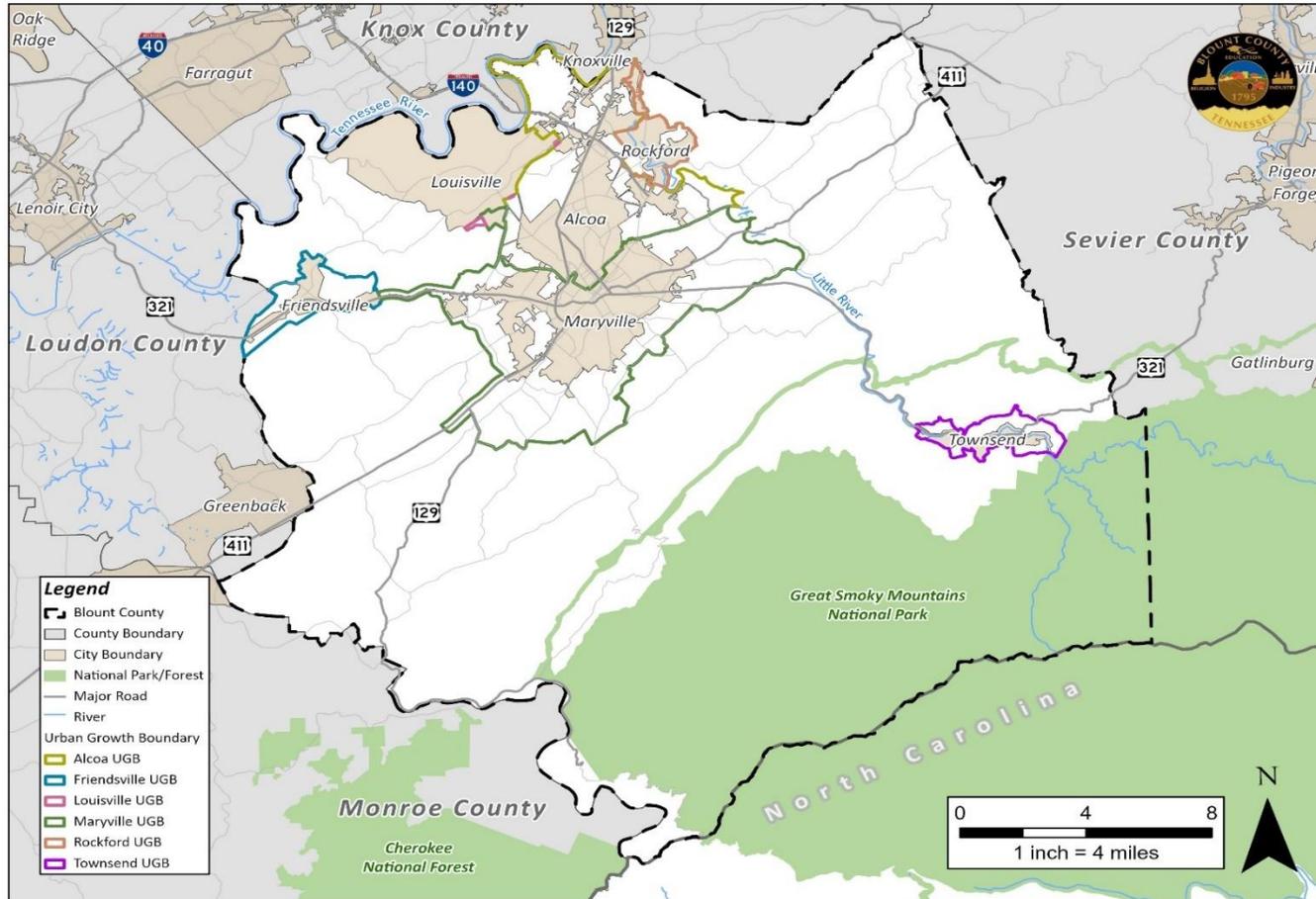
Regional Context of Blount County illustrates the general location of County within the Region, while the Blount County Boundary map shows the cities and urban growth boundaries within the County.

## Regional Context of Blount County



Sources: Blount County, State of Tennessee, State of North Carolina (NC OneMap), TNDOT, NCDOT, Census Bureau, 2023

## Blount County Boundary



Sources: Blount County, State of Tennessee, TNDOT, Census Bureau, 2023

## LAND USE DATA, INVENTORY, AND ANALYSIS

### EXISTING LAND USES

To better guide and direct future land uses (FLU) within the County, it is necessary to understand the present land use patterns. **Table 1: Existing Land Use** depicts the existing land use and development patterns by parcels in the County. This information is based upon Department of Revenue (DOR) tax codes as interpreted by the State. The existing land use (ELU) inventory serves as the basic framework for the FLU designations.

**Table 1: Existing Land Use**

Existing Land Use Category <sup>1</sup>	Acres	%
Conservation	122,691.5	39.1%
Low Density Residential	87,168.7	27.8%
Agriculture	72,473.0	23.1%
Public/Institutional	15,035.6	4.8%
Vacant	13,188.7	4.2%
Commercial	1,523.6	0.5%
Right-of-Way/Utilities	720.3	0.2%
Industrial	262.6	0.1%
Medium Density Residential	246.3	0.1%
Office/Professional	159.5	0.1%
High Density Residential	159.0	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>313,628.8</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup>The ELU categories shown above are derived from the Department of Revenue (DOR) land use codes provided within the most recent version of the County's parcel shapefile.

Source: Blount County, State of Tennessee, Inspire Placemaking

**Table 1: Existing Land Use** shows the acreage of land use by category. This analysis does not include parcels within incorporated areas, which generally has increased levels of commercial, industrial, and professional uses, as well as denser residential uses. This table and the **Existing Land Use Map** show that the predominant use of land in the County is Conservation (39.1% of the unincorporated land area). The second most common land use in the County is Low Density Residential, which is spread throughout the unincorporated areas, and accounts for approximately 28% of the unincorporated areas. Agricultural land uses account for approximately 23% of the unincorporated areas, similarly spread throughout the County. A brief description of each land use category, along with their typical uses, is provided below.

## **CONSERVATION**

Lands designated as Conservation on the ELU Map include areas that are often owned by public agencies, such as the State of Tennessee and the Federal Government. However, some of these parcels are owned by private residents, are unimproved, and typically forested. These areas are usually preserved due to their significance in supporting important and/or protected ecosystems. The largest contiguous Conservation areas in the County are in its southern quadrant and include part of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. For more information regarding conservation lands within the County, please see the Conservation Chapter of this plan.

## **LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

The Low-Density Residential land use category includes low density housing accommodations such as single-family dwellings. Low density residential is the most popular housing type in the County and is found throughout the unincorporated areas.

## **AGRICULTURAL**

This designation represents areas used for agricultural activities and rural residential development located on the fringes of the urban areas. Uses found in the agriculture areas may include vegetable farms, livestock ranches, plant nurseries, and silviculture activities, as well as kennels, and farm equipment storage and sales. As shown on the ELU map, agricultural land uses are located throughout the County, particularly in the western portion.

## **PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL**

Public/Semi-Public uses consist of public, semi-public, and private not-for-profit uses, such as civic and community centers, parks, hospitals, libraries, police and fire stations, and government administration buildings, as well as churches, social service facilities, emergency shelters, and similar uses. Educational facilities, such as public or private schools (primary or secondary), vocational and technical schools, and colleges and universities, are also included in this category. This land use is primarily located near Alcoa and Louisville, as well as near the boundary of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

## **VACANT**

The vacant classification generally refers to undeveloped or unimproved parcels. This includes lots in subdivisions that have already been platted, but are not developed, as well as lands that currently have no active uses. As shown on the ELU map, the vacant lands are generally found northeast of the national park, as well as along the US-411 and US-321 corridors.

## **COMMERCIAL**

The commercial land use category consists of a variety of restaurant and retail uses including, but not limited to fast-food establishments, grocery stores, clothing stores, automobile service facilities, and more. As shown on the ELU map, commercial uses in the unincorporated areas are located along major roads such as US-411, US-321, and US-129. These uses are also located on the fringes of the incorporated areas. Commercial land accounts for less than one percent of the unincorporated land area.

## **RIGHT-OF-WAY & UTILITIES**

The Utility and Right-of-Way ELU category contains infrastructure designed to accommodate the County's residential and nonresidential uses. This designation in the unincorporated areas primarily includes utilities. This land use category runs from the southwestern corner of the County to Maryville.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

Industrial uses typically include warehouses, wholesale/distribution centers, heavy equipment repair, assembly, processing, motor vehicle impoundment facilities, and outdoor storage. This use is primarily located in the area northeast of Rockford on the County boundary and between Alcoa and Louisville, southwest of the airport. This land use accounts for less than one percent of the unincorporated area.

## **MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

The medium density residential land use category includes attached medium density housing accommodations such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and smaller garden-style apartments. This ELU category is primarily found near the boundaries of Maryville, Alcoa, and Rockford.

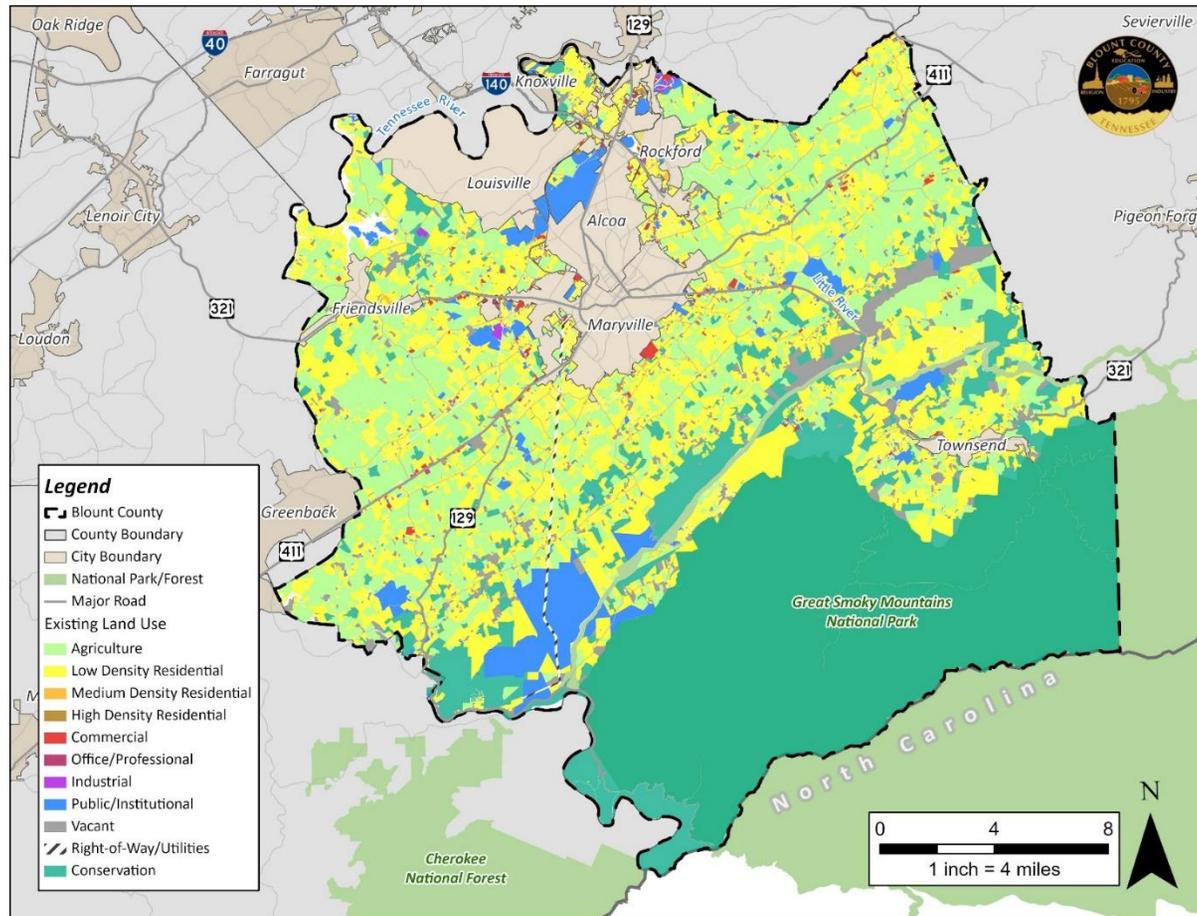
## **OFFICE/PROFESSIONAL**

This ELU designation describes land that contains professional offices including medical complexes, office buildings, and doctor's offices. Office/Professional uses are generally found near the borders of the incorporated areas, including near Rockford, Alcoa, and Maryville.

## **HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

This ELU designation describes residential structures capable of accommodating a large number of dwellings, often taking the form of two (2) to three (3) story apartments or condominiums within County. Due to the limitation of urban activity to lands within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), this category is the least occurring land use found within the County and is rarely found outside of municipal limits. The most concentrated area of High Density Residential activity within the County is along the boundaries of Maryville and Rockford.

## Existing Land Use Map

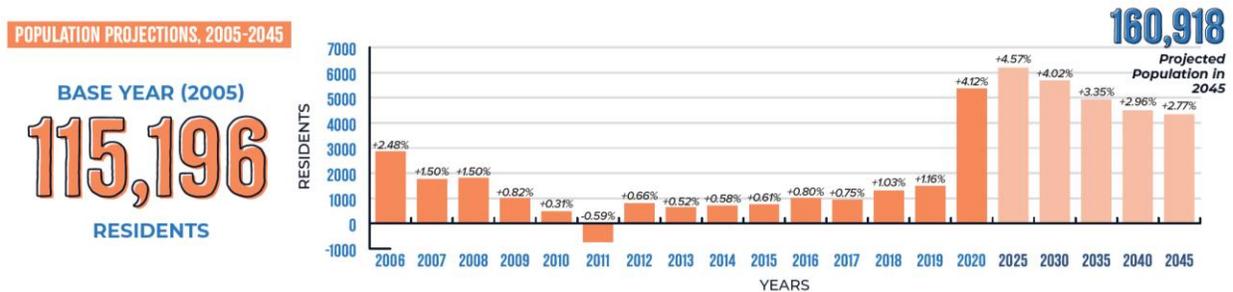


Sources: Blount County, State of Tennessee, TNDOT, Census Bureau, 2023

## PROJECTED POPULATION AND HOUSING NEEDS

Future population growth is the driving force behind future facility needs and land requirements. The 2010 population for Blount County was 123,208 residents, 134,751 in 2020, and 136,184 in 2021. The Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville releases population projections for all Tennessee counties and metropolitan statistical areas every two years. The data for Blount County is found in Table 2: Population: Historical & Projections, 2005-2045. As these population projections are based upon past growth rates and may not account for all current growth trends, the projections may under-account for new residents within the County. Due to the availability of developable land in the County, as well as the County’s proximity to the City of Knoxville, population may increase faster than expected. Information regarding housing and environmental pressures is addressed in further chapters.

**Table 2: Population: Historical & Projections, 2005-2045**



## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Blount County is a primarily rural county in the southeastern area of Tennessee, bordering North Carolina. There are a few cities in the County, with the largest being Maryville. The County has part of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in its southern half, as well as part of the Foothills Parkway. Blount County is part of the Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area, and the city of Knoxville is located near the County boundary. Much of the County is preserved in its natural state and provides ample opportunities for tourism. Residents have diverse options for their lifestyles, ranging from acres of farmland to dense living in a city.

### STRONG RURAL COMMUNITY

Blount County has long-time, strong ties to agriculture. The County has long been considered rural with some portions of urban land use to the north. Blount County originated with a strong agricultural industry and was once one of the largest producers of cotton in the State of Tennessee.<sup>1</sup> During the public engagement process, community members have voiced their concerns over losing the rural nature of the County through further development of unincorporated areas. Residents believe that this development is stripping the County of its rural heritage while increasing the burden on local infrastructure, particularly on the road network. The County has urban growth boundaries established for each of the incorporated areas, however, as development pressures from the metropolitan area continue in the County, there has

<sup>1</sup> Blount County History. <https://tngenweb.org/goodspeeds/blount-county-history/>

been concern that additional development at higher densities could start being developed outside of the urban growth boundaries.

The Suburbanizing district was originally created in 2000 in the zoning regulations as an area where it was anticipated that it would transition to a higher density over time, coinciding closely with the Planning Regions of Alcoa and Maryville. Planning Regions are areas outside of a municipality over which the municipality exerts subdivision control if their Planning Commission has been given Regional Planning Commission status by the State. The idea is that, by enforcing the development standards of the municipality, the development would be consistent with that inside the city should, for example, the city annex the area. When Maryville became a municipal planning commission in July, 2018, it left two regional planning commissions in the County: Blount County and Alcoa.

In an effort to continue to direct density to the more appropriate locations, which are surrounding the cities, the County has proposed a new Future Land Use designation of Suburbanizing 2. This new category is for lands outside of the urban growth boundary and will have a lower density than Suburbanizing 1.

## **ACCESS TO NATURE**

Blount County residents, due to the County's proximity to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Foothills Parkway, and various national forests, have many outdoor recreational opportunities, as well as economic development in the form of eco-tourism. Access to nature is associated with better overall community health. Throughout the public engagement process, County residents highlighted the connection to nature being important for the community and important to preserve. Like the County's strong rural and agricultural ties, residents do not want to lose this access and want to preserve the natural areas in the County. Through eco-tourism, defined as nature-based forms of tourism where the main motivation of the tourists is to observe and appreciate nature while minimizing negative impacts upon the natural world, Blount County can continue to share its natural areas and support local tourism and economic development that fosters continued preservation<sup>2</sup>.

## **CONCEPTUAL LAND USE CATEGORIES**

This section provides an overview of the conceptual land use categories as well as the conceptual land use map. The categories of Commercial, Industrial, Airport, and Suburbanizing 1 are generally consistent with the areas in the County which have been identified for potential future growth. The categories of Rural 1, Rural 2, and National Park are generally consistent as areas identified for limited growth. The new category of Suburbanizing 2 is intended for a lower density outside of the urban growth boundary.

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations, World Tourism Organization. 2002. <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/ecotourism-and-protected-areas>

**Table 3: Conceptual Land Use Categories**

**FLU BREAKDOWN**

<b>FLU Type</b>	<b>Acres Sum</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Airport	1,306.60639	0.61%
Commercial	3,061.4346	1.42%
Industrial	1,638.16059	0.76%
R-1	138,168.65119	64.10%
R-2	45,321.21635	21.02%
S-1	16,266.46153	7.55%
S-2	9,839.61042	4.56%
<b>TOTAL SUM</b>	<b>215,562.141076294</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Only includes zoned areas in unincorporated areas – incorporated areas and Great Smoky Mountains National Park not included\**

**RURAL 1**

The Rural 1 land use category identifies areas where medium to low density development is expected to occur, with an emphasis on residential development. This area is unlikely to be annexed by municipalities. Medium density residential developments could potentially be developed on land suitable for septic tanks. Low density residential is expected to occur in areas with greater development constraints, while some limited commercial development, based on requirements within the land development regulations, is allowed along arterial or collector roads. Further commercial development may be allowed to expand based upon changing development in these rural areas. The Rural 1 category accounts for approximately 64% of the County’s unincorporated area, generally located in the northern half of the County surrounding the municipalities.

**NATIONAL PARK**

The National Park land use category covers the area owned by the federal government, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Foothills Parkway. This land use category allows for conservation and open space, as well as limited recreational development. This land use category accounts for 31% of the unincorporated area.

## **RURAL 2**

The Rural 2 land use category identifies areas where development is highly constrained by environmental factors and infrastructure. Residential development is likely to be at densities of less than one dwelling unit per five acres. Limited, low intensity commercial activity is allowed, specifically commercial development geared toward recreation and tourism. The Rural 2 category accounts for approximately 21% of the County's unincorporated areas, concentrated north of the National Park area.

## **SUBURBANIZING 1**

The Suburbanizing 1 land use category is intended to provide areas for high to medium density development near municipalities, generally residential. The high density residential (greater than 3 dwelling units per acre) should occur on land with public sewer, while medium density residential (between 1 and 1.5 dwelling units per acre) should occur on land suitable for septic tanks. Limited commercial development is allowed, specifically along arterial or collector roads. This land use category surrounds Maryville, Alcoa, and part of Louisville and Rockford, accounting for 7.5% of the unincorporated land area.

## **SUBURBANIZING 2**

The Suburbanizing 2 land use category is expected to be for low density residential, conservation, and agricultural. High density residential properties on public Sewer are 2 to 3 dwelling units per acre while those on septic (medium density residential) is 1 to 1.5 units per acre. This land use category is outside of the Urban Growth Boundary and accounts for approximately 4.5% of the unincorporated land area.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

The primary function of the Industrial land use category is to provide areas which are appropriate for existing and future industrial development. This land use is primarily found near the larger municipalities and accounts for less than one percent of the unincorporated area (0.76% or approximately 1,700 acres).

## **COMMERCIAL**

The Commercial land use category allows for commercial development to support needs of residents and travelers. Most of the commercial development can be found along highway corridors and around the fringes of municipalities. The highest intensity commercial development should be near municipalities. In the unincorporated area, the category accounts for approximately 3,061 acres or less than one and half percent of the land area.

## **AIRPORT**

The primary function of the Airport land use category is to provide areas for airports and directly related activities. This classification will allow for a mix of industrial and commercial uses as needed to support the McGhee-Tyson Airport, an economic driver in the County. This type of land use is in the northeastern area of the County, between the cities of Alcoa and Louisville and accounts for 1,300 acres (less than half a percent of the unincorporated land area).



# TRANSPORTATION



03



## INTRODUCTION

The Transportation Chapter is the blueprint to plan for and enhance the mobility of not only goods and services but also to provide for the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and automobiles. This chapter analyzes the current performance and capacity for the existing transportation facilities, projects future needs for roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, and provides recommendations and information regarding future system improvements.

Alternative modes of transportation are an important part of this chapter. Providing accessible multimodal transportation options in the form of roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other services and programs is a challenge for many communities that this chapter seeks to address. The safety and accessibility of transportation infrastructure impact community residents every day. Therefore, it is essential to accurately describe and understand the state of the County's transportation infrastructure to gauge the needs of the community and its access to the surrounding region.

## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

### ROADWAYS

- **Inventory of Roadways and Signals**

The major roadways that serve Blount County are as follows and referenced in **Map 1 Map 2: Road Network**

- Pellissippi Parkway (Interstate 140) is a major highway connecting Blount and Knox counties to Interstate 40.
- US Route 129 is a USDOT maintained highway that runs north/south through Blount County, serving as a primary access road for the McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS).
- US Route 321 is a major USDOT highway that gives Blount County residents access to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, western North Carolina, and South Carolina.
- US Route 411 South travels southwest from Maryville to neighboring Monroe and Polk counties.
- Tennessee Route 33 travels northeast from Maryville to Knoxville and greater Knox County.
- Tennessee Route 35 connects Maryville to US Route 129, traveling north to Knox County.

- **Roadway Trends**

Based on Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) data the roadways with the highest annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes are Pellissippi Parkway (Interstate 140) and Airport Highway (US Route 129) with 32,001 to 59,110 daily trips. Portions of US Route 321 and US Route 411 also maintain relatively high traffic volumes, facilitating between 17,000 to 32,000 daily trips. The Lamar Alexander Parkway (US 321) maintains a moderate traffic flow, with 8,501 to 17,000 daily trips. All other major road segments house low traffic volumes by comparison, with fewer than 8,500 daily trips. An overview of Blount County traffic volumes can be found in **Map 2: Traffic Map**.

As Blount County and surrounding areas continue to develop, traffic volumes will also increase. TDOT and County staff will continue to monitor roadway performance and collaborate to implement roadway improvements as needed.

- **Maintenance and Responsibility**

Roadway maintenance responsibilities vary according to location and agency. Highways, parkways, state roads, are maintained by the Tennessee Department of Transportation and funded by the Federal Highway Administration. State and local roads are maintained by TDOT, Blount County, or the respective municipality's transportation departments.

## **PARKING**

Most of the parking in Blount County is private, located on the lots of residences or businesses, with the size of these parking areas dependent on the size and type of development. There are a few public parking options for residents and visitors, with lots and garages operated by the cities of Maryville and Alcoa.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

East Tennessee Human Resource Agency (ETHRA) supplies all public transportation options for Blount County residents. ETHRA operates as a point-to-point transit system where residents can request rides directly to their destinations. Fares are \$3.00 each way from trips within the County, with an additional \$3.00 charged for each county line crossed. Riders may add additional stops for \$1.00 so long as they are 15 minutes or less in duration. All children under the age of 6 ride for half-fare. Since these rides are operated as point-to-point, residents must contact ETHRA Public Transport to schedule a ride 3 business days prior to their trip.

## **AIRPORTS**

Blount County is serviced by McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS) in Alcoa. The airport hosts commercial airline, air cargo, and military aviation services for East Tennessee. The facility employs around 2,700 people and has an estimated economic impact of \$1 billion annually.

## **PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM**

The pedestrian system within the County is concentrated most heavily around the downtown areas of Alcoa and Maryville. Sidewalks are also located near schools, County and city properties, and various parks and recreation facilities. Many private subdivisions also contain sidewalk networks for their residents, although these are not publicly maintained.

## **BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE, TRAILS, AND GREENWAYS**

In areas throughout the County, there are areas of paved, dedicated bike lanes to support cyclists. Even on roadway segments that do not have dedicated bike lanes, drivers are encouraged to share the roads with cyclists to keep roads safe for all users.

Blount County, in collaboration with the cities of Maryville and Alcoa, maintains the Alcoa-Maryville greenway. The greenway has over 18 miles of paved paths and trails that stretch from Clayton-Bradley Academy in the north to Foothills Elementary School in the south. The greenway connects many

commercial corridors, schools, residential neighborhoods, and parks and recreation facilities in the County, allowing residents to walk and bike freely between destinations.

## RAILWAYS

Blount County is home to two (2) Class 1 railroads serviced by CSX and Norfolk Southern, operating as freight haulers for the region. The CSX route runs through neighboring Knox, Loudon, and Monroe counties, and the Norfolk Southern route originates in Maryville, traveling North into Knox County. Map 3 shows all railroads in Blount County.

## FUTURE NEEDS

East Tennessee is experiencing growth in population and industry, exerting development pressures on Knoxville and the surrounding counties. It is important that Blount County monitors this growth, ensuring that roadways continue to provide residents and travelers with reasonable trip times, safe conditions, and variety in available transit modes.

TDOT has identified Blount County and the Alcoa Highway as an improvement site as described in Table 1. The project, coined the "Relocated Alcoa Highway," is a seven (7) phase project aimed at improving traffic flow and access to McGhee Tyson Airport. The redesign will shift the current Alcoa Highway to the east, add new travel lanes and interchanges, and expand pedestrian greenway sections along sections of Hunt Road, Wright Road, and Cusick Road<sup>3</sup>. This project may cause travel interruptions and delays until its completion but should greatly improve trip performance upon completion.

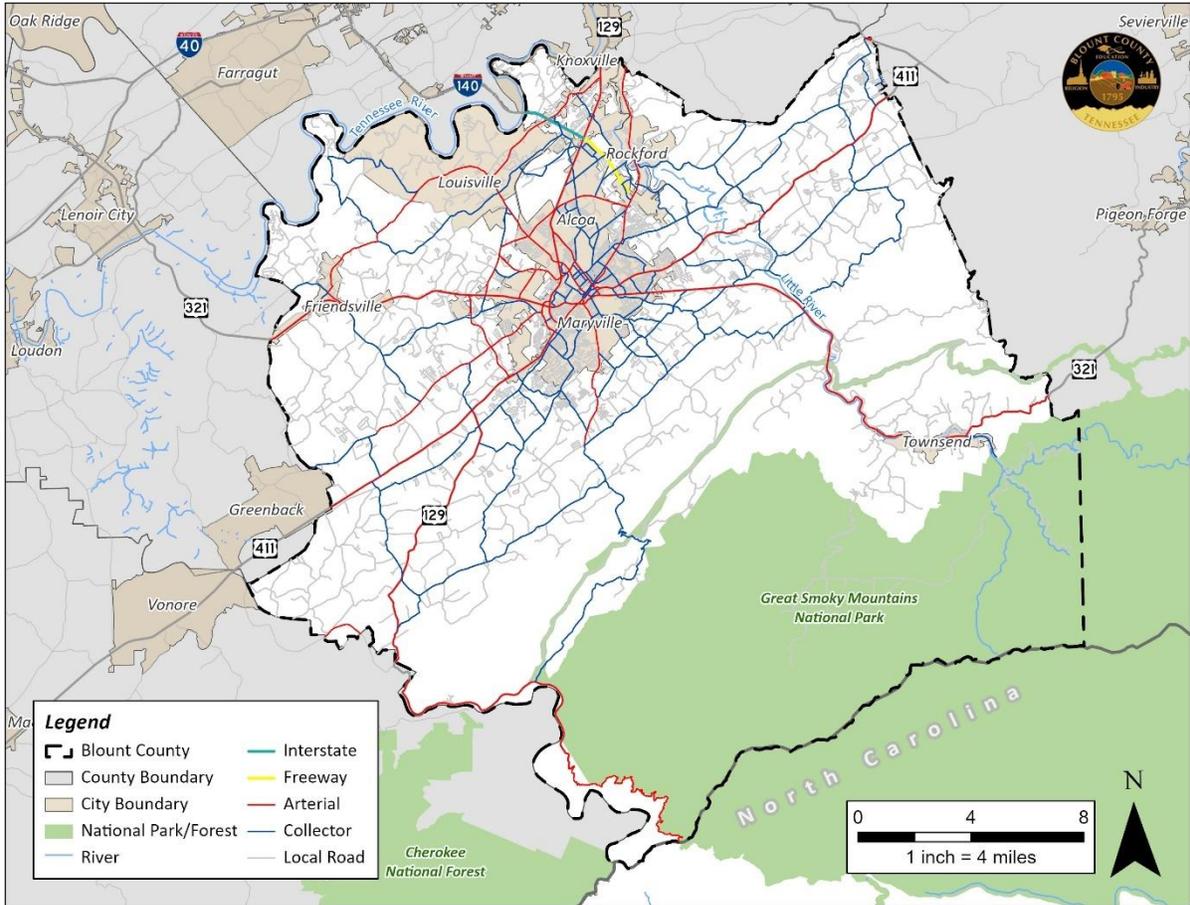
**Table 1**

Blount County	Schedule
From north of SR 35 (Hall Road) to proposed interchange at Tyson Boulevard	Summer 2022
(Relocated Alcoa Highway) from proposed interchange at Tyson Boulevard to SR 115 at South Singleton Station (Phase 1)	Estimated completion Fall 2027

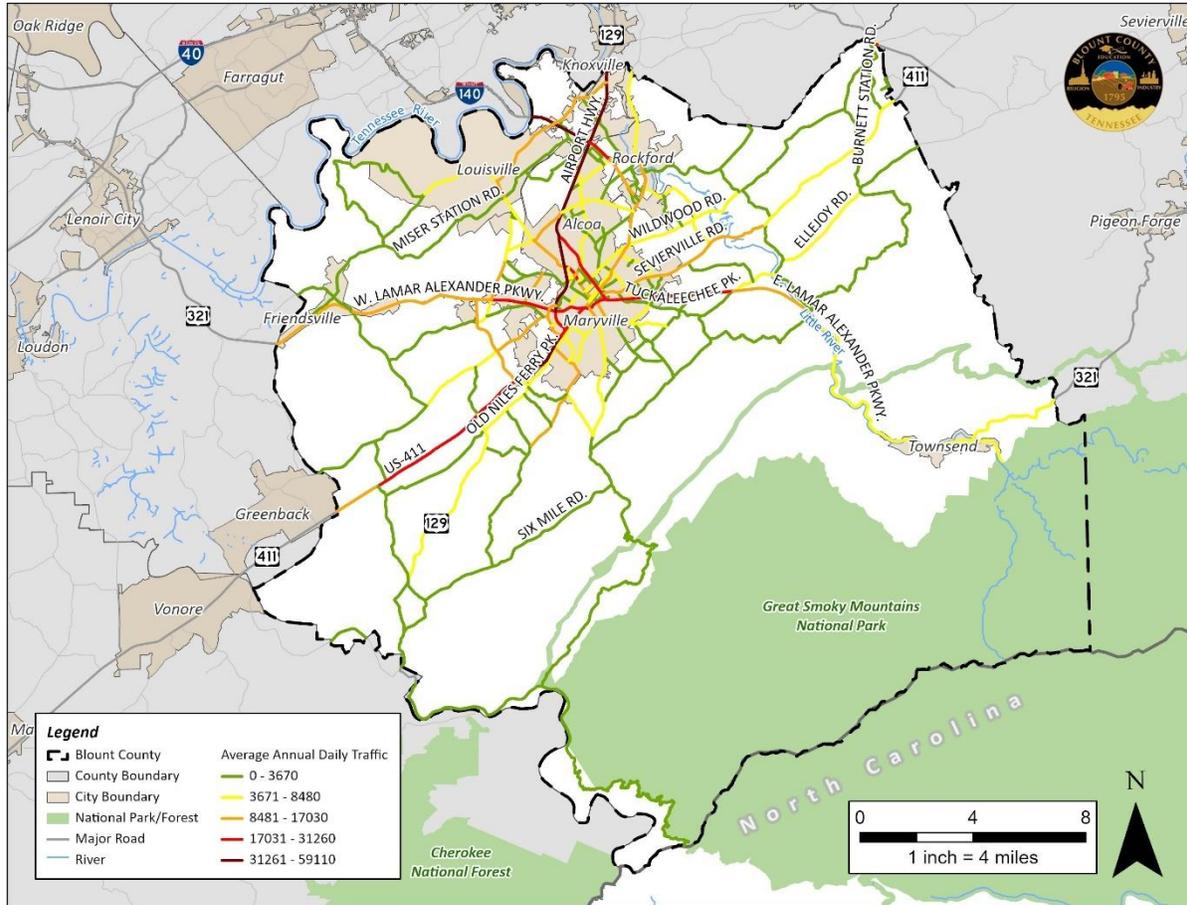
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/projects/projects-region-1/sr115-us-129-alcoa-highway.html>

(Relocated Alcoa Highway) from proposed interchange at Tyson Boulevard to SR 115 at South Singleton Station (Phase 2)	Scheduled Fiscal Year 2028
From South Singleton Station to south of Little River	TBD

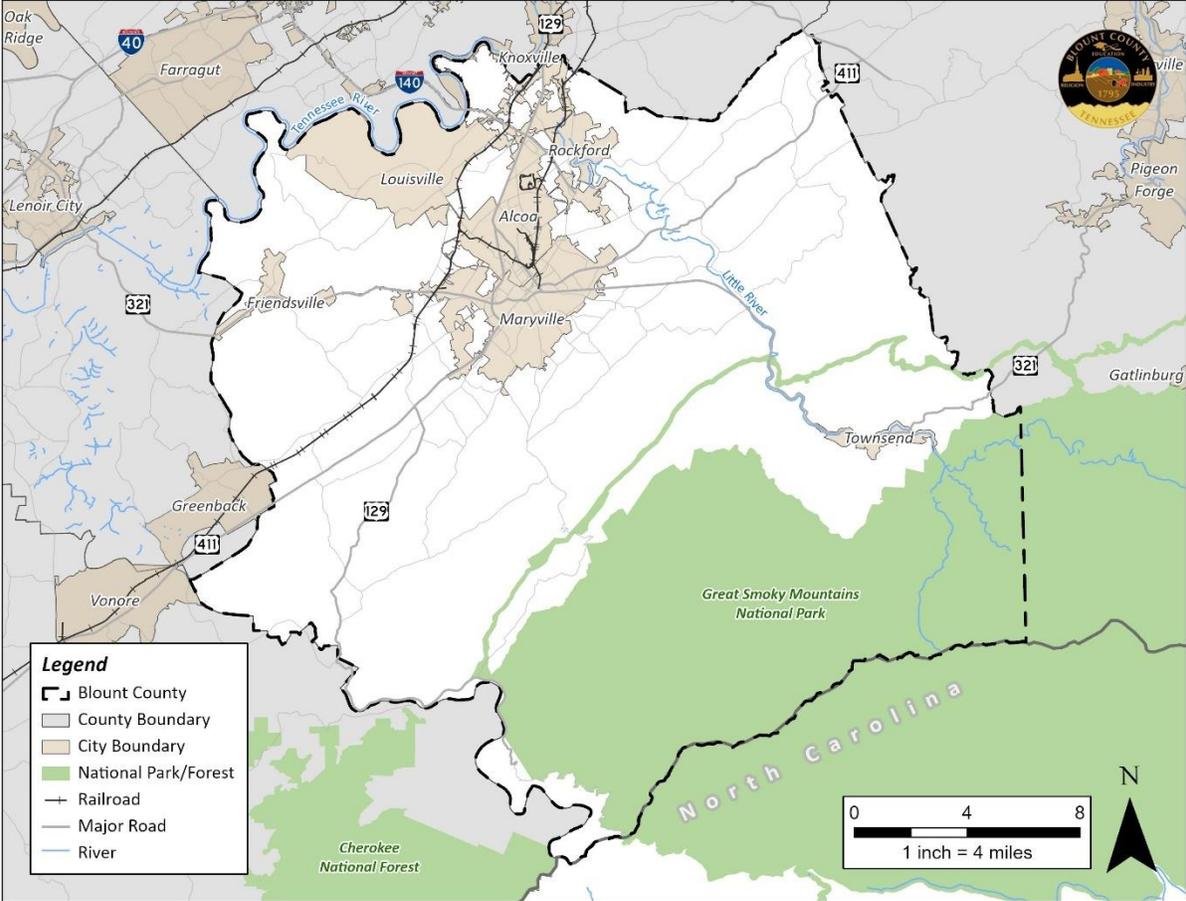
# Map 1: Road Network



## Map 2: Traffic Map



### Map 3: Railway Map



# INFRASTRUCTURE



# 04

## INTRODUCTION

The Public Facilities Element provides an inventory, analysis and future needs of potable water, wastewater treatment, solid waste collection, emergency services, and electric utilities within Blount County.

## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

### WATER & WASTEWATER SYSTEM

The primary water and wastewater facilities for residents of unincorporated Blount County includes the South Blount County Utility District (SBCUD), Alcoa Water System, Friendsville Water Works, Knox-Chapman Utility District, the City of Maryville Water & Sewer Department, and the Tuckaleechee Utility District. SBCUD has the largest service area within the County. This utility services over 17,000 homes, businesses, and schools in Blount County, Friendsville, and Louisville. SBCUD maintains its lines and facilities in a service area of over 150 square miles.

SBCUD's distribution center is located at 320 Partnership Parkway in Maryville. This facility serves as the primary distribution hub for water processed at the treatment plant. The treatment plant opened in 2004 and greatly expanded the capacity of the system. The network has added over 400 new customers per year over the past five years and distributes around 3.7 million gallons of water per day with total production capabilities of 10.3 million gallons daily.

### SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

South Blount County Utility District has identified several improvement projects to better serve the growing population of the County and service area. The projects aim to expand utility capabilities and service, update and replace aging infrastructure, and retain high quality drinking water standards for all customers.

- ◆ Louisville Transmission Main Project
- ◆ A 35,000 linear feet project that replaces aging assets and provides modern system hydraulics for the future of the county. Project alignment has been determined and engineering is approximately 40% complete.
- ◆ Blockhouse Phase 3
- ◆ A major water line overhaul on Chilhowee View Road that replaces 10,000 linear feet of 4 & 6-inch water lines with 12-inch water lines that improve fire flows, pressures, and overall system hydraulics. This phase also integrates 2,500 linear feet of 4-inch with 8-inch between Autumn Drive and Sims Road on Hwy 321. The project went to bid in September of 2023 and is funded with American Rescue Plan Act funding from Blount County. As of August 1, 2024, the project is around 50% completed with substantial completion date slated for October 6, 2024.
- ◆ Blockhouse Phase 4
- ◆ A major waterline improvement project on Whites Mill Road and Tuckaleechee Pike replaces over 14,800 feet of 6-inch water lines with 12-inch water lines that improve fire flows, pressures, and overall system hydraulics. This project starts at the end of Blockhouse Phase III (Chilhowee View Road and Whites Mill Road) and ends at Autumn Drive on Hwy 321.

Engineering for the project is completed and the bidding process is expected to begin in the fall or winter of 2023.

- ◆ Clear Well Project
- ◆ A partnership between SBCUD and W.K. Dickerson to add an additional 1-million-gallon clear well water tank for the water treatment plant. The advertising and bidding process will take place in the summer of 2023.

## **SOLID WASTE COLLECTION**

- **Active Landfills and Collection**

Blount County does not operate a county trash collection service. Residents living in unincorporated Blount County are encouraged to use private trash collection companies for curbside pickup services. Residents may also use the Alcoa/Maryville/Blount County Sanitary Landfill located at 240 Long Powers Road in Friendsville to deposit waste for a fee. The landfill is operated by the City of Alcoa Public Works department but allows all residents of the County to use its facilities. Proof of residency or job within the County is required when checking-in to the facility.

- **Recycling Program**

Blount County operates a recycling center in Alcoa located at 331 Levi Street adjacent to the Blount County Operations Center. The Recycle Center is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Accepted items include corrugated cardboard, glass, paper items like office goods, junk mail, newspapers, and catalogs, metal cans, and plastics #1 through #7. There are separate collection areas for specific items such as light bulbs, paint, and newsprint. The center also accepts household hazardous waste, used oil, and antifreeze as a part of their hazardous waste collection program.

- **Hazardous Waste**

The County's hazardous waste program is operated out of the Recycling Center located at 331 Levi Street. Given the difficult nature of hazardous waste disposal, accepted items are limited, and waste areas are monitored. Residents may dispose:

- ***Automotive and Marine Products***

- oil and fuel additives
- grease and rust solvents, naval jelly
- carburetor and fuel injector cleaners
- starter fluids
- body putty
- antifreeze / coolant
- gasoline (in approved container which MUST be left)

- ***Home Maintenance / Improvement Products***

- used strippers and thinners
- adhesives
- driveway sealant
- roofing tar
- wallpaper remover
- **Home Lawn and Garden Products**
  - pesticides
  - fertilizers
  - wood preservatives
- **Miscellaneous**
  - pool chemicals
  - photo processing chemicals
  - aerosols / compressed gas
  - mercury thermostats and thermometers
  - fluorescent tubes
  - compact fluorescent bulbs
  - needles and sharps (in a puncture-proof container)

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

- **Fire Protection**

Blount County residents can subscribe to fire protection services through the Blount County Fire Protection District (FDBC). FDBC offers fire suppression, hazardous material response, vehicle rescue, water rescue, land search, high angle rescue, collapse rescue, trench rescue, fire prevention, and public fire education services to residents of unincorporated Blount County. FDBC operates on a non-profit subscription model meaning that yearly payments from Blount County Residents fund the department rather than tax dollars. Service rates depend on the type of structure/dwelling unit and can be found on their website at [www.blountfire.org](http://www.blountfire.org).

- **Law Enforcement**

Law Enforcement responsibilities are performed by the Blount County Sheriff's Office under the leadership of Sheriff James L. Berrong. The Sheriff's Office is located at 940 E Lamar Alexander Parkway in Maryville, providing a variety of services to residents of the county. Officers are responsible for corrections, court support, criminal investigations, narcotics, records, training, and patrol and public safety for Blount County.

Residents can contact the Sheriff's Office for help through the Crime Prevention Hotline at 865-273-5200 or the Non-Emergency Dispatch at 865-983-3620. For all emergencies call 911. All other questions can be answered by calling 865-273-5000.

## **ELECTRIC UTILITIES**

There are multiple electric utility providers for Blount County residents. The following is a summary of those providers.

- **Alcoa Electric Department (AED)**

Alcoa Electric Department is a significant electricity provider for unincorporated Blount County. Of the 30,000 customers serviced by the utility, around 26,100 are residential. AED is one of 153 distributors of Tennessee Valley Authority power.

- **Fort Loudoun Coop**

Fort Loudoun Electric Cooperative (FLEC) serves portions of a three-county area including Blount, Loudon, and Monroe counties. The cooperative is a private, non-profit organization that is owned by the members it serves. The service area of FLEC is divided into eight districts and a director is elected from each district every three years. Four of the eight districts are within Blount County.

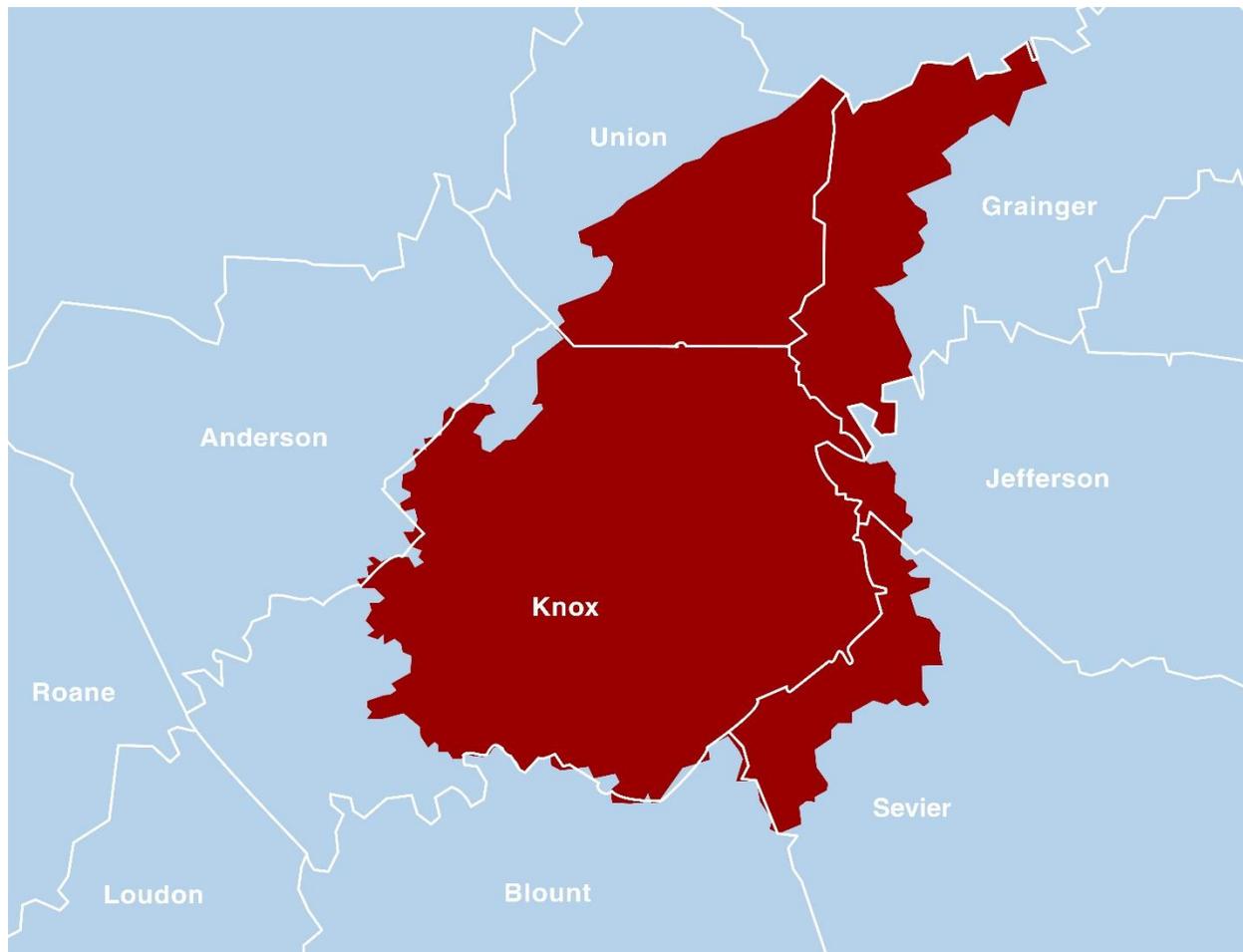
- **City of Maryville**

Maryville's Electric Department provides electrical service to customers in the City of Maryville and surrounding areas within Blount County. In providing this service, the department has installed and maintained 387 miles of electrical distribution line to over 20,000 customers. Of these customers, approximately 17,000 are residential, and the other 3,000 are commercial and industrial customers.

- **Knoxville Utilities Board (KUB)**

A very small number of Blount County residents are serviced by the KUB, as shown in the service area map provided by KUB below:

**Map 1: KUB Service in Blount County**



- **Sevier County**

The Sevier County Electric System, also known as SCES, is a nonprofit, public utility company located in Sevierville, TN. The system has been in operation for more than 65 years. It provides electricity for over 60,000 residential and commercial customers in Sevier and Blount counties in Tennessee. The system purchases electricity on the basis of a wholesale contract from the Tennessee Valley Authority.

## **SCHOOL SYSTEM**

- **Overview**

The Blount County School District encompasses 21 schools:

- 14 elementary schools, grades K-5

- 3 middle schools, grades 6-8
- 2 high schools, grades 9-12
- 2 non-traditional schools, the Samuel Everett School of Innovation (grades K-12) and Eagleton College & Career Academy (grades 6-12).

There are about 10,000 students and 1,400 teachers across these 21 schools. According to the [Tennessee Comptroller](#), all schools in Blount County are considered to be in good or excellent condition.

- **Available Data Sources**

The Tennessee Department of Education and the Tennessee Comptroller offer district- and school-level data on school quality and student enrollment. Esri Business Analyst Online and the [University of Tennessee - Knoxville](#) provide population data that provides insight into the future growth of the school-aged population in Blount County. The Blount County School Board also provided academic capacity data for each school in the district.

- **Data Analysis**

- ***Current Enrollment and Student-Teacher Ratios***

- As of 2022, elementary school enrollment ranges from 113 students (Townsend) to 528 students (Mary Blount), with an average enrollment of 318. Student-teacher ratios are low, ranging from 11 to 14.
- Blount County middle schools have a range of enrollment of 574 (Carpenters) to 711 (Heritage), with an average enrollment of 644. All three schools have a student-teacher ratio of 16.
- The two high schools have student enrollments of 1333 (Heritage) and 1540 (William Blount) and both have student-teacher ratios of 15.
- The two non-traditional schools have smaller enrollments of 359 (Samuel Everett) and 476 (Eagleton) and have student-teacher ratios of 16 and 13, respectively.
- The student-teacher ratios for all schools are either on par or below the 2022 [national average](#) of 15.8. Furthermore, the average student-teacher ratios are well within the averages as required by Tennessee Code Ann. § 49-1-104:

9.0 20 for grades K-3,

10.0 25 for grades 4-6,

11.0 30 for grades 7-12, and

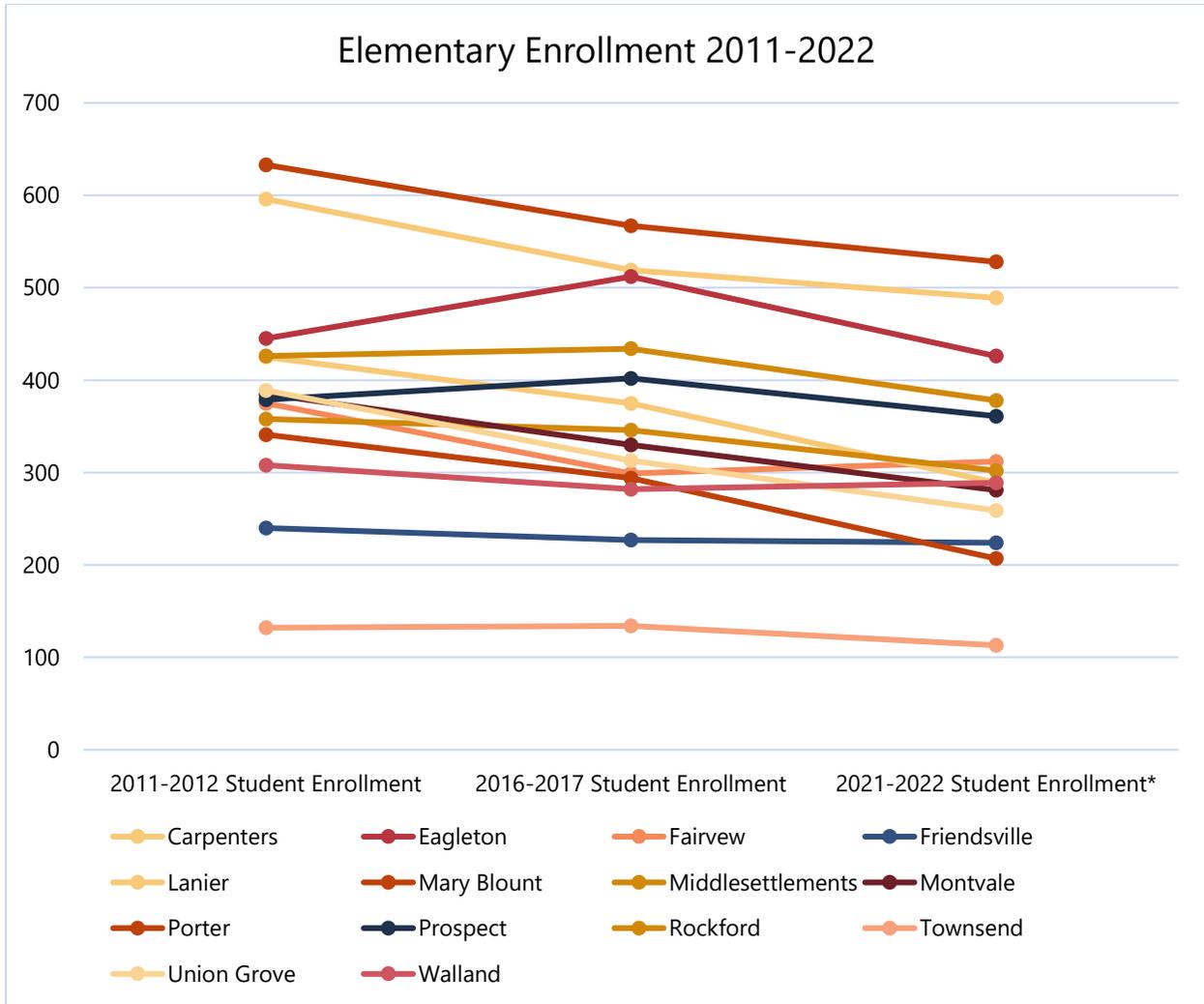
12.0 20 for career and technical education.

- ***Enrollment over Time, 2011-2022***

Overall enrollment in Blount County Schools has not changed drastically over the past several years. In fact, most schools saw slight decreases in enrollment between the years 2011 and 2022 (see charts 1-4 below). Some of these enrollment decreases may be explained by the two non-traditional schools being built / expanded and capturing some enrollment.

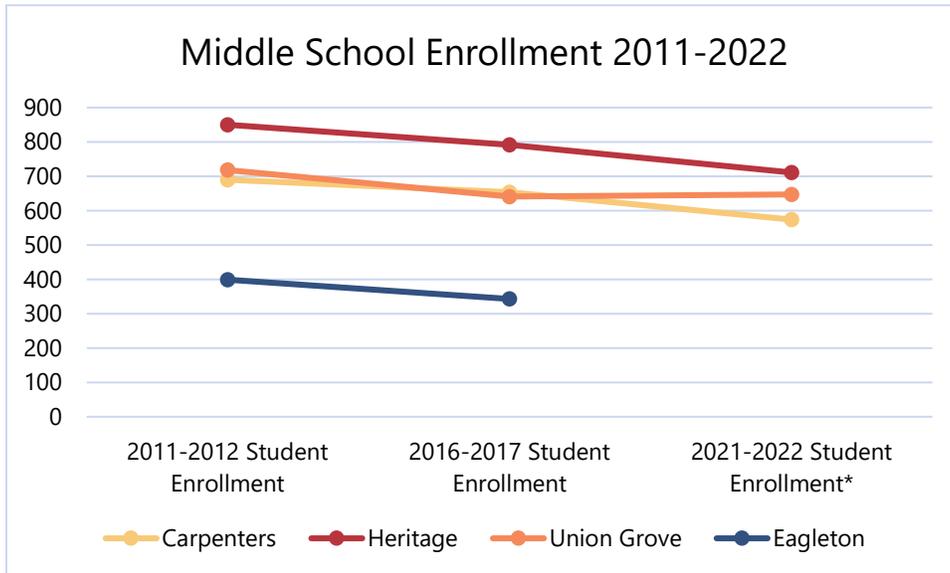
**Chart 1: Blount County Elementary School Enrollment, 2011-2022**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education)**



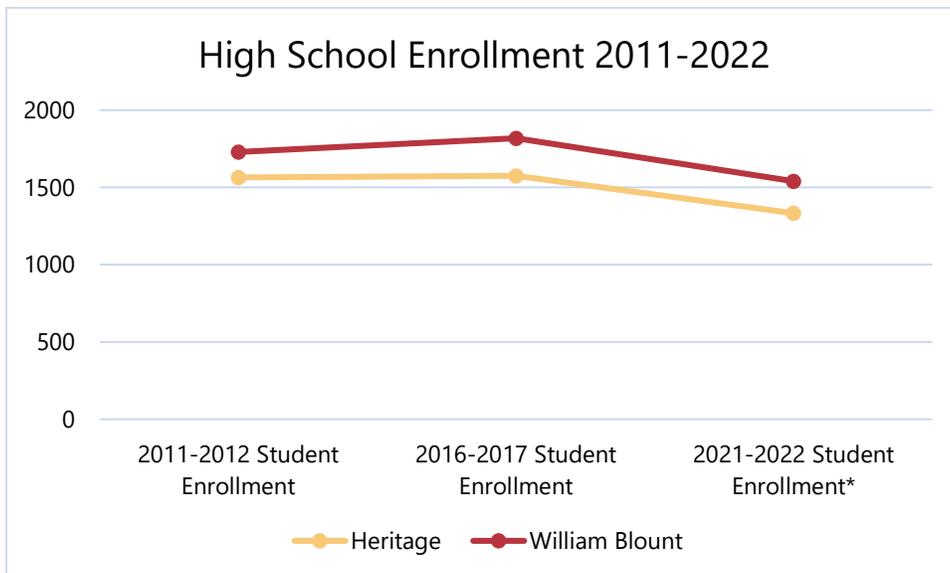
**Chart 2: Blount County County Middle School Enrollment, 2011-2022**

(Source: Tennessee Department of Education)



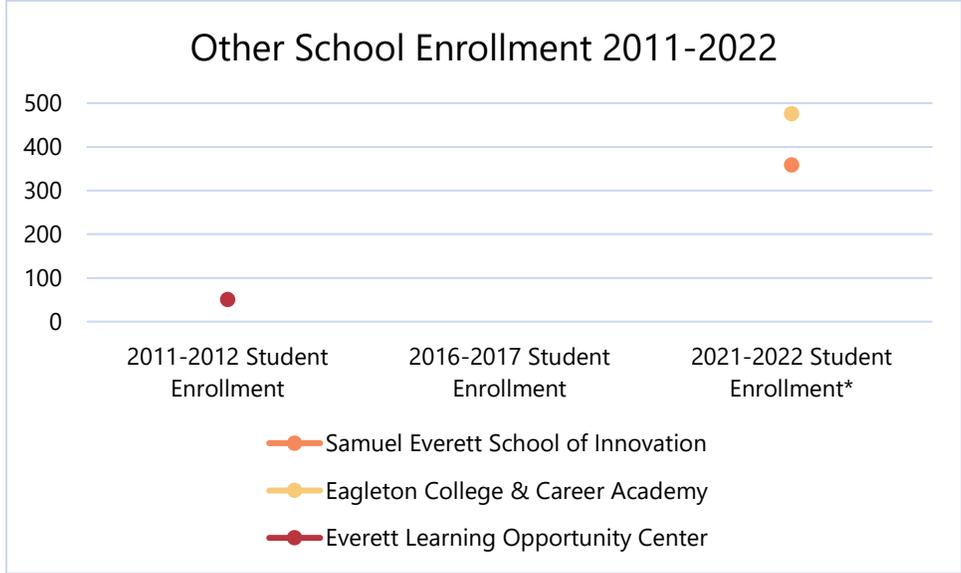
**Chart 3: Blount County County High School Enrollment, 2011-2022**

(Source: Tennessee Department of Education)



**Chart 4: Blount County County Other School Enrollment, 2011-2022**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education)**

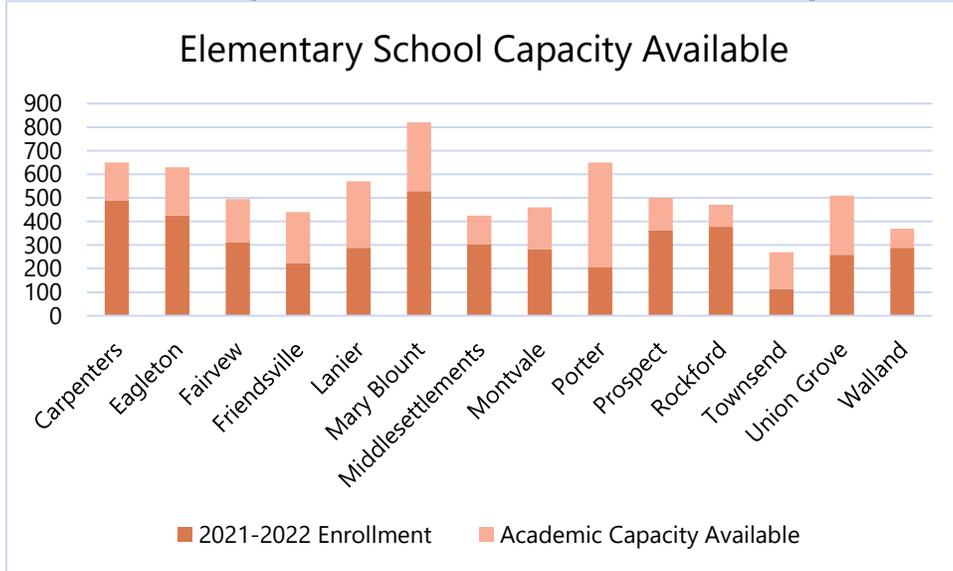


- **Current Academic Capacity**

There are no schools in Blount County that have reached their academic capacity. Enrollment at most schools is at least twenty percent (20%) below the school’s academic capacity, with the exception of Heritage Middle School which is only 8% below capacity and Heritage High School which is 18% below capacity.

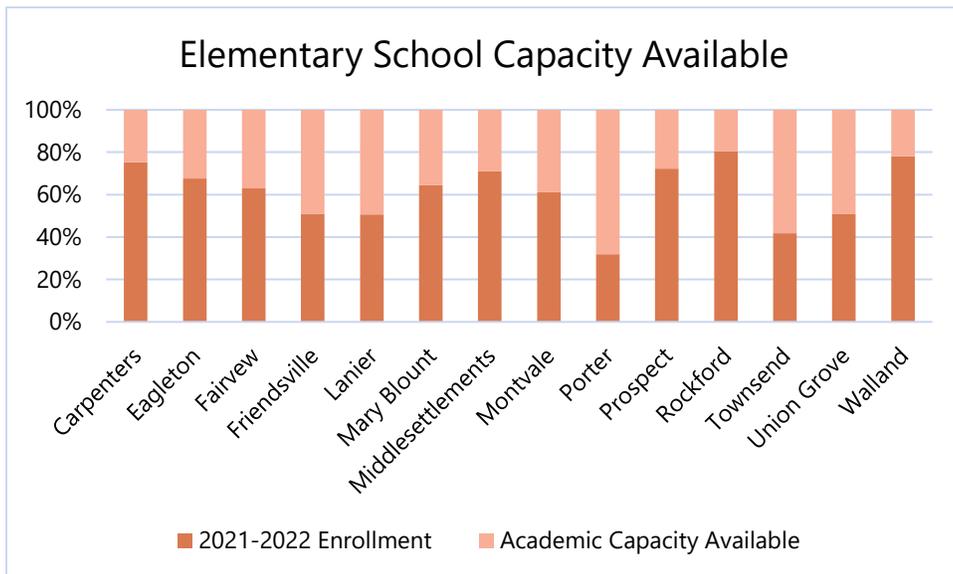
**Chart 5: Blount County Elementary School Capacity by Number**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**



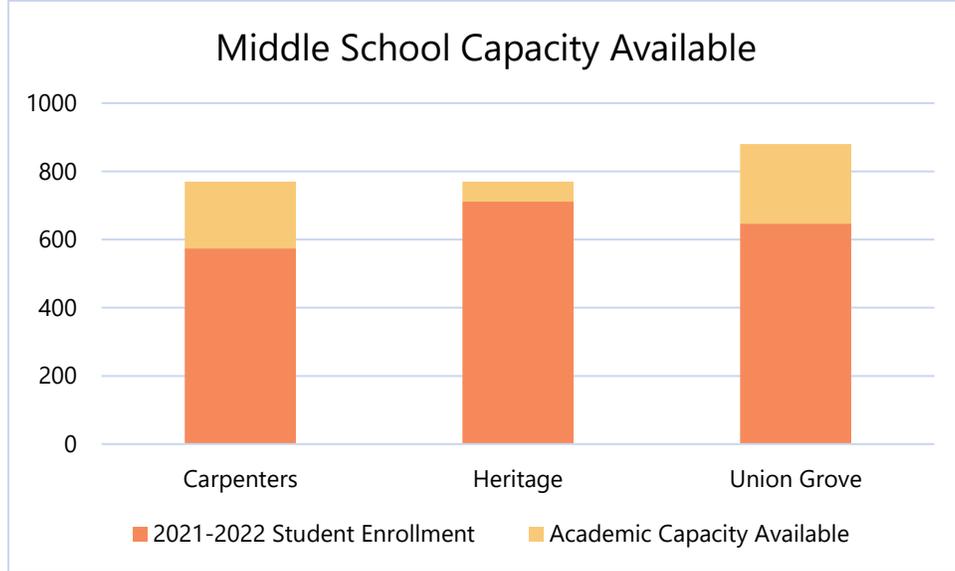
**Chart 6: Blount County Elementary School Capacity by Percentage**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**



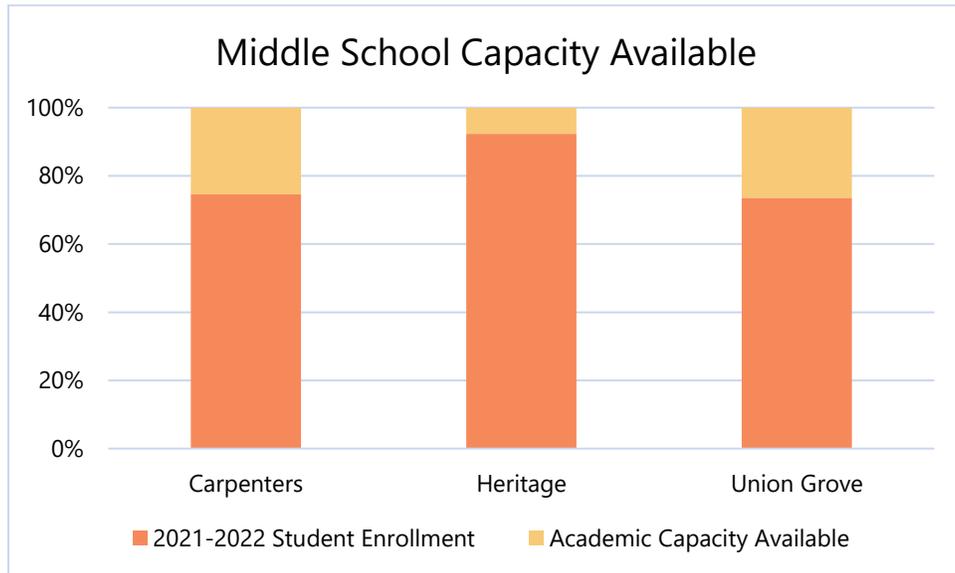
**Chart 7: Blount County Middle School Capacity by Number**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**



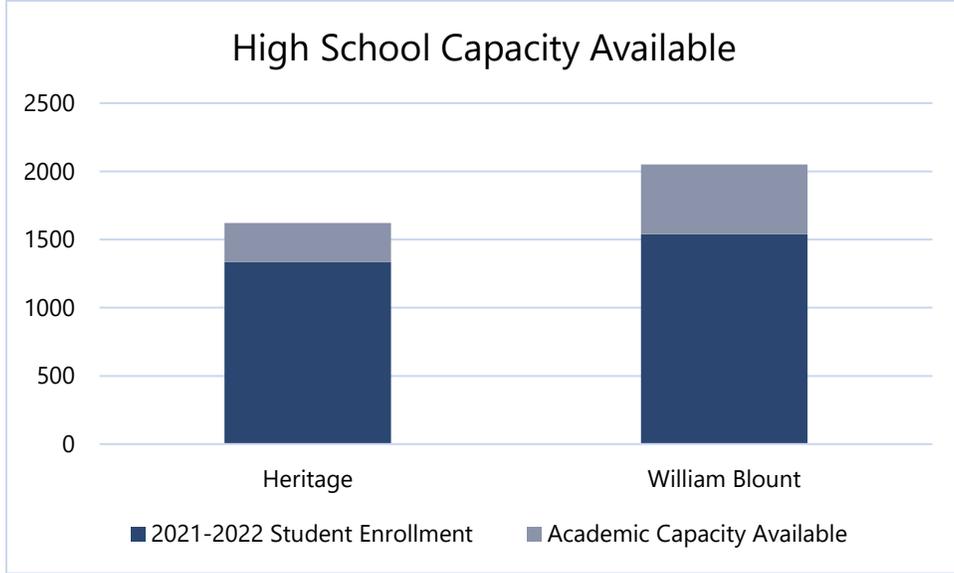
**Chart 8: Blount County Middle School Capacity by Percentage**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**



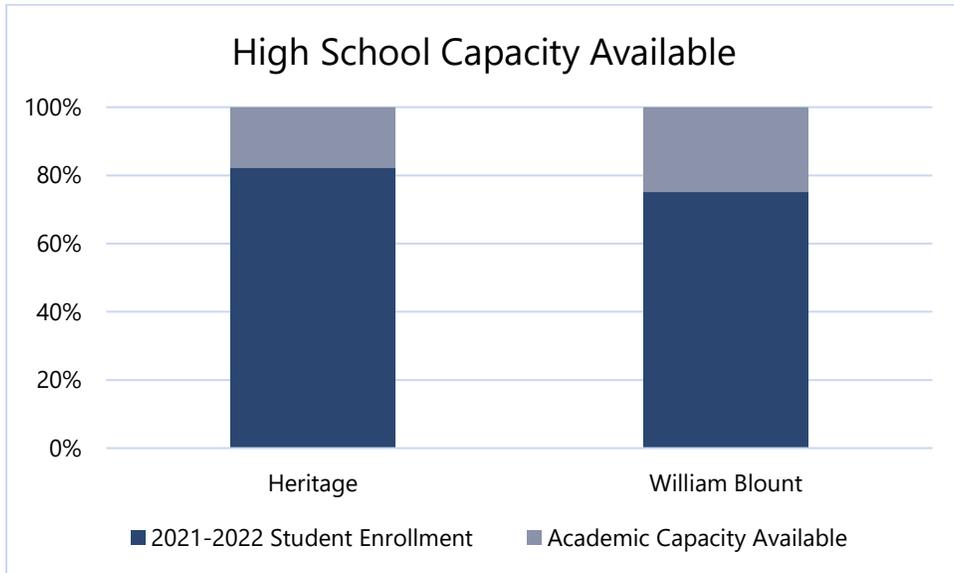
**Chart 9: Blount County High School Capacity by Number**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**



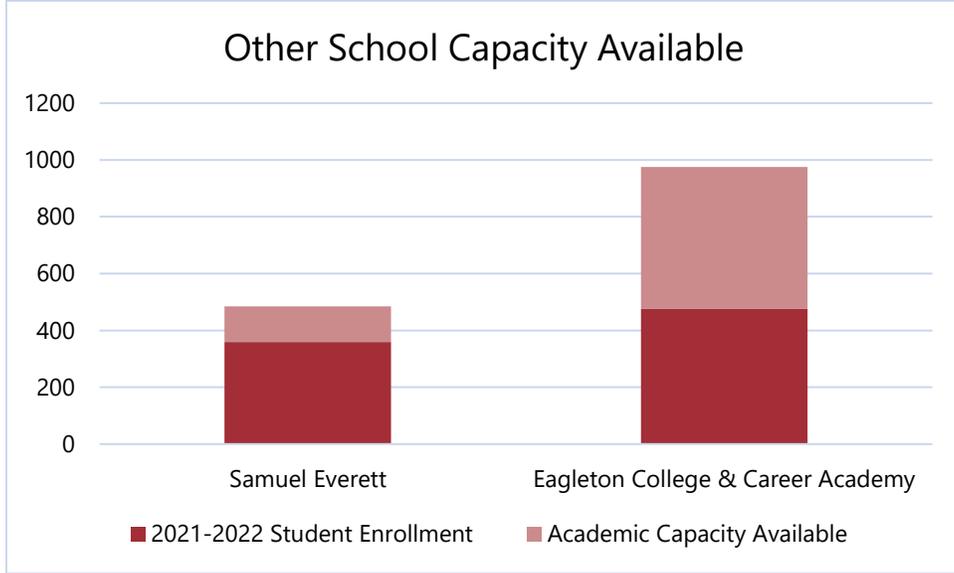
**Chart 10: Blount County High School Capacity by Percentage**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**



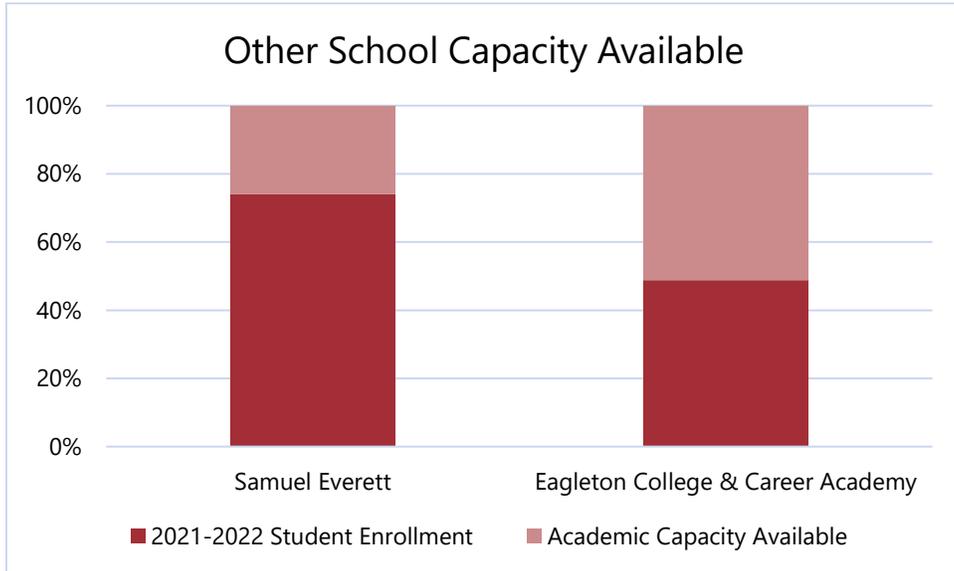
**Chart 11: Blount County Other School Capacity by Number**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**



**Chart 12: Blount County Other School Capacity by Percentage**

**(Source: Tennessee Department of Education and Blount County School Board)**

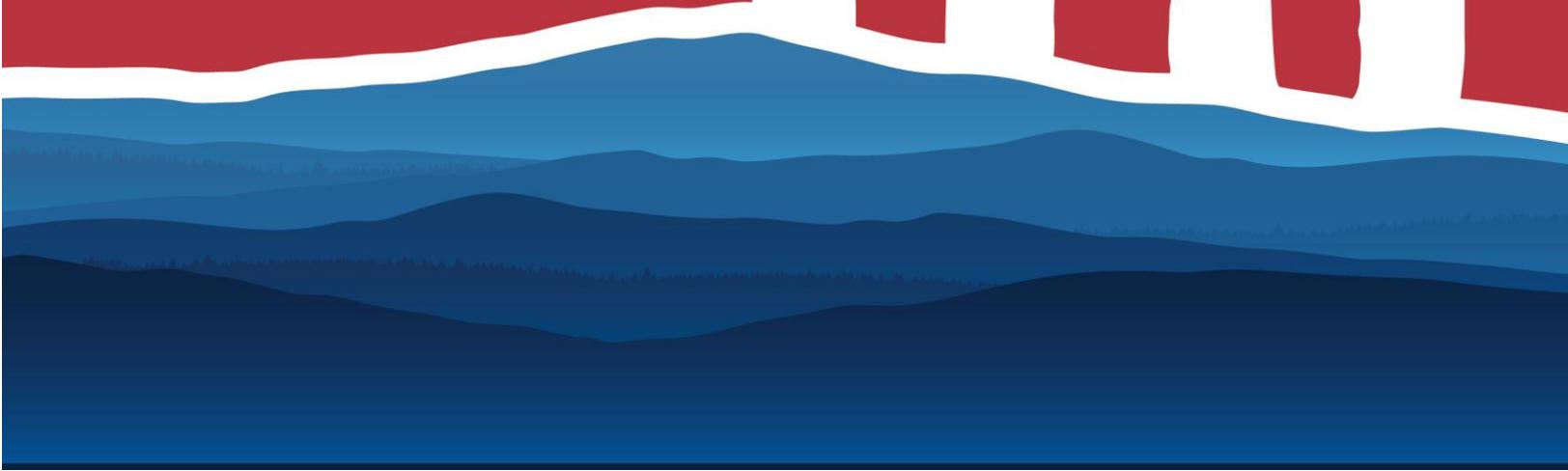


*2027 Population of School-Aged Children*

# HOUSING



# 05



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide information regarding the range of housing options and affordability within Blount County.

## INVENTORY

The provided herein has been collected, analyzed, and extrapolated from various, reputable databases and reports, including decennial census data from the U.S. Census Bureau, five-year estimates (2017-2021) derived from the American Community Survey (ACS) and housing and population reports from the Environmental System Research Institute (ESRI)'s Business Analyst Online (BAO) software. Wherever possible, the newest and best available data was utilized to develop the contents of this element. All values found within this element are estimates unless specifically noted otherwise.

## NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS

According to the ESRI BAO data, there were approximately 58,320 housing units (often referred to as 'dwelling units' throughout this document) within Blount County as of 2021. However, it should be noted that although the provided margin of error is minimal, this value is an estimate based on a sampling of small geographic areas and are subject to sampling variability and thus, are not based on actual counts. It is noteworthy to mention the increase of housing units from 2010 to 2020 of over 4,000 units, as provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1



## HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE AND CAPACITY

Blount County, like many rural and suburban communities, has an overwhelming majority (75.3%) of its inventory comprised of '1-unit, detached' housing at 43,925 units, as provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of Housing in Blount County

Type of Housing	# of Units	% of Total
1-unit, detached	43,925	75.3%
1-unit, attached	1,179	2.0%
2-units	591	1.0%
3 or 4 units	1,358	2.3%

5 to 9 units	1,848	3.2%
10 to 19 units	1,197	2.1%
20 to 49 units	766	1.3%
50 or more units	640	1.1%
Mobile home	6,816	11.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58,320</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ESRI BAO

## HOUSING TENURE AND OCCUPANCY

According to estimates from 2021, approximately 39,279 dwelling units (or 67.4% the County's estimated total of 58,320) are owner occupied, 11,995 (20.6%) are occupied by a renter. Of all units, 7,046 (12.1%) are considered vacant.

## AGE OF HOUSING

The ESRI BAO data also provides estimates of historical building information. Blount County has a relatively old housing stock, with the median year of housing construction being 1987. Of the 58,320 units estimated within the County, only 26% (15,161) were built after the turn of century, with the remaining 43,159 units built before the year 2000 as described in Table 2.

**Table 2: Number of Residential Structures Built, By Decade**

Period	Number	Percent
Built 2014 or later	2,349	4.0%
Built 2010 to 2013	1,752	3.0%
Built 2000 to 2009	11,060	19.0%
Built 1990 to 1999	11,595	19.9%
Built 1980 to 1989	7,679	13.2%
Built 1970 to 1979	8,563	14.7%
Built 1960 to 1969	4,368	7.5%
Built 1950 to 1959	4,817	8.3%
Built 1940 to 1949	2,788	4.8%

<b>Built 1939 or earlier</b>	3,349	5.7%
<b>Total housing units</b>	<b>58,320</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ESRI BAO

## OWNERSHIP COSTS AND BURDENS

Homeownership can be a costly endeavor. In addition to the relatively reliable costs associated with taxes, insurance, utilities, and association fees, maintenance costs for repairs and improvements tend to increase as structures age. Another significant cost to home ownership is mortgage payments, which can influence decisions to either buy or rent property. Of the 39,279 owner-occupied housing units within the County, 22,487 of these are making mortgage payments as described in Table 3.

**Table 3: Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income**

With Mortgage Payments	Units	% of Total Units
Less than 10.0 percent	1,886	4.8%
10.0 to 14.9 percent	4,871	12.4%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	4,839	12.3%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	3,721	9.5%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	1,976	5.0%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	1,464	3.7%
35.0 to 39.9 percent	833	2.1%
40.0 to 49.9 percent	835	2.1%
50 percent to more	1,875	4.8%
Not Computed	187	0.5%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>22,487</i>	<i>57.2%</i>
<b>Without Mortgage Payments</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>% of Total Units</b>
Less than 10.0 percent	9,207	23.4%
10.0 to 14.9 percent	3,347	8.5%

15.0 to 19.9 percent	1,539	3.9%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	675	1.7%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	639	1.6%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	407	1.0%
35.0 to 39.9 percent	211	0.5%
40.0 to 49.9 percent	140	0.4%
50 percent to more	417	1.1%
Not computed	210	0.5%
<i>Subtotal</i>	16,792	42.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,279</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ESRI BAO

According to HUD, a household is cost-burdened when housing costs exceed 30% of a household's monthly income—particularly when the household has moderate to low incomes. Of the County's 39,279 owner-occupied households, 6,182 (15.7%) can be considered cost burdened under these terms, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Cost Burdened Households**

With Mortgage Payments	Units	% of Total Units
Less than 30%	17,293	44.0%
More than 30% (Cost-Burdened)	5,007	12.7%
Not computed	187	0.5%
<i>Subtotal</i>	22,487	57.2%
<b>Without Mortgage Payments</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than 30%	15,407	39.2%
More than 30% (Cost-Burdened)	1,175	3.0%

<b>Not Computed</b>	210	0.5%
<b>Subtotal</b>	16,792	42.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,279</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ESRI BAO

## RENTAL COSTS AND BURDENS

Renting is often considered to be an affordable alternative to single-family homeownership, however, when a high demand for rental housing units exceeds an affordable local supply, the cost of renting can escalate quickly. According to ACS data, the median gross rent (which includes the cost of both rent and utilities) for a household in Blount County is \$828. A breakdown of rental costs is provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Housing Rentals by Gross Rent

Gross Rent	Units	%
Less than \$500	1,465	12.2%
\$500 to \$999	6,473	54.0%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	2,435	20.3%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	167	1.4%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	207	1.7%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	54	0.5%
\$3,000 to \$3,499	61	0.5%
\$3,500 or more	40	0.3%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10,902</b>	<b>90.9%</b>
<b>No Cash Rent</b>	<b>1,093</b>	<b>9.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,995</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ESRI BAO

If the total cost of rent exceeds 30% of the household's income, the household is generally considered to be cost-burdened by HUD. Cost-burdened households often are forced to choose between essential items, such as transportation, food, clothing, or medicine because they cannot afford to purchase these

items once rent and utilities are paid. These choices can have long-term and dramatic effects on a household, often leading to issues such as long-term health concerns, limited employment opportunities, and lesser economic mobility opportunities. According to the estimated rental data provided by ACS data, approximately 39.7% of renting households within the County are estimated to be cost-burdened by their housing choices, as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income**

Percentage of Household Income	% of Total Renting Households
Less than 30%	50.7%
30% or Greater (Cost-Burdened)	39.7%
Not computed	9.6%
Total	100%

Source: ACS, 2021

## GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

There are very few government-subsidized housing options within Blount County. There are some Section 8 Housing units within the County, as well as developments which were financed using Low Income Housing Tax Credits and must have a proportion of affordable units.

In partnership with the federal and state government, Blount County, in partnership with the Blount County Community Action Agency, administers several affordable housing and support programs to area residents. A listing of these programs is provided below:

- **Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)**

The program is federally funded and allows eligible families to receive a one-time vendor payment to help pay heating bills. The Blount County Community Action Agency, a local nonprofit, facilitates this program.

- **Crisis Intervention Program (CIP)**

The program is federally-funded that provides emergency assistance to eligible households that are in a heating or cooling related emergency. The program helps to reduce the risk of health and safety problems such as illness, fire, or eviction.

- **Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)**

The LIHTC was created to provide an incentive for the development and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing. These federal housing tax credits are awarded to developers of qualified projects via a competitive application process administered by state housing finance authorities (HFAs). Developers either use the credits or sell them to investors to raise capital for real estate projects, which, in turn, reduces the debt or equity contribution that would otherwise be required of developers. With lower financing costs, tax credit properties can potentially expand the supply of affordable rental housing.

- **Section 8**

The housing choice voucher program (Section 8) assists low-income families to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Housing can include single-family homes, and apartments and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects. A family that is issued a housing voucher is responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the local housing authority on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program. Maryville Housing Authority accepts Section 8 vouchers as well as other programs for County residents, such as youth and senior support programs. However, throughout the U.S. there are long waiting lists to access Section 8 housing, and as of May 2022, the wait list for Maryville Housing Authority is closed. Periodically, these wait lists will open as housing and funding become available.

- **Public Housing**

The Maryville Housing Authority also provides public housing to Blount County residents who qualify.

## **MANUFACTURED HOMES**

A manufactured home (formerly known as a mobile home) is built to the Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards (HUD Code) and displays a red certification label on the exterior of each transportable section. Manufactured homes are built in the controlled environment of a manufacturing plant and are transported in one or more sections on a permanent chassis. These structures are traditionally provided on individually platted lots or within a mobile home park under unified ownership. According to housing estimates from ESRI BAO, 11.7% of the housing stock in the County (6,816) consists of manufactured homes—either located on individually platted lots or as part of a mobile home park.

## **HOUSING TRENDS**

There are several housing and development trends within the County which will impact the future of the growing community. The County and community members want to preserve open space, while allowing for residential development to accommodate population growth. Residents are concerned over the type of residential growth. They do not want widespread residential development throughout rural areas, instead preferring large lots in rural areas and smaller lots near municipalities. Some residents would like to see mixed use developments (residential mixed with office or commercial uses, either vertical or horizontal) in areas near or within municipality boundaries. This type of development could minimize the footprint of a development and reduce the need for driving for certain needs (groceries, restaurants, services, etc.).

As the region continues to grow in population, Blount County will also grow, due to its easy access to employment and regional services. To preserve the natural affordability of housing, the County should continue to encourage the development of a range of housing types near municipalities and along busy roadway corridors, such as accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and multifamily residential.

Not only will a range of housing types provide for affordability in the future, but it will also assist with the provision of housing for all life stages. As populations age, communities should shift to accommodate different housing needs. Retired or single-person households may prefer a smaller home with fewer

associated costs, as well as homes near to conveniences and services. The County has several programs which support residents as they age, and the County can continue to support an aging population by encouraging residential development geared toward older, retired adults.

# PARKS & RECREATION



06

## INTRODUCTION

The Recreation and Open Space chapter is intended to steer Blount County in providing a safe recreational environment that offers diversified activities for all area residents and generations. Currently Blount County parks and recreation facilities are maintained by a joint commission along with the City of Maryville and the City of Alcoa. The Parks and Recreation Commission is the only joint venture of its type in the State and operates and maintains the facilities, though each government entity is responsible for its own capital improvements and thus Blount County has a need to evaluate its recreation and open space system to be able to expand the County's parks and recreation system. This chapter will consist of identifying the County's current inventory of open space and recreation facilities and discuss recreation and open space desires of the community.

## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

### COUNTY-PROVIDED RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

Park spaces can provide many benefits to a community, including the conservation of open spaces, the preservation of natural resources, and the provision of venues for recreational activities. It should be noted that only officially designated public parks have been included in this section. Thus, vacant public lands and open space typically found in medians, buffers, retention areas, and similar facilities are not included as part of this analysis.

Currently, Blount County offers six park facilities within the unincorporated parts of the County, while Maryville offer eight facilities and Alcoa offers ten facilities. The table below lists the facilities within each area:

Park Facilities		
Maryville-8	Alcoa-10	Blount County-6
Amerine Park	Alcoa Duck Pond	Eagleton Park
College Hill Park	Bassel Basketball & Pickleball Courts	Everett Athletic Complex & Recreation Center
Everett Park	Claytons Disc Golf Course	Frank Bogle Greenway
Everett Senior Center	Howe Street Park	Louisville Point Park
John Sevier Park, Tennis/Pickleball Courts & Pool	Martin Luther King Jr Community Center & Basketball Courts	Richard Williams Park
Pearson Springs Park	Oldfield Park	Singleton Park
Petsafe Dog Park	Rock Garden Park	
Sandy Springs Park & Tennis Courts	South Hall Park	
	Springbrook Park & Pool	
	Springbrook Recreation Center & Tennis Courts	

The last park and recreation master plan that was completed in 2005 used a guideline based of the National Recreation and Park Association whose guidelines suggested between 6.25 to 10.5 acres and the steering committee suggested 6.5 acres as an appropriate goal to achieve. When the park and recreation system was evaluated in 2004, based on the population at the time, the County should have had 738 acres dedicated to parks and recreation however the county only had 329 dedicated acres. The master plan at the time predicted that the disparity would increase by 2014 and new parks areas would need to be acquired and developed to reduce the deficit. An updated master park and recreation plan should be considered to evaluate if the deficit continues or if the County is meeting the recreational needs of the residents.

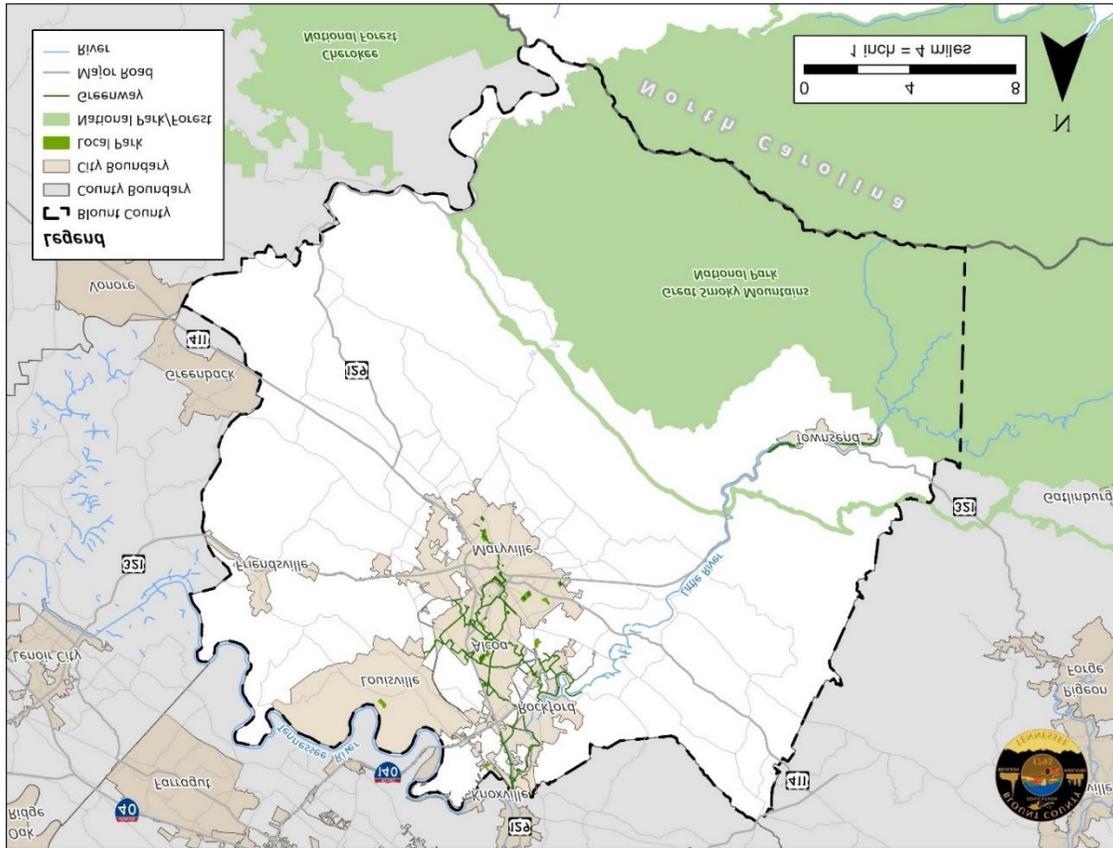
Greenways and trails provide recreational opportunities to the community as they are a safe and convenient way to get outdoors and exercise as well. Having access to places for physical activity encourages residents to participate in physical activity and do so on a continual basis. If residents live closer to parks, they are more likely to walk or bike to the park as well as use the park for exercise. Having designated bike paths and walking paths that are separated from traffic will also encourage more users as they feel safer when they are not next to vehicular traffic. Walking is the most reported form of physical activity<sup>4</sup>, and having separated trails and paths for walkers to use is important for their safety and use of the paths. The County has roughly 48 miles of greenways and walking paths. One greenway runs through the City of Townsend, while the others are located around Maryville, Rockford, and Alcoa.

The Tennessee River forms the boundary between Blount and Knox Counties, near Louisville, and provides ample opportunities for recreation. This area is part of the Tennessee Riverline project, which connects 1.2 million acres in the states of Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky along a series of trails, parks, and blueways (water recreational areas). This is an ongoing regional trail vision for the areas surrounding the Tennessee River which starts in Knoxville, Tennessee to the confluence with the Ohio river in Paducah, Kentucky. This project launched in 2017 envisions a continuous system of hiking, biking, and on-water experiences. This connected system will not only provide a great recreational opportunity for the County residents but also serve as a catalyst for economic, social and environmental impacts. This project is tying the communities together by establishing them as RiverTowns, a voluntary application for a town, city or county to be involved in a project. As of 2022, no city or town within Blount County has been chosen to become a RiverTown, however as the project grows cities or Blount County itself may submit an application to join.

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<sup>4</sup> National Center for Environmental Health

**Map 1: Greenway Map**



**FACILITIES OWNED AND OPERATED BY OTHER AGENCIES**

- **Great Smoky Mountain National Park**

Blount County is fortunate to have part of one of the most treasured National Parks in the Country in its borders. The Great Smoky Mountain National Park is located within North Carolina and Tennessee and Blount County serves as one of the gateways to this incredible resource. Over 97,581 acres of the National Park is located within the County, as well as providing one of the main park entrances in Townsend, Tennessee.

The Great Smoky Mountain National Park has substantial features, such as the Historic Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountain Heritage center, and Tuckaleechee Caverns. Historic Cades Cove is a UNESCO World Heritage Site with historic residences, many of which contained original log construction, remaining in the park. Great Smoky Mountains Heritage Center is a historic village with 11 originally restored historic houses. Tuckaleechee Caverns, known as the Greatest Site Under the Smokies, were carved over tens of thousands of years ago and are estimated to be between 20 and 30 million years old. The Park is known for its biodiversity, forests, mountains, and waterfalls. The Cades Cove Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This district contains historic buildings and prehistoric archeological sites.

The countless recreational opportunities for tourists and residents are also a huge draw to the area. Tourism generated by the National Park attracts many tourists to the area, resulting in the creation of jobs and revenue. According to the Blount Chamber of Commerce in their 2022 Annual Report, the County ranked eighth in Tennessee in direct visitor spending.

- **Foothills Parkway**

A national parkway maintained by the US National Park Service. This 72-mile parkway passes through Blount, Sevier and Cocke County. While the entire right of way area has been purchased by the National Park Service, portions of the parkway have not been completed, as funding is still not fully acquired. Once the parkway is completed it will be a part of the Foothills Parkway. This proposed new section would extend the Foothills Parkway within the existing NPS-managed corridor for 9 miles from Wears Valley to the Spur near Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

## RECOMMENDATION

The County is experiencing growth in residential and non-residential development, and a priority is to maintain the rural nature of the community. During public and online engagement County residents highlighted the need for walkability and preserving the natural environment and rural nature within the County. Increasing greenways can help preserve areas, maintain the natural environment, and increase walkability for residents.

There is an interest in creating additional greenways and grant funding to support these improvements. Many greenway master plans have already been created to connect Knoxville to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park including: *The Knox/ Blount Regional Greenway*, *Maryville-to-Townsend Greenway*, and *the Tennessee Riverline*. Grant funds have already been secured and additional funding is currently being requested. Greenways can meet the need for walkability, greenspaces, recreation, and pedestrian opportunities described by the public.

There are currently examples of greenways, such as the Knox/ Blount Regional Greenway, 2010, which focused on the development of a connection from neighboring Knox County's existing greenway to a greenway network within the parts of Blount County. The Maryville-to-Townsend Greenway, 2010, was developed to connect the City of Knoxville to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for cyclists and pedestrians. The Tennessee Riverline Project, 2017, is a proposed greenway and blueway to stretch along the Tennessee River. The Riverline eventually would connect along all 652 miles of the four states that the river borders. These greenways not only provide recreational opportunities for residents but also can generate tourism opportunities and intertwine the communities together.

Many County residents leaned into the idea of tourism as leading industry that the County should invest in, leveraging the location of the National Park. Many tourists visit Blount County for the nature and recreational aspects. Embracing ecotourism may not only be an economic driver but also a way to preserve areas and increase recreational opportunities for both tourists and residents. Additionally, the County should prioritize the update of a parks and recreation plan to assess the level of service existing within Blount County and what additional services may be needed or wanted.

# CONSERVATION



07

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Chapter is meant to identify the natural and cultural resources in the County as well as establish policies that would protect and conserve environmentally sensitive lands. In preparing for the future, it is necessary to have a complete understanding of existing environmental and cultural resources in Blount County. This section will take inventory and discuss the quality of air, surface waters, forest and agricultural lands, soils, and cultural resources within the County and the conservation of these resources. Knowing where those resources are will protect them as the County develops in the future. Some environmental resources, such as floodplains, may limit development potential.

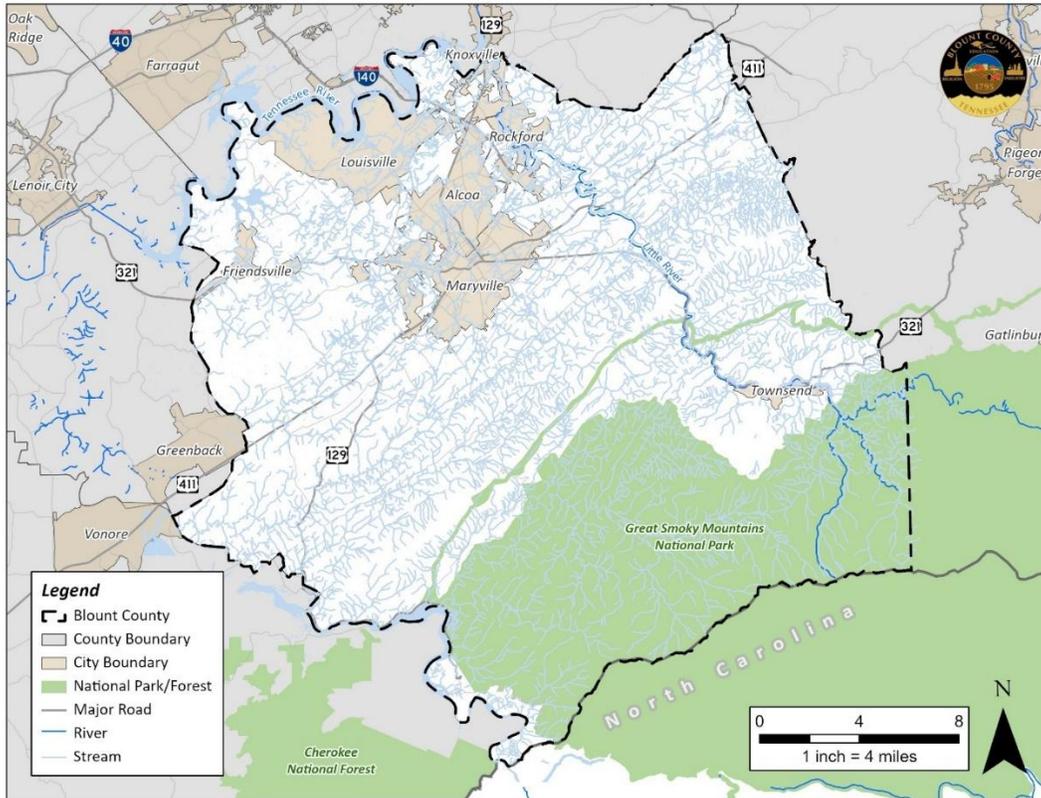
## **INVENTORY OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **SURFACE WATERS**

Two major rivers run within the County's boundaries: the Tennessee River and the Little River. The Tennessee River flows along the northwestern boundary of the County, near Louisville, while the Little River runs from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Fort Loudon Lake at the Tennessee River in Knox County. There is an extensive stream networks throughout the County, as can be seen in the Figure below.

The County is located within the Upper Tennessee Watershed Basin. The Upper Tennessee River Basin Study Unit encompasses four states, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia, and approximately 21,390 square miles. The most prominent surface water features of the River Basin are maintained by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). Due to the location of being in a watershed it is the responsibility of the County to develop stormwater runoff programs and operate treatment facilities. It is recommended that the County explore a project to identify areas of vulnerability as a way to limit additional development in such areas.

## Map 1: Hydrology Map



- **Water Quality and Pollution Sources**

Pollution to the environment can be classified as point or non-point. Point sources are pollutants that originate from one particular site or source in a large amount, while non-point pollution is derived from a variety of disperse sources. Land use characteristic is a significant indicator of non-point source pollution. Non-point pollution can also be difficult to monitor because of the irregularity of the discharges. Most sources come from front septic tanks, pesticides, and fertilizers that are used on crops and lawn, which eventually leak into the rivers and other tributaries. Unless right outside of the municipalities located in Blount County the majority of the buildings within Blount County are not connected to the municipal wastewater treatment system.

Undoubtedly, there are septic systems that are contributing nutrients that eventually make their way into the rivers causing nutrients to enter in the systems and cause aquatic plant growth. Septic systems leach both nitrogen and phosphorus which travel readily through the soil, particularly sandy soils, into a water body. Even years after the septic systems are shut down, these nutrients can continue to travel toward the waterbodies.

In 2022, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation provided a comprehensive list of the impaired waterbodies, which do not meet water quality standards and are in need of restoration. Below is the list of impaired waterbodies within Blount County.

- 13.0 Fort Loudoun Reservoir
- 14.0 Roddy Branch
- 15.0 Caney Branch
- 16.0 Hollybrook Branch
- 17.0 Pistol Creek
- 18.0 Springfield Branch
- 19.0 Brown Creek
- 20.0 Duncan Branch
- 21.0 Culton Creek
- 22.0 Russell Branch
- 23.0 Little River
- 24.0 Rocky Branch
- 25.0 Peppermint Branch
- 26.0 South Fork Crooked Creek
- 27.0 Flag Branch
- 28.0 Crooked Creek
- 29.0 Hesse Creek
- 30.0 Floyd Creek
- 31.0 Lackey Creek
- 32.0 Polecat Creek
- 33.0 Little Tennessee River
- 34.0 Abrams Creek
- 35.0 Centenary Creek
- 36.0 Little Ninemile Creek
- 37.0 Binfield Branch
- 38.0 Little Baker Creek
- 39.0 Baker Creek

## **SOILS AND SOIL EROSION**

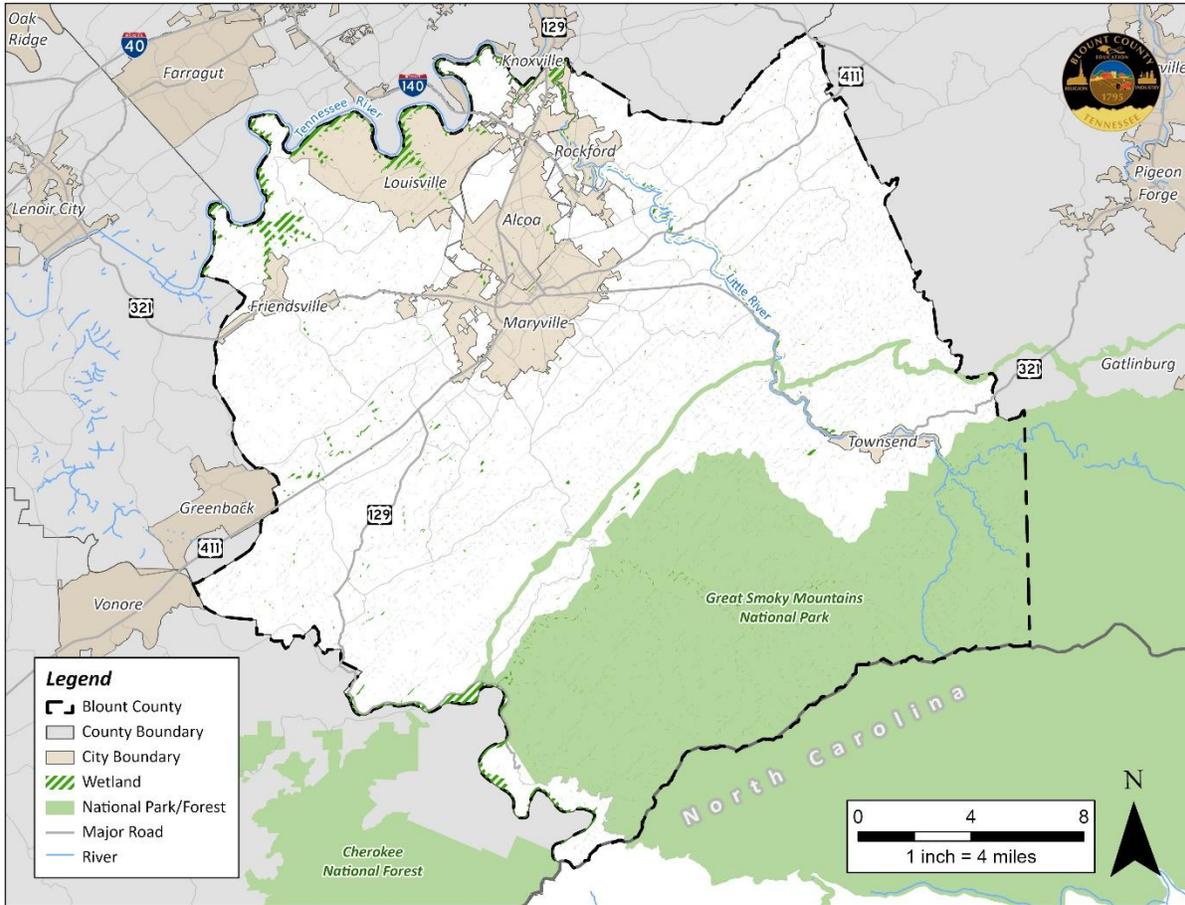
Soil erosion is caused when the top layer of dirt becomes exposed and to wind and rain and human activities such as farming and construction may potentially worsen the situation. Soil erosion will cause silt and nutrients to end up in waterways. This pollution may cause physical, chemical, biological, and economic impacts to the water system. Siltation may cause changes in water flow patterns, increase the cost of water treatment, hinder navigation, increase the risk of flooding, restrict light penetration, smother eggs and nests, and cover stream substrates that provide habitat for biodiversity. If left unchecked soil erosion will cause the loss of topsoil which ultimately reduces the viability of the soil.

Maintaining top quality soil and limiting soil erosion is of great importance in Blount County, and the County uses conservation planning to help assist farmers and landowners have sound use and management of soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources. The soil conservation district has started to implement strategies to help reduce the nutrients going into the streams and tributaries, these strategies include stream crossing and livestock ramps to provide a safe, solid, and mud-free area for livestock and equipment to cross streams, alternative livestock watering systems which are designed to provide an alternative to watering livestock directly from streams, and streambank stabilization of adding native plants to help secure the banks. Other methods are creating jetties along riverbanks, create terraces, and grade control structures. The County has implemented a stormwater prevention plan during construction and requires the use of Best Management Practices to control and minimize soil erosion.

## **WETLANDS**

Wetlands are generally identified as areas where the water table is at, or above, the land surface for a significant part of most years. As seen in **Map 2: Wetlands**, wetlands cover a small portion of the County. There are small areas of wetlands primarily concentrated near the Counties boundaries along the north and southwest boundary near the areas surrounding bodies of water. Wetland areas within vacant land areas largely remain in their natural state. The potential future land uses of these wetlands are limited due to the integral role these areas provide in the hydrological balance. Wetlands serve as natural water retention systems, regulate the flow of water and remove excess nutrients and particulates from stormwater. When the weather is wet or areas experience flooding, wetlands accept the excess water, and when drought conditions exist, wetlands keep the surrounding area from becoming parched. Wetlands are also fragile ecological communities supporting an assortment of plants and wildlife. The alteration of the natural topography and character of these areas may cause a great expense both monetarily and physically to the surrounding natural environment and community at large.

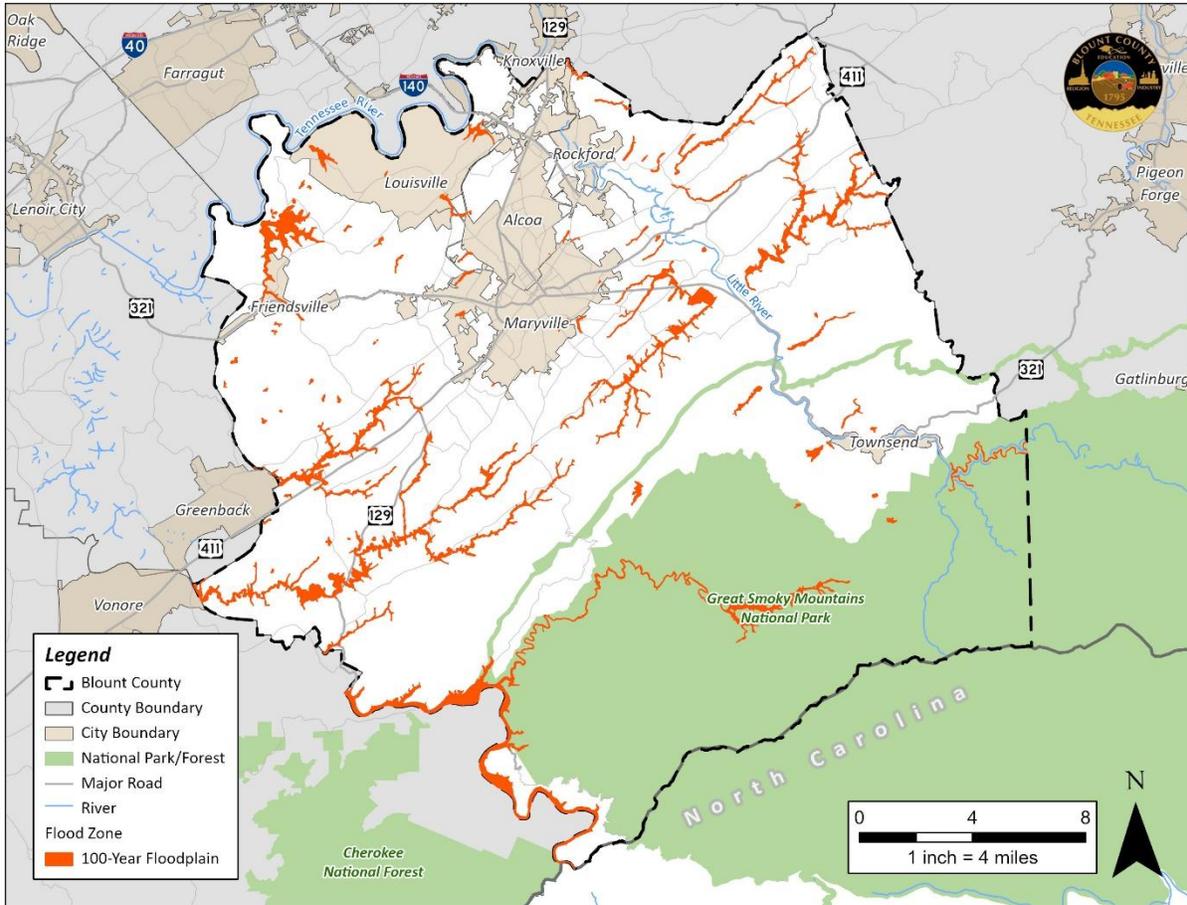
## Map 2: Wetlands



### FLOODPLAINS

The floodplains in Blount County provide crucial flood waters storage during significant rain events. Fortunately, the flood risk within the County is low. **Map 3: Floodplains** below shows the 100-Year Floodplain as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The 100-Year Floodplain designation represents a 1% annual flood risk. Low-lying areas, especially those near waterways, are at the highest risk of flooding. All other land is classified as not having a significant flood risk. Creeks, streams, and lakes throughout the unincorporated areas of the County have the highest risk of flooding, as can be seen below.

**Map 3: Floodplains**



**AIR QUALITY INVENTORY**

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park experience some of the highest measured pollution of any national park in the US. The burning nearby of fossil fuels and the wind currents that push toward the southern Appalachians Mountains create tend to trap and concentrate the human made pollutants in and around the national park. Since the population of Blount County is just north of the Smoky Mountains reducing air pollutants is of great importance to the future of the County. Since the passing of the Clean Air Act air quality in the Smoky Mountains has been improving. The Great Smoky mountains receive the highest level of acid deposition of any monitored national park, the good news however is that acid rain has been significantly reduced over the years. However, the acid rain does cause problems with soil with depositing nitrogen and sulfur.

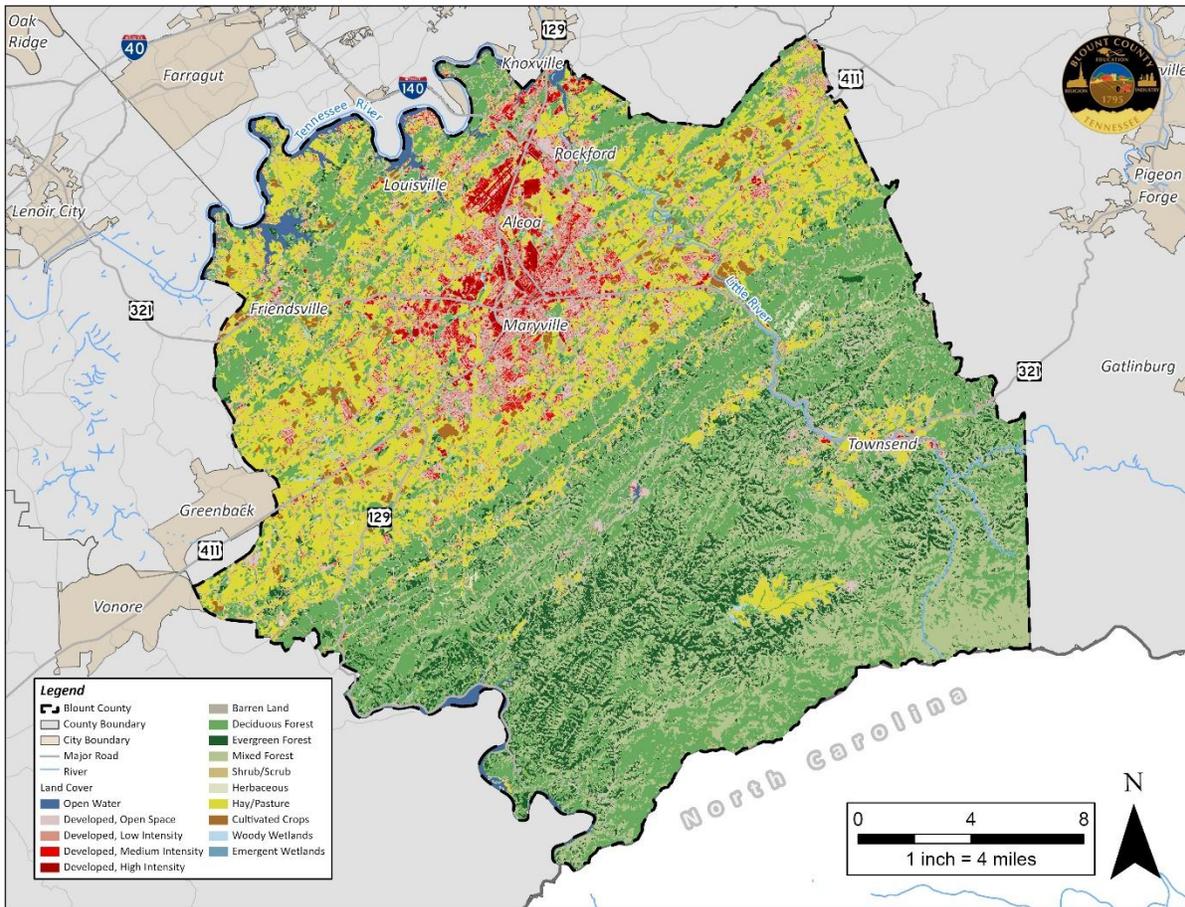
The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) Air Pollution Control Division has three monitoring sites within Blount County. One is located within Maryville and two are located within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one in Cades Cove and the other in Look Rock. Combined they look at ozone and particle pollution (PM2.5). Since the Clean Air Act the levels of good air day have been increasing and air quality has been improving.

## VEGETATIVE, WILDLIFE AND LISTED SPECIES COMMUNITY INVENTORY

- **Land Use/ Land Cover**

Map 4 summarizes the existing land uses and land cover found throughout the County. Over half the County is covered in forests and a large portion of the remaining land is classified as hay/pasture land. The developed areas are mainly concentrated around the cities within the County primarily Maryville, Alcoa, Rockford and Townsend.

**Map 4: Land Use and Land Cover**



- **Threatened or Endangered Species**

Threatened and Endangered species can potentially limit development in the region as areas become off limit to develop or mitigation costs may inhibit development potential. The Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation provides an inventory of plants and animals that are found to be significant to the county, region, or state. There were 31 plants and 33 animals that were considered of state or federal importance in Blount County.

There are twelve species that have federal status designated by U.S. Endangered Species Act. The three federal categories that are found in Blount County are: 1) Endangered (E) - Species in danger of extinction if the harmful factors affecting their population continue to operate, 2) Threatened (T) - Species that are likely to become endangered in the nation within the foreseeable future if current trends continue, 3) Proposed Threatened (PT) - species which has been formally proposed for listing as threatened.

Tennessee separates their threatened species as endangered, threatened, and special concern through the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA). 1) Endangered (E) - species of wild animal whose continued existence has been determined to be in jeopardy 2) Threatened (T) - species of wild animal which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range 3) Deemed in need of management (D) - any species of wild animal which is determined by the Wildlife Resource Agency to that needs to be investigated.

**Table 1: Endangered Species** lists the species which may be found within Blount County. This table categorizes these species by name, habitat, federal and state status.

**Table 1: Endangered Species**

SPECIES	HABITAT	Federal Status	TN Status
<b><u>Amphibian</u></b>			
<b>Four-toed Salamander (Hemidactylium scutatum)</b>	Woodland swamps, shallow depressions, & sphagnum mats on acidic soils; middle & east Tennessee.		D
<b>Hellbender (Cryptobranchus alleganiensis)</b>	Rocky, clear creeks and rivers with large shelter rocks.		E
<b>Cumberland Dusky Salamander (Desmognathus abditus)</b>	Assoc. with streams of Cumberland Plateau; under rocks along small streams or adj. cover; Morgan & Grundy counties.		D
<b><u>Reptiles</u></b>			
<b>Eastern Slender Glass Lizard (Ophisaurus attenuatus longicaudus)</b>	Dry upland areas including brushy, cut-over woodlands and grassy fields; nearly statewide but obscure; fossorial.		D
<b>Northern Pinesnake (Pituophis melanoleucus)</b>	Well-drained sandy soils in pine/pine-oak woods; dry mountain ridges; E portions of west TN, E to lower elev of the Appalachians.		T
<b><u>Mammals</u></b>			
<b>Southern Bog Lemming (Synaptomys cooperi)</b>	Marshy meadows, wet balds, & rich upland forests.		D

<b>Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat (<i>Corynorhinus rafinesquii</i>)</b>	Caves, hollow trees, abandoned buildings; often associated with forested areas.		D
<b>Carolina Northern Flying Squirrel (<i>Glaucomys sabrinus coloratus</i>)</b>	Spruce-fir or mature hardwood forest with snags; in tree cavities or leaf nests; higher elevations of the Appalachians.	E	E
<b>Little Brown Myotis (<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>)</b>	Often uses human-made structures for resting and maternity sites; they also use caves and hollow trees. Typically feed over water.		T
<b>Northern Myotis (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)</b>	A forest bat whose summer roosts may include caves, mines, live trees and snags; hibernates in caves and mines, often using small cracks and fissures. Notably susceptible to White-Nose Syndrome.	T	T
<b>Indiana Myotis (<i>Myotis sodalists</i>)</b>	Hibernates in caves; spring/summer maternity roosts are normally under the bark of standing trees.	E	E
<b>Southern Appalachian Woodrat (<i>Neotoma floridana haematoresia</i>)</b>	Forests & talus slopes in southern Appalachians of southeastern Tennessee.		D
<b>Hairy-tailed Mole (<i>Parascalops breweri</i>)</b>	Moist soils in deciduous forests with thick humus; east Tennessee.		D
<b>Tricolored Bat (<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>)</b>	roosts in clumps of leaves (mainly in summer), caves, rock crevices, and other dark and sheltered places		T
<b><u>Mollusks</u></b>			
<b>Oyster Mussel (<i>Epioblasma capsaeformis</i>)</b>	Shallow riffles in mod-swift current of small-medium rivers with coarse sand and gravel; Tennessee & Cumberland river systems excluding the Duck River.	E	E
<b>Finerayed Pigtoe (<i>Fusconaia cuneolus</i>)</b>	Riffles of fords and shoals of mod gradient streams in firm cobble and gravel substrates; middle & upper Tennessee River watershed.	E	E
<b><u>Fish</u></b>			
<b>Spotfin Chub (<i>Erimonax monachus</i>)</b>	Clear upland rivers with swift currents & boulder substrates; portions of the Tennessee River watershed.	T	T
<b>Tennessee Dace (<i>Chrosomus tennesseensis</i>)</b>	First order spring-fed streams of woodlands in Ridge and Valley limestone region; Tennessee River watershed.		D

<b>Smoky Dace (<i>Clinostomus funduloides</i> ssp. 1)</b>	Upland tributaries of Little Tennessee River; east Tennessee.		D
<b>Smoky Madtom (<i>Noturus baileyi</i>)</b>	Clear, cool, rocky riffles, runs, and flowing pools of mountain creeks; lower Little Tennessee River system.	E	E
<b>Yellowfin Madtom (<i>Noturus flavipinnis</i>)</b>	Medium size to large creeks and small rivers that are unpolluted & relatively unsilted; upper Tennessee River watershed.	T	T
<b>Tangerine Darter (<i>Percina aurantiaca</i>)</b>	Large-moderate size headwater tribs to Tennessee River, in clear, fairly deep, rocky pools, usually below riffles.		D
<b>Blotchside Logperch (<i>Percina burtoni</i>)</b>	Habitat includes gravel runs and riffles of clear, small to medium rivers or large creeks.		T
<b>Snail Darter (<i>Percina tanasi</i>)</b>	Sand and gravel shoals of moderately flowing, vegetated, large creeks; upper Tennessee River watershed.	T	T
<b>Sickle Darter (<i>Percina williamsi</i>)</b>	Flowing pools over rocky, sandy, or silty substrates in clear creeks or small rivers; upper Tennessee River system; east TN.	PT	T
<b>Ashy Darter (<i>Etheostoma cinereum</i>)</b>	Small to medium upland rivers with bedrock or gravel substrate and boulders.		E
<b>Marbled Darter (<i>Etheostoma marmorinum</i>)</b>	Pools and moderate runs with clean pebbles, cobble, & small boulders; lower Little River (Tennessee River drainage).	E	E
<b>Cumberland Arrow Darter (<i>Etheostoma sagitta</i>)</b>	Smaller streams of northern Cumberland Plateau & Cumberland Mountains; Cumberland River watershed.		D
<b>Citico Darter (<i>Etheostoma sitikuense</i>)</b>	Riffles, runs, & pools with cobble & small boulders; larger creeks to medium size rivers; lower Little Tennessee River watershed.	E	E
<b>Flame Chub (<i>Hemitremia flammea</i>)</b>	Springs and spring-fed streams with lush aquatic vegetation; Tennessee & middle Cumberland river watersheds.		D
<b><u>Bird</u></b>			
<b>King Rail (<i>Rallus elegans</i>)</b>	Marshes, upland-wetland marsh edges, flooded farmlands, shrub swamps.		D
<b>Least Bittern (<i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>)</b>	Marshes with scattered bushes or other woody growth; readily uses artificial wetland habitats.		D

<b>Swainson's Warbler (Limnothlypis swainsonii)</b>	Mature, rich, damp, deciduous floodplain and swamp forests.		D
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Source: Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation, 2023

**HAZARD MITIGATION**

State of Tennessee Hazard Mitigation Plan was last adopted in 2018 and was provided to assess and reduce the state vulnerability to all geological and manmade hazards. The State Mitigation plan created a threat index level for each hazard one (1) through five (5) with five being the most severe. In 2020, a comprehensive emergency management plan for Blount County and its political subdivisions was adopted. The emergency management plan directs actions aimed at accomplishing four general goals: (1) to mitigate the potential effects of the various hazards that might impact the county, (2) to prepare for the implementation of measures which will preserve life and minimize damage, (3) to respond effectively to the needs of the citizens and local jurisdictions during emergencies, and (4) to provide for organized recovery to return the county and its communities to a normal status as soon as possible after such emergencies. This plan defines the roles and responsibilities associated with the mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts directed at natural disasters, technological accidents, terrorist attacks, and other major events that might impact Blount County.

**Table 2: Threat Index for Geological Hazards Occurrence in Blount County**

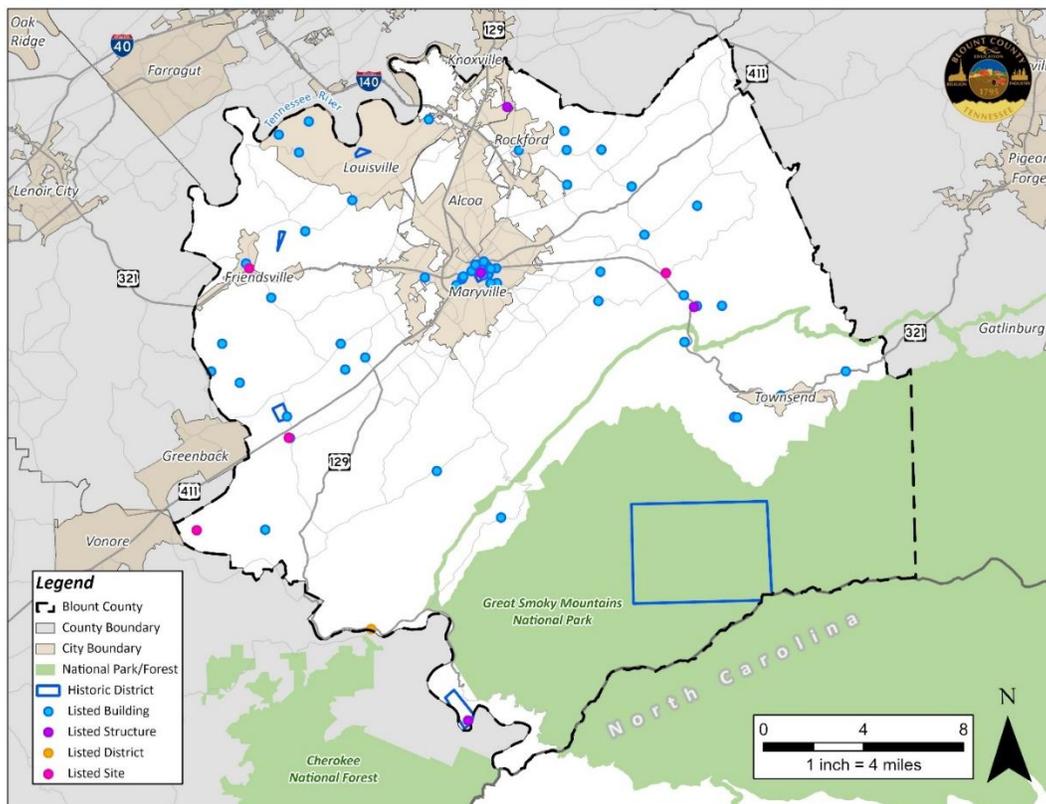
Hazard	Rank
Drought	Not Provided
Extreme Temperature	3
Severe Storms	3
Tornado	2
Earthquake	Not Provided
Floods	3
Wildfire	Not Provided
Geologic Hazards	4

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS**

While it is exciting to plan for future development and growth, it is also essential to honor Blount County's history and respect the community's roots. By observing community landmarks, planners will be able to direct development away from historically sensitive areas and potentially create community gathering places or memorials around its treasured landmarks. The County has over 70 sites, buildings, structures, and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Some are located within the municipalities,

in particular the city of Maryville, yet the majority are located in unincorporated areas. Buildings generally refer to homes of historic people or locations associated with historically-relevant events (Sam Houston Schoolhouse). Four historic mills are identified as historic sites within the County. Structures generally refer to historic infrastructure within the County (bridges, dams, railroads). The largest historic district is Cades Cove Historic District, located within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. **Map 5: Historic Landmarks** shows the location of the historic structures, **Table 3: Historic Landmarks** provides further information.

**Map 5: Historic Landmarks**



**Table 3: Historic Landmarks**

"\*" = incorporated resource (located within a City)

Resource Name	Year Listed
<b>Building</b>	
Sam Houston Schoolhouse	1972
Henry House	1974
Anderson Hall*	1975
Thompson-Brown House*	1978
George, Samuel, House*	1982

Jones, David, House*	1982
Clover Hill Mill	1989
Frazier, Samuel, House	1989
Gillespie, James, House*	1989
Hackney, John, House*	1989
Hamil, Alexander, House	1989
Henderson, William, House*	1989
Kerr, Macklin, House	1989
Kizer, Hezekiah, House	1989
Miser Station Store	1989
People's Bank of Friendsville*	1989
Rorex, John M., House	1989
Warren, Marcus, House	1989
Yearout, Isaac, House	1989
Cochrane, Mary, Barn	1989
Clark, Langston, Barn	1989
McConnell, John, House	1989
Cloyd's Creek Presbyterian Church	1989
Russell--Lackey--Prater House*	1989
Crawford, Gideon, House*	1989
Jones, David, House*	1989
Alexander, John, House*	1989
Alumni Gym*	1989
Bartlett, Peter, House*	1989
Bethlehem Methodist Church	1989
Brickey, Peter, House	1989
Davis, James R., House	1989
Fisher, A. J., House	1989
Friends Church*	1989
Harper Memorial Library*	1989
Hood, Pete, House*	1989
Martin, Warner, House	1989
Martin, John, Mill	1989

McCulloch, Thomas, House*	1989
McNutt--Howard House*	1989
Patton, Samuel A., Building*	1989
Porter, Stephen, House	1989
Shea, John F., House*	1989
Southern Railroad Freight Depot*	1989
Stevenson, Dr. William P., House*	1989
Walland Power Plant	1989
White's Mill	1989
Willard--Clark House*	1989
Morningside*	1989
Happy Valley School	1989
Vineyard, Tobler, House	1989
Trundle, Carl, Barn	1989
McCampbell, James, Barn	1989
McCampbell, Minnis, Barn	1989
McNutt--McReynolds House*	1989
Martin, James, House	1989
Federal Building*	1989
Hitch, John, House	1993
<b>Site</b>	
Hackney, John, Mill Site*	1989
Brick Mill Site	1989
Shaddon Mill Site	1989
Peery Mill Site	1989
<b>Structure</b>	
Southern Railroad Bridge	1989
Walland Bridge	1989
Pistol Creek Dam and Mill Race*	1989
Calderwood Dam	1989
<b>District</b>	
Louisville Historic District*	1974
Cades Cove Historic District	1977

Maryville College Historic District*	1982
Craig, John J., Quarry Historic District	1989
Indiana Avenue Historic District*	1989
Calderwood Hydroelectric Development	2004
Chilhowee Hydroelectric Development	2004
Henry Farm	2011

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Our public engagement efforts prove that conserving the beauty and viability of Blount County’s environment and ecosystems are priorities for residents. The rural character, nature, and recreation options were the most popular selections for reasons residents choose to live in the County. As the County continues to develop, balancing the natural and built environments becomes a challenge for the future of the area. The County has a responsibility to compensate for growth, build a healthy market for housing choice, and create diverse employment opportunities for residents, but we must do so without sacrificing the very reason many of us chose to come here – the mountains and the environment we live in. We’re proud that East Tennessee continues to attract many visitors for its hiking, fishing, and parks, but the County has a responsibility in promoting positive and responsible ecotourism through its land use, maintenance, and conservation efforts. The residents of this County have deep ties to the mountains and the role they play in the lived experience of our community. Identifying and acknowledging areas of vulnerability and regions where development should be diverted from will be essential in the preservation of Blount County in all facets of the planning process.

# GOALS & POLICIES



008

The public engagement process identified four areas of focus for the residents of Blount County. These four topics represent shared ideas and concerns that came out of the survey, meetings and listening to public input. They are considered the Guiding Principles of the Comprehensive Plan: key ideas held in common by citizens that participated in the process. The goals and policies also have an associated time frame. Short-term means that policies may be completed within a year, medium term means that policies may be completed between 1 and 3 years, and long-term means that policies may be completed in three or more years. The following goals and policies of the Plan have been tagged to identify which Guiding Principle they address.



Environmental Stewardship



Affordable Housing



Rural Character



Balanced Growth

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>FLU GOAL 1: PRESERVE THE RURAL, SMALL-TOWN, AND NATURAL CHARACTER OF THE COUNTY</b>					
<p><b>FLU 1.1:</b> The following Future Land Use categories, along with their intended uses, are described:</p> <p>a. <b>Airport:</b> The McGhee-Tyson Airport is recognized as a unique regional transportation resource. Airport operations are an integration of air traffic, governmental, military, commercial, and industrial uses. It is expected that the area of airport operations, including all uses directly connected to the runways and terminal, will develop as an integrated whole under semi-autonomous direction of the Airport Authority</p> <p>b. <b>Commercial.</b> The commercial within this category is intended to accommodate primarily a low and moderate intensity of commercial uses along arterial and collector roads.</p> <p>c. <b>Industrial.</b> This designation applies to the development of industrial areas primarily surrounding the airport.</p> <p>d. <b>National Park.</b> The Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Foothills Parkway are unique regional resources under control of the National Park Service. It is expected that there will be no development in the usual sense of the term, and that the areas will be conserved or open for limited recreational purposes.</p>			✓		

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<p>f. <b>Rural 1.</b> Medium density residential development is expected to occur on land suitable for septic fields, which allows gross densities of 0.2 to 1.33 units per acre. Low density residential development is expected to occur on land with greater constraints to development. Only limited commercial activity is expected along arterial and collector status roads.</p> <p>g. <b>Rural 2.</b> This land use category identifies areas in the County where land development is highly constrained by natural factors and infrastructure, and where low-density development is expected. The majority of development in the area is expected to be residential at densities of no greater than 0.2 units per acre.</p> <p>h. <b>Suburbanizing 1.</b> The majority of development in the area is expected to be residential and agricultural. High density residential development is expected to occur on public sewer, which allows gross densities of greater than 3 units per acre. Medium density residential development is expected to occur on land suitable for septic fields, which allows gross densities of 1-1.5 units per acre.</p> <p>i. <b>Suburbanizing 2.</b> The majority of development in the area is expected to be low to medium density residential, conservation, and agricultural. Low density residential development is expected to be 1-1.5 units per acre on</p>					

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
land suitable for septic fields and 2-3 units per acre for property on public sewer.					
<b>FLU 1.2</b> Encourage development and redevelopment that fits the small-town character, preserves natural and cultural resources, enhances quality of life, and is consistent with the County's ability to provide adequate public services and infrastructure.			✓		   
<b>FLU 1.3</b> Amend the County's development regulations relating to development in rural areas that emphasize the inclusion of natural features, trees and vegetation, open space, minimal environmental impact and subdivision entrances that contain open space treatments.		✓			  
<b>FLU 1.4</b> Special attention should be given to ensure compatibility in transitional areas between land uses.			✓		
<b>FLU 1.5</b> The zoning regulations should be reviewed to determine if adequate setbacks and buffers are required between uses and/or districts.	✓				

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>FLU 1.6</b> Promote a high-quality land development pattern by focusing growth in areas with existing infrastructure and available capacity.	✓				
<b>FLU 1.7</b> Review the County's regulations to identify conflicts between the regulations and the Comprehensive Plan.	✓				
<b>FLU 1.8</b> Review the percent of usable open space standard in subdivision regulations and zoning to determine if this is adequate.	✓				
<b>FLU 1.9</b> Amend subdivision regulations and zoning to require retention of natural cover and minimize land disturbance during construction.	✓				

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<p><b>FLU 1.10</b> Focus new development into the Suburbanizing 1 land use category to avoid encroachment outside of the urban growth boundary.</p>			✓		   
<p><b>FLU GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR PROGRAMS THAT DIRECTLY PRESERVE PRIORITY RURAL LAND IN THE COUNTY</b></p>					
<p><b>FLU 2.1</b> Farmland should be preserved both for open space and to conserve prime agricultural production areas.</p>			✓		  
<p><b>FLU 2.2</b> Evaluate creating a Farmland Preservation Plan with strategies for potentially modifying regulations to relax any restrictions on uses that will support agriculture as well as promoting Blount County as a place to farm. This may also include supporting agritourism and innovative food processing facilities.</p>	✓			✓	 

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>FLU 2.3</b> Provide a land use pattern that protects farmland and directs growth to areas of existing or proposed infrastructure		✓			 
<b>FLU 2.4</b> Evaluate the land development regulations to establish or enhance Conservation Easements, <u>greenbelts, and other regulatory conservation actions.</u>		✓			 
<b>FLU 2.5</b> Encourage and support training programs for small and beginning farmers.	✓				
<b>FLU 2.6</b> The County staff should stay current with rural preservation methods including rural preservation best practices in order to amend the County regulations as needed.			✓		
<b>GOAL FLU 3 - PROTECT NATURAL, CULTURAL &amp; HISTORIC RESOURCES, AND OPEN SPACE OF BLOUNT COUNTY.</b>					
<b>FLU 3.1.</b> Survey and maintain a list of cultural & historic assets and coordinate the list with the Tennessee Historical Commission to ensure protection of resources.			✓		

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>FLU 3.2.</b> The significant historical sites and buildings in the County should be preserved and protected as they contribute to the rural, small town, and natural character of the County.			✓		
<b>FLU 3.3</b> Preserve scenic views and vistas throughout the County and consider the impacts of views when reviewing development applications.			✓		 
<b>FLU 3.4</b> Modify the County’s regulations where appropriate to ensure preservation of views and vistas.	✓				 
<b>FLU 3.5</b> When considering development applications, the County should evaluate water quality impacts carefully and support design that is sensitive to the unique nature and landscape of Blount County.	✓				  
<b>FLU 3.6</b> Adopted flood plain regulations should be maintained and enforced to continue participation in the National Flood Insurance Program that allows county residents opportunity to purchase flood insurance.	✓				 

**GOAL FLU 4 - ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING WITH THE MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN THE COUNTY TO PROPERLY PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND POTENTIAL ANNEXATIONS.**

# FUTURE LAND USE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>FLU 4.1.</b> Build cooperative partnerships with local organizations, agencies and municipalities to achieve the goals and policies of the County's Plan.			✓		
<b>FLU 4.2</b> Partner with the County School System to coordinate development to ensure school capacity is maintained.		✓			
<b>FLU 4.3</b> Recognize the development in the municipalities and consider the impact large development projects may have on the County. Update the projections in the comprehensive plan regularly as a result of these projects.		✓			



# HOUSING

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>GOAL H 1 – ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF A VARIETY OF HOUSING FOR ALL RESIDENTS TO ACCOMMODATE A RANGE OF AGES, LIFESTYLES AND INCOME LEVELS.</b>					
H 1.1. Prioritize the preservation and enhancement of established neighborhoods while providing for housing stock to accommodate the needs of current and future residents.			✓		  
H 1.2. Encourage cooperation with utility providers to coordinate new water and sewer infrastructure with the demand for new housing.			✓		
H 1.3. Seek to eliminate substandard dwelling conditions through appropriate programs and regulations, and to encourage the maintenance and repair of the existing housing stock. Seek grant opportunities to achieve this policy.	✓				 
H 1.4. Support the viability of older established neighborhoods to maintain an affordable housing stock.			✓		  
H 1.5 Regulate density of development, with different regulations for areas close to the cities and areas farther away from the cities, and with different regulations for		✓			  



# HOUSING

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
areas adequately served by high-capacity infrastructure (especially sewer) and areas not adequately served by infrastructure (especially rural roads).					
<b>GOAL H 2 – SUPPORT HOUSING FOR ALL SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS WITHIN BLOUNT COUNTY.</b>					
<b>H 2.1</b> The County should maintain an inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.		✓			  
<b>H 2.2</b> The County should encourage opportunities for providing workforce housing and affordable housing options in order to ensure that individuals from all socio-economic backgrounds have housing opportunities.		✓			
<b>H 2.3</b> The County shall maintain consistency with Federal Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity requirements.	✓				
<b>H 2.4</b> The County shall consider an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee to review the established policies and procedures, ordinances, land development regulations, and adopted local government comprehensive plans and their impact on the provision of affordable and workforce housing	✓				 

# HOUSING

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
in the County. The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee would recommend specific actions or initiatives to encourage or facilitate affordable housing while protecting the ability of the property to appreciate value.					
<b>H 2.5</b> The County shall continue to seek state and federal funding where infrastructure improvements are needed to support affordable residential development and enhance existing residential areas in need of infrastructure improvements as a way to preserve affordable neighborhoods.		✓			
<b>H 2.6</b> The County shall review and update, as needed, land development regulations to assure clear and concise land development regulations that minimize uncertainty and undue delay in approval of affordable development applications.			✓		



# TRANSPORTATION

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>GOAL T 1 - ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF WELL-DESIGNED STREETS THAT ARE SAFE, CONNECTED, AND WELCOMING FOR ALL USERS.</b>					
<b>T 1.1.</b> Prioritize the provision of sidewalks or other pedestrian pathways to connect neighborhoods to businesses and connect businesses to each other.		✓		✓	 
<b>T 1.2.</b> County roads should be improved when needed and maintained to a level consistent with present development and expected future development.			✓	✓	
<b>T 1.3.</b> Partner with the Knoxville TPO and East Tennessee South RPO to include Complete Streets design in the development and widening of roadways.	✓			✓	 
<b>T 1.4.</b> Carefully manage access along major thoroughfares and road entranceways, to protect public safety, road function, and community aesthetics.	✓				 
<b>T 1.5.</b> Provide an adequate transportation system that supports new land development in the most appropriate places, keeps pace with the County's growth, decreases congestion, increases			✓	✓	 

# TRANSPORTATION

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
mobility for people and goods, and provides a network of interconnected streets, sidewalks, greenways and bike lanes.					
<b>T 1.6.</b> Evaluate new roadway projects for opportunities to achieve these goals and policies and support the future land use map.			✓	✓	 
<b>T 1.7.</b> Review the Thoroughfare Plan annually to determine if roadway classifications on the Plan should be modified.		✓			
<b>GOAL T 2 - SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREENWAYS, TRAILS AND BICYCLE PATHS TO PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION AND ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY.</b>					
<b>T 2.1.</b> Strive to connect neighborhoods to parks, schools, and other community-oriented uses through a network of sidewalks greenways, trails and bike lanes.			✓	✓	 
<b>T 2.2.</b> Partner with the Knoxville TPO and East Tennessee South RPO to prioritize multimodal projects.			✓		  

# TRANSPORTATION

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>T 2.3.</b> Actively participate in regional transportation discussions to coordinate projects and information about transportation initiatives for the County to be involved at a regional level.			✓		 
<b>T 2.4.</b> Pursue grant funding opportunities relating to greenway and trail development.		✓		✓	
<b>T 2.5</b> Adopt subdivision regulations to allow sidewalks and/or greenways that interconnected with each other and the road system.		✓			 
<b>T 2.6</b> Evaluate the need for a bicycle and pedestrian study to enhance non-vehicular, safe travel throughout the County.		✓			 



# PUBLIC FACILITIES

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>GOAL I 1 - INVEST IN PUBLIC UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WILL IMPROVE EFFICIENCIES AND DIRECT GROWTH ACCORDING TO THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP.</b>					
I 1.1. Coordinate with the Blount County School District to evaluate and update student generation rates resulting from new residential development. Revisit the school analysis included in the Comprehensive Plan annually.			✓		
I 1.2 Provide information to the Blount County School District when requested relating to building permits and development applications for the purpose of school planning.			✓	✓	
I 1.5. Encourage expansion of sewer service in the Suburbanizing 1 Category to support and direct development in this area.	✓				 
I 1.6. Actively pursue grant funding opportunities relating to infrastructure improvements.	✓			✓	 

# RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>GOAL R 1 - PRIORITIZE BLOUNT COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND BEING THE GATEWAY TO THE SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK</b>					
<b>R 1.1</b> Ensure that new development does not obscure vital sightlines of the smoky mountains.			✓		  
<b>R 1.2</b> Incentivize and promote environmentally sensitive design options that reduce energy usage and ensure that County facilities maximize the use of these same elements, if applicable.			✓		 
<b>R 1.3</b> Work with regional agencies to promote regional efforts to preserve agricultural lands, biodiversity, natural habitat, forests, riparian zones, wetlands, scenic views, hillsides and waterways with a focus on connectivity. Consider pursuing a regional dark sky ordinance and urban forestry initiatives as part of this effort.			✓		  
<b>R 1.4</b> Educate property owners on the benefits of resource protection and environmentally friendly behaviors.			✓		
<b>GOAL R 2 - SEEK OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARKS AND TRAILS TO PROVIDE RECREATIONAL AMENITIES FOR THE RESIDENTS OF BLOUT COUNTY.</b>					

# RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>R 2.1.</b> Investigate grant funding opportunities for the acquisition and development of parks and open space.			✓	✓	
<b>R 2.2.</b> Prepare a parks and trails master plan to identify and address current deficiencies and potential locations for new recreation facilities and amenities throughout the County.			✓		
<b>R 2.3.</b> Encourage new subdivisions to provide connections to proposed greenways and trails.	✓				
<b>R 2.4.</b> Evaluate amending development regulations to offer incentives for new subdivisions to provide park and trail amenities within the neighborhood and require recreational facilities in larger and planned communities.	✓				
<b>R 2.5.</b> Encourage the development of residential conservation subdivisions where appropriate.		✓			 

# CONSERVATION

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
<b>GOAL C 1 - PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND RESTORE NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE BENEFIT AND ENJOYMENT OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.</b>					
<b>C 1.1.</b> Educate citizens on the importance of water quality protection.			✓		
<b>C 1.2</b> Encourage cluster development to provide open space and avoid disturbance in environmentally sensitive areas.			✓		   
<b>C 1.3.</b> Bolster water quality protection and enhancement initiatives by coordinating growth management efforts with the County and surrounding municipalities through regional coordination.		✓			 
<b>C 1.4.</b> Revise existing development ordinances for strong and enforceable regulation that protects the community from excessive noise, light, and vibration by including requirements for adequate setbacks, buffers and dark-sky lighting.	✓				 
<b>C 1.5.</b> Support efforts to protect local farmland through development of new, diverse markets for local foods and produce, such as additional farmers' markets, grocery stores,			✓		 



# CONSERVATION

Goals and Associated Policies	Timeframe			Capital Projects	Guiding Principles
	Short	Med	Long		
community-supported agriculture programs, farm-to-institution programs, etc					
<b>C 1.6.</b> Ensure development design respects the area’s environmental assets and resource base, including watershed protection areas, unique landscapes, and mature trees, especially where there is potential for greenway development.			✓		  
<b>C 1.7.</b> Coordinate with outside agencies to leverage conservation areas and nature preserves for passive recreation – seeking trails/facilities/amenities.		✓			  
<b>C 1.8</b> Support coordination of a project to map potential river flooding through GIS and identify levels of vulnerability.	✓				 

# APPENDIX



# 09



## 1.0 Introduction

This literature review is intended to summarize adopted plans and other planning materials to provide an understanding of Blount County's planning history and how the County has responded to the needs and desires of the community. The documents most relevant to this effort include the Long-Range Facilities Plan for Blount County Schools (1997), the 1101 Growth Plan (2001), the Blount County Policies Plan (2008), Conceptual Land Use Plan (2000), the County's Zoning Regulations (2000), the Blount County Subdivision Regulations (2006), the Knox/Blount Regional Greenway Master Plan (2010), the Maryville-to-Townsend Greenway Master Plan (2014), and Tennessee RiverLine established in 2017.

## 2.0 Long-Range Facilities Plan for Blount County Schools (1997)

The 1997 facility planning document for schools is largely outdated, but the relevance to this comprehensive planning process is to show the past trends in growth and how they impacted planning. Also, the recommendations in the facility planning document can later be compared to the actual development and expansion of the school facilities. Leading up to the development of the 1997 plan, the measure of 10-year growth (1980 – 1990) showed population losses in Alcoa and Townsend but projected population increases in Maryville, Rockford, and Friendsville.

Comprehensive planning documents address the current and impending population growth, infrastructure, and housing planning, drawing attention to special concerns regarding changes in the schoolchildren population. Not only does the addition of schoolchildren require additional bedrooms in housing type development planning, but the delivery of educational services also has capacity limits on the number of children that can be allocated to each school. Therefore, growth projections in schoolchildren impact planning relating to the number of schools to build, the number of staff and faculty to hire, as well as adjustments to the school board budgeting process. Housing developers and builders gain value from coordinating with school district and being aware of the districts' facility planning as well. If school facility resources are insufficient in certain areas, incoming residents to Blount County may avoid certain areas and favor other areas with sufficient school capacity. In response to this potential impact, the County may need to increase the capacity of infrastructure (roadways, utilities, etc.) to reflect unanticipated concentrations of residents in certain parts of the County outside of the timeline of the budget planned for capacity-related improvement projects.

### School Districts Organization

Schools in Blount County are organized into three separate municipal systems: the Blount County school district, the Alcoa school district, and the Maryville school district. The Alcoa school district and the Maryville school district charge tuition due to the fact that the cities school districts have higher per-pupil expenditures than the Blount County School District. At the time of this document's publishing, students were allowed to transfer between school districts. This planning document also notes that many of Alcoa and Maryville's students were not residents within Blount County, pointing to a need to consider population growth outside of Blount County in planning for Blount County's infrastructure needs,

especially in areas in close proximity to Maryville and Alcoa (and other cities with attractive school systems at the time of the future planning document updates).

County School District Deficiencies

Deficiencies within the Blount County School District identified in this 1997 plan were the need for pre-K programs<sup>1</sup>, the construction of middle schools, the expansion of useable teaching space for the high schools, and funding for cultural arts and physical education. Needs for school facilities are determined through an inter-analysis of class size standards and schoolchildren population projections.

Class size requirements determined by the Tennessee General Assembly<sup>2</sup> that apply to this 1997 plan are as follows:

**Figure 1 Class Size Standards (as of 1997)**

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Maximum Class Size</u>
K-3	20	25
4-6	25	30
7-12	30	35
Vocational	20	25

For comparison, the class size standards in effect at the time of this review are as follows:

**Figure 2 Class Size Standards (as of 2022)**

Local boards of education shall have policies providing for class sizes in grades kindergarten through twelve (12) in accordance with the following:

Grade Level	Average Class Size	Maximum Class Size
K-3	20	25
4-6	25	30
7-12	30	35
Career and Technical Education	20	25

Source: Rules of the State Board of Education, 0520-01-03.01 Approval of Schools<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At the time of the report, pre-K programs were only available for “at-risk” children, as noted on page 8 of the 1997 school facilities planning report.

<sup>2</sup> The Tennessee General Assembly is the legislative body governing the state of Tennessee.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/meeting\\_oct\\_20\\_17/10-20-17\\_III\\_M\\_Minimum\\_Requirements\\_for\\_the\\_Approval\\_of\\_Public\\_Schools\\_Rule\\_0520-01-03\\_Attachment\\_Clean\\_Copy.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/meeting_oct_20_17/10-20-17_III_M_Minimum_Requirements_for_the_Approval_of_Public_Schools_Rule_0520-01-03_Attachment_Clean_Copy.pdf)

The student population estimates used in the 1997 plan were projected using Cohort Survival Method<sup>4</sup> with a recommendation to update the projections periodically. 10-year projections up to the year 2007 are as shown below:

**Figure 3 Student Population Projections**

	Student Population Projections		
	(Actual) 1996-97	2001-02	2006-07
Blount County Schools	10,292	11,167	
Grades K-5	4,904	5,305	
Grades 6-8	2,311	2,538	2,715
Grades 9-12	2,919	3,166	3,511
Wm. Blount Attendance	4,973	5,578	
Grades K-5	2,343	2,546	
Grades 6-8	1,116	1,329	1,402
Grades 9-12	1,440	1,629	1,876
Heritage Attendance	5,319	5,623	
Grades K-5	2,561	2,765	
Grades 6-8	1,195	1,223	1,327
Grades 9-12	1,479	1,551	1,664

Notes: Special education students are reflected only in the K-12 totals. The eleven alternative school students were divided between the two high schools.

Source: report pg. 29<sup>5</sup>

### Recommendations

Recommendations to improve the school district’s ability to meet the population’s needs were primarily divided into two forms: reorganizing school populations and building new school types. The literature recognizes that as rural municipalities in the American South began to urbanize and children began to mature earlier, the model of K-8, 9-12 organization of schools was outdated. Therefore, the first recommendation<sup>5</sup> was to organize schools into 1-5, 6-8, 9-12 models to address the special needs of the “in-between” population of children. The in-between population represented pre-teen/early-teen youth that would later be known as “middle school students.” As a result of this recommendation, the second recommendation was to expand school facility diversity by building middle schools and re-allocating the appropriate students out of the existing elementary schools into the new middle schools. Moving towards this new model would also address the shortage of available classroom space in elementary schools in Blount County, thus reducing the need to build new elementary schools to accommodate current outsized student populations.

Regarding the high school population, the methodology used in the literature determined that the existing Blount County high schools had populations below the standard class sizes, according to Tennessee regulations (see **Figure 1**). However, William Blount High School is noted as a crowded school because the useable square footage in the school was not sufficient for the school’s population.

<sup>4</sup> Cohort survival rate is calculated by dividing the total number of children belonging to a cohort who reached each successive grade of the specified level of education by the number of children in the same cohort; those originally enrolled in the first grade of primary education, and multiplying by 100. *World Health Organization*

<sup>5</sup> Page 34

Heritage High School had a noticeably larger percentage of students in vocational education, determining a need for the expansion of vocational education resources. This may predict a trend of needing also to expand vocational education facilities within the community where Heritage High School is located. Using a variety of factors, the final recommendation within the literature was to adopt new capacity measures to be used in school facility planning.

### 3.0 Policies Plan (1999 & 2008)

Blount County's Policies Plan was established to guide the development of other planning material that would be used to prepare for the County's future and set a growth strategy. The most recent Policies Plan was written in 2008 as a successor to the 1999 Policies Plan. The 1999 document was used to establish zoning regulations, a conceptual land use, the 1101 Growth Plan, building codes, code enforcement provisions, and other regulations for the County. Since Blount formalized a robust foundation of regulations that would support the growth management planning in the County, a new Policies Plan was revised in 2008 to reflect the County's intended next phase of growth.

The 2008 Policies Plan document is organized into five (5) sections of Guiding Policy topics, which are generally related to the preservation of community character, zoning regulations, approaches to land regulation by government agencies, public roadway levels of service, and the balance of growth and infrastructure planning. With regard to comprehensive planning, the strategies in the Policies Plan were developed in consideration for the Conceptual Land Use Plan (CLUP) and the 1101 Growth Plan. However, not all of the policies are directly related to topics addressed in a comprehensive plan.

The first guiding policy section emphasizes the need to preserve the "rural, small town and natural character" of Blount County. The implementation strategies and action items listed under this section establish the recommended approach to developing future regulations for physical development, regulations which would primarily exist in the zoning and subdivision regulations. The content of this section could be used to determine actions or policies in a Comprehensive Plan that would promote and strengthen arts, culture, or historical preservation. However, the Blount County Growth Plan (2001) and the CLUP did not address these topics.

Guiding Policy #2 explains how land use and development should be regulated, providing guidance for the Zoning Plan. Similarly, Guiding Policy #3 is not directly relevant to the scope of a Comprehensive Plan – it focuses on limiting the regulatory authority of governments.

However, Guiding Policies #4 and #5 are relevant to a comprehensive plan since both sections address public infrastructure investments being provided in a manner that is consistent with current and future growth in the County. Policy #4 focuses on County roadway levels of service in relation to development; Policy #5 takes a more general approach, discussing all public infrastructure provisions. Regarding roadway improvements and planning, the policy's components advise how Blount should regularly assess the need to widen roadways and develop priorities in the capital improvement budget. Guiding Policy #4 – Implementation Strategy (3) encourages further exploration of alternative multi-modal transportation but provides few specific objectives or action items on this topic. However, an accompanying comprehensive plan would take the directive to develop comprehensive plan policies about this type of transportation planning.

Comprehensive Plan documents typically evaluate whether existing infrastructure is adequate for current and future levels of growth or development. Guiding Policy #5 addresses all infrastructure planning in general. It recommends the clustering of development near existing infrastructure, maintaining an updated growth plan, coordinating with other agencies to improve the accuracy of growth estimates and infrastructure capacity level assessments, and preparation of master plans specific to different types of infrastructure. In addition, recommendations were made about forming committees and agencies to assist in planning for County services/infrastructure assessments, maintenance, and expansions.

The existing objective policies and implementation strategies in Guiding Policies #4 and #5 may be converted directly into goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. These guiding policies address insufficiencies, prepare the County fiscally, and consider service partnerships that may be needed in the future.

#### **4.0 1101 Growth Plan (2001)**

In 1998, the State of Tennessee enacted the Tennessee Growth Policy Act (Public Chapter 1101)<sup>6</sup>, which required each county and municipality (with some exceptions) to develop a 20-year growth plan that included adopted Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs). The plans may also add Planning Growth Areas (PGAs) and Rural Areas (RAs) as optional addendums. These area boundaries establish where growth would be encouraged or supported and where growth would be restricted. Furthermore, establishing these areas sets the precedent for the content of associated growth management policies.

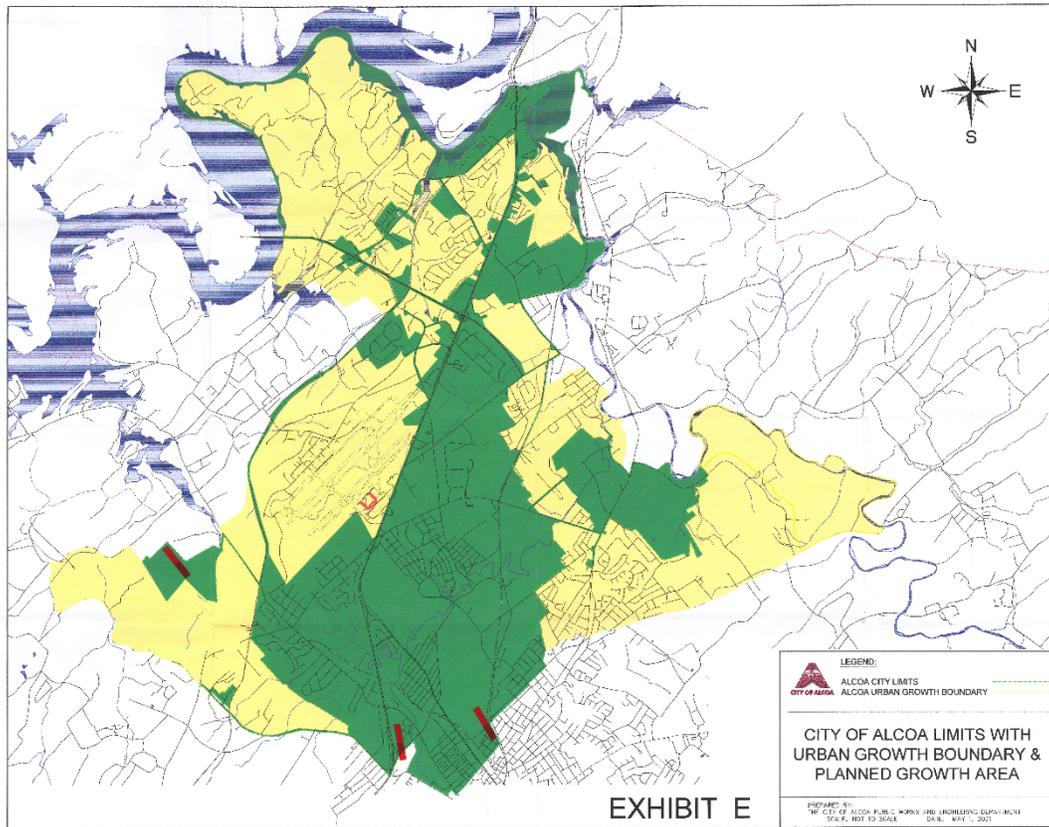
Blount County's 1101 Growth Plan was not established until nearly three (3) years later, only after many of the County's Planning documents and supporting documents were ratified/accepted/adopted, including the 1999 Policies Plan and 2000 Zoning Regulations. Growth management policies expected within a set of comprehensive planning documents are primarily present within the County's Policies Plan(s) and Land Development Regulations (which include Zoning). The 1101 Growth Plan primarily provides geographical information regarding the areas that are to be considered in the comprehensive planning process. In addition, supplemental versions of growth maps depict the availability of services, such as sanitary sewer, electric, and fire department. Any inter-jurisdictional coordination is also recorded in this document.

The Blount County Urban Growth Boundaries are depicted as follows:

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.tn.gov/tacir/tennessee-county-growth-plans.html>

Figure 4 Alcoa UGB & PGA Map



The City of Alcoa’s map was supplemented by various maps of available infrastructure and public services, as shown below:

Figure 5 Alcoa Sanitary Sewer

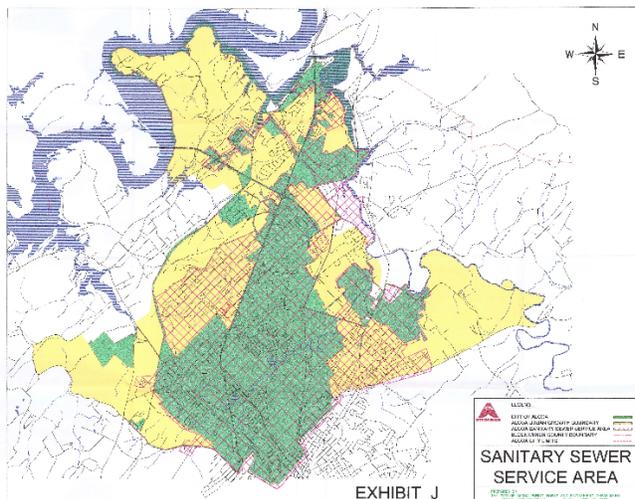


Figure 6 Alcoa Water Service Area

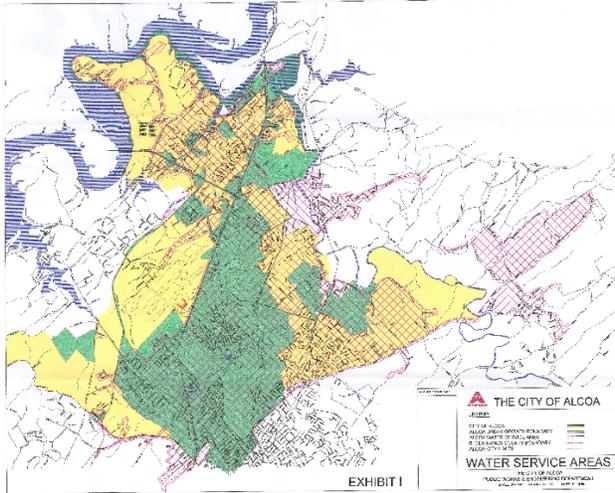


Figure 7 Alcoa Electric Service Area

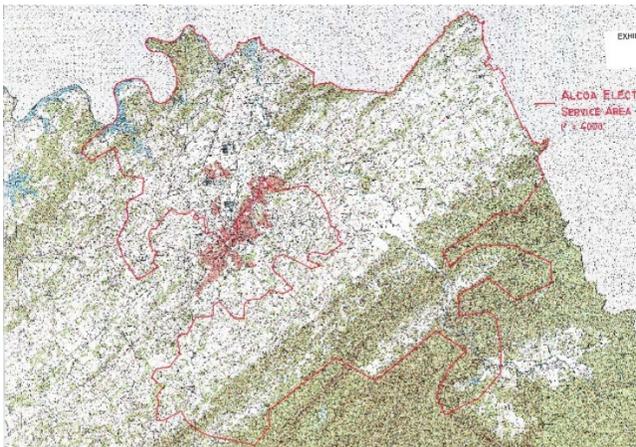
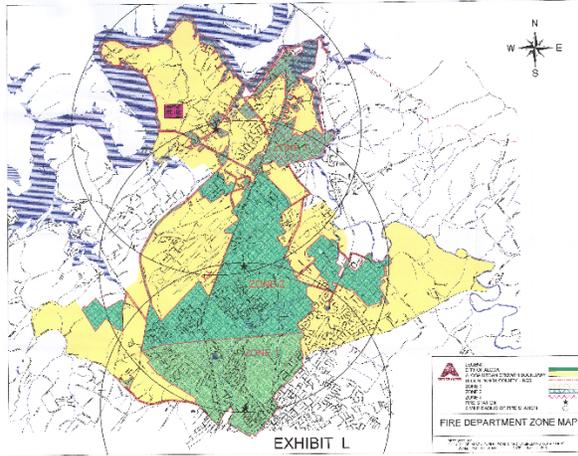
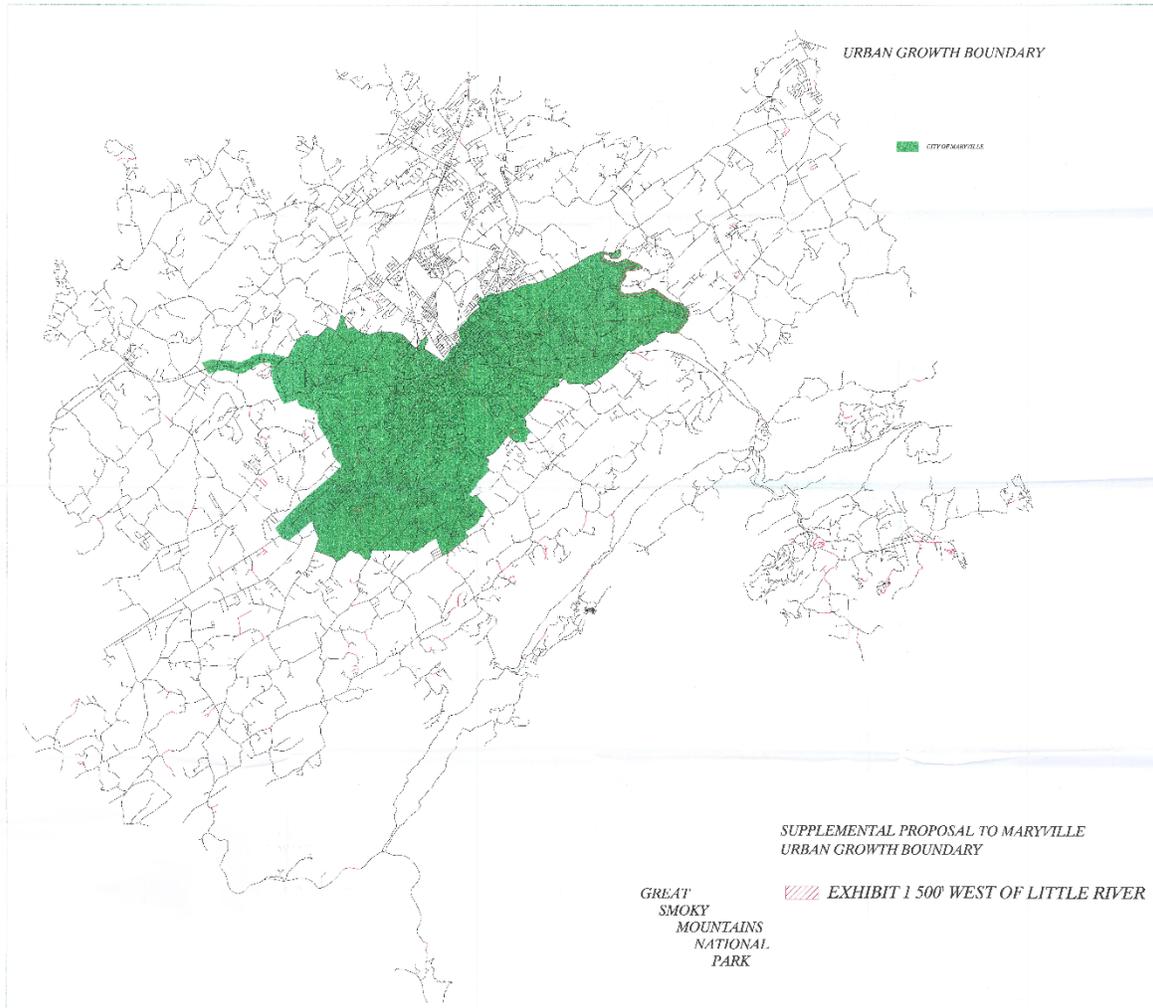


Figure 8 Alcoa Fire Department Zone



**Figure 9 Supplement to Proposed Maryville UGB Map**



Regarding the City of Maryville, the 1101 Growth Plan provides a supplement to the proposed Maryville UGB but the document does not provide specific boundaries. The planned area of Maryville UGB is described as the area that Maryville already provides municipal services to including sewer and water. Other municipalities that adopted UGB are Friendsville, Rockford, Louisville, and Townsend.

## 5.0 Blount County Conceptual Land Use Plan (2000)

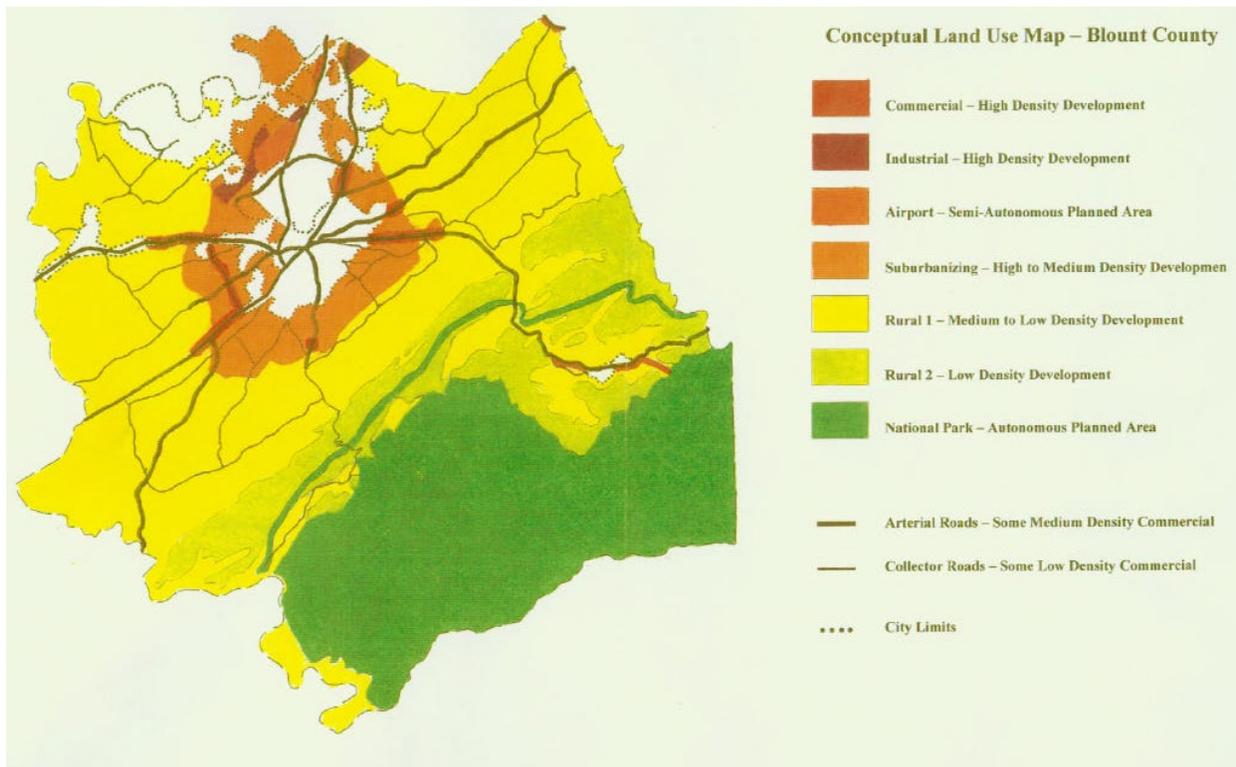
A companion to the Blount County Policies Plan, this land use plan was adopted on March 23, 2000 with a twenty year horizon of 2020. The county is split into two areas the planned growth area and the rural area. The planned growth area mostly contains all the commercial, industrial, airport and suburbanizing land uses. The Rural area mostly contains rural 1, rural 2, and the national park area.

Commercial Land Use is mostly concentrated around Alcoa and Maryville with smaller pockets throughout other parts of the county concentrated along arterials and collector roads. Industrial areas are concentrated around the two cities of Alcoa and Maryville and southwest of the airport. Existing commercial and industrial uses, outside of their respective designated land use areas, will be allowed to expand as need and as appropriate to the surrounding development context. Airport land uses are a combination of multiple different uses and therefore given its own category and will develop under the direction from the Airport Authority. The suburbanizing land use identifies areas where medium to high density is expected to occur, with density starting at .33 dwelling unit per acre. The suburbanizing areas is expected to be predominately residential.

Rural 1 land use category identifies areas where low to medium density is expected. This area will mostly be residential with a maximum density of 1.5 dwelling unit per acre. Rural 2 land use are area highly constrained by natural factors and infrastructure and where low density is expected. This area will mostly be residential with a maximum density of .33 dwelling unit per acre. Both rural 1 and rural 2 do expect some limited commercial to occur especially related to tourism, recreation, and household items.

Both the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Foothills Parkway are within the National Park land use category. Most of this area will be conserved and only open for limited recreational purposes.

The land use plan also wanted additional consideration for projects that were located near flood prone areas, had height and noise impacts from airport operations, proposed mixed use development, clustered development, proposed signs or telecommunication towers, included manufactured homes, or included multifamily homes.



## 6.0 Land Development Regulations

Comprehensive Plans serve as the framework for the development and enforcement of land development regulations. Blount County has adopted two sets of land development regulations : the Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision Regulations. Each document details the specific strategies or policies the County will implement in order to achieve the long-term goals, policies, and objectives that established within the 1999 Policies Plan. At that time, Blount County did not have a Comprehensive Plan – comprehensive planning documents were created in the following years based upon the 1999 Policies Plan. Typically, land development regulations are developed to manage the expected growth and land use needs as identified and prioritized in a comprehensive plan. Therefore, the review of the following two documents summarizes and evaluates key strategies Blount County has and currently uses to manage its growth and change.

### 6.1 Zoning Regulations (2000, amended 2020)

Zoning policies or laws regulate the types of uses that are permitted on or nearby a certain parcel of land. The location of land parcels subject to these policies or laws can be found within a zoning map. Zoning is typically done as a means of providing actionable policies that will should help realize Comprehensive Plan goals. An example of this implementation is parcels of land near an interstate highway zoned as “industrial” or “commercial” in response to a Comprehensive Plan goal that wants to ensure businesses have prime access to highway corridors in order to support attracting job growth. The core of zoning laws is setting standards for development and serving as a tool in growth planning and realizing a community’s vision for the future.

Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance outlines 12 land use districts (two of which are overlay districts<sup>7</sup> and two of which are autonomous districts), which communicate what types of uses – commercial, residential, industrial, etc. – are permitted in the areas. Article 9 defines any lot size minimums, development density/intensity limits, setbacks<sup>8</sup>, height limits, and other special site regulations for each district. The goal of the associated requirements is to ensure that uses nearby each other do not have adverse impacts on each other. Therefore, attaining comprehensive planning goals is performed in a manner that achieves the intended future outcomes while protecting the well-being of the community. Of the 12, Blount County has eight “core” zoning districts that exist for the County’s exclusive purposes: Suburbanizing, Rural 1, Rural 2, Commercial, Industrial, Rural Arterial Commercial, Rural Arterial Commercial 2, and Planned Rural Resort District. The remaining four districts are set aside for autonomous planning by external organizations or as overlay districts to manage a specific impact.

#### Autonomous Districts

The two autonomous districts, Airport District (AD) and National Park District (NPD), identify the areas within the County in which the land is managed by the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority and the National Park Service, respectively. Blount County’s zoning resolution explicitly releases all planning decisions within these districts to independent agencies and requires that planning decisions explicitly

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<sup>7</sup> An “overlay district” is a zoning district that allows for special types of development within an area that already contains a basic zoning district designation, such as “commercial” or “low-density resident”. An overlay district can be layered on top of the basic zoning district.

<sup>8</sup> A “setback” is the distance between the building/structure on a property and the property lines on the front, sides, and back.



exclude these areas from any regulations within the County's zoning regulations. In doing so, the regulations' provisions for these independent areas require Blount County to actively pursue interagency partnerships and coordination with external agencies in order to achieve Blount County's growth management goals. However, growth management goals may be prevented from achieving full realization due to any inability to coordinate with the external agencies presiding over land zoned as AD or NPD.

#### Overlay Districts

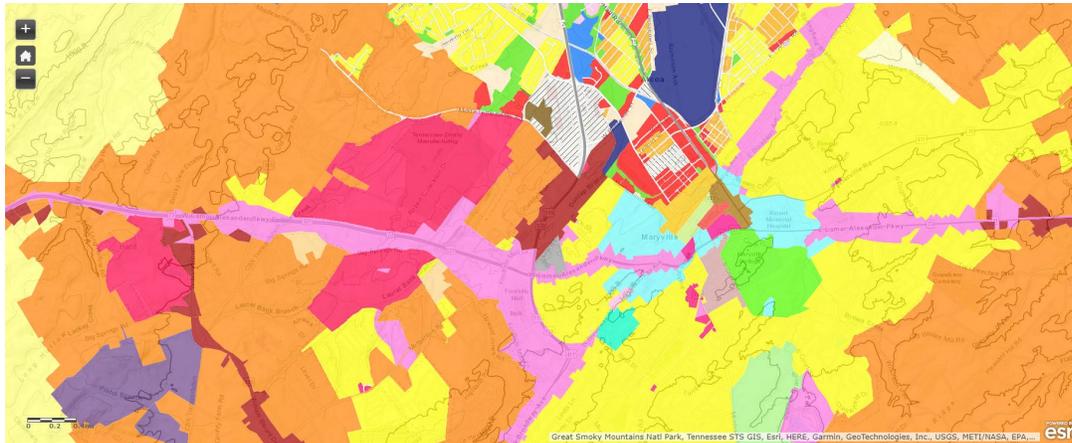
The two overlay districts are the Airport Hazard Overlay (AHO) and the Flood Hazard Overlay (FHO). The AHO primarily functions to provide a process for the Airport Authority to comment on proposed buildings over a certain height and an additional review for building permits. A notable impact this may have on comprehensive planning is that housing and employment space development near the airport may be limited by the Airport Authority. In contrast, land within the FHO is subject only to regulations within the Blount County Floodplain Zoning Resolution, decisions for FHO-zoned land are still under the County's jurisdiction and review.

#### Core Districts

The remaining eight (8) districts established in Article 8 are zoning districts that contain regulations specifically permitting or prohibiting certain uses on the land. The eight (8) core districts are Suburbanizing District (S), Rural District 1 (R-1), Rural District (R-2), Commercial (C), Industrial (IND), Rural Arterial Commercial (RAC and RAC2), and Planned Rural Resort District (PRRD). Regulations within the districts ensure that growth is managed and organized in different areas as the County has dictated in the existing Land Use Plan (adopted 2000) and the Conceptual Land Use Map, which is found in the 2000 Land Use Plan.

As introduced earlier in this literature review, zoning regulations are applied to land parcels organized onto a zoning map. The Zoning Map is intended to follow the direction set forth in the County's Land Use Map, which is a map typically included in a Comprehensive Plan and reflects the Comprehensive Plan's growth management goals. The location of land assigned to each district is available in the County's existing zoning map, as shown below:

**Figure 10 Zoning Map**



Source: Blount County ArcGIS Online

As shown on the Zoning Map, the orange color is associated with the “Suburbanizing District,” which allows a moderate-to-high density of 1.2 dwelling units per acre if using septic tank systems and 6.2 units per gross area. This suburbanizing district is primarily concentrated around the City of Alcoa and the City of Maryville. The district’s density regulations encourage the installation and use of public water/sewer, which impacts the likelihood of other incoming development concentrating nearby. This arrangement of higher-density residential development matches the current Conceptual Land Use Map (<https://blountgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/OnePane/basicviewer/index.html?appid=38d69f75766040e3b69d72b2e68d20bf>). In addition, the Land Use Plan (2000) identified these areas as areas that will likely be annexed into the cities they surround. The septic requirements for this land under this zoning district are compatible with the Policies Plan Guiding Policy #5, which aims to balance public infrastructure with growth and development patterns.

Also surrounding the cities are some concentrated groups of land parcels zoned for Commercial and Industrial use, indicated by the brick red and dark purple-colored land parcels. However, further out, land parcels marked coded with yellow coloring represent land with the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts, which have significant restrictions on development potential and ways the land can be used. Applying zoning districts allows the County to restrict uses away from rural and conservation areas and concentrate certain uses in the growth areas. Enforcing zoning districts reinforces the adopted Land Use Plan and supports the Policies Plan Guiding Policy #1.

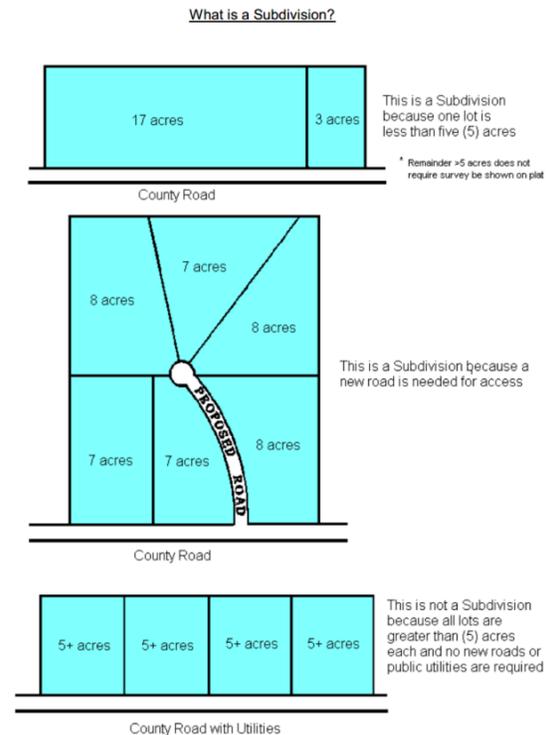
## **6.2 Subdivision Regulations (2006, amended 2020)**

The subdivisions regulations document can be considered a supplementary document to the Zoning Plan/Regulations, therefore supporting orderly implementation of the County’s growth management goals. Similar to the Zoning Plan/Regulations, not all sections of the Subdivision Regulations are independently relevant to the comprehensive planning process. This review of the Subdivision Regulations will cover Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 9. The sections excluded from full review are Sections 5, 7, 8, and 10, as they are primarily procedural sections recording the types of documentation that must be submitted for

approval or they detail construction material requirements. However, they support the ability of other sections to adequately implement growth management goals.

Section 1 and 2 are foundational portions of the Subdivision Regulations. Section 1 establishes the purposes of the document, and the purposes listed are compatible with the comprehensive planning goals set forth in the Policies Plan (2008) and Conceptual Land Use Plan (2000). For example, purpose #4 emphasizes the need to protect community character and encourage orderly development. Purpose #6 emphasizes the need to ensure public needs and infrastructure are adequately planned and provided for.

The establishment of purposes is followed by the list of definitions in Section 2, which defines subdivisions according to lot sizes, roadway infrastructure needs, and public utility needs. Similar to the density and lot size regulations assigned to each zoning district, the information provided to define subdivisions ensures that subdivision development proceeds in an orderly manner that does not result in deficiencies in the capacity of roadways and utilities infrastructure.



Section 3 of the Subdivisions Regulations provides infrastructure improvement and performance standards, detailing the approval of improvements, recommended maintenance, and other infrastructure-related assurance procedures. This portion of the document helps to ensure development-related improvements are added and maintained at a certain service level so that the next phase of planning (the next Comprehensive Plan process) is able to focus on the future rather than retroactive repairs or corrections.

Section 4 describes the types (major, minor, one-lot, and lot line) of subdivisions that may be created, the procedures to do so, and extends the definitions of each subdivision type originally introduced in Section 2. Most of this section focuses on the procedural criteria for establish various subdivision types. However, in the focus on infrastructure capacity levels management, each sub-section stipulates contingencies for evaluating infrastructure capacity according to development changes. For example, lot line subdivisions, to be categorized as a standard lot, are subject to the Director of Planning’s evaluation of septic capabilities for development on lots that are less than five (5) acres in size. With such stipulations, development is encouraged on larger lots versus smaller ones, which may impact the potential housing supply levels that may feasibly be constructed in Blount County. Section 6 informs users of general requirements and minimum standards for land improvements, reservations, and the subdivision’s design. The section addresses suitability of land and what land is considered unsuitable for development and subdivisions.

This limitation supports the growth policy that makes capital improvement budget planning more feasible, which is also the intent of Objective Policy 5B of the Policies Plan (2008). In addition, the standards set forth in Section 6 require that infrastructure is developed in a manner that is not only fiscally responsible but will also remain safe and provide acceptable levels of service at population levels estimated in the future. Section 7 and 8’s technical specifications for the final approval of development improvements and road construction standards serve to strengthen the intent of Section 6.

Although the content of the Subdivision Regulations document is useful for guiding how growth is controlled and planned for, one potential deficiency noted is the removal of coordination with the School Board District prior to platting<sup>9</sup>. This was an amendment approved in 2006, deleting “Standard of School Capacity as Criteria Precedent to Platting.” Removing this requirement may be to the advantage of a developer, making development in Blount County more attractive. However, doing so may potentially risk the ability of the region’s educational facilities to plan and accommodate growth at a rate that is in-step with the rate of development.

## **7.0 Parks and Recreation Master Plan: Maryville-Alcoa-Blount County (2005)**

The Maryville-Alcoa-Blount County Parks and Recreation Commission (“the Commission”) is an intra-jurisdictional coordinating organization that manages the parks owned by the City of Maryville, the City of Alcoa, and Blount County. At the time of the 2005 plan’s drafting, most of the parks and recreation facilities were within the Maryville-Alcoa area, with only one (Louisville Point Park) being outside of that region.<sup>10</sup> The spread of facilities noted in the Master Plan implies residents in unincorporated areas are not as well served, indicating a need to focus on serving additional areas especially the areas of higher densities. In growth management planning, parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces are evaluated for service capacity with regard to current and future population sizes and geographical spread.

A study was commissioned in 2004 by the MAB Commission, and the Tennessee DEC identified the source of park and recreation levels of service (LOS) deficiencies were caused by the development of facilities outside of the Commission’s oversight, thus leaving parks and recreation facility maintenance schedules devoid of sufficient resources (funding and staff). When evaluating the system organization the report noted that additional staff is needed and the lack of revenue made it harder to increase staffing and additional services.. Recommendations for MAP Parks and Recreation system included the development of fees for some facilities/activities, the institution of user-friendly digital payment systems, staffing upgrades, and the outsourcing of facilities maintenance to more efficient maintenance providers.

In the Comprehensive Planning process, the LOS provided by and predicted for the Parks and Recreation providers is a key focus. The LOS analyzed in this Master Plan were based upon 1995 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines, which include recommendations to have a “core system of

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<sup>9</sup> Subdivisions Regulation 6.01.2(c)

<sup>10</sup> Plan page 4.8

parklands” (secondary reference: Mertes, 1995<sup>11</sup>) and a certain level of open space provided per 1,000 residents.

The Commission’s assets at the time of this Master Plan’s development were 16 park facilities over 200 acres of land, exclusive of the Maryville and Alcoa Greenbelt parks and the Townsend greenway. The recorded parks facility types and acreage are as below:

**Figure 11. MAB Parks<sup>12</sup> - 2004**

<b>Mini Parks</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
Richard Williams Park	1.0	Alcoa
Bassell Courts	1.0	Alcoa
Oldfield Mini Park	.5	Alcoa
Total	2.5	
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>		
	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
Pole Climbers Athletic Fields	3	Alcoa
Howe Street Park	2	Alcoa
Rock Garden Park	4	Alcoa
South Hall Park	10	Alcoa
John Sevier Park	8	Maryville
Amerine Park	7	Maryville
Pearson Springs Park	8	Maryville
Total	42	
<b>Community Parks</b>		
	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
Eagleton Park	22	Blount County
Everett Athletic Complex	12	Blount County
Louisville Point Park	16	TVA (on lease to County)
Springbrook Park	62	Alcoa
Sandy Springs Park	20	Maryville
Everett Park	20	Maryville
Total	152	

Source: Maryville-Alcoa-Blount Parks Master Plan, 2005

The Blount County population at the time of the 2004 study was recorded at 113,578 persons. Using the park facility service delivery standard (decided by the Study’s steering committee) of 6.5 acres per 1,000 people (this is within the NRPA guideline range of 6.2 to 10.5), 738 acres of parks should have been in service in 2004. Population projections for 2014 required 847 acres of parks and recreation space to be developed by that year based on the 6.5 acres per 1,000 person ratio.

However, in 2004, only 329 acres<sup>13</sup> had been developed, leaving the MAB region with a deficiency of 409 acres. Furthermore, the deficiency was predicted to increase to 518 acres by 2014. Additionally, the diversity of facilities was measured against NRPA standards for park facilities. The Commission’s facility type offerings also did not meet the standards-- the Commission would need to increase the acreage and

<sup>11</sup> Page 6.1

<sup>12</sup> This land excludes the greenways and greenbelt park

<sup>13</sup> The acreage calculation includes land ties to existing greenways and parks; greenways and certain additional connected lands were not counted in the 152 acres shown in Figure 6.1



increase the diversity of facilities within its parks and recreation system so that its level of service meets current and projected needs.

To meet the level of service (LOS) needs for the County, the Master Plan identified needing to acquire land in high population growth areas: at least 30 acres in south Blount County for a community park, and at least 100 acres in east Blount County for a regional park. To meet and exceed the 409-acre deficiency, the MP identified that the greenway would need to be expanded in addition to the acquisition of the two aforementioned parcels. Even more land would need to be acquired to meet the 2014 projected needs.

In planning to meet the LOS goals, the Maryville-Alcoa-Blount County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan details \$57.2 million in needed capital improvements (\$4.8 M for renovations, \$32.5 M for new parks, \$19.2 M in greenway development, and ~600K in administrative/maintenance expenses) for the Commission's 10-year priority project spending. A proposed schedule of spending is available in Section 7 (Facility Phasing and Cost Recommendations) of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. However, the projected expansions were planned with the horizon year of 2014, which has since expired. Comprehensive planning document sections addressing parks and recreation facilities will provide data regarding the Commission's more recent service delivery level of operation beyond the 2014 horizon set in the Study contained in the 2005 Master Parks Plan and identify park expansion acreage since.

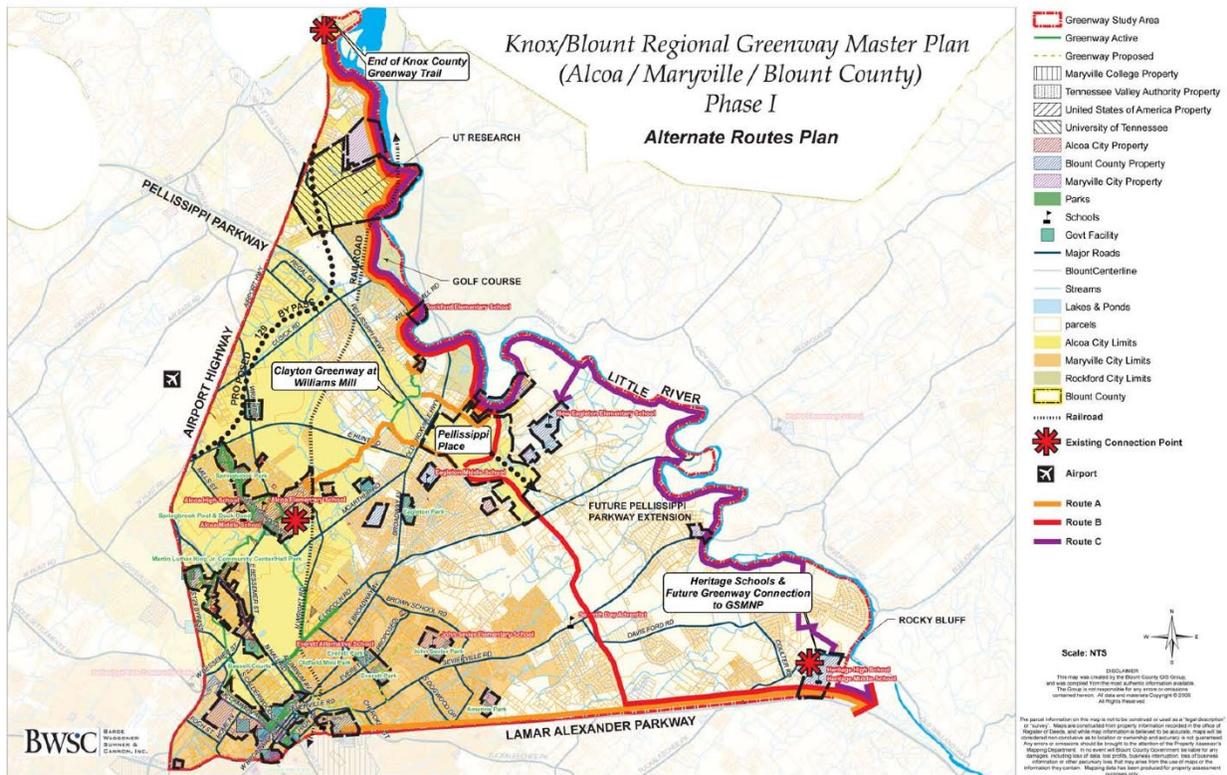
Since 2021, the Eagleton ballpark redevelopment project has been ongoing to rehabilitate the Eagleton Ballpark into a regional sports and event complex which will eventually draw tournaments to the area. The 21 acre park currently consists of seven baseball/softball fields and related structures. Proposed improvements call for two dedicated fields for Eagleton College and Career Academy with press boxes and field house facilities, a multi-function event plaza and pavilion, and improved traffic circulation and parking.

## **8.0 Knox/Blount Regional Greenway Master Plan for Maryville, Alcoa, and Blount County – Phase 1 (2010)**

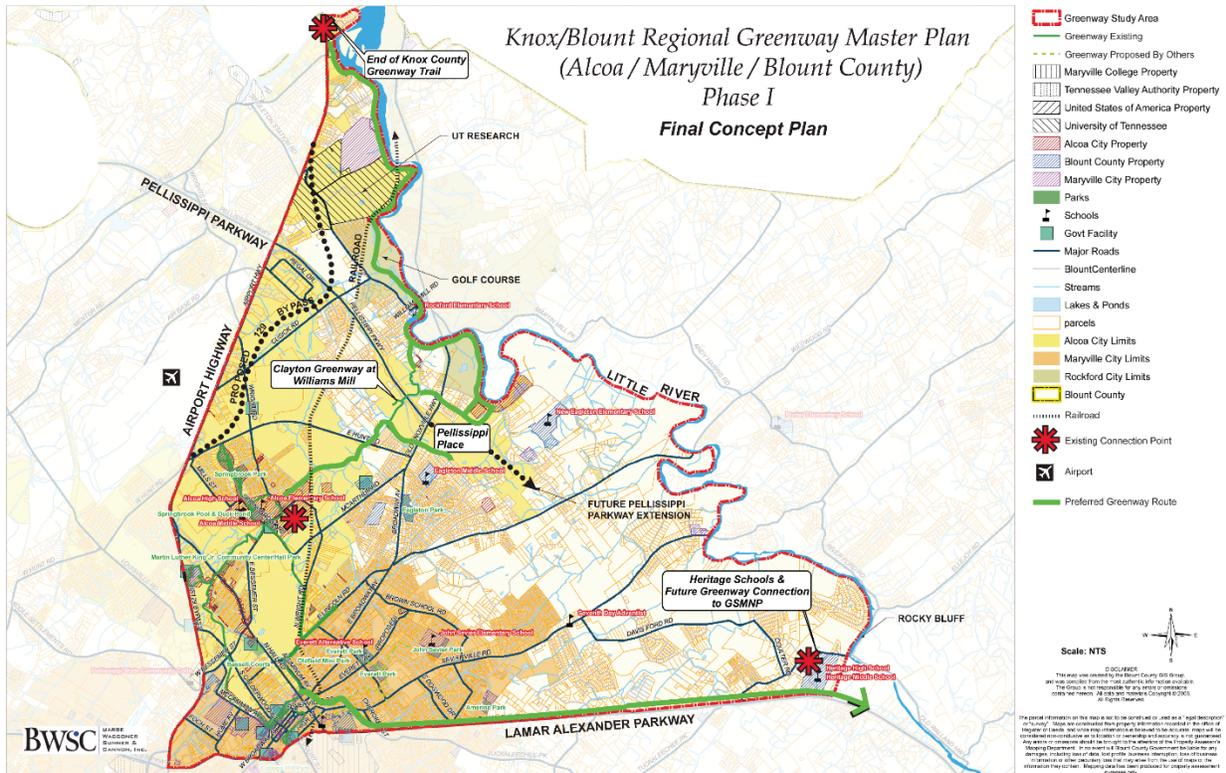
The Comprehensive Planning process factors in the development of greenways, trails, and their connections as a part of evaluating and planning for the County's transportation infrastructure. Greenways and trails provide a means of transportation besides roadways for automobiles and bicycles – they also support improved quality of life for residents and other users who travel within natural transportation paths for the enjoyment of nature. Greenway networks are encouraged to be developed around key community hubs of activity and business as an attractive feature of regional connectivity and elements of public leisure.

This Greenway Master Plan focuses on the development of a connection from neighboring Knox County's existing greenway to a greenway network within the parts of Blount County within and adjacent to the cities of Alcoa and Maryville. The connection would serve as a physical and symbolic intertwining of the cities to each other, the Blount County community around them, and eastern Tennessee.

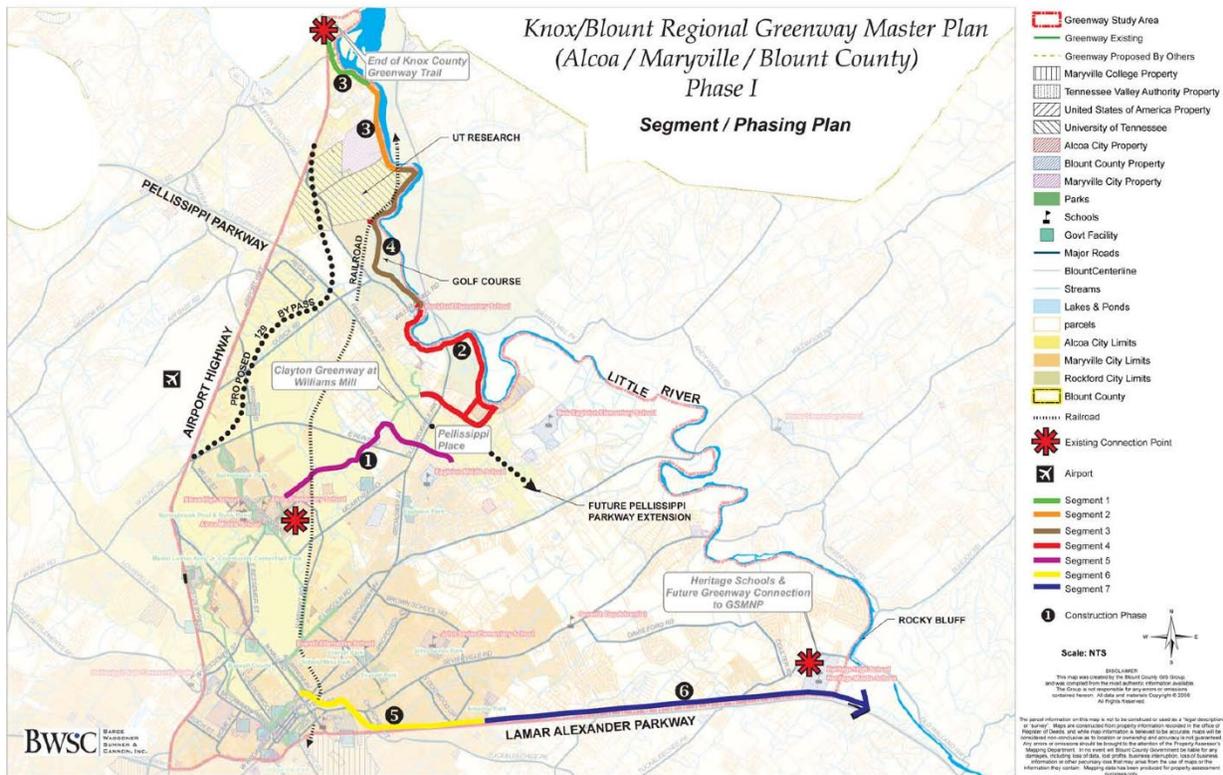
The corridors evaluated in the Master Plan were considered are shown below:



The three routes for their connections to publicly owned facilities, ease of access, rural land preservation, and potential experience for the users. Public input set a preference for Route C. However, the Final Concept Plan determined was a revised version of Route A, shown below:



The final conceptual drawing is split into six phases of development, with this document review only considering Phase 1, which is the only published portion of the Master Plan. The segment phasing plan is shown below:



Phase 1 is represented by the development of Segment 5, which would connect Springbrook Elementary School to Pellissippi Place, thereby placing emphasis on access to the City of Alcoa’s existing greenway network. The report did not discuss the number of residents or users that may be served by the development of this greenway or a similar route. However, with regard to Comprehensive Planning, the document is beneficial as it has already analyzed the opportunities and challenges for greenway development in different locations. Therefore, in the next stages of Blount County’s comprehensive planning process, the County is able to use this Master Plan as a basis for developing policies and strategic goals for certain locations that should be connected with multimodal transportation, including greenway or trails. In addition, the route features identified in this Master Plan is information that could also be used in parks and recreation facility development and planning for a cohesive experience between facilities and connections to them.

Phase 1 of the Knox/Blount County Regional Greenway Master Plan (for Maryville, Alcoa, and Blount County) represents a culmination of efforts between the municipalities and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) to address the need for natural travel paths in the region and the use of greenways to support the development of other infrastructure. Green infrastructure, which includes greenways, was identified by the County’s 2008 Policies Plan<sup>14</sup> as a planning priority for the County’s next Comprehensive Plan. According to that Policies Plan, in planning for green infrastructure, a development rights purchase program should be established and green infrastructure development should be

<sup>14</sup> 2008 Policies Plan, 5B Implementation Strategy (3)

coordinated with parks & recreation planning. The most recent parks and recreation plan was developed in 2005, five years before the completion of this 2010 Greenway Master Plan. The Greenway Master Plan does not inform the reader of any coordination with parks and recreation planning, but it does recommend such coordination.

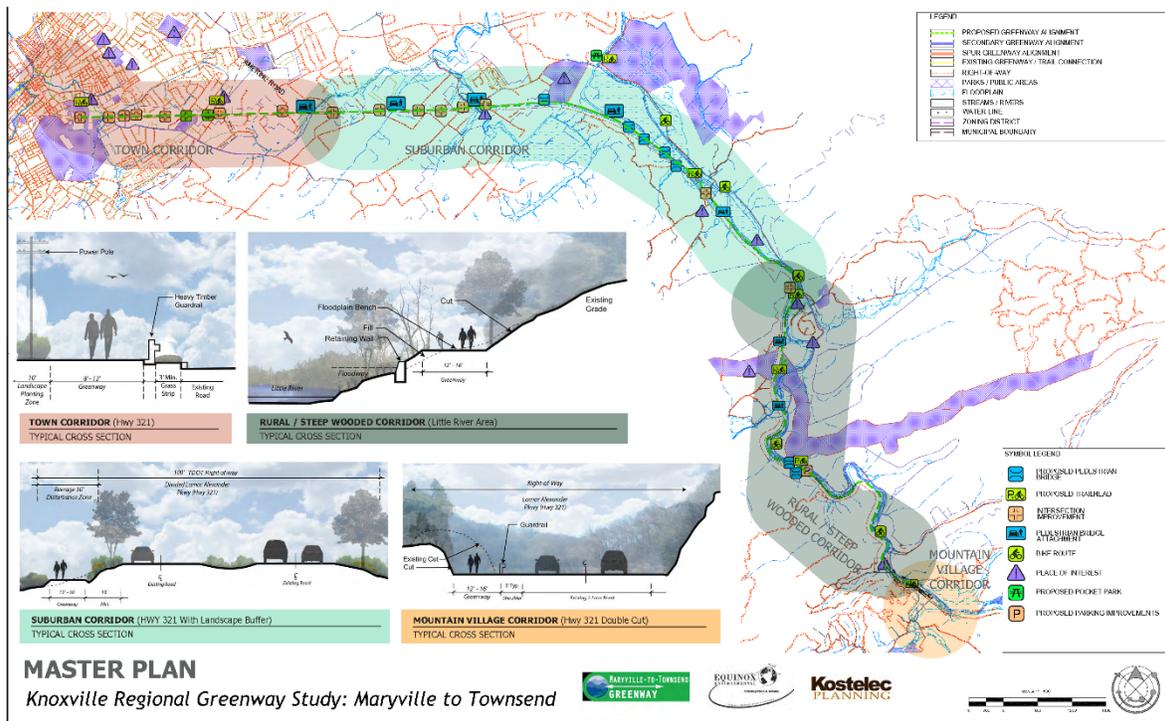
## 9.0 Maryville-to-Townsend Greenway Master Plan (2014)<sup>15</sup>

The Maryville-to-Townsend Greenway Master Plan (MT GMP) was developed primarily for the purpose of the City of Knoxville to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for cyclists and pedestrians. Doing so requires investment in facility development within Blount County as the County is considered the “gateway” to the Great Smokey Mountains. The MT GMP can be considered a follow-up to or an extension of the 2009 Knox/Blount Regional Greenway Master Plan’s discovery. The proposed greenway connections are similar to that which was proposed in the 2009 plan.



The pathways presented and evaluated in the MT GMP connect through portions of Blount County and the plan was developed with input from Blount County, the City of Maryville, the City of Alcoa, the City of Townsend, the Maryville-Alcoa-Blount County Parks & Recreation Commission, the Blount Partnership, and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).

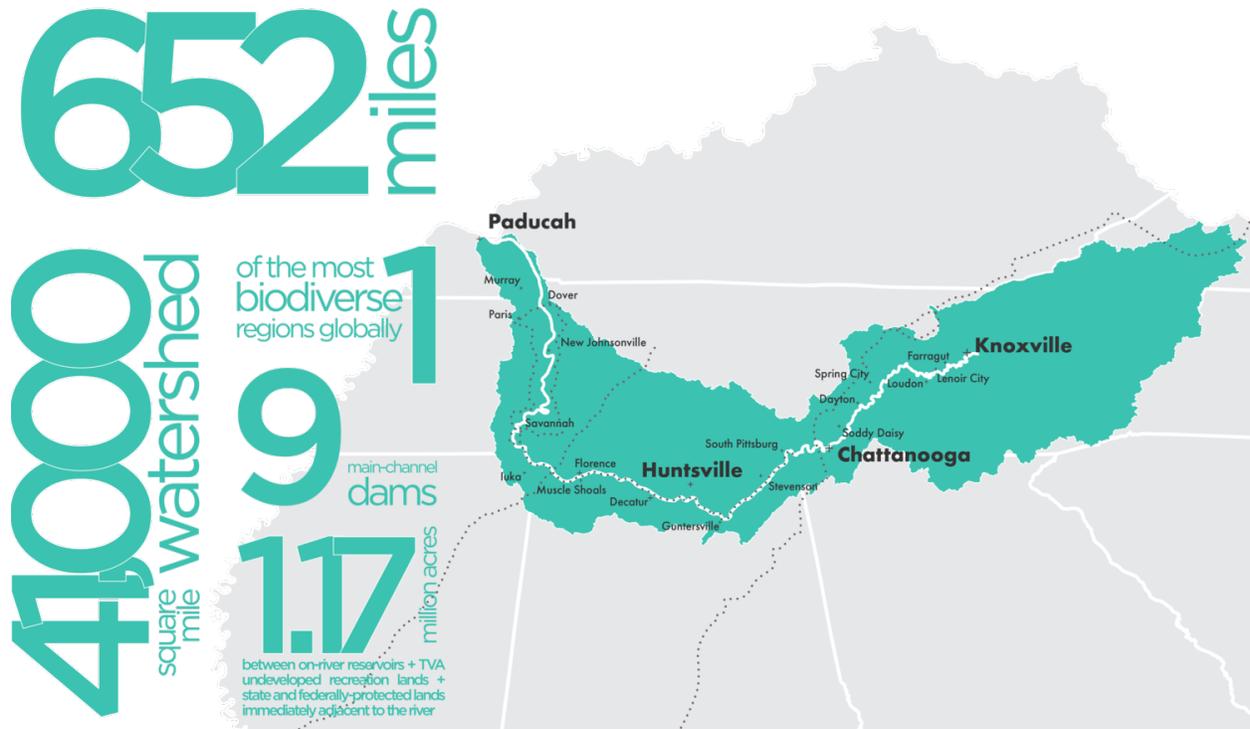
<sup>15</sup> <https://knoxblounttrail.org/the-route/>



The MT GMP identified Blount County as the region with higher-than-state-average physical activity, but a significantly lower-than-state-average provision of parks and recreation facilities. The document estimates that increases in physical activity, implied by increasing access to physical engagement outdoors, can provide a return on investment (ROI) in millions of dollars of prevented medical expenses, workers' compensation, and lost productivity.

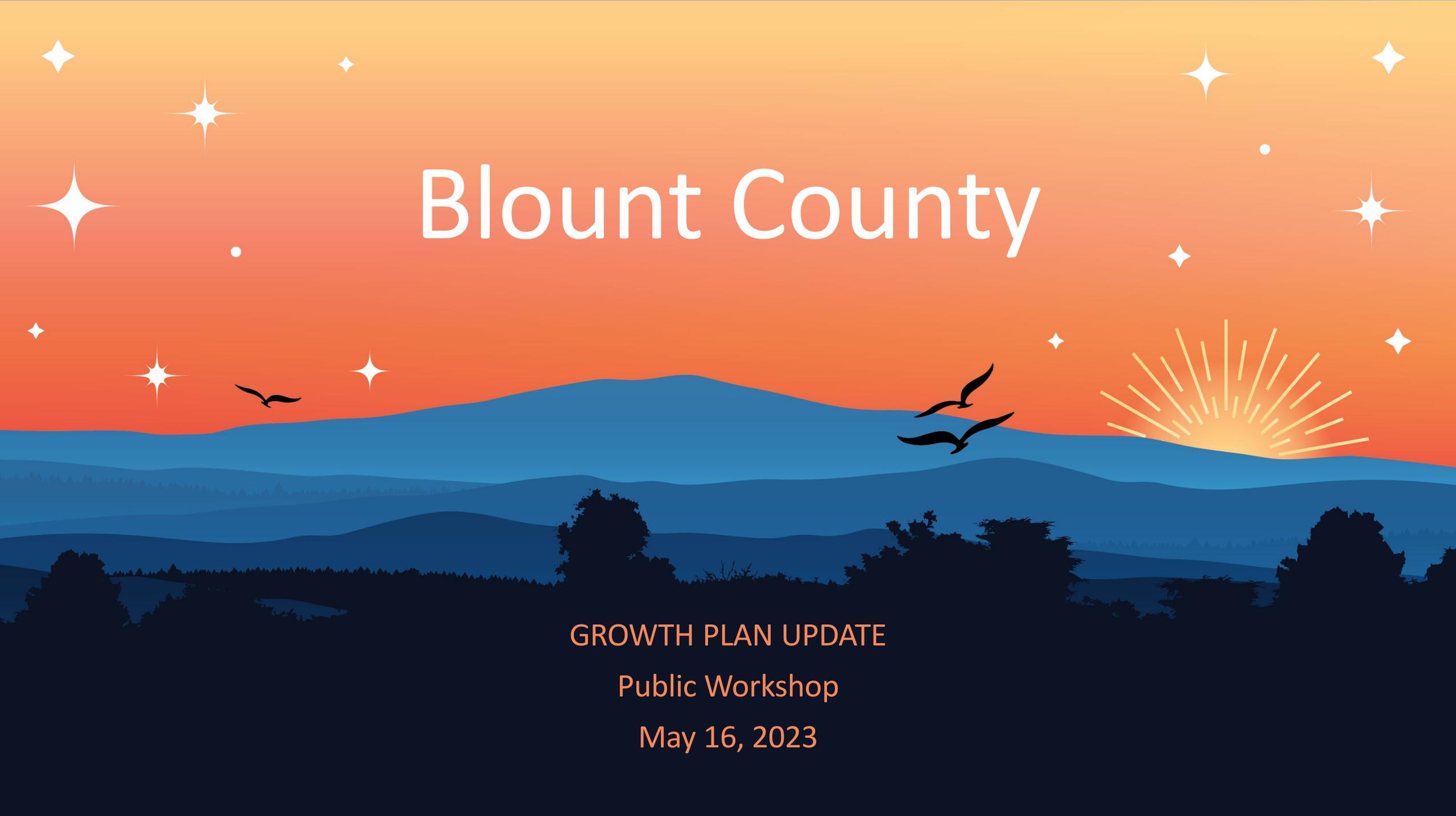
The proposed greenway project would provide 13.7 miles of recreation, and travel infrastructure and the plan estimates over 100,000 users each year and generate \$65 million in economic impact within the first decade.

## 10.0 Tennessee RiverLine (est. 2017)<sup>16</sup>



The Tennessee River stretches 652 miles from Knoxville, TN to Paducah, KY and touches four states, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky. The river has been separated by nearby communities and as a result the river banks degradation and pollution goes unnoticed. The Tennessee RiverLine project has a vision to provide public access to the Tennessee River, enhances the visibility of nearby communities, increases river use, stimulate new interest and investment in the river’s future, protect and heal the biodiversity and ecosystems. In 2019, the Tennessee RiverLine established a community program in order to understand opportunities and challenges passed to each community related to river use. At this time Blount County is not part of the program but may be a part of it in the future. The RiverLine will provide recreational and tourism opportunities.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.tnriverline.org/>

The background of the slide features a vibrant sunset or sunrise sky with a gradient from orange to yellow. Scattered across the sky are several white, multi-pointed starburst graphics. In the lower half, there are blue silhouettes of rolling hills and mountains. Two black silhouettes of birds are shown in flight, one on the left and one on the right. On the right side, a sun is depicted with multiple yellow lines radiating from it. The foreground consists of dark blue and black silhouettes of trees and a small body of water.

# Blount County

GROWTH PLAN UPDATE

Public Workshop

May 16, 2023

# Agenda

- Workshop Purpose
- Growth Plan
- Identifying Opportunities & Challenges
- Public Engagement

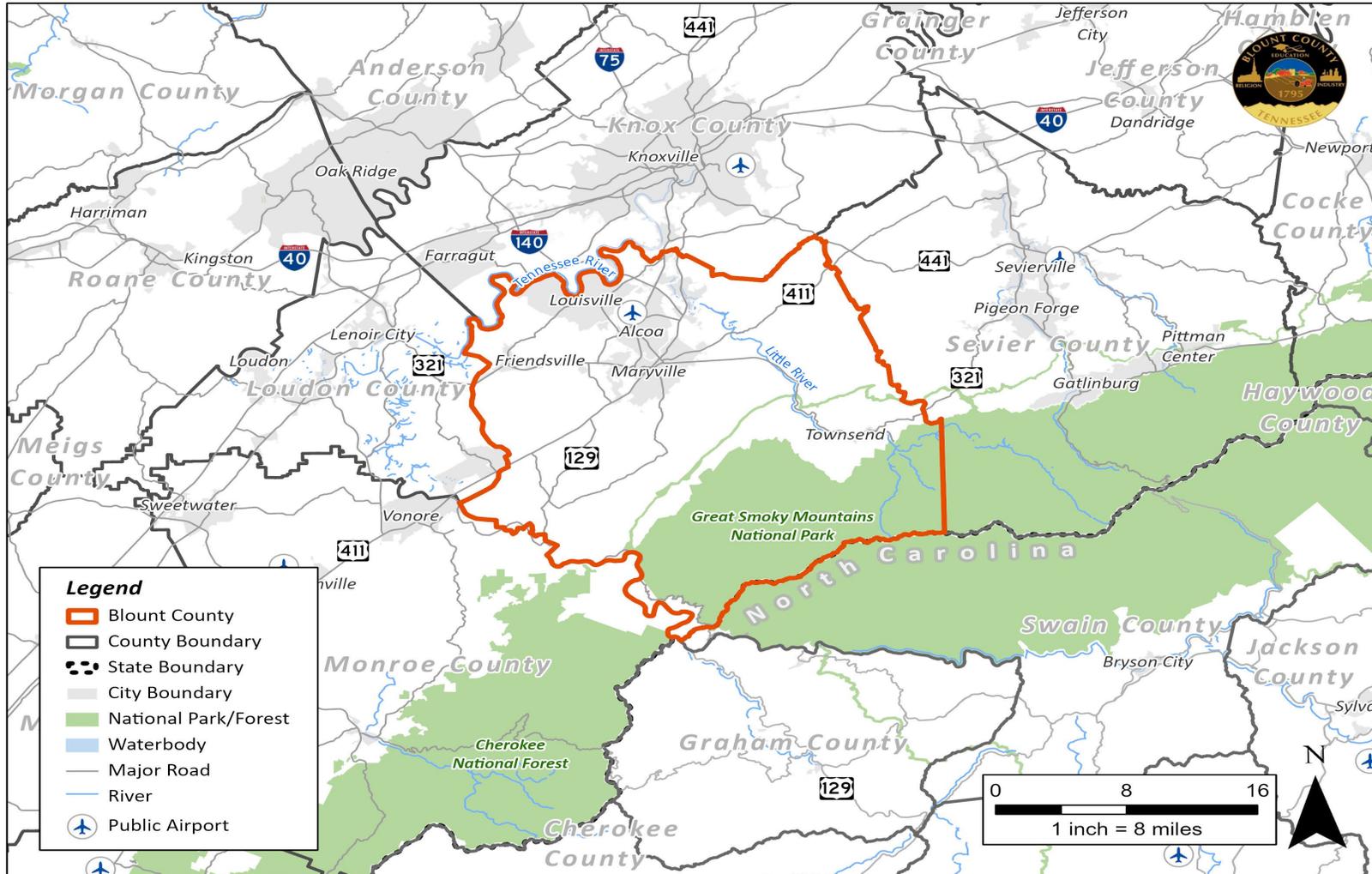
# Workshop Purpose



## General Purpose of Updating Growth Plans

- I. To be consistent with changes in Public Chapter 1101
- II. Original Growth Plan had a 20 Year Planning Horizon, adopted in 1999
- III. To reflect and address changes in local conditions

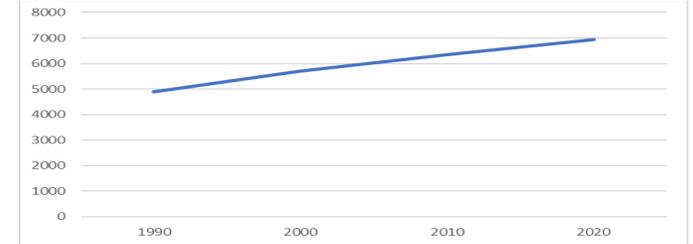
# Regional Context



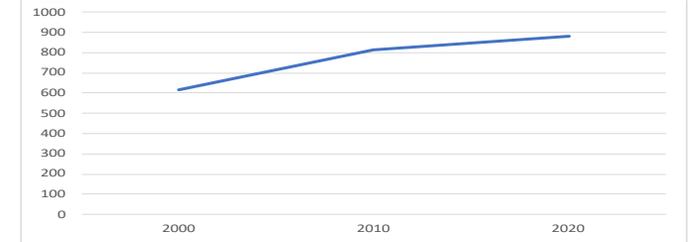
## POPULATION GROWTH

(Population in thousands)

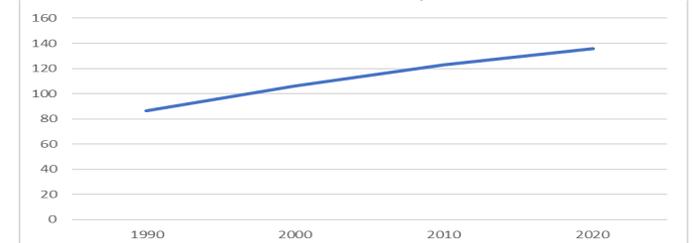
### Tennessee



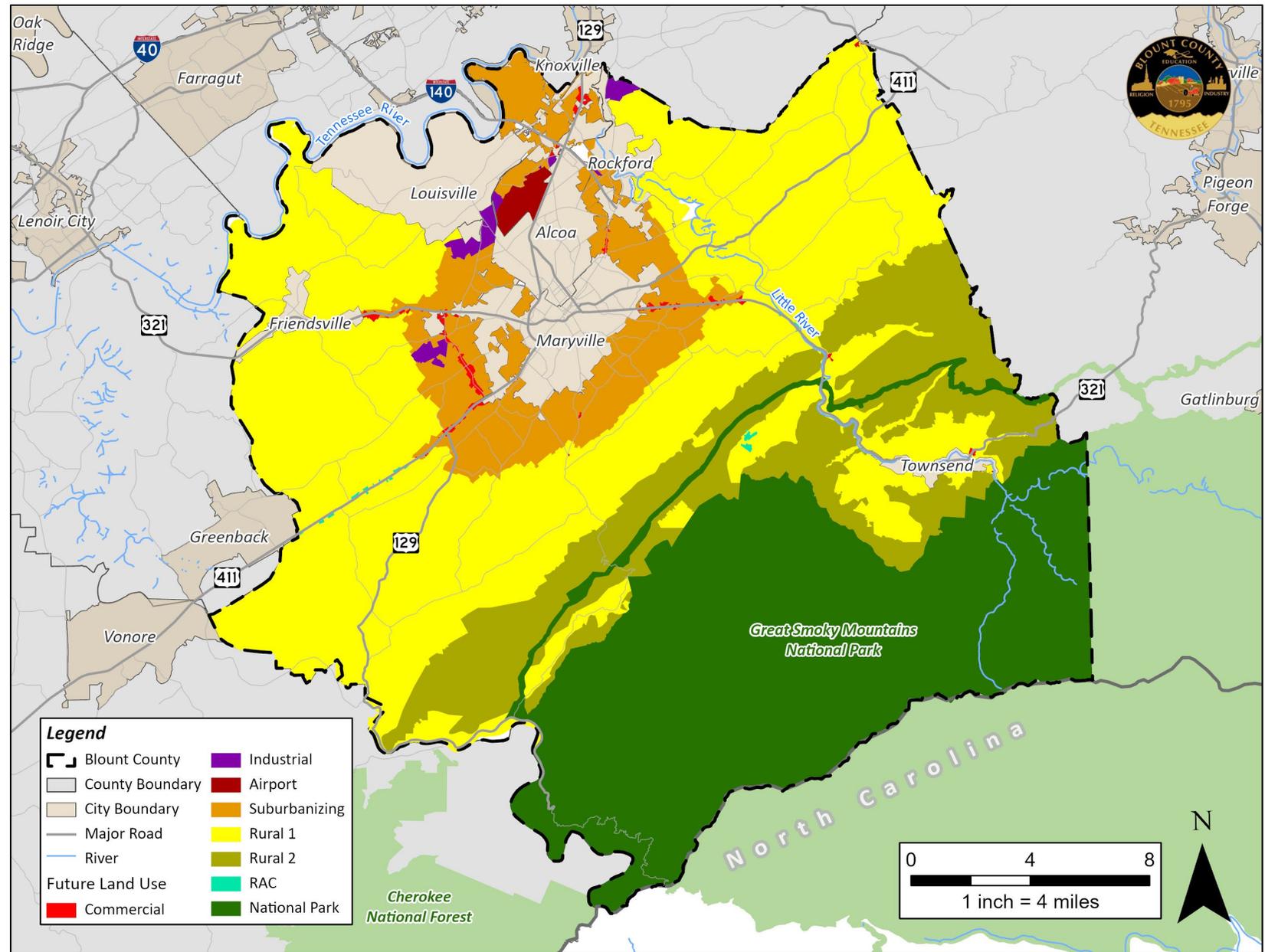
### Knoxville TN MSA



### Blount County



# Future Land Use



# Growth Planning 101

The comprehensive plan is a **document designed to guide the future actions** of the County. It also presents a **vision for a community's future with long-range goals, objectives and policies**

Tennessee Code 1101 requires each county to have a Growth Plan



View the “Big Picture”



Coordinate Local  
Decision Making



Give Guidance to  
Landowners and  
Developers



Establish a Factual  
Basis for Policy  
Decisions



Involve a Discussion  
about the Long-Range  
Future on an Array of  
Topics



Build an Informed  
Community

# Growth Planning 101

The plan does **not** dictate the following

- Engineering Standards
- Zoning Regulation
- Prohibit uses, densities, or intensities allowed by the zoning regulation
- Subdivision Regulations
- Building Codes Regulation

# CHALLENGES



MAINTAINING  
RURAL NATURE



ALIGNMENT WITH  
REGULATIONS



EDUCATION  
OPPORTUNITIES



POPULATION  
GROWTH



BUSINESS &  
INDUSTRY



INFRASTRUCTURE



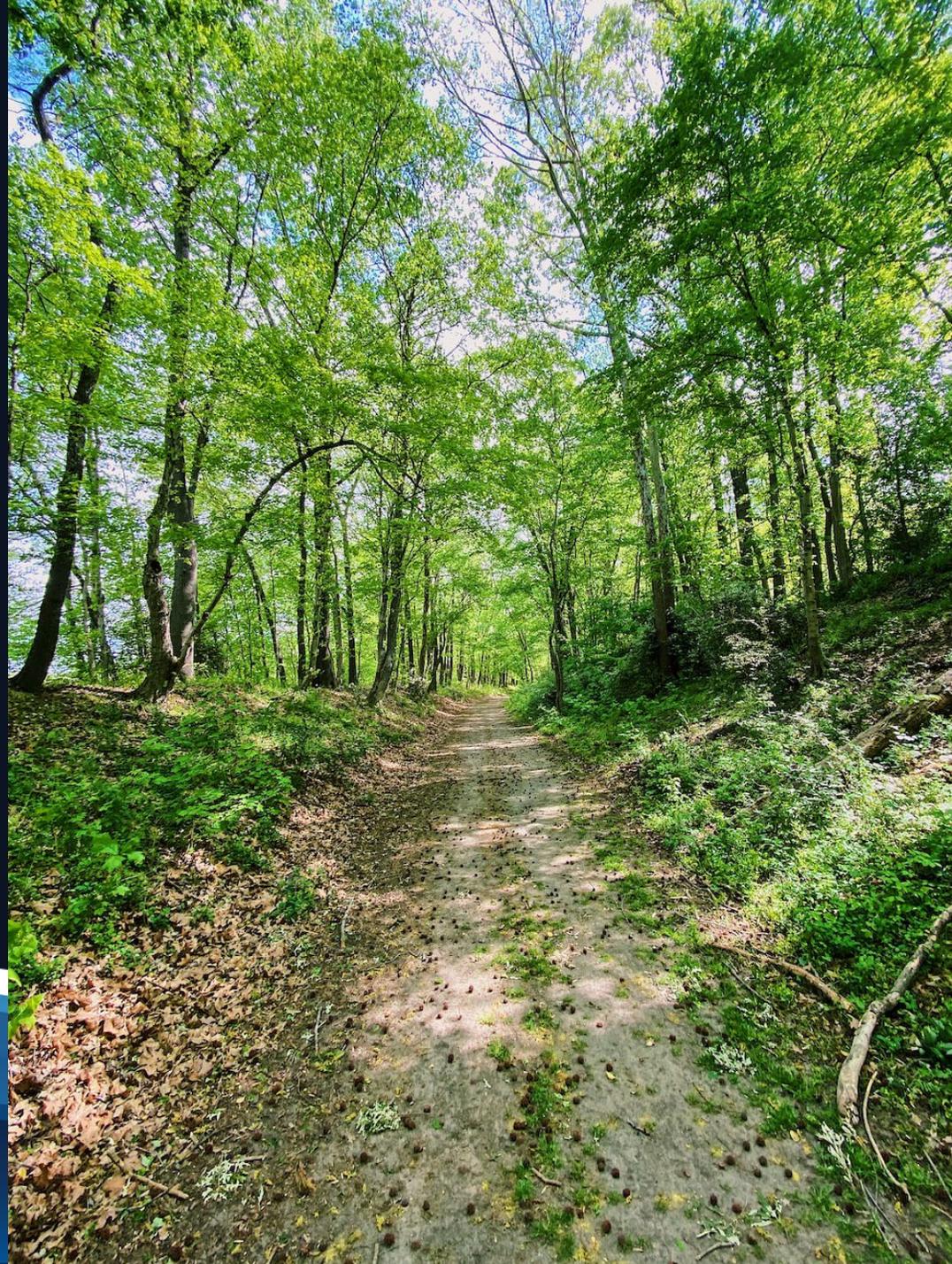
FUTURE LAND  
USE REFINEMENT



PRESERVING  
NATURAL RESOURCES

# OPPORTUNITIES

# Public Engagement



# Public Engagement Opportunities

- Project Website
- Two Steering committee Meetings
- Public Workshop
- Two Public Open House
- Public Hearings



Scan Me!



# Online Public Engagement

- Social Pinpoint is a tool for virtual community engagement
- It allows for community residents to share input, ask questions, and provide feedback for the Plan & Regulations Updates
- Three activities for the public to engage in
  - Survey
  - Interactive Map
  - Vote on Priorities and Strategies



## Participate in a brief Survey regarding our County

Please complete our brief survey which asks for your input on the future of Blount County.

Get Involved



## Share your ideas on the Interactive Map

We want to hear your perspective on how Blount County should grow within the decades ahead. Leave your own comment and engage with the comments left by others. *Let the discussion begin!*

Join the Conversation

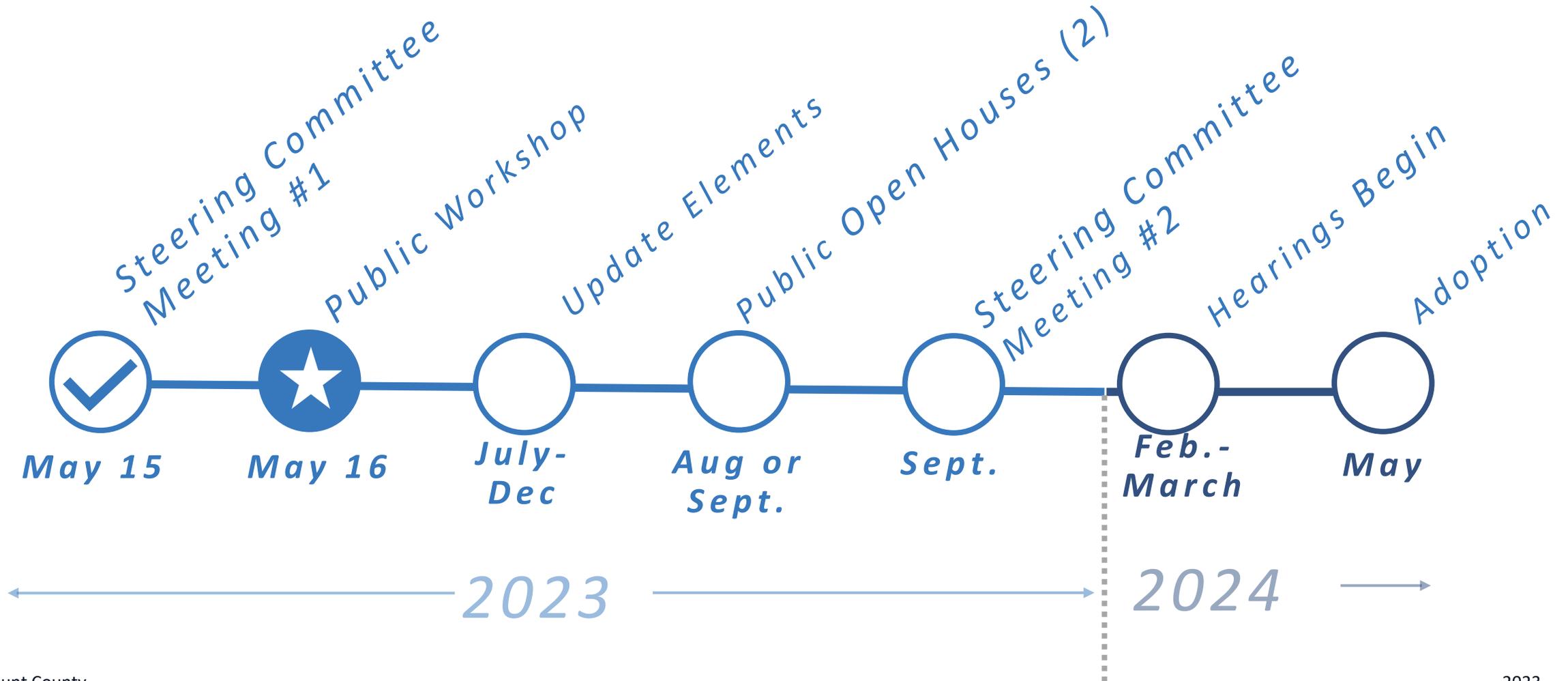


## Vote for your Future Vision of Blount County

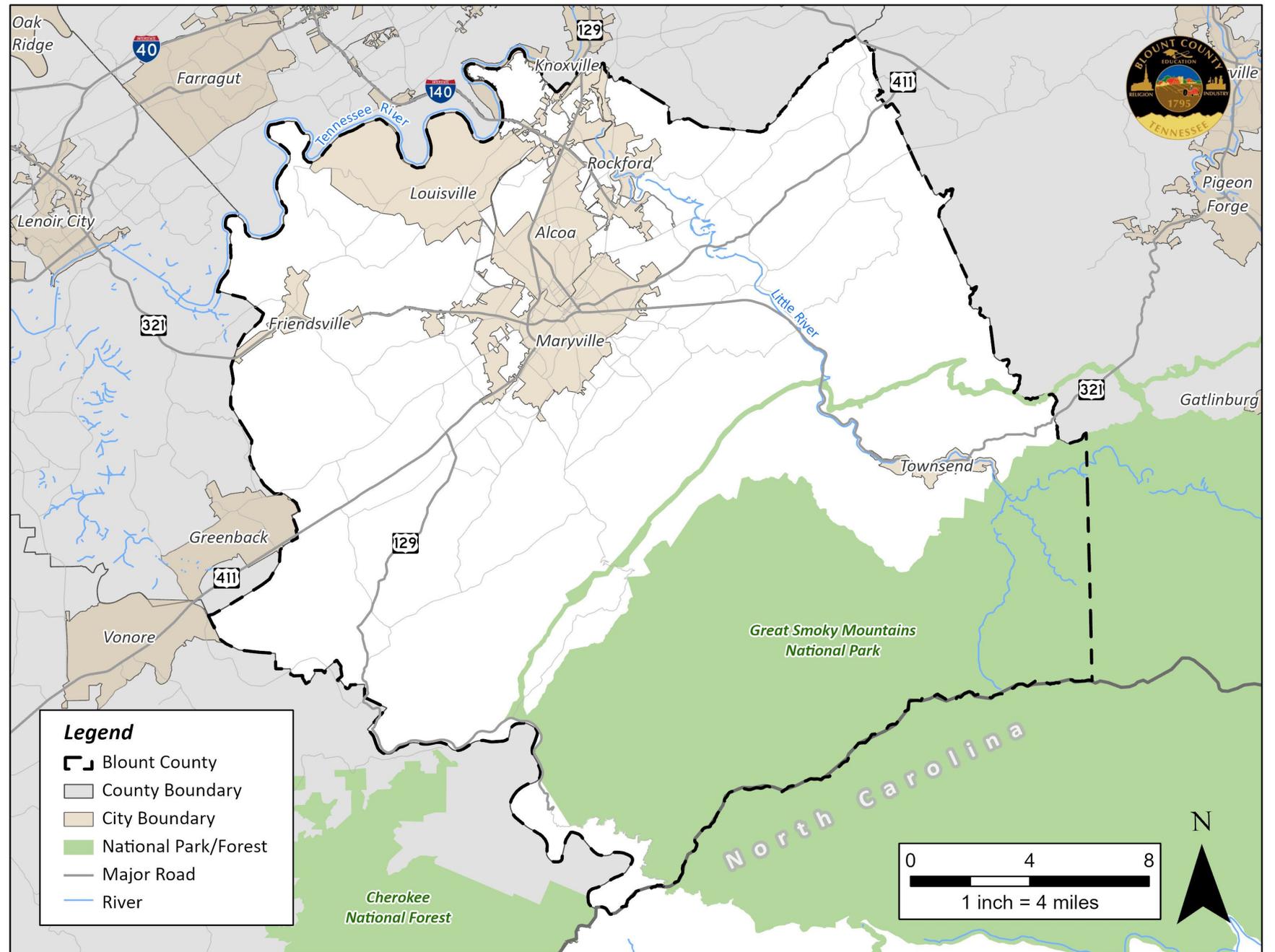
Cast your vote for the seven (7) words or phrases which best reflect your vision for Blount County in the decades ahead.

Vote Now

# Anticipated Timeline



# Aerial Map





THANK YOU!

Website:





# Blount County Growth Plan Update

## Open House Summary



### MEETING INFORMATION

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#### Dates & Venue:

08/21/2023 Heritage High School, 3741 E Lamar Alexander Pkwy, Maryville, TN 37804

08/22/2023 William Blount High School, 219 County Farm Rd, Maryville, TN 37801

### MEETING ATTENDEES

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- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Sarah Sinatra Gould, AICP, CZO,<br>Inspire Project Manager | 29. Kathleen Skinner       |
| 2. Robbie Addington, Inspire Project<br>Team                  | 30. John Skinner           |
| 3. Evan Atchley   | 31. Brenda Bell            |
| 4. Tina Wallin  | 32. Nick Bright            |
| 5. Kevin J. McNeill   | 33. David Nahigian         |
| 6. Judy Hill  | 34. Ashley Bohle           |
| 7. Shirley Rupert   | 35. Lynn Waters            |
| 8. Misty Davis  | 36. Trevis Gardner         |
| 9. Wanda DeWaard  | 37. Cristi Anderson        |
| 10. Scott DeWaard   | 38. Tina Stockton          |
| 11. Ray Boswell   | 39. Barbara Bender         |
| 12. Eileen young  | 40. Thomas Fitzgerald      |
| 13. Jan Maness  | 41. Marian Fitzgerald      |
| 14. Stan Morgan   | 42. Corey Gillard          |
| 15. Debi Morgan   | 43. Nancy Olsen            |
| 16. Amy Conder  | 44. Bruce Seidner          |
| 17. Katie Bailey  | 45. Patti Young            |
| 18. Gail Taylor   | 46. Phil Young             |
| 19. Len Hudgens   | 47. Jack Piepenbring       |
| 20. Robyn Blair   | 48. Andreas Guevara-Nadeau |
| 21. Matthew Thomas  | 49. Janette Kennedy        |
| 22. Tammy Bobbitt   | 50. Paul K. Hicks          |
| 23. Jeanne LeDoux   | 51. Robert Simerly         |
| 24. Ty Hickman  | 52. Greg Gilbert           |
| 25. Tammi Ford  | 53. Dan Monat              |
| 26. Brad Bowers   | 54. William H. Busser      |
| 27. Randy Wallin  | 55. Leslie Woodall         |
| 28. Sue DeBois  | 56. Matt Snow              |
|   | 57. Brent Dotsa            |
|   | 58. Rhea Morgan            |

59. Pat McGill  
60. Wendy Waid  
61. Ed Stucky  
62. Maelea Galyon  
63. Nancy Zambell  
64. JD Hurst  
65. Alice Burrows  
66. Kyle Bryant  
67. William Vance  
68. Dana Saywell  
69. Betsy Smith  
70. Robert Smith

71. Linda Wade  
72. Jennifer Sactsgaver  
73. Nina Gregg  
74. Doug Gamble  
75. Mike Rusher  
76. Tara Rusher  
77. Dudley Leath  
78. Terrance Morton  
79. Alex Wyss  
80. Erich Henry  
81. Kim Henry

## OPEN HOUSE OVERVIEW

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On August 21, 2023 and August 22, 2023 from 4pm to 7pm, Inspire facilitated an open house to collect public feedback on the Blount County Growth Plan. This was a two-day open house that allowed County residents to drop in as their schedule allowed. Through several activity stations, this open house engaged residents on issues related to the growth plan, such as new land uses, housing development, and areas for growth and conservation. Inspire will use this feedback to develop a vision for the future of Blount County that will guide the development of the Growth Plan.



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

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The open house had several activity stations for attendees as follows:

### ***Establishing Priorities for the Growth Plan***

This activity asked participants to place stickers next to their top 3 priorities for the Blount County Growth Plan. The board included 10 priorities to choose from, including an option to write in any additional priorities on a separate sheet of paper.

### ***New development in the County should include...***

This activity asked participants to place stickers next to their top 3 choices for new land uses in the County. The board included 14 new uses to choose from, including an option to write in any additional land uses on a separate sheet of paper.

### ***In 20 years, I hope Blount County is...***

This board posed an open-ended question for participants to share their thoughts on the future of Blount County.

***What are places you like? What places could be changed?***

This activity included a base map of the County and asked participants to place numbered stickers on areas of the County they like and areas they would like to see change. Participants could then elaborate on their choices on a separate sheet of paper.

***Where do you want to see growth? What areas do you want to conserve?***

This activity included a base map of the County and asked residents to place colored stickers on where they want to see the following types of growth: retail/commercial, industrial, agricultural, and no growth/conservation.

***Where do you want to see housing development?***

This activity included a base map of the County and asked residents to place colored stickers on where they want to see the following types of housing: single-family, multi-family, and mixed-use.

***Open-Ended Easel Questions***

This activity included four open-ended questions posted on easels for participants to write on. The questions include:

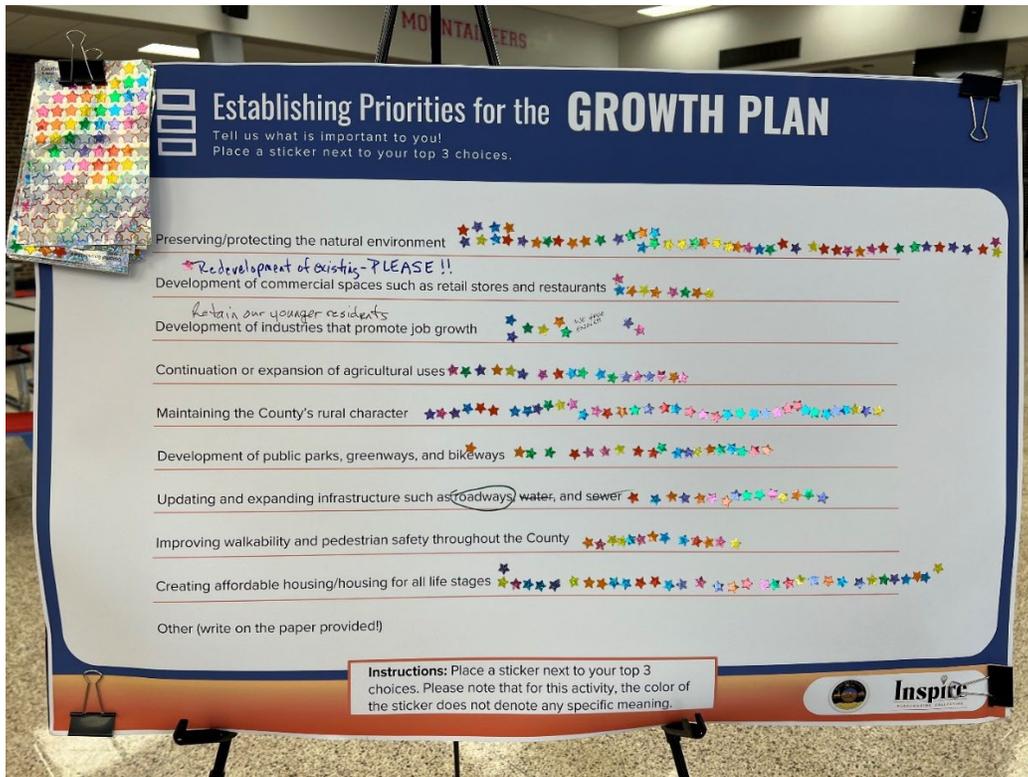
- What are challenges for residents in Blount County?
- What are opportunities and benefits for residents in Blount County?
- If money or time were not a constraint, what changes would you like to see in Blount County?
- Please share any other thoughts you have with us!

## PUBLIC FEEDBACK

**Note:** Note that because many of these boards received hand-written comments, some were challenging to decipher which may have resulted in incorrect transcription. Phrases or words in brackets [ ] indicate comments in response to a previous participant’s comment.

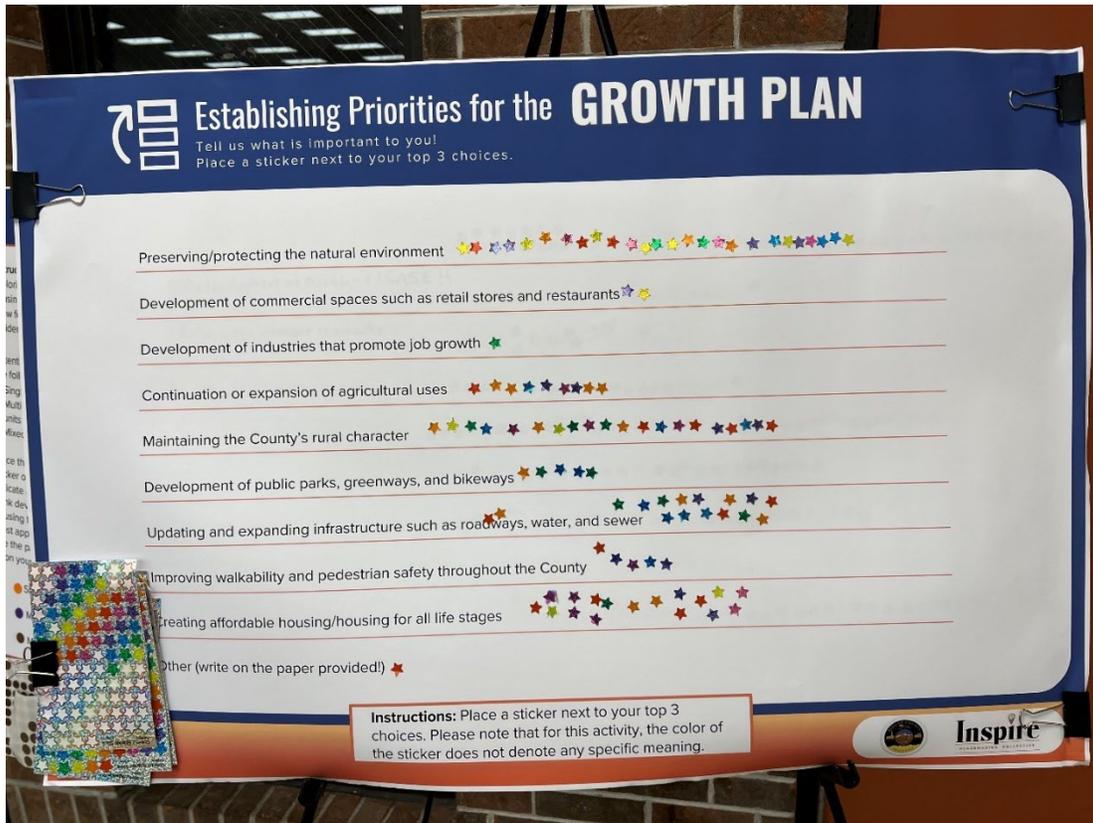
### Establishing Priorities for the Growth Plan

#### Day 1:



Priority	Number of Stickers
<b>Preserving/protecting the natural environment</b>	<b>49</b>
Redevelopment of commercial spaces such as retail stores and restaurants	9 [Redevelopment of existing – PLEASE!!]
Development of industries that promote job growth	8 [Retain our younger residents, we have enough]
Continuation or expansion of agricultural uses	18
<b>Maintaining the County’s rural character</b>	<b>38</b>
Development of public parks, greenways, and bikeways	20
Updating and expanding infrastructure such as roadways, water, and sewer	15
Improving walkability and pedestrian safety throughout the County	13
<b>Creating affordable housing/housing for all life stages</b>	<b>34</b>
Other	0

Day 2:



Priority	Number of Stickers
<b>Preserving/protecting the natural environment</b>	<b>26</b>
Redevelopment of commercial spaces such as retail stores and restaurants	2
Development of industries that promote job growth	1
Continuation or expansion of agricultural uses	9
<b>Maintaining the County's rural character</b>	<b>20</b>
Development of public parks, greenways, and bikeways	5
Updating and expanding infrastructure such as roadways, water, and sewer	16
Improving walkability and pedestrian safety throughout the County	5
<b>Creating affordable housing/housing for all life stages</b>	<b>17</b>
Other	1

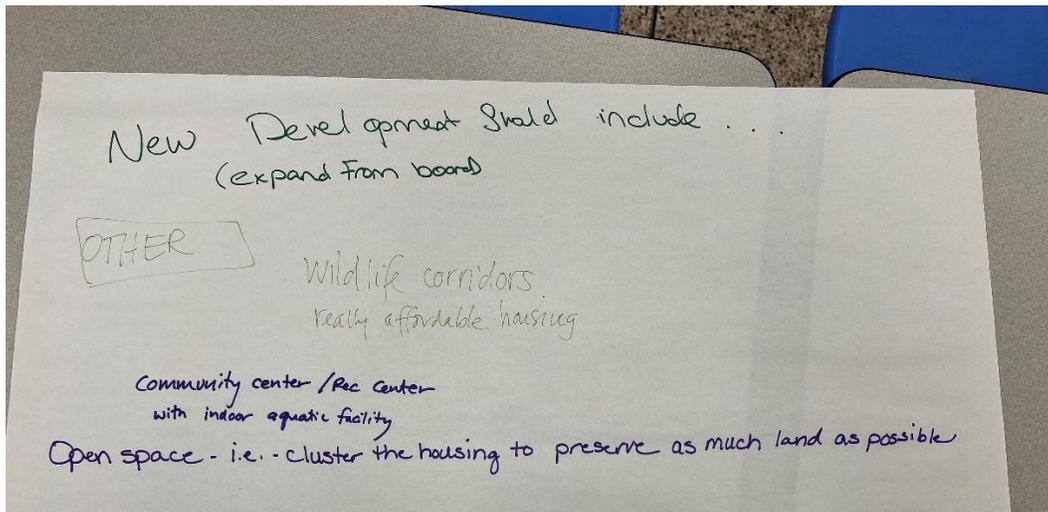
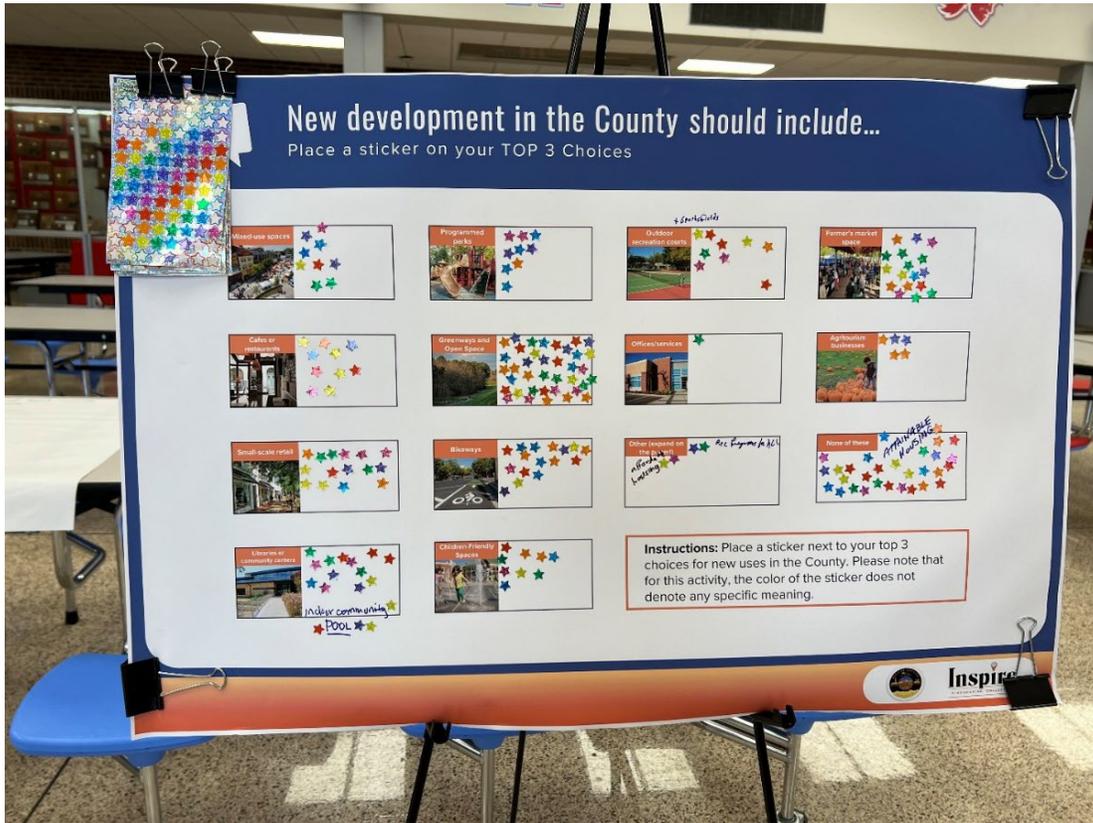
**Total:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Number of Stickers</b>
<b>Preserving/protecting the natural environment</b>	<b>75</b>
Redevelopment of commercial spaces such as retail stores and restaurants	11
Development of industries that promote job growth	9
Continuation or expansion of agricultural uses	27
<b>Maintaining the County's rural character</b>	<b>58</b>
Development of public parks, greenways, and bikeways	25
Updating and expanding infrastructure such as roadways, water, and sewer	31
Improving walkability and pedestrian safety throughout the County	18
<b>Creating affordable housing/housing for all life stages</b>	<b>51</b>
Other	1

Participants on both days of the open house agree that the top priority for the County should be preserving / protecting the natural environment (75 total votes). The next two highest priorities for participants on both days are maintaining the County's rural character (58 total votes) and creating affordable housing / housing for all life stages (51 total votes).

**New development in the County should include...**

**Day 1:**



<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Number of Stickers</b>
Mixed-use spaces	9
Cafes or restaurants	10
Small-scale retail	15
<b>Libraries or community centers</b>	<b>17 [indoor community pool]</b>
Programmed parks	9
<b>Greenways and open space</b>	<b>38</b>
Bikeways	16
Children-friendly spaces	9
Outdoor recreation courts	9 [+ sportfields]
Offices/services	1
Other	4 (“affordable housing”, “rec programs for all”)
<b>Farmer’s market space</b>	<b>17</b>
Agritourism businesses	5
<b>None of these</b>	<b>30 [attainable housing]</b>

**Other comments:**

- Wildlife corridors
- Really affordable housing
- Community center/rec center with indoor aquatic facility
- Open space – i.e. – cluster the housing to preserve as much land as possible

Day 2:



Development Type	Number of Stickers
Mixed-use spaces	9
Cafes or restaurants	7
<b>Small-scale retail</b>	<b>13</b>
Libraries or community centers	4
Programmed parks	3
<b>Greenways and open space</b>	<b>22</b>
Bikeways	5
Children-friendly spaces	7
Outdoor recreation courts	3
Offices/services	0
Other	0
<b>Farmer's market space</b>	<b>10</b>
Agritourism businesses	9
None of these	2

**Total:**

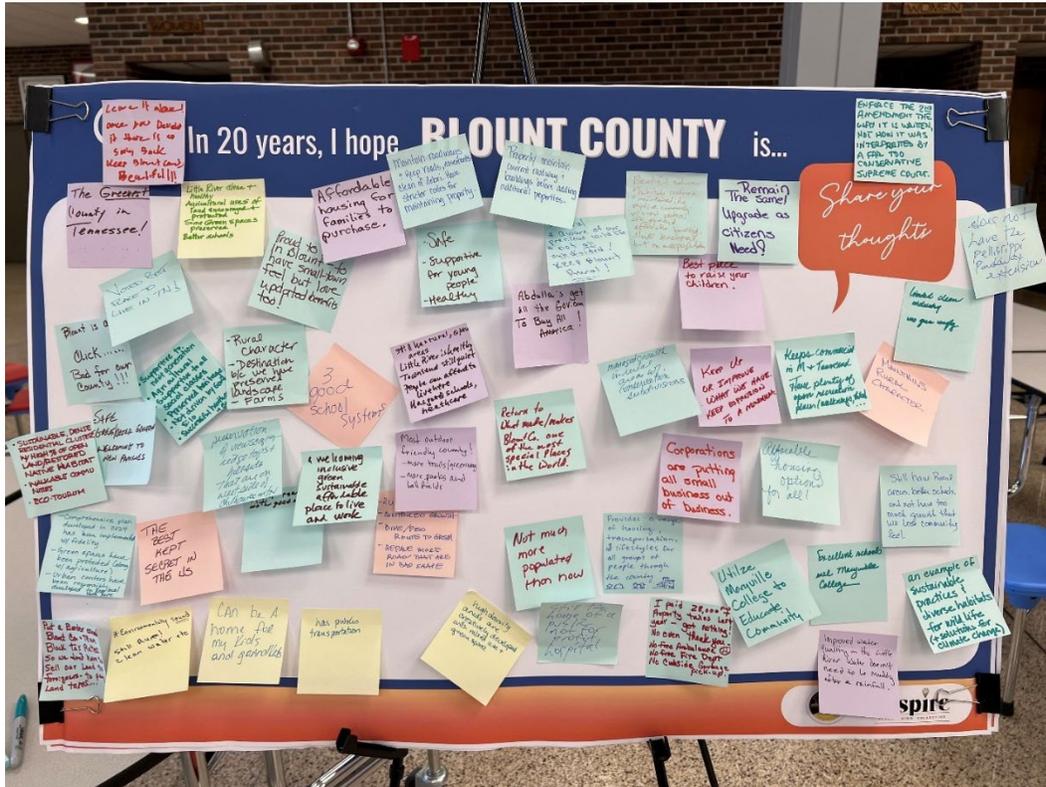
<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Number of Stickers</b>
Mixed-use spaces	18
Cafes or restaurants	17
<b>Small-scale retail</b>	<b>28</b>
Libraries or community centers	21
Programmed parks	12
<b>Greenways and open space</b>	<b>60</b>
Bikeways	21
Children-friendly spaces	16
Outdoor recreation courts	12
Offices/services	1
Other	4
Farmer's market space	27
Agritourism businesses	14
<b>None of these</b>	<b>32</b>

Across both days of the open house, participants overwhelmingly preferred new development of greenways and open space, with a total of 60 votes. None of these (32 total votes) and small-scale retail (28 total votes) were the next two preferred uses.

Aside from greenways and open spaces, participants on each day had slightly different preferences. On the first day, participants preferred none of these (30 votes), farmer's market space (17 votes) and libraries or community centers (17 votes). Participants on the second day preferred small-scale retail (13 votes) and farmer's market space (10 votes).

*In 20 years, I hope Blount County is...*

**Day 1:**



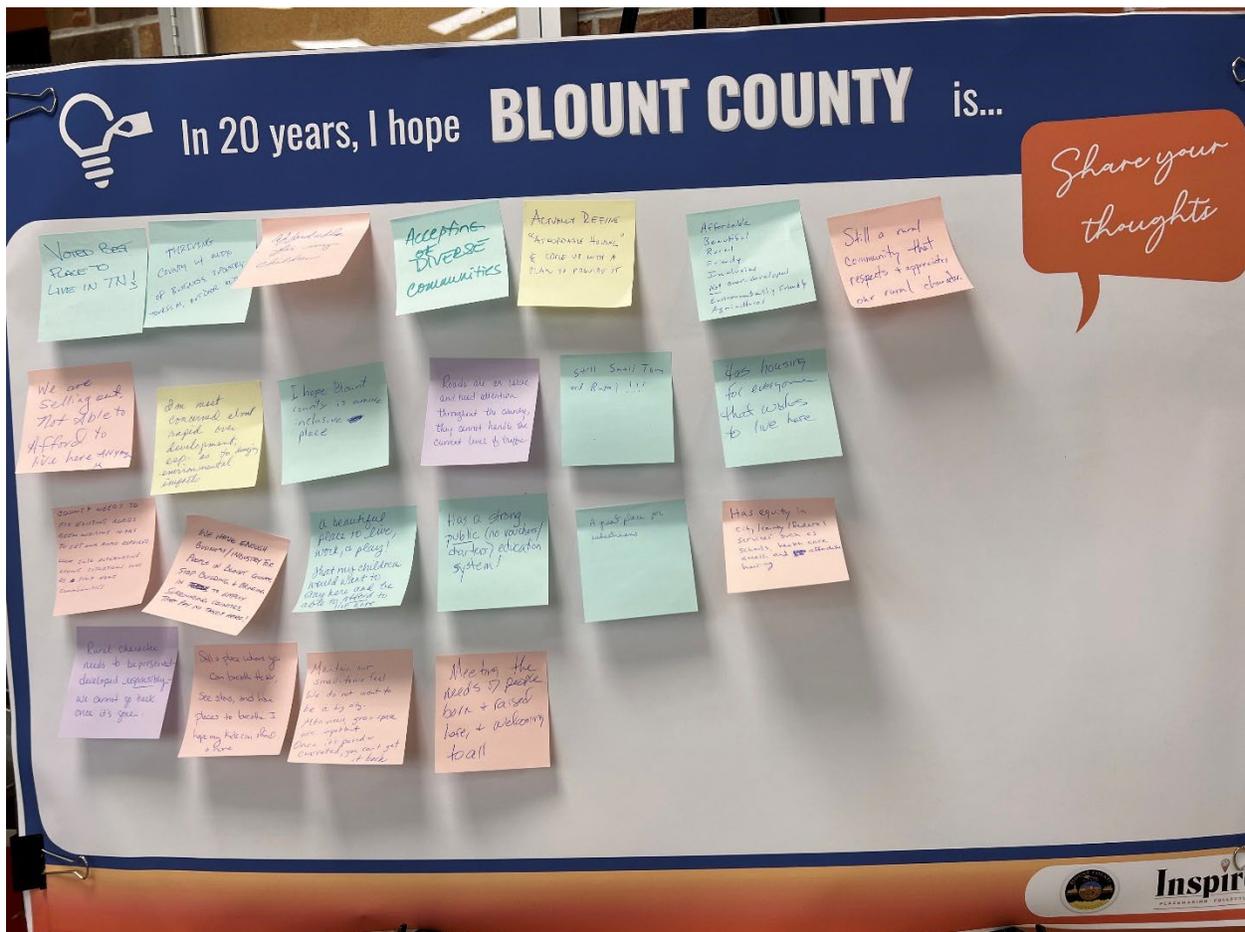
Comments left on this board include the following.

- Leave it alone! Once you develop it there is no going back. Keep Blount County beautiful!!!
- The greenest County in Tennessee!
- Little River clean + healthy. Agricultural uses of land encouraged + protected. Some green spaces preserved. Better schools.
- Affordable housing for families to purchase.
- Maintain roadways & keep roads, easements clean of debris. Have stricter codes for maintaining property.
- Properly maintain current roadway & buildings before adding additional properties.
- Beautiful nature + habitats restored + maintained; an active community with event centers; job growth + affordable housing. Slower development but no overpopulation.
- Remain the same! Upgrade as citizens need!
- Enforce the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment the way it was written, not how it was interpreted by a far too conservative Supreme Court.
- Voted best place to live in TN!
- Proud to live in Blount – to have small-town feel but love updated benefits too!
- Safe, supportive for young people, health

- Rural, aware of our precious wild life, not all subdivided. Keep Blount Rural!
- Best place to raise your children.
- Does not have the Pellissippi Parkway extension
- Limited clean ...
- Blount is a click... band for our County!!!
- Supportive to next generation, agricultural, supportive to all social classes, preserved heritage, not driven by Govt silo, successful healthcare + schools
- Rural character, destination b/c we have preserved landscape, farms
- 3 good school systems
- Still has rural, open areas; Little River is healthy; Townsend still quiet; People can afford to live here; Has good schools, healthcare
- Abdulla's get all the gov.com to buy all America!
- Sustainable, dense residential clusters w/ high % of open land/restored native habitat; walkable communities; eco-tourism
- Safe, great/better education, welcoming to new families
- Preservation of viewscape – ridge tops + hillside that are on west side of Chilhowee Mtn
- A welcoming inclusive green sustainable affordable place to live and work
- Most outdoor friendly county! More trails/greenway, more parks and ballfields
- Return to what made/makes Blount Co. one of the most special places in the world
- Managed growth in rural areas with conservation subdivisions
- Keep up or improve what we have. Keep expansion to a minimum.
- Keeps commercial in M + Townsend. Have plenty of open recreation places (walking, bikes)
- Maintains rural character
- Comprehensive plan developed in 2024 has been implemented w/ fidelity, green spaces have been protected (along w/ agriculture), urban centers have been responsibly developed to keep local youth here
- The best kept secret in the US
- Rural, controlled growth, bike/ped route to GRSM, repave more roads that are in bad shape
- Not much more populated than now
- Provides a range of housing, transportation, & lifestyles for all groups of people through the county
- Corporations are putting all small business out of business
- Affordable housing options for all!
- Still have rural areas, better schools, and not have too much growth that we lose community feel.
- Put a border around Blount Co. and town. Block tax rates so we don't have to sell our land to foreigners – to pay land taxes
- Environmentally sound, still rural, clean water etc
- Can be a home for my kids and grandkids
- Has public transportation

- High density areas are creatively developed with mixed use + green space
- Still the home of a public not for profit hospital
- I paid 28,000+ property taxes last year – got nothing! No event thank you – no free ambulance, no free fire dept, no curbside garbage pick-up
- Utilize Maryville College to educate community
- Excellent schools with Maryville College
- Improved water quality in the Little River. Water doesn't need to be muddy after a rainfall.
- An example of sustainable practices & diverse habitats for wildlife (+ solutions for climate change)

Day 2:

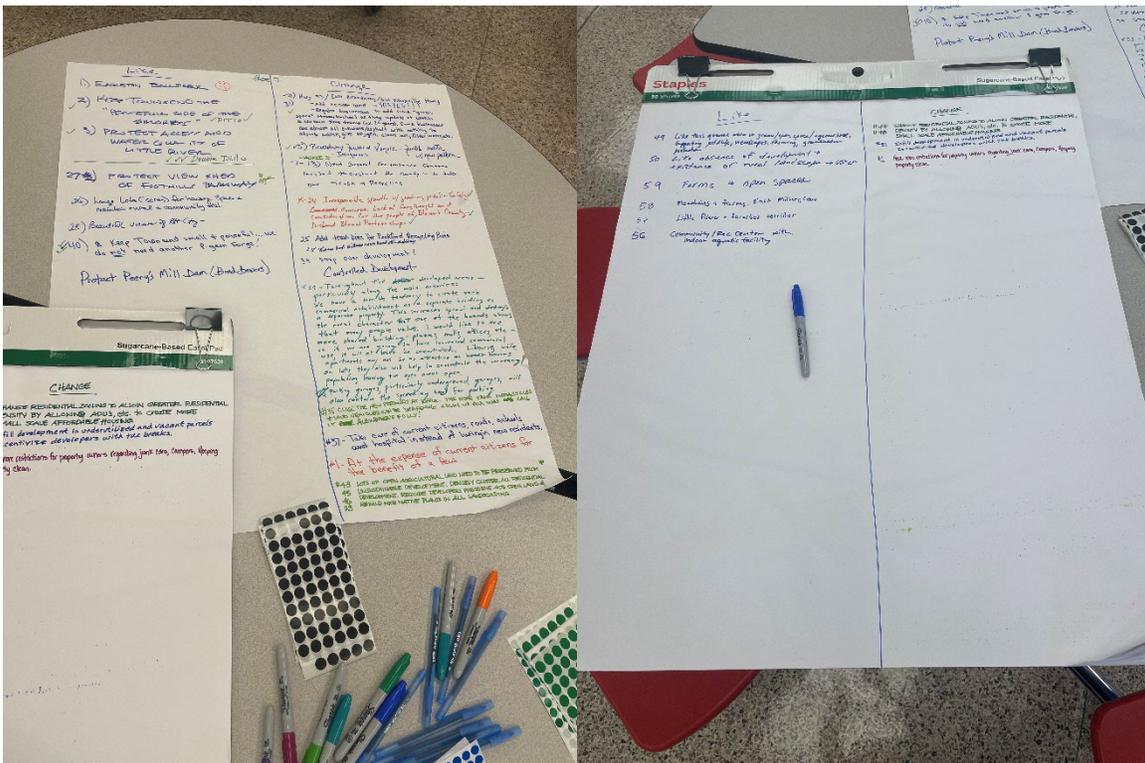
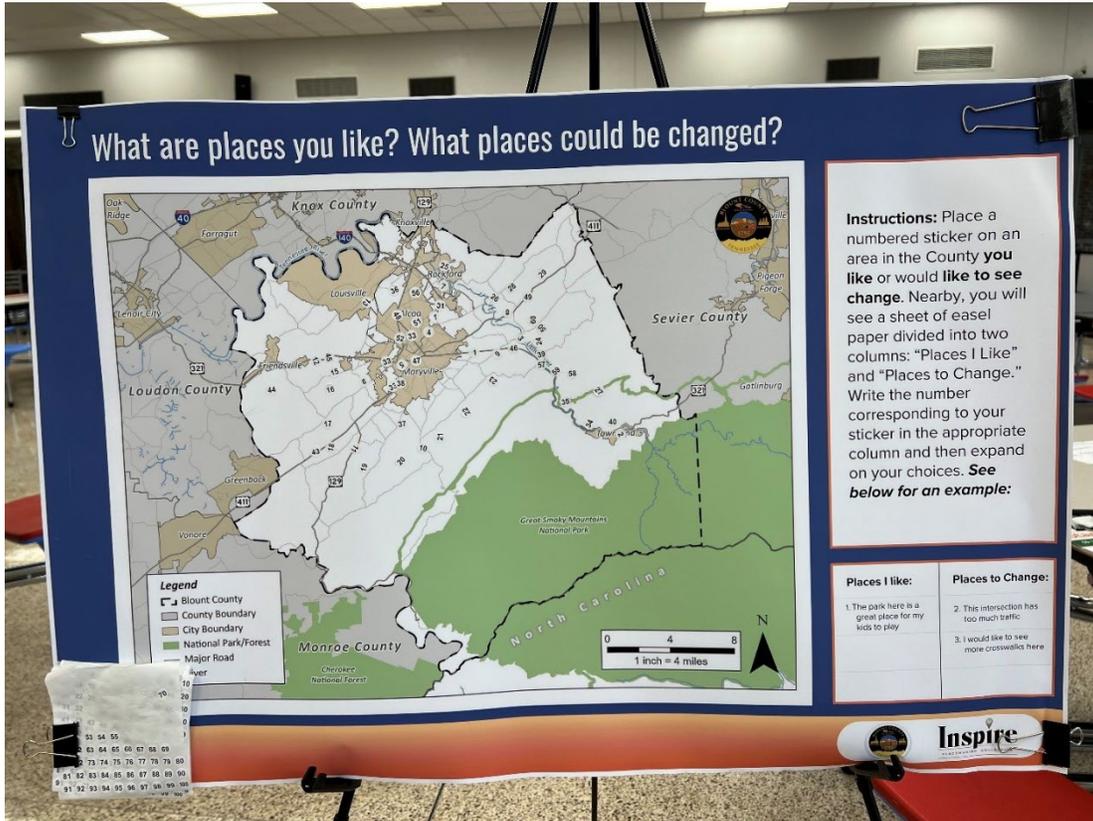


- Voted best place to live in TN!
- Thriving County w/ mix of business, industry, tourism, outdoor activity
- Affordable for my children
- Accepting of diverse communities
- Actually define “affordable housing” and come up with a plan to provide it
- Affordable, beautiful, rural, friendly, inclusive, not over-developed, environmentally friendly, agricultural

- Still a rural community that respects + appreciates our rural character
- We are selling out. Not able to afford to live here anymore :(
- I'm most concerned about rabid over development, esp. as to damaging environmental impacts
- I hope Blount County is a more inclusive place
- Roads are an issue and need attention throughout the County, they cannot handle the current level of traffic
- Still small town and rural!!!
- Has housing for everyone that wishes to live here
- County needs to fix existing roads, been working 10 yrs to get our road replaced. Look into alternative living situations such as tiny home communities.
- We have enough business/industry for people in Blount County. Stop building & bringing in to employ surrounding counties. They pay no taxes here!
- A beautiful place to live, work, & play! That my children would want to stay here and be able to afford to live here.
- Has a strong public (no vouchers/charters) education system!
- A great place for pedestrians
- Has equity in city / county / federal services such as schools, health care access, and affordable housing
- Rural character needs to be preserved – developed responsibly – we cannot go back once it's gone
- Still a place where you can breathe the air, see stars, and have places to breathe. I hope my kids can afford a home.
- Maintain our small-town feel. We do not want to be a big city. Mtn views, green space are important. Once it's paved or concreted, you can't get it back.
- Meeting the needs of people born + raised here + welcoming to all

What are places you like? What places could be changed?

Day 1:



**Like:**

1. Eagleton Ballpark
2. Keep Townsend the “Peaceful side of the Smokeys” [✓✓✓ Ditto]
3. Protect access and water quality of Little River [✓✓✓ Double Ditto]
27. Protect view shed of Foothills Parkway [\*agree]
26. Large lots (acres) for houses. Space + maintain rural + community feel.
29. Beautiful views of Blt Cty
40. Keep Townsend small + peaceful...we do not need another Pigeon Forge!

Protect Peery’s Mill Dam (Brad Bowers)

49. Like this general area is green / open space / agricultural, supporting wildlife, viewsapes, farming, grand... protection
50. Like absence of development + existence of rural landscape + uses
59. Farms + open spaces
58. Mountains + farms. East Millers Cove
57. Little River + forested corridor
56. Community / Rec Center with indoor aquatic facility

**Change:**

4. Hwy 33 / East Broadway / Old Knoxville Hwy [✓]
31. Add center lane, require businesses to add some “green space” (trees, bushes) as they update or within a certain time frame (ex. 20 years). Some businesses are almost all concrete/asphalt with noting to absorb water, give oxygen, clean air, filter water, etc. [✓ YES YES!!!]
5. Broadway toward Vonore – terrible traffic with new pattern, dangers [✓✓✓ Agree 38]
- 7-13. Need several convenience centers located throughout the County – to take our trash and recycling
- 15-24. Irresponsible growth w/ growing public safety concerns. Lack of forethought and consideration for the people of Blount County. Disband Blount Partnership. [✓✓✓]
25. Add trash bins for Rockford, Recycling bins
28. Widen East Millers Cove Road with shoulders
39. Stop over development! Controlled development
33. Throughout the developed areas – particularly along the main arteries: We have a terrible tendency to create each commercial establishment as a separate building on a separate property. This increases sprawl and destroys the rural character that one of the boards shows that many people value. I would like to see more shared building – plazas, malls, offices, etc – so if we are going to have increased commercial use, it will at least be concentrated. Likewise, while apartments may not be as attractive as houses on lots, they also will help to concentrate the increasing population leaving the open spaces open. Parking garages, particularly underground garages, will also contain the spreading need for parking.

35. Close the new parkway at dark. The noise from motorcycles and loud vehicles can be deafening. Folks up our way call it Alexander's Folly!
37. Take care of current citizens, roads, schools and hospital instead of luring in new residents.
1. At the expense of current citizens for the benefit of a few
- 43, 45, 46, 23. Lots of open agricultural land need the preserved from unsustainable development. Densely cluster all residential development. Require developers preserve 40% open land & rewild with native plants in all landscaping.
- 47, 48. Change residential zoning to allow greater residential density by allowing ADU's, etc. to create more small scale affordable housing.
51. Infill development in underutilized and vacant parcels. Incentivize developers with tax breaks.
1. Have more restrictions for property owners regarding junk cars, campers, keeping property clean.

Day 2:

## What are places you like? What places could be changed?

**Instructions:** Place a numbered sticker on an area in the County **you like** or would like to **see change**. Nearby, you will see a sheet of easel paper divided into two columns: "Places I Like" and "Places to Change." Write the number corresponding to your sticker in the appropriate column and then expand on your choices. **See below for an example:**

Places I like:	Places to Change:
1. The park here is a great place for my kids to play	2. This intersection is too much traffic
	3. I would like to see more crosswalks

Staples
Sugarcane-Based Easel Pad

### Like

- 1) Business district
- 2) Sports fields
- 3) Community parks
- 4) Business district
- 5) **The park system & greenways are excellent**
- 7) Nice rural landscape area - hard to be sure the river is perfect! but not too big
- 8) nice view of the river
- 10) **all the rest of Loudon County**
- 11. nice rural landscape
- 12. nice rural landscape
- 13. nice rural landscape
- 14. nice rural landscape
- 15. nice rural landscape
- 16. nice rural landscape
- 17. nice rural landscape
- 18. nice rural landscape
- 19. nice rural landscape
- 20. nice rural landscape
- 21. nice rural landscape
- 22. nice rural landscape
- 23. This is a rural, pastoral place with important area for family, friends, & community. It's a great place to be in. I would like to see more of this kind of place.
- 27 - **Keep Townsend quiet & small.**

### Changes

- 6. extend business district down to town center
- 9. extend business district down to town center
- 10. extend business district down to town center
- 11. extend business district down to town center
- 12. extend business district down to town center
- 13. extend business district down to town center
- 14. extend business district down to town center
- 15. extend business district down to town center
- 16. extend business district down to town center
- 17. extend business district down to town center
- 18. extend business district down to town center
- 19. extend business district down to town center
- 20. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 21. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 22. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 23. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 24. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 25. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 26. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 27. **make 411/202 intersection a roundabout**
- 28. **Improve roads (411)**

**Like:**

1. Greenways / Bike Trails
4. Springbrook Park
11. Greenways; parks

Political conservative values

5. The park system + greenways are excellent
7. Nice rural/agricultural areas – need to be sure the river is protected! And no sprawling subdivisions
9. The greenway, the rural atmosphere
10. I like all of Blount County
8. I like the rural nature of the County.
12. I like the parks + playground
13. I like the greenbelts
16. Rural areas

Farmland, rivers, greenway  
I love Blount Cty

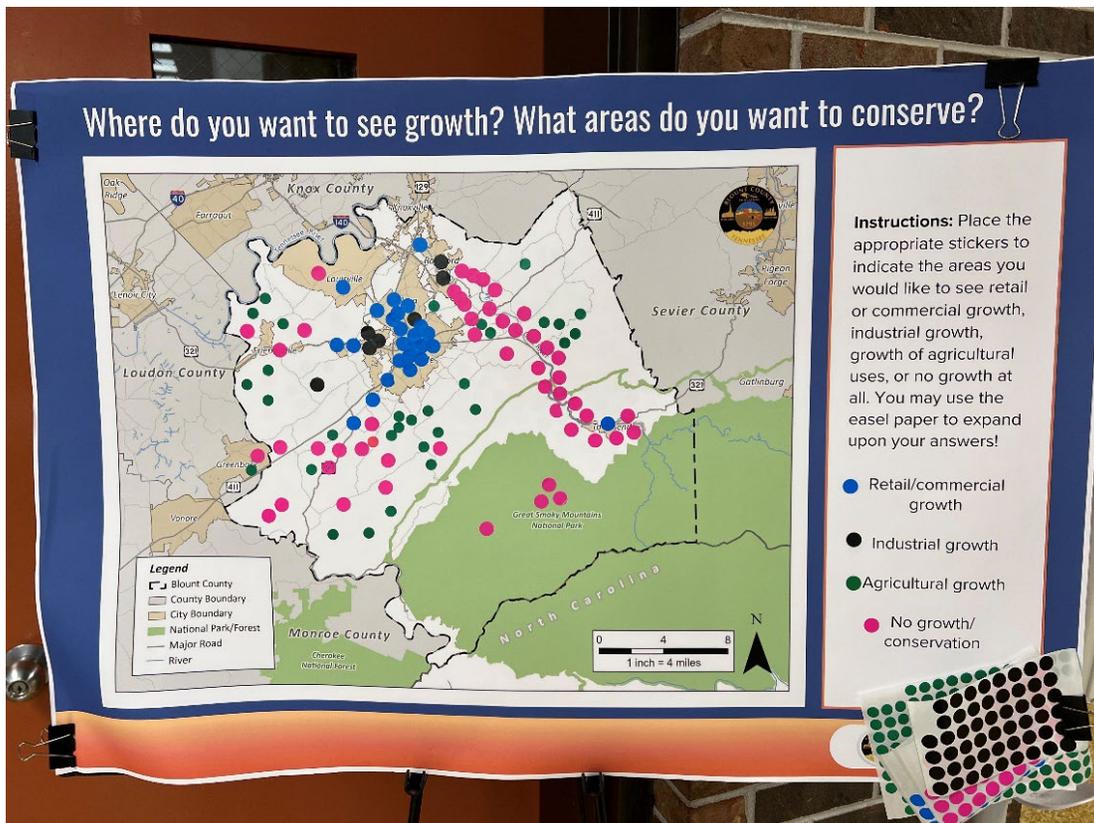
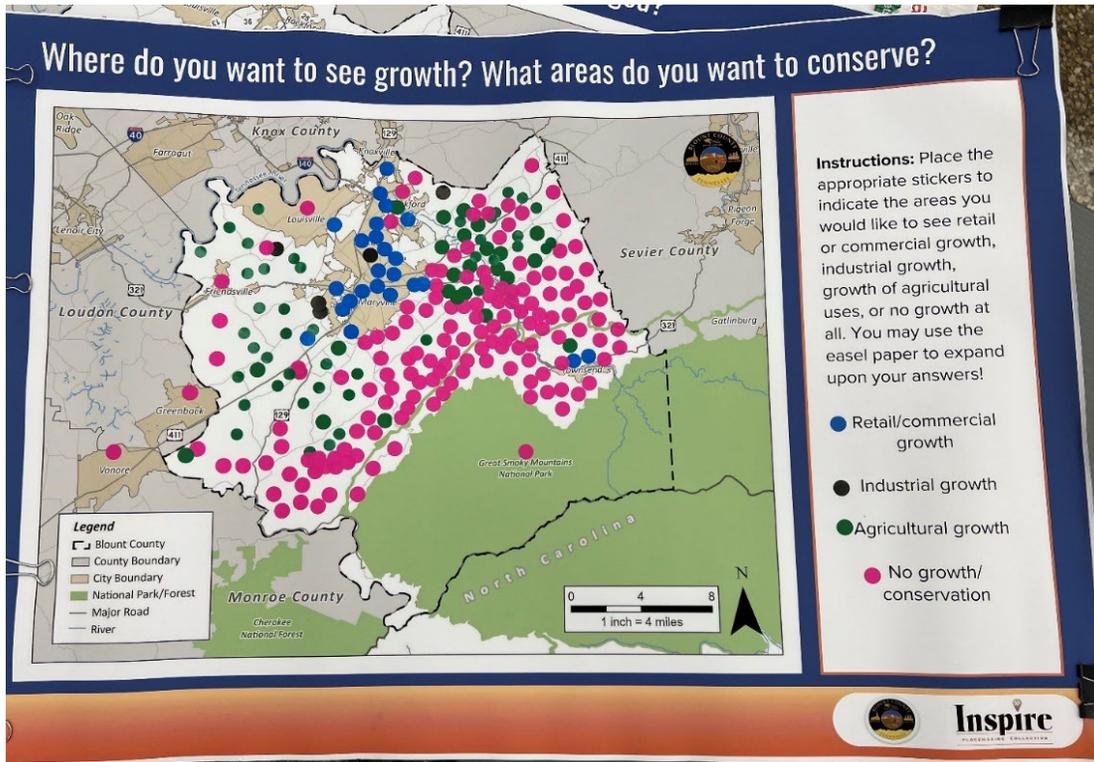
- 18, 19, 20, 21. This area is prime agriculture land! We do NOT NEED to ruin the rural character to save a handful of people, mainly tourist, 9 mins to get to Smokies! Thus, NO Pellissippi Parkway Extension! It will ruin this area...like part of Western BC!
22. Little River is a treasure... if we don't screw it up!
30. Rural Areas + Farmland. What makes us who we are!
23. This is a rural, pastoral place with important areas for farms, greenspace, + environmental stability. We do not have a traffic problem here like in West Maryville where no parkway is proposed.
27. Keep Townsend quiet & small.

**Changes:**

1. Expanded Greenways from Maryville/Alcoa to Knoxville, Lenoir City, Townsend
2. Infrastructure needs update to support better traffic flow
3. Hold on Residential development, use existing structures! No more building!
6. Improve County roads that traditionally not been wide enough to support increased traffic / population. i.e Vernie Lee, Dunlap Hollow, Big Springs
14. Use existing structures
15. I would like to see more sidewalks in the communities in the county.
17. Too much commercial + tight subdivisions. Light pollution + noise is making it feel like somewhere besides Tennessee.
18. More affordable housing / property to build tiny homes
29. Make 411/Seiverville Rd safer...building an interstate (ie Pellissippi Parkway Extension) will only make 411 & other roads in this area a disaster!

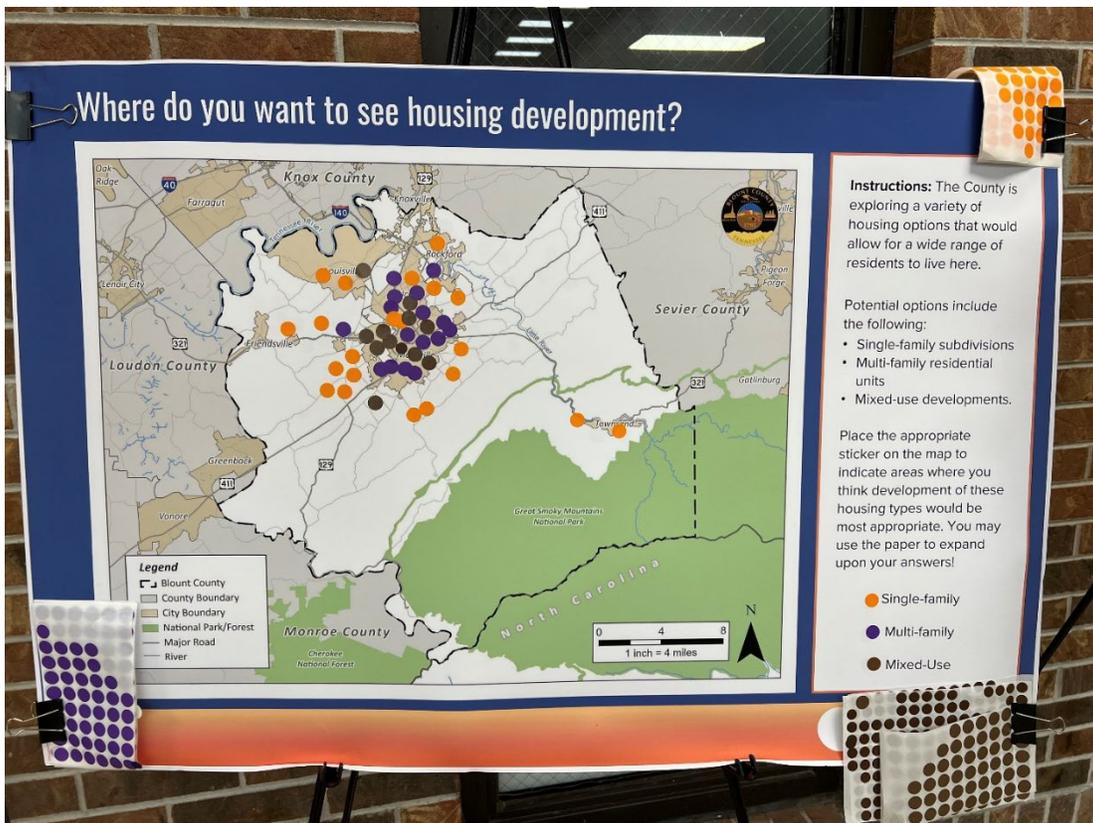
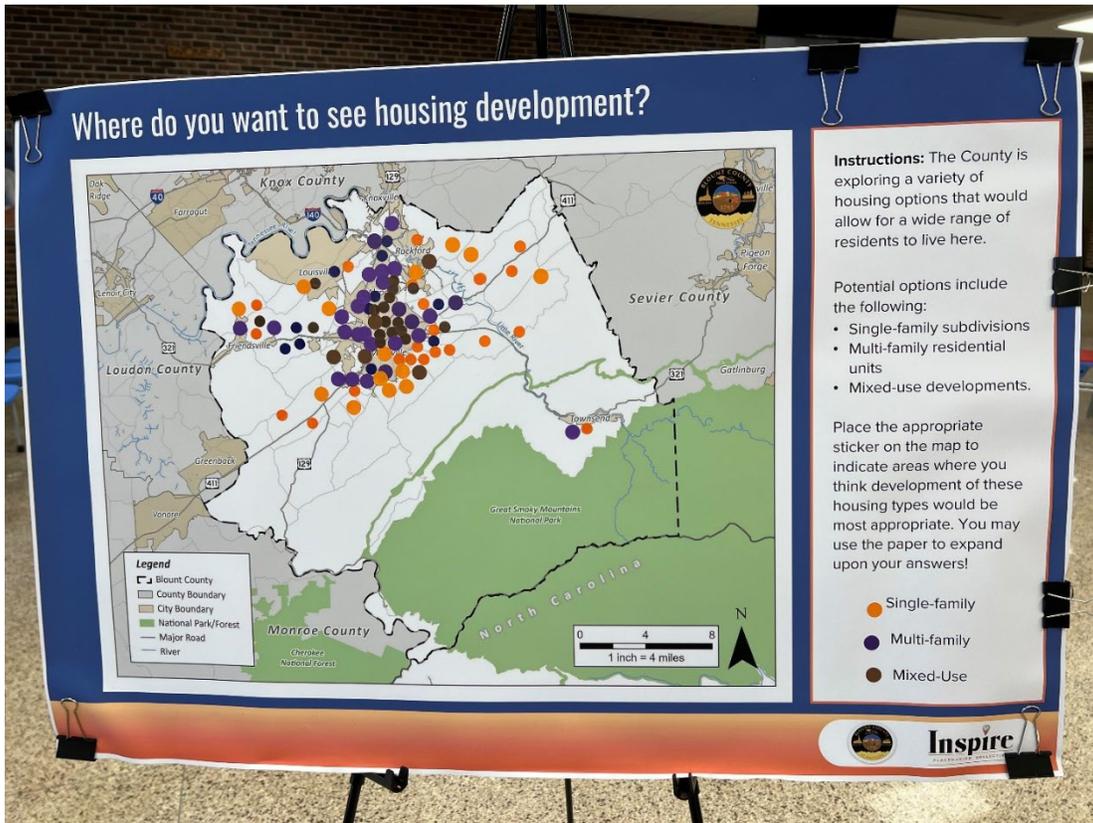
- 24. Heavy congestion, traffic, + noise.
- 28. Improve roads (411)

Where do you want to see growth? What areas do you want to conserve?



Participants on both days of the open house had similar preferences regarding growth and conservation in the County. Residents agree that the land south of US 411 and US 321 should be conserved or used for agriculture. Similarly, residents want to see agricultural growth in the unincorporated areas north of US 411. Both maps show that retail and commercial growth should be concentrated in the municipalities with some extension into the County along US 411. Residents agree that industrial growth should occur in Maryville, Alcoa, and Rockford.

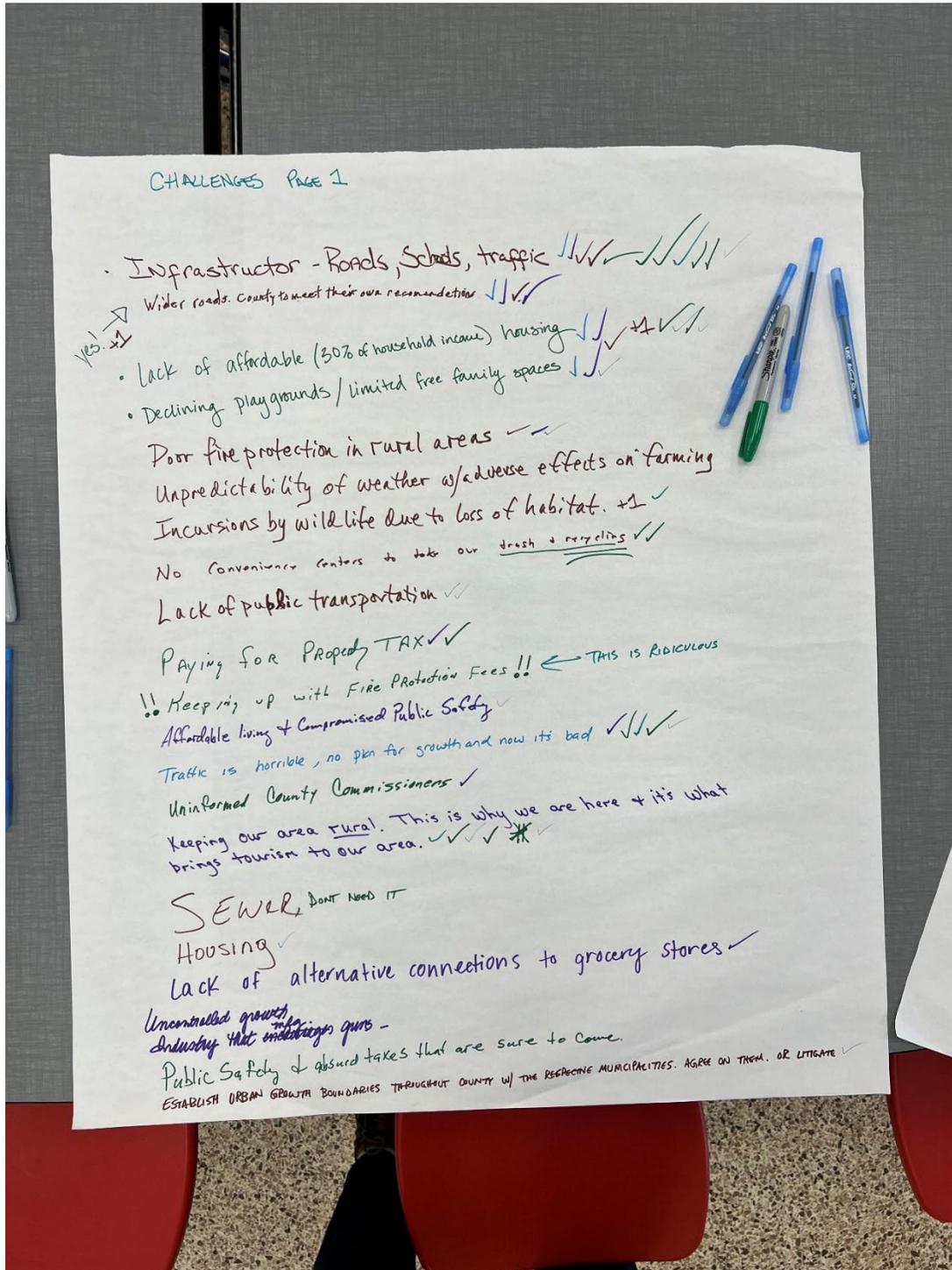
Where do you want to see housing development?



Participants on both days of the open house agree that multi-family and mixed-use development should occur within the municipalities, particularly in Maryville and Alcoa, and extended into the County along portions of US 321 and US 411. Residents want to see single-family housing development within the municipalities of Townsend, Rockford, and Louisville and in the unincorporated areas of the County just beyond the Maryville boundaries.

## What are challenges for residents in Blount County?

### Day 1:



Challenges p 2

Not enough homes for families, (Attainable starter homes)

Why are there hungry children in an agricultural county?

- Residents are disconnected from the land
- County leadership promotes "retiree" age residents - need to keep younger population

Housing prices while jobs don't pay enough to afford it.

Losing farms too fast & no options for young farmers to buy at ag rates ✓

Protecting existing farms + supporting young people who want to farm

Cost of living - wages aren't sufficient for service sector workers to afford to live where they work

Attacks on public education

People who do not know anything about health care trying to mess up the hospital

Not many union jobs -

Attacks on organizations and public services that are trying to meet people's needs

## What are challenges for residents in Blount County?

Challenges p -

Unrealistic expectations about what the costs are of what we need and resistance to paying for it

Devotion to old and bad ideas about growth and its relationship to roads -

Leaders accepting that "growth" is always necessary → cannot be challenged

Explicit and implicit racism limits who can flourish here.

### \* Affordable Housing \*

Improvements in infrastructure (Roads, Stormwater BMP's)

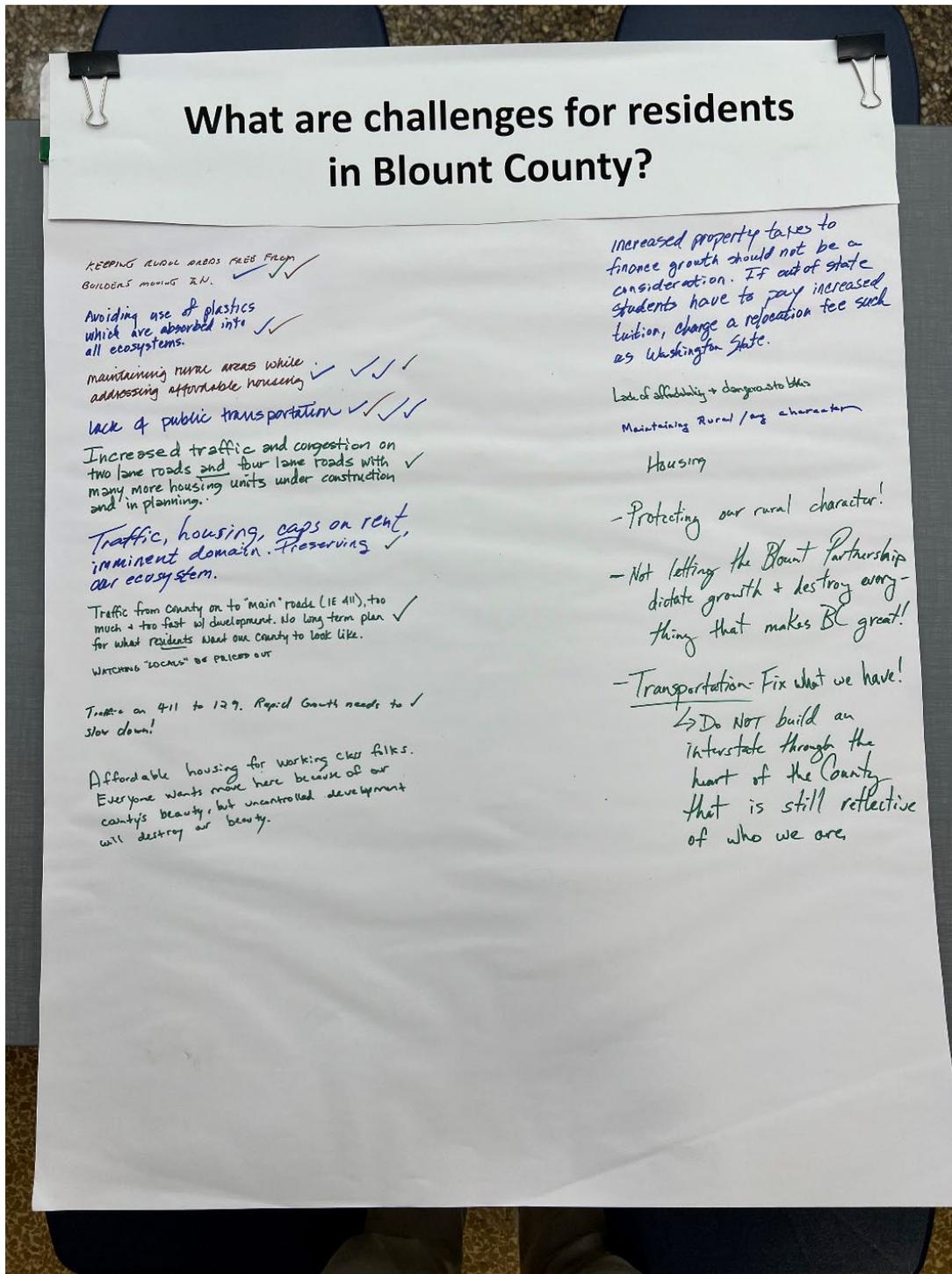
Affordable Housing. No Public transportation (many people don't or can't drive!). Loss of open space. Blount Co. seems to be self-segregated which is - kind of sad. Homelessness - more here than we realize

Lack of support from county & city governments in regard to stormwater policies

- Infrastructure – roads, schools, traffic [✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓]
- Wider roads. County to meet their own recommendations [✓✓✓✓, yes!, +1]
- Lack of affordable (3-% of household income) housing [✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓, +1]
- Declining playgrounds / limited free family spaces [✓✓✓✓]
- Poor fire protection in rural areas [✓✓✓✓]
- Unpredictability of weather w/adverse effects on farming

- Incursions by wildlife due to loss of habitat [+1, ✓]
- No convenience centers to take our trash + recycling [✓✓]
- Lack of public transportation
- Paying for property tax [✓✓]
- !! Keeping up with fire protection fees !! [← This is ridiculous]
- Affordable living + compromised public safety
- Traffic is horrible, no plan for growth and now it's bad [✓✓✓✓✓]
- Uninformed County Commissioners [✓]
- Keeping our area rural. This is why we are here + it's what brings tourism to our area [✓✓✓✓✓]
- Sewer [don't need it]
- Housing [✓]
- Lack of alternative connections to grocery stores [✓]
- Uncontrollable growth
- Industry that mfg. guns
- Public safety + absurd taxes that are sure to come
- Establish urban growth boundaries throughout County w/ the respective municipalities. Agree on them or litigate. [✓]
- Not enough homes for families (attainable starter homes)
- Why are there hungry children in an agricultural county?
- Residents are disconnected from the land
- County leadership promotes "retiree" age residents – need to keep younger population
- Housing prices while jobs don't pay enough to afford it.
- Losing farms too fast & no options for young farmers to buy at ag rates [✓]
- Protecting existing farms + supporting young people who want to farm
- Cost of living – wages aren't sufficient for service sector workers to afford to live where they work
- Attacks on public education
- People who do not know anything about health care trying to mess up the hospital
- Not many union jobs
- Attacks on organizations and public services that are trying to meet people's needs
- Unrealistic expectations about what the costs are of what we need and resistance to paying for it
- Devotion to old and bad ideas about growth and its relationship to roads
- Leaders accepting that "growth" is always necessary + cannot be challenged
- Explicit and implicit racism limits who can flourish here
- affordable housing
- Improvements in infrastructure (roads, stormwater)
- Affordable housing. No public transportation (many people don't or can't drive!). Loss of open space. Blount Co. seems to be self-segregated which is kind of sad. Homelessness – more here than we realize.
- Lack of support from County + City governments in regard to stormwater policies.

Day 2:



## What are challenges for residents in Blount County?

KEEPING RURAL AREAS FREE FROM BUILDERS moving in. ✓✓✓

Avoiding use of plastics which are absorbed into all ecosystems. ✓✓

Maintaining rural areas while addressing affordable housing ✓✓✓✓

Lack of public transportation ✓✓✓✓

Increased traffic and congestion on two lane roads and four lane roads with many more housing units under construction and in planning. ✓

Traffic, housing, caps on rent imminent domain. Preserving our ecosystem. ✓

Traffic from County on to "main" roads (IE 411), too much + too fast w/ development. No long term plan for what residents want our County to look like. ✓  
Watching "toxic" be pulled out

Traffic on 411 to 129. Rapid Growth needs to slow down! ✓

Affordable housing for working class folks. Everyone wants more here because of our county's beauty, but uncontrolled development will destroy our beauty.

Increased property taxes to finance growth should not be a consideration. If out of state students have to pay increased tuition, charge a relocation fee such as Washington State.

Lack of affordability + dangerous roads  
Maintaining Rural / ag character

### Housing

- Protecting our rural character!

- Not letting the Blount Partnership dictate growth + destroy every-thing that makes BC great!

- Transportation: Fix what we have!

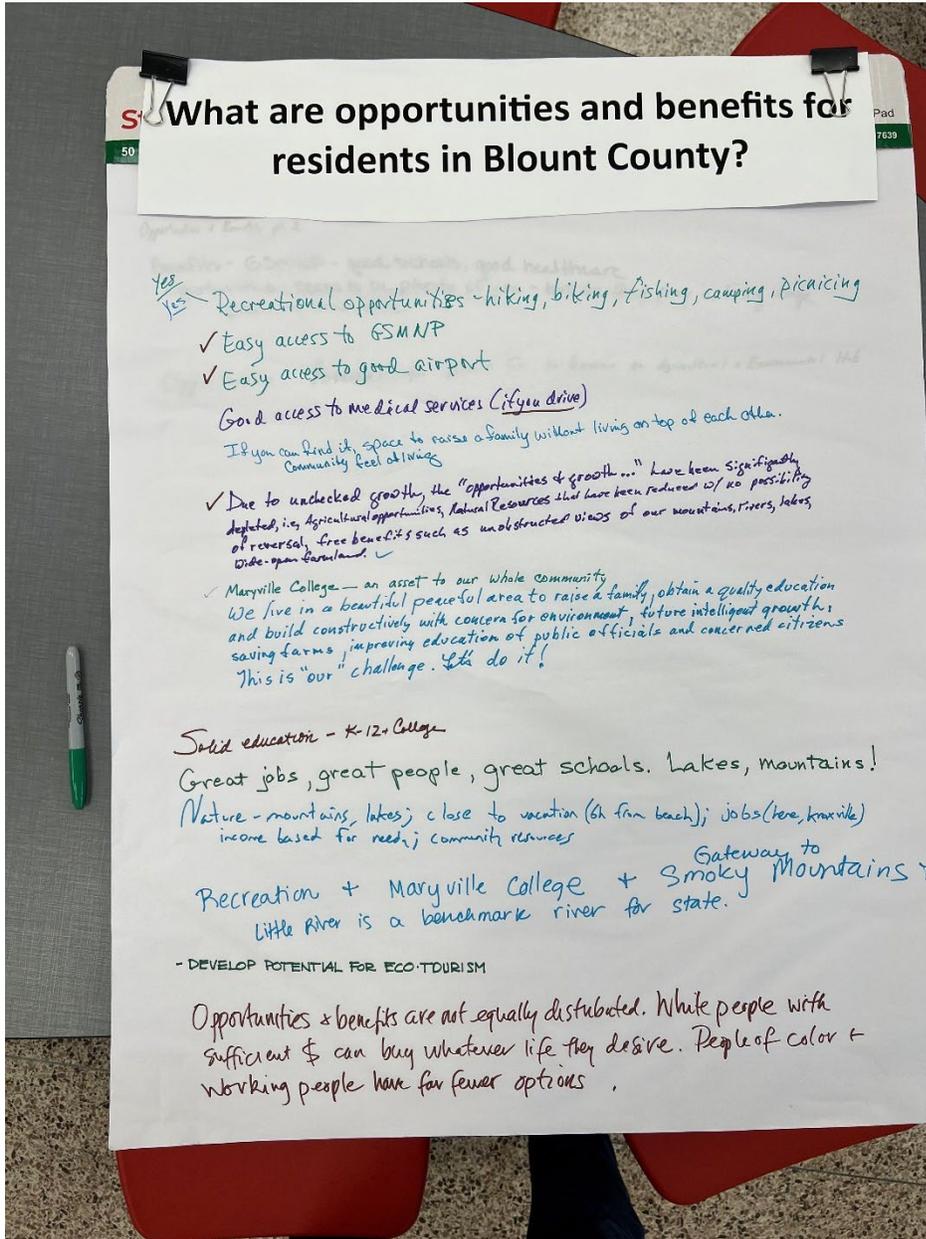
↳ Do NOT build an interstate through the heart of the County that is still reflective of who we are.

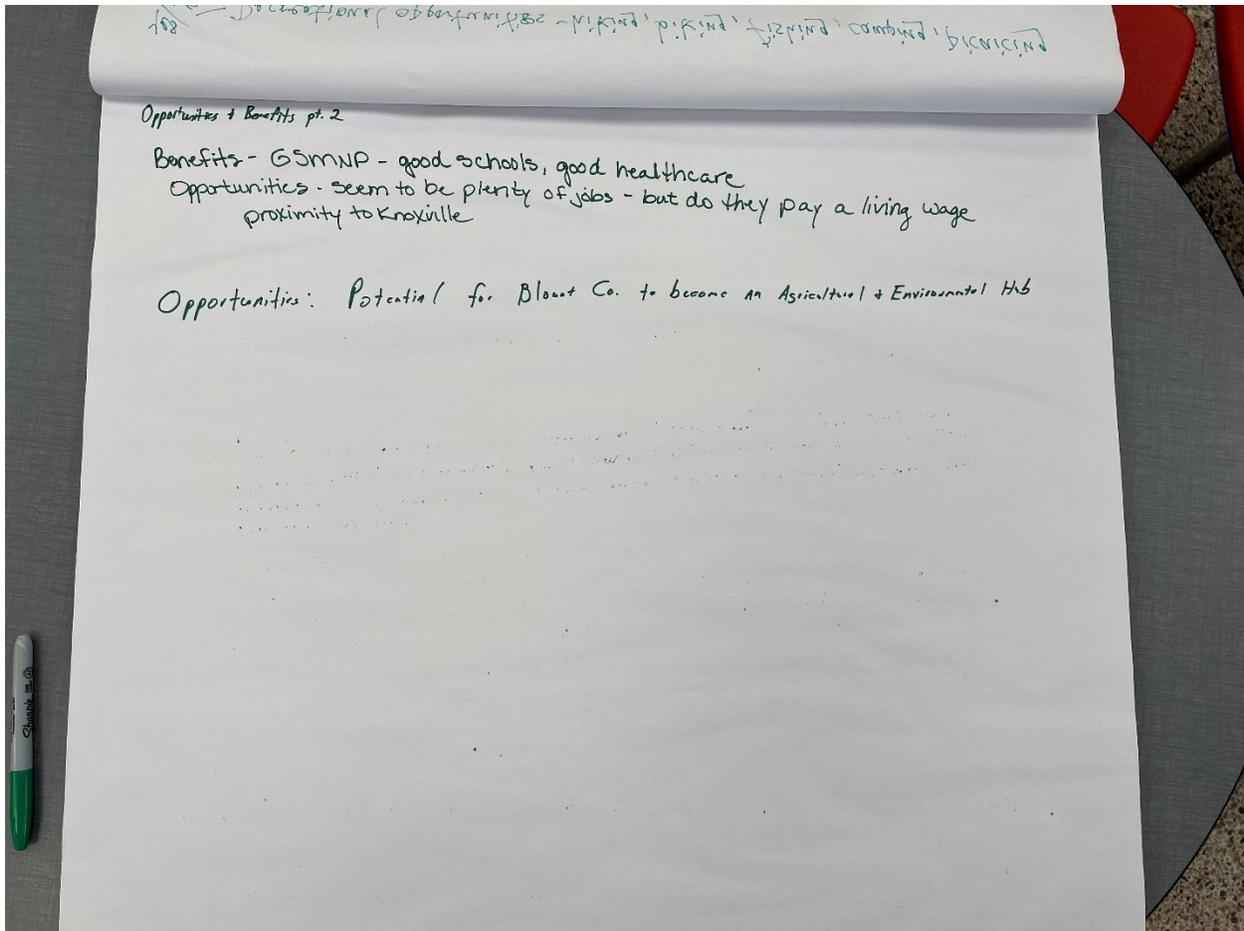
- Keeping rural areas free from builders moving in. [✓✓✓]
- Avoiding use of plastics which are absorbed into all ecosystems [✓✓]
- Maintaining rural areas while addressing affordable housing [✓✓✓✓]
- Lack of public transportation [✓✓✓✓]

- Increased traffic and congestion on two lane roads and four lane roads with many more housing units under construction and in planning. [✓]
- Traffic, housing, caps on rent, imminent domain. Preserving our ecosystem. [✓]
- Traffic from County on to “main” roads (ie 411), too much + too fast w/ development. No long term plan for what residents want our County to look like. [✓]
- Watching “locals” be priced out
- Traffic on 411 to 129. Rapid growth needs to slow down! [✓]
- Affordable housing for working class folks. Everyone wants move here because of our county’s beauty, but uncontrolled development will destroy our beauty.
- Increased property taxes to finance growth should not be a consideration. If out of state students have to pay increased tuition, charge a relocation fee such as Washington State.
- Lack of affordability and dangerous to bikes
- Maintaining rural / ag character
- Housing
- Protecting our rural character!
- Not letting the Blount Partnership dictate growth + destroy everything that makes BC great!
- Transportation – fix what we have! Do NOT build an interstate through the heart of the County that is still reflective of who we are.

What are opportunities and benefits for residents in Blount County?

Day 1:

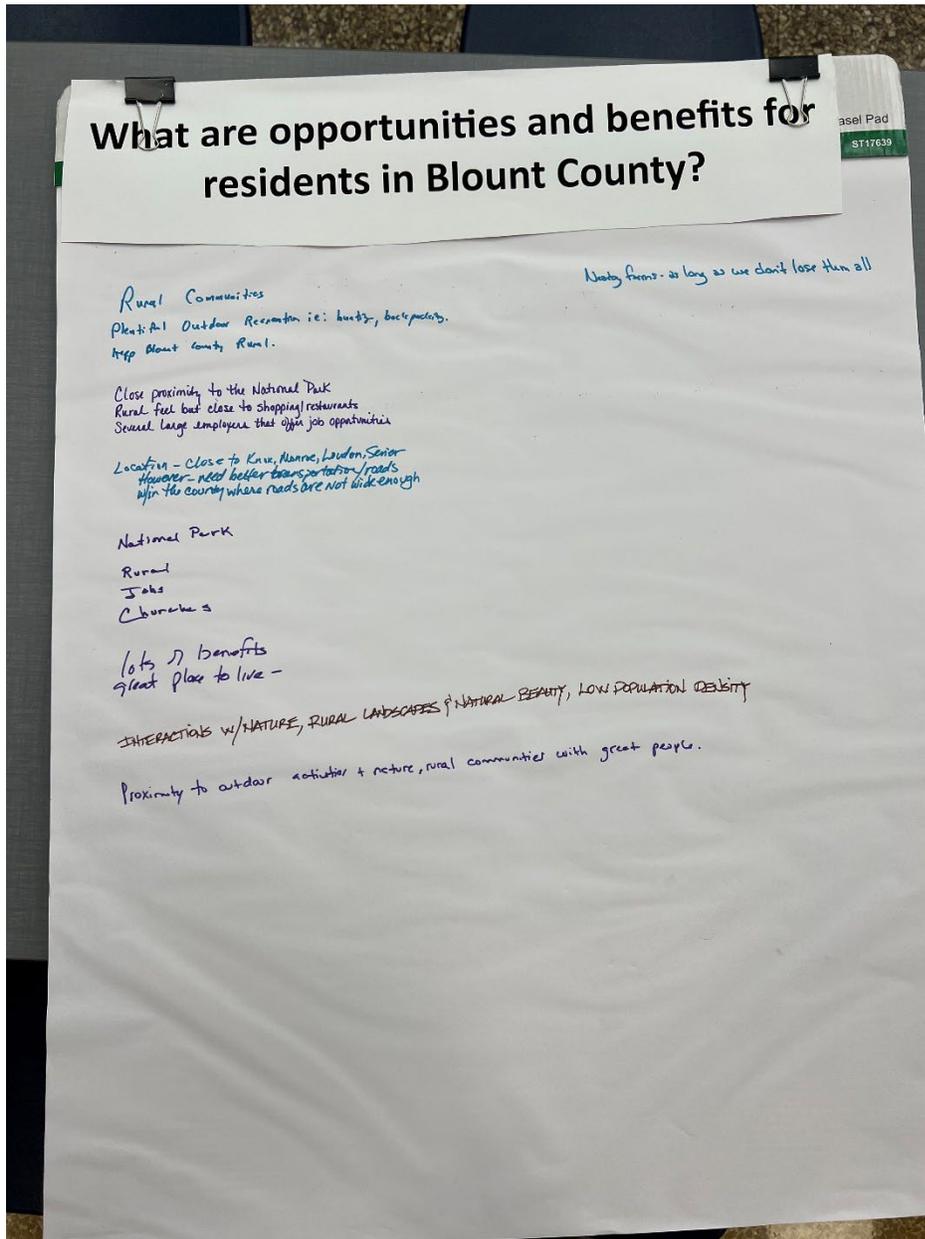




- Recreational opportunities – hiking, biking, fishing, camping, picnicking [yes, yes]
- Easy access to GSMNP [✓]
- Easy access to good airport [✓]
- Good access to medical services (if you drive)
- If you can find it, space to raise a family without living on top of each other. Community feel of living
- Due to unchecked growth, the “opportunities of growth...” have been significantly depleted, i.e., agricultural opportunities, natural resources that have been reduced w/ no possibility of reversal, free benefits such as unobstructed views of our mountains, rivers, lakes, wide-open farmland. [✓✓]
- Maryville College – an asset to our whole community
- We live in a beautiful peaceful area to raise a family, obtain a quality education and build constructively with concern for environment, future intelligent growth, saving farms, improving education of public officials and concerned citizens. This is “our” challenge. Let’s do it!
- Solid education – K-12 + College
- Great jobs, great people, great schools. Lakes, mountains!
- Nature – mountains, lakes; close to vacation (6h from beach); jobs (here, Knoxville); income based for needs; community resources

- Recreation + Maryville College + Gateway to Smoky Mountains + Little River is a benchmark river for state.
- Develop potential for eco-tourism
- Opportunities + benefits are not equally distributed. White people with sufficient \$ can buy whatever life they desire. People of color + working people have far fewer options.
- Benefits – GSMNP – good schools, good healthcare
- Opportunities – seem to be plenty of jobs – but do they pay a living wage proximity to Knoxville
- Opportunities: Potential for Blount Co. to become an agricultural + environmental hub

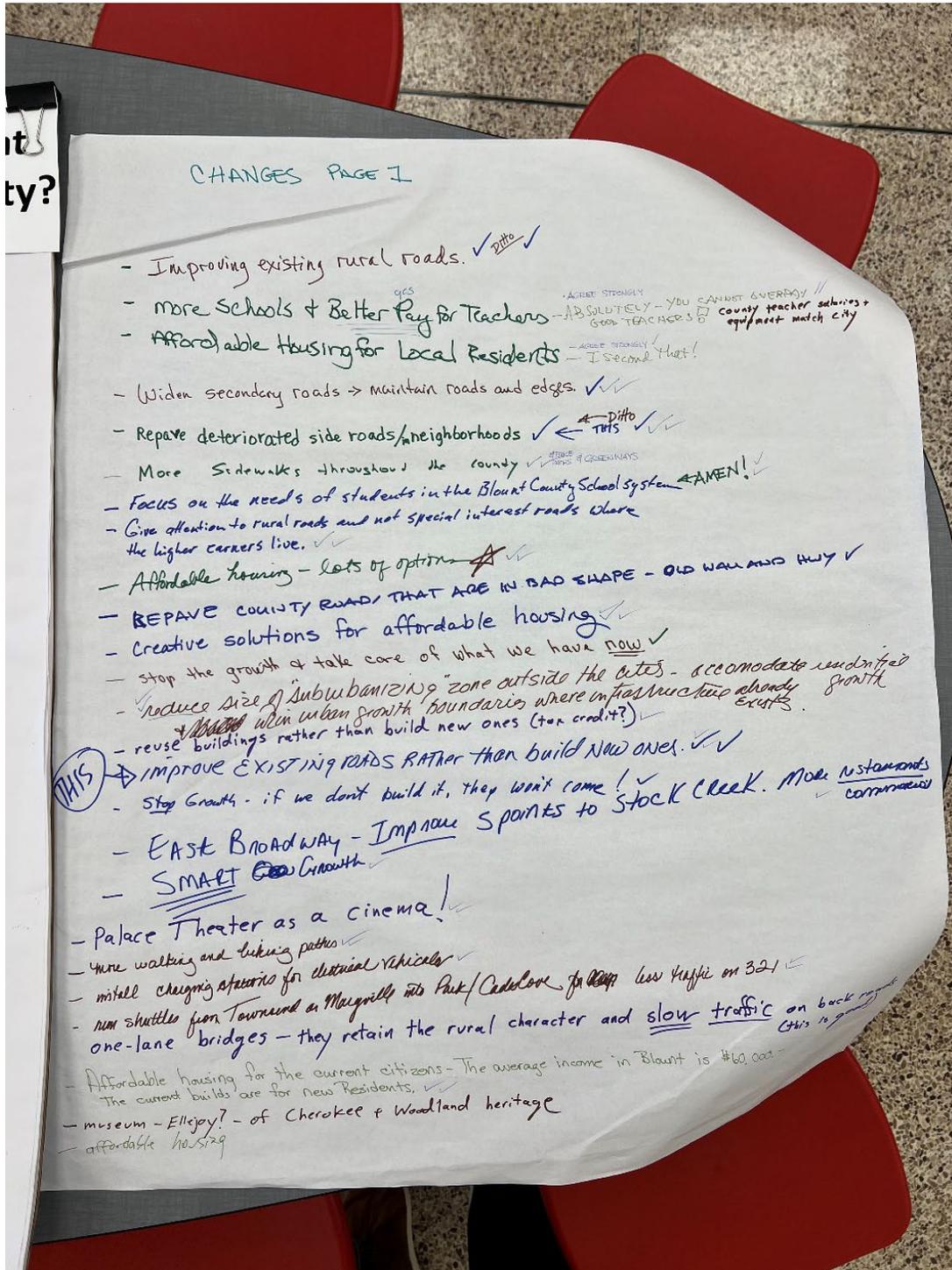
Day 2:



- Rural communities
- Plentiful outdoor recreation ie: hunting, backpacking
- Keep Blount County rural.
- Close proximity to the National Park, rural feel but close to shopping/restaurants, several large employers that offer job opportunities
- Location – close to Knox, Monroe, Loudon, Sevier. However – need better transportation / roads w/in the County where roads are NOT wide enough
- National Park
- Rural, jobs, churches
- Lots of benefits
- Great place to live
- Interactions w/ nature, rural landscapes & natural beauty, low population density
- Proximity to outdoor activities + nature, rural communities with great people
- Nearby farms – as long as we don't lose them all

If money or time were not a constraint, what changes would you like to see in Blount County?

Day 1:



## If money or time were not a constraint, what changes would you like to see in Blount County?

Concentrate residential growth close to city limits, where infrastructure services exist  
Incorporate climate resilience into all planning - prepare for what's inevitably coming  
Maintain + repair existing road system - improve safety and sight lines

✓ Better streets and roads  
Rec programs for kids + adults - physical + mental

Protect our wildlife from excessive development.  
Retain their habitats.

Very well funded public education

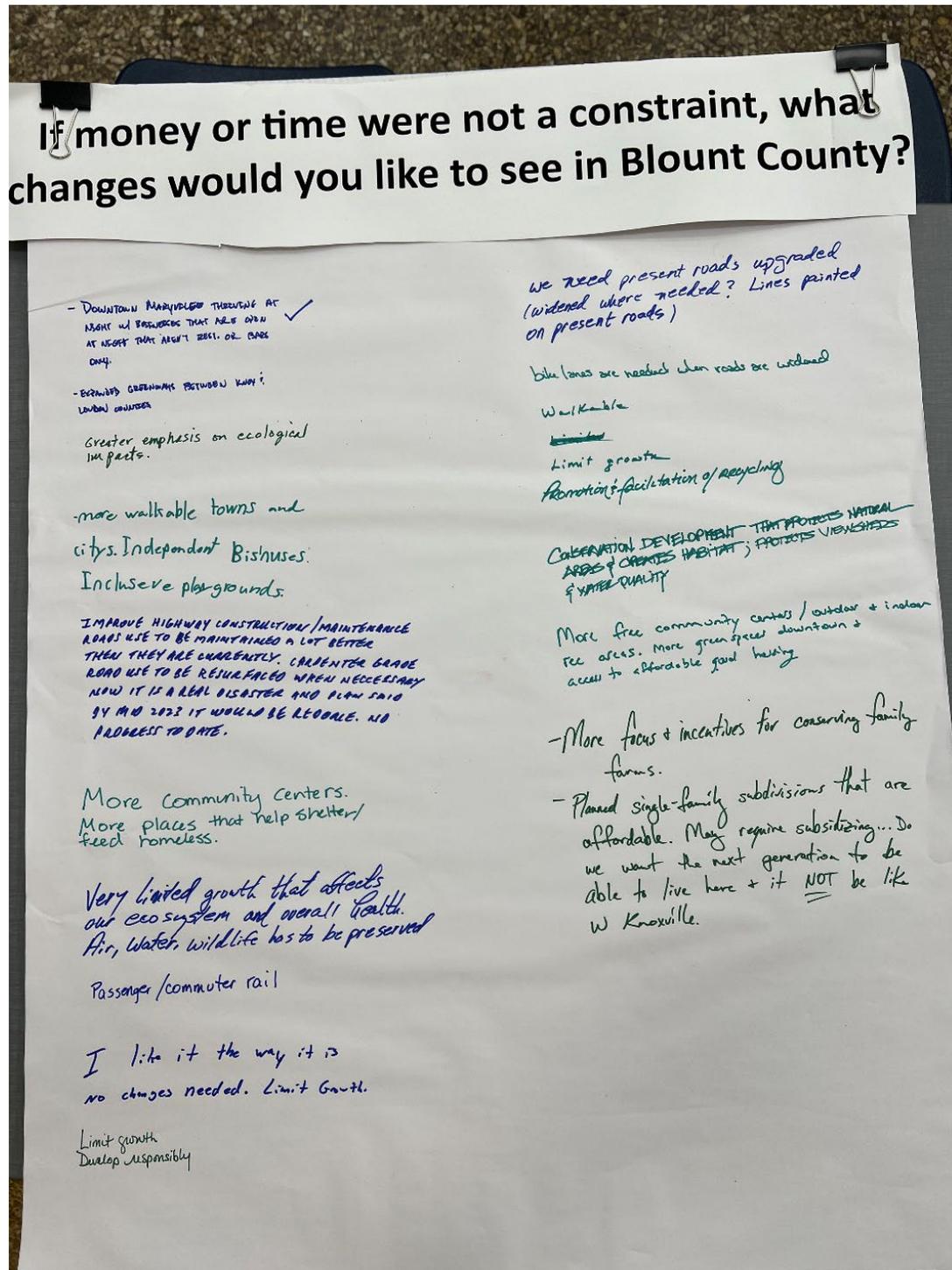
More highway trash pick-up

Bike trail from downtown to Townsend

- Improving existing rural roads [✓✓, ditto]
- More schools + better pay for teachers – agree strongly, absolutely – you cannot overpay good teachers!, County teacher salaries + equipment match City
- Affordable housing for local residents [agree strongly, I second that!]
- Widen secondary roads → maintain roads and edges [✓✓✓]
- Repave deteriorated side roads / in neighborhoods [✓✓✓✓, ditto, this]

- More sidewalks throughout the County [✓✓, & bike paths & greenways]
- Focus on the needs of students in the Blount County School System [amen!]
- Give attention to rural roads not special interest roads where the higher earners live [✓✓]
- Affordable housing – lots of options [✓✓]
- Repave County roads that are in bad shape – Old Wall and HWY [✓]
- Creative solutions for affordable housing [✓✓✓]
- Stop the growth + take care of what we have now [✓]
- Reduce size of “suburbanizing” zone outside the cities – accommodate residential growth w/in urban growth boundaries where infrastructure already exists [✓✓]
- Reuse buildings rather than build new ones (tax credit?) [✓]
- Improve existing roads rather than build new ones [✓✓✓✓, THIS]
- Stop growth – if we don’t build it, they won’t come! [✓]
- East Broadway – improve 5 points to Stock Creek. More restaurants ...
- Smart growth [✓]
- Palace Theater as a cinema! [✓✓]
- More walking and biking paths [✓✓]
- Install charging stations for electrical vehicles [✓]
- Run shuttles from Townsend or Maryville into Park / ... for less traffic on 321
- One-lane bridges – they retain the rural character and slow traffic on back roads (this is good)
- Affordable housing for the current citizens. The average income in Blount is \$60,000. The current builds are for new residents [✓✓]
- Museum – Ellejoy? – of Cherokee + Woodland heritage
- Affordable housing
- Concentrate residential growth close to city limits, where infrastructure and services exist
- Incorporate climate resilience into all planning – prepare for what’s inevitably coming
- Maintain and repair existing road system – improve safety and sight lines
- Better streets and roads [✓]
- Rec programs for kids + adults – physical + mental
- Protect our wildlife from excessive development
- Retain their habitats
- Very well funded public education
- More highway trash pick-up
- Bike trail from downtown to Townsend

Day 2:

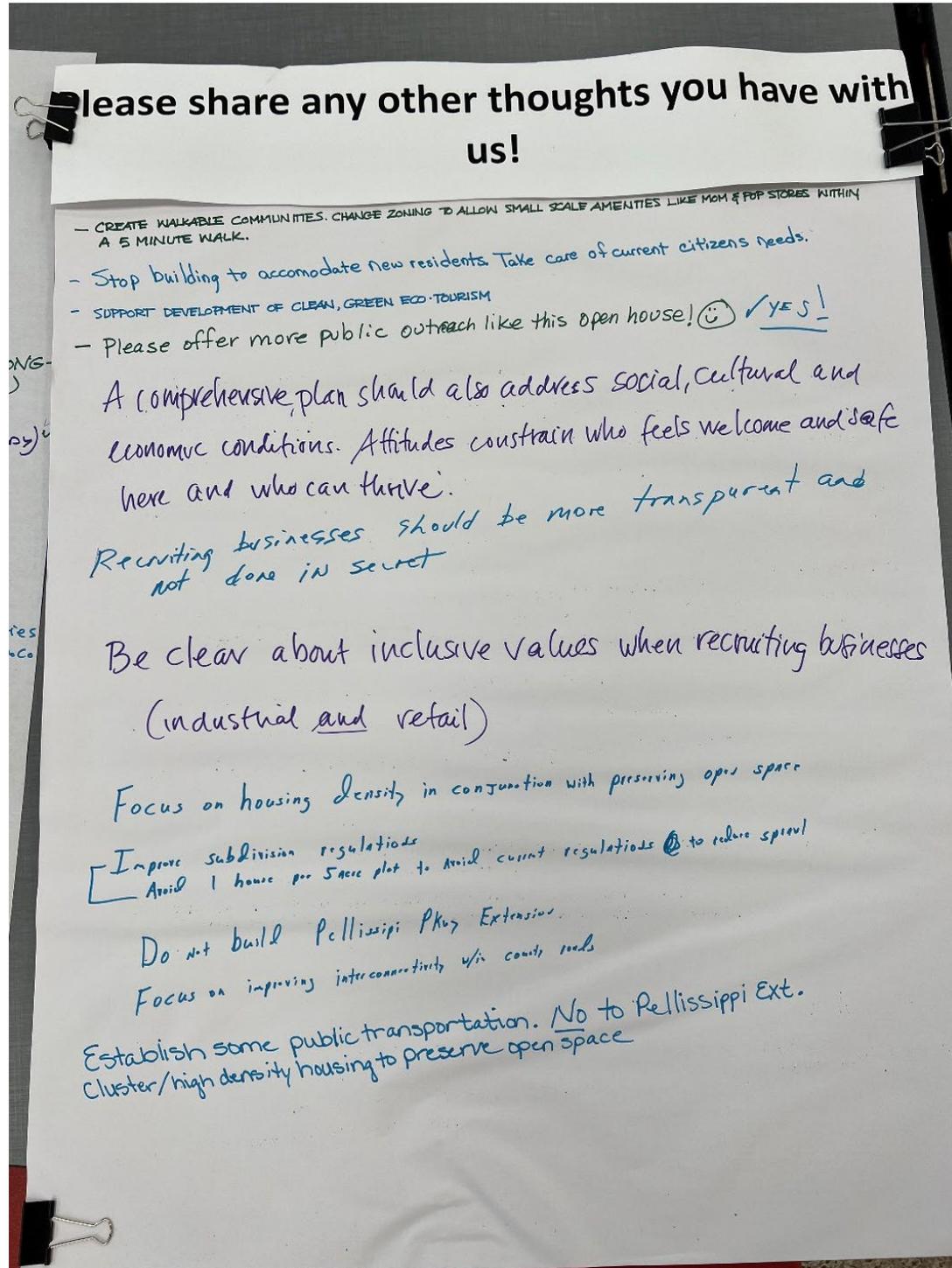


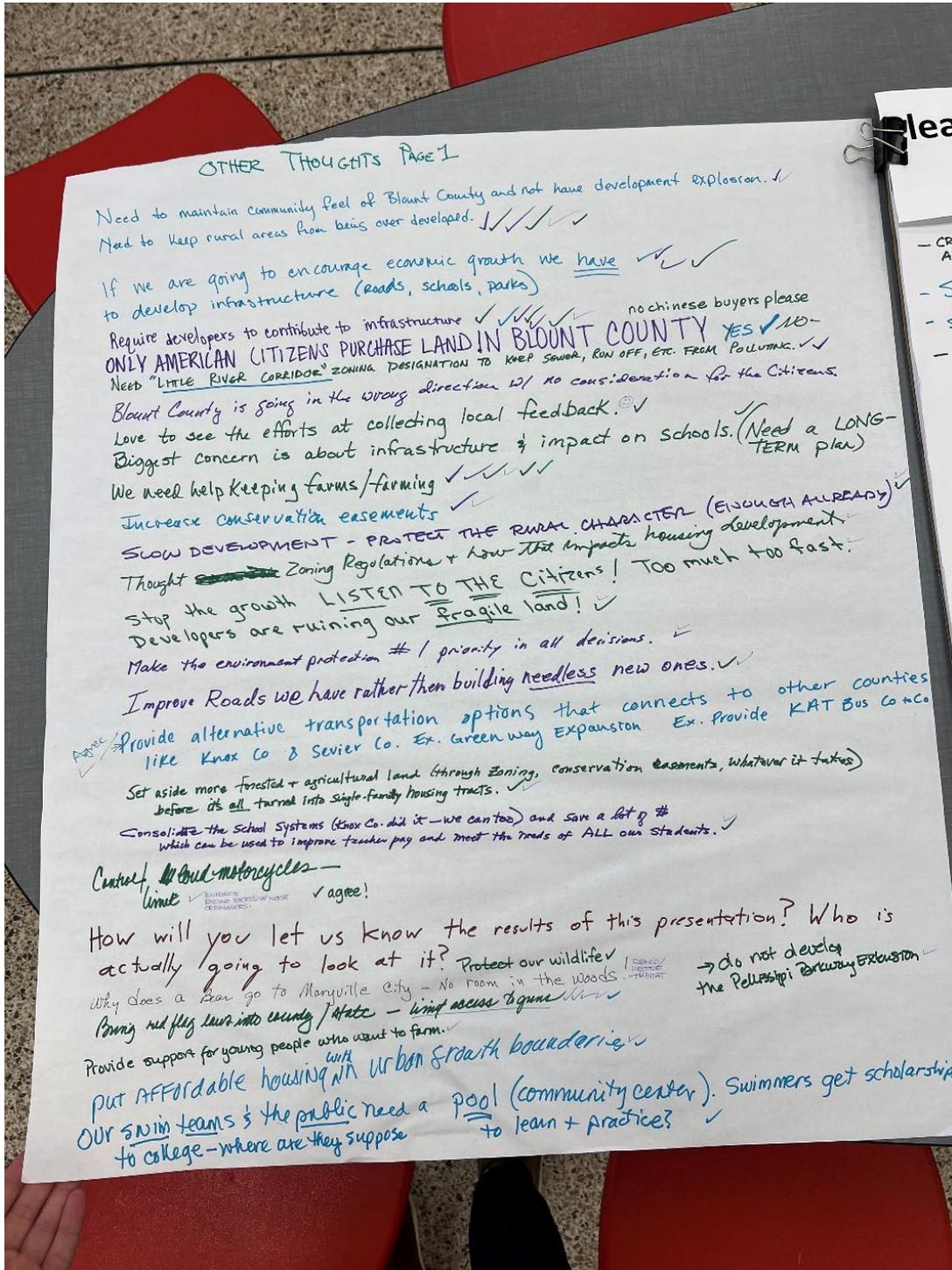
- Downtown Maryville thriving at night w/ breweries that are open at night that aren't rest. or bars only. [✓]
- Expanded greenways between Knox & Loudon Counties

- Greater emphasis on ecological impacts
- More walkable towns and cities. Independent businesses, inclusive playgrounds.
- Improve highway construction / maintenance. Roads used to be maintained a lot better than they are currently. Carpenter Grade Road used to be resurfaced when necessary now it is a real disaster and ... said by mid 2023 it would be redone, no progress to date.
- More community centers. More places that help shelter/feed homeless.
- Very limited growth that affects our ecosystem and overall health. Air, water, wildlife has to be preserved
- Passenger/commuter rail
- I like it the way it is. No changes needed. Limit growth
- Limit growth, develop responsibly
- We need present roads upgraded (widened where needed? Lines painted on present roads)
- Bike lanes are needed when roads are widened
- Walkable
- Limit growth
- Promotion & facilitation of recycling
- Conservation development that protects natural areas & creates habitat; protects viewsheds & water quality
- More free community centers / outdoor + indoor rec areas. More green spaces downtown + access to affordable good housing.
- More focus + incentives for conserving family farms.
- Planned single-family subdivisions that are affordable. May require subsidizing...do we want the next generation to be able to live here + it NOT be like w/ Knoxville.

Please share any other thoughts you have with us!

Day 1:

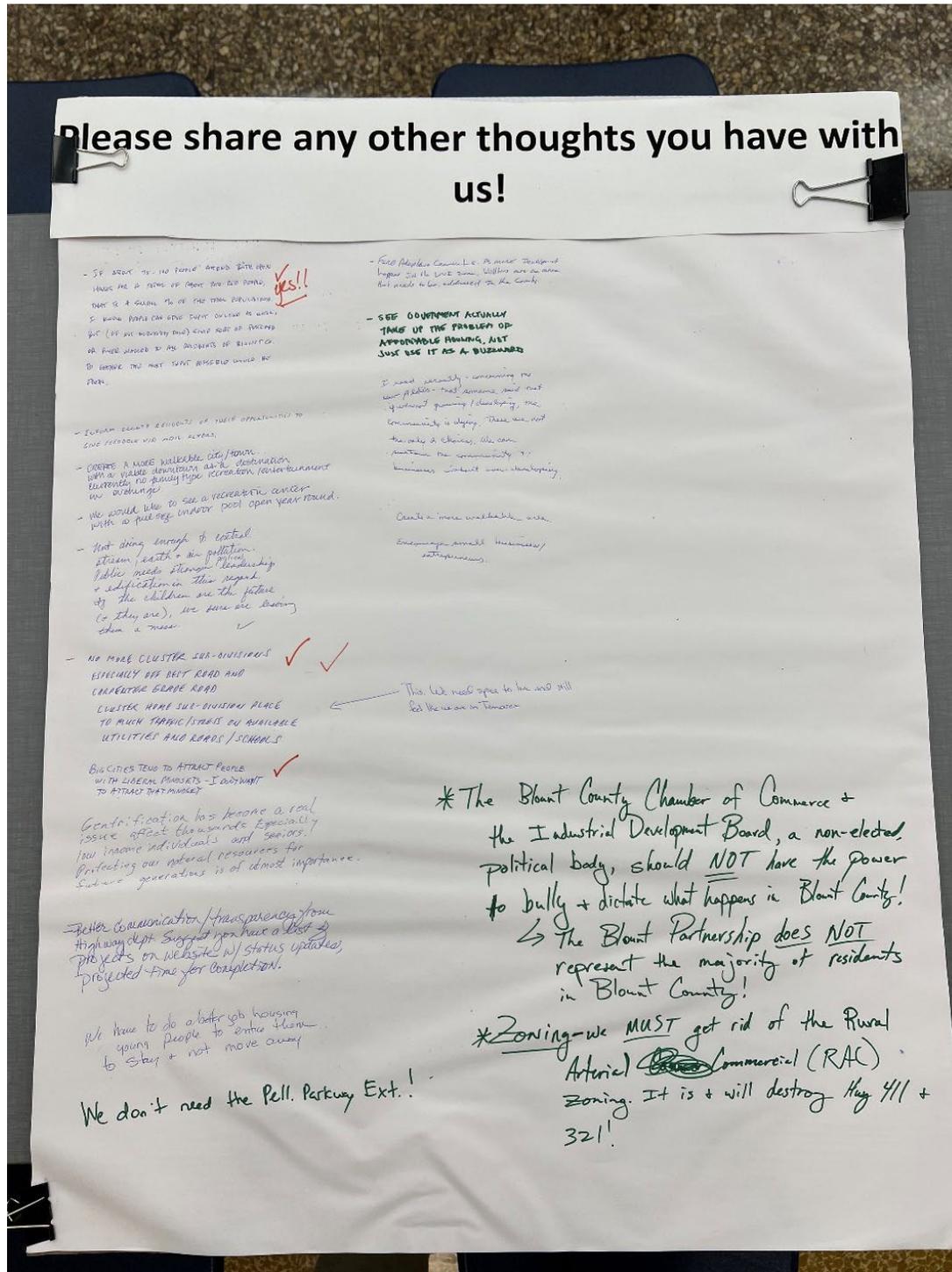




- Create walkable communities. Change zoning to allow small scale amenities like Mom & Pop stores within a 5 minute walk.
- Stop building to accommodate new residents. Take care of current citizens needs.
- Support development of clean, green eco-tourism
- Please offer more public outreach like this open house! [✓, yes!]

- A comprehensive plan should also address social, cultural and economic conditions. Attitudes constrain who feels welcome and safe here and who can thrive.
- Recruiting businesses should be more transparent and not done in secret
- Be clear about inclusive values when recruiting businesses (industrial and retail)
- Focus on housing density in conjunction with preserving open space
- Improve subdivision regulations
- Avoid 1 house per 5 acre plot to avoid current regulations to reduce sprawl
- Do not build Pellissippi Pkwy Extension
- Focus on improving interconnectivity w/in county roads
- Establish some public transportation. No to Pellissippi Ext.
- Cluster/high density housing to preserve open space
- Need to maintain community feel of Blount County and not have development explosion [✓✓]
- Need to keep rural areas from being over developed [✓✓✓✓✓✓]
- If we are going to encourage economic growth we have to develop infrastructure (roads, schools, parks) [✓✓✓✓]
- Require developers to contribute to infrastructure [✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓]
- Only American citizens purchase land in Blount County [yes, ✓, no, no Chinese buyers please]
- Need “Little River Corridor” zoning designation to keep sewer, run off, etc from polluting [✓✓]
- Blount County is going in the wrong direction w/ no consideration for the citizens.
- Love to see the efforts at collecting local feedback [✓]
- Biggest concern is about infrastructure & impact on schools (need a LONG-TERM plan)
- We need help keeping farms/farming [✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓]
- Increase conservation easements [✓✓]
- Slow development – protect the rural character (enough already) [✓✓]
- Thought zoning regulations + how that impacts housing development [✓]
- Stop the growth LISTEN TO THE CITIZENS! Too much too fast [✓]
- Developers are ruining our fragile land! [✓✓]
- Make the environmental protection #1 priority in all decisions [✓✓]
- Improve roads we have rather than building needless new ones [✓✓]
- Provide alternative transportation options that connects to other counties like Knox Co & Sevier Co. Ex. Greenway expansion Ex. Provide KAT Bus Co to Co [✓, agree]
- Set aside more forested + agricultural land (through zoning, conservation easements, whatever it takes) before it’s all turned into single-family housing tracts [✓✓]
- Consolidate the school systems (Knox Co. did it – we can too) and save a lot of \$ which can be used to improve teacher pay and meet the needs of ALL our students [✓✓]
- Control/limit loud motorcycles – [✓✓, enforce existing excessive noise ordinances, agree!]
- How will you let us know the results of this presentation? Who is actually going to look at it?
- Protect our wildlife [✓]
- Why does a bear go to Maryville City – no room in the woods!
- Rebuild/restore habitat
- Do not develop the Pellissippi Parkway Extension [✓]
- Provide support for young people who want to farm [✓]
- Put affordable housing within urban growth boundaries [✓✓✓]
- Our swim teams & the public need a pool (community center). Swimmers get scholarships to college – where are they suppose to learn and practice? [✓]

Day 2:



- If about 75-100 people attend both open houses for a total of about 200-250 people, that is a small % of the total population. I know people can give input online as well, but (if not already done) some sort of postcard or flyer mailed to all residents of Blount Co. to get the most input possible would be ideal. [✓ yes!!]

- Inform County residents of these opportunities to give feedback via mail flyers.
- Create a more walkable city/town with a viable downtown as a destination. Currently no family type recreation / entertainment in evenings.
- We would like to see a recreation center with a full size indoor pool open year round.
- Not doing enough to control steam, earth, and air pollution. Public needs stronger political leadership and edification in this regard. If the children are the future (and they are), we sure are leaving them a mess. [✓]
- No more cluster subdivisions especially off Best Road and Carpenter Grade Road. Too much traffic / stress on available utilities and roads / schools [✓✓, This. We need space live and still feel like we are in Tennessee]
- Gentrification has become a real issue affect thousands. Especially low income individuals and seniors. Protecting our natural resources for future generations is of utmost importance.
- Better communication / transparency from Highway dept. Suggest you have a list of projects on website w/ status updates, projected time for completion.
- We have to do a better job housing young people to entice them to stay and not move away.
- We don't need the Pell. Parkway Ext!
- Fire adaptive communities. As more development happens in the WUI zone, wildfires are an area that needs to be addressed in the County.
- See government actually take up the problem of affordable housing, not just use it as a buzzword
- I read recently – concerning the new Aldi's – that someone said that if we're not growing / developing, the community is dying. These are not the only 2 choices, we can sustain the community + businesses without over-developing.
- Create a more walkable area. Encourage small businesses / entrepreneurs.
- The Blount County Chamber of Commerce + the Industrial Development Board, a non-elected political body, should NOT have the power to bully + dictate what happens in Blount County! The Blount Partnership does NOT represent the majority of residents in Blount County.
- Zoning – we MUST get rid of the Rural Arterial Commercial zoning. It is + will destroy Hwy 411 + 321!



**Blount County  
Comprehensive Plan  
Online Public Engagement Results  
October 11, 2023**



**Public Engagement Website**

The Blount County Comprehensive Plan Public Engagement Website was launched in May 2023. There were over 11,500 visits to the website, 4,100 unique visitors, and 109 unique stakeholders who engaged with the interactive map activity.

**Survey Results**

In May 2023, Inspire Placemaking Collective launched the Blount County Comprehensive Plan survey. The survey was available online until October 6, 2023. The survey received 584 responses, and the results are shown below. Detailed answers are attached.

**Question 1.** What is your relationship to Blount County? (select all that apply)

Most respondents live in the County and/or shop or visit Blount County on a regular basis.

**Question 2.** What is your age?

Most respondents (51%) are between the ages of 45 and 64, with approximately 28% of respondents being over the age of 65.

**Question 3.** What is your highest educational attainment?

Over 60% of respondents have either a graduate degree or a bachelor's degree.

**Question 4.** What is your 5-digit zip code?

The two most common zip codes for respondents were 37803 and 37804, though other zip codes were represented by respondents (37801, 37777, 37886, 37701, 37737, 37742, and 37853).

**Question 5.** What is your current employment status?

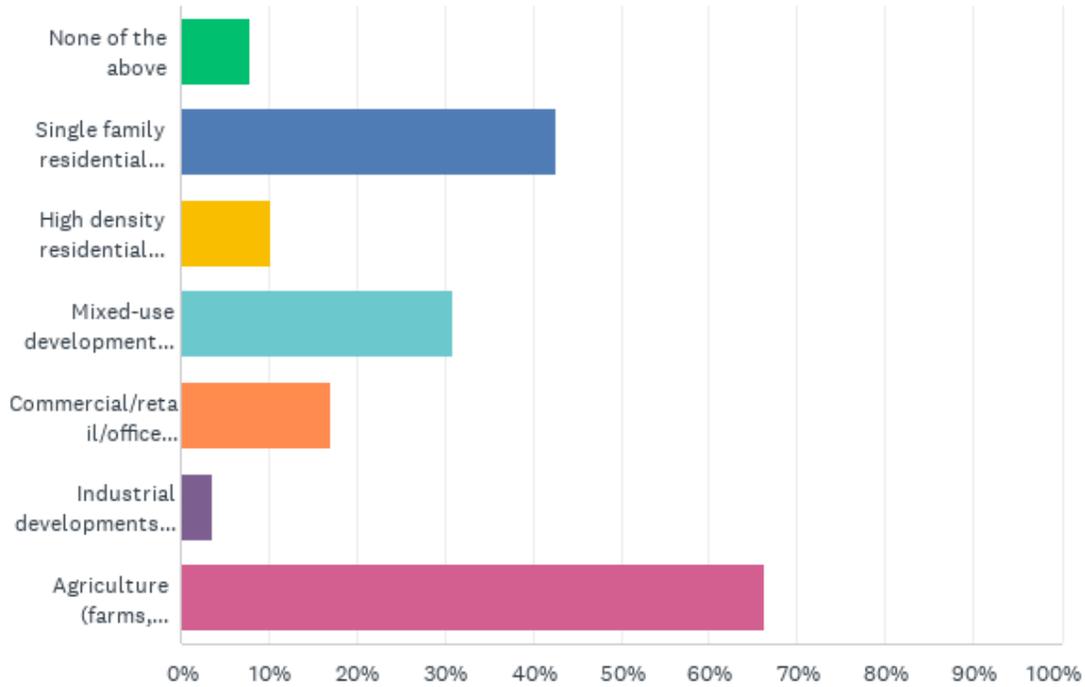
Respondents were most likely to either be employed full time or retired.

**Question 6.** Do you plan to participate in one or more of the public workshops the County is hosting for the Comprehensive Plan Update process?

Over 60% of respondents replied "yes" to this question.

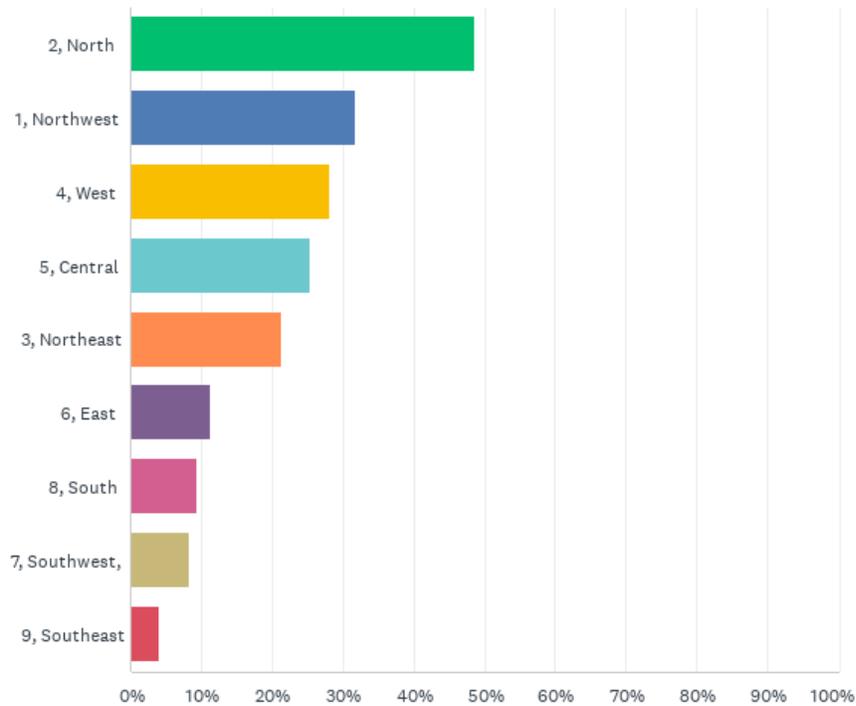
**Question 7.** As Blount County grows, what types of development would you like to see more of within the County limits? (please pick up to 3)

Two-thirds (66%) of respondents selected agriculture (farms, orchards), and 43% of respondents would prefer single family residential homes. Approximately 31% of respondents selected mixed-use development (residential, commercial, and/or office uses together).



**Question 8.** Where would you like to see growth within the County lines?

Most respondents would prefer growth to be in the north and northwest areas of the County.

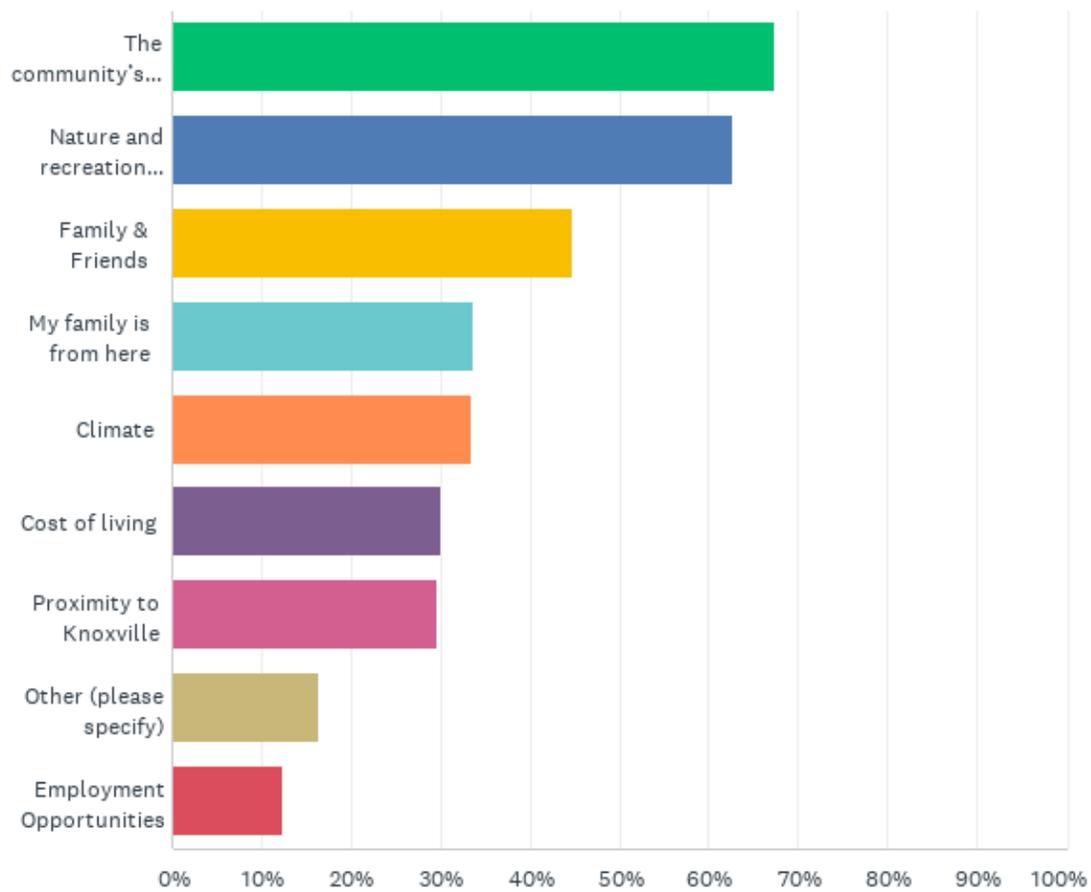


**Question 9.** On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not important at all and 5 being very important, how important is walkability (the ability to walk easily from one destination to another) to you for the future of Blount County’s development?

Respondents felt that walkability is somewhat important with an average response of “3.”

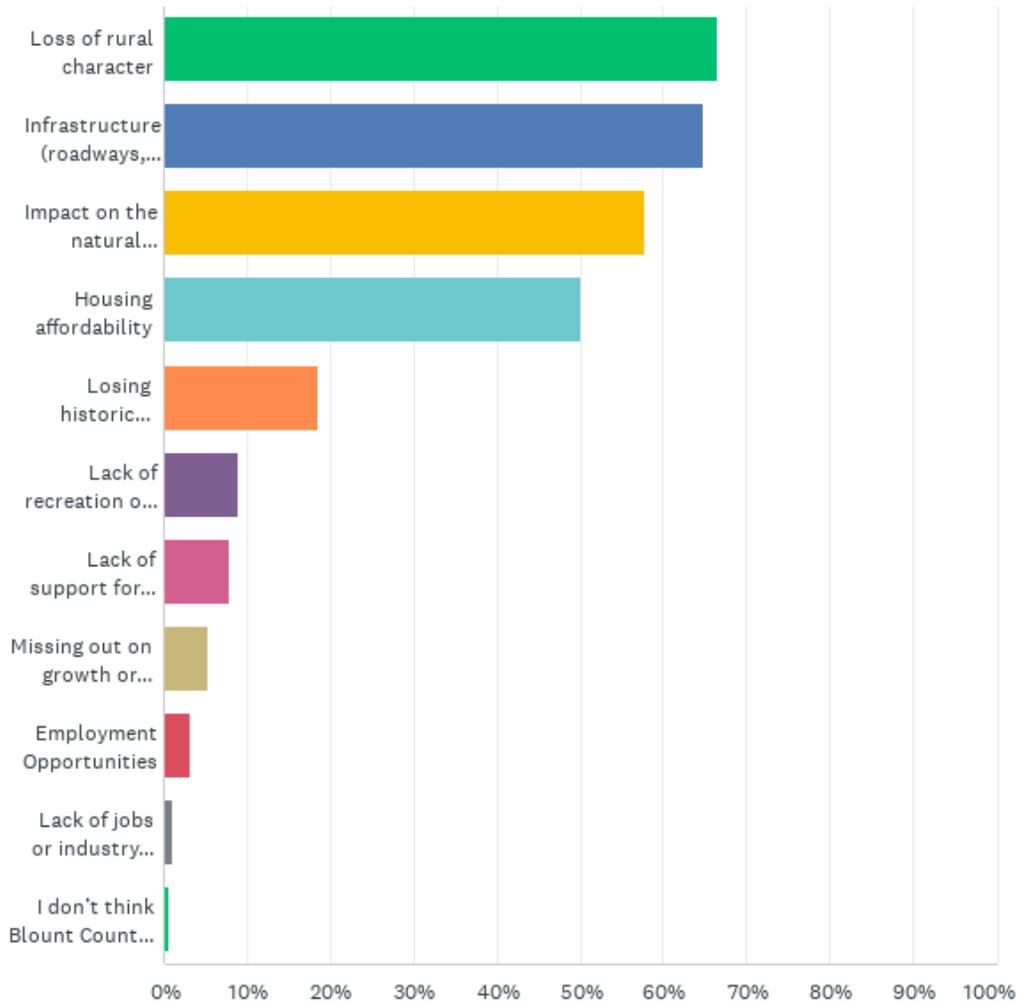
**Question 10.** Why do you choose to live in Blount County?

Most respondents said they chose to live in the County because of its community rural character and nature and recreational options. Below are all responses:



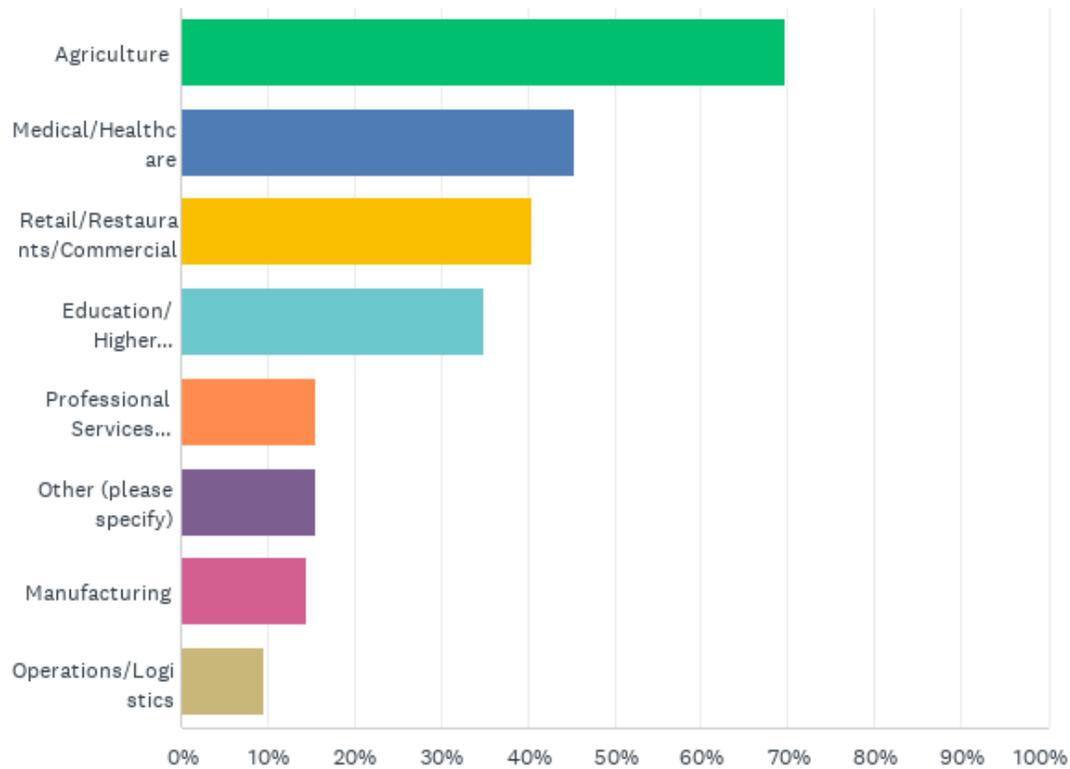
**Question 11.** What are the top three concerns you have related to the future growth of Blount County?

Most respondents said they were most concerned about the loss of rural character, the impacts on infrastructure, the impact on natural resources, and housing affordability. Below are all responses:



**Question 12.** What are the top three industries that you would like to see in Blount County over the next 20 years?

Most respondents said they would like to see the growth of the following industries in the next 20 years: agriculture, medical/healthcare, retail/restaurants/commercial, and education/higher education. Below are all responses:



**Question 13.** Is the roadway network and connectivity sufficient to support future growth in Blount County?

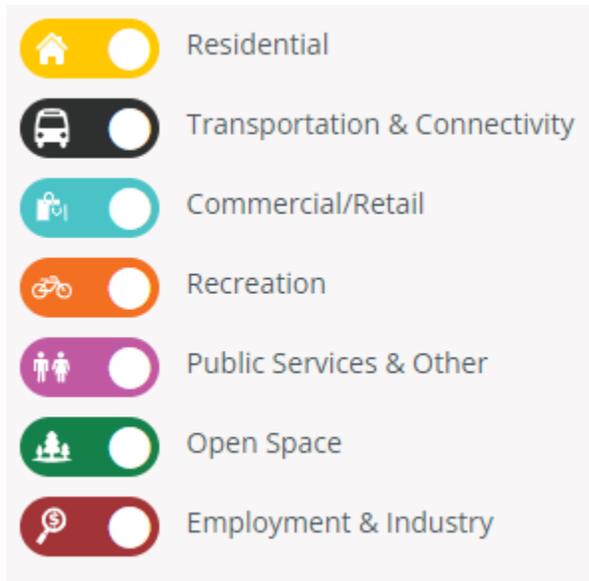
Most respondents felt that the roadway network and connectivity is insufficient to support the growth of the County.

**Question 14.** Is there anything else you would like to share with us today?

When given the opportunity to share other thoughts and comments, respondents highlighted the concerns around the growth of the County and its impact on the existing infrastructure. Many respondents felt there should be increased opportunities for other forms of transportation (walking, biking, etc.), as well as affordable housing options.

## **Map Results**

In May 2023, Inspire Placemaking Collective launched the Blount County Comprehensive Plan interactive map on the project website. The map was available until October 6, 2023. Participants were asked to share their ideas regarding the following categories:

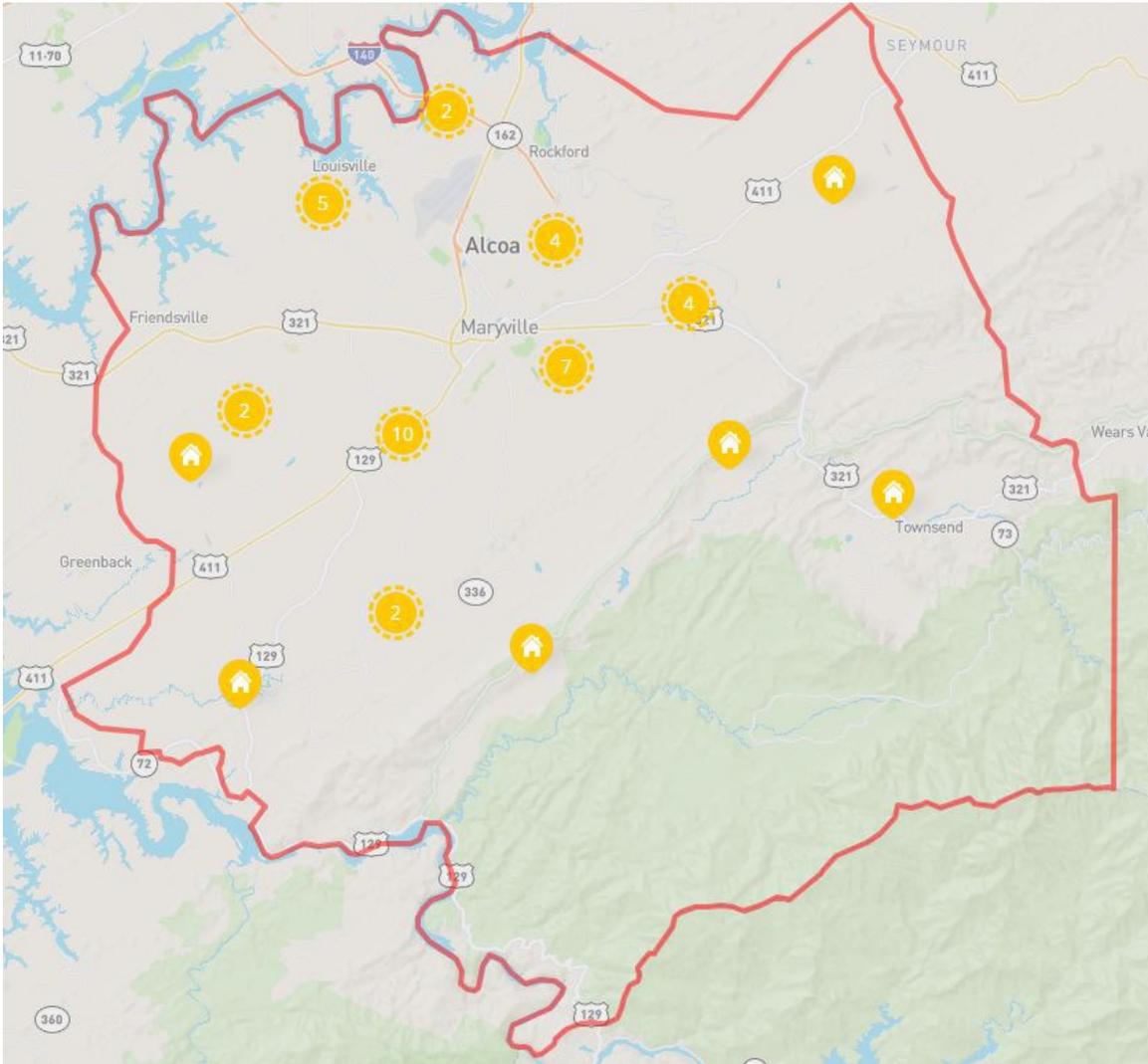


Participants could select a location to add a comment regarding one or more categories. There were 294 total responses. Over a quarter of all comments (27%) were under the Transportation & Connectivity category, and 20% of all comments were under the Residential category. The image below shows all of the comments combined. The following pages contain maps showing the location of the comments for each of the categories.



**Residential Comments:**

Most comments in this category relate to the changing affordability within the County. As the County's population has grown, the cost of housing has also increased. People want to preserve affordability, while also preventing the sprawl of new neighborhoods into the rural areas of the County.



**Comments:**

- No high density
- Blount County historically has been an affordable place for families to thrive, but recently has struggled to retain this characteristic and is now among the most expensive places to live in East Tennessee. I would like to see a plan that includes recommendations on how affordable housing developments can be created in the county, ideally near the city limits. Being in close proximity to jobs while also not having city taxes is very conducive to affordable housing development.

- I would like us find a way to balance need for affordable housing with desire to maintain our rural character. We need to do more to identify and preserve green spaces, Making living spaces that are communities in themselves with inviting features like small parks and recreational opportunities.
- This location is developing to be single family housing. Is the county providing effective inspection of infrastructure and housing as it develops? We need to ensure another "Shore" subdivision is NOT in the works! Additionally, the roads leading to & from this large development are totally inadequate to handle the amount of traffic that will be driving on Carpenter's Grade, Best Road, Raulston Rd & other narrow two-lane roads when residents move in. What are the plans for surrounding roads?
- There is too much development of multi-family housing without giving concern of the impact to our infrastructure and schools. This is particularly true in the City of Alcoa. School overcrowding is already a concern, and traffic continues to worsen every day. Blount Partnership needs to stop the TV commercials inviting the whole USA to "come try us out". Blount County will be ruined if we continue with this aggressive growth.
- We need to keep shops and other growth in the Alcoa/Maryville current city limits and stop expanding into the county. The county needs to stay residential/agricultural to supply food and housing for the region. Blount also needs more alternative routes to 411, Morganton Rd, Old Niles Ferry Rd to alleviate the congestion at Morganton and William Blount, at 129 and 321, and all the way down Washington/Hall.
- "The only park( Louisville Point) in Blount County with lake assess and there is no designated swimming area. A handicap accessible fishing pier would be nice as well. The fishing pier could be paid for by grant money.
- All of the park money seems to be spent on the city parks."
- Is anything going to be done about the hollowed out shell of an apartment building? It burned about 3 years ago and is still an eyesore. Along with the half of a carwash still left across the street it makes the neighborhood look trashy.
- "25 years ago we passed subdivision regulations that required developers to buy ""right of way"" and widen roads if their development would push the vehicle traffic above road safety standards.
- That was never enforced what measures will be taken that will prevent non-conforming uses from happening again?"
- Safe, quiet, and rural. The traffic has increased so very much it's truly unbelievable. The roads are no longer sufficient for the population we have right now. Stop the building of all these apartment complexes, too many. MiddleSettlements Rd, apartments and town houses. 2 huge apartment complexes on Topside Rd. Our school systems can't handle the increase. Stop The Growth! We didn't want the growth but city and county governments only seem to want more tax revenue. Improve the schools
- This comments pertains to the entire county. We need AFFORDABLE housing. I hope the comprehensive plan puts forth concrete suggestions on how all the planning building

can incorporate affordable apartment units and single-family homes. Lack of affordable housing is a huge problem here.

- This neighborhood desperately needs an additional drainage point. Due to climate change, our storms are worse, and when it rains, our streets look like rivers. Many houses get flooded in the basements.
- We need more single family neighborhoods with affordable housing close to where services are.
- We need more single family neighborhoods on the east side of town and close to the 140 extension.
- We live in a wonderful place and people are free to live where they choose. They're choosing to be here. We can't stop someone from choosing to move here. What matters is how we respond to the new residents. Because of an increase in relocations, we have commerce and service demands that must be met with new developments. It's critical we press those developments into the cities where services are available and decrease sprawling across the county. Housing must be more dense downtown.
- Very concerned with the developments being built without any affordable units and also without sufficient open space. The location of open space could possibly be on the perimeter so the development not an eyesore and would provide more natural foliage for wildlife . The developers are not being encouraged to have some affordable units. We have new industry in the town, where are the workers going to live? Other communities have enticed builders to increase affordability, but not here.
- balance providing affordable housing with ensuring greenspace -- not easy task -- but essential to supporting workers and the environment
- Residential growth should be directed to city urban growth boundaries where infrastructure (roads, utilities, sewer, schools) already exist. Taxpayers pay heavily to service sprawling subdivisions and productive farmland is lost forever. Residences cost \$1.23 in services (especially schools) for every \$1 in property taxes paid.
- We need a plan to use a small part of Blount Partnership property to be rezoned for housing with a program with Clayton homes to produce 200 homes under 200K
- What happened to no cluster developments?! Montvale cannot handle this!
- Will there be any more subdivisions approved of Raulston RD, Best RD, and Carpenters Grade RD?
- Apartments and high development should be kept close to downtown!
- Leave this area alone! We do not want subdivisions. Stop destroying our precious farmland!
- We need affordable housing. Those of us that have lived here our whole lives can't compete financially with folks moving here with their pockets full of money. Their income is significantly higher as their cost of living has been higher elsewhere. I can sell my house for double what I paid for it but where do I move? All of the homes have doubled & tripled over the last 5 years. My pay has not increased to support buying a house at current prices.

- Good news is my house has doubled in value. The bad news so has everything else.
- With the Robert C. Jackson extension and all the cluster housing that came with it . All the cluster housing on the back side of Royal Oaks and the Maryville Academy school zone , the Denso First and second shift traffic and now the Legends Way extension, the traffic for this small winding narrow rd. with mostly no shoulder is extremely over traveled
- "I am hoping for commissioners to think carefully on future decisions, allowing housing w/o a proper codes & squeeze a lot of homes in a lot.
- this area is way too pretty to ruin it by your decisions by greedy people."
- Blount County has been through these explosive growth spurts in prior decades and unfortunately has apparently chosen to ignore lessons learned from the past. The Raven Society was instrumental in helping enact laws decades ago to curb large new development until roads and schools could be funded to support additional development. Are those laws still on the books and being ignored?
- Keep Louisville rural. We don't need high density developments or apartments. It's disappointing enough that there are several.hundred apartments going in on Topside and now S &W will be bringing excessive traffic. Many people live here because of the rural nature. We don't need to be Knoxville. Allow the residents to have their peace and keep the overgrowth out. Once development happens, it cannot be undone and it can forever ruin an area.
- While I agree that there are many who want to be close to services, there are many who are moving here to "have land". The only way to get half acre plus lots is to allow "sprawling". While this area has been a rural secret for decades, it can't be one forever. Coming from one of the bigger cities in the US, I can tell you they start cramming more and more people in the cities and it doesn't make things better. I think a combination of both options is good.
- Affordability multifaceted. Some of that cost is the permitting, inspection, and land study fees. I come from a bigger US city and all of their fees and studies required were often in the \$50-\$75k range. That makes "affordable" housing harder to come by when housing prices keep rising. Given the current housing prices and the cost to build (around \$200/ft), there's not necessarily a lot the govt can do besides offer grants to builders and put requirements on buyers' income.
- The apartment complexes being built are going to overwhelm the infrastructure of this area, not to mention take away from the rural community. Too late to change now, but please NO MORE high density or apartment complexes in Louisville!
- There has been far too much unfettered development with no concern for retaining green space or protecting natural resources. Land better suited for agriculture or recreation is too often turned into huge suburban housing tracts. Not smart.
- The suburban zone outside the cities should be smaller. Dense residential development needs to happen in and near the cities, where services and infrastructure already exist.

- We don't need rezoning of residential land to commercial. Once we let this happen in Townsend it will blow up. We need stricter regulations on big resort developments trying to come into Townsend and Blount County. East Tn is becoming overcrowded and overgrown and we have to stop it now.
- PLEASE put a limit on more subdivisions in the Carpenters Grade/Best Road area. The traffic increases in this area are out of control already and the subdivisions are still in the construction stage.
- "Provide incentives/regulations for developers to preserve existing trees on building sites. Permits could be required before developers can remove large trees during construction. Create restrictions against clearcutting on steep slopes and near waterways.
- Promote the construction of rain gardens on residential as well as commercial properties, utilizing information provided on the Tennessee Smart Yards website. (Applies to entire county)"
- "Enact building codes promoting energy efficiency
- Encourage residential solar installations
- Encourage creation of rain gardens to slow runoff, improve water quality, and reduce flooding.
- Create local resources for composting food waste
- Encourage development of community gardens.
- Encourage use of native plants in yards.
- Promote the preservation of mature trees during and after construction.
- (Applies to entire county)"
- Are we growing faster than infrastructure can support? Why are there so many huge apartment buildings? Increasing lot sizes for new construction would slow growth and increase green space.
- Protect our water & property values! Lackey Creek now has American Pond Weed growing, thanks to the rerouting of ponds/streams.
- Blount County needs to get with TVA about mooring laws. The boat in George's Creek being used as a permanent residence needs stopped.
- I have great concerns about the growth with the airport and the air traffic noise above very high dollar real estate. This needs to be addressed in the plan to protect property values."
- As a young Local I cannot afford a home in the very subdivision my parents brought me home to. The county commission should apply a Fifty thousand dollar impact fee to all out of state buyers; and if they purchase rental property this impact fee should apply to all homes purchased within their first five years of residency. Also We should restrict lot sizes to a minimum of Nine/ Tenthths of an acre for septic and Six/Tenthths for property on city sewer.
- The R1 and R2 zones of the county should remain low to medium density residential. As a life long resident it is already hard to see the county I grew up in. I know growth will

happen, but I also know many people from Blount County do not want to become the next Knox County.

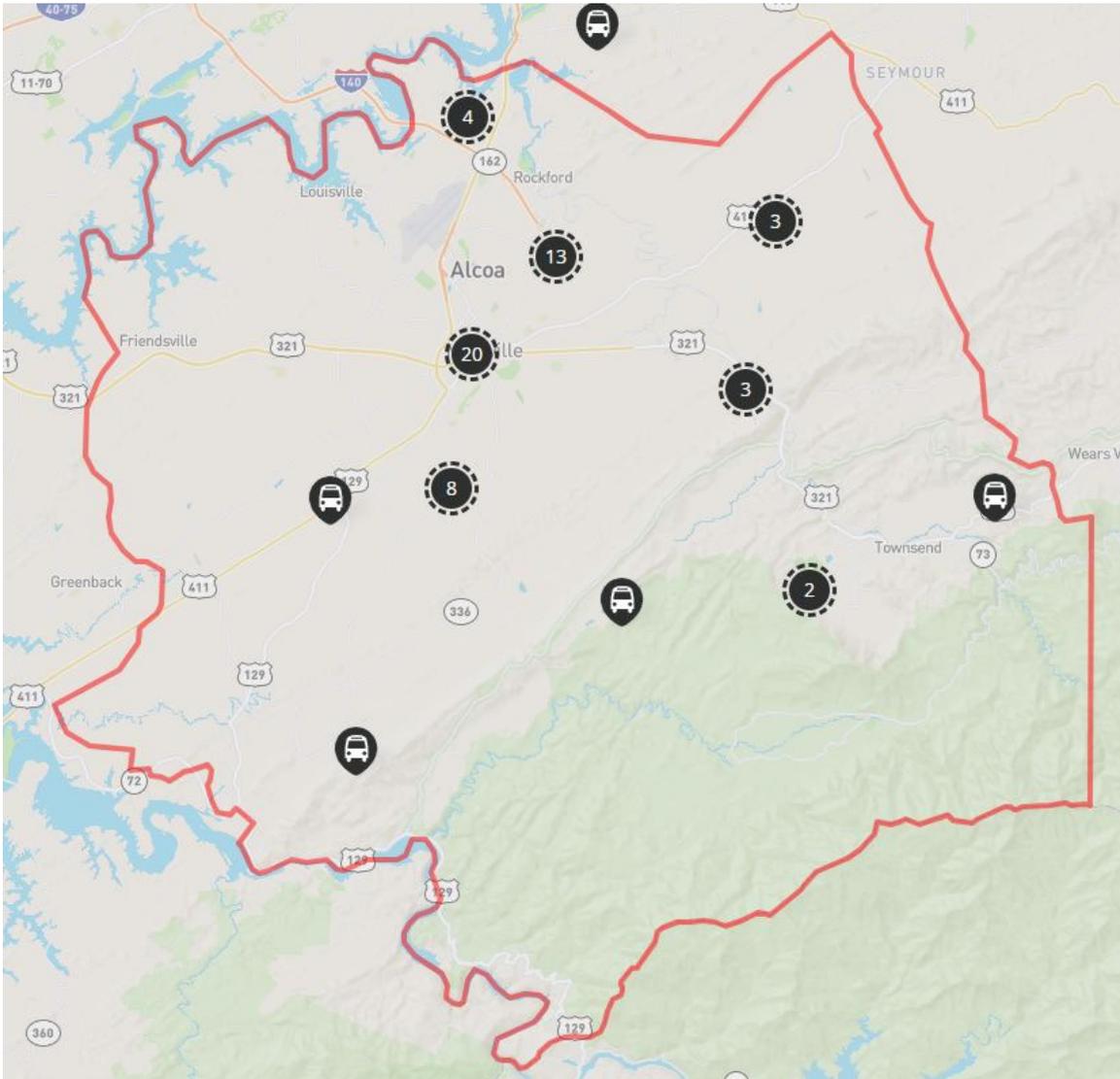
- It's time to restrict development in Blount County, over development is destroying the natural and rural atmosphere that caused many of us to want to live here.
- I agree with these excellent suggestions. We need to educate our builders and the general public and all pitch in together to improve our planet, starting with the local communities.
- I agree! We need to save as many trees as we can. I am privileged to live in the first subdivision in Blount County with buried utilities, to save as much existing forest as possible. We love our woods, which provide us with beauty, shade, wonderful wildlife, and lower electric bills.
- Yes, growth requires smart infrastructure. If we have denser development, it will benefit the rural character. by using land use. To say the county should not grow without considering infrastructure.
- Instead of more houses using more land, what about apartment buildings?
- Agreed. The new apartment complex on Sandy Springs Road is so sad that so many trees were removed and the beauty of the area is being forever destroyed for the sake of developers profits.
- This really applies to the entire County. How about some affordable housing for folks making under \$100,000 a year? Home prices and even rental prices mean lots of our young people and others cannot afford to live in Blount County.
- Green space means parks and open space for the community, not private lawns. Slowing growth by increasing sprawl and making housing out of reach for the average home-buyer or renter would exacerbate existing problems.
- We do not need sprawl. We do not need the extension. We need housing to be contained within an urban growth boundary that does not expand into the rural parts of the county.
- "Topside Rd, next to a Weigel gas station has seen a sudden huge increase of condominiums, half a dozen maybe, each with 4 or 5 floors, and numerous apartments, with a rough estimate of 180 new families moving in in the near future. This will obviously contribute to a great increase of traffic going to and coming back on a daily basis. Contributing to the existing traffic
- This seems to be another snafu case of building houses in grand quantities, and later trying to solve the messy traffic!"
- Residential density belongs near infrastructure. For this reason and others, I approve of the location of Springbrook Farm development, even though the Alcoa School System is overloaded. Alcoa Schools will be in dire straits when all the children in all the condos here and on Topside start needing classrooms and teachers.
- Some residents within this neighborhood will be displaced and lose their homes. Others that remain will have a huge parkway at their doorstep, creating more noise and

pollution. These folks will face increased health risks due to smog, increased heat from loss of trees and vegetation.

- This rural area should not be in the urban growth boundary of Maryville.
- The urban growth boundary should not extend to near Little River. Sprawl is inevitable with so much of the county included as suburbanizing/urban growth boundary.

**Transportation & Connectivity Comments:**

Most comments in this category relate to the impact of the County’s growth on road infrastructure. Respondents feel that these infrastructure challenges are related to sprawling development, specifically residential development in suburban and rural areas.



Comments:

- I'm concerned about the traffic density on Louisville Road, which leads into a 2-lane road on W Hunt into Old Glory. Over the past 6+ months, traffic has dramatically increased due to the reopening of the Hunt Road exit. In addition, Smith & Wesson will be opening this Fall. I'm curious if there are any plans or conversations happening around ways to assist in the flow of the traffic. (Especially by Green Meadow where there are 2 3-way traffic lights within 20 yards from one another.
- Heavy traffic zone
- With many folks voicing concerns for traffic, a logical response would be to investigate increasing transit or walkability options, especially near the city limits where the green belt can be accessed. By enabling households to have options other than driving, the volume of traffic can be decreased substantially.
- Can we plan with the NPS to provide parking space and shuttle services into the GSMNP to decrease traffic and air pollution. The connections could be in Townsend and also other points of entry into Blount Co where traffic is headed to the Smokies.
- Montvale has more traffic than it can handle with the new cluster development in the area. Many of them cut across Murphy Myers as a shortcut to avoid downtown delays. Murphy Myers is far too narrow and needs repaving. Grass is actually growing through the pavement on the Raulston Rd end, and visibility is extremely limited where it runs into Montvale. Please stop the big trucks!
- I think there is an high priority need to build sidewalks along Broadway to provide connectivity to Collector streets that tie in to Broadway. Many of the roads have sidewalks that lead up to Broadway and then stop. I often see people walking along side the road towards Broadway.
- I love living close to downtown and wish that this side of Washington St. was more accessible and walkable to enjoy our great businesses. We have very few sidewalks along such a busy road, and the few we do have are in rough shape. The bridge that crosses this creek is no longer there, so we have people walking along the road to get to the other side of the sidewalk. Creating a more walkable city that is safe and accessible would be amazing.
- We need a cross walk here for our kids to walk to ECCA. We have several kids walking from the opposite side of Broadway. My home is less than 1/3 of a mile from the school, but because of this dangerous intersection, my kids can't walk to school. Bus drivers are constantly in and out and the school doesn't open until 7:20. This would help out a number of kids in the neighborhood. With the school expanding and more and more families moving in, I see this problem growing.
- I agree a crosswalk here would help keep all of the students who choose or have to walk to school much safer. I have witnessed kids trying to cross Broadway during the morning rush hour and it is dangerous.
- I want my granddaughters to be safe going to and from school. They live on MacArthur and it is very dangerous. My 11 year old says she is afraid because traffic is coming from all 4 directions and it is scary.

- I'd ask leadership to be very mindful of zoning for the areas around Smith & Wesson and refrain from multi family housing or other zoning changes that would allow for even more heavy traffic in this congested area. The roads cannot support the traffic as it is right now.
- "The left hand turn lane needs to be extended. With increased traffic, the
- Left "straight ahead" lane is frequently blocked, by excessive cars in the left hand turn lane"
- Adding a right hand turn lane in the empty and unsightly lot at this intersection would help with back ups to the Broadway and Lamar Alex. Pkwy. Intersection, and help traffic flow overall.
- A safe way for children to walk to school is wonderful and needed! It will greatly benefit the community and its kiddos. It will offer a safe & efficient logistics solution of having so many cars in a compacted area!
- I see a great need for a dependable daily transportation program to get people to work so they can get on their feet. Why can't we at least have something that comes from knox down alcoa hwy and run through town past the mall or so? I run a transitional housing program and this is one of the biggest obstacles people face trying to better themselves. I have some great ideas if anyone else thinks this is worth looking at.
- It appears the Pellissippi Pkwy Extension is going to move forward in the near future. I am concerned about development at its termination and intersection w/Rt 321. Most other intersections on PPky have gas stations, McDonalds, office buildings, apartment complexes, new building growth, etc. Is there a way to prevent this? We don't want to become west Knoxville.
- I concur. Parking at Cades Cove maxes out on vehicle-less Wednesdays by 8:30 AM due to popularity with walkers, runners and bicyclists. We need a shuttle system to take pedestrians to Cades Cove on such Wednesdays right now.
- I concur. Lack of public transportation is a major limiting factor for workers, the elderly, folks who have trouble paying for gasoline, and others who have environmental concerns
- I concur. Lack of public transportation is really hurting the County.
- I would like to see truck and motorcycles prohibited from using Old Walland Highway from Walland Center (beginning at East Miller's Cove Rd) to Townsend. They make the road dangerous, especially because it is a popular, designated bicycle road.
- The road belongs to everyone in Blount county who pay taxes. Like it or not,
- There was a study done years ago that proved the "Smokey" Mountain haze was not due to automobiles in the park. It actually came from industrial production from areas beyond East Tennessee.
- We are concerned about the possibility of huge lights over the proposed Alcoa Highway bypass and throughout the county. We would strongly encourage the adoption of Dark Skies lighting standards that will provide ample light for safety without enormous light pollution of our neighborhoods.

- We are concerned about the possibility of very tall and bright lights at this proposed intersection and would encourage using properly installed, Dark Skies lighting to reduce light pollution affecting nearby residential areas.
- I live less than 2 miles from Food City, Kroger, and soon Publix, and there are no sidewalks or bike lanes to get there. I can drive there in 5 min, but gas is expensive and I like to bike and would only take 10 min to bike. All the roads surrounding the grocery stores have 4-lane high speed roads. I want connectivity to these places and the mall by walking or walking. I see people walking or biking there and I do not feel safe doing so. Foothills Mall Dr does not need 4 lanes, Hw 411 is there.
- The bike / walking path between Knoxville and Townsend will provide an extended recreational outlet for the area. One caution: limit the commercial development along the route so that it is a pleasant outdoor recreational area for walkers and cyclist.
- Enforce a noise limit for motorcycles, trucks, and cars so that the peaceful side remains the peaceful side
- We would like to see Grade Rd & Milliton Cir get potholes filled in & the roads repaved.
- extending the Left turn lane to Montvale road would help backed up traffic.
- Going north on 129 from Maryville to Alcoa at the Louisville Rd. intersection the left turn lanes (going into Walmart, Aldi, etc.) need to be expanded further back. Often times traffic is significantly backed up, especially in the late afternoon. If those left turn lanes were extended it would allow the traffic to flow better and would allow less idle time for the cars, which are backed up.
- The roads should be a priority before additional housing is added. Carpenters Grade currently has more daily cars than 321. The current citizens should be the provided for.
- Health and Safety has been ignored in allowing the Traffic capacity to be dangerously increased.
- Recreation in daylight is good for all but at night the access to residential neighborhoods should be avoided.
- Old Niles Ferry from 129 to Brickmill needs repaving. The road is breaking up from the trucks and development along this road.
- We don't need this. If you need transportation, then you have grown too big in my eyes. All that does is draw in the riff raft. If the people cannot afford their own transportation, then there is something wrong. Everyone is to be equal, but greed gets in the way.
- Yes! Rush hour is a nightmare, nevermind just regular hour traffic. And now with two developments coming up, it's going to get worse. They also need to work on the timing of the lights into the city. I can also see the entrance of the new development across from Forest Hill Church is going to be a nightmare. It's just asking for accidents on that curve.
- For one it's not a designated Bike road.... Maybe one should outlaw bikes to be on county roads without registration and insurance. The Bicycles are a hazard for motorist.

- Exactly - build more roads, there will be more cars; build (accessible and safe) sidewalks and bike trails and more people will walk and bike.
- At one time there were rumblings of developing the existing rail that runs from Knox down to Blount for passenger travel. Would love to see that come back to life. Of course, it requires redefining what some mean by "too expensive" so we are taking into account the costs and consequences of maintaining the status quo.
- "This road is EXTREMELY dangerous! No shoulders, no lines, very narrow and huge dump trucks traveling way too fast!
- We do not need any more traffic filtered onto this road (future Pellissippi Parkway Extension)"
- The drive from Maryville to the Smokies on Hwy 321 is one of the most beautiful drives in TN. This is a real asset for the county. It should be protected from rampant commercialization and the clutter of billboards.
- Noise pollution is becoming a real issue in the county. It's another thing chipping away at the quality of life here. Build into the growth plans ways to reduce and mitigate noise pollution so we can retain the quiet side of the Smokies brand.
- Please move the red light at Fairview Dr & Old Niles Ferry to this intersection. The red light is not necessary in it's current location and causes a lot of backups on Old Niles Ferry and Peterson Lane. I don't know how many wrecks occur but I do know there are a lot of near misses. Traffic flow is horrendous during rush hour and I often see people running the red light because it's on a timer instead of sensor.
- Driving through Blount County is awful now. Our infrastructure is tapped out.
- Unfortunately, while we were not looking, they have already rezoned the property along 321 as Commercial. Owners have rights to build what they want.
- I would love to see a street light added here. In the dark, turning left from Broadway onto Old Knoxville is challenging due to the angle of the turn. I've seen a car hit the ditch here before trying to do the same thing.
- Any planning for Hwy 336, Montvale Rd, Happy Valley Rd, Six Mile Rd, Old Piney Rd, and others in this community need to include bicycle/pedestrian paths for safe connectivity alternatives to driving. Providing safe alternatives to driving can reduce the traffic congestion and improve safety for bikes and pedestrians. Bicycling is more than recreation, it is also transportation and past time for bike/pedestrian paths to connect communities to businesses and other areas.
- Better sidewalk connectivity throughout to promote walking and healthy lifestyles
- I 100% agree that roads need to be a priority. The patch at Louisville Rd and 129 has a horrendous seam. But also, the capacity of most of the roads is too small. Even what is happening on 129 is not a big enough expansion. I just saw them redo big section of Pellissippi, but if you're going to do that, you should expand it as well. Many of the streets are narrow and have no shoulder. This discourages biking and walking (and I am NOT a green person). Also, more crosswalks are needed

- There's a lot of people that take Singleton station headed west right here. Adding a southbound 3rd "on ramp" would be nice. Especially with the trucking school there and the plant further up Singleton that has trucks coming and going on 129. This would allow them to pull into that lane and gain speed before merging into 129 rather than having to wait forever for an open spot.
- The proposed PPE does not fit any sensible plan for improving connectivity or managing future growth. Little River valley is the wrong location for new 4-lane highway that serves no real transportation need. Its proposed interchange with Sevierville Rd. will add traffic to a 2-lane highway that already carries more vehicles than it can safely accommodate. Let's scrap this proposal.
- The proposed "tourism corridor" along Sevierville Rd. in Maryville is a fine example of poor planning. Surely there are better locations for hotels than the Ft. Craig property on Washington St.! Such a project would increase traffic beyond what the road system can tolerate and would damage an existing residential community with its pleasant neighborhood and two elementary schools.
- The intersection of the 129 Bypass and US411 is a mess in need of improvement. The traffic congestion here is stressful and unsafe. Things are very bad here if you are driving a car-- and just impossible to navigate by any other means.
- Many are disadvantaged by the total lack of public transit within our county, and between here and Knoxville. A public option would reduce the number of individual cars on our road system, and provide an affordable alternative that would save the entire community money and grief over the long haul.
- The best solution is not to build the PPE at all. It is not (yet) written in stone that this unnecessary highway MUST be built.
- Can you show the results of your study? I'm interested to see these numbers.
- Add more sidewalks to provide safe alternatives for pedestrians and cyclists
- Add bike lanes to popular routes
- Continue to expand greenway network to connect nodes such as schools, community centers, and other activity hubs.
- Encourage the addition of small cafes, coffee stands, and small parks along greenways. (Applies to entire county)"
- I don't think it's a good idea to build the Pellissippi Parkway extension because it will take away the land where Mane Support is located as well as valuable farmland and land for the wildlife which is needed with all of the overdevelopment in Blount County. It will also negatively impact a century farm owned by Tom Robinson and disrupt the rural character where it will be located as well as causing a removal of trees to build this road extension.
- There was a need to make this main road more efficient for the increasing amount of traffic coming & going. However, visuals matter just as much as physical infrastructure. The absurdly massive overarching signage on major interstate highways is obnoxious on W Broadway between Best st. and Montgomery Ln. They should be replaced with

appropriately large signs on the roadside that clearly direct people & get the job done well without obliterating the look and feel of this part of town.

- We need a safer way to exit Browns Creek subdivision on Wilcox to 321. Maybe a redlight or something, too many accidents happen here
- We oppose any "southern loop highway or interstate" around Maryville. This part of the county is still somewhat quiet and a highway running through Six Mile/Blockhouse/Old Piney would add a huge amount of noise pollution. The National Park Service has excellent information on the damage done to rural and forest areas by noise pollution (<https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/fee.2112>) with links to other scholarly articles detailing effects on humans and wildlife.
- Traffic in the middle of Maryville and Alcoa is becoming very difficult. These cities are not set up for this much traffic. To continue to build without fixing it is irresponsible.
- Traffic along our main arteries has become untenable. For our environment, safety, and ease of getting around, it's time for a public transit system in Blount County!
- I live in Maryville and work in downtown Knoxville. I commute on Alcoa Highway (I-kill-ya Highway) a lot. The worst part of the route is Alcoa and all of its many businesses. I am aware of the new plans to expand and divert the highway, but I still believe that ALL LEFT TURNS SHOULD BE BANDED! (sorry for shouting) Have drivers U-turn around on Tesla Blvd or I-140 ramps. It only takes 5min. I am tired of constant accidents! Also people walk and bike on the highway, add a mixuse sidewalk path too!
- The Pellissippi Parkway Extension will do NOTHING to aid traffic in the Maryville core. We need to focus our limited transportation dollars on projects that will benefit our County and create a better quality of life. The PPE will do neither!
- Lots of comments about heavy traffic (and getting worse) as well as wanting more / wider roads. But building more roads will inevitably invite more vehicles. This is not sustainable. We now have the opportunity to reduce traffic, reduce emissions, and make transit more accessible without expanding roads. A new model of public transportation known as MICROTRANSIT (google it) works well for smaller cities like Maryville-Alcoa.
- Almost impossible at times to navigate from Broadway toward 411 S. It was dangerous before but worse now. Coming from town trying to merge to continue toward 411 is close to impossible. Daily I experience the left lane pulling extremely close to the car in front to PREVENT merging in front of them. To complicate matters more, if I want to merge on there and go to Food City it's a fight to get all the way over or impossible.
- Beyond this issue is the intersection at 411 and Peppermint Road the site of numerous and serious traffic accidents in the 7am to 9 am and 4:00 to 6:30 time frame
- Along with the waste of the PPE as a whole, the Sevierville Rd exit from the PPE is now a proposed Tourism Corridor by the City of Maryville. This would damage an established community and take land through eminent domain. It would make the traffic on Sevierville Rd worse. Let's put a stop to the PPE and the Sevierville Rd. Tourism Corridor.
- The area near the mall, especially 411/Sandy Springs Rd., Foothills Mall Rd, etc. is extremely dangerous. Overbuilding in the west portion of the county has led to too

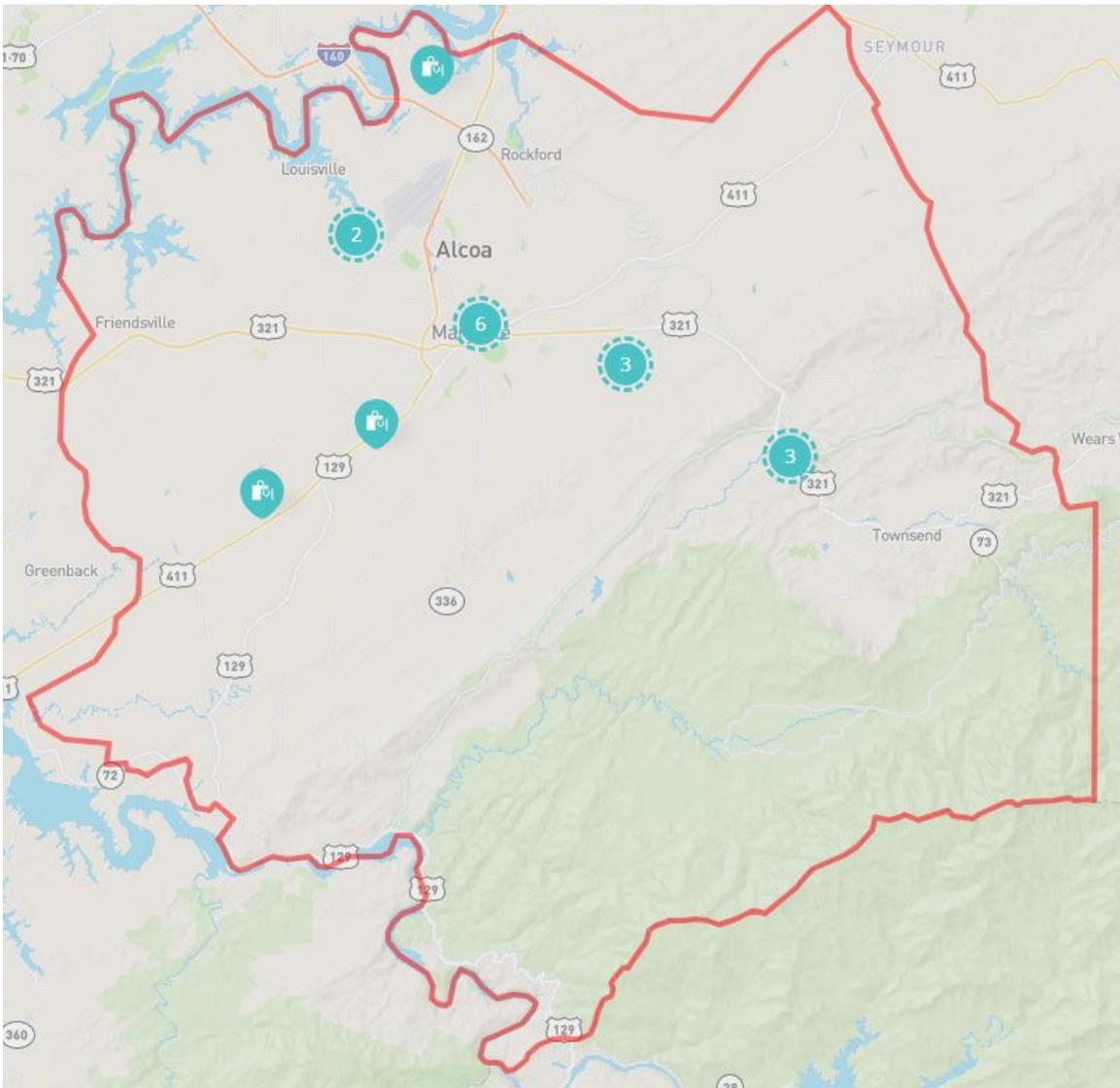
many drivers converging on the area at once. Subdivisions were built without road infrastructure in mind. Many people have been injured or even killed trying to turn left in this area. I personally avoid it as much as possible.

- It is absurd to build all these condos without regard to A) school capacity in Alcoa and B) basic functionality of Topside Road. To my knowledge, and I have asked Alcoa, there are no plans to make improvements to the one intersection (McBath Road) that will handle the majority of the traffic generated into and out of these condos. The chaos and traffic jams this will create is something we all dread.
- "Travelling from Louisville to UT Campus, using Topside Rd, and then crossing Hwy 129 is a VERY dangerous proposition. At almost anytime of the day, but more so during rush-hour traffic.
- The crossing has been modified a few years ago, however it is still very risky. The high speed of traffic traveling in both directions o HWY-129 compounds the problem even more."
- Highway 321 should be protected from ugly development, but that WILL be minimized if no Parkway Extension is built. No intersection, less incentive to built a McDonalds.
- Traffic already gets very backed up at school rush hour at Coulter Grove. Why would we add traffic by establishing a "tourism corridor" to Maryville via Sevierville Road? That is really poor planning. Leave the neighborhood residential. Traffic is bad enough as it is.
- Why is the PPE already on this map? It is not a done deal. Traffic spilling out here is not going to help reduce congestion or traffic accidents and will route traffic away from the businesses within the city of Maryville.
- This proposed highway should not be on this map, unless ALL proposed road improvements across the County are also accurately represented on this map. For the PPE, I don't see the overpass and half cloverleaf at 321. I don't see the deep right-of-way taken from homes fronting on Sevierville Road.
- The PPE is a highway of convenience for tourists and developers and people who want to live in Townsend and work in Oak Ridge. It undermines the preservation of rural Blount County to save 10 minutes in the car,
- The proposed Pellissippi Parkway Extension will turn Sevierville Road into Sevier County's access to the airport. People will travel through this area and the 13 Curves in a hurry to get to the PPE and on to the airport. This road is already crowded and dangerous.
- Thank you for this is example of why comprehensive planning has to include the cities as well as the county, and why comprehensive planning has to consider the system-wide impact of any development on the capacity of infrastructure (utilities, roads) and institutions (schools) and public services (fire, emergency, law enforcement).
- This is another excellent example of why comprehensive planning is needed that coordinates development and infrastructure with the cities and the county.
- This is yet one more example of the need to coordinate development and transportation planning across the entire county and with the cities.

- Induced demand - increasing traffic follows additional lands and new roads - is well documented. This is why comprehensive planning has to be regional - including the cities AND the county - and address where and how to grow with consideration of the capacity of infrastructure and sustainability.
- You are right to be concerned about these interchanges. The PPE won't solve any traffic problems (see TDOT's own studies) but it is already determining growth and development. We are losing what makes Blount County distinctive. Dollar General is a terrible employer (cited multiple times for dangerous working conditions). Fast food doesn't pay a living wage. We already have a housing crisis. Is low-wage, dangerous work and same as everywhere the retail identity we want for our community?
- This is possible to do \*IF\* we value what we have, and don't rush to replicate the same chains that are everywhere else.
- Walkability could be promoted throughout the county, especially in connection with public services. Many students live near their schools but cannot walk to them because there are no sidewalks or cross walks.
- The intersection for Alcoa Hwy traffic with Hunters Crossing in front of Lowe's has a lot of activity, making it challenging to navigate to either enter or exit Hunters Crossing. I'd recommend placing a traffic circle here to help the traffic flow and to eliminate right-of-way confusion.
- Traffic traveling from 129 to Topside via 162/Pellissippi Pkwy cannot turn left easily at the exit. The amount of traffic on Topside requires a traffic light to help with this junction. I'd recommend either a traffic light right here or some way to direct this off-ramp to the intersection with Marriott Dr (Casey's, Subway, etc.). This will help avoid frustration and potential collisions.
- I understand that Old Knoxville Pike has served as a relief artery for Broadway during commuter traffic. It doesn't provide, however, safe pedestrian walkways or a quiet neighborhood environment next to the ball park. I here are 2 suggestions: 1. Provide a pedestrian sidewalk from First St. to Broadway via Old Knoxville Pike. 2. Enforce the already grossly ignored speed limits using traffic calming speed bumps between Broadway and Sevier Avenue.

**Commercial/Retail Comments:**

Most comments in this category reflect the need for more commercial and retail options along major road corridors, while preventing the sprawl into rural areas of the County outside of these corridors.



**Comments:**

- While I appreciate this end of the county being mostly rural, this end of 411 really needs a few more gas stations for convenience. Once you get past the 129 intersection, there isn't anything until you hit the next county. There's plenty of land for sale out here to develop one or two more gas stations along the highway.
- Is anyone going to develop this old Gracie's building? It was purchased over a year ago with no real development. It is a great location for a new restaurant or even just a commercial space. It's a shame to see it sit empty.

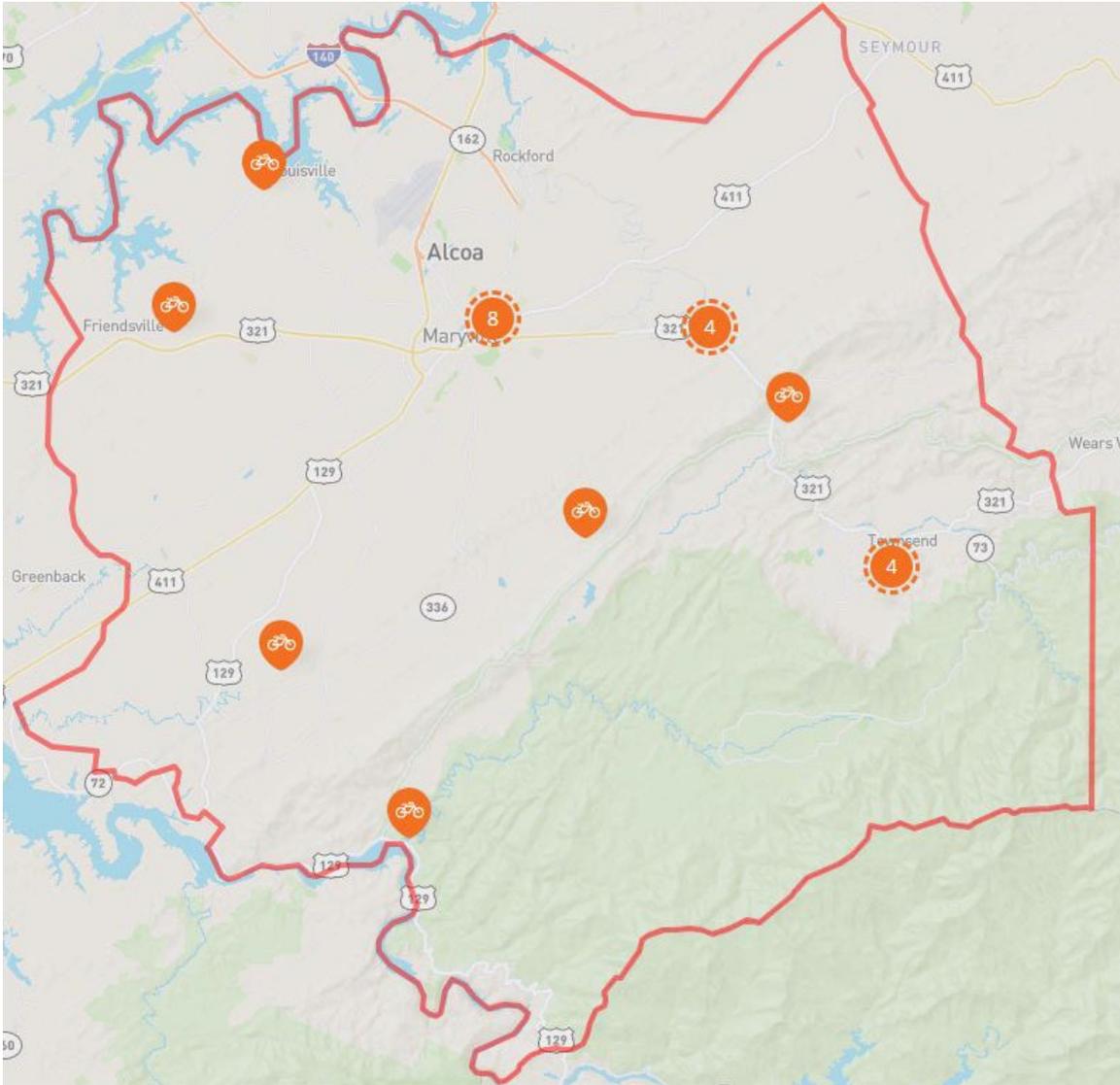
- I am very concerned about commercial development along Rt 321. With the new fast food places, car dealerships, Dollar General stores, planned (not yet built) subdivisions, it is starting to look like Alcoa Highway. Traffic volume is increasing and urbanization is creeping towards Walland.
- Additional retail close to the 140 extension will be convenient and needed as the East side of Maryville continues to grow in the next 10-15 years.
- I would like to see controlled commercial development along 321 -- a corridor to the GSMNP. I am concerned that the Pellissippi extension will become the congested area that the Northfield exit has become for Knoxville in the last 10 years
- There is no reason why Foothills Mall should be as dead as it has been in the last few years, given how active West Town Mall in Knoxville still is. This mall has always been a staple of Blount County, and with the county having as much growth as it's had in the last few years, there's no reason the mall couldn't have more retail outlets similar to West Town.
- Pressure should be put on the current owners to either attract more mall centric retail chains, or sell to someone who will."
- All commercial activity should be in town centers except for a few mom and pops out in the surrounding communities. You let them come here and ruin our community for greed and greed only. I see no good from the decisions being made here. It is all for the corporations and screw the people that have to pay the price. That is how I see this county now.
- Commercial/Retail should be kept close to the city. Stop the sprawl that is happening on Hwy 321! We should NOT develop all the way to Townsend!
- I think it would be great to utilize empty space instead of building new retail/restaurant. Let's revitalize the mall and quit building more buildings that will be empty within a year.
- I am concerned that we are building more commercial buildings when many existing structures are sitting empty
- Stop the REZONING! This only benefits the few at the expense of the community. Changing Rural/Residential to Commercial creates traffic, utility, crime and quality of life issues for the citizens that live in this area.
- there is brickmill mkt on 411
- The problem with this is, as soon as you start to "force a business" to do something in regards to how it's run (not about safety or permitting), you start edging into the totalitarian type format. The government tells you who you can sell to, what you can sell, where you can sell, etc. That's not capitalism. The mall owner needs to be allowed to fail not forced to sell. currently they are building something new there
- We are in desperate need of a grocery store near Topside and Pellissippi!
- The 140 Extension should not be built; it is not needed. The Little River valley is not the right place to encourage continued growth.
- Industrial development should take place in our industrial parks, not all over the map. We need to plan for industry and commerce in a thoughtful way, and make sure it fits

our economic needs and aesthetic desires. New industries should provide our area with good jobs and protect the natural environment.

- Too much commercial development along our scenic highway and gateway to GSMNP, 321 East.
- Overdevelopment along this corridor beyond Maryville City limits.
- Rural Arterial Commercial (RAC) zone needs to be reconsidered, reduced, or possibly deleted for this area."
- Limit commercial development along 321 heading towards the GSMNP. Most locals are already very unhappy about the Pellissippi PKWY extension and the development, congestion, and noise it will bring. We're quite happy with our rural, small town life. Leave it alone please!
- Blount County should strive to be more selective about the kind of businesses come here. Ones that have high environmental standards and will not negatively impact the well-being of the county.
- Siting essential businesses like grocery stores in localized neighborhoods, appropriately sized for the area, would substantially ease the traffic pressures when everyone drives to the mega-stores.
- Maybe large employers could develop some sort of employee transit system, delivering workers to multiple commuter lots, or already existing lots that are under-used. Thinking this might reduce the amount of paved land as well as reduce traffic and emissions. We need to come up with new ideas instead of falling back on the same old ones.
- I was opposed to the Smith and Wesson plant for a lot of reasons, but just as far as PLANNING goes, putting an ammo plant so close to an elementary school is not just in poor taste, but potentially dangerous. Moreover, those children are going to have to listen to weapons being fired while they are trying to learn. It's an abomination. Shame on the Partnership and shame on Gov. Lee.
- The new ammo plant traffic will make Topside Road and Proffitt Springs Road a traffic nightmare. I am dreading having to drive to work after the plant opens and all the Topside Road apartments are full. I am also worried about losing MORE open space in the Louisville area to housing developments for Smith and Wesson employees.

**Recreation Comments:**

Many respondents highlighted the need for further recreational activities (walking, biking, etc.) in rural areas of the County. Respondents requested greenways to be completed to provide these opportunities in a safe way as the County grows in population.



**Comments:**

- Can we do something about the aquatics facilities. Perhaps close one down and convert another to a year round indoor facility.
- I love living close to downtown and wish that this side of Washington St. was more accessible and walkable to enjoy our great businesses. We have very few sidewalks along such a busy road, and the few we do have are in rough shape. The bridge that crosses this creek is no longer there, so we have people walking along the road to get to the

other side of the sidewalk. Creating a more walkable city that is safe and accessible would be amazing.

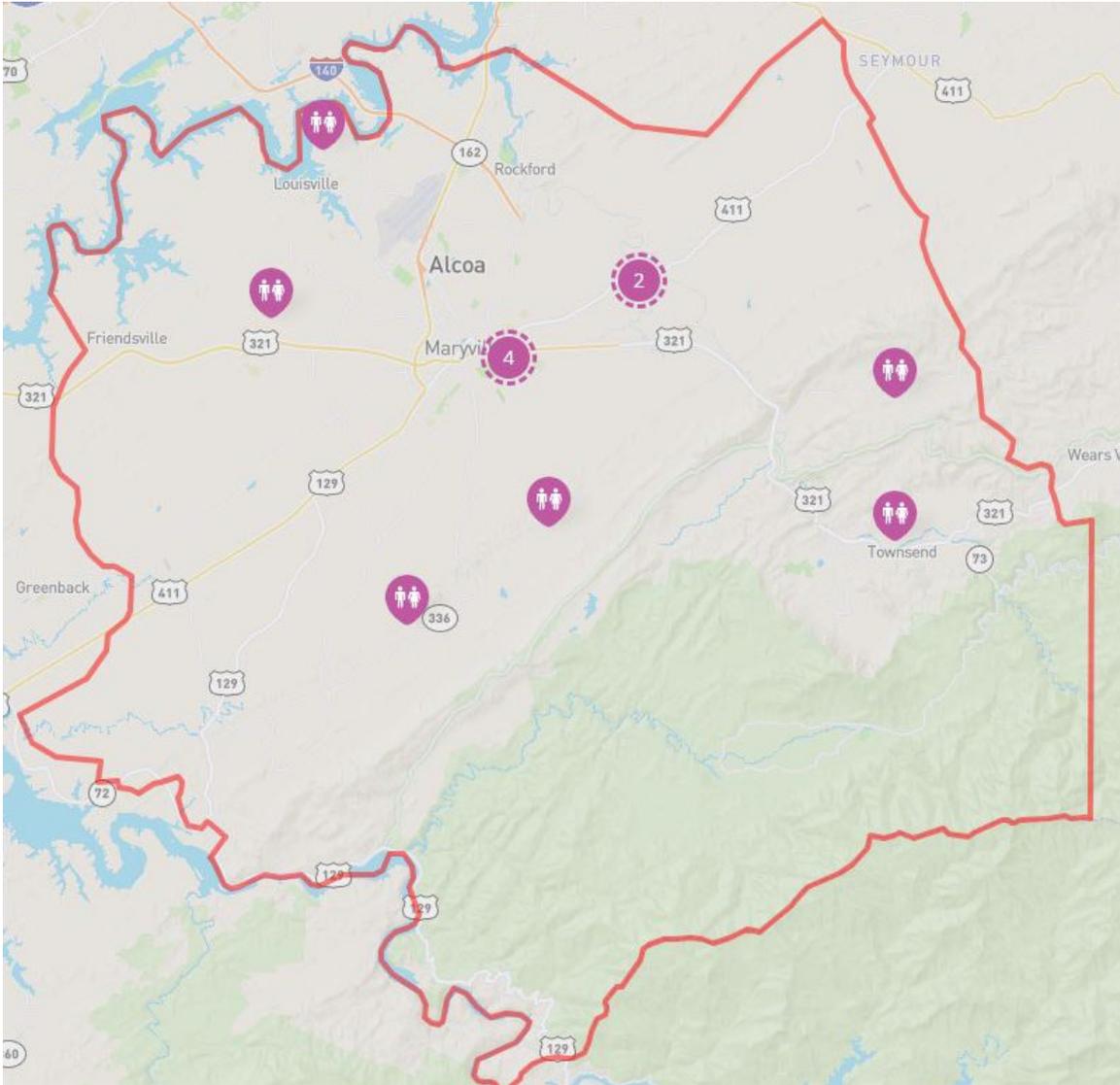
- We need walking and exercise trails. driving to Sandy Springs from out here has become increasingly miserable with the traffic on 411. shouldn't we have our own greenspaces in the end of the county? Chilhowee Lake and the Dragon Foothills Parkway are congested almost year round now. Shouldn't we have parks out here?
- A sidewalk extension from Waller to Duncan along Court Street would allow many residents to safely walk to Maryville College, downtown Maryville, and access the green belt. With all of the traffic issues, adding bike and walking alternatives would be great!
- The only park( Louisville Point) in Blount County with lake access and there is no designated swimming area. A handicap accessible fishing pier would be nice as well. The fishing pier could be paid for by grant money. All of the park money seems to be spent on the city parks.
- Road bicycling has become impossible to enjoy in parts of Blount County. We need more bicycle lanes and preservation of rural areas and road to be able to enjoy our beautiful area.
- We need to ensure that Townsend remains the peaceful side of the Smokies. Commercial and tourist development should be limited between the edge of Maryville through the Walland and Townsend areas, all the way to the entrance of GSMNP. I try to avoid Sevierville and Pigeon Forge as much as possible. If Townsend takes on that character, then I will move away and take my online business with me.
- It would be great to have a park along the Little River. This area is already a very popular cycling spot so preserving it for recreation helps ensure it will be a safer place.
- It would be great to expand bike paths and greenways throughout the county, especially near old Walland Highway. This would create a safer environment for everyone and encourage more people to be active walkers and riders.
- Old Walland Highway is already highly used by bike enthusiasts. Prioritize completing the Greenway from Maryville to the Smokies. The benefits include safety and more sustainable transportation options. It could also be used as buffer of protection along and for the Little River.
- We love our safe beautiful biking routes, please help us encourage outdoor active activities and safety watching out for bikers.
- We really need a splash pad for our community. John Sevier pool would be the perfect spot.
- Not sure if it's possible due to already narrow road, but this would be a great road for a sidewalk. There is no room for kids to ride bikes, dogs to be walked, etc. safely on this road. It is a missed opportunity, especially with the nearby park/ballfields.
- This area is about a mile or less south of a main boat launch near Foothills Pkwy and Hwy 129. The trail is just past the bridge on the left on Hwy 129 South. It is a great place to put in and kayak or canoe the back waters of Panther Creek and Abrams Creek. Currently only a crude rutted trail exists, which is quite difficult to carry the kayak down

to the back waters. Please, BC work with GSMNP to create a clean and safe path to the water for transporting kayaks and canoes.

- Build a whitewater play wave park.
- Build a skatepark.
- Supporting the creation of more greenways throughout the county will increase outdoor recreation opportunities, create new outdoor education opportunities, preserve natural corridors and environmentally sensitive lands, and create the connected habitat corridors that are essential for wildlife.
- "Maryville needs a great community center like the great community center in my hometown of Jefferson City, Tennessee. Below is the address with the features of the Jefferson City Community Center.
  - 1247 N Hwy 92, Jefferson City, TN 37760
  - 865-475-2924
  - Gymnasium
  - Indoor Swimming Pool
  - Walking Track
  - Locker Room with Showers
  - Weight Room with Free Weights and Machine Weights
  - Cardiovascular Exercise Room with Treadmills, Steppers, Bikes, Elliptical Machine
  - Meeting Room
  - Outdoor Pavilion
  - Aerobics Room"
- No to rezoning!!! Keep Townsend quiet!! The locals don't want more resorts, made in China Knick-knack shops, traffic congestion, and noise! We want our rural life to stay rural! We want peace and quiet, wildlife, and wild places!
- Leave Townsend alone. We do not want big city ideas in Townsend or nearby areas. We want a peaceful place we can continue to enjoy and our children can continue to enjoy.
- Create county wide system of greenway corridors, with and without paved trails.
- "Focus on making Townsend a gateway community that showcases the natural treasures that make our county special, inside GSMNP and elsewhere.
- It would be wonderful to have a location (aside from Tremont Institute) where residents and visitors can learn about our unique natural heritage, and about things they can do in their own yards to protect biodiversity.
- The Heritage Center would be an ideal location, but their landscape choices do not provide any examples of ecologically valuable gardens"

**Public Services & Other Comments:**

Many respondents highlighted their desire for further support of natural systems in the County, including preservation of native flora and fauna, permeable surfaces to reduce runoff, and more widespread recycling options.



**Comments:**

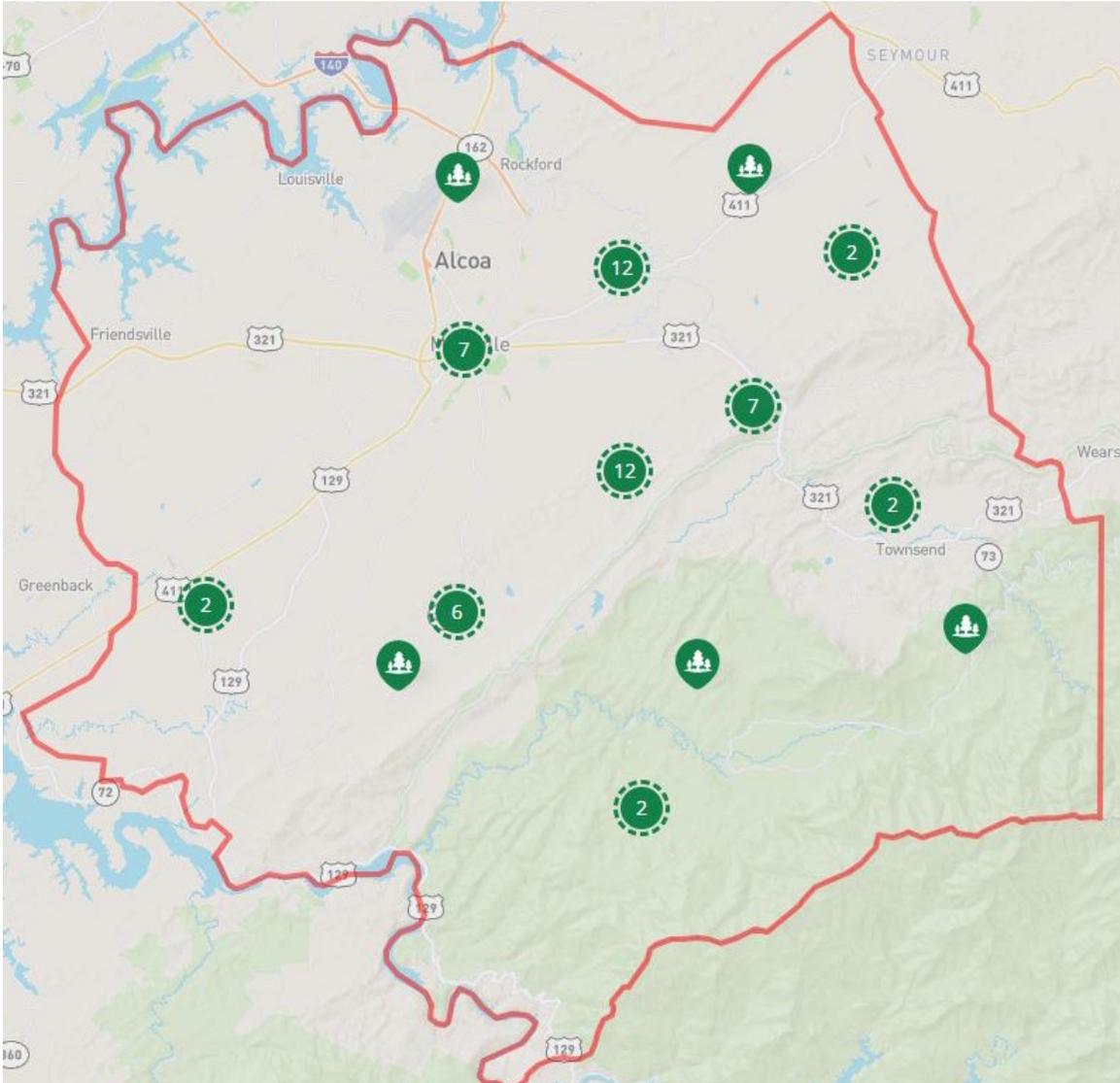
- I think we need to stop the growing of our little piece of heaven before it becomes Knoxville or Nashville. It's getting too big and too busy.
- Need a cell tower to support this area which is almost completely a dead zone. We also do not have high speed fiber so getting that extended to this area would be great. We don't have cable ran down our road (Old Piney) either. Options for internet service are limited to none.

- The plan should encourage and/or require vegetative buffers along creeks, streams & rivers to slow runoff, prevent erosion and allow water infiltration. In addition, the increased use of permeable surfaces instead of impervious paving would significantly reduce flooding.
- "Utilize integrated planning for community development, combining inputs from local government and community members to evaluate the socio-economic needs of the community and determine how to balance those needs with the natural systems on which the community depends.
- Rather than simply hiring businesses to perform public works projects, focus the work on businesses and organizations that provide cost savings through green technologies."
- It's good that Maryville has the drop off recycle centers and the glass recycling near Levi Street, but people will recycle more if they have a curbside recycling pickup program like they do in my hometown of Jefferson City, Tennessee. They provide a recycle container that's a similar size as the current Maryville City trash containers where people put everything they recycle in the one container and take it to the curb on the designated recycle pickup day.
- Enjoyed your comment. I would augment to say that natural systems do more than serve our community. Conservation to retain the character and biodiversity of places has far-reaching impacts.
- Please ensure that municipal employees involved in natural resource management are trained and knowledgeable in currently recommended practices to protect our streams, lands and wildlife. Maintain awareness of latest findings regarding correct / appropriate use of pesticides and use only if absolutely necessary.
- "Expecting people agree on the definitions of terms used in the Vision vote shows facilitators have little confidence in residents' levels of education; facilitators are not educated beyond a standard high-school level of English; and/or these results will not be used in a meaningful way.
- The personality-quiz style approach adds insult to injury. If residents are to take a vote like this seriously, why not provide definitions or actual local examples of each term? This is our tax \$ at work?"
- We desperately need public transportation
- Support efforts of all cities to meet requirements to become certified Bee Cities.
- Create programs and provide funds to train/pay workers to remove non-native invasive plant species throughout the county.
- County wide: Replace all impervious paving in parking lots with permeable surfaces.
- "Focus on making Townsend a gateway community that showcases the natural treasures that make our county special, inside GSMNP and elsewhere.
- It would be wonderful to have a location (aside from Tremont Institute) where residents and visitors can learn about our unique natural heritage, and about things they can do in their own yards to protect biodiversity.

- Something similar to the gardens that were installed around the Ocoee Whitewater Center would be idea for native garden displays."

**Open Space Comments:**

Respondents highlighted the need for further protection of native flora, fauna, and open spaces within the County, especially as development increases.



**Comments:**

- I would like to see the riparian area along Little River have increased protection from clearing for residential or commercial usage and areas that are currently degraded replanted with native vegetation in order to protect the diverse life found in Little River from higher levels of sedimentation.

- We have taken 95%-97% of all available undisturbed natural habitat for our homes, businesses, schools, farms, roads, etc.; this puts us on track to extinction of 95% of all native flora/fauna existing before Europeans came. Sustainable development going forward requires that all residential development be densely clustered with 30%-50% of undeveloped open rewilded area, minimal lawn, and a very high percentage of native plant species in the landscaping.
- The development on this end of Blount County (see 6 mile,9 mile Old Niles Ferry, around Lanier Elementary School and the trailer park on Crye Road. Development is clear cut , houses and trailers on top of one another and it getting ready to be worse with all the large parcels of land for sale out here We need some guidelines to maintain some space for wildlife and the rural character.in our end of the county we need more greenspaces, parks and walking trails before there is no land left.
- If it is green it seems that it is being sold and concrete is going down . It does not matter the public's opinion nor the residents . The property between 411 and Morganton being opened for a road because someone demands her road. . There has to be a better plan for land use and the horrendously crappy roads . Blount County and it's beauty are being destroyed for \$\$\$ and greed
- Creating subdivisions that have reduced individual lot sizes along with designated common areas for open space would provide passive recreation spaces for residents along with valuable habitat for pollinators and birds.
- Creating subdivisions that have reduced individual lot sizes along with designated common areas for open space would provide passive recreation spaces for residents along with valuable habitat for pollinators and birds.
- Blount Countians have been worried about losing open space and our rural landscape for many years now. I hate to be a pessimist but I fear it is already too late. Too much space has already been taken up by commercial development and residential development. Ultimately the County Commission does what it wants to do, and that is not usually preserving the land.
- Such development should be complemented with public transportation serving many areas of the county, especially denser population centers.
- One of best assets is the views of the mountains. Build into future growth protecting the viewscape.
- Can you please clarify what you mean by "building into future growth"?
- Require houses on westfacing ridgetops and hillsides to fit into their surroundings (no shiny roofs, earth colored materials, limit clear cutting of trees).
- I should have said include viewscape protection in planning for any development.
- I am seeing more and more bulldozing and concrete going in and natural habitats being destroyed. Woods and a beautiful field on Jett Road have been completely destroyed. Concrete and over a 100 houses going to be crammed in there. All the money in the world is not going to do any good if our natural habitats continue to be destroyed. I

would love to see Blount Co. be a leader in creating sustainable, environmentally friendly housing and industry. Save our green spaces and wetlands!

- We need wider stream buffers along the Little River to protect it from siltation, water pollution from suspended clay/soil particles that accumulate on river bottoms. Siltation destroys aquatic habitats for young fish, dragonfly nymphs, and other aquatic insects. Sediment can clog fish gills, making it hard for fish to breathe.
- Promote an interconnected network of natural areas and open spaces (aka green infrastructure) that conserves natural ecosystems, sustains clean air and water, and preserves the rural nature of the county that we all value. Encourage development that preserves the quality of our county.
- Blount county was a retirement community and tourists spot.. Now I have lived here for 16yrs, and it has become a disaster. They have brought in large corporations along with their employees to cluttering up our county and our air quality. Traffic sucks! I hate going out now to much traffic. The new construction is messing up the water runoff and flooding people's homes, costing them money to fix the problem that the county has caused. In my book they all need to be fired.
- Keep our farmland! Stop ruining our beautiful area with subdivisions!
- Stop the development! Builders are ruining our area!
- One of the things that make Blount County such a unique and beautiful place to live is the mountains and the viewscapes from multiple locations throughout the county. Before the multistory buildings went up in the new Springbrook developments, the views of the mountains from the airport were eye-catching. It depletes the natural character of the Blount County every time a new development obstructs a view of the mountains. We can't stop growth but we should use a wider lens for aesthetics value
- Agreed. This is critical for a county that is a gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and wildlife management areas and preserves. Conservation Planning needs to be an integral part of all county planning, e.g., include county wide connectivity greenways with wildlife passages, restructure culverts to open bottom structures with aquatic and wildlife passages as needed and recommended by various conservation organizations, state and federal land managers.
- Simple: Stop the overgrowth. Y'all are ruining Eastern TN. We are slammed together and our infrastructure cannot sustain more growth. Stop. We don't even have enough emergency responders to help now....Blount County is being ruined.
- Our current zoning laws provide no incentive for retention of suitable areas of fertile land for agricultural use. Farms are important, and we need to take active steps to preserve them.
- I would like to see more stringent guidelines for the use of land bordering all of our rivers and streams. Unforested riparian corridors should be planted with native vegetation to stabilize soil resources and protect our drinking water. Buildings and septic systems should be kept at a safe distance from riverbanks.

- For the sake of both wildlife and people, we must take measures to protect the forested land we have, especially on steep slopes. Chilhowee Mountain should be left alone.
- It's vital to protect our most important resource--the Little River--from both residential and commercial development. Our beautiful river is not only valuable for wildlife and human recreation; it is the water supply for the majority of Blount County residents. As our population grows, it is becoming ever more obvious how precious-- and how LITTLE our River really is.
- Keep our mountains green and not littered with rental cabins.
- This area is one of the most beautiful in the country, as evidenced by the number of people who flock to the mountains. With our world in a climate crisis, we need to maintain and cherish these wild areas and help them flourish, preserving the ecosystems, not choke them out with industry and pollution.
- Please preserve open space for farms, black bear corridors, and conservation of our rural landscape.
- Alcoa urgently needs a new park at the Springbrook Farms development. So many more people added to the community but not enough recreational space. The Alcoa community was originally developed with a minimum amount of parks space per resident and lots of trees.
- "Promote Conservation Planning/Design: Encourage and/or reward developers for utilizing the principles of conservation design to protect scenic view-sheds, steep slopes, floodplains, farmland, conserve woodland habitat, and provide open space for active and passive recreation. Provide clear information to developers demonstrating that the total number of lots in conservation subdivisions will be the same using conservation design as there would be using conventional design.
- (For entire county)"
- "Encourage/require vegetative buffers along creeks, streams & rivers to slow runoff, prevent erosion and allow water infiltration which will reduce flooding.
- Establish a Little River Zone that requires measures to plant/preserve native vegetation along the riverbank and prohibits any grading that would cause erosion and negatively impact water quality. (Comment applies to entire county)"
- "High density developments should be allowed only if part of the property is not developed, and is set aside for open space, walking trails, passive recreation, and habitat. A formula should be created to determine how much land is to be preserved for each acre of high medium or high density residential development.
- Include requirements for planting trees, shrubs, and native wildflowers to prevent erosion, provide habitat, and regulate temperatures in all site plans. (Applies to all of BC)"
- "Encourage the creation of conservation subdivisions. These are developments that have reduced individual lot sizes along with designated common areas for open space, which provide passive and active recreation spaces for residents along with valuable habitat for

pollinators and birds. The total number of lots wouldn't change from what there would be under conventional subdivision development. (county-wide)"

- Please leave what little rural space we have left alone. Keep Blount County Rural!
- Keep our rural spaces wild. No more development, no more cabins, and please God, no Gatlinburg/Pigeon Forge style attractions. Leave this side quiet.
- Leave it wild! No development!!
- The county is allowing unnecessary and outdated clearing of land for subdivision development. All trees and existing forests are being destroyed, water re-routed, killing and/or displacing all life that lived there. Acres of land are cleared to build these developments. The county must add language for new developments to protect existing large or rare trees and plants and keep habitat for species that live in these areas rather than discarding them as 'nuisance' or 'common'. Quit clear cutting.
- We need to maintain some open space. To cover every inch of land with buildings is completely the opposite of what the people want. We that came here decades ago, came for the beauty of the area. Please maintain it.
- The natural and rural open space is why many of us chose to live in Blount County. Excess development is destroying these features that make Blount County attractive as a place to live.
- We are losing the rural beauty of the county to continued dense "cheap" housing. The roads have become crowded and will only continue to become more clogged as these developments are filled. Infrastructure utilities and internet services will NOT be able to meet demand. All the construction traffic is adding to air pollution - at what point will Blount County be required to monitor and inspect vehicle emissions to limit smog ??? Large trucks are also destroying our narrow roads. STOP
- WE moved here 16 years ago for much the same reasons. It is no longer the place for our forever home due to traffic, pollution, and the loss of open spaces. VERY SAD that we lose all this for the sake of growth that lines the pockets of developers...
- it is vital to protect the little river by protecting its length with vegetation
- The ideal would be for citizens to traverse the county from the mountains to the lakes from anywhere in the county. Condensed multi unit development as well as mixed residential/commercial areas will help. We cannot afford continued sprawl.
- The city of Alcoa's desire to build residential out in this area is a very bad idea. It doesn't make sense on a variety of fronts. In my opinion, subdivisions do not belong in what remains one of the few agricultural and scenic areas as yet untouched by developments consisting of hundreds of houses and all the car trips and runoff and pollution that will result. This area borders the Little River. Parts of Blount County need the protection of a comprehensive plan and good zoning.
- Preserving our agricultural and scenic areas should be a top priority. We are losing agricultural land and open space at an alarming rate.
- When open space is gone, you lose not just scenery but opportunities for recreation, exercise, and enjoyment of the outdoors. These are experiences that are vital to the

health of all, especially our children. Same with space for agriculture: once it's covered with houses, it's gone forever. Yes, people can sell their land, no question. But if we have good planning for growth, we can steer denser development to where it belongs and even provide incentives for agriculture. It can be done.

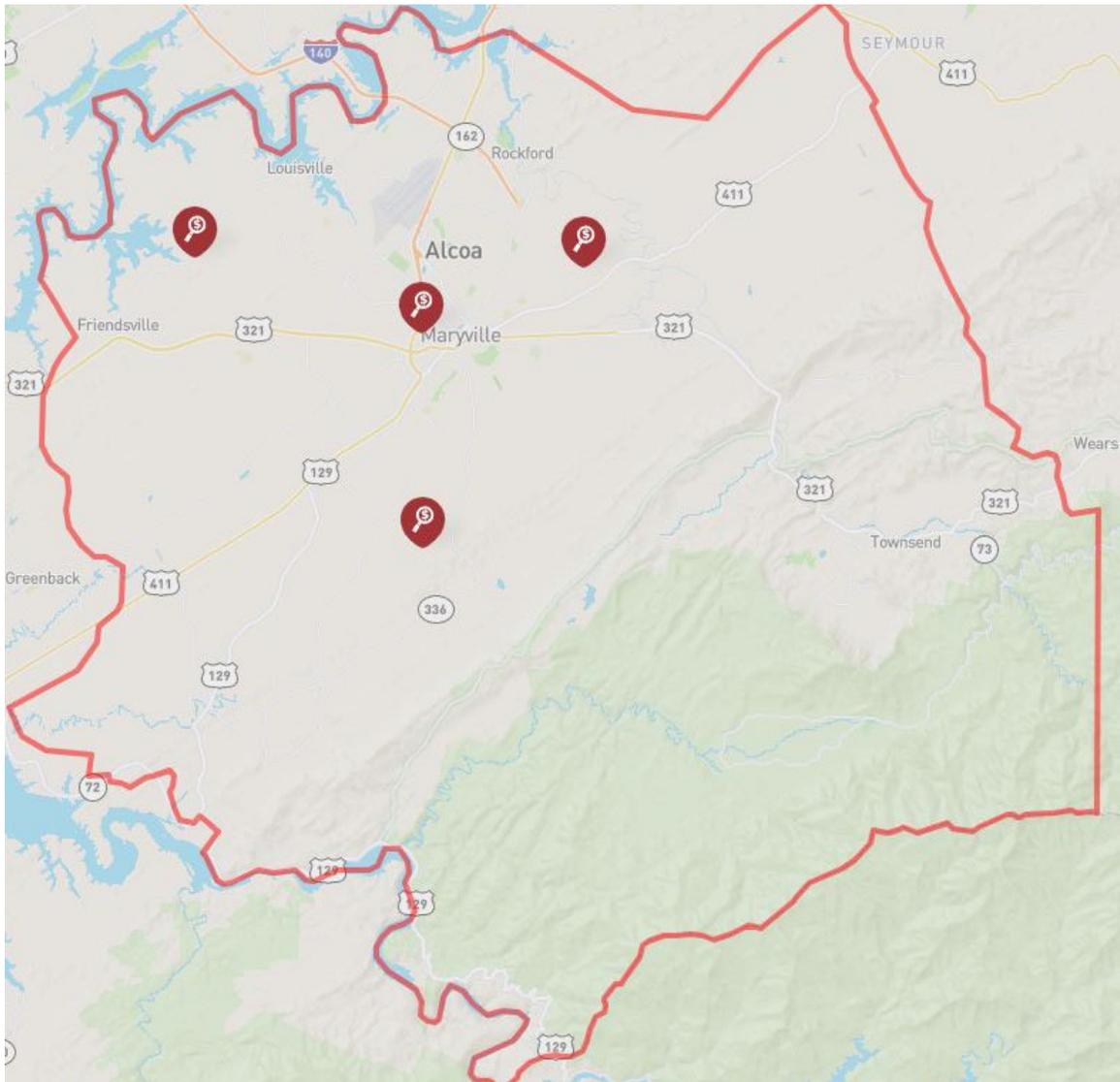
- Preserving open space and farmland is important in order to maintain a rural feel of this county. Century farms should not be split by a parkway.
- There are large farms in this area which will be permanently altered if the PPE comes through here. Once it is paved over there is no going back.
- The Robinson's have been on this century farm for generations. If the PPE comes through here it will be a real shame and irreversible damage to local beauty and rural character of this area.
- Please protect the areas around the large State of TN regulated wetland at Brick Mill and Hwy 411 South from development. It also extends to the other side of Hwy 411. It filters the Baker Creek watershed area that drains into a source for water for the southern part of county. One day it could be a beautiful park for an area that does not have any parks. A generous buffer should be provided around the perimeter of the wetland, such as is provided on the banks of Little River.
- The loss of agricultural land is a national, regional and local crisis.
- Urban growth needs to be within the city limits and not out in the rural areas. The suburbanizing zones/urban growth boundaries of Maryville and Alcoa are too large. The Alcoa Wildwood annexing scheme, which has stalled, is a warning for the County to protect itself and its rural character.
- We should have restrictions on mountain development that ruin the viewscapes.
- A program to purchase development rights could protect essential areas (habitat corridors, viewscapes and the water we drink).
- We need to learn from other communities that have successfully protected agricultural land, through agriculture districts, agriculture zones and other approaches. American Farmland Trust has expertise in this area. Retiring farmers don't sell to developers because they love subdivisions. They sell because their land is their retirement fund. If we could purchase development rights or help young farmers buy land, we would save our farmland and all the contributions it makes to our community.
- "We should fix and upgrade our infrastructure, especially roads, before
- building new ones, including the Pellissippi Parkway, which will just bring more sprawl and make this area more like what people here hate already!"
- Blount County developed a Green Infrastructure Plan that identified important viewscapes. We need a way to implement that plan.
- Farms are not considered businesses by TDOT, but they are in fact businesses. Our leadership should recognize that not protecting farms (century or otherwise) with sound zoning measures is an overall loss to all, not just the farmers. We all benefit from open space and the open spaces help attract tourists for recreation in the Smokies. We are a

beautiful gateway county for the most visited national park in the US. Why would we want to muck that up with the PPE?

- Provide funding so that owners of ecologically important property can protect it from development. Also provide funds to allow farmers who practice sustainable agriculture (integrated pest management, reduced or zero pesticide use, no till, etc) to keep their farms.
- Provide funding and implementation information to anyone owning land with creeks, streams, rivers, and lakes for planting natives along the riparian zone.
- Create pollinator pathways throughout the county (public and private pesticide-free corridors of native plants) to provide critical habitat for pollinators, birds, and other wildlife.
- Establish better control over new development, to ensure that existing open space, scenic view sheds, and natural resources aren't negatively impacted. As a gateway community to GSMNP, Townsend should prioritize the preservation and enhancement of the natural beauty within and adjacent to its borders. The same applies to the corridor between Walland and Townsend, as uncontrolled development there will diminish the visual beauty as well as the ecological value of watersheds and natural areas.

**Employment & Industry Comments:**

Most comments in this category highlight a need for employment and industry, especially those industries which support natural systems within the County. Respondents mentioned potential training programs for County residents in renewable energy or other ecological practices. As the County grows, respondents still want to preserve the community's rural character.



Comments:

- I believe we have exceeded our limits of growth in the City and County. I do not want to be the Knoxville. In order to preserve what is left of the rural county community the growth must be capped. To many people are moving here it must stop.

- The Blount Partnership is all about bring more employment to Blount County but where do we put all the people moving into the area for the jobs? Apartment buildings are going up all over the place. Where is all the infrastructure for these people? And the cost of a home in Blount County has become prohibitive for many who grew up here. A 31 year old man I know was born, raised and educated in Blount County, he is a teacher and cannot afford to live here.
- I agree 100%, safe, quiet, and rural. The traffic has increased so very much it's truly unbelievable. The roads are no longer sufficient for the population we have right now. Stop the building of all these apartment complexes, too many. Middle Settlements Rd, apartments and town houses. 2 huge apartment complexes on Topside Rd. Our school systems can't handle the increase. Stop The Growth!
- We need a business corridor along the 140 extension.
- You can't just say "sorry, you can't move here". You can enact laws that prevent any new construction on a vacant lot, but all that's going to do is get rid of jobs. Then when there's less jobs, other services go away. When you prevent growth, you encourage a lagging economy which then makes it harder for the govt to provide services because they have less tax dollars. This is especially true when you are a bedroom community of a major city and have a major airport.
- We do not need the 140 extension! If we are stupid enough to build it anyway, then it is supposed to be a limited access Parkway. The last thing we need in this lovely rural valley is a "business corridor".
- "1. Attract green industry that emphasizes the reduction of resource use and environmental impacts. 2. Promote (or require) solar panels on all new commercial buildings. 3. Provide training in green jobs. (Applies to entire county)"
- Agree that we do NOT need this abomination that would only serve the "business" of construction companies and access to Blackberry Farm.
- Set up programs and provide funds to train unskilled workers in methods for sustainable landscape management, to responsibly assist property owners who want to break the mow and blow habit and replace their lawns with ecologically-based gardens.



# Blount County Growth Plan Update

## Steering Committee Meeting #1 Summary



### MEETING INFORMATION

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**Date:** Monday, May 15, 2023, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

**Venue:** Blount County Operations Center (1221 McArthur Road Maryville, TN) and Zoom

### MEETING ATTENDEES

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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Doug Gamble, Original Ad Hoc Committee Member (Zoom attendee) | 7. Pat McGill, Realty Executives                           |
| 2. Mike Akard, Commissioner                                      | 8. Sarah Sinatra Gould, AICP, CZO, Inspire Project Manager |
| 3. Clifford Walker, Planning Commission                          | 9. Erin Anderson, Inspire Intern                           |
| 4. Nick Bright, Commissioner, Planning Commission                | 10. Jean Ramsey, SM&E                                      |
| 5. Darrell Tipton, Planning Commission                           | 11. Thomas Lloyd, Planning Director                        |
| 6. David Wells, Commissioner, Planning Commission                | 12. Jeff Headrick, Highway Superintendent                  |

### INTRODUCTION

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As part of Blount County's Growth Plan Update, a group of citizens was nominated to be on a steering committee for the project. The purpose of the steering committee is to guide the project's visions from a high level and ensure that the updated Growth Plan is an accurate reflection of the community. The first meeting of the steering committee took place on May 15, 2023 at the Blount County Operations Center from 6:00 PM-7:30PM. This event was organized to include an introduction and presentation from Inspire and a structured discussion amongst committee members.

### DISCUSSION SUMMARY

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The meeting began with a brief introduction from the Highway Superintendent, Jeff Headrick, to introduce consultants and staff members. Steering committee members then introduced themselves and their roles in Blount County. Sarah Sinatra Gould followed with an educational presentation to orient the steering committee on the goals of the growth planning process and the responsibilities of a steering committee. Sarah then opened the meeting up to a discussion with questions developed by Inspire to guide the conversation. The discussion had four main topics: challenges and opportunities, development impacts, business and industry, and improvements. A summary of the responses and discussion is listed below.

## **Challenges and Opportunities:**

What is the best thing about the County? What would you change? Describe the challenges facing the County in the next 20 years.

### **BEST THING ABOUT THE COUNTY**

#### *Rural nature of the County*

Many members reiterated the goal to keep the County rural, as the rural look and feel of the County is what attracts people here. Similarly, members expressed interest in the preservation of the County's natural resources, such as the Little River, and the prevention of overdevelopment in these areas.

#### *Culture of the people*

One member highlighted the residents of Blount County as an asset and encouraged the plan to focus on keeping young people and families here.

### **CHALLENGES FACING THE COUNTY**

#### *Growth Boundary*

Members expressed concern regarding the large size of the County's Suburbanizing Land Use and suggested that it be reduced. Members similarly are concerned that the suburbanization of the incorporated areas is reaching too far into the rural areas of Blount County.

The group suggested three types of zones for the County, each with their own rules and standards: a Maryville/Alcoa zone, a tourist zone, and a rural zone.

#### *Housing Choice / Affordability*

Housing affordability was a challenge brought up by the group. Housing prices have increased dramatically in Blount County, rendering housing unaffordable for local residents – especially for younger people and families. However, it was expressed that it is the market that determines housing prices and Blount County is a very attractive place for incoming residents, who may be relocating from areas with higher housing costs. The ability to keep housing affordable in the County will continue to be a challenge due to the changes in the housing market.

## **Development Impacts**

What are the pros and cons of the growth plan? Is the plan producing the right type of development? Is the vision in the plan still the vision for the County?

Members expressed interest in concentrating residential and commercial growth in developed areas and along highway corridors.

Many members also questioned the implementation of the growth plan and want to ensure that the plan is actually used in development decision-making.

## **Business and Industry**

Where should job creation be focused? What types of businesses should the County try to attract? Do you prefer rigorous regulation or flexibility?

#### *Tourism*

Committee members repeatedly mentioned tourism as a main economic driver in the County. One member mentioned that the County was "duty-bound" to promote tourism due to the 5% hotel/motel

tax. However, members noted a tension between tourism growth and the implications this growth will have on the rural nature of the County.

#### *Partnerships*

Members mentioned the need to collaborate with businesses and the Chamber when developing the growth plan, with some suggesting that additional business/industry recruiting could further strain already limited resources.

Members also expressed the need to work with the school system on job training. The group had concerns that youth in the County are not trained for trade/manufacturing jobs and employers must recruit employees from outside the County.

#### **Improvements**

What capital investments should be focused on for the next 5-10 years? What environmental concerns should be addressed in the next 5-10 years?

The group noted that the foundation for the growth plan is rooted in infrastructure and that there will need to be a partnership between the County and the municipalities to implement infrastructure improvements.

#### **Pillars of the plan**

The following are preliminary pillars that were gleaned from the steering committee discussion:

1. Preserve natural resources
2. Strengthen the Land Use Map
3. Business & Industry growth & challenges
4. Education opportunities to increase the workforce
5. Housing for life cycle needs

**TO: Blount County Stakeholder Committee Meeting**

**FROM: Sarah Sinatra Gould, AICP, CZO, Inspire Project Manager**

**CC: Jeffery Headrick, Highway Superintendent; Thomas Lloyd, AICP, Director**

**DATE: March 25, 2024**

**SUBJECT: Summary & Action Items from 10-24-2023 Stakeholder Meeting**

### Summary

- Discussed public engagement summary
- Presented new Land Use Category for Suburbanizing 2 for feedback
- Prepared three drafts of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for input
- Committee gave direction to create a map with suburbanizing 1 and 2
- Definition of two categories:
  - **Suburbanizing 1.** The majority of development in the area is expected to be residential and agricultural. High density residential development is expected to occur on public sewer, which allows gross densities of greater than 1.5 units per acre. Medium density residential development is expected to occur on land suitable for septic fields, which allows gross densities of 1.5 units per acre or less. The lower limit on the medium density scale is expected to be one unit per three acres on average.
  - **Suburbanizing 2.** The majority of development in the area is expected to be low density residential, conservation, and agricultural. Low density residential development is expected to be one unit per three acres on average.

### Action Items

- Committee wanted two options for a follow up meeting:
  - Option 1
    - A portion of the suburbanizing 1 would be suburbanizing 2
    - Certain corridors would have Commercial land use designation
    - Remove RAC designation
  - Option 2
    - All areas outside of the Urban Growth Boundary would be suburbanizing 2
    - Certain corridors would have Commercial land use designation
    - Remove RAC designation

# Planning Commission Meeting

  
**Inspire**

PLACEMAKING COLLECTIVE

April 25, 2024



# Progress Report



Draft of comp. plan and integrated public feedback



Completed maps for each element



Completed schools report



Draft of goals and policies



Staff/Stakeholder review and comments

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES



Environmental Stewardship



Affordable Housing



Rural Character



Balanced Growth

- The new Goals, Objectives, and Policies integrate guiding principles, a timeline, and matrix for easy navigation and clarity.
- The GOPs are organized into six categories:
  1. Future Land Use
  2. Housing
  3. Transportation
  4. Public Facilities
  5. Recreation and Open Space
  6. Conservation

# SHARED FEEDBACK

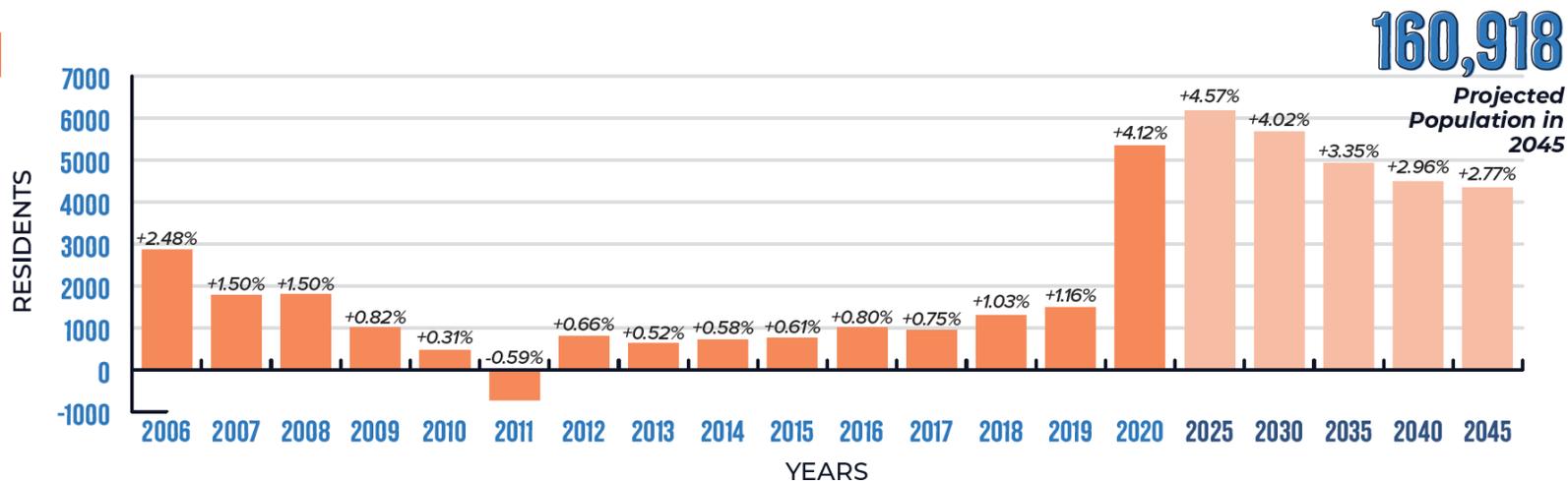
- An emphasis on strategic growth, prioritizing open space and mountain views.
- Housing availability and affordability was a repeat concern across all activities.
- Residents want economic growth to benefit the community; not rely on outside hires to attract industry.



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SNAPSHOT

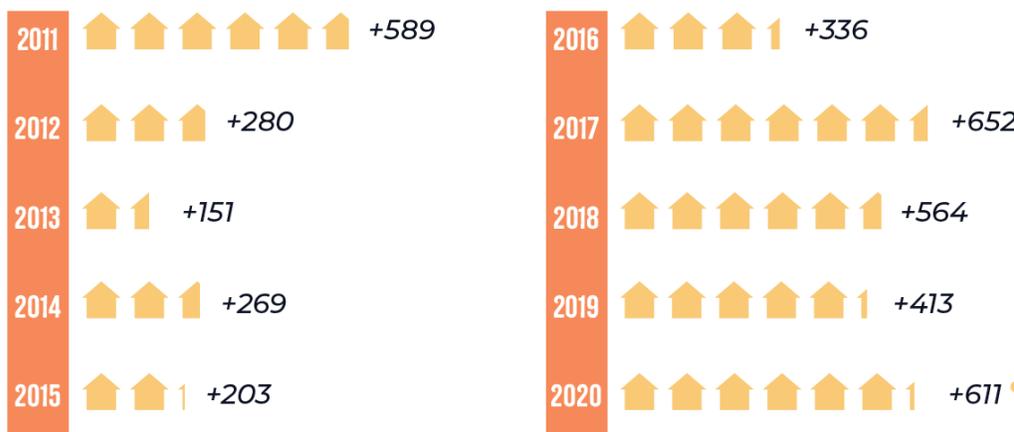
**POPULATION PROJECTIONS, 2005-2045**

BASE YEAR (2005)  
**115,196**  
RESIDENTS



**HOUSING UNITS, 2010-2020**

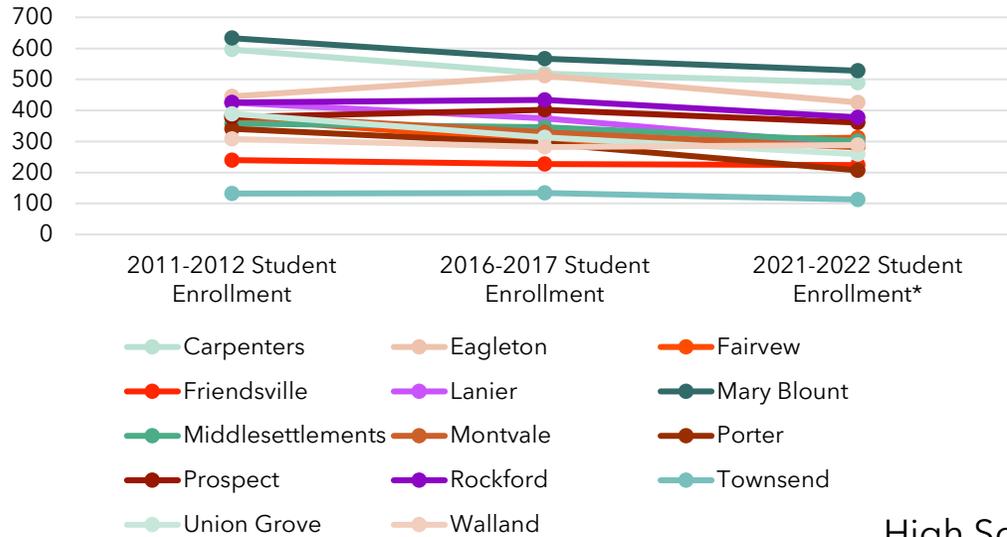
BASE YEAR (2010):  
**54,252**  
HOUSING UNITS  
🏠 = 100 Housing Units



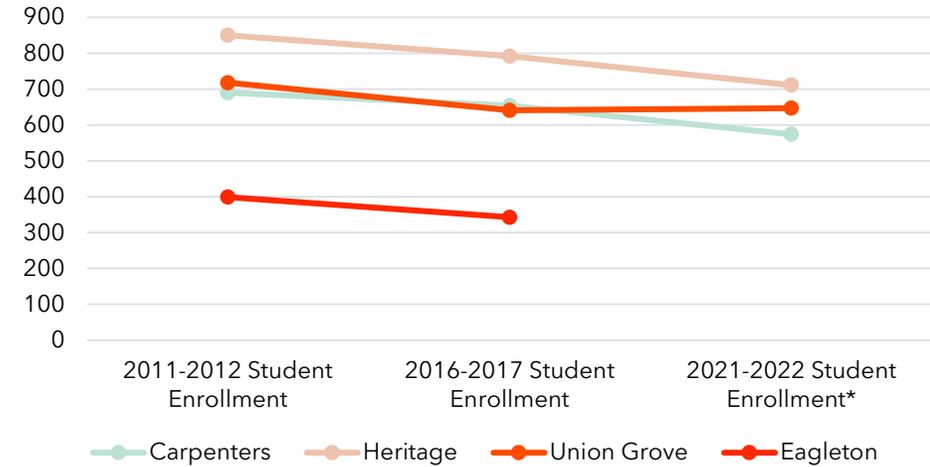
**HOUSING UNITS  
= 58,320  
IN 2020**

# School Analysis

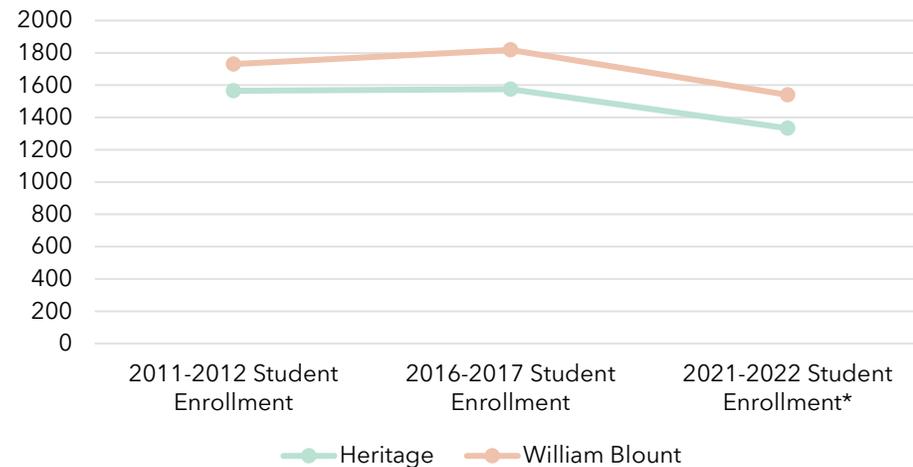
## Elementary Enrollment 2011-2022



## Middle School Enrollment 2011-2022



## High School Enrollment 2011-2022



*Projections through 2027 indicate a 2% -3% increase in students. It is likely Blount County School District can absorb this increase.*

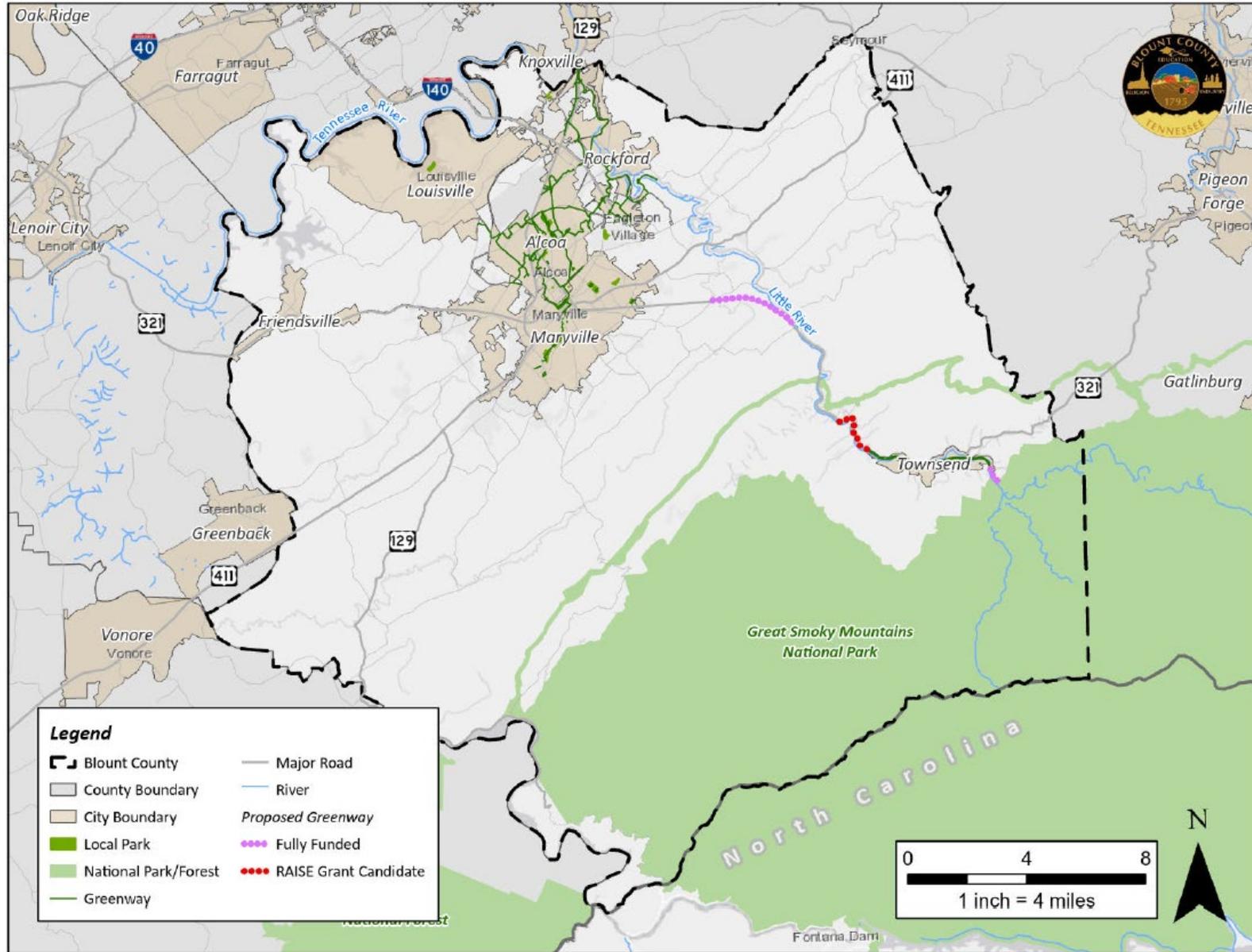
(Source: Tennessee Department of Education) Blount County County School Enrollment, 2011-2022

# TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

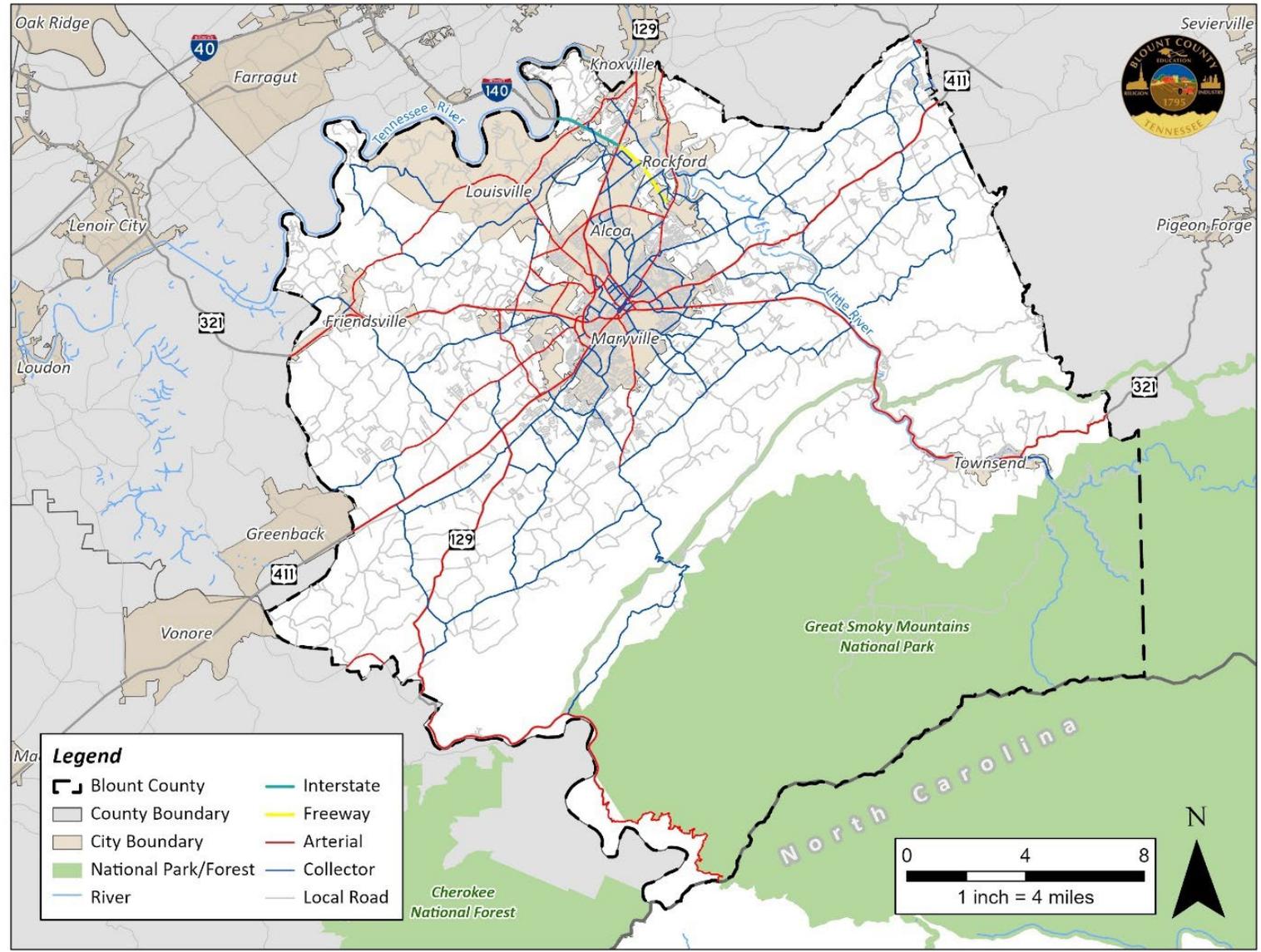
- The Transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on traffic, designations of roadways, and planned improvements.
- Average daily traffic on the arterial roadways are analyzed by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) for possible improvements.
- TDOT has identified Blount County and the Alcoa Highway as an improvement site with a seven (7) phase project aimed at improving traffic flow and access to McGhee Tyson Airport

Blount County		
From north of SR 35 (Hall Road) to proposed interchange at Tyson Boulevard	Complete	Summer 2022
(Relocated Alcoa Highway) from proposed interchange at Tyson Boulevard to SR 115 at South Singleton Station (Phase 1)	Construction	Estimated completion Fall 2027
(Relocated Alcoa Highway) from proposed interchange at Tyson Boulevard to SR 115 at South Singleton Station (Phase 2)	Construction	Scheduled Fiscal Year 2028
From South Singleton Station to south of Little River	Construction	TBD

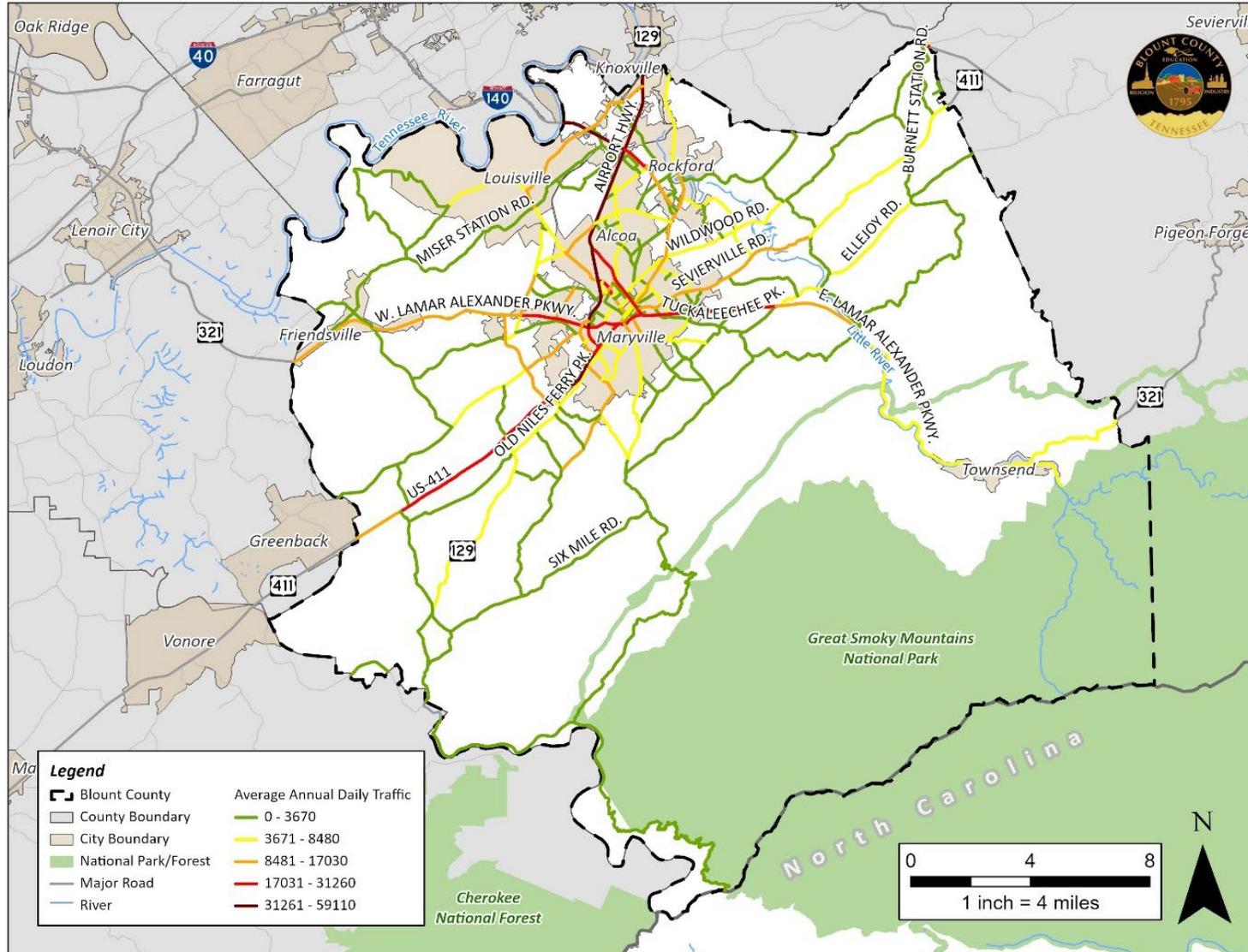
# Greenways



# Road Network Classifications



# Traffic

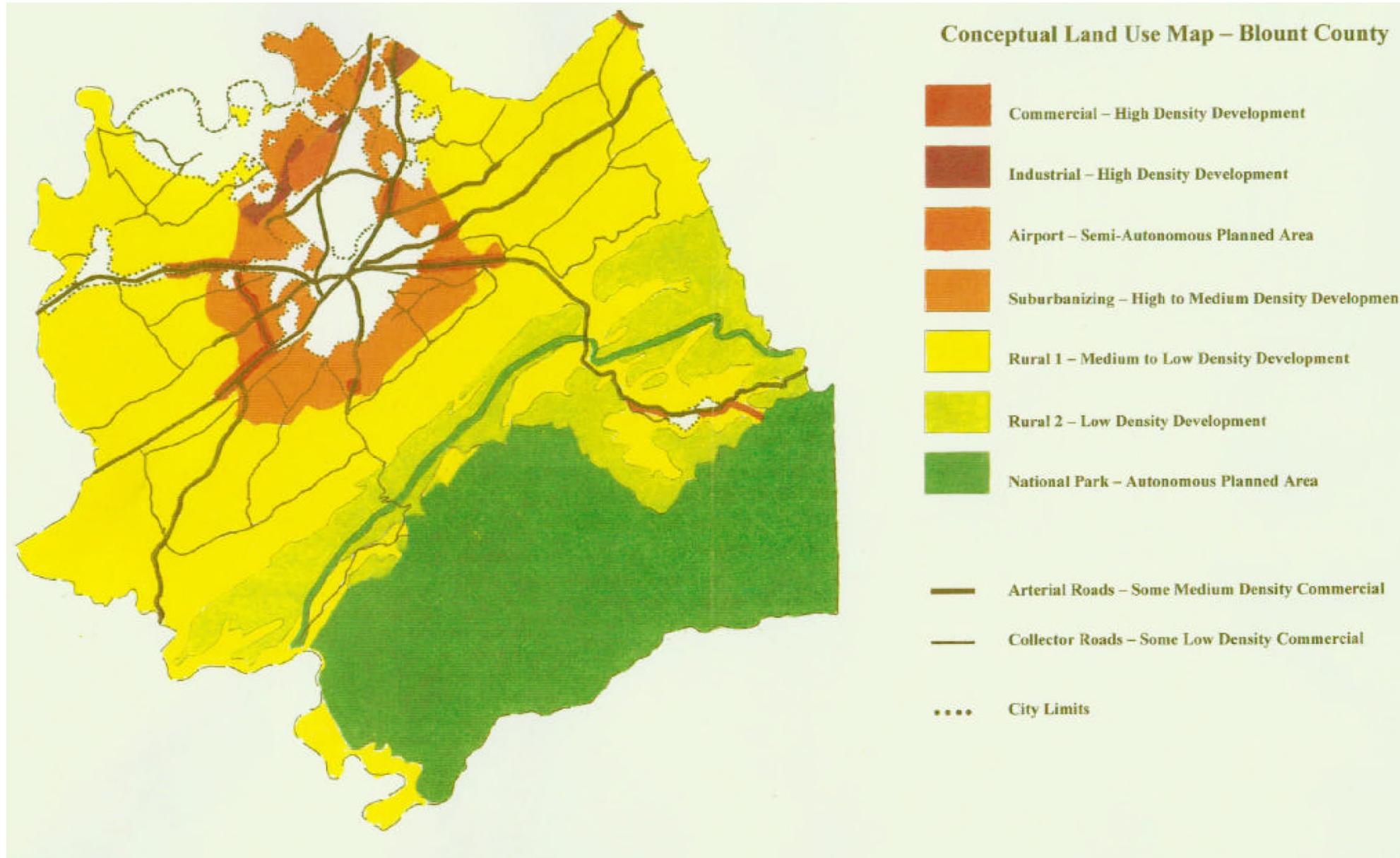


# Public Facilities Analysis

Currently underway.

Expectation: Include infrastructure improvements/expansions to confirm future land use map changes particularly for S1/S2.

# FUTURE LAND USE MAP



## FLU CATEGORIES

The following Future Land Use categories, along with their intended uses, are described:

### A. AIRPORT

The McGhee-Tyson Airport is recognized as a unique regional transportation resource. Airport operations are an integration of air traffic, governmental, military, commercial, and industrial uses. It is expected that the area of airport operations, including all uses directly connected to the runways and terminal, will develop as an integrated whole under semi-autonomous direction of the Airport Authority

### B. COMMERCIAL

The commercial within this category is intended to accommodate primarily a low and moderate intensity of commercial uses along arterial and collector roads.

### C. INDUSTRIAL

This designation applies to the development of industrial areas primarily surrounding the airport.

### D. NATIONAL PARK

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Foothills Parkway are unique regional resources under control of the National Park Service. It is expected that there will be no development in the usual sense of the term, and that the areas will be conserved or open for limited recreational purposes.

### E. RURAL 1

Medium density residential development is expected to occur on land suitable for septic fields, which allows gross densities of 1.5 units per acre or less. The lower limit on the medium density scale is expected to be one unit per three acres on average. Low density residential development is expected to occur on land with greater constraints to development. Only limited commercial activity is expected along arterial and collector status roads.

### F. RURAL 2

This land use category identifies areas in the County where land development is highly constrained by natural factors and infrastructure, and where low-density development is expected. The majority of development in the area is expected to be residential at densities of one unit per three acres on average.

### G. SUBURBANIZING 1

The majority of development in the area is expected to be residential and agricultural. High density residential development is expected to occur on public sewer, which allows gross densities of greater than 1.5 units per acre. Medium density residential development is expected to occur on land suitable for septic fields, which allows gross densities of 1.5 units per acre or less. The lower limit on the medium density scale is expected to be one unit per three acres on average.

### H. SUBURBANIZING 2

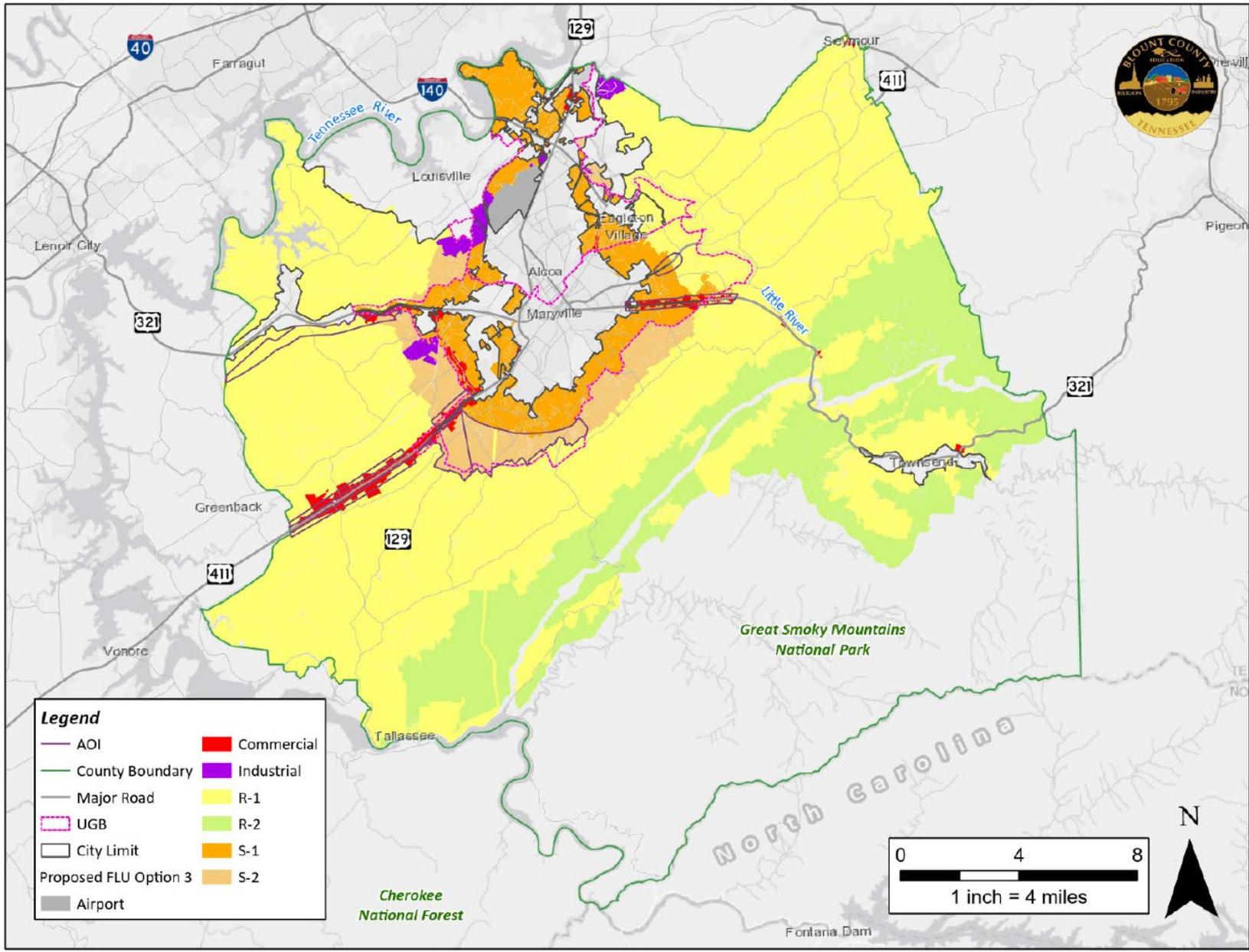
The majority of development in the area is expected to be low density residential, conservation, and agricultural. Low density residential development is expected to be one unit per three acres on average.

# FUTURE LAND USE

FLU Type	Acres Sum	% of Total
Airport	1,306.60639	0.61%
Commercial	3,061.4346	1.42%
Industrial	1,638.16059	0.76%
R-1	138,168.65119	64.10%
R-2	45,321.21635	21.02%
S-1	16,266.46153	7.55%
S-2	9,839.61042	4.56%
<b>TOTAL SUM</b>	<b>215,562.141076294</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Only includes zoned areas in unincorporated areas – incorporated areas and Great Smoky Mountains National Park not included\**

# PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE MAP



# Next Steps

Additional Feedback on Fact Sheet Information

Finalize Draft Plan. Plan to be reviewed by Steering Committee.

Present Draft Plan to Planning Commission (Date will depend on infrastructure analysis)

## Responses

As a citizen of Blount County for over 45 years I appreciate all the work that has gone into this plan. Managing increased growth in our county and maintaining the rural character of the county is of utmost importance to me. I use the greenways often and hope to see the walkability in the county maintained and expanded. I hope all future development in the county will be done so as to save the views of the Smoky Mountains and save the Little River basin upon which our future water and recreation needs depends. Having taught at Maryville College for 35 years, I always appreciated the college stewardship forest which provided extensive habitat for animals. I sincerely hope that the future development considers the importance of having fields, woodlands, forests, and wetlands to allow wildlife to move to and from the Smoky Mountains. Many 100+ year farms are in the county; we need to preserve those areas, not only for our food sources, but also to maintain the rural character of the county. Once those farms are developed in dense housing areas, that rural, scenic character is lost forever. Because the urban areas of the county (Maryville, Alcoa) are growing, I hope we are able to keep and expand bike paths so that people can ride safely throughout the county, without fear of being pushed off the roads.

As a small business owner in Blount County for over 11 years, I hear from MANY locals that we just don't have enough "mom and pop type services and have too many "chains and big box" venues. Here's the problem... When there are more of "us" that have a small business and the services are more tailored and personal they tend to cost a little bit more. I'm not talking about gouging but as a small business we don't have the marketing budgets and purchasing budgets of the "big box" services. The SAME people that complain about too many "big box/chain services" are the VERY PEOPLE that go and support them because it is a couple dollars cheaper. Folks...I opened a business here with zero customers and thankfully with hard work and the support of some key people in the area we've sustained and grown. We couldn't do this without all of you! If we REALLY WANT small mom/pop businesses to survive and thrive here we need to support them and the city/county needs to do EVERYTHING it can to lower it's cost output and regulation overload so it can put more money into marketing and business development. I LOVE my home here and love this county. I want to see EVERYONE prosper and enjoy our beautiful area."

Emphasis on listening to the citizens and their desire for rural open spaces. This area is a treasure and could very easily be overdeveloped and ruined. It's in your hands. Also, Blount Partnership is way too powerful. They are being fed millions of dollars that they don't need. They are becoming power hungry. Their purpose is not to be all powerful. They need to stop and think also what the citizens want, not just what Blount Partnership wants. This is a critical issue.

Fully support the changes in zoning

Given the increase in homeless throughout the United States and as is happening in Blount Co, how can a growth plan ignore a problem our community has no idea how to address?

Growth needs to be centralized in a dense downtown/urban environment that is a mix of commercial and residential properties to help lessen the traffic impact.

How can we get a copy of your presentation to the Planning Commission?

I lived in a town that grew from 15,000 to over 60,000 (and now 90,000) in less than 30 years. I can tell you that growth does not pay for itself. I know developers will try to convince you that you need to improve your tax base, but it doesn't work that way. First comes the need for more infrastructure, then still more infrastructure, then still more. Then you realize that after all the tax breaks and concessions you have given to get this growth, you don't have the money to pay the bills, so you increase the millage. Then you realize that you need more money to meet the demands of the community so you borrow. But the things you borrow for wear out before they are paid for, so you keep borrowing and raising taxes. Stop the madness before it starts.

I'm concerned about the lack of any specifics concerning the housing shortage. I'm concerned that our kids are having trouble staying in the area because they can't find an affordable place to live. I'm concerned that our county is creating good jobs for people, but they'll have to drive an hour one way to come here to work. Eventually, businesses will stop coming here, which will erode our tax base and create a large unemployed population.

In light of developments following the closure of the survey, it would be interesting to see if those that are seeming to create induced demand for "walkability" and hotels/stores in the downtown district also happen to have any business ventures that stand to benefit from such concepts. One would imagine that any such ventures would be operating under an indistinguishable LLC name or are owned by a family member, but the conflict of interest opportunities are too great to assume that nothing is happening.

Inspire Placemaking Collective - The Ukraine Collectives were created in the 1920s to describe where people were sent to die.

I support the Future Land Use Categories: Suburbanizing 1 and 2, specifically with high density development limited to urban centers where infrastructure exists.

I think that the officials of Blount County, Alcoa and Maryville are building too many apartment homes and businesses not leaving enough land and trees. It's beginning to look like Knoxville. It's not the place I used to love in here 64 years. Not to mention expensive everything is.

It's hard to assess the plan without meaningful water quality, water usage amounts (current and projected) from the various 3 watersheds utilized in BC. The Little River provides drinking water to a lot of people and overdevelopment in that area may have very deleterious impacts to the quality of the river. Also, I was told by a local government official (as in top level mgmt) that the withdrawal rates from the Little River was at a maximum 5 years ago. How can we possibly support growth in this area without knowing, in detail, where the water will come from. Will massive infrastructure projects be required to get water to areas so as not to completely dry up the Little River? And how will the water quality of the LR be insured with development? These questions need to be answered before ANYONE can make logical, informed decisions about growth. Where and when will this information be available and are there any entities working on this now?

I would like to express my support for high density and medium density close to city limits. Low density should be further away from city limits. If new development is necessary, it should be where infrastructure and/or sewer already exists.

I would like to request Blount County do away with any plans to extend the Pellissippi Parkway further into Blount County. I see no benefit to this project in terms of safety, economic benefit, and the added development it will bring is clearly NOT wanted by ANY residents of the affected area. The only benefits will be financial gain for developers and that profit will not come back to residents Blount County.

I would like to see that with any growth that as much of the natural environment would be preserved. I really don't like seeing a large area completely clear cut and reshaped and turned into an artificial environment. Especially the preservation of larger trees.

Keep Blount the peaceful side of the Smokies with more greenways and MORE bike trails. Don't overdevelop our beautiful county.

Looks like the comprehensive plan presented by Inspire does little to stop the urban sprawl with medium to high density housing planned to continue along Montvale Road corridor. VERY disappointing. There is no way the current roads can absorb the future traffic flow without creating massive traffic backups and delays for all.

More walking and bike paths please

My concern is that there are properties available for Permanent Supportive Housing, and affordable housing for everyone (including those below the poverty level and ALICE folks. I also have a concern that there is space for mobile home communities. There are non-profits in the county looking for land to provide resources in a responsible manner and running into "not in my backyard." How do we address that? Yes, the preserving natural resources and the beauty of the county is primary.

Affordable housing for everyone in Blount County is also important. I recently came from Knoxville on Alcoa Hwy and realized how there is now a road that looks like an interstate aimed right at the county to bring people to Blount County. People and more development are on their way. I hope this plan addresses that so that Blount County is a beautiful place where everyone can thrive.

My family has been in Blount County for generations. One of my grandfathers worked at the Aluminum Company for 40 years. The other drove a dump truck hauling rock from the rock quarry every day. Then, my mom in the medical field and my dad in middle management of a manufacturing company. Now I am the first in my family with a 4-year degree, multi-million dollar net worth, and a small business owner in Blount County. Each generation was able to better themselves right here in Blount County because we had great career opportunities. We must provide a diverse and growing economy for people to support their families and have the quality of life they desire.

One of the top priorities should be shoulders on 411. Two things That would make 411 considerably more dangerous and have significantly more traffic would be the intersection with the Pellissippi extension And Blount partnerships ill conceived idea of a tourist corridor going into Maryville. The rule character of Blount County and residen Resident Residential Residential areas is much more in line with what Blount county citizens want, not pigeon Forge. Hipp Parkway extension wood further destroy a huge swath of currently rural and residential areas and add significantly to the traffic problems.

Our County must plan for growth. That plan must include economic development. We need to have the necessary jobs and resources to retain the youth that are graduating in Blount and surrounding counties. Small business and manufacturing need skilled employees. This will require investment in development that attracts talent, a younger workforce, retail, restaurants, and all things that keep a community alive and moving forward. We need growth to be for the sustainability of our future generations. That requires investment in development of roads, housing, recreation: all for the continued Economic development of our community.

Our median age is rising, which is not good for the future of our county. We must do more to retain young workers and families. Planning for future economic development is necessary to provide jobs for a younger workforce needed for a sustainable future.

Please consider more of a focus on economic development. People need jobs, good jobs. Without jobs growth can not be sustained.

Please consider purchasing land for open space or park in Southern Blount County at land around the gigantic wetland at 411 South and Henry Lane. This wetland is a historic piece of Blount County with much Indian history that would be a big draw and would provide easy access to all. The beauty and wildlife of this land are too valuable to build houses or commercial entities upon.

Please guide commissioners to immediately prohibit cryptocurrency mining in Blount County by excluding the use in zoning regulations. Even China prohibits cryptocurrency mining on their land. They send it to other countries. Incentives offered to local commissioners to get a mine in will be great. If even one gets in the county, it will set a precedent and will be unstoppable to prevent others. Please make all the county roads wide enough (24 ft) for school Buses and Large trucks to pass each other! Also, a Yellow line in the middle would keep all drivers in their half of the road!

Please stop adding new housing. Blount County has lost its small town charm, traffic is horrific. We don't need more people moving to Blount County. Start thinking of the citizens and stop thinking about tax dollars.

Reading all the comments from my fellow Blount Countians who participated in your surveys and interactive map conversation gives me hope. I want to emphasize the following points in how I think our future growth should be managed: 1. It is important to keep residential and commercial density as close as possible to the city limits, and to limit new development to the places where infrastructure (especially sewer) already exists. 2. I favor strong control/curtailment of commercial development along and near the Little River, including Hwy. 321 between Maryville and Townsend. It is vital to protect this river as a wildlife and recreation resource, as well as a clean water supply for future generations. 3. I believe the public made it clear that we do not want the PPE to be built. 4. I hope we can manage to protect much of our existing farmland and forested space, and to improve the land in our county by actively planting native species, maintaining wildlife corridors, and encouraging people to enjoy the out-of-doors on foot, bicycle, kayak, or wheelchair. Finally, I would like to thank everyone who worked to inspire and facilitate this Comprehensive Plan.

Re: the proposed map: We need to support for high/medium density close to city limits, support low density further from city limits, support focusing new development where infrastructure already exists, such as where there is already sewer.

Smart growth is key. Preservation of green space, co-mingling green space into urban and suburban living areas. A community is always trending toward something. We must have a slight growth trend in our economy. Alternative 1: Declining economy is bad for our quality of life. Alternative 2: Rapid growth means we can't maintain our services and resources. A slight growth trend is key.

Suburbanizing 2 an excellent idea. We need to promote high and medium density close to the cities where infrastructure already exists. Cost of community services for residential developments farther and farther out is more than those residences pay in property taxes. Police, school buses, utilities, road maintenance, etc all cost more when communities are allowed to sprawl.

Thank you for bringing jobs to our area. It is important to me that there is a plan to bring more options to Blount County so that my children and family can remain here for generations to come. Planning for future economic development is important to the future of our community, our children, and generations to come.

Thank you for sharing the draft plan and inviting comment again at this stage. I welcome the proposed changes to the FLU map. Distinguishing between S1 and S2 is an important step in the direction of "balanced growth," which is one of the goals of the Plan. Focusing high and medium density closer to the city limits, where infrastructure already exists, will also support two other goals of the plan " Environmental Stewardship and Rural Character " if additional steps are taken to protect the Little River watershed, agricultural land, woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitat and viewsapes. (The 2009 Green Infrastructure Plan contains many recommendations that should be integrated into the new Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan.) I would like to see the final plan make the case that these changes are economically sound as well as responsive to input from residents. Will you be able to present any case studies or data on the economic impact of this kind of zoning in communities like ours? I haven't found much in the draft plan that addresses transportation as thoroughly as the draft addresses "development" as the siting of buildings, whether commercial, residential or industrial. To achieve the four goals, the plan also requires a strong commitment to, first, maintaining the road network we already have in alignment with the four goals; second, improving sightlines and intersections when necessary for safety without inducing inappropriate development; and third, adding new roadways only when consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and the four goals. As you know, roads can induce sprawl, and the Comprehensive Plan should address this directly. A few more ideas to support achievement of the four goals:

- Include, as a way to fulfill the Plan's goals, protection of viewsapes and ridgetops that are part of Blount County's identity (see 2009 Green Infrastructure Plan).
- Promote purchase of development rights on land throughout the county to provide a permanent network of connected habitat corridors (fields, woodlands, wetlands, forests, riparian areas) as well as greenways.
- Commit to development that ensures children can safely walk and bike to school, with sidewalks, crosswalks and bike paths.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan. I would like to share some feedback about the proposed plan. I would like the plan to focus on preserving the rural character of the county, to protect out watershed and farms. We need a sustainable mindset that is more ambitious than currently exists. One step toward this could be to NOT build the proposed PPE in Blount County. Preserving wetlands is also important.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the planning process. We have a unique opportunity to enhance and preserve the natural beauty and assets of Blount County for future generations. I support the Guiding Principles of Environmental Stewardship, Balance Growth, Rural Character and Affordable Housing.

The Daily Times reports that you are still looking for feedback. There is no place on this page for me to do so.

The depths of the proposed commercial zone down 411 S are excessive in spots. A few parts of it go to a depth of 3/4 mile from the highway. This is due to letting property owners develop commercially to the full depth of their property lines. The current Rural Arterial Commercial Zone allows a depth of 500 ft. Doubling that to 1000 ft. Is more than generous. People bought homes and land back 3/4 mile from the highway not expecting commercial buildings right on top of them. You would be encouraging industrial uses with this kind of dept.

The direction of the county is encouraging, and the fact that leaders and organizations, like the Blount Partnership, are spearheading this effort makes me excited for the future. I love seeing young people move here, and more kids who graduate staying, and more jobs coming available. We have an ideal mix between a beautiful, quaint, town and a place with enough industry that our residents and their graduating children have solid job options. The only bone I have to pick is this: Childcare for babies and toddlers who aren't yet old enough to enter the school system is a huge problem. I know there is an early childhood task force that was created, but action isn't being taken soon enough. The childcare options aren't expanding--we've already lost two day care/preschool options in the past year and my son has been on a waiting list for TWO YEARS. This is a big problem, because people in this county or can't get quality childcare, due to a severe shortage, can't work. Some moms that I have talked to have decided to move to another county or state where there are better childcare options. Because not everyone has the income to support one parent staying at home. I have seen a lot of communication and emphasis around fixing the traffic problem or fixing access to affordable housing, but the childcare crisis is a big deal and doesn't receive the same emphasis. Perhaps because a majority of the people in leadership are men? The loss of working parent due to lack of childcare is a detriment to the local economy. If more childcare and preschool options can't come available, I worry that it will continue to impact the job force and economy in addition to creating a negative sentiment. Blount County is truly wonderful. But we have got to have enough quality childcare that it doesn't take 2 years to get a placement.

The median age for Blount County is rising, an aging population is not good for the future of our county. We must do more to retain young workers and families. Planning for future economic development is necessary to provide jobs for a younger workforce needed for a sustainable future. It is vitally important that our growth plan take this into consideration, and provide adequate areas for economic expansion.

The Pellissippi Parkway should not be built because it will cause accelerated growth, going against the desire to keep Blount County rural. Development should be limited when roads are substandard. There is a balance that needs to be weighed between affordable housing and characteristics that give uniqueness to East TN and Blount County. I believe looking into incorporating green space with agricultural farming that allows farmers markets to thrive and provides valuable resource to the community.

There is enough large company growth in this area with Alcoa, Amazon, Denzo, and Smith & Wesson already overcoming infrastructure. Please maintain the suburban and rural areas by avoiding high density housing developments except possibly near city or commercial areas. Please preserve agricultural areas and open spaces. Most people chose to live here to avoid the congestion and over developed cities of Knoxville and Pigeon Forge areas. Prefer maintaining and serving the existing population over growth of the population.

There seems to be a lack of communication and coordination among major growth generators in the county. The best example of this I can think of recently is the Smith and Wesson site. Development of that industrial site is an obvious generator of growth. Promises by the cities of Alcoa and Maryville, the Blount Partnership and Blount County include promises of upgraded road systems and the installation of bicycle and pedestrian connections. None of these promises included consideration of the town of Louisville or its objectives. Yet the roadway improvements are largely within the boundaries of Louisville, and the proposed bikeway ignores completely potential linkages with the town and with its objective of developing pedestrian/bicycle connections. The dense, new development at the intersection of Topside and I-140 doesn't involve conversations with Louisville, although the new residents of those apartment complexes will be obvious candidates for using Louisville's Beale Park. Thoughtful coordination could be very helpful in the future, particularly since a majority of Louisville's residents consider

The snap shot you choose to show is almost 20 years past! It does not reflect current populations or traffic volume! How can your plan be realistic using 2 decade old information? Typical politicians in Blount County planning!

This plan seems to be more about increasing revenue" than improving the quality of life. I can tell you the the revenue will never keep up with the growth if you choose to go down this road. Please don't turn the beaut of Blount county into another Orange County Florida. You have nothing to gain and everything to loose."

We need to protect our agricultural lands and family farms and provide space for community gardens. Whatever we do, stop building Dollar Tree stores, and also slow the growth of apartments. The school systems cannot sustain the type of growth we are seeing in this county.

What is the depth of the city boundary off of Hwy 411 South. I guess it is now referred to as the RAC zone? Thank you.

Who the hell are you to decide. Who gave you power to do that? I know the people did not. So, it must have been the foreign corporation pretending to be the people's government. U.S. citizens are also foreign entities on our land and soil have you all done your FARA forms to our true de jure government The United States of America Unincorporated? Made up of State Nationals and Citizens.

Wow, West Maryville has become a two sided bottleneck...forget construction of the PPExtension. The unbridled construction in West Maryville, sprawl, has become a roadway headache for comers and goers.