





## Public Transit

Public Transportation provides a service that is essential to the well-being and livelihoods of many residents in the FBRMPO region. Individuals depend on public transportation services to get them to work, to the doctor, to the grocery store, and anywhere else they need to go. Approximately 1/3 of the U.S. population do not drive. For people who are unable, or choose not to drive themselves, these services are essential. Besides the benefits to individuals, communities that invest in reliable and convenient public transportation can help to encourage more efficient land-uses and provide a more equitable and environmentally-friendly transportation option.

### Current Public Transportation Services

Public transportation, in some shape or form, is provided in every county in the FBRMPO region, as well as the City of Asheville. All six public transportation systems use buses or

vans- no fixed guideway or passenger rail facilities have been established in the region.

Buncombe County currently has two public transportation providers: Mountain Mobility (provided by Buncombe County) and Asheville Redefines Transit (provided by the City of Asheville.) Both services are operated through third-party operators, but administered through their respective government bodies. The two services also account for the largest service area (by population) and the majority of unlinked rides in the region.

Asheville Redefines Transit (ART) has the most extensive fixed-route service in the region with seventeen routes that run six days a week; as of January 2015, nine of these routes run seven days a week. The routes have been designed in a radial system- all routes begin and end from a central point in downtown Asheville.

Mountain Mobility was established as Buncombe County’s public transportation provider in 1989 and offers deviated fixed-route service, demand-response service, and

Table 5.1: Unlinked Trips

Unlinked Trips Provided in FY 2013	
Service Provider	Number of Unlinked Trips
Asheville Redefines Transit	1,437,104
Mountain Mobility	159,974
Apple Country Transit	98,786
Haywood County Transit	43,825
Madison County Transit	29,600



subscription service. Mountain Mobility also partners with the City of Asheville to provide ADA paratransit within the city of Asheville and within ¾ mile of ART fixed routes outside of the city limits. Mountain Mobility also has three trailblazer routes with service to Black Mountain, Enka-Candler, and North Buncombe.

Henderson County has developed Apple Country Transportation, in partnership with Western Carolina Community Action, which has quickly grown from a demand-response transit provider to a service that provides three fixed-routes in Henderson County; one of which links to Asheville Redefines Transit near the Asheville Regional Airport. Apple Country Transportation also provides service for residents needing rides for groceries, errands, employment opportunities or training, medical trips, and general rural transit service.

Haywood County provides transportation services Monday through Friday for Haywood County residents. Services are also provided to transport people to Buncombe County.

Madison County provides transportation services Monday through Friday from 8:30am – 4:30pm. The transportation authority is a part of their community services department and works closely with many senior-care providers. Critically needed trips are provided for many people seeking medical care in nearby counties as well as general on-demand trips for employment, shopping, and social needs.

## Challenges

There are several challenges to improving public transportation options, the primary challenge being financial. While there is significant, and increasing, demand for public transportation in the region, sufficient funds are not available to provide the level of service being demanded. In the financial forecast made for this plan, the assumption is that state and federal sources of funding are likely to decrease in purchasing power, causing systems to struggle to maintain current levels of service, with limited, if any, possibilities for service expansion.

As more of the region urbanizes, more systems are becoming eligible for 5307 funds. At the time of this writing, the City of Asheville and Henderson County are the only regular recipients of 5307 funds, but with the expansion of the urbanized area in 2012 and funding decreases to rural transit providers, Buncombe County and Haywood County have shown increased interest in collecting 5307 funds. A study is expected to take place in FY 2016 to recommend sub-allocation formulas so the region can efficiently and effectively use 5307 funds.

Another challenge has been the efficient and effective coordination to supply inter-county transit service. While most counties in the region, with the exception of Buncombe and Transylvania Counties, offers service to other counties, this service can be difficult and is generally used for the most essential trips. Providing greater regional public transportation services

is becoming increasingly significant with the growth of employment centers and residential nodes in areas that are currently without reliable transit service. The MPO currently convenes a transit operators workgroup every other month and will continue to do so to continue to work towards enhanced cooperation and coordination on a regional level.

The “last mile” of the transit trip is still very difficult and dangerous in many places. Bus stops are often without nearby pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure. Crossings- especially across corridors that emphasize faster motor vehicle travel- put transit users in perilous situations. While much of this is stated in safety and bike/ pedestrian chapters, it is worth re-stating and contextualizing to transit. Providing people with safe and convenient access to bus stops can help improve riders’ comfort level and transit ridership.

## Recommendations:

- Increase fixed-routes with frequent headway (15 minutes or fewer) on high demand corridors
- Coordinate efforts between transit providers to improve regional transit service
- Targeted projects to increase safe pedestrian and bicycle access for the “last mile” trips
- Maintain or improve existing transit service levels
- Conduct a feasibility study to explore regional transit options



## Rail

Regular passenger train service to Asheville and Western North Carolina ended in 1975, yet the area still attracts millions of visitors each year - many from cities served by existing Amtrak service. Support for passenger rail service in the Land of Sky region remained strong. Many believe it will enhance economic development and improve connectivity with the state's transportation infrastructure.

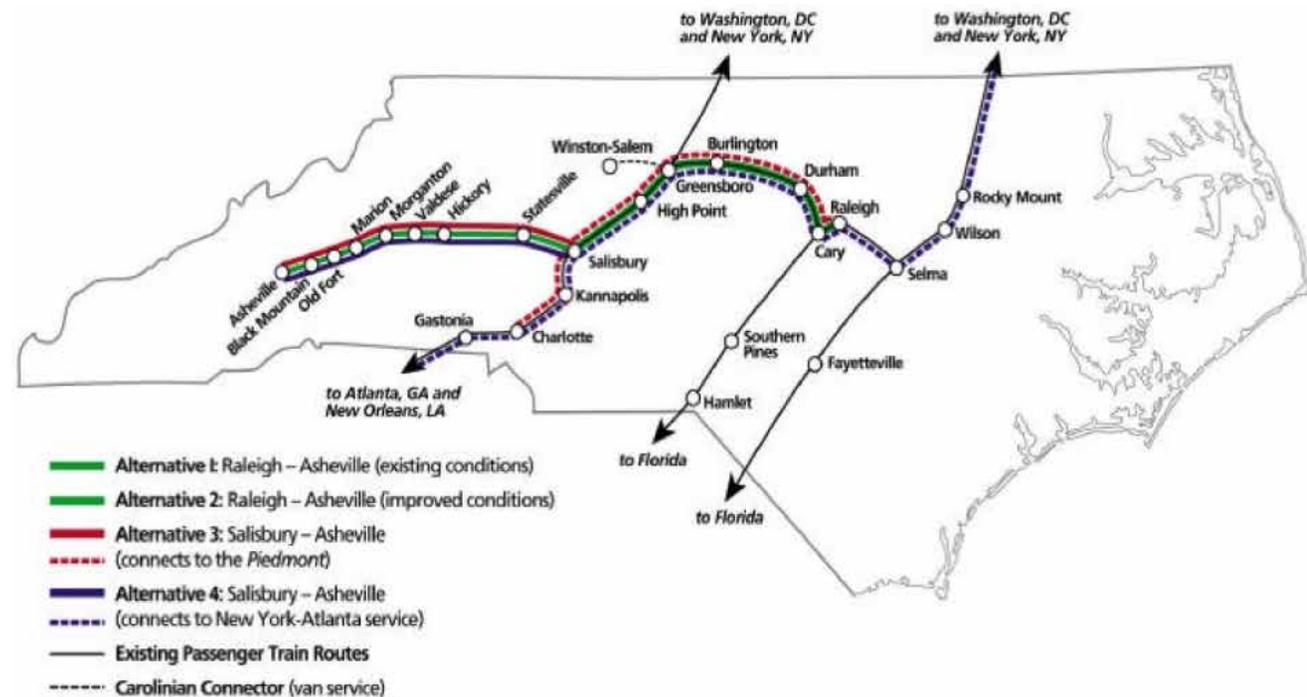
In March of 2000, the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with other regional leaders, formed the Western North Carolina Rail Corridor Committee to promote restoration of passenger rail service to the foothills and mountains of North Carolina and

to provide assistance and support to NCDOT. This committee consisted of stakeholders and representatives from communities along the proposed route between Salisbury and Asheville.

In the FBRMPO region, NCDOT adopted a phased plan to extend passenger rail service to Black Mountain and Asheville along the Norfolk Southern Track that runs from Old Fort to Asheville. The plan would increase the number of trains on the corridor through Black Mountain and along US 70 and includes rail safety improvements and the elimination of at-grade crossings wherever possible.

In 2001 a Western North Carolina Passenger Rail Study was completed and suggested

Map 5.1: WNC Passenger Rail Alternatives



four alternatives depicted in Figure 1. Each scenario was evaluated as a possible way to extend passenger rail service from Salisbury to Asheville. Each scenario incorporated a detailed review of potential ridership and revenue, as well as probable costs of operation. The plan would increase the number of trains on the corridor through Black Mountain and along US 70 and includes rail safety improvements and the elimination of at-grade crossings wherever possible.

### Western North Carolina Passenger Rail Study Alternatives

**Alternate 1** - Raleigh to Asheville via Salisbury

- Trains would operate from Raleigh to Salisbury to Asheville with stops at 13 cities along the way.

**Alternate 2** - Raleigh - Raleigh to Asheville via Salisbury

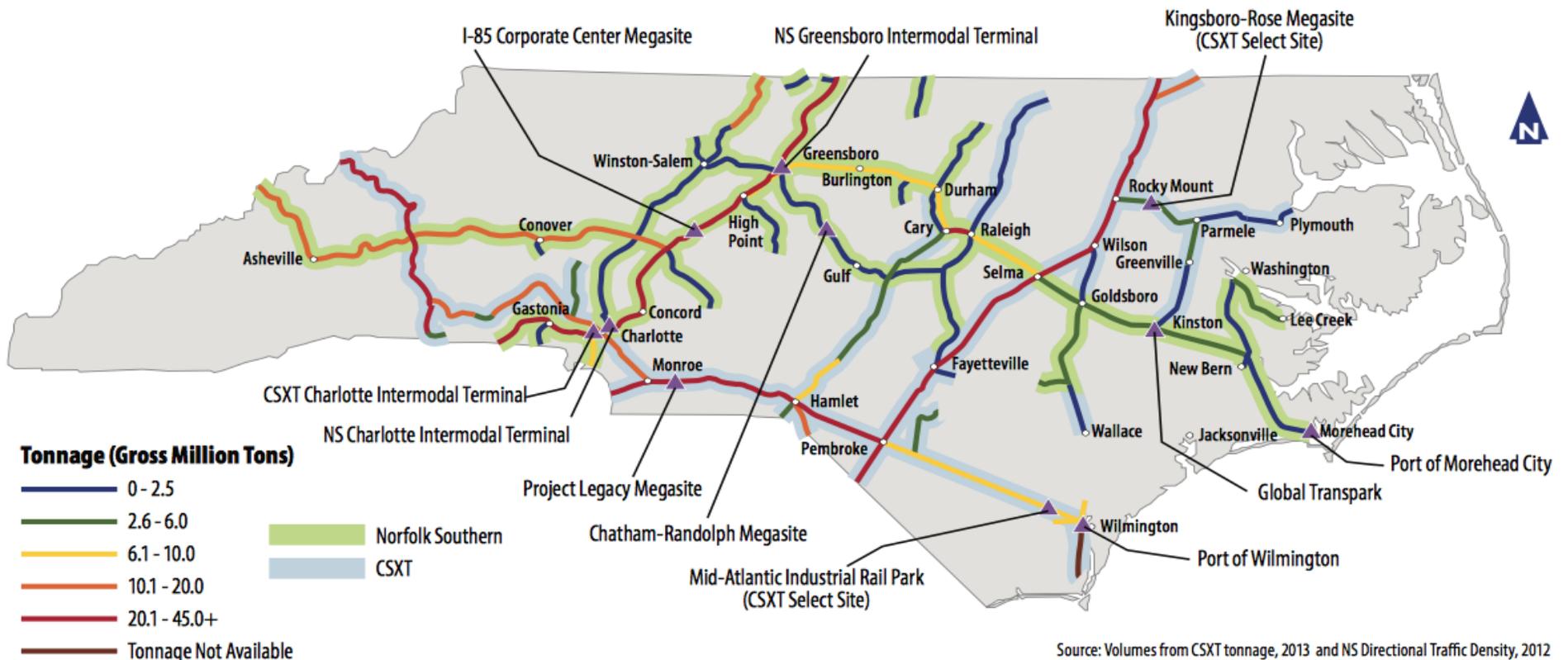
- Trains would operate along the 270-mile route between Raleigh and Asheville via Salisbury with 13

stops. Improvements to the track infrastructure would also be made between Raleigh and Salisbury to increase the average speed to 46 mph and decrease travel time to just under six hours.

**Alternate 3** - Salisbury to Asheville with connections to Piedmont service

- Trains would operate between Salisbury and Asheville only, but passengers could easily connect to the existing daily Raleigh-Charlotte Piedmont service. The Salisbury-Asheville portion

Map 5.2: Class I Rail Corridors, Volumes and Key Facilities [www.ncbytrain.org/\\_resources/download/StateRailPlanExecutiveSummary](http://www.ncbytrain.org/_resources/download/StateRailPlanExecutiveSummary).



of the trip is 139 miles with an average speed of 37 mph.

**Alternate 4** - Salisbury to Asheville with connections to New York-Atlanta service

- Trains would operate independently between Salisbury and Asheville with one coach that connects to/splits off from New York-Atlanta train. Under this alternate Northbound passengers could depart from Asheville, arrive in Salisbury and transfer to the New-York or Atlanta bound train.

### Railroad Freight

Railroads are an important part of the FBRMPO areas integrated transportation system. There is increased interest in rail as an economically efficient and environmentally sound mode to transport goods in and around our area.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) promotes and regulates safety in the nation's railroad industry in coordination with State Departments of Transportation and the railroad industry

### At-Grade Crossings

At-grade crossings are a safety concern for NCDOT, Norfolk Southern, the FRA, and the FBRMPO, particularly when they involve heavily traveled roads and high train frequency. According to the 2004 USDOT Action Plan for Highway-rail Crossings Safety and Trespass Prevention, "Trespassing on railroad property and collisions at highway-rail grade crossings

are the two leading causes of death in the entire railroad industry. The areas of particular concern in the FBRMPO region are:

- The line through downtown Black Mountain (the same on that will provide passenger service) has seen an increase in the frequency of trains up to 22 trains per day, causing traffic to back up through an already congested area of Town at various times throughout the day.
- This same line continues to parallel US 70 through Black Mountain and the unincorporated area of Swannanoa. At Lytle Cove Road, which is the only road into a developing neighborhood, residents are concerned for the lack of access in or out of Lytle Cove anytime a train passes, particularly for Emergency Services.
- US 25 at Biltmore Village is a heavily congested area at anytime, but experiences considerable delays in traffic flow whenever a train moves through.
- Riverside Drive and Meadow Road in Asheville are popular roadways for cyclists and the future location of the proposed Riverway project through Asheville. Tracks that cross the roadway diagonally in these locations have cause several severe bicycle wrecks. Attempts by the City, the NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, and the

local bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force to work with Norfolk Southern on crossing improvements for bicycles have not been successful.

- In Waynesville, train activity has decreased in frequency to 1-2 trains per day along the lines (formally controlled by CSX) through Town. However, crossing safety improvements were requested and funded through TIP # Z3814-A at Hazelwood Avenue.
- Trespass concerns for tracks in general often occur where either tracks which are not being used attract children or others to explore or walk along it, or where there are not adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities and railroad right-of-way is perceived as the preferred route to take than a busy street of high traffic volumes.

Map 5.3: NC Rail System

# North Carolina RAILROAD SYSTEM



Beverly E. Perdue, Governor  
 Gene Conti, Secretary  
 Jim Westmoreland, Deputy Secretary for Transit  
 Patrick B. Simmons, Director, Rail Division  
 155B MSC, Raleigh, NC 27699-1553  
 Phone: (919) 733-7245, Fax: (919) 715-6580

### NC's Amtrak Train Stations

Burlington	Gaithersburg	Rocky Mount
Cary	Greensboro	Salisbury
Charlotte	Harrisville	Selma
Durham	High Point	Southern Pines
Raleigh	Kannapolis	Wilson

1-800-BYTRAIN (1-800-298-7245) - Information  
 1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245) - Reservations

### Legend

- Going to 8 Centers
- - - - - Preserved Rail Corridor/Out of Service

REPORTING AGENCY	RAILROAD NAME
ACWR	Aberdeen Carolina & Western Railway
AR	Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad
ARC	Alexander Railroad
ATW	Atlantic & Western Railway, LP
CA	Chesapeake & Albemarle Railroad
CALA	Carolina Southern Railroad
CFR	Cape Fear Railways
CLNA	Carolina Coastal Railway
CMR	Craggy Mountain Railroad
CPL	Camp Lejeune Railroad

REPORTING AGENCY	RAILROAD NAME
CSX	CSX Transportation
CTR	Clinton Terminal Railroad
CMCY	Caldwell County Railroad
HPTD	High Point, Thomasville & Denton Railroad
LRB	Laurinburg & Southern Company, Inc.
MHSF	Morehead and South Fork Railroad Company
NCDOT	N.C. Department of Transportation
NCR	North Carolina Railroad Company
NCVA	North Carolina & Virginia Railroad
NCYR	Nash County Railroad

REPORTING AGENCY	RAILROAD NAME
NHV	New Hope Valley Railroad
NS	Norfolk Southern Corporation
PDRR	Pee Dee River Railway
RSNR	Red Springs & Northern Railroad
SLR	State University Railroad
TBR	Thermal Belt Railway
US	US Military
WSS	Winston-Salem Southbound Railway
WTR	Wilmington Terminal Railroad, Inc.
YVRR	Yadkin Valley Railroad

Railway Association of North Carolina - www.norailways.org



CSX Emergency Number  
 1-800-232-1444  
 NS Emergency Number  
 1-800-453-2530

January 2010



## Air

The Asheville Regional Airport (AVL) is a Class C airport located in South Asheville. From 1995 through 2010, enplanements increased from 294,780 to 378,087 respectively, or by 31.31%. The airport has a year-round based aircraft population of about 145, approximately 170 in the summer season. An economic impact study determined that Asheville Regional Airport generates 1,700 local jobs and nearly half a billion dollars annually. (Source <http://flyavl.com/about-the-airport/planning-development/master-plan-documents/>)

The Asheville Regional Airport updated their master plan in 2013 in order to plan for responsible development over a two decade period. The Master Plan considers existing facilities, historical operational levels, and existing capacity to address future operations and future facility requirements. Alternative plan concepts took financial constraints into consideration.

### Existing Facilities

Currently the Asheville Regional Airport has a single 8,001 foot runway that meets Airport Reference Code (ARC). Category C-III standards, which are designed to accommodate aircraft with approach speeds between 121 knots and 141 knots, and with wingspans between 79 and 181 feet. Other existing features include:

- A full Category I Instrument Landing System for Runway 16/34
- A 163-acre terminal area, with air carrier

facilities occupying 50 acres, general aviation areas, navigational aids (Nav aids), and maintenance facilities occupying the remaining property.

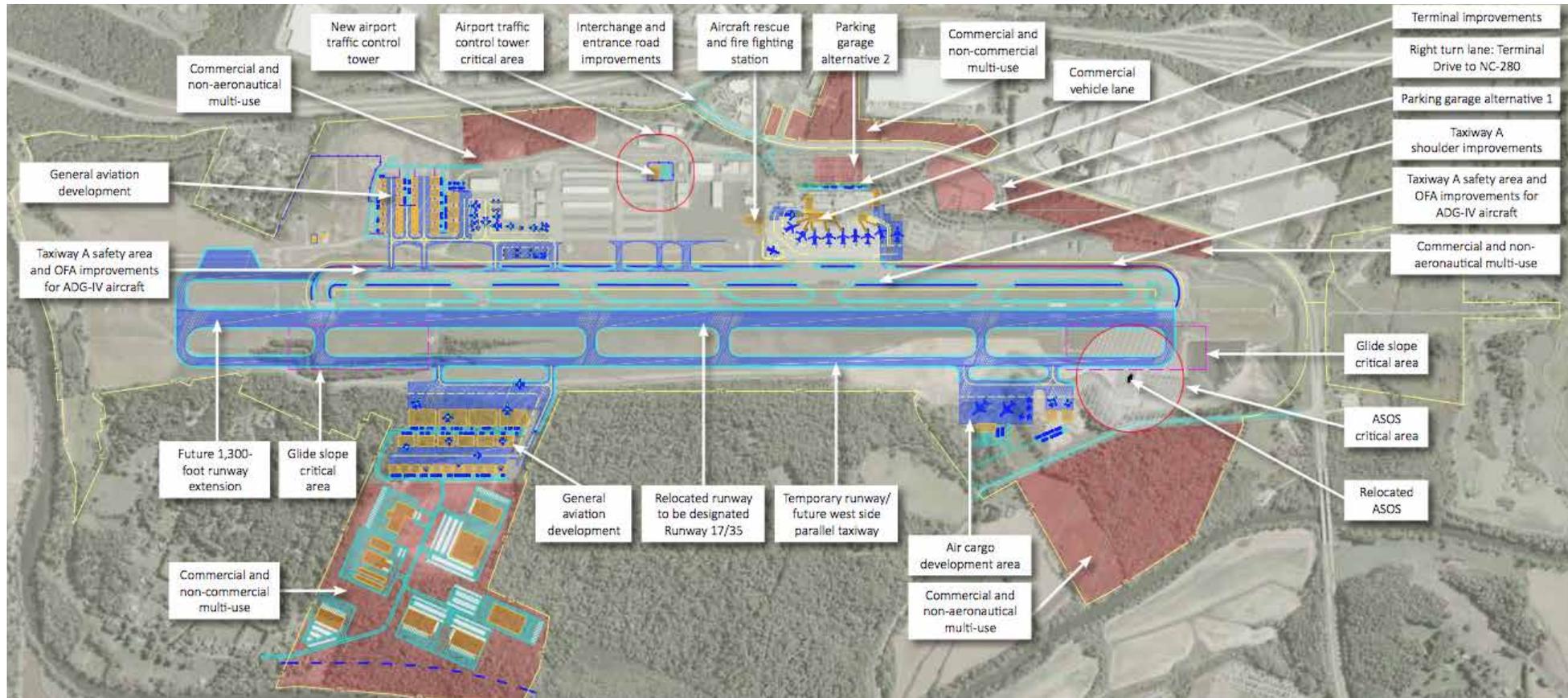
- Topographic constraints limit the airport air carrier development and activity on the south side of the airport, while Airport Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF), cargo, and general aviation developments bound the air carrier parking apron's northern side.
- The terminal buildings are a typical linear layout with two significant primary functions, ticketing and baggage claim, which have the ability to expand independently as demand dictates.
- The Fixed Based Operator (FBO), Landmark Aviation, is located on the north ramp. The FBP provides an extensive range of services; among them are fuel, air charter, pilot services and flight instruction.

(Asheville Regional Airport Master Plan)

### Projections of Aviation Demand

The Asheville Regional Airport Master Plan states that two of the most important factors in analyzing future growth of an airport and determining the facilities needed to meet that demand are accurate projections of "future passenger enplanements and operational levels". (Asheville Regional Airport Master Plan)

Figure 5.1: Asheville Regional Airport Master Plan 2013



### Capital Improvements

According to the Master Plan, \$71.1 million in planned investments will occur to address critical airport needs through 2017. Primary issues affecting Asheville Regional Airport are:

- Airfield improvements to meet FAA design standards
- Terminal Area property configuration
- Terminal Area constraints and

development limitations

- Parking demand versus land capacity
- Aircraft Operating Apron Capacity and Mix

(Asheville Regional Airport Master Plan)

Generally, the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) will fund approximately 90% of most of the development items recommended

in this plan. The remaining 10% of these federally eligible projects' cost are normally shared by the State and the airport sponsor. Additionally, a small portion of the projects, that are non-eligible for federal funds, would regularly be funded by the State and the airport sponsor.



## Freight

The movement of goods is essential to fueling regional and domestic economic engines. Executing more efficient strategies to move these goods bolsters local and regional economies. Strategic freight planning fortifies the preservation of the entire transportation system.

The French Broad River MPO region exhibits a unique challenge in regards to freight due to geographical constraints that limit the number of routes available for transport of ground freight. It is for that reason that freight transportation serves as an essential element of future long range planning efforts. Freight is most commonly transported utilizing trucks, contributing to rising levels of highway congestion and safety concerns. Strategic regional freight planning is critical to congestion mitigation, safety (in 2013, 3964 fatalities, or 12.11% of all crashes involved a large truck in the U.S.), pavement health, and lower emissions. (Source: NHTSA, June 2015. Traffic Safety Facts, 2013 Data: Large Trucks. [www.nr0.nhtsa.dot.gov/pubs/812150.pdf](http://www.nr0.nhtsa.dot.gov/pubs/812150.pdf))

Nationally, truck freight traffic is increasing due to the reliability and efficiency of the mode. By 2020, 90.1 million tons of freight is expected to travel throughout the US, an 80% increase from 2002. The effects of congestion are demonstrated by an annual loss of \$8 billion dollars by the domestic trucking industry. (The Good Haul)

USDOT identifies the following issues as paramount to the development of effective

freight planning:

- Most of these agencies have more experience considering the movement of passengers rather than the movement of freight;
- Current and historical data on freight, especially truck movements, are extremely limited; and;
- Most of the models in the literature are highly complex, and require data that are not generally available to planning agencies.

In 2014, Asheville MSA contributed \$1.1 billion in exports. Export flows from the Western North Carolina region to seaports are depicted in the Table 5.2.

Increasing amounts of freight traffic will decrease the life span of highways and state maintained roads. If the region continues to add additional truck freight traffic to the roads, additional funding will be needed for maintenance and resurfacing in an effort to maintain the system. Maps 5.4 - 5.9 demonstrate existing freight volumes in the region.

### Local Truck Restrictions and Networks

Truck restrictions were created for routes around the state in response to NC Senate Bill 1695. These are common practice throughout the nation and are enacted for multiple reasons which may include concerns for safety, noise and road impacts. See Table 5.3 for further detail on existing truck restrictions in the FBRMPO region.

### Inland Port

In October 2013 the Greer Inland Port opened. Within the first year the port proved significant to the region and will likely be the Inland Port for WNC due to its proximity to transportation infrastructure. The port made 58,407 rail moves in FY15, and container volumes increased 14%. The port extends the Port of Charleston, 212 miles inland and moved 1.9 million TEUS (twenty-foot equivalent units) in FY 15 and 1.1 million containers.

Table 5.2: <http://greertoday.com/greer-sc/inland-port-surpasses-volume-projections-5-years-ahead-of-schedule/2015/07/15/>

WNC Exports Levels and Destinations <sup>1</sup>		
% of total exports	TEUs	Destination
33.9 %	3,500	Charleston, SC
30.1%	3,100	Savannah, GA
16.1%	1,650	Miami/W. Palm Beach/Port Everglades, FL
12.6%	1,300	Jacksonville, FL
5.9%	610	Norfolk/ Newport News, VA
0.5%	50	Richmond, VA

### Greer Inland Port



Table 5.3: NC Truck Restrictions

Buncombe, Haywood and Henderson County Interstate Freight Traffic Volume July-September 2009 NC Truck Restrictions for Buncombe, Haywood and Henderson County					
Route	County	From	To	Miles	Restriction Type
NC 151	Buncombe	SR 1100	Henderson Co Line	4.35	No truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'
NC 191	Buncombe	I-240	US 19-23		Trucks and other vehicles of a gross vehicle weight in excess of 13,000 lbs.
NC 197	Buncombe	US 19/23	Yancey Co Line	15.43	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'
NC 209	Haywood	I-40	Madison Co Line	12.24	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'
NC 213	Madison	US 19-23/I-26	US 25/70		No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
NC 215	Haywood	Transylvania County Line	US 19/23	26.05	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
NC 225	Henderson	US 25 BUS/176	US 25	10.62	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'. No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
US 19	Haywood	SR 1304	Jackson Co Line	3.62	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'
US 64	Transylvania	Jackson Co Line	Henderson Co Line		Trucks and other vehicles of a gross weight in excess of 20,000 lbs shall be prohibited
US 64	Henderson	SR 1574	US 74A	5.61	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'. No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48' from SR 1783 eastward to US 74A
US 74A	Buncombe	I-40	Henderson Co Line	11.5	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'. No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'.
US 74A	Henderson	Buncombe Co Line	Rutherford Co Line	6.75	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'. No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
US 176	Henderson	US 25	Polk Co Line	4.39	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'. No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
US 276	Haywood	Transylvania Co Line	NC 215 + NC 110	14.75	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'. No truck tractors with trailers longer than 30' from SR 1887 southward to Transylvania County Line
NC 9	Buncombe	I-40	Henderson Co. Line	14.79	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30'. No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48' from SR 2500 to the Henderson Co Line
NC 9	Henderson	Buncombe Co Line	US 74A	2.00	No through truck tractors with trailers longer than 30', and no truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
NC 63	Buncombe	Madison Co Line	SR 1001	2.35	No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
NC 251	Buncombe	US/19/23	Madison Co Line	12.75	No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'
NC 694	Buncombe	US 70 (Tunnel Rd)	Blue Ridge Parkway	6.35	No truck tractors with trailers longer than 48'

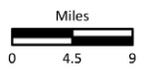
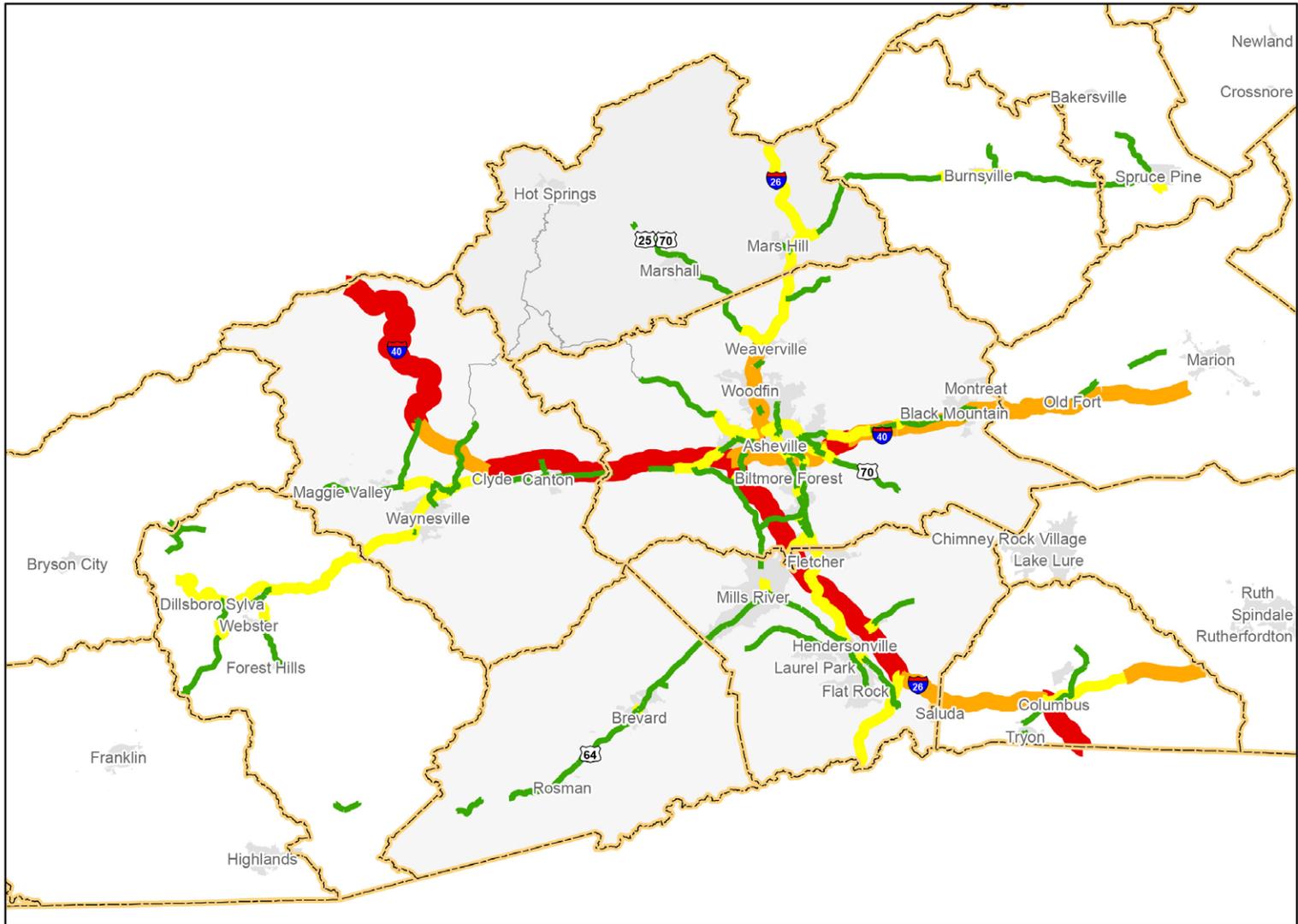
Table 5.3: NC Truck Restrictions

Buncombe, Haywood and Henderson County Interstate Freight Traffic Volume July-September 2009 NC Truck Restrictions for Buncombe, Haywood and Henderson County					
Route	County	From	To	Miles	Restriction Type
SR 1004	Buncombe	Haywood Co Line	NC 63		No through trucks with trailers longer than 48'
SR 1004	Haywood	I-40	Buncombe Co Line		No through trucks with trailers longer than 48'
SR 1361	Henderson	Fanning Bridge Road	US 25		No through trucks
SR 2702	Buncombe	SR 2708	SR 2531/SR 2706		No through truck tractors with trailers
SR 3186	Buncombe	US 25	US 25 Alternate		Through vehicles with three or more axles are prohibited
SR 3530	Buncombe	NC 280	US 25		Through vehicles with three or more axles are prohibited

Map 5.4: Truck Traffic

# FBRMPO AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRUCK TRAFFIC

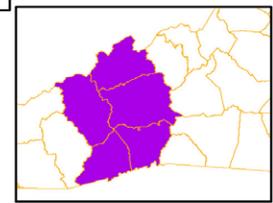
Source: NC DOT



**Annual Average Truck Traffic**

- 301 - 1000
- 1001 - 2500
- 2501 - 5000
- 5001 - 9320

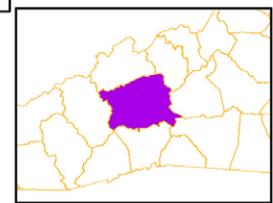
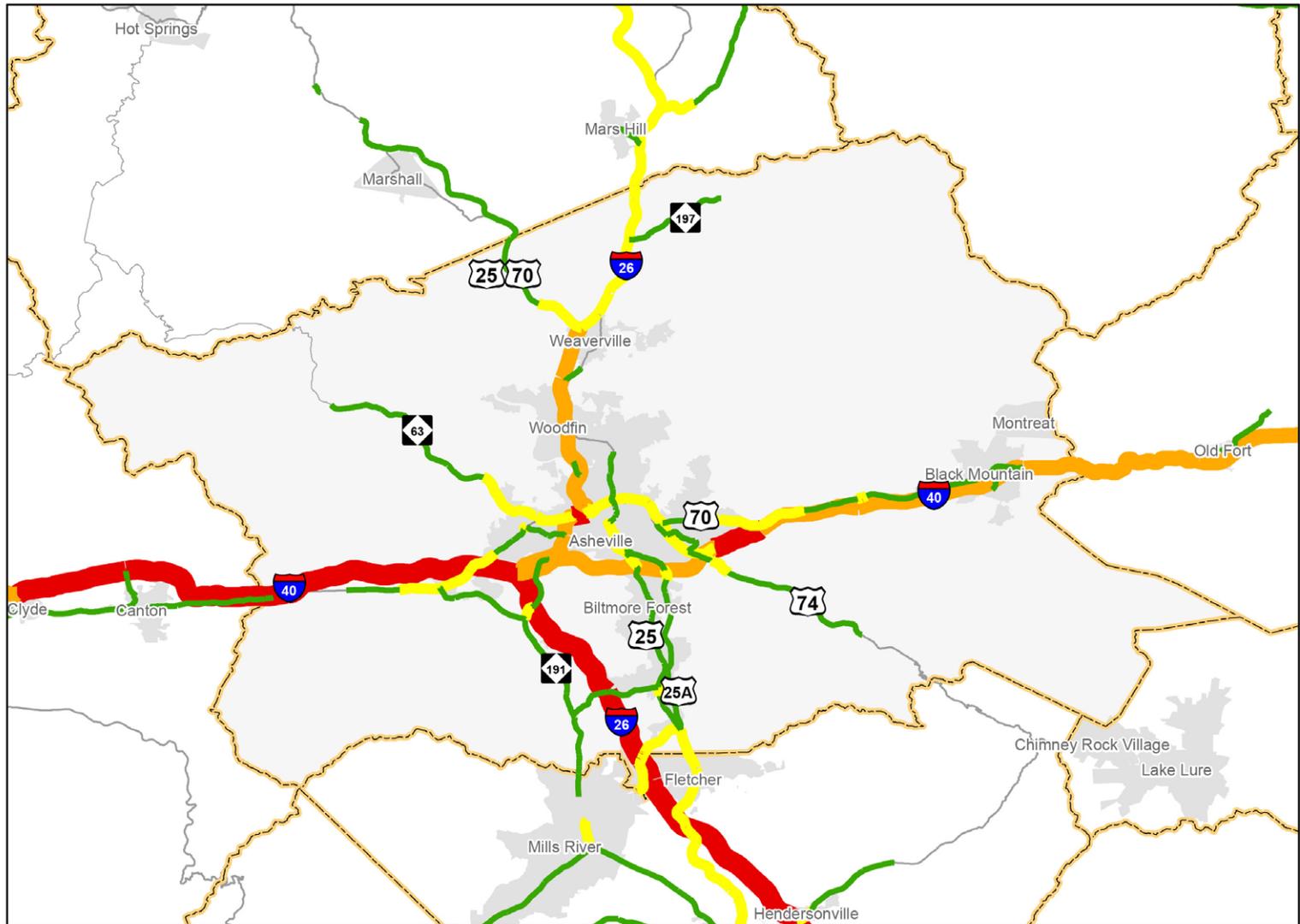
- NCDOT Roads
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries



Map 5.5: Truck Traffic

# BUNCOMBE COUNTY AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRUCK TRAFFIC

Source: NC DOT



- Annual Average Truck Traffic**
- 301 - 1000
  - 1001 - 2500
  - 2501 - 5000
  - 5001 - 9320
- NCDOT Roads
  - County Boundary
  - Municipal Boundaries

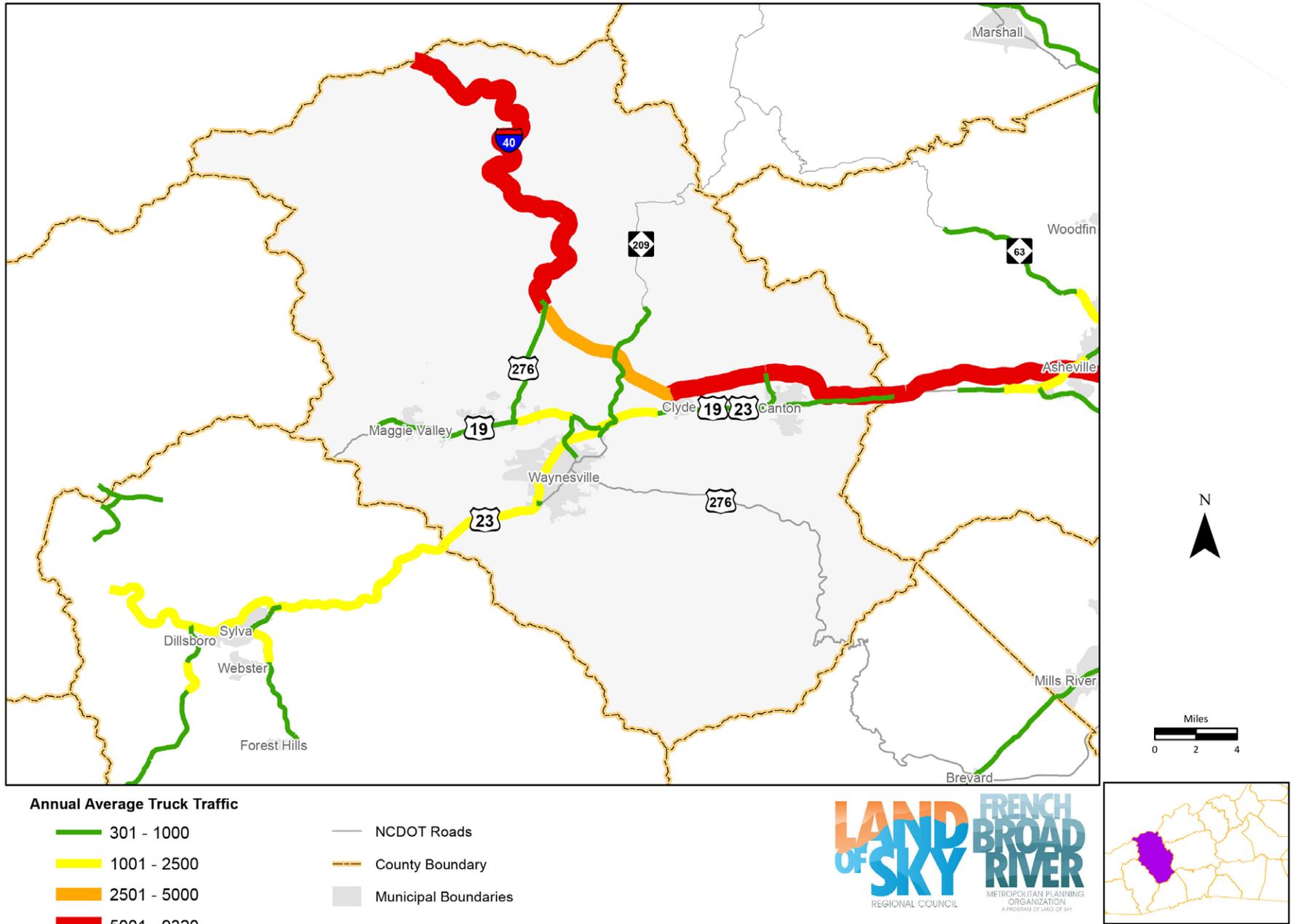


Source: 2013 NCDOT AADT Data

Map 5.6: Truck Traffic

# HAYWOOD COUNTY AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRUCK TRAFFIC

Source: NC DOT

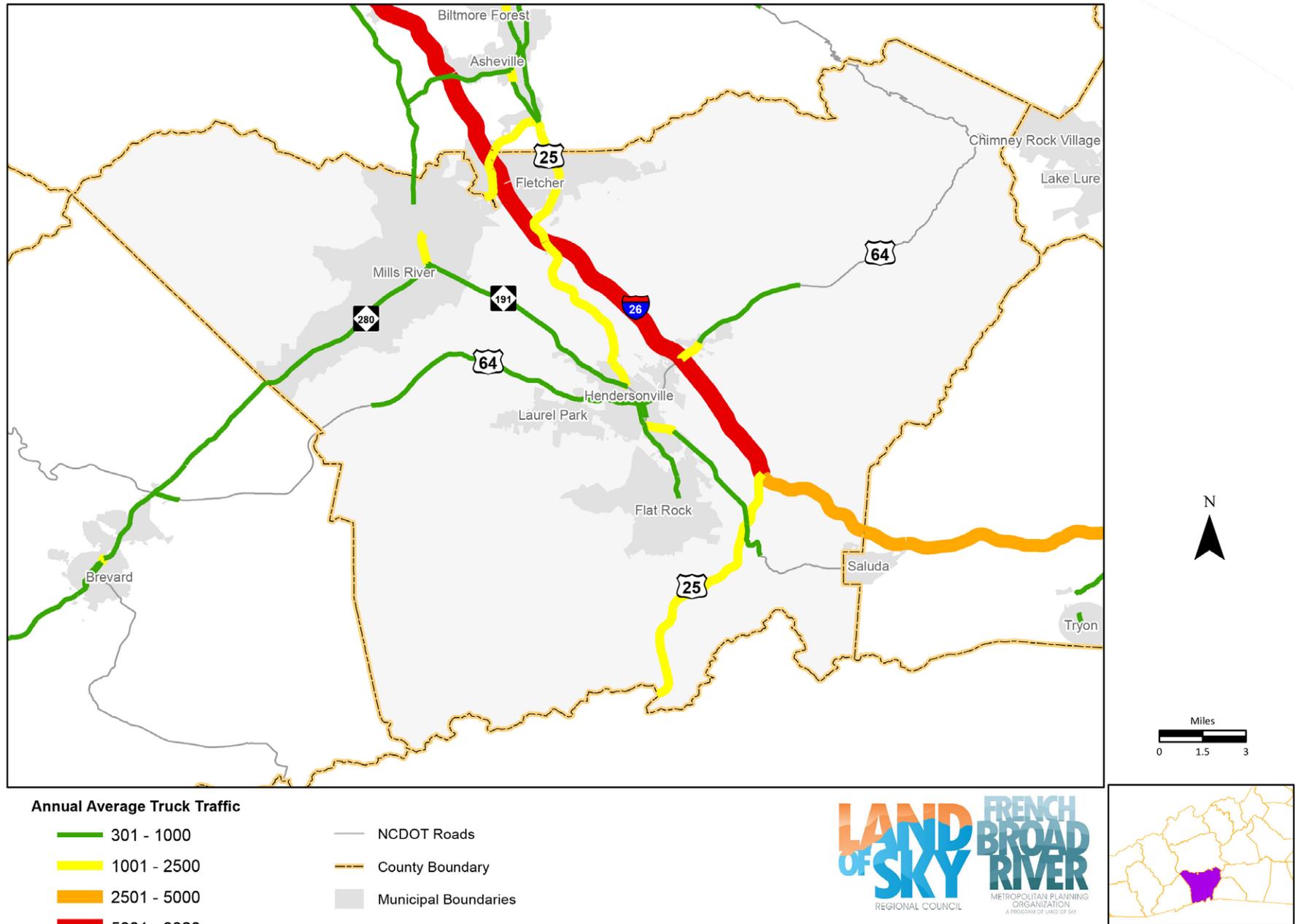


Source: 2013 NCDOT AADT Data

Map 5.7: Truck Traffic

# HENDERSON COUNTY AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRUCK TRAFFIC

Source: NC DOT

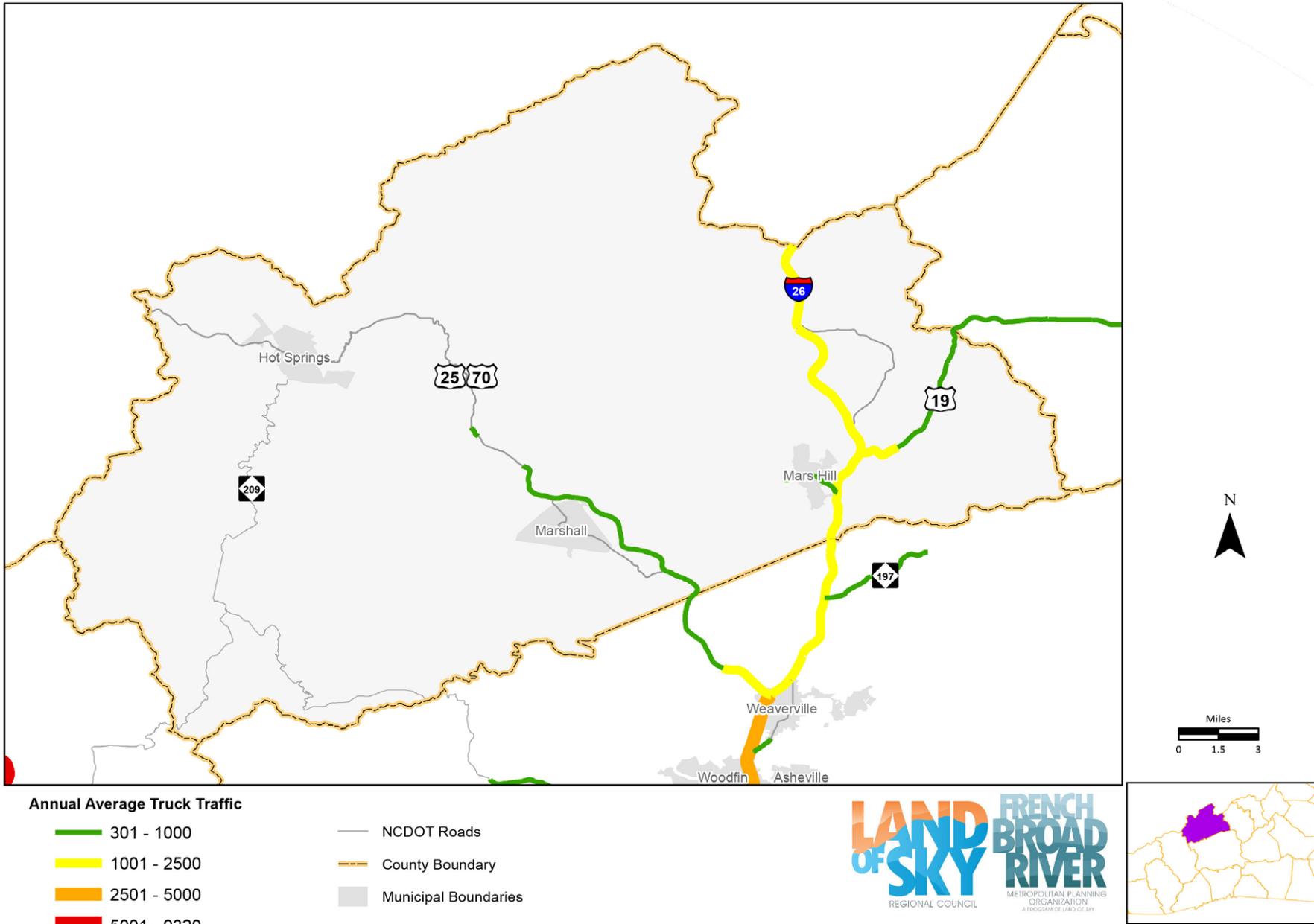


Source: 2013 NCDOT AADT Data

Map 5.8: Truck Traffic

# MADISON COUNTY AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRUCK TRAFFIC

Source: NC DOT

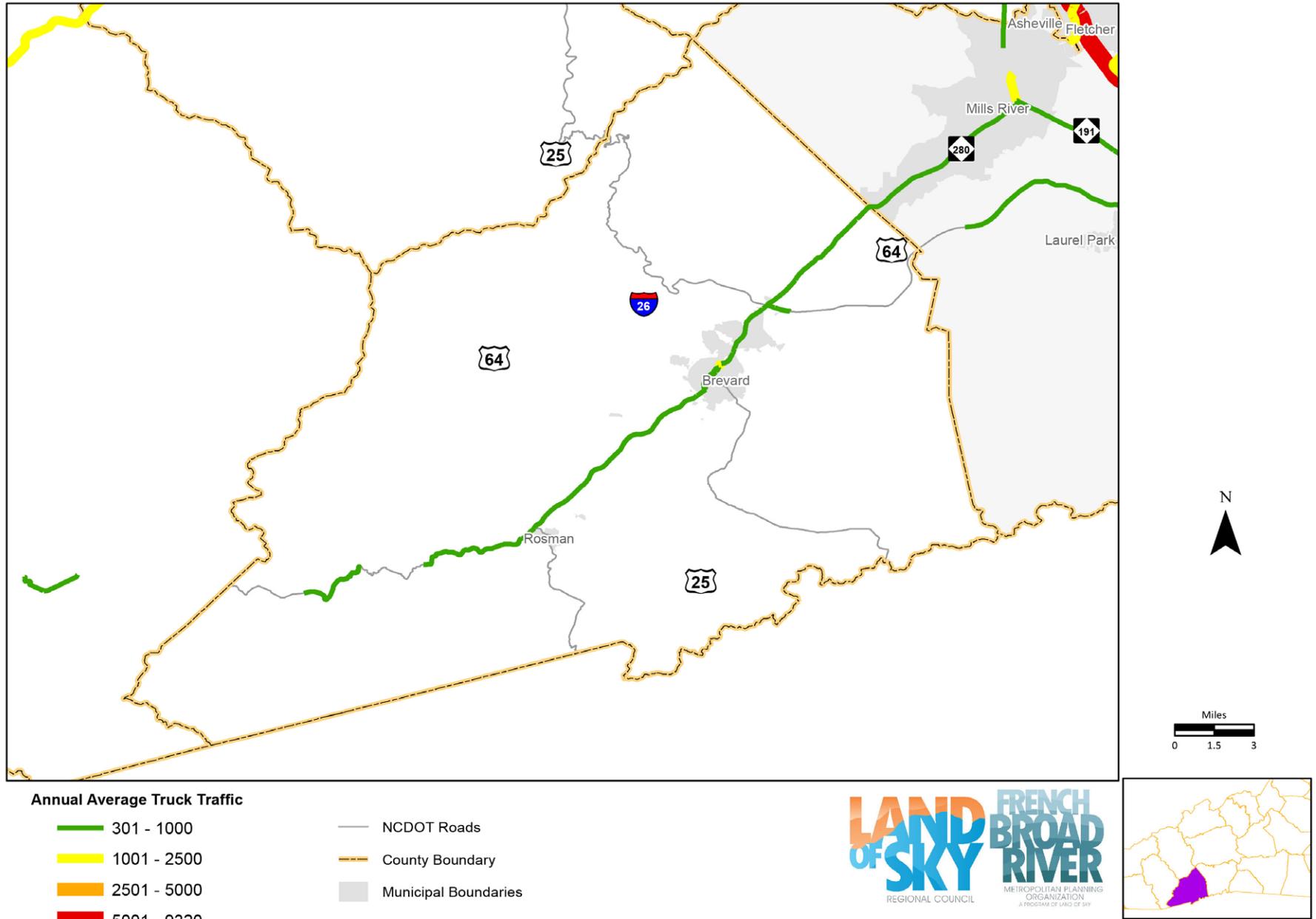


Source: 2013 NCDOT AADT Data

Map 5.9: Truck Traffic

# TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRUCK TRAFFIC

Source: NC DOT



Source: 2013 NCDOT AADT Data



## Bike / Pedestrian

Safe and convenient travel for bicyclists and pedestrians is integral to developing a thriving, healthy region in the 21st Century.

Since the development of the FBRMPO's 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan for the region, several important initiatives have been undertaken. In 2009, the North Carolina Department of Transportation adopted its Complete Streets Policy which encourages streets to be designed to enable safe access for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, regardless of age or ability. In 2012, NCDOT published its Complete Streets Planning and Design Guidelines to give guidance on the policy. Local governments have also increased efforts to provide safer travel for all users and by hosting events and campaigns to encourage safer travel for all modes. Finally, spurred on by a disproportionate number of bicyclist and pedestrian fatalities, federal, state, and local agencies have provided training materials and courses to illustrate the benefits of providing safe and convenient access for pedestrians and bicyclists and the strategies that can be used to achieve that.

Improving conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians is a high priority for many of the communities in the FBRMPO region, evidenced by the numerous bicycle and pedestrian plans adopted by many of the counties and municipalities, as well as the numerous comprehensive plans that name improving facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians as a primary goal. The FBRMPO has assisted communities applying for NCDOT's Bicycle

and Pedestrian Planning Grants. These grants, offered by NCDOT since 2004, enable local governments to hire consultants to develop comprehensive bicycle and/or pedestrian plans for their communities. FBRMPO staff has played an active role in serving on steering committees for these plans and providing input and data when requested.

The FBRMPO has been working to achieve a better quality of service for bicyclists and pedestrians by spearheading a number of initiatives and providing support in others. The FBRMPO, along with the Land of Sky Regional Council and the Southwestern Regional Commission developed the Blue Ridge Bike Plan in 2014. The Blue Ridge Bike Plan identifies corridors to be improved throughout the five-county region as well as two additional counties (Jackson and Swain) in Western North Carolina.

The FBRMPO has also established a pedestrian count program, utilizing its mobile pedestrian counter. These counts have helped to inform local staff and elected officials of pedestrian volumes in areas with new or developing greenways, sidewalks, or other infrastructure, or areas of noted interest such as downtowns or near schools. Counts are taken for one week at a time and reports are circulated to local government staff. An ArcGIS database is currently being developed to make these counts more easily accessible to interested members of the public.

These planning efforts are all done to address the issues and concerns regarding the safety of current users of bicycle and pedestrian

infrastructure as well as help to prioritize areas that are currently in need of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Between 2007 and 2012, 217 bicyclists were reported in crashes in the five-county region, including 4 bicyclist fatalities. In that same time period, 758 pedestrians were reported in crashes in the five-county region, including 42 fatalities. Many of these fatalities occurred in areas without infrastructure for all users.

Working to make our region safer for people to travel without a personal automobile can help reduce emissions, lead to more compact developmental patterns, boost local economies, provide a means of travel that will positively impact the health of all users, and responsibly provide access to destinations for people who are unable or unwilling to use a personal automobile (children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and people who choose not to drive for a variety of reasons.)

Table 5.4: Bike / Pedestrian Counts

Municipality	Facility	Month	Trips counted over 1-week period
Asheville	Reed Creek Greenway	September 15 - 23, 2014	2775
Asheville	South French Broad Avenue	October 28 - November 4, 2014	992
Asheville	Biltmore Avenue	December 2 - 9, 2014	27200
Asheville	Haywood Road	December 12 - 19, 2014	8881
Asheville	Broadway Avenue	February 26 - March 5, 2015	1353
Asheville	Merrimon Avenue	March 6 - 13, 2015	438
Asheville	Haywood Road	May 21 - 28, 2015	9407
Asheville	Biltmore Avenue	May 29 - June 5, 2015	35474
Hendersonville	Main Street	December 22 - 29, 2014	13103
Hendersonville	Four Seasons Blvd	March 13 - 20, 2015	798
Hendersonville	Oklawaha Greenway	June 23 - 30, 2015	1598
Waynesville	Main Street	January 19 - 26, 2015	2968
Waynesville	E Main Street	April 15 - 22, 2015	4046
Black Mountain	Cherry Street	November 11 - December 2, 2014	3291
Black Mountain	State Street	February 18 - 25, 2015	1563
Black Mountain	Flat Creek Greenway	June 6 - 13, 2015	1517
Marshall	Main Street	February 2 - 9, 2015	1453
Marshall	Main Street	May 5 - 12, 2015	5184
Mars Hill	NC 213	January 26 - February 2, 2015	1454
Mars Hill	College Street	April 27 - May 4, 2015	2089
Flat Rock	NC 225	March 21 - 28, 2015	77
Canton	Main Street	January 9 - 16, 2015	803
Canton	Mills Avenue	April 7 - 14, 2015	637
Weaverville	Main Street	November 17 - 24, 2014	2968
Weaverville	Main Street	February 10 - 17, 2015	1343
Weaverville	Main Street	May 13 - 20, 2015	5311



## Land Use and Built Environment

Integrating land use development decisions with transportation planning is key to a well-connected infrastructure network. Few decisions matter more to transportation systems than how an area is developed in the surrounding area. For example, if a large residential development is built on a rural route, the traffic impacts could change how the road functions. It could add pedestrian traffic where there are no sidewalks, greatly increase the number of vehicles traveling on the road, and decrease safety. Likewise, if a road is widened to accommodate a higher amount of traffic or a new commercial facility, there could be more access points than is desirable for safety.

During the GroWNC visioning process, the preferred scenario was chosen based on a number of factors, including land use development as it relates to transportation. The preferred scenario is shown in Map 5.10 and highlights the areas desirable for future growth – chiefly those already along major transportation corridors where infrastructure exists.

While the responsibility for land use planning rests with the local governments, FBRMPO can work with the municipalities to identify needs, challenges and solutions related to the transportation system. Areas in the FBRMPO region with the most direct impacts from land use decisions on the transportation system include:

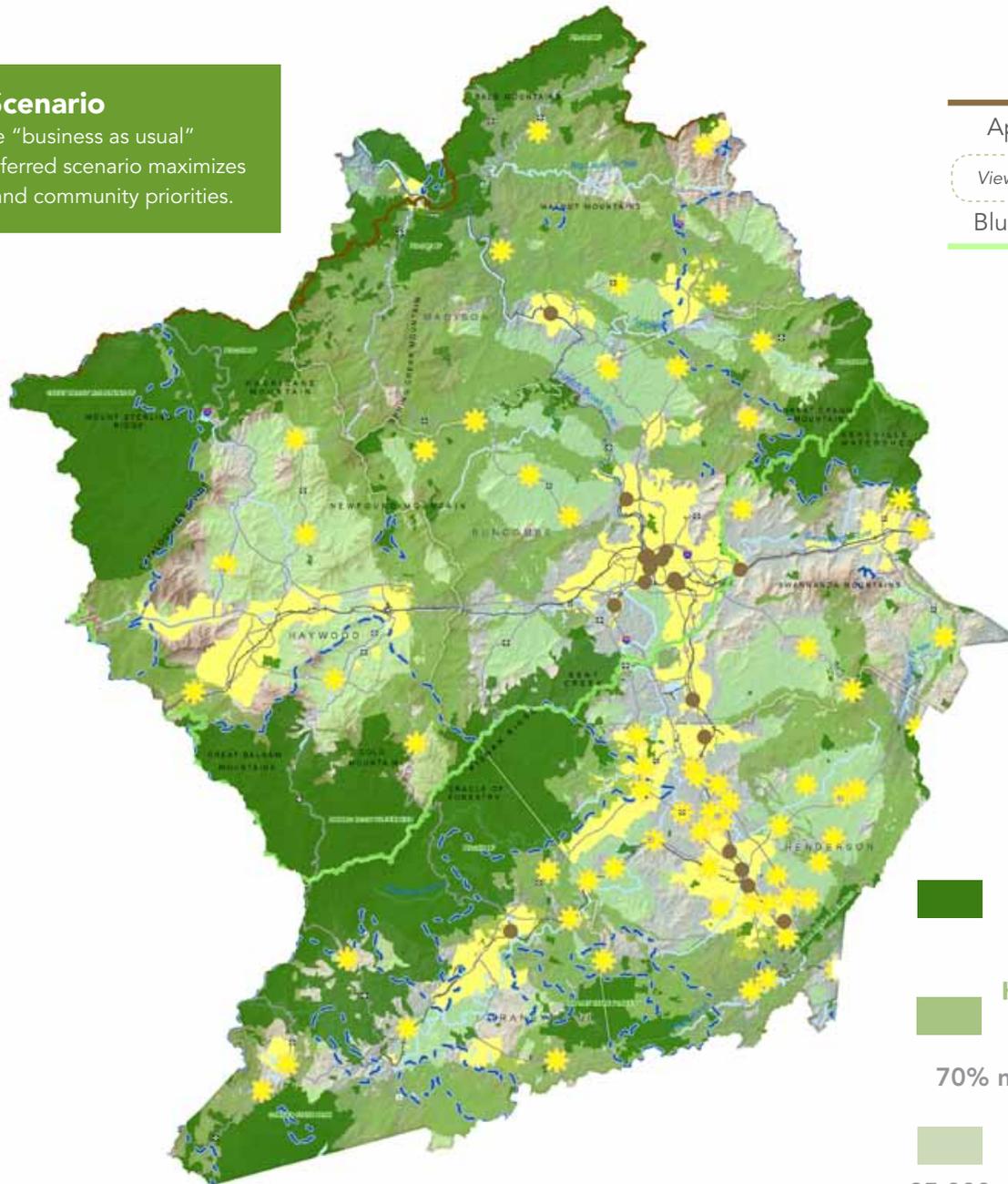
- Transit access points
- Downtown and village areas with a high amount of pedestrian traffic
- Complete Streets and context-sensitive design
- Rural routes
- Access management on major roadways

For the purposes of developing the Regional Travel Demand Model, a more conservative GroWNC “Business as Usual” scenario was used to project household and employment changes across the region. Map 5.11 illustrates the Business as Usual scenario.

Map 5.10: GroWNC Preferred Scenario

**Preferred Scenario**

Compared to the “business as usual” scenario, the preferred scenario maximizes GroWNC goals and community priorities.



Appalachian Trail

Viewsheds are protected.

Blue Ridge Parkway

**CRITICAL WATERSHEDS**

80% less impervious surface



**Rural Centers**

Infrastructure investments in rural communities result in more housing and jobs.

Land use policies encourage growth in areas that are not in conflict with natural or cultural resources.



**Brownfield Sites**

Redevelopment is encouraged on brownfields, old industrial sites and shopping centers.

**PUBLIC CONSERVATION LANDS**

**KEY ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS & HABITATS**

70% more remain intact

**AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY LANDS**

85,000 more acres preserved

**LAND USE**

Policies focus growth in areas with existing infrastructure

Map 5.11: GroWNC Business as Usual Scenario

