



COMMUNICATION & ACTION PLAN

DECEMBER 2018

PURPOSE

Vision – Blowing Rock Civic Association educates the community to protect, preserve, inform, engage and unite our community.

Mission – Blowing Rock Civic Association is a strong voice for the residents and property owners of Blowing Rock dedicated to protecting and improving the quality of life in Blowing Rock by taking proactive stands on civic affairs, educating and engaging residents on key town issues, working with local government, and encouraging citizens to be involved in the community.

Action Plan – Document a Strategic Plan and Action Plan to communicate our Goals and Desired Results for Blowing Rock.

PRINCIPLES & PRIORITIES

Driving Principles

1. Homeowners are the cornerstone of the Blowing Rock economy
2. Homeowners fund most of the Town budgets
3. Homeowners desire to retain our village
4. Homeowners should have a strong voice

Key Strategic Priorities

1. Protect our Neighborhood Infrastructure
2. Protect our Residential Economy
3. Protect our Vibrant Village

STRUCTURE OF PLAN

- **STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

- *Goal*

- **Desired Result**

- **Action Steps**

PROTECT OUR NEIGHBORHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal – Improve Neighborhood Infrastructure

Desired Result – Quality Neighborhood Infrastructure

Action Steps - Town Council and Town Manager

- Consider outsourcing contractors to catch up on deferred maintenance
- Update and implement the Comprehensive Master Plan and the Water & Sewer Plan to properly prioritize neighborhoods
 - Engage a well-respected professional with a track record to guide the process
 - Implement a public tracking process to hold Town Manager and Town Council accountable for progress in implementing all Master Plans
- Prepare and implement a 5 year Neighborhood Improvement Plan as a subset of all Master Plans
- Upgrade Sewer System to fill gaps that hinder new construction
- Work with the County to utilize existing Town ambulances and certified EMT teams as the first-responder

PROTECT OUR RESIDENTIAL ECONOMY

Goal - Re-balanced the economic development equation used by leaders to promote our residential and tourist economies

Desired Result - Growing Property Tax Base & Controls on Spending

Action Steps – Town Council

- Educate Town Council, Homeowners and Business Community that homeownership, primarily second homeownership, has been and is the primary economic development engine for Blowing Rock
- Encourage Town Council to prioritize growth of property tax revenue based on growth of the tax base, not tax rate since Homeowners fund 85% of property taxes and 60% of all Town revenue
- Request Town Council to set a policy that requires Town Manager to evaluate the cost benefit of outsourcing and compare to permanent internal staffing solutions
- Request the Town Council Implement a Parking Plan that is self-funded by parking meters and fees and focuses on remote parking for expansion to address traffic and parking congestion

PROTECT OUR RESIDENTIAL ECONOMY

Goal - *Re-balanced the economic development equation used by leaders to promote our residential and tourist economies*

Desired Result - Growing Property Tax Base & Controls on Spending

Action Steps – Town Council, TDA & Chamber

- Focus marketing plans to prioritize
 - Second home destination
 - Vacation destination
 - Retirement home destination
 - Shopping destination for affluent visitors
 - Residential destination with schools and connectivity for families who work from home

PROTECT OUR RESIDENTIAL ECONOMY

Goal – Town Council to implement new policies and processes to promote outreach to the community to insure public input on key decisions

Desired Result – Two-way communication between Town Council and Citizens that promotes trust and consensus

➤ **Action Steps – Implement new policies and procedures**

- Change Speaker from Floor policy to allow citizens to speak on agenda items
- Implement a Public Agenda Review Process to engage citizens in agenda development and to insure public input
- Issue agendas one week in advance
- Share Monthly Department Reports with the public on the website
- Implement a budget preparation session to seek public input on budget prioritizes

PROTECT OUR VIBRANT VILLAGE

Goal - *Maintain the Norman Rockwell look and feel of our historical mountain village*

Desired Result - Attractive Residential Community

Action Steps

- Town Council
 - Retain and grow our residential tax base by improving infrastructure
 - Encourage a vibrant retail, restaurant and lodging economy
 - Balance marketing to tourists within the capacity of Downtown to accommodate growing numbers. See parking recommendation.
 - Add a Neighborhood Initiative supported by a permanent committee like BRAAC to provide guidance on addressing neighborhood improvements and identities
- BRCA
 - Assign BRCA director to monitor Planning & Zoning Board
 - Nominate a BRCA director to serve on the Planning & Zoning Board

PROTECT OUR VIBRANT VILLAGE

Goal - *Maintain the Norman Rockwell look and feel of our historical mountain village*

Desired Result – Historical Mountain Village Downtown

Action Steps – Town Council

- Develop a Downtown Master Plan as a subset of the Comprehensive Master Plan to retain village atmosphere
 - Engage a well-respected professional with a track record to guide the process
- Redefine Building and Landscape Standards
 - Implement a remote parking plan
 - Prioritize preservation of older and historical structures
- Evaluate a Downtown Special Taxing District to address improvements requested by the merchants and property owners.
 - <https://canons.sog.unc.edu/a-guide-to-business-improvement-districts-in-north-carolina>
 - Business Improvement District (BID) under G.S. 160A, Article 23 (Municipal Service District Act) implements Section 2(4) of Article 5 of the North Carolina Constitution

PROTECT OUR VIBRANT VILLAGE

Goal - Maintain the Norman Rockwell look and feel of our historical mountain village

Desired Result – Mountain Village Valley Boulevard that complements our Historical Downtown Mountain Village

Action Steps

- Develop a Valley Boulevard Master Plan as a subset of the Comprehensive Master Plan to insure a village atmosphere for redevelopment
 - Engage a well-respected professional with a track record to guide the process
 - Redefine Building and Landscape Standards
 - Avoid strip shopping center destiny
 - Extend Middle Fork Greenway through corridor
 - Require green grass and trees in front set-backs
 - Locate parking lots to rear or sides of buildings, not street side
- Redefine Gateways
 - Enhance and focus Downtown Gateways to 221 and Main Street
 - Change focus of Sunset to a Pedestrian Walkway
 - Avoid funneling traffic to Sunset Drive that dead ends into Main Street and creates congestion
 - Purchase property for off Main Street parking lots and future mixed-use parking garages

PROTECT OUR VIBRANT VILLAGE

Goal - *Achieve the appropriate balance to meet the needs of residents, rental tourists and day tourists*

Desired Result – Attract Affluent Tourist

Action Steps – Town Council, TDA & Chamber

- Engage the Town Council, Chamber and TDA Leaders in a conversation to discuss our goals and understand their goals
- Nominate a BRCA director to serve on Chamber board
- Assign a BRCA director to attend and monitor TDA meetings or nominate a BRCA director and resident to serve on TDA board
- Ask Town Council and Parks & Rec to re-evaluate all events that are permitted or sponsored by the Town to implement a sunset clause, to evaluate the cost benefit of each event and establish a criteria for new events
- Expand Downtown parking using a self-funded parking system primarily funded by parking revenue and/or a special downtown tax district
- Complete Downtown Parks by purchasing the missing link between Broyhill Park and Davant Park.

BOARD BIOGRAPHIES

Chairman of the Board and President – George T. Wilcox –CEO and Owner of Wilcox & Co. financial consulting, life and health insurance and investments. Former manager Merck & Co. Former member of the Board of Blowing Rock Hospital, former member of the Board Blowing Rock Country Club, member of BRAHM, member of BR Chamber of Commerce, member BR Methodist Church, member BR Historical Society, member Blue Ridge Conservancy, member Conservation Trust of N.C.

Vice President – William H. Carter – CEO and Owner of Carter Land Co. commercial real estate sales, development, investment and management. Longtime Blowing Rock resident and property owner and a member of various BR organizations.

Secretary/Treasurer– Betsy C. Wilcox – Manager and agent Wilcox & Co. financial consulting, life and health insurance and investments. Graduate of UNC Greensboro, N.C. Member of BRAHM, BR Chamber of Commerce, BR Methodist Church, BR Historical Society, Blue Ridge Conservancy and Conservation Trust of N.C.

Brian Beaty – Computer networking consultant and former Mayor Pro Tem of the Town of Marvin, N.C. , one of America's fastest growing towns.

Richard Gambill – A Chemistry and Textiles graduate of N.C. State Richard was a manger for two major chemical companies before founding his own successful business as a manufacturer and marketer of custom cabinets. After retiring to Blowing Rock Richard has become active in a number of organizations including BRAHM, the BR Chamber of Commerce, BR Historical Society and the BR Rotary Club where he serves as Treasurer.

Tim C. Gupton – A graduate of UNC Chapel Hill. Tim pursued a very successful career as a CPA with KPMG and then with his own firm Hughes, Pittman and Gupton, LLP. Tim was also a founder and general partner of Research Triangle Ventures and HPG Family Office, LLC. Tim also was an executive, board member, and owner of several successful startup biopharmaceutical companies. He currently is a member of the board of Blue Ridge Conservancy, an officer of the Mayview Homeowners Association, and a member of BRAHM and other BR organizations.

BOARD BIOGRAPHIES

Karyn K. Herterich – Karyn and her husband Dieter own SouthMarke Shopping Mall in downtown BR. Karyn also owns and manages one of SouthMarke’s outstanding shops Serves You Right. She has had extensive involvement in the BR Chamber and other BR organizations. Through her Kennedy Herterich Foundation Karyn has been a very charitable benefactor of many Blowing Rock and High Country organizations and endeavors. Karyn is the North Carolina member on the Board of the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Jean Kitchin – Owner , CEO and President of a company that includes three pharmacies for 16 years. Former Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of UNC Chapel Hill, Former Chair of the UNC Chapel Hill Alumni Association, recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from UNC Chapel Hill, Former Chair of the UNC Lineberger Cancer Center Board of Visitors, Former Chair of the Nash County Rocky Mount Board of Education, has hosted and produced television programs for a number of state stations and continues to host and produce programs for WHIG TV. Jean is an active member of various BR organizations.

Dan J. McLamb – Dan, a law graduate of UNC Chapel Hill where he also received his undergraduate degree is a founding partner in the Raleigh law firm Yates, McLamb, and Weyher, L.L.P. Dan is recognized as one of the best litigators in North Carolina. Dan has received numerous professional awards and extensive professional recognition. His clients include some of the state’s most outstanding institutions and companies. Dan, a BR homeowner, is an active member of various BR organizations.

Blake Pace – Blake who received both undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Maryland College Park is General Manager of Affordable High Country Housing, a company that buys, repairs, manages and sells homes. Blake is also a very talented musical producer and performer, having performed at a number of events for President Ronald Reagan. Blake serves as President of Ensemble Stage Company, one of the state’s most outstanding theatrical organizations. Blake has also been active in the BR Chamber and various other BR and high Country organizations.

Senator Tony Rand – Senator Rand, who received both undergraduate and law degrees from UNC Chapel Hill, is a practicing attorney. He served for a number of years in the N.C. Senate including eight years as Senate Majority Leader. He later served as head of the state Post-Release and Parole Commission. Senator Rand who has owned homes in BR for years is active in a number of BR organizations including serving as a board member of the BR Chamber and on the board of the BR Country Club. Senator Rand is also a member of the N.C. Lottery Commission.

BOARD BIOGRAPHIES

James M. Scott – Jim had an extensive military career as an officer and an engineer. After retiring from the military Jim pursued a career as an engineer in the private sector. Jim who has been involved in Blowing Rock for years served as Chairman of the Blowing Rock Planning Board for several years. Jim also obtained a real estate license for his business activities. Jim is an active member of various BR organizations.

Julian R. West, Jr. – Julian, a graduate of East Carolina University, was an owner and executive of PS West Construction Co. in Statesville, N.C. After retiring from the company Julian has continued in commercial real estate development and management. Julian also serves as a director of a regional bank. Julian was a member of the Statesville Planning and Zoning Board and of the Statesville Board of Adjustments. He was also Chairman of the Statesville Chamber of Commerce. He is a Charter member of The Greater Statesville Rotary Club and he has served on a number of other civic and church boards. Julian has a home and other investment properties in Blowing Rock. He is an active member of various BR organizations.