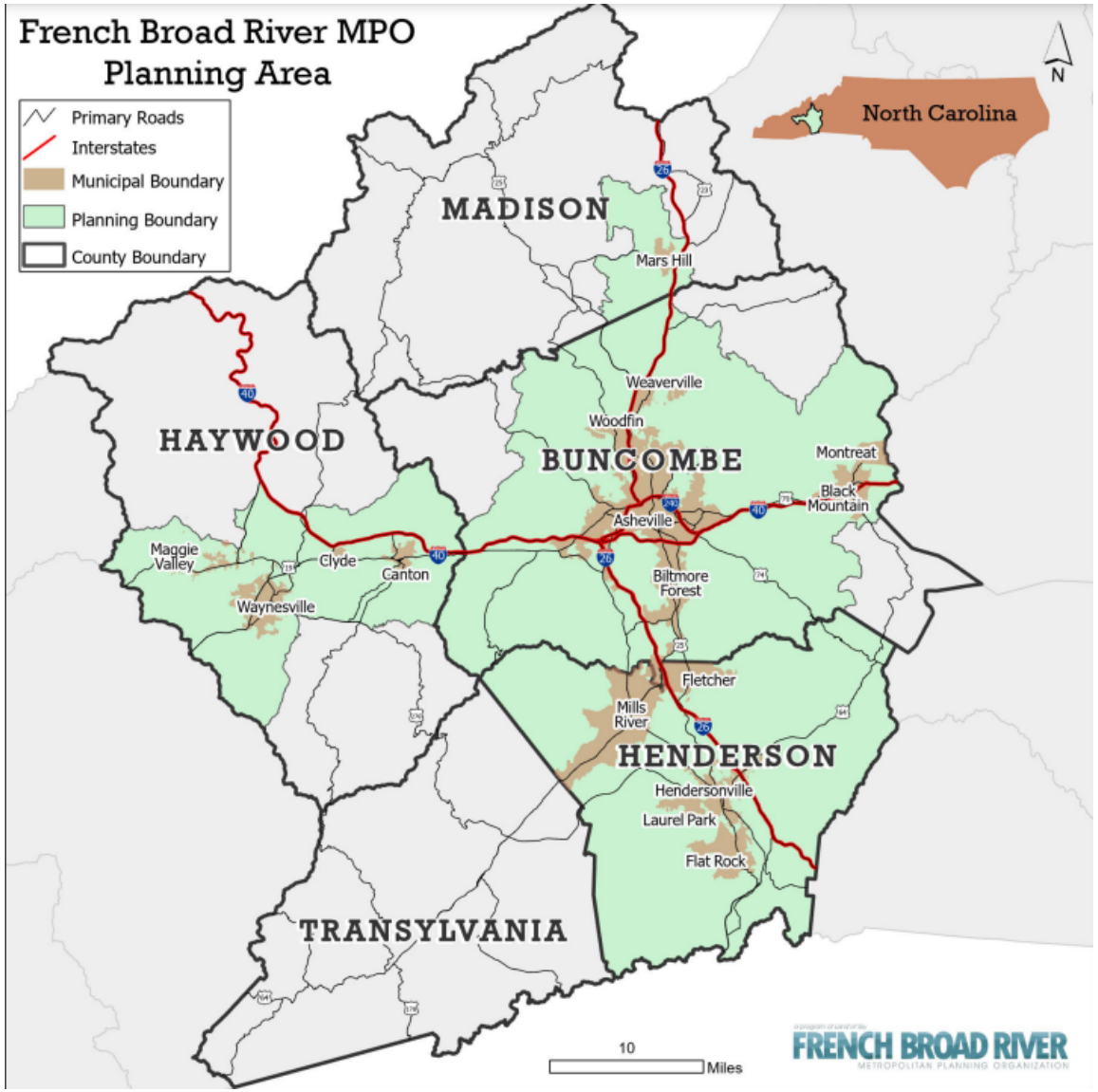
a program of Land of Sky
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Growth on the Ground & Movement Around

How Growth or Not-Growth Has Impacted Transportation Choices and Challenges

FBRMPO Background



French Broad River MPO

- Began in 1966
- Centered around Asheville
- Grew to include Henderson & Haywood in 2000, Madison in 2010
- Slightly modified boundaries in 2023



Metropolitan Planning Organization?

“The forum for cooperative transportation decision making for the metropolitan planning area”

Source: 23 CFR Part 450.104

What We Do, What We Don't Do

What We Do

- Work With Local, State, and Federal Partners to Manage the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process
- Program Transportation Funds for

What We Don't Do

- Land Use Decisions & Zoning
- A Lot of Other Things

TWO IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS



Projects Don’t Move Quickly

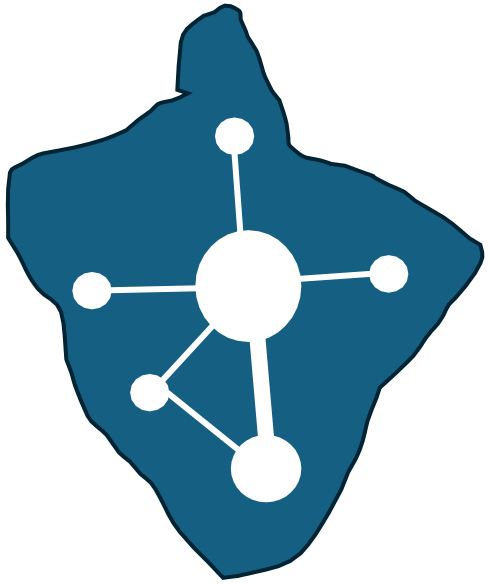


No Project Makes Everyone Happy

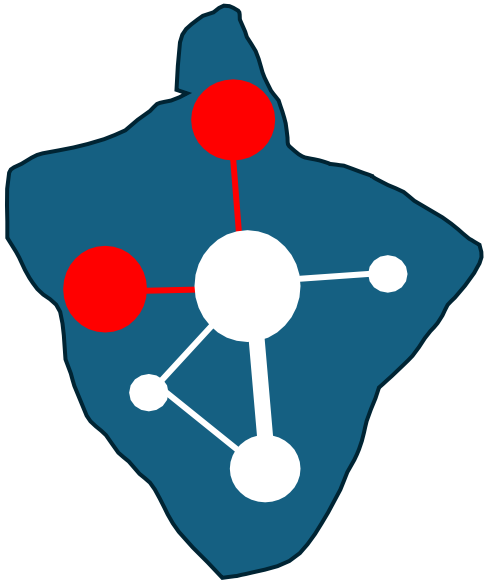
Housing & Transportation as Barriers

Travel Demand Modeling

- The MPO is responsible for developing data related to how much growth the region is projected to have over the next 25 years and where that growth is expected to go
- That data goes into the regional travel demand model that helps determine how that growth is expected to impact the transportation network

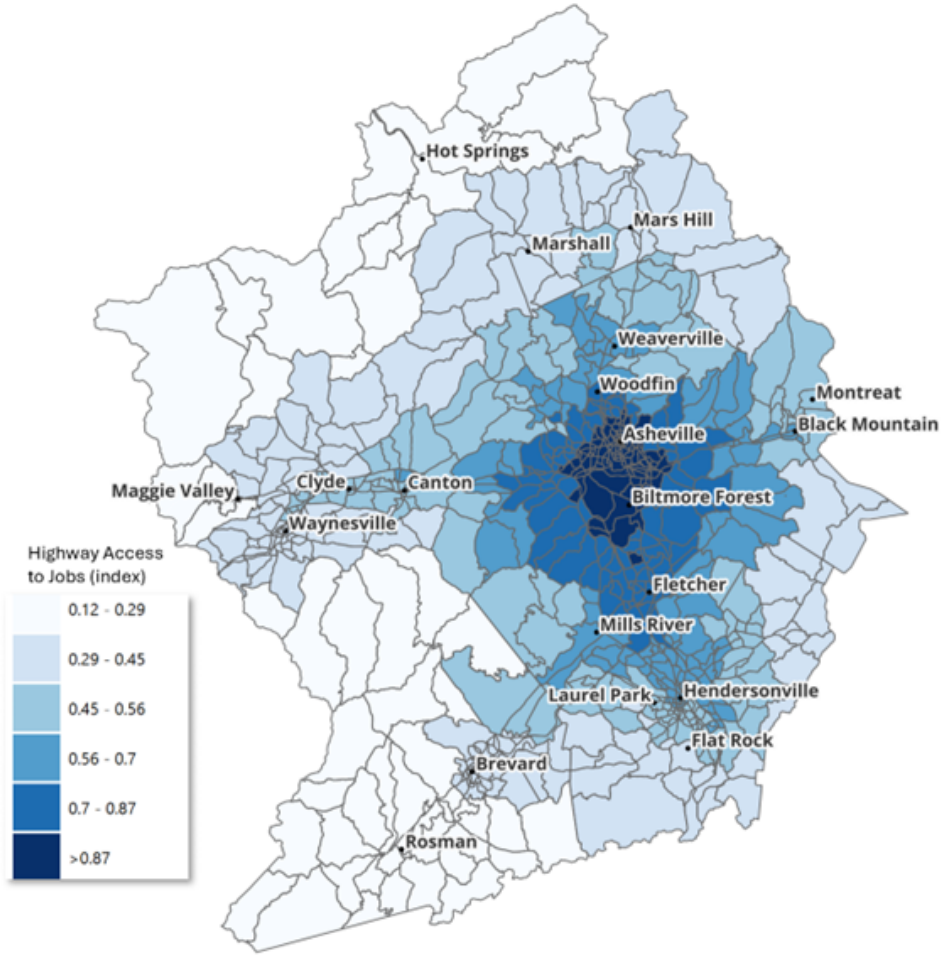


PRESENT

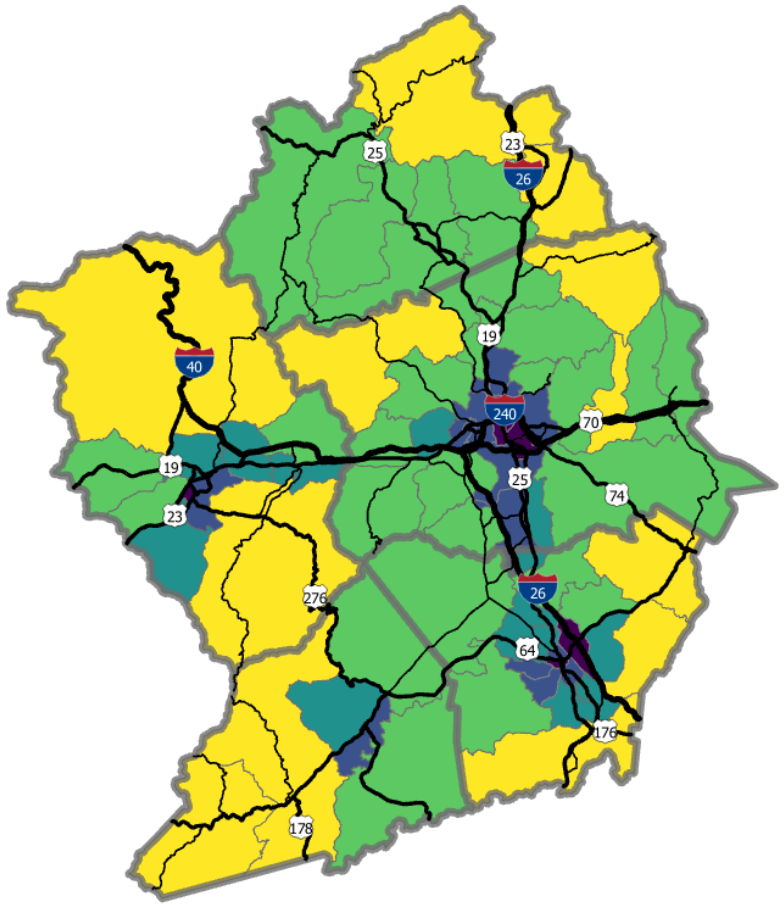


FUTURE

Land Use & Transportation



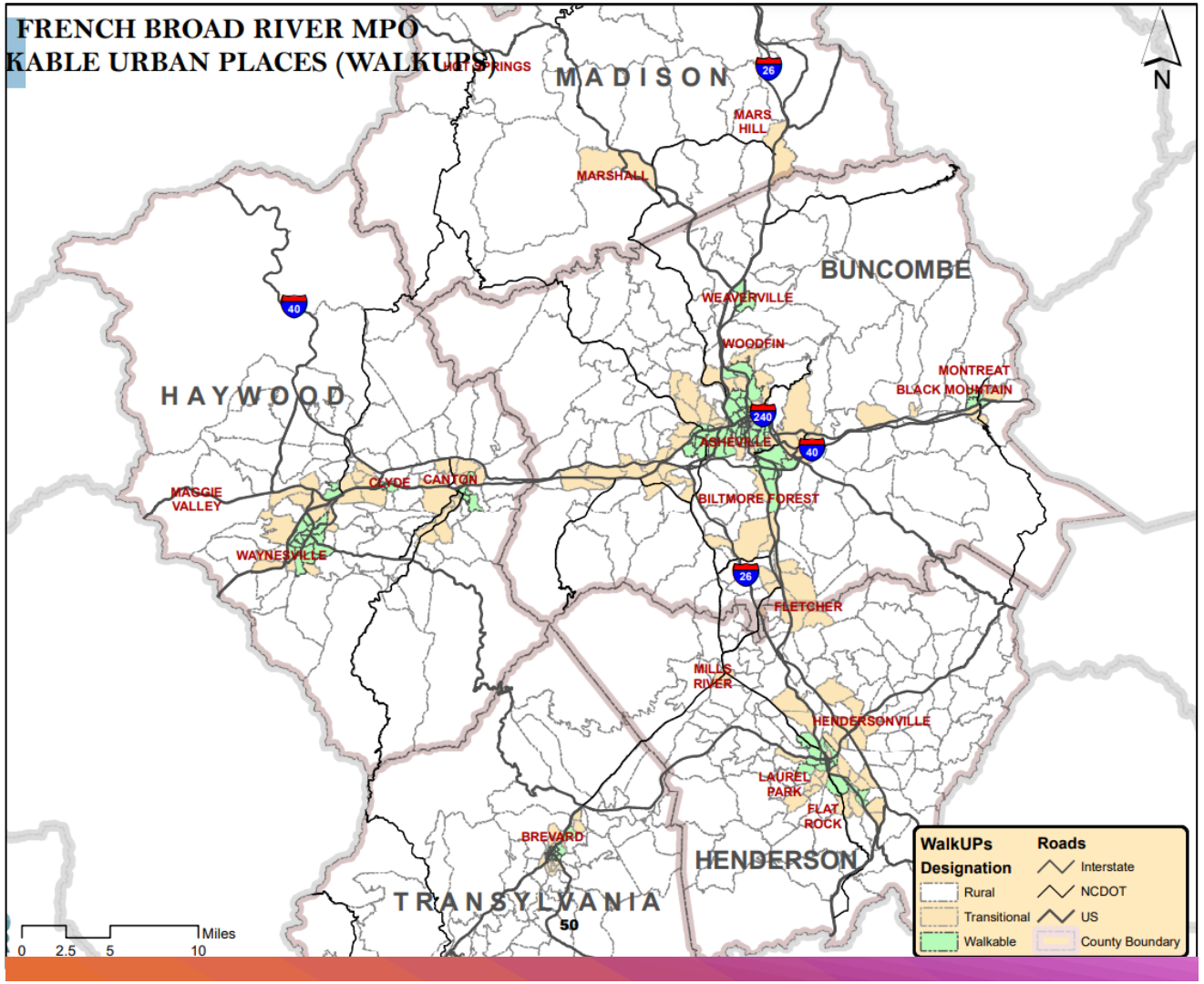
Access to Jobs



Average Driving/Household

Walkable Urban Places

- Based on intersection connectivity, land use “entropy”, low-income & zero-vehicle households
- Identifies areas where more trips are likely made by walking, biking, and transit
- Developed as part of the Congestion Management Plan



Example

- Census Tract #1, Buncombe County
- Annual VMT per Household: 9,196
- Transit to Work: 11%
- Walk to Work: 18%

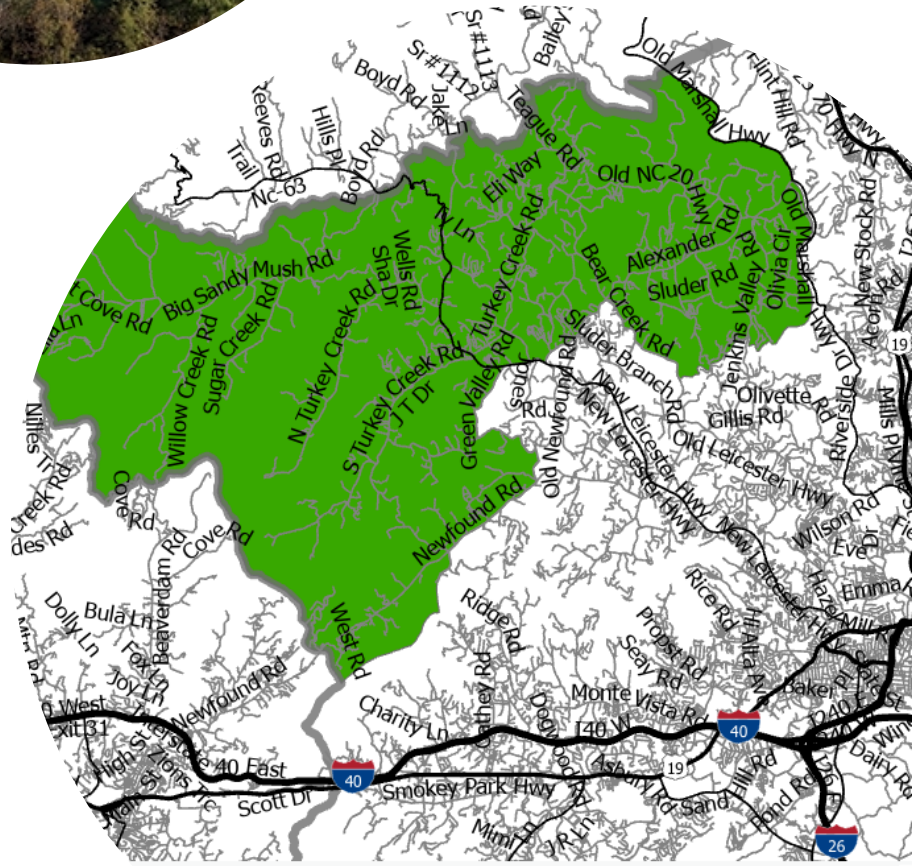




Example

- Census Tract 26.01, Buncombe County
- Annual VMT per Household: 23,728
- Transit to Work: 0%
- Walk to Work: 2%





Scenario Planning



BUSINESS AS USUAL



CONSOLIDATED GROWTH



DISPERSED GROWTH

Scenario Planning



BUSINESS AS USUAL

- More Traffic
- Less Transit & Walking



CONSOLIDATED GROWTH

- Less Traffic
- More Transit & Walking

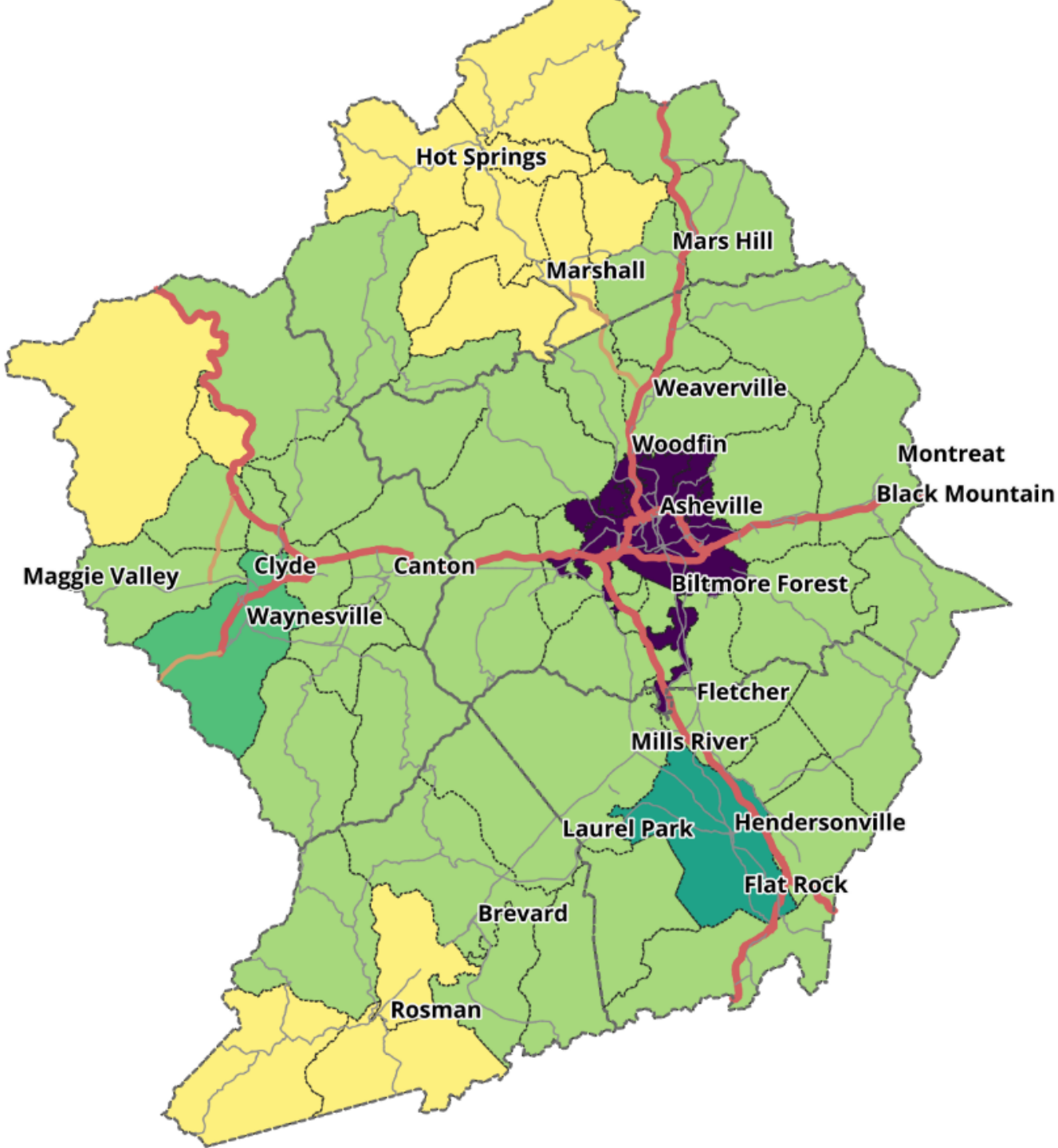


DISPERSED GROWTH

- Much More Traffic
- Much Less Transit & Walking

Preferred Growth Scenario

- Consolidated Growth
- Fewer Vehicle Miles Traveled (less distance driving)
- More transit use
- More trips by walking and biking
- More preservation of rural and natural areas
- Same Amount of Growth, Fewer Impacts



Travel Demand Modeling

- The updated Travel Demand Model determined that six lanes was acceptable for the I-26 Connector through West Asheville (not the eight that was originally proposed)

Asheville I-26 Connector



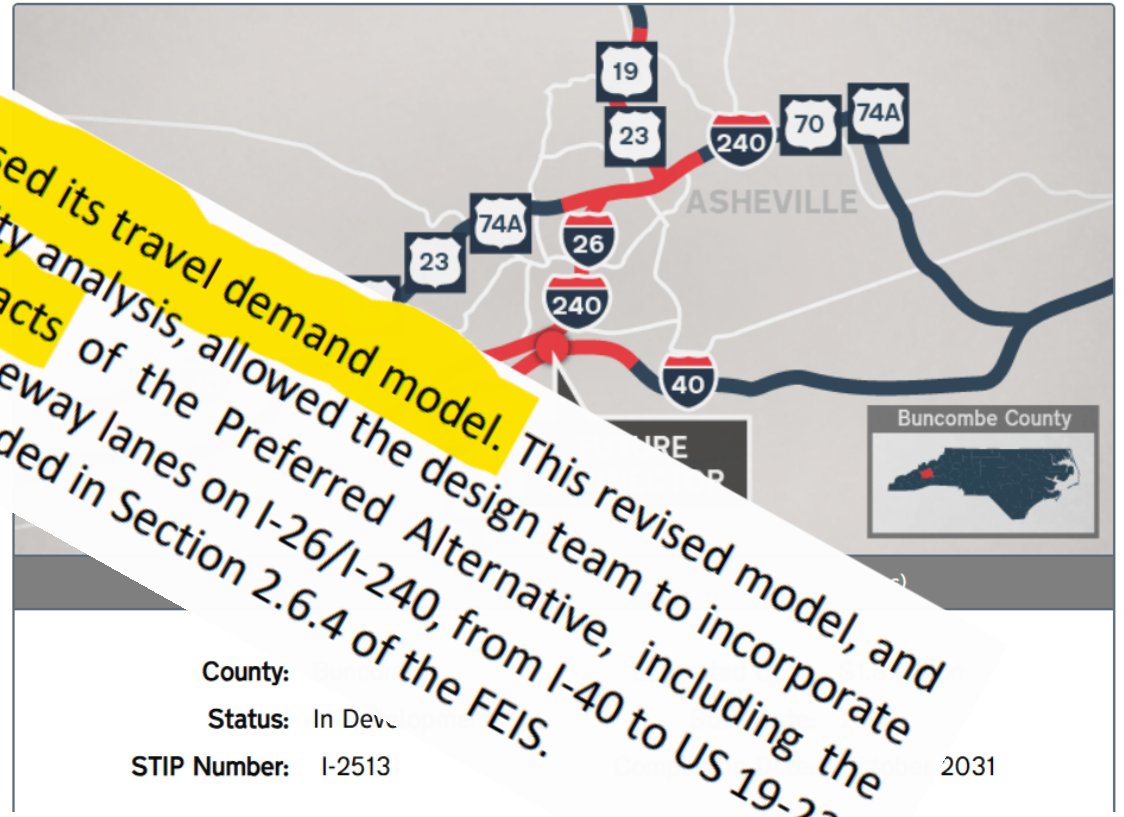
County:	Buncombe	**Estimated Cost:**	$1.8 billion
Status:	In Development	**Start Date:**	2022
STIP Number:	I-2513	**Completion Date:**	October 2031

Tr mand
Mo

- The updated Trave
  determined that six lane
  acceptable for the I-26 Con
  through West Asheville (not the
  eight that was originally proposed)

Following publication of the DEIS, the FBRMPO revised its travel demand model. This revised model, and associated revisions to the traffic forecast and capacity analysis, allowed the design team to incorporate several refinements into the project to reduce impacts of the Preferred Alternative, including the recommendation of a six-lane typical section for basic freeway lanes on I-26/I-240, from I-40 to US 19-23-70. A detailed discussion of the design refinements is included in Section 2.6.4 of the FEIS.

Asheville I-26 Connector





The Way We Are Growing: Building Somewhere Else

PHOTO CREDIT: ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES

WEATHER

North Carolina had a housing crisis before Hurricane Helene; now it's even worse

JUNE 1, 2025 · 6:00 AM ET

HEARD ON WEEKEND EDITION SUNDAY

By Greg Allen, Marisa Peñaloza

NPR

NEWS

Asheville-area 2025 housing report: Over 23,000 households spend 50% of income on rent



Will Hofmann
Asheville Citizen Times

Aug. 22, 2025, 5:07 a.m. ET

Report: WNC needs 34,000 new homes by 2028 to meet demand after Helene

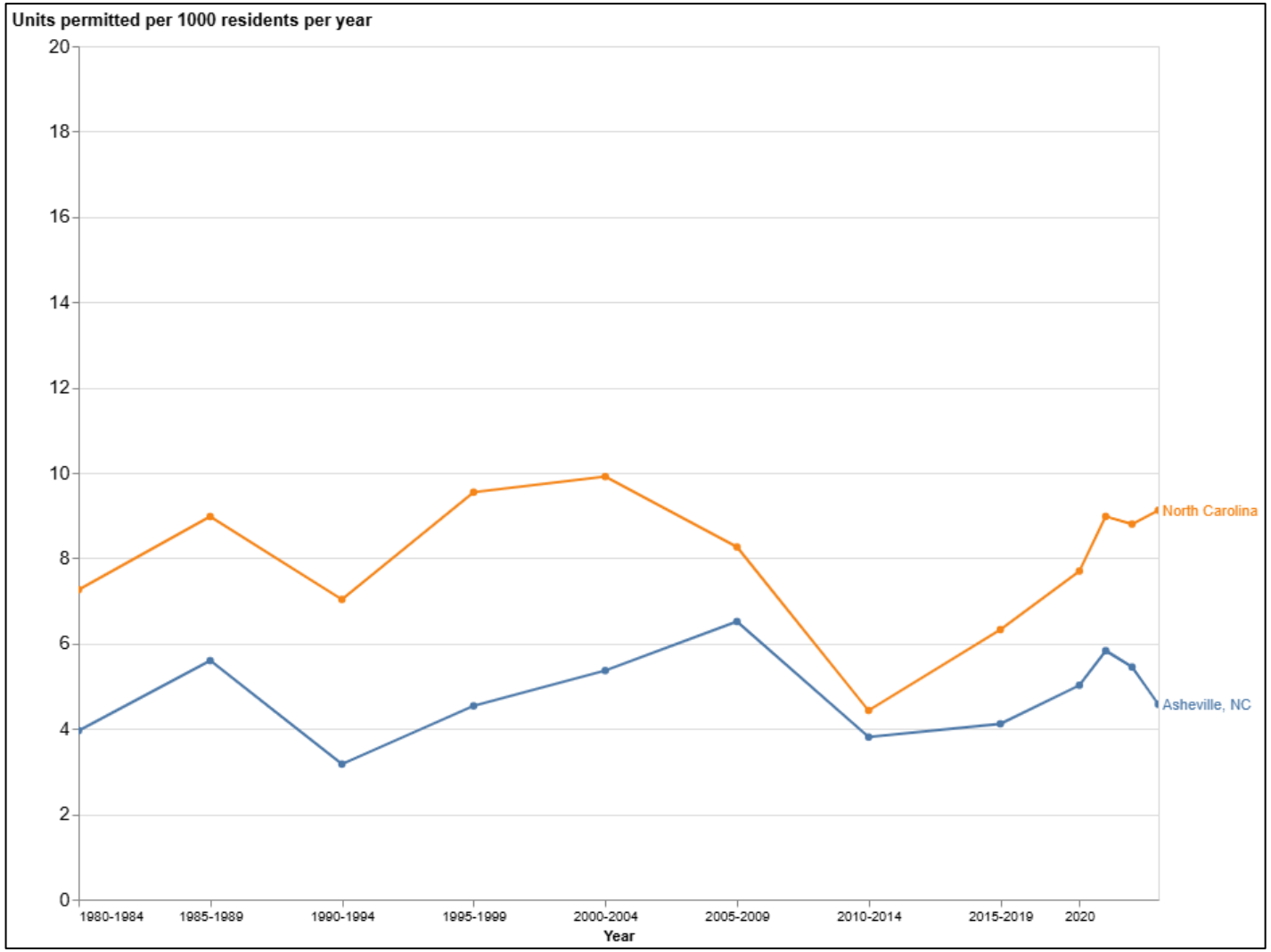
Elijah Skipper | Mon, September 29th 2025 at 6:26 PM

Updated Mon, September 29th 2025 at 9:25 PM

WLOS

Housing Units Permitted

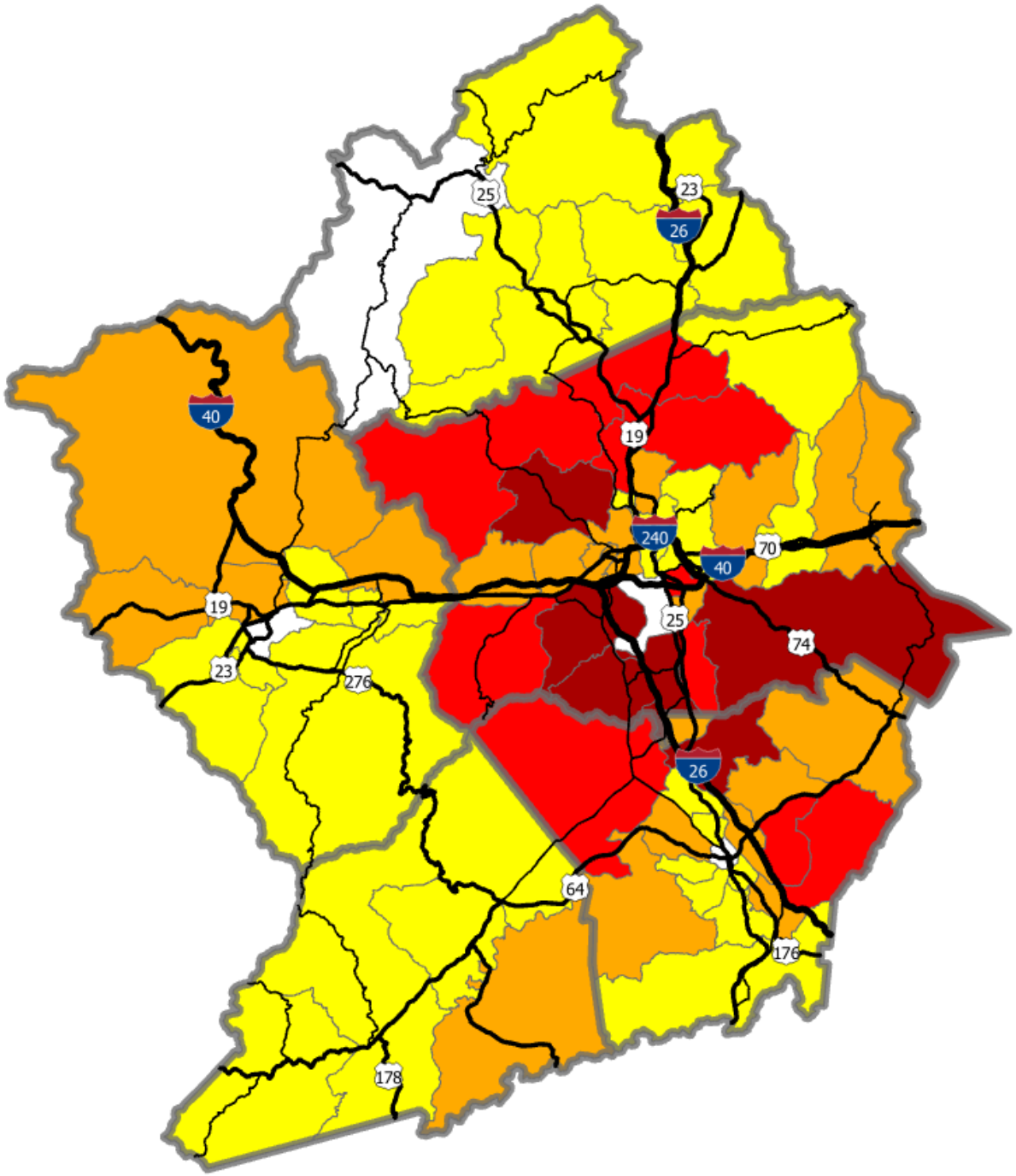
- The rate of housing development in the City of Asheville has been less than the state average despite being one of the more desirable places to live

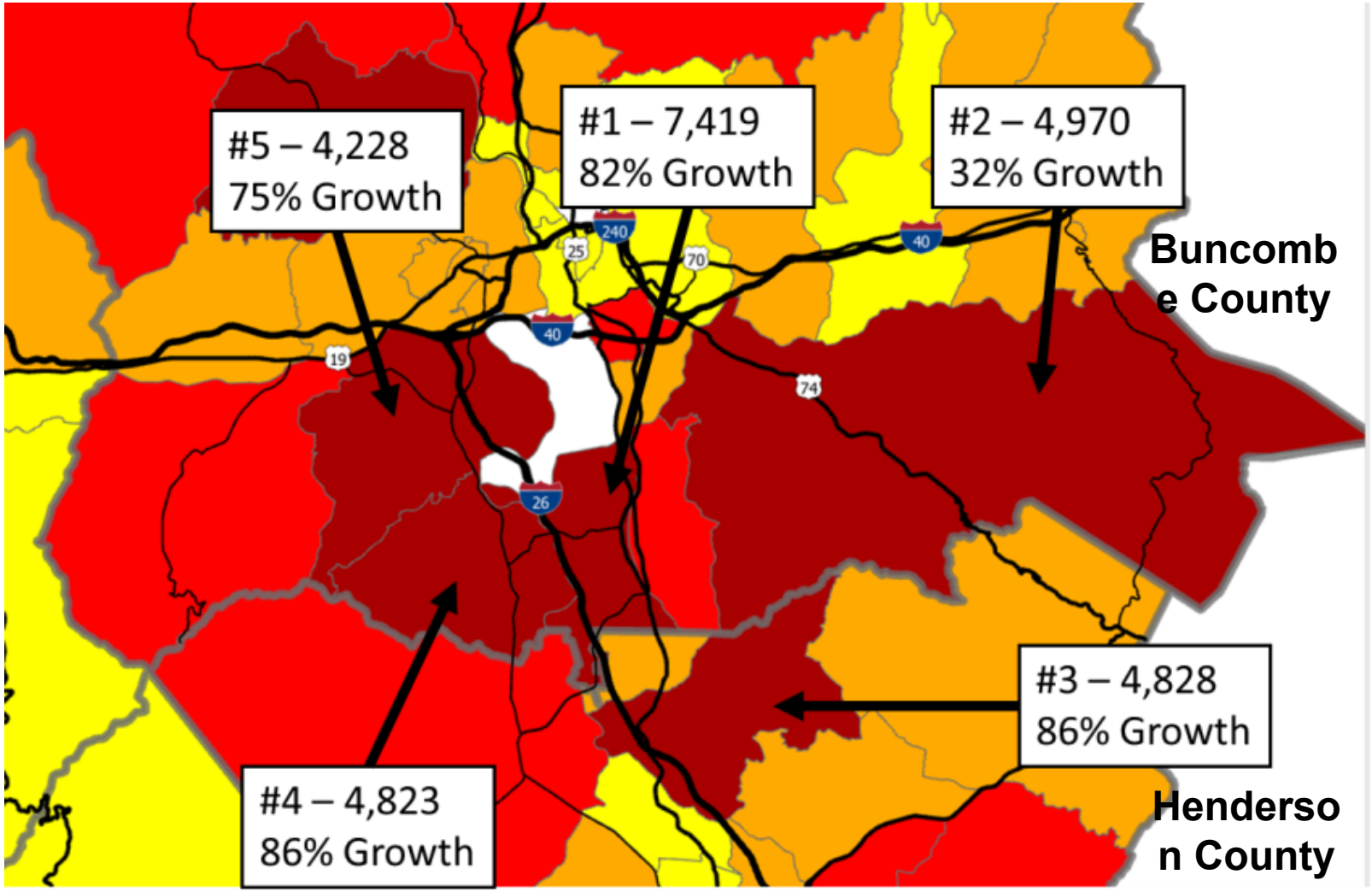


Source: US Census Building Permits Survey

Population Growth 2000-2020

- Population growth has been heaviest in unincorporated Buncombe County and Henderson County
- Population growth and growth rates have been lower in more urban areas

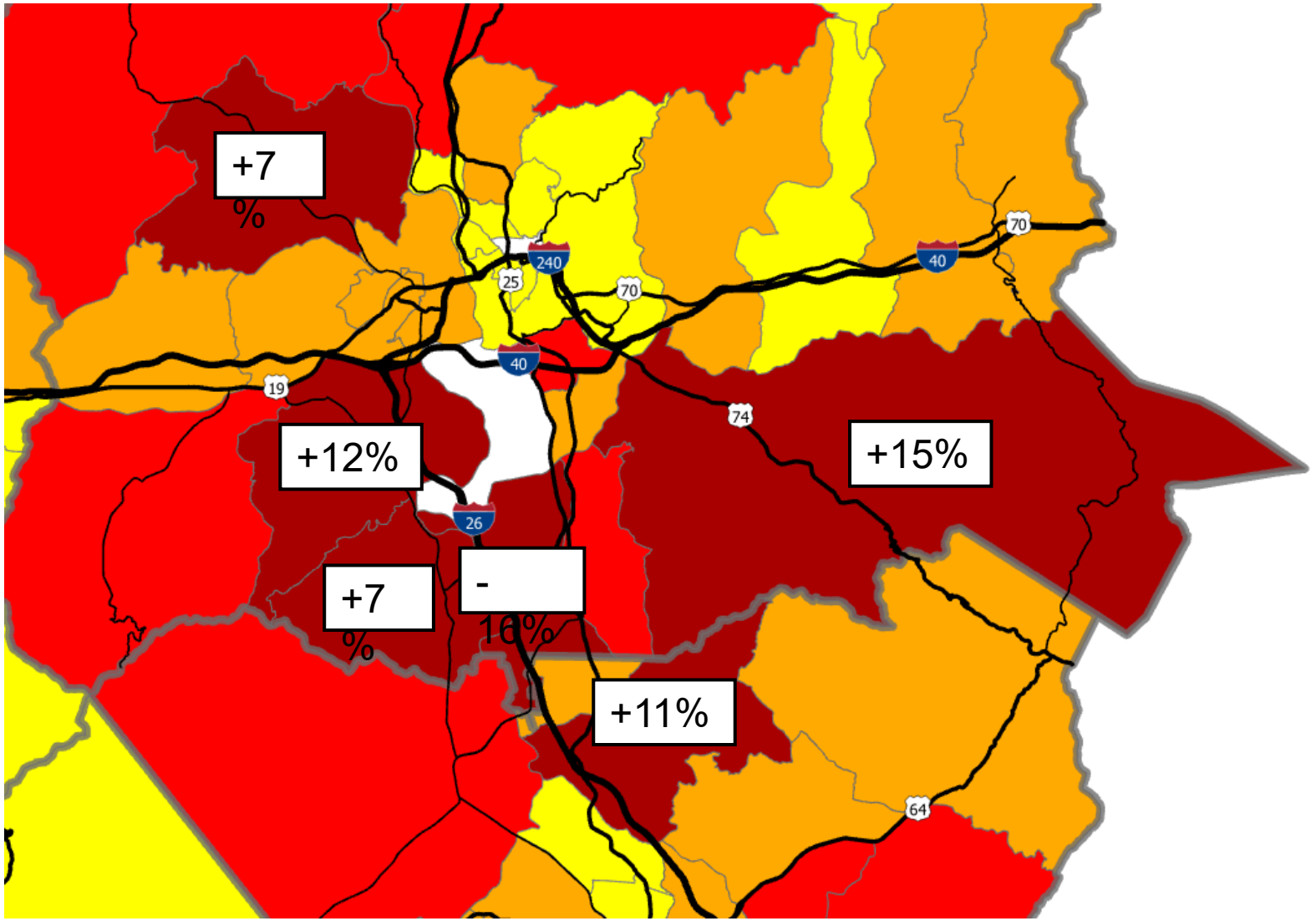




High-Growth Areas

26,268 New Residents in Five Census Tracts (25.38% of the Region's Growth in Five Census Tracts)

Average Household Vehicle Miles Traveled vs. Regional Average

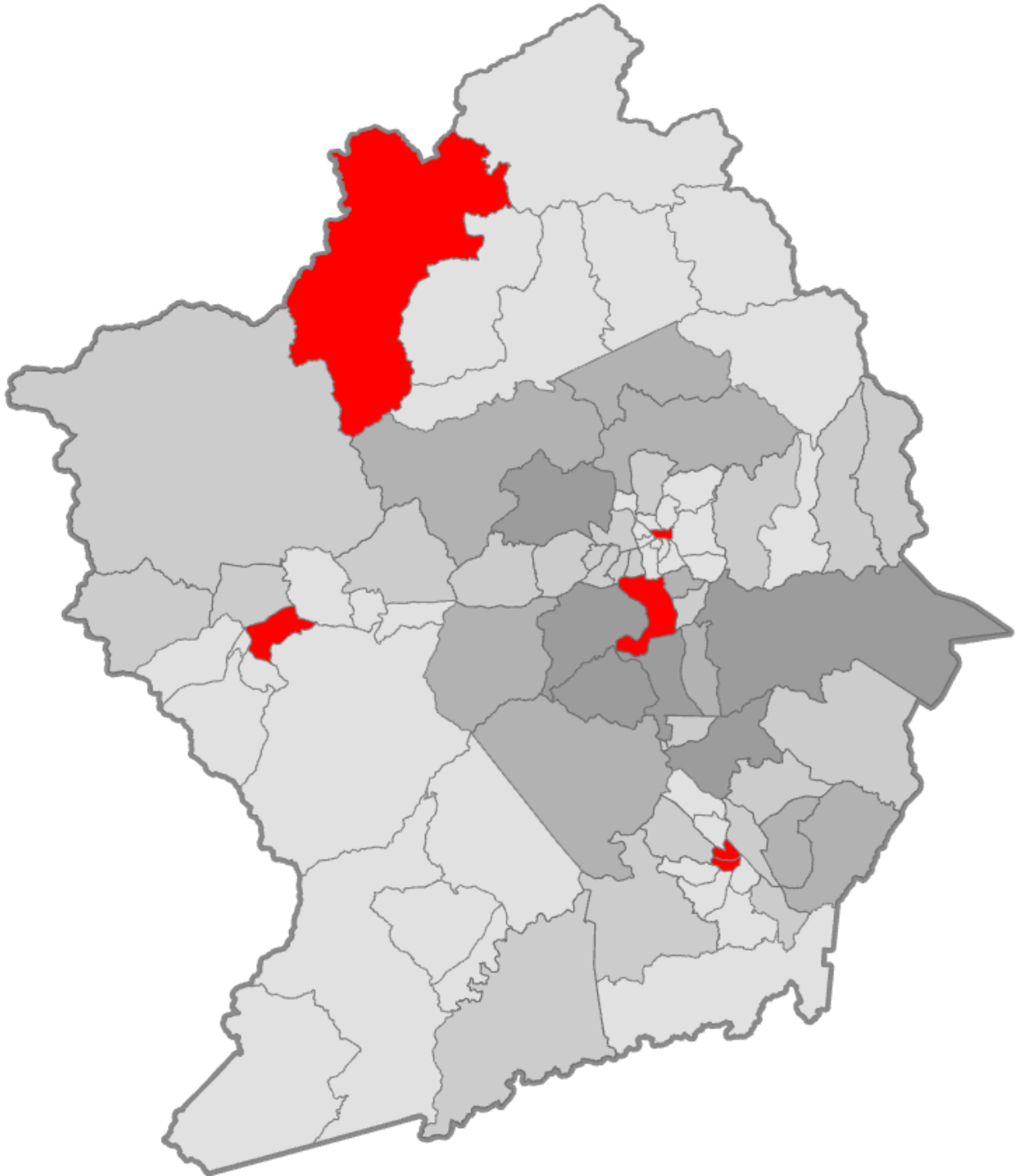


High-Growth Areas & Driving

Many of the fastest growing census tracts average more vehicle miles traveled than the regional average (i.e., more car dependent)

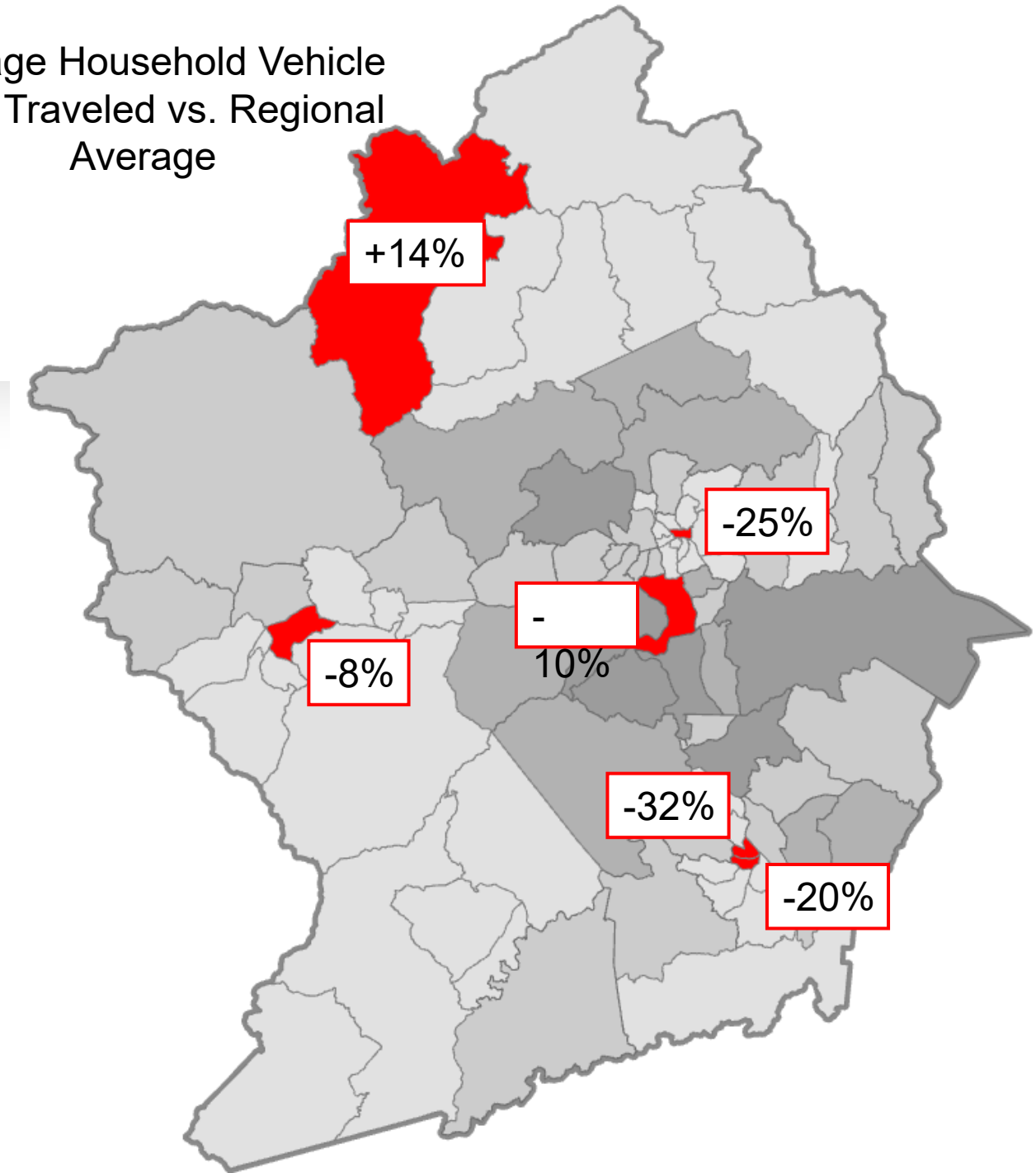
Population Loss

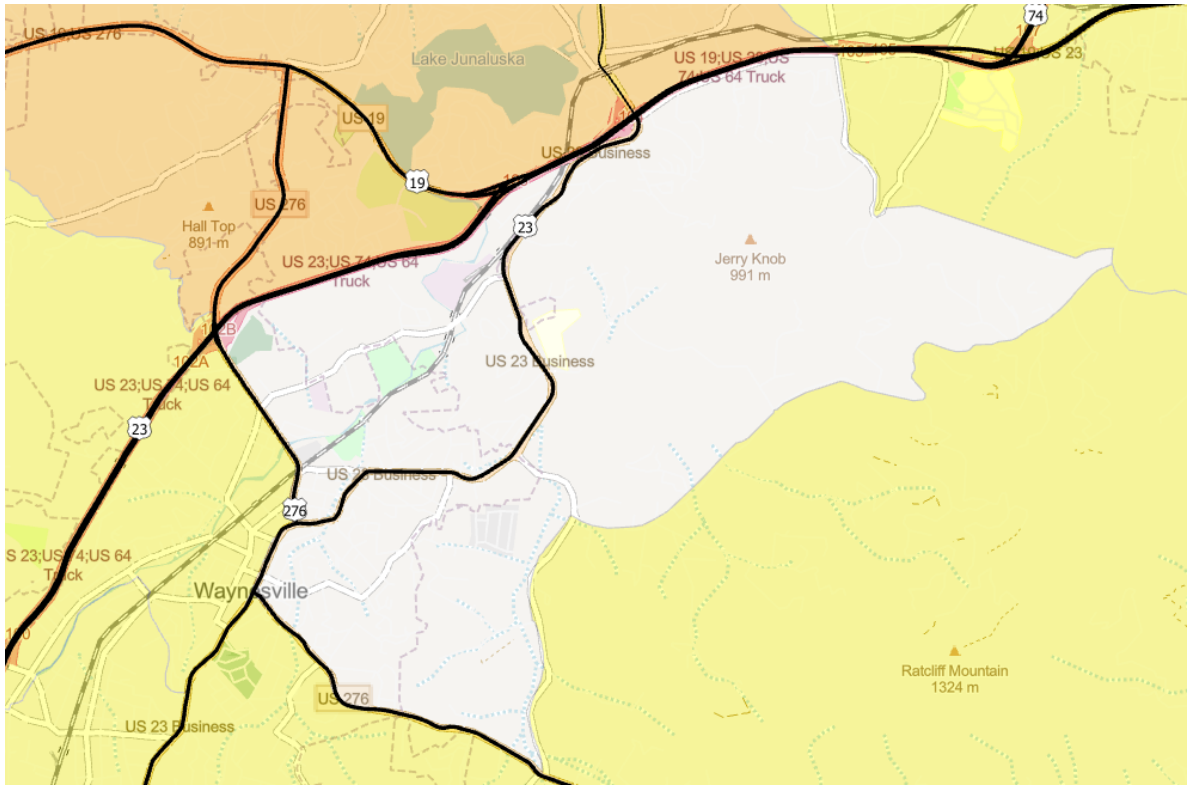
- The region grew by 103,496 new residents since 2000
- Six census tracts lost population over that same time period



Population Loss & Driving

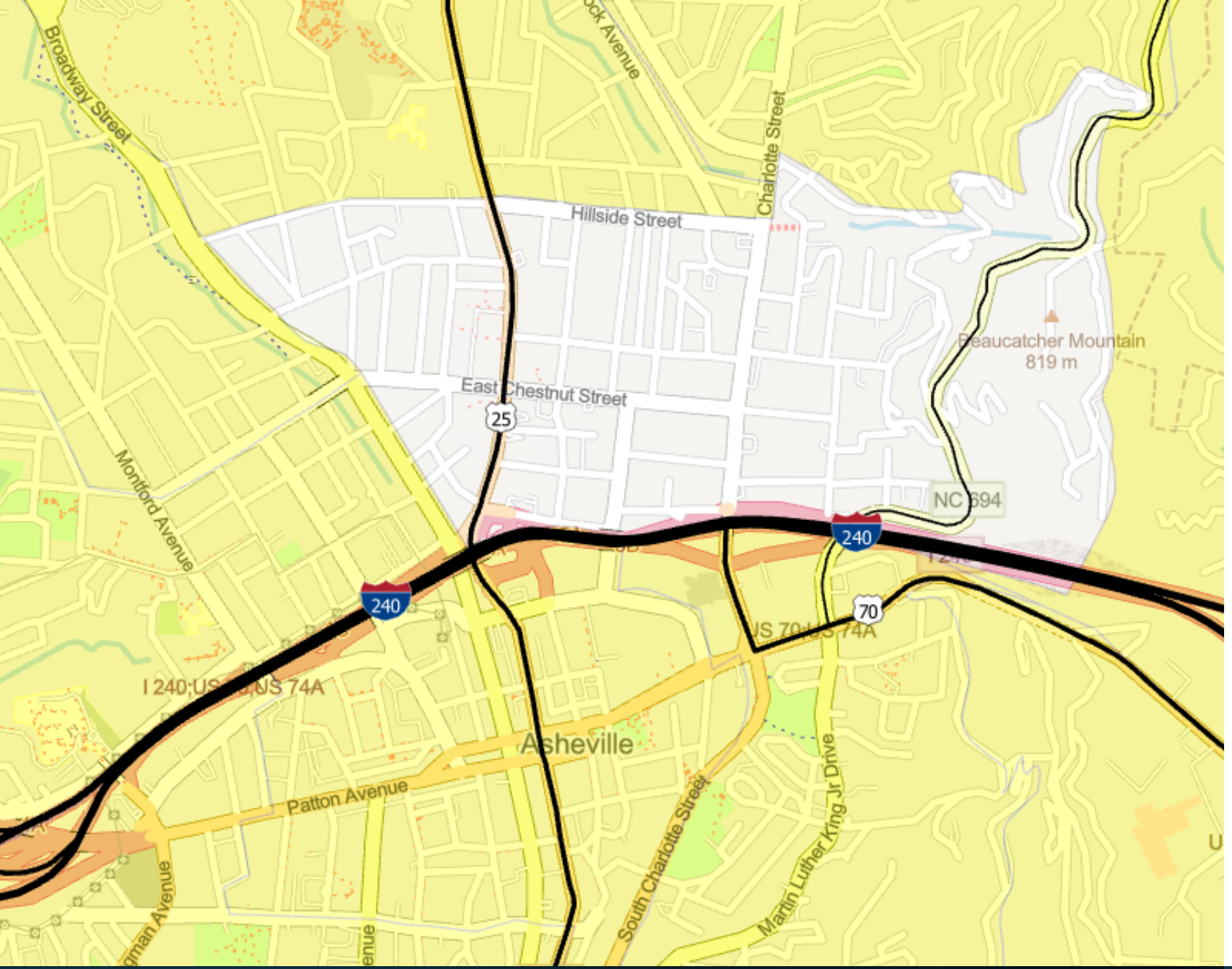
- Many of the areas losing population are more urban, tend to have lower vehicle miles traveled per household, i.e., less car dependent





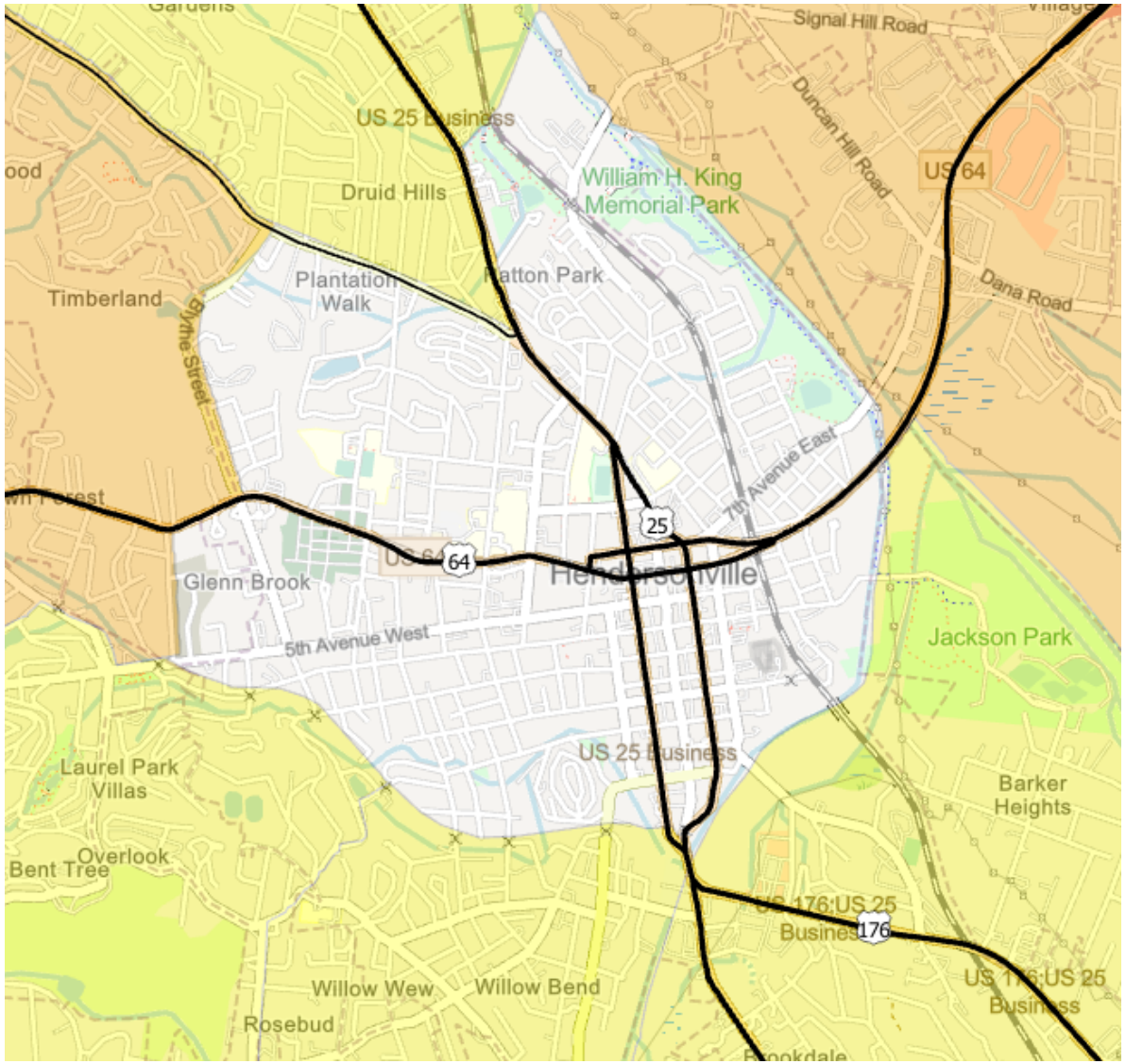
Low-Growth Areas

- Only census tracts in Haywood County to lose population since 2000
- Includes part of Downtown Waynesville



Low-Growth Areas

- One of Two Census Tracts in Buncombe County to lose population since 2000
- Lost nearly 6% of its population since 2000

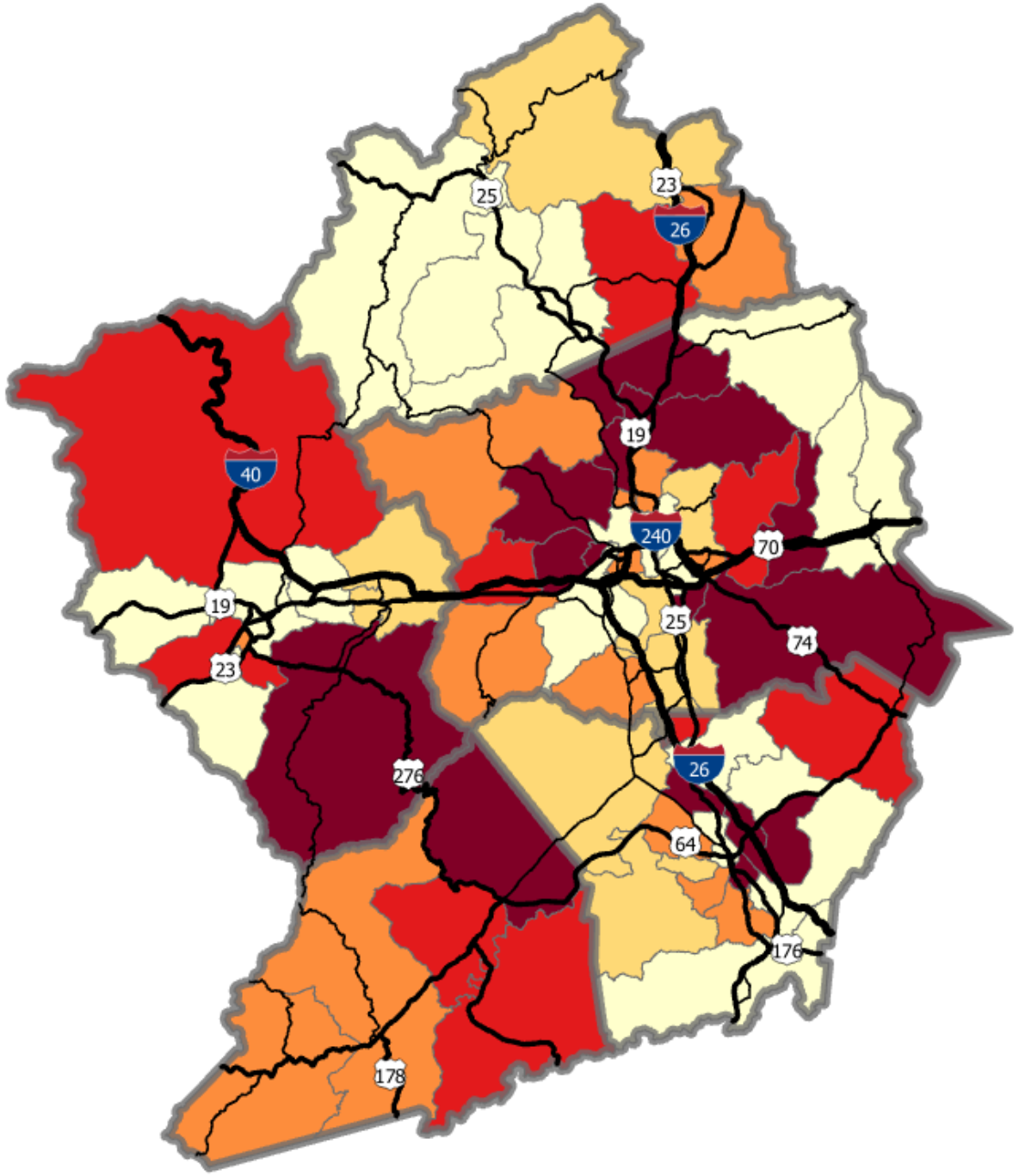


Low-Growth Areas

- Only census tracts in Henderson County to lose population since 2000
- Encompasses nearly all of Downtown Hendersonville
- Tracts lost 1.5% and nearly 6% of population since 2000

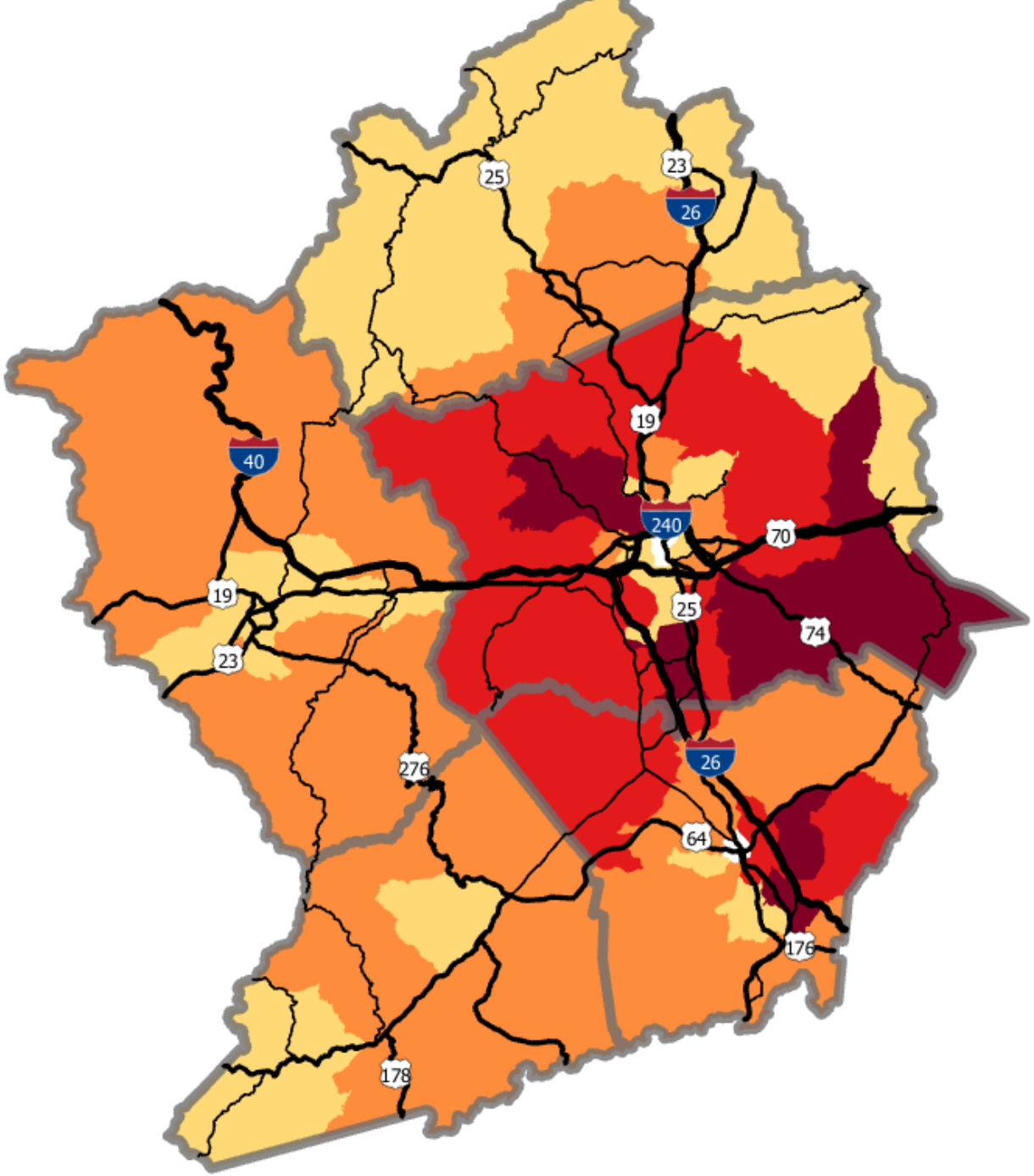
Change in Poverty

- 43,159 residents in poverty in 2000
- 55,999 residents in poverty in 2020
- Most of the growth has occurred in outlying areas
- Significant decreases in many urban areas



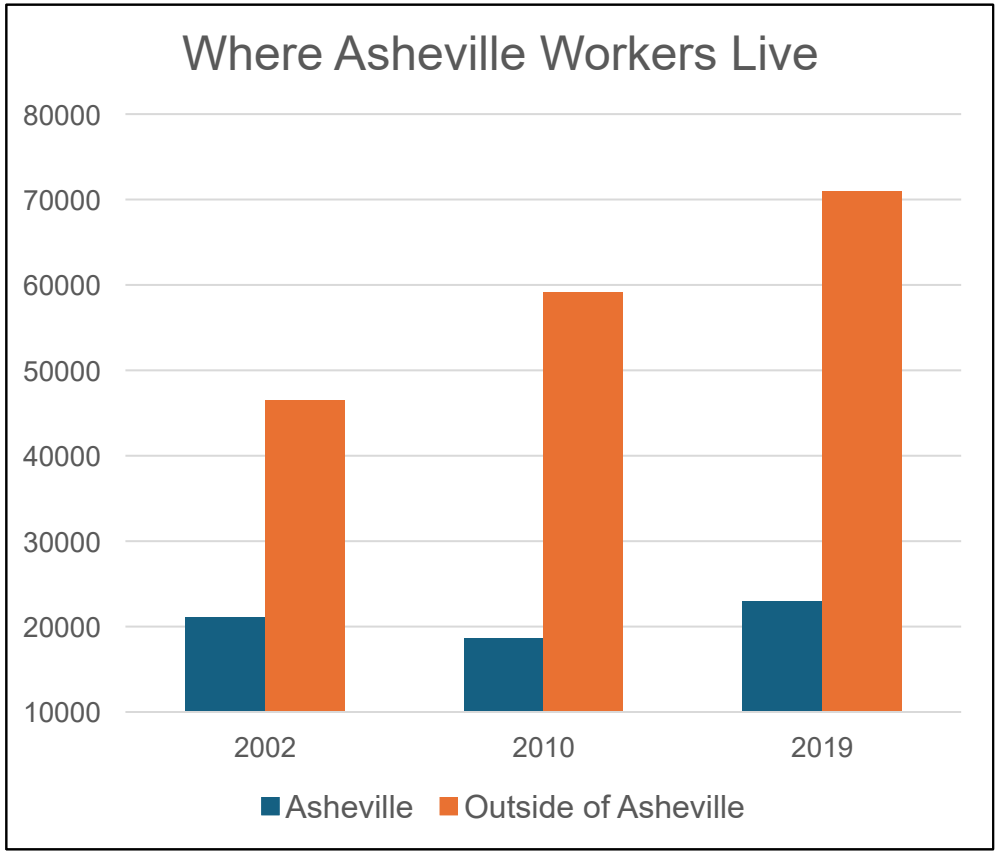
Change in Non-White (Alone) Populations

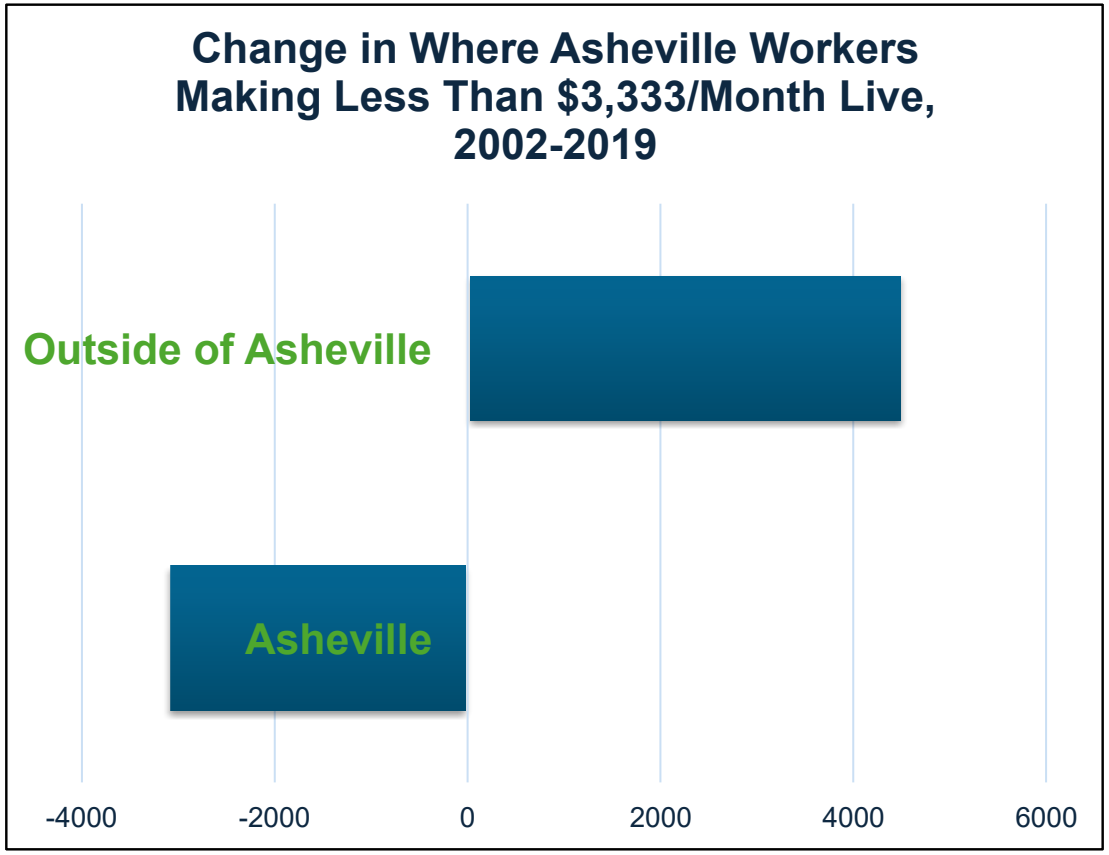
- 33,903 non-white/hispanic residents in 2000
- 84,210 non-white/hispanic residents in 2020
- Reductions in central Asheville, central Hendersonville
- Increases in more outlying areas



Employer/Employee Impacts of Growth Patterns

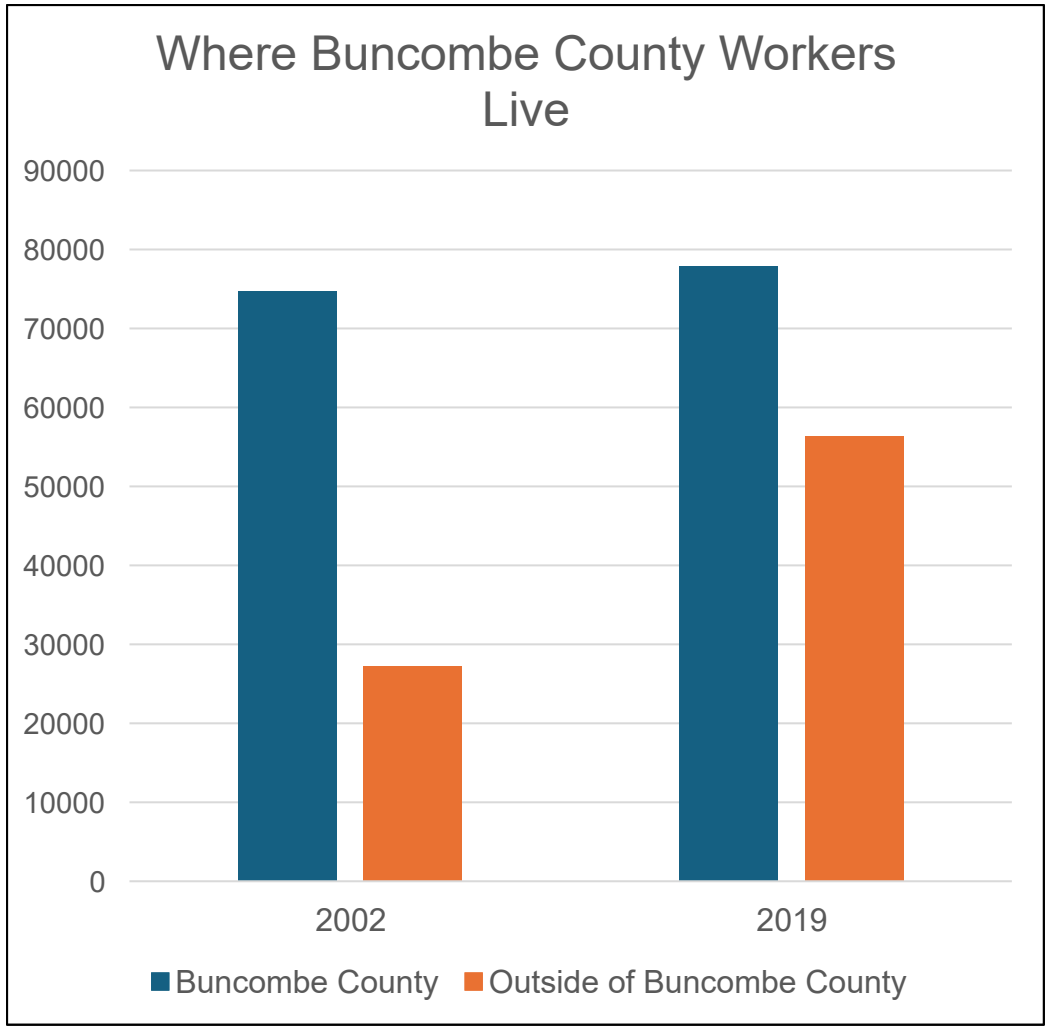
Moving Out





Source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Commuting In

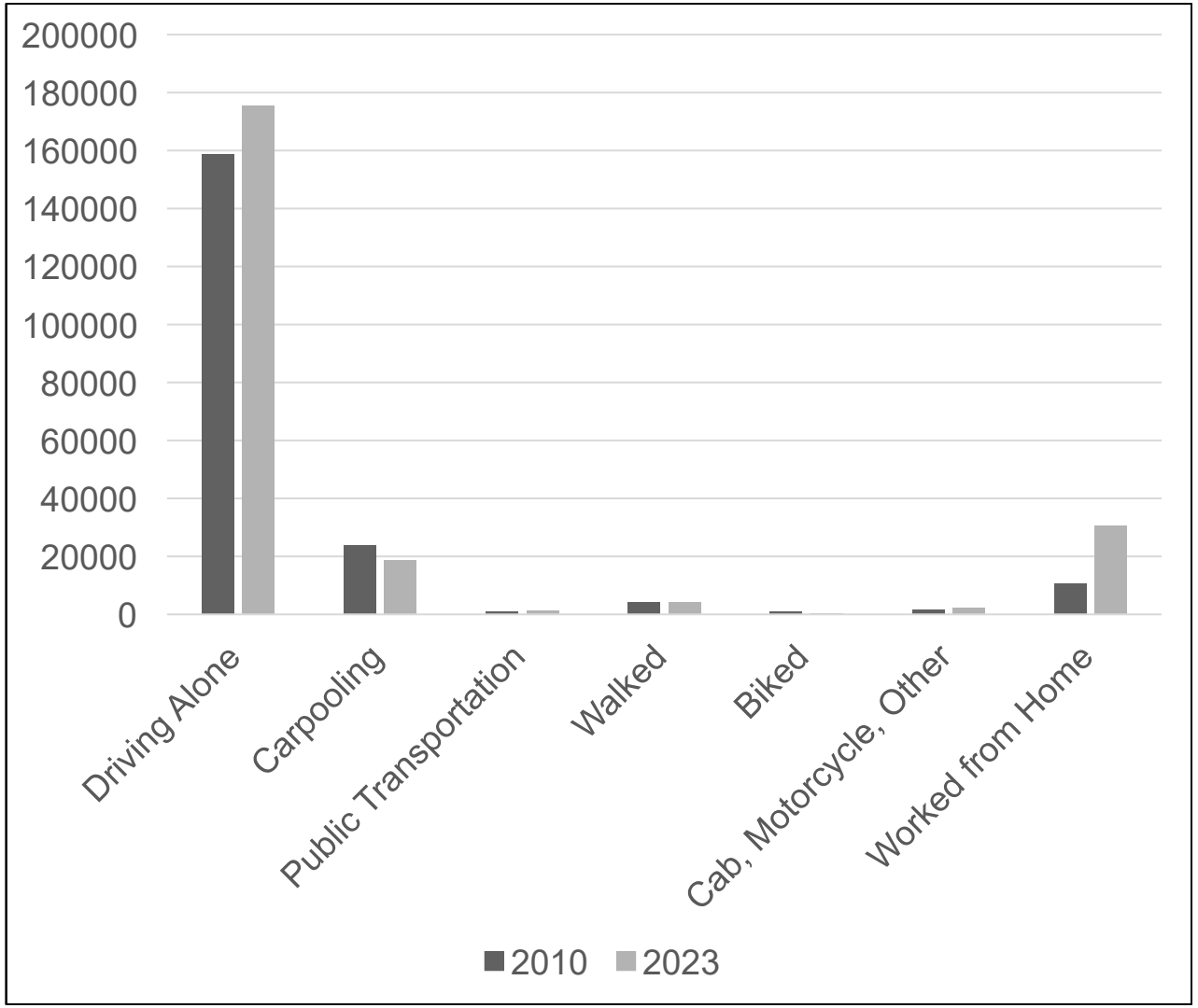


Six Largest County-to-County Connection for All Jobs

Worker Origin	Worker Destination	Number of Workers, 2020	Change Since 2002
Henderson	Buncombe	12,305	+7,231
Buncombe	Henderson	7,308	(165)
Haywood	Buncombe	5,903	+2,353
Buncombe	Mecklenburg	4,682	+1,744
Madison	Buncombe	3,393	+760
McDowell	Buncombe	3,046	+1,874

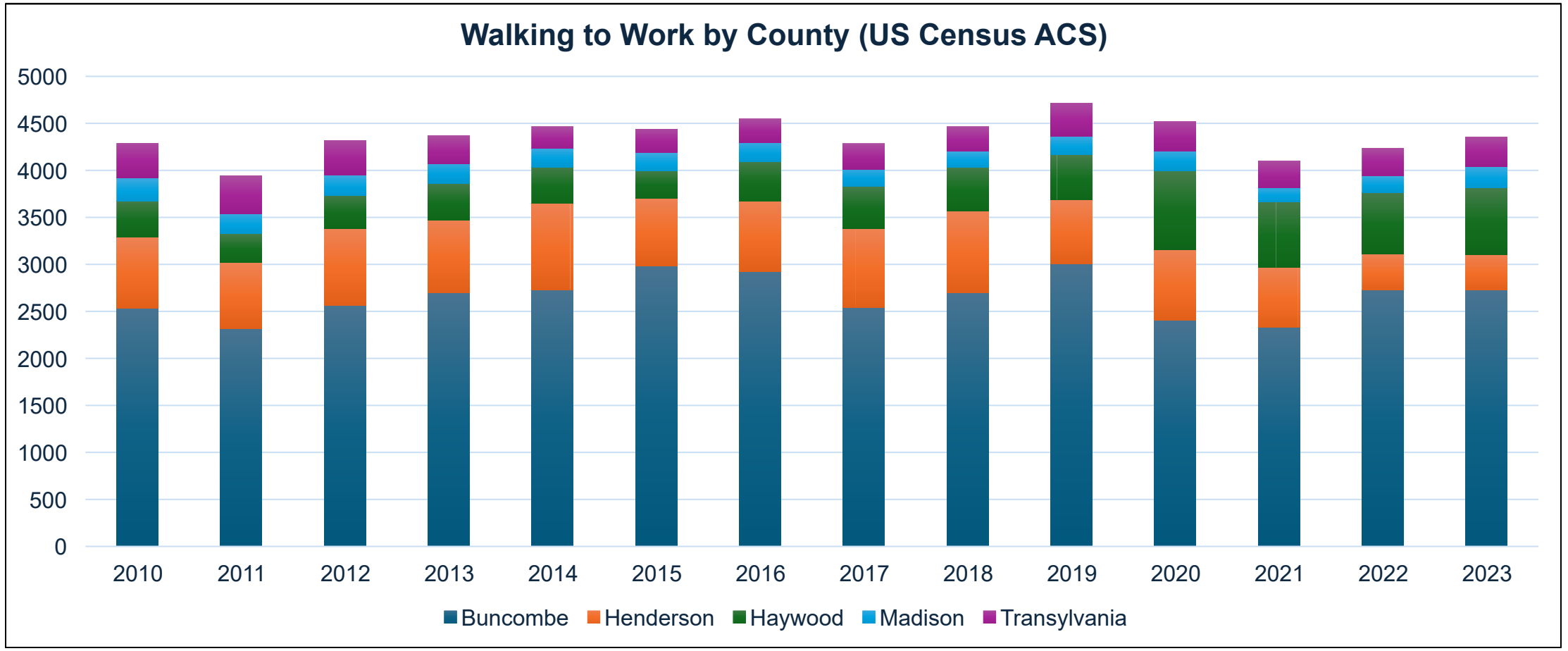
Source: Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics

How People are Getting to Work

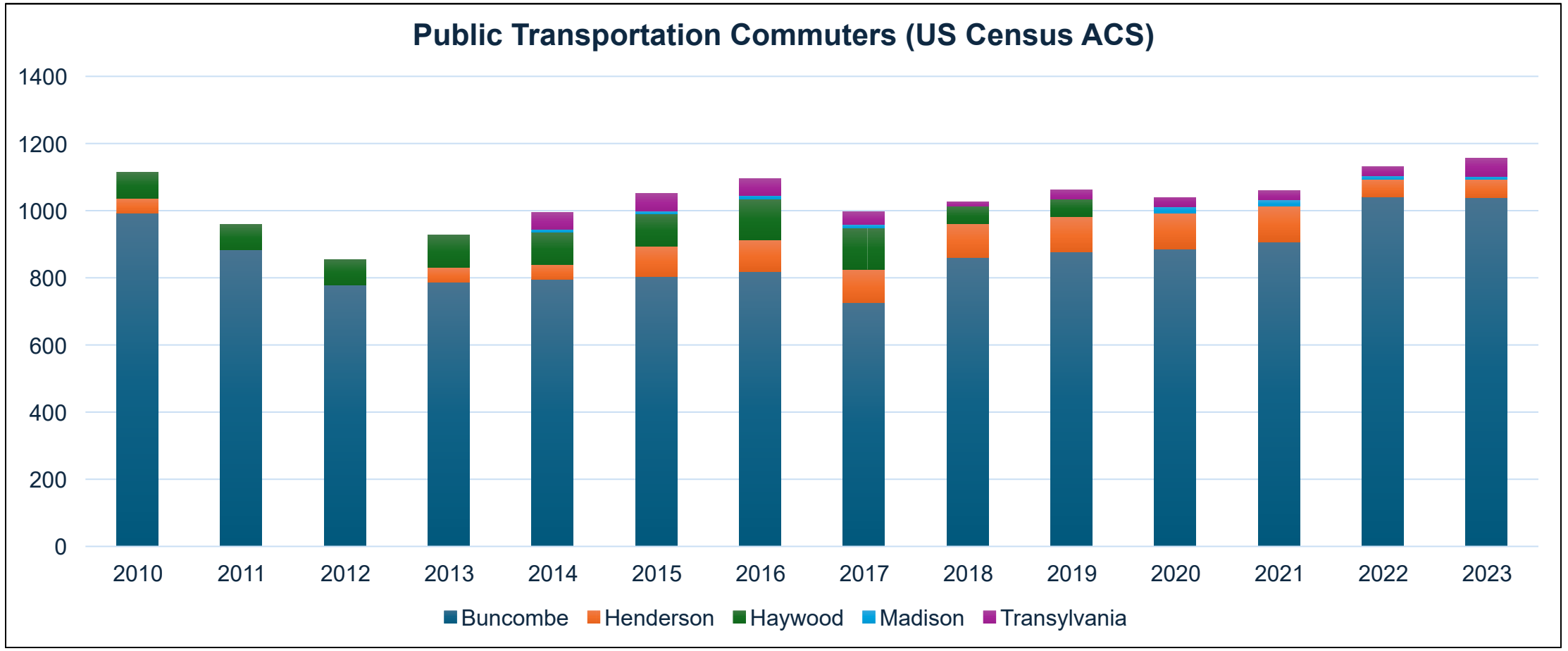


Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey

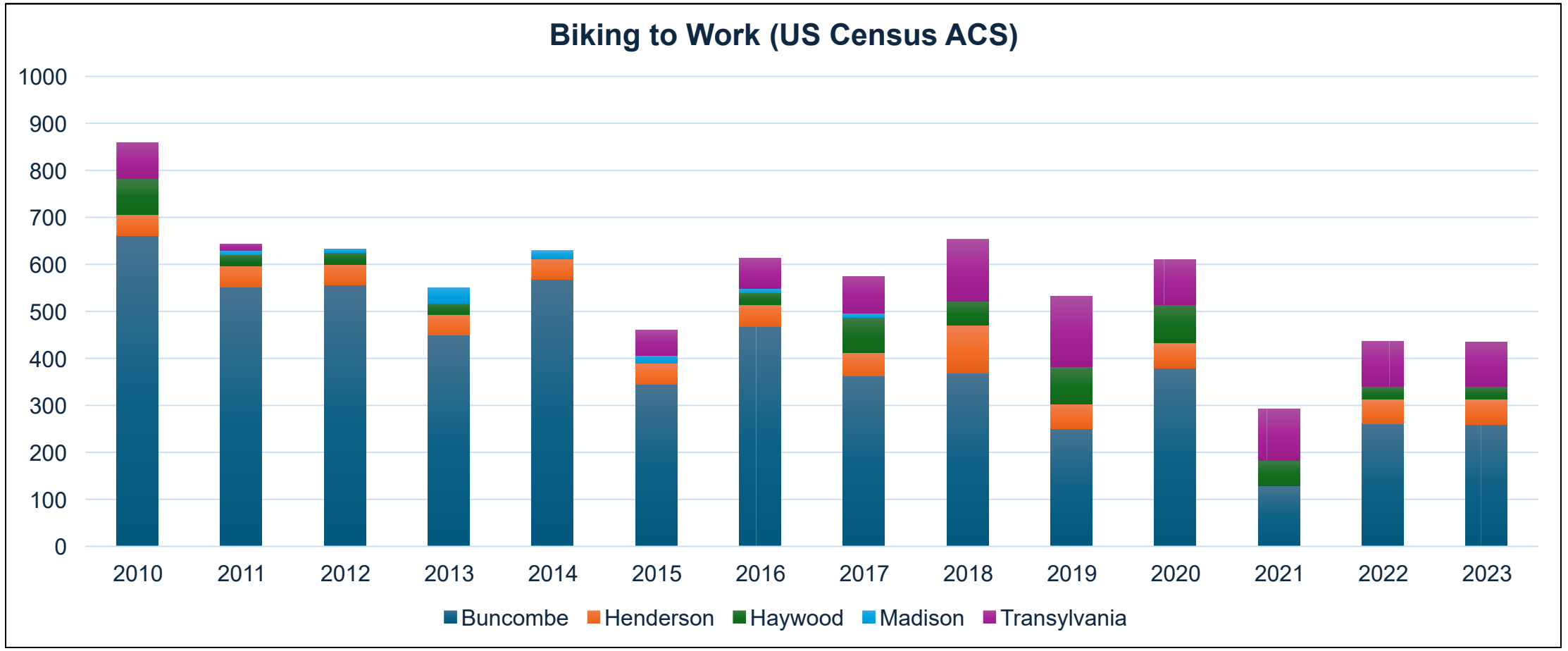
Walking to Work



Transit to Work

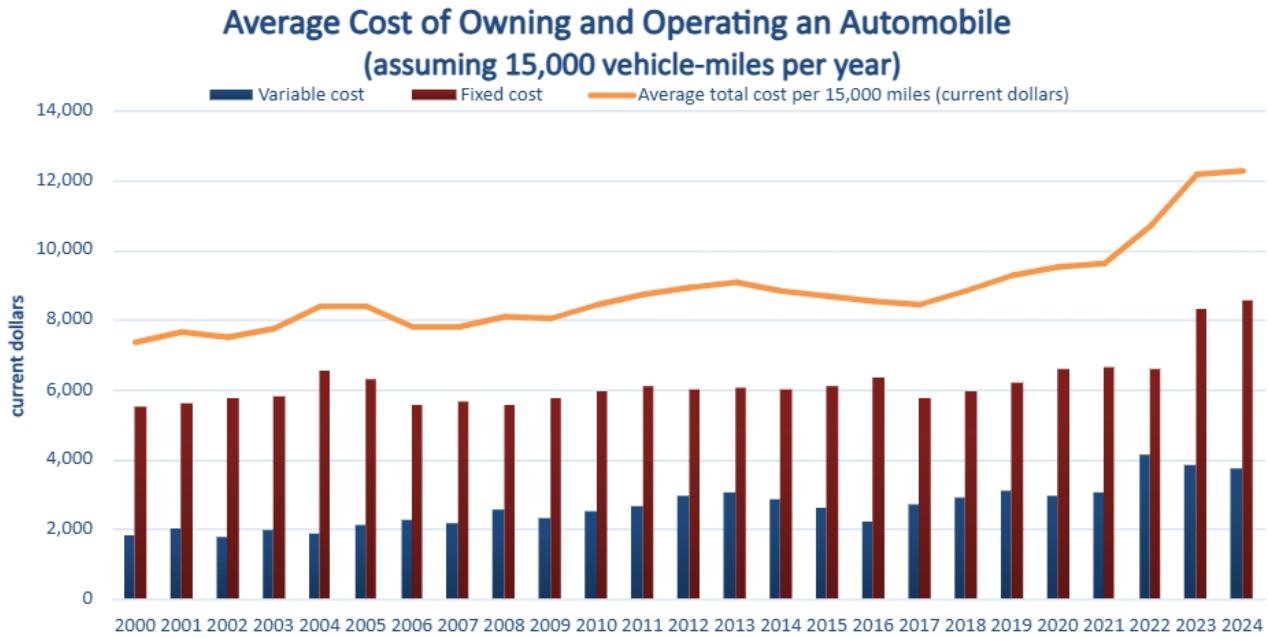


Biking to Work



Outlying Areas

- Limited access to public transportation
- Very limited pedestrian and bicycle amenities
- Very few choices but to drive a car more than the average person in the region drives a car



Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Why Can’t We Just Build More Infrastructure to Outlying Areas?

Why Can’t We Just Build More Infrastructure Further Out?

- Inflation has reduced the purchasing capacity for all types of transportation infrastructure
- Transit focusing on geographic coverage tends to be more expensive, less attractive to potential riders

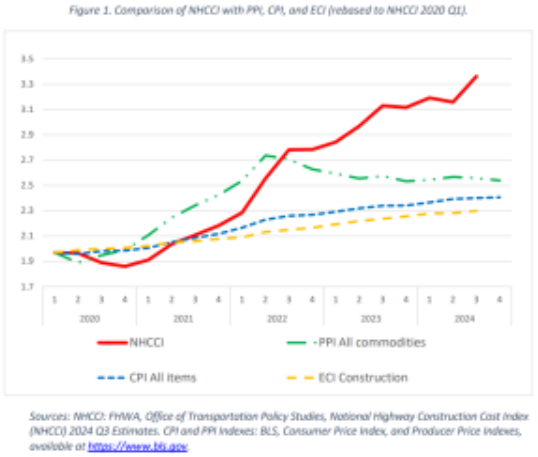
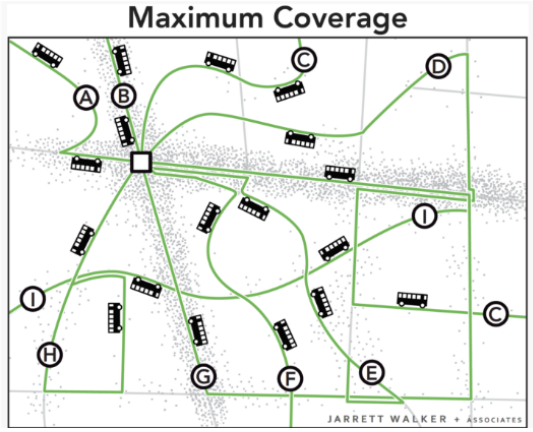


Figure 1. Comparison of NHCCI with PPI, CPI, and ECI (rebased to NHCCI 2020 Q1).

Sources: NHCCI: FHWA, Office of Transportation Policy Studies, National Highway Construction Cost Index (NHCCI) 2024 Q3 Estimates. CPI and PPI Indexes: BLS, Consumer Price Index, and Producer Price Indexes, available at https://www.bls.gov



LOCAL

NCDOT draft 10-year plan cuts funding for several major road projects in Buncombe, MPO says

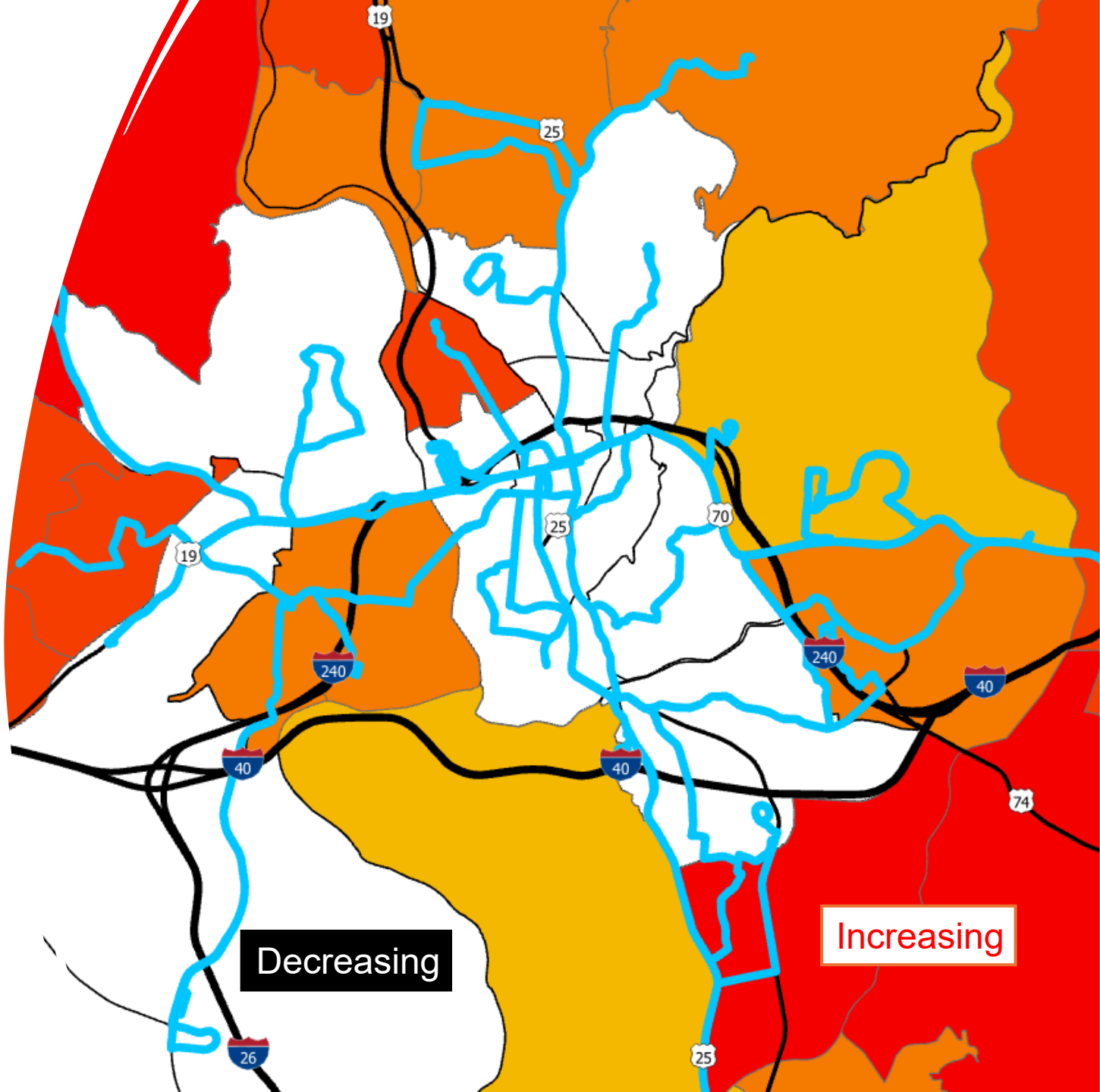


Sarah Honosky
Asheville Citizen Times

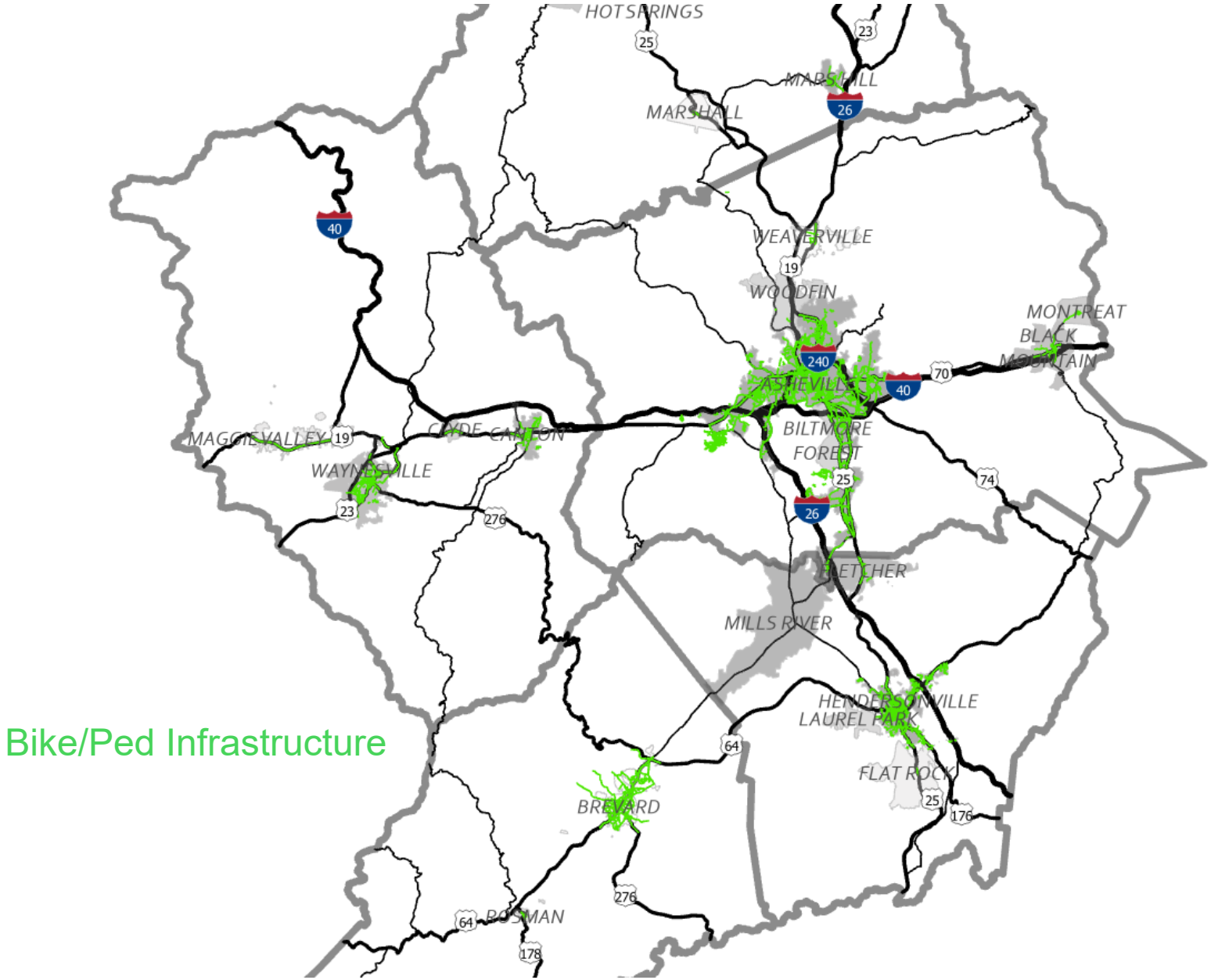
March 3, 2025, 5:05 a.m. ET

Transit and Low-Income Population Growth

- Low-Income Populations have been declining in some of the areas with the most transit coverage



There's A Lot of Outlying, Quickly Growing Areas



Bike/Ped Infrastructure

Why Aren’t We Building More Housing in Our Urban Areas?



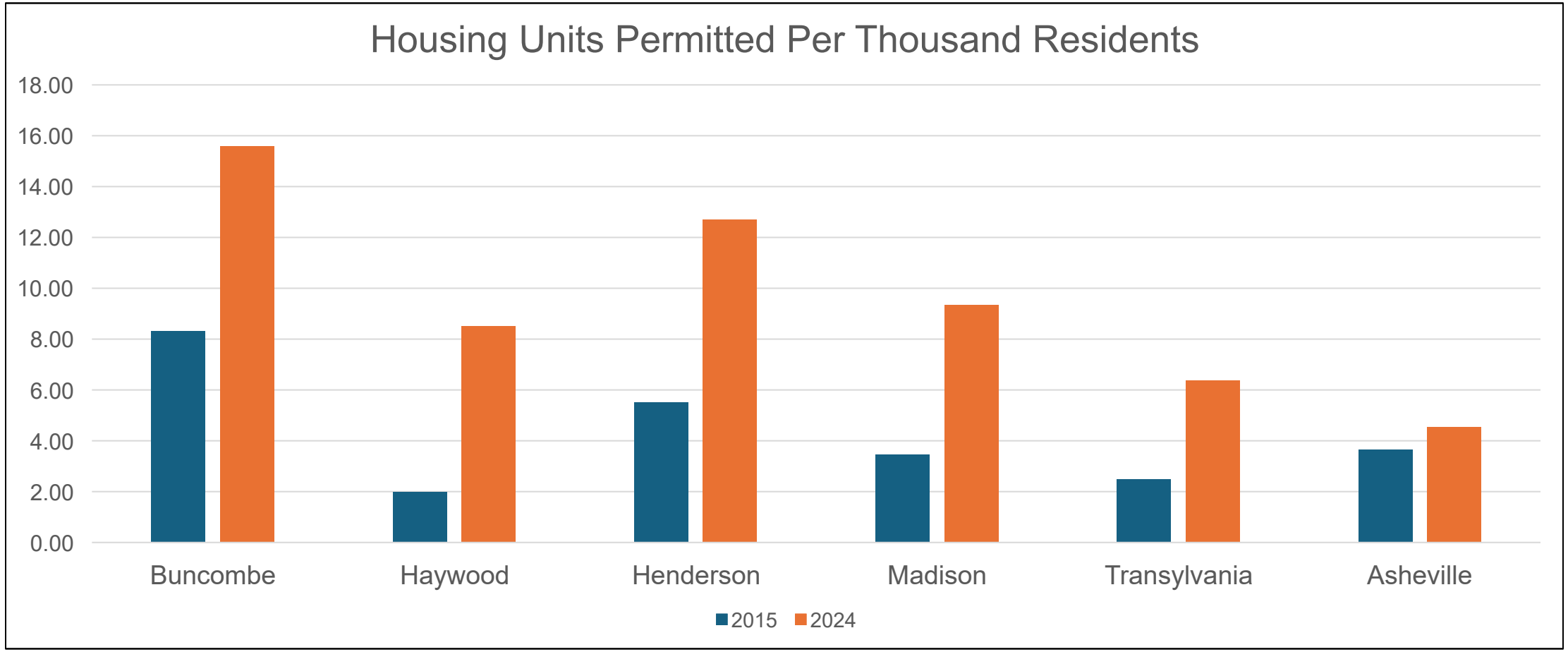
Source: Posted Regularly on Regional Social Media

Rank	City	Population	Square Miles	Pop/Sq Mi
1	Lake Park	3,269	0.7	4670
2	Governors Village	1,512	0.4	3780
3	Morrisville	29,630	8.7	3406
4	Carrboro	21,295	6.5	3276
5	Raleigh	467,665	145.8	3208
6	Boone	19,092	6.3	3030
7	Cary	174,721	58.7	2977
8	Chapel Hill	61,960	21.5	2882
9	Charlotte	874,579	307.2	2847
10	Elon	11,336	4	2834
11	Apex	58,780	20.8	2826
12	Wake Forest	47,601	17.6	2705
13	Carolina Beach	6,564	2.5	2626
14	Silver Lake	6,500	2.5	2600
15	Knightdale	19,435	7.5	2591
16	Durham	283,506	112.2	2527
17	Davidson	15,106	6	2518
18	Ranlo	4,511	1.8	2506
19	Gibsonville	8,920	3.6	2478
20	Greenville	87,521	35.6	2458
21	Cornelius	31,412	12.9	2435
22	Kure Beach	2,191	0.9	2434
23	Holly Springs	41,239	17	2426
24	Hope Mills	17,808	7.4	2406
25	Greensboro	299,035	129	2318
26	Winterville	10,462	4.6	2274
27	Northchase	3,842	1.7	2260
28	Fuquay-Varina	34,152	15.2	2247
29	Wilmington	115,451	51.4	2246
30	Wingate	4,055	1.9	2134
31	Cullowhee	7,682	3.6	2134
32	Green Level	3,152	1.5	2101
33	Asheville	94,589	45.6	2074
34	Hendersonville	15,137	7.3	2074

Are We Full?

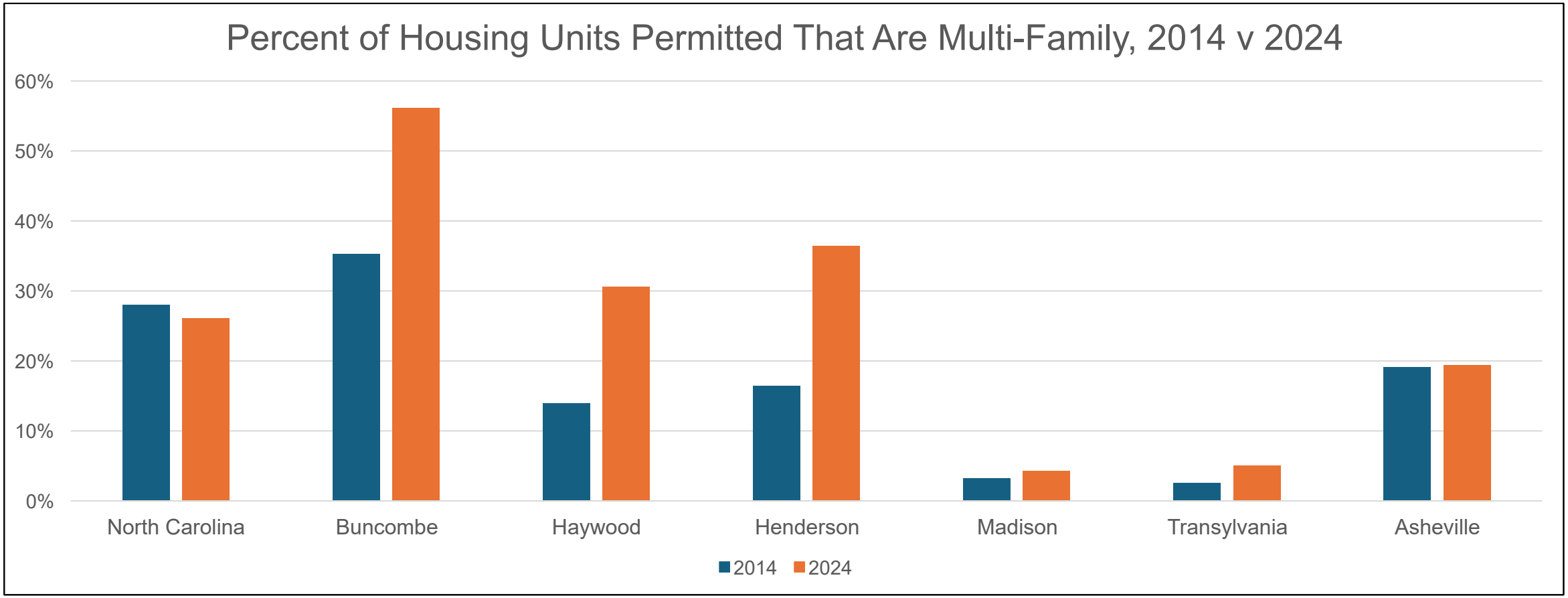
	Asheville's Population if as Dense as. . .	Hendersonville's Population if as Dense as. . .
Chapel Hill	128,683	21,038
Raleigh	146,285	23,418
Evanston, IL	457,869	73,299
San Francisco, CA	849,574	136,006
New York City, NY	1,336,203	213,910

Rate of Housing Permitting



Source: US Census Building Permits Survey

Multi-Family Housing Permitting



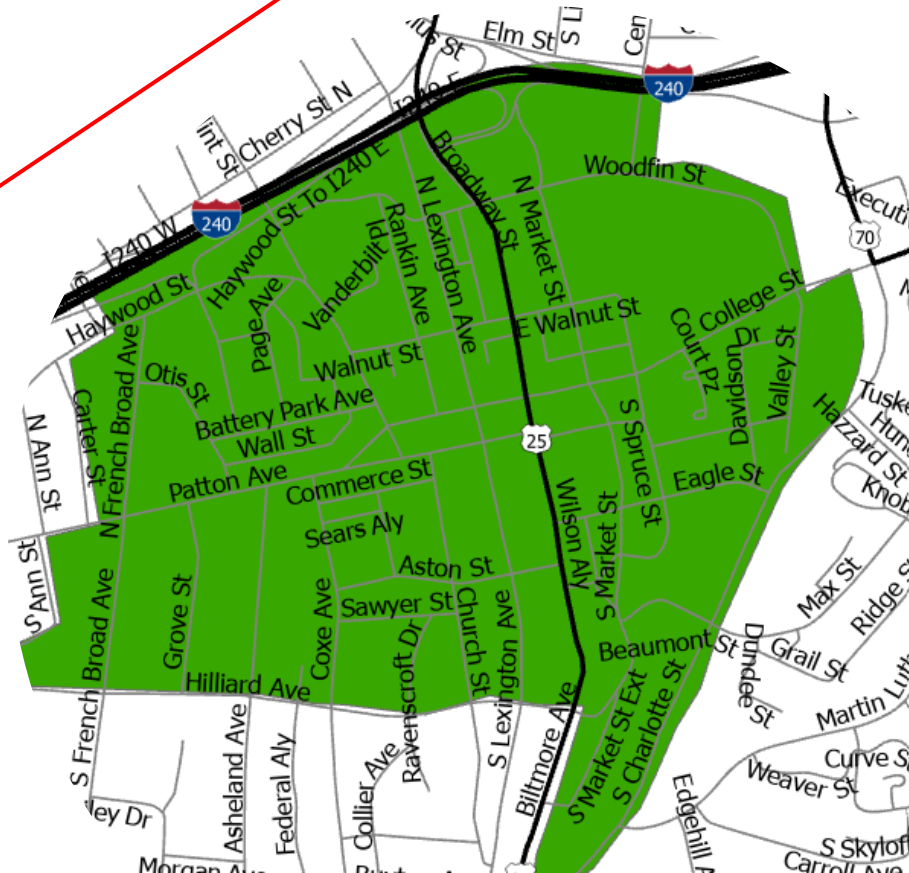
Source: US Census Building Permits Survey

Example

- Census Tract #1, Buncombe County
- Annual VMT per Household: 9,196
- Transit to Work: 11%
- Walk to Work: 18%



GREW BY 231 NEW RESIDENTS

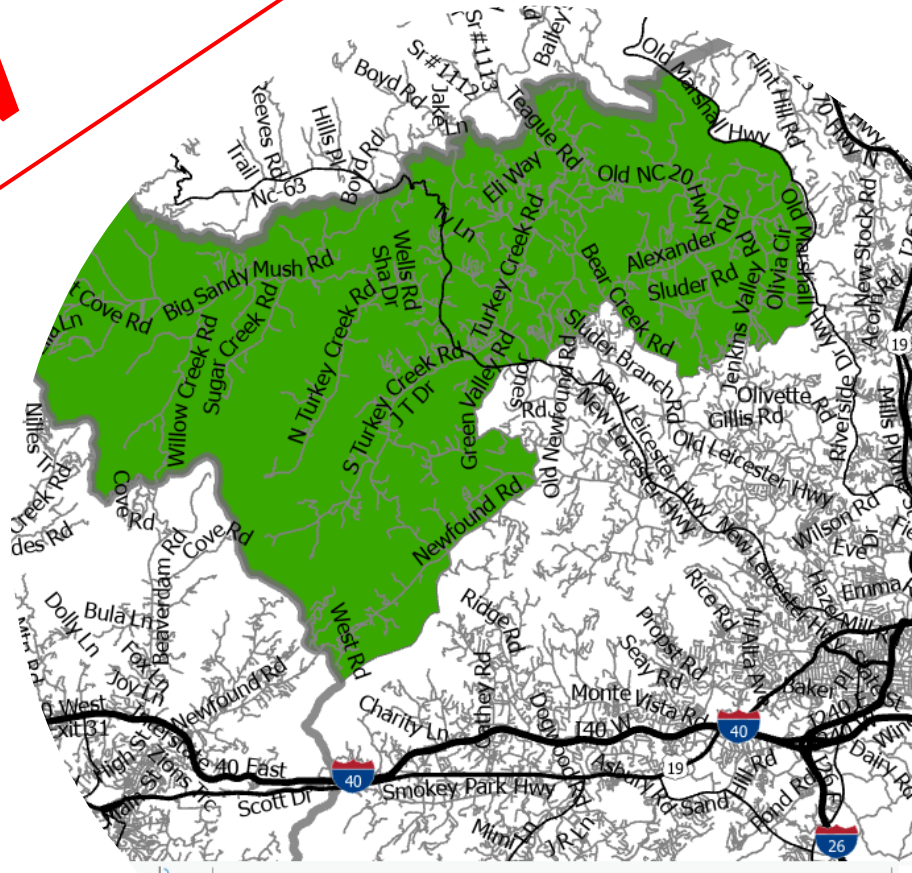


Example

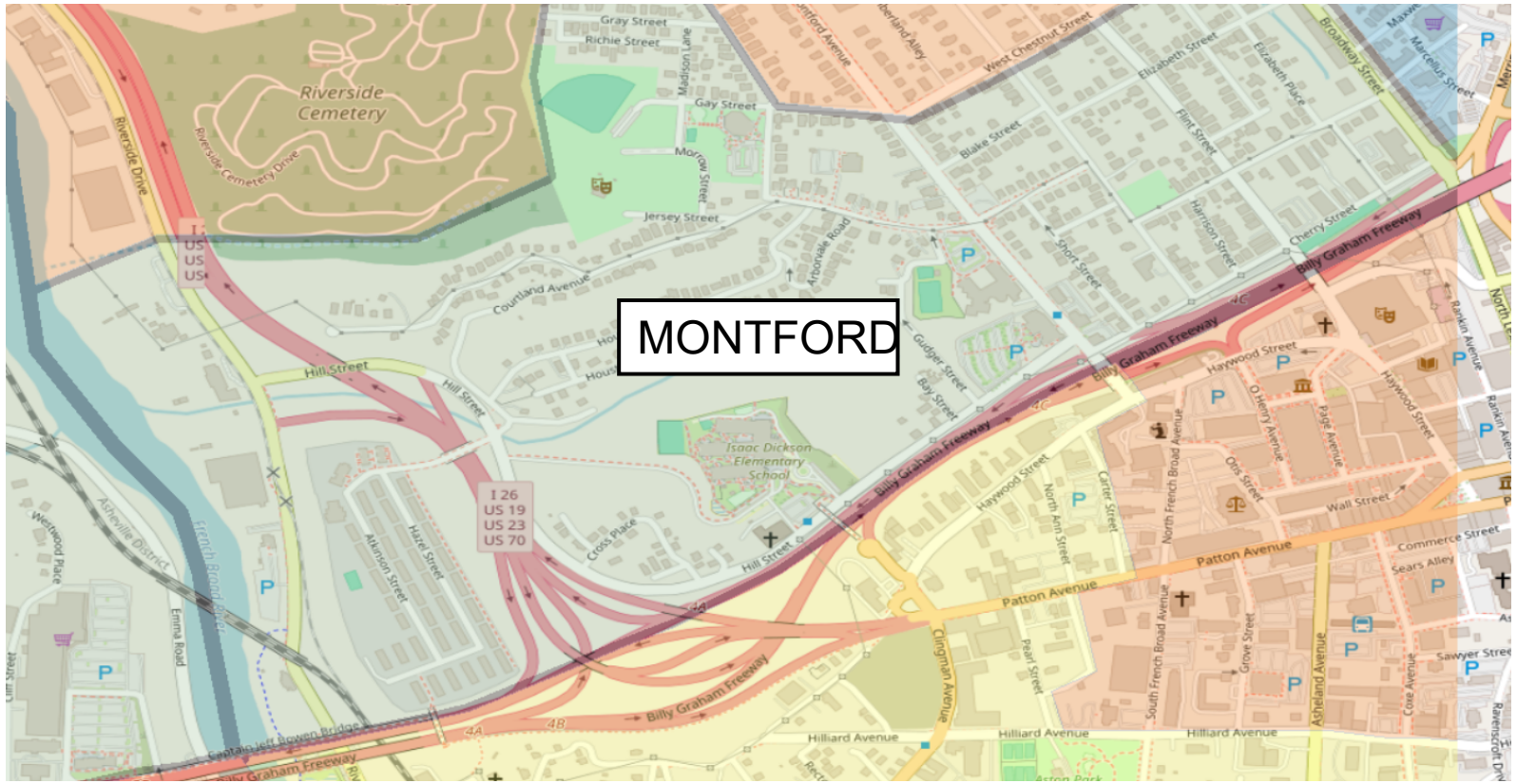
- Census Tract 26.01, Buncombe County
- Annual VMT per Household: 23,728
- Transit to Work: 0%
- Walk to Work: 2%



GREW BY 2,512 NEW RESIDENTS



Limited Housing Growth Does Not Always Mean No Change



Changes from 2000-2020

Housing Unit Growth: 17% (Reg. Avg. 30%)
Non-White Population: 59% -> 36%
Median HH Income: $16,534 -> $76,250
Poverty: 43.8% -> 15.5%
Transit: 17% -> 0%
Drove Alone: 50% -> 69.3%

Sources: US Census Bureau Decennial Census & American Community Survey

New Zoning Changes Pave the Way for More Housing in Hendersonville

LOCAL

House passes bill that would eliminate state parking minimums

By Michelle Alfini, wsoctv.com

June 26, 2025 at 2:24 pm EDT

LOCAL

Asheville code changes could make it easier to build housing along transit corridors



Sarah Honosky

Asheville Citizen Times

March 13, 2025, 5:14 a.m. ET

Positive Steps

More work at the regional and local levels to permit more housing



Conclusion

- Our region is growing and its populations are shifting- understanding those patterns is important
- The transportation impacts from different growth patterns are important to consider and plan for
- Areas of restricted growth are likely putting growth pressures in areas further out

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