





Responsible Regionalism

Welcome the Region to Asheville

**Preserve and Celebrate Regional
Environmental Systems**

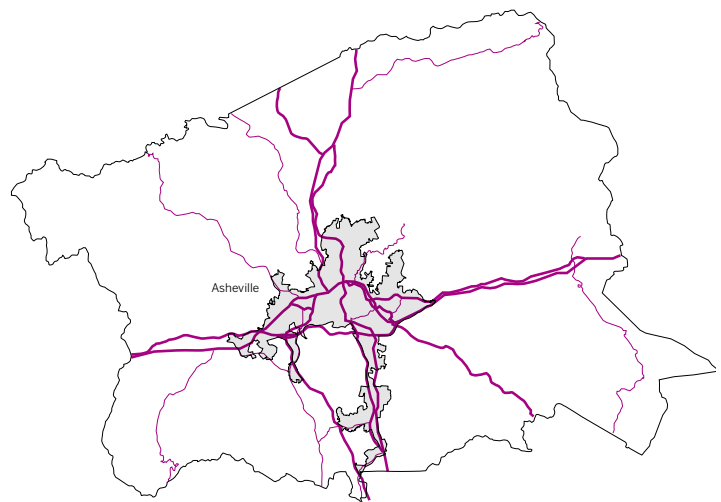
**Continue to Recognize Asheville as a
Leader in the Region**



Principle #18

Welcome the Region to Asheville

Asheville is a cultural destination and the economic hub for many more people than live within the city limits. By promoting welcoming, regionally integrated strategies Asheville can ensure its own success at the confluence of larger natural and infrastructural ecosystems.







GOAL 18-1

Enhance Transportation To and From Asheville

OVERVIEW

Transportation is crucial not just within Asheville, but between Asheville and surrounding communities and the larger region. Enhanced transportation networks at all scales will benefit Asheville residents.

OUTCOMES

- Increase in the number of commuters that use Park and Ride
- Increase in the number of Park and ride locations / spaces
- Increase in transit mode share and riders
- Number of regional residents working in and visiting Asheville

KEY TERMS

- **The WNC Rail Initiative** is an ongoing effort begun in the 1990s to revive passenger rail service to western North Carolina, particularly Asheville. A series of studies and reports have assessed the costs, benefits, and feasibility of such service, establishing a long-term goal of expanding passenger rail service to WNC sometime between 2020 and 2040. Most recently, NCDOT's 2015 Comprehensive State Rail Plan estimated a cost of over \$400 million for providing the proposed service, including extensive rail line upgrades and realignments; new/improved stations; and new equipment and maintenance facilities. Given very high initial costs/rider, substantial state and federal subsidies would be needed to implement such service.

DIRECT STRATEGIES

- Grow a regional park-and-ride network by working with NCDOT, Buncombe County, and neighboring municipalities.
 - Coordinate between regional transportation agencies to promote express service to regional communities.
 - Promote regional support for ride-sharing programs such as Uber and autonomous vehicles.
 - Explore alternative travel technologies to expand the speed of regional transportation.
 - Continue to support initiatives to bring passenger rail to the region, including the Western North Carolina Rail Initiative.
 - Support additional regional rail initiatives, including continuing to support freight rail and excursion travel, as well as regional long-distance bus connectivity.
 - Support the development of a regional transit network.
 - Partner with neighboring municipalities and organizations to find regional mobility solutions.
 - Review truck routes to ensure adequacy to handle truck traffic and meet freight needs.
 - Study the feasibility of demand-responsive regional transit such as on-demand taxis or minibuses.
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Principle #19

Preserve and Celebrate Regional Environmental Systems

Increased pressures from sprawling development threaten the mountains, waterways and agricultural lands that surround Asheville. These landscapes are an important part of the city's image and character and help to drive the economy of the region. Our visitors come to enjoy the regions fall color, its rivers, and to enjoy organically grown food from its farms. Asheville must support regional efforts to preserve and protect its natural environmental systems.





GOAL 19-1

Preserve and Reinvigorate Hillsides, Waterways, and Agricultural Land

OVERVIEW

Asheville should participate in or lead regional efforts to protect the regions natural landscapes, hillsides, waterways, sensitive habitats and agricultural lands.

KEY TERMS

- **Transfer of Development Rights** is a system that allows a property owner to transfer the development capacity of one parcel to another. This allows a property owner to retain the market value of the parcel in the event of development restrictions, such as environmental, or if the parcel is developed at a capacity below what is allowed under the current zoning. This system can encourage new development, but more importantly, offer an incentive for development that contributes to the public good.

DIRECT STRATEGIES

- Pursue regional policies and cooperation to preserve operating agricultural lands.
 - Work with regional government agencies to coordinate a joint policy for preserving agriculture.
 - Pursue a regional policy to preserve views and hillsides.
 - Promote a local and regional night sky ordinance.
 - Develop, with regional partners, regional watershed, basin, and stormwater plans.
 - Consider the adoption and use of conservation easements, conservation based development and other policies that promote land conservation or protection.
 - Explore the long-term potential to re-incorporate transfer of development rights (TDR) as a tool for ensuring land conservation.
 - Preserve regional biodiversity, natural habitats and forests in addition to waterways, water quality and agricultural lands.
 - Develop and implement drainage basin level stormwater management and erosion control plans in cooperation with private property owners, regional agencies, state and federal agencies.
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Principle #20

Continue to Recognize Asheville as a Leader in The Region

Asheville is the hub of a region five times its size, with a large influx of residents during the workday. Asheville must recognize the need to grow gracefully within this larger region, while at the same time ensuring its policies are not putting it at a competitive disadvantage relative to the region. Generally speaking, as the region succeeds, so will Asheville.





GOAL 20-1

Improve Regional Collaboration, Coordination, and Communication

OVERVIEW

Many of the challenges Asheville faces are regional challenges that require integrated solutions between multiple levels of government, including City, State, and County. Managing regional transportation, ecosystem, growth, and character concerns will require cooperative collaboration. In many instances, key issues are already being addressed regionally, but as the region grows and the population totals of regional communities shift relative to one another, it is imperative that Asheville work closely with regional organizations and surrounding communities to ensure equitable access to funding and shared decision-making.

DIRECT STRATEGIES

- Work with the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Regional Planning Organization, and Land of Sky Regional Council on key issues:
 - Regional transportation
 - Regional greenways
 - Water quality
 - Affordable housing provision
 - Economic development
 - Regional land use planning
 - Aging communities
- Develop a regional watershed basin and stormwater plan in coordination with Buncombe County.
- Continue to work with the state to develop pro-Asheville home rule policies.
- Work to restructure county funding disbursement policies that are tied to population growth. Policies of this type in many cases reduce Asheville's access to regional funding because many outlying areas are growing more quickly than Asheville.
- Partner with other local governments, regional agencies and organizations, and state and federal agencies to combine individual strengths and mitigate individual weaknesses for the betterment of Western North Carolina's business and industrial environment.

SYNERGISTIC STRATEGIES

- Coordinate city, county and regional funding and governance.
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