

MAGGIE VALLEY REVITALIZATION PLAN



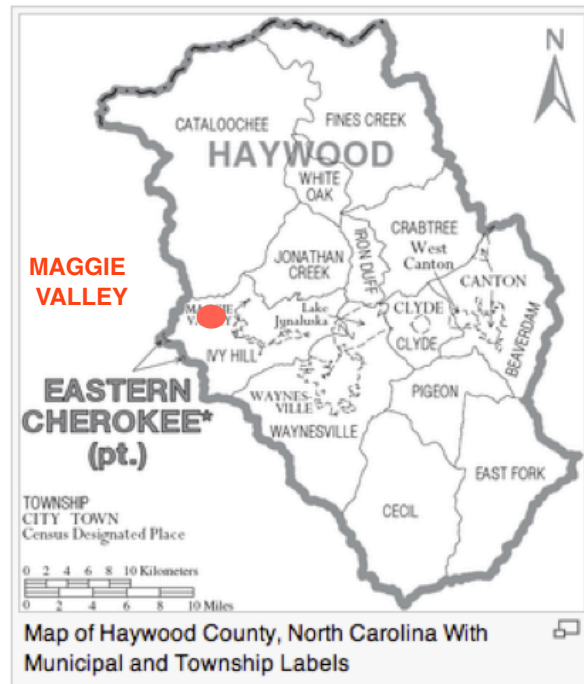
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REGIONAL AND COUNTY OVERVIEW

The Town of Maggie Valley is located in Haywood County in the Southwest Mountain Region of North Carolina. In the early years of the new millennium, tourism, second-home development, and retiree migration were driving impressive growth in the Southwestern North Carolina region. This growth was driven primarily by the region's vast natural resources. The US Congress designated the North Carolina Mountains as the nation's twenty-third national heritage area, **The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area**, in 2003. This designation was founded not only on nationally significant natural resources, but also on the rich craft and music culture that still exists today and drives thousands of visitors to the region. Eastern America's highest mountains and the South's most dramatic rivers are found here in the Southwest Mountains. It is the sacred ground and original "homeland" for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Maggie Valley borders the nation's most visited national park, **The Great Smoky National Park**. The town also sits at the southern terminus of **The Blue Ridge Parkway**, the nation's "favorite drive" and most popular linear unit in the US National Park System.



The Qualla Boundary also borders the Town of Maggie Valley. Historic small towns and rolling farmland have survived here after having long disappeared in most areas of the U.S.

Maggie Valley is well positioned in the Southeast with major highway access corridors and proximity to the Asheville Regional Airport.

HAYWOOD COUNTY PROFILE

NC Rural Center

POPULATION	
Total Population (2010)	59,036
Population Density (2010)	107
Total Population (2000)	54,033
Percentage Population Change (2000-2010)	9.3%
Percentage American Indian (2010)	1%
Percent Asian (2010)	0%
Percent Black (2010)	1%
Percent Hispanic (2010)	3%
Percent White (2010)	94%
Median Age (2010)	45.6
Percent Under 18 (2010)	20%
Percent 18 to 29 Years (2010)	12%
Percent 30 to 64 Years (2010)	48%
Percent 65 or Older (2010)	21%
Percent Born in NC (2006-2010)	65%
INCOME AND POVERTY	
Median Household Income (2010)	\$39,987
Median Household Income 2000 (2010 Dollars)	\$43,811
Per Capita Income (2006-2010)	\$24,233
Poverty Rate (2010)	15%
Child Poverty Rate (2010)	25%
Elderly Poverty Rate (2006-2010)	9%
Percent Receiving Food Assistance (2010)	15%
HOUSING	
Home Ownership Rate (2010)	74%

Percent Substandard Housing (2006-2010)	4%
Percent Unaffordable Housing (2006-2010)	27%
HEALTH	
Infant Mortality Rate, per 1,000 Live Berths (2010)	3.8
Percent Uninsured (2009)	19%
Physicians, per 10,000 population (2010)	18.1
EDUCATION	
Students Passing End of Grade Exams (2012)	76%
Graduation Rate (2012)	79%
Per Student Expenditures K-12 (2011)	\$8,803
Bachelor Degree or Higher ((2006-2010)	21%
Associate's Degree (2006-2010)	11%
High School Diploma (2206-2010)	31%
Less Than High School Diploma (2006-2010)	16%
LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT	
Labor Force (2011)	28,846
Number Unemployed (2011)	2,842
Unemployment Rate (2011)	10%
Percent Working in Manufacturing (2011)	13%
Percent Working in Health Care (2011)	16%
Percent Working in Public Administration (2011)	11%
Employment in Tourism (2011)	1,280
Tourism Payroll (2011)	\$22.76 Million
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES	
Total Farms (2007)	707
Average Farm Size (2007)	80 acres
Total Agricultural Receipts (2010)	\$20,872,000
Total Livestock Receipts (2010)	\$12,872,000

OTHER	
Crime Rate per 1,000 residents (2011)	30
Economic Tier Designation (2012)	2
Property Tax Rate	\$0.54
Rural or Urban Region	Rural
Updated on October 18, 2012	
MUNICIPALITY PROFILE - MAGGIE VALLEY	
POPULATION	
Total Population (2010)	1,150
Total Population (2000)	607
Percent American Indian (2010)	1%
Percent Asian (2010)	2%
Percent Black (2010)	1%
Percent Hispanic (2010)	5%
Percent White (2010)	91%
Median Age (2010)	53.3
Percent 0 to 17 (2010)	15%
Percent 18 to 29 Years (2010)	8%
Percent 30 to 44 (2010)	15%
Percent 45 to 64 (2010)	35%
Percent 65 and Older (2010)	27%
INCOME AND POVERTY	
Median Household Income (2006-2010)	\$52,933

PER Capita Income (2006-2010)	\$40,803
Poverty Rate (2006-2010)	3%
Child Poverty Rate (2006-2010)	0%
HOUSING	
Home Ownership Rate (2006-2010)	74%
Housing Built between 1980-2010 (2006-2010)	78%
Housing Units That Are Mobile Homes (2206-2010)	9%
EDUCATION	
Bachelor Degree or Higher ((2006-2010)	35%
Associate's Degree (2006-2010)	6%
Attended College (2006-2010)	20%
High School Diploma (2206-2010)	34%
Less Than High School Education (2006-2010)	Less Than High School Education (2006-2010)
OTHER	
Geographic Region	Mountain
Rural or Urban Region	Rural
Updated on October 18, 2012	

HAYWOOD COUNTY LODGING INDUSTRY & ROOM TAX INFORMATION

Today there are **1,524 lodging accommodations** in Maggie Valley accounting for **56% of the total accommodations** in Haywood County.

Lodging Accommodations by Category and Town

Town	Canton	Clyde	Waynesville	Lake Junaluska	Maggie Valley
Category					
Hotels/Motels	116		176	450	868
Bed & Breakfasts, Inns & Lodges	1		110	15	30
Country Club Resorts	36		171		91
Cabins, Cottages & Villas	49	9	40	1	177
Vacation Rentals	147	8	88	120	358

Note: VR - based on number of properties. All other categories based on number of rooms/units

Haywood County Occupancy Tax Breakdown

The county collects an occupancy tax of 4% on lodging revenues. The first 3 % of collections are dedicated 100% to tourism promotion. Beginning in 2008, when the rate increased from 3% to 4%, the additional 1% is distributed by zip code to the five municipalities.

Haywood County Occupancy Tax Collections Chart

Year	Amount in Thousands
04 - 05	\$614,089
05 - 06	\$653,129
06 - 07	\$704,847
07 - 08	\$879,739
08 - 09	\$952,663 *
09 - 10	\$889,417
10 - 11	\$893,802
11 - 12	\$890,534

* Room tax rate increased to 4%

Haywood County TDA 1% Fund Distributions

Year	ZC Canton	ZC Clyde	ZC Lake Junaluska	ZC Maggie Valley	Waynesville
08 - 09	\$20,358.47	\$461.07	\$9,335.81	\$138,065.52	\$68,077.60
09 - 10	\$17,391.17	\$582.94	\$9,817.35	\$129,021.44	\$64,010.37
10 - 11	\$18,140.41	\$613.85	\$9,566.62	\$122,954.88	\$70,936.29
11 - 12	\$16,911.65	\$544.28	\$10,454.57	\$122,358.64	\$71,126.86

Haywood County Tourism Development Authority Staff & Visitor Centers Information

Lynn Collins, Executive Director
Ashley Rice, Marketing Manager
Becky Seymour, Video Marketing Manager
Jason Dailey, Office/Visitor Center Manager

HCTDA operates three visitor centers within the county: Haywood County (in downtown Waynesville), Maggie Valley and Canton

Visitor Center Staff

Shirley Carswell
Eddes Christopher
Jane Farmer
Linda Martin
John Porter

WNC Regional Occupancy Tax Rates

County	Tax Rate
Buncombe	4%
Graham	3%
Haywood	4%
Henderson	5%
Macon	6%
Jackson	6%
Swain	4%

BUSINESS COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Restaurant Establishments

Haywood County Department of Environment & Natural Resources

Year	Number of Restaurants
2009 - 2010	24
2010 - 2011	20
2011 - 2012	22
As of 2-15-2013	23

Maggie Valley Business License Issued - 2013

Business Type	Number of Permits
General Service	39
RV/Campgrounds	14
Real Estate/Construction	21
F&B Outlets	23
Retail	28
Lodging	41
Total issued to MV addresses	166
Total issued to Out of Town	199
Total Issued	365

Situation Analysis

The history of Maggie Valley began over 100 years ago when the growing community was in need of a post office. For the US Postmaster to award the location a post office a name of the community was needed. A few names were submitted, including the name of a daughter of the man who was currently bringing the mail into the valley. The US Postmaster chooses "Maggie" and the rest is history.

The foundations of the tourism-based economy have been forged in its location on the eastern side of Great Smoky Mountain National Park as well as being as the southern terminus of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Within a day's drive of most of the Southeast, but yet having a climate similar to northern New England due to its altitude, Maggie Valley enjoys four equally balanced seasons. The valley floor sits at 3200 feet while the mountain peaks surrounding the valley rise above 5000 feet.

The valley's position as a tourist destination was dramatically changed in 1961 with the opening of two significant attractions. On May 1, R. B. Cogburn opened Ghost Town in the Sky, a wild west theme park promoted as "North Carolina's Mile-High Theme Park." It attracted over 600,000 visitors per year during its hey day.

In that same year Tom Alexander opened the Cataloochee Ski Area, which would become North Carolina's first ski area and the most southern ski slope on the East coast of the United States. Cataloochee Ski drove winter visitation while Ghost Town filled the valley from May to the end of October.

Ghost Town was sold to National Linen Services in 1973 but repurchased by Cogburn in 1986. In later years the park suffered from deferred maintenance issues and increased competition for regional attractions, Dollywood, Six Flags and Carowinds. Ghost Town closed its doors in 2002 and the attraction remained dark until 2006. The new owners operated the park from 2006 until the end of the 2010 season ending that year in bankruptcy.

In February of 2012 Alaska Pressley, a Maggie Valley businessperson, who had been involved with the park since its beginning, bought the park at a public auction. The park reopened with a limited operation in June of 2012 with expanded operations planned for the 2013 season.

Both the fortunes and identity of Maggie Valley became linked to Ghost Town. With the park's openings and closings, both have suffered. In addition there have been many other negative influences on the business climate within the Valley.

The successful return of Ghost Town will be an asset to the Valley's tourism offerings. It can help fill a product gap in the valley—providing activities for families. Ghost Town has the potential of restoring its position as one of the anchor tourism businesses for the region.

Businessperson Dale Walksler decided to move his transportation museum, Wheels Through Time from Mt. Vernon, Illinois in 2002 after he sold his Harley Davidson dealership. The 50,000 square foot facility features one of the largest collections of motorcycles in the US as well as a unique collection of automobiles and unique vehicles. The facility is truly unique because all the vehicles in the collection still run. The sounds of powerful engines being revved up often delight surprised visitors. The Museum attracts over 40,000 visitors per year and has generated significant media exposure through online, print and national television outlets.

There have been shifts in the demographic profile of the Maggie visitors. In years past the area had a strong appeal to the blue-collar tourist. As the economy shifted due to the continued loss of manufacturing jobs, the segment declined. The core market is now aging. The lack of entertainment options for families makes it difficult to create a new generation of family visitors. In addition, today's children have a higher benchmark for their entertainment requirements.

In 2013, the curbside appeal of the town has suffered over the years. In the entrances to the town on US 19 greet visitors with empty buildings in disrepair. A collection of empty buildings, aging building facades, a jungle of power lines border the streets and crisscross the highway line over the six-mile strip of Maggie's five-lane highway.

Numerous "For Sell" and "Closed" signs dot the landscape. A concern expressed by many residents is that Maggie Valley is evolving into a real "ghost town."



The business community is divided into multiple association groups with overlapping interests, often competing for the same funds for similar or redundant advertising programs. Relations between the businesses, the Maggie Valley Chamber and the Haywood Tourism Development Authority have been strained in recent years. Fighting among different groups appears to have been a tradition in Maggie Valley for decades.

Another challenge for the business community is many business owners do not live within the Town limits. They are not able to vote in local elections or serve on key Town boards. This creates an environment of both frustration and disconnect between the business community and local government.

The Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau currently has only one fulltime person working to promote the town. The Chamber's primary function has been to promote tourism, a role shared with the Maggie Valley Hotel/Motel Association, the Maggie Valley Lodging Association and the Haywood County TDA. The Maggie Valley Chamber is a membership organization and not all businesses are members of the chamber.

The need for a more cohesive community became a common theme throughout during the fact-finding phase of the project. There appears to be a sincere desire for businesses owners to be more positive about the community. The need for harmony and a positive attitude from within in Maggie Valley emerged as a major point in community input meetings.

Since 2008 room tax collections in Maggie Valley have declined 11.3%. Room tax collections have declined every year over the last four years. There are some signs of recovery. In 2012 the average daily rate in Haywood County increased by 6.8%. Occupancy rates increased only 3.5%, which places Haywood County last in a five -county comparison.

The business community is struggling. The need for meaningful change is needed sooner rather than later. Regardless of past disputes, there appears to be a genuine desire to work together to find common ground so the town can move forward.

The North Carolina Division of Travel, Film and Sports Development through research provided by the U.S. Travel Association reports that in 2010/2011 Haywood County generated \$120.4 million in overall tourism expenditures. Maggie Valley represented 55% of total room revenue during that period. Therefore it can be estimated that the tourism economy of Maggie Valley represents \$66.2 million. This is impressive for a town with a population of only 1,150.

There is more good news. Through the Moving Maggie Forward process we discovered a tremendous amount of agreement on key issues. During the extensive one-on-one interview and in the group work sessions there was open and honest dialogue. During the S.W.O.T analysis, there was broad based agreement on the Town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. During the community input session the ranking of Town's opportunities have provided a clear direction for plan development. It appears that consensus on how to move forward is close.

"If we don't change direction soon we'll end up where we're going."

-Professor Irwin Corey



“It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory”

-W. Edwards Deming

Moving Maggie Forward –The Process

Moving Maggie Forward was formed to develop a plan to revitalize the business community of Maggie Valley. It has been a collaborative effort of different groups working toward a common goal:

The Town of Maggie Valley

Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center

Haywood County Community College

Haywood County Tourism Development Authority

Maggie Valley Parks, Recreation and Festival Advisory Committee

Craig Madison of CMA Associates was retained to facilitate the plan

The objectives of Moving Maggie Forward were established to:

- Create an identity

- Develop a business plan

- Determine the metrics for success

Moving Maggie Forward began group meetings in August 2012. During October Mayor Ron DeSimone, with assistance from team members, made 150 visits to business owners. They discussed the goals of the project and he invited them to attend the Kick Off Meeting.

During the week of October 4, Craig Madison spent a week posing as a tourist visiting local businesses to better understand the existing visitor experience.

Over 100 community members attended the November 15 Kick Off meeting at the Town Hall. In conjunction with the Haywood Community College, Janis Allen conducted the team building session “Fun-a-Mentals” on November 27 with 19 participants.

Over 120 hours of one on one interviews were conducted with business owners in Maggie Valley. Work sessions were conducted with the following groups:

- Maggie Valley Lodging Association
- Maggie Valley Hotel/Motel Association
- Town Square merchants
- Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

An extensive time investment was made during the discovery phase of the project. The interviews were an attempt to find common ground for Maggie Valley’s strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats. These sessions were mainly listening sessions allowing business owners to express their concerns and recommend those actions that would positively have an impact on their businesses. The group work sessions further refined the common themes. The themes were then grouped and structured into strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats.

On January 21, 2013, a Town Vision meeting was held to review the data generated to date. The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats were compiled through those one-on-one interviews and listening work sessions with key groups and the ranked through community meetings.

MAGGIE VALLEY - S.W.O.T

STRENGTHS

Arranged in rank order

Location - Southern Terminus of the Blue Ridge Parkway

141,000 acres National Parks and Forests (GSMNP and Pisgah National Forest)

Highway Access (I-40, Hwy 9 and 74)

Proximity to the Cherokee Indian Reservation

Ability to serve as a hub to WNC visitors

Geographically central gathering place for families

Natural beauty/mountain vistas

-Therapeutic

-Relaxing

-Quiet

-Moderate climate – cooler in the summer

-Fall foliage

Availability of outdoor recreation-Fishing, Hiking, Elk Viewing, Mountain Biking, Skiing

Small town atmosphere

Wheels Through Time Museum

Ghost Town

Affordable - offering a strong value proposition

Festival Grounds

Ghost Town

Cataloochee Resort

Cataloochee Ski Area

Emotional Connection with visitors through the years

WEAKNESSES

Arranged in rank order

Curbside appeal

- Product needs a facelift
- Appearance of gateway entrances
- Five-lane road through center of town
- Power lines
- Empty buildings

Behavior/Cultural Issues

- Fear of competition
- Fighting among difference groups
- “What gets into the ears of the community gets into visitor’s ear”
- The need to be more positive
- Tolerance
- Failure to work together as a community
- Negative attitude

Lack of activities after 5 PM

- Too many businesses close at 5 PM
- Nothing to do after 9 PM

Lack of family activities

Lack of year-round activities

Festival Grounds

- Events need to be more consistent
- Outdoor venue subject to inclement weather

Lack of communication between businesses

Local Government

- Polarization of leadership
- Perceptions they don’t care what the business community wants
- Individual agendas override the needs of the business community

Fragmentation of distribution of the 1% Fund

At the mercy of the weather - the winter season

Need for hospitality training

Need for long-term vision

OPPORTUNITIES

Arranged in rank order

Improve the curbside appeal of the town
Diversify the economy –attract non-tourism related businesses
Establish who is the advocate for business

Wheels

- Better leverage Wheels Through Time
- Expand and embrace the motorcycle enthusiast market
- Promote cycling
- Attract auto shows

Increase the positioning as an overnight hub to WNC

Take advantage of the Cherokee traffic

Increase activity after 5 PM

Festival Grounds

- Grow events and attract new ones
- Establish a more defined booking plan

Increase the hospitality service standards

Promote outdoor adventures

Eagles Nest

Create a winter carnival to improve seasonality

Increased emphasis on Arts & Crafts

Increased emphasis on Family reunions

Increased emphasis on amateur sports marking

Promotion of winter skiing

Change the mythology of 1% Fund distribution

Create a Product Development Fund to fund bricks and mortar projects

Emphasis on the available inventory of vacation rentals

Ghost Town

Encourage more involvement from local businesses

Emphasis on referring visitors to local businesses

Create a free signature event

More cohesive community

- Need to be more positive about each other

- Harmony

- Positive attitude

Sponsor a Trolley at night to address DUI concerns

Advertise 12 months of outdoor adventures

Seek grant funds to improve curbside appeal

THREATS

Arranged in rank order

Cultural/Behavioral Issues

- Too many people locked in 70's and 80's mindset
- Failing to adapt to changing times
- Fighting among groups

Leadership/Town Government/Boards

Changing demographic of visitors

- Core market is aging
- Lack of options for traveling families
- Children today have a higher benchmark for entertainment options

Curbside Appeal

- Aging Product
- Vacant Buildings
- Negative appearance of gateway entrances to Maggie

Cherokee Adventure Park

No advocate for business

Sewage Tap fees

Failing to adapt to changing online/social media trends in tourism

Perception that it is difficult to open a business in Maggie

Perception of excessive police presence after 9:00 PM

Negative Image in the media

Lack of options for traveling family

COMMUNITY RANKINGS FOR THE SWOT ANALYSIS

The common themes were generated through the extensive interview phase with business owners. They were further refined through group work sessions and organized into Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

On January 22, 2013, a community input meeting was held to review the S.W.O.T and rank the priorities. The results are listed in order of the votes received for each item.

STRENGTHS	VOTES
Location	26
Wheels Through Time	17
Natural beauty/mountain vistas	17
Festival Grounds	16
Availability of outdoor recreation	13
Ghost Town	10
Cataloochee Ski	8
Small town atmosphere	6
Affordable-Value	6
Emotional connection with visitors through the years	6
Cataloochee Resort	5

WEAKNESSES:	
Curbside appeal	37
Behavior/Cultural issues	32
Need for hospitality training	20
Community needs a long-term vision	18
Lack of year round activities	14
Lack of activities after 5 PM	13
Lack of family activities	13
Local Government	12
Distribution of the 1% Fund	8
Festival Grounds	7
Lack of communications among businesses	7
At the mercy of winter	1

OPPORTUNITIES:

Wheels	24
Better leverage Wheels Through Time	
Expand and embrace the motorcycle enthusiast market	
Promote cycling	
Attract auto shows	
Improve curbside appeal	22
Create a winter carnival to improve seasonality	17
Sponsor a Trolley at night to address DUI concerns	17
Amateur sports marketing	12
Encourage more involvement from local businesses	12
More cohesive community	11
Increase activity after 5 PM	11
Promote outdoor adventures	11
Increase the positioning as an overnight hub to WNC	11
Seek grant funds to improve curbside appeal	11
Festival Grounds	10
Grow events and attract new ones	
Establish a more defined booking plan	
Eagle's Nest	10
Take advantage of the Cherokee traffic	9
Establish who is the business advocate for Maggie	9
Advertise 12 months of outdoor adventure	8
Diversify the economy attract non-tourism related businesses	7
Increase the hospitality service standards	6
Change the mythology of 1% Fund distribution	6
Create a free signature event	5
Cataloochee Ski	5
Ghost Town	4
Emphasis on referring visitors to local businesses	4
Increased emphasis on family reunions	2
Emphasis on the available inventory of vacation rentals	1
Increased emphasis on Arts & Crafts	0

THREATS:

Cultural/Behavioral Issues	21
Failing to adapt to changing online/social media trends	20
Curbside Appeal	15
Perception of excessive police presence after 9:00 pm	15
Perception that it is difficult to open a business in Maggie	10
Changing demographics of visitors	9
Lack of options for travelling families	8
Negative image in the media	7
Leadership/Town Government/Boards	6
Perception that personal agendas override business interest	6
No advocate for new business	5
Sewage Tap fees	2
Cherokee Adventure Park	0

What organization should lead the ongoing implementation of the Moving Maggie Forward plan?

Arranged in rank order

	Votes
1. Maggie Chamber of Commerce with a new mission and business model	16
2. A newly formed business council	6
3. Town of Maggie Valley	0

CREATING A NEW IDENTITY

Groups were asked to describe which words come to mind when you think of Maggie Valley.

Number of Votes

Hub	26
Blue Ridge Parkway	19
Outdoor Adventures	17
Smoky Mountains	16
Elk	11
Southern Hospitality	10
Friendly	10
Relaxing	7
Views	7
Making Memories	6
Quiet	6
Stuck in the Past	6
Miss Maggie	5
Trout	5
Cool summers	5
Old and Tired	4
Porch/Rockers	3
Emotional Connection	3
Laid Back	2
Unplug	2
Family Gathering Place	2
Beauty	1
Crafts	1
Quiet Side of the Smoky	1
Value	1
Bang for Buck	1
Tranquil	1
Entertainment/Music	1



THE “MOVING MAGGIE FORWARD” PLAN PREMISE

When the community outreach began to introduce the Moving Maggie Forward Project many people asked a key question. “So what makes this plan different from all the others than end up on a bookcase collecting dust?” The difference can be summed up in just five words. “It will be your plan!”

The recommendations contained within this plan represent a business plan based on achieving consensus among the business community. The significant time investment made in one-on-one interviews, group work sessions and town input meetings were made to determine if there was a common theme throughout the business community.

This part of the project was a success. The perceptions of a community, which cannot agree on priorities, have been dispelled through the Moving Maggie Forward project. This plan has been built on the foundation based solely on the common themes discovered through the process.

This is your plan.

CREATING A FOCUS ON SHORT-TERM SUCCESS

focus |'fōkəs|

“the ability to concentrate physical and mental energies toward the accomplishment of a single objective”

One of the most notable quotes made by General George Patton was “A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow.” The last four years have had a dramatic negative affect the Maggie Valley business community. Therefore, a conscious decision has been made to shrink the time horizon of this plan focusing on recommendations that can be initiated over the next five years. Priority has been given to those recommendations that have an impact on all business segments.

During the S.W.O.T. analysis there was strong consensus on Maggie Valley's Strengths:

Location
Wheels Through Time
Natural beauty/mountain vistas
Festival Grounds
Availability of outdoor recreation
Ghost Town
Cataloochee Ski
Small town atmosphere
Affordable-Value
Emotional connection with visitors through the years
Cataloochee Resort

The assets of Maggie Valley can continue to be used to leverage the tourism industry. This has been the primary economic driver for the area in the past and it remains the biggest growth opportunity in the shortterm. Increasing visitor traffic should be the priority. This strategy has the potential to positively have an impact on all business categories and can be executed within the five year period.



The Plan Recommendations

KEY PLAN PREMISE

1. DEVELOPING THE MALL MENTALITY

Roger Brooks, President of Destination Development, Inc., is considered an expert in community branding for small towns. He stresses that downtowns need to have a “mall mentality.” This includes:

- Consistent hours
- Open late
- Like businesses are clustered together which increases sales
- Have a sense of place
- Recruit and promote the anchors
- Events/entertainment bring life and generate excitement

The idea of developing a mall mentality is a key foundation on which this plan has been built. Considering Maggie Valley’s geographic size these concepts should be kept in mind as the town works toward its revitalization. Brooks defines anchor tenants as something that people would drive an hour to visit. Maggie already has several key anchor tenants. These are the businesses that drive the majority of all business traffic.

- The Blue Ridge Parkway – Southern terminus
- Ghost Town
- Wheels Through Time
- Catahoochlee Resort & Ski Area
- Stompin Grounds
- Festival Grounds

Embracing this mall mentality is a key premise of the Moving Maggie Forward Plan. It encourages aggressive promotion of the anchor tenants, but does not recommend that the identity of the Town be associated with a single attraction. It is the collective of all these experiences that will drive increased visitation. The plan also recommends the creation of gathering places. It recommends using entertainment to bring life to the Town and attempt to slow down the traffic

2. DRIVING TOURISM - WHEELS

Expanding Maggie Valley's current base of "driving tourism" represents one of the quickest returns on investments for the town. This includes two, three and four wheel vehicles.

Motorcycle
Cycling
Cars

Extensive capital investments are not necessary to expand these market segments. It will be necessary to embrace the market through education and niche marketing. The driving tourism market leverages a majority of the Town's strengths as identified through the S.W.O.T. process.

Location –includes highway access, Parkway and National Parks
Wheels Through Time
Natural beauty/mountain vistas
Festival Grounds
Availability of outdoor recreation
Small town atmosphere
Affordable-Value
Emotional connection with visitors through the years

Initiatives to expand and embrace the motorcycle segment should be a priority. Maggie Valley already has a strong existing motorcycle visitor base. The Wheels Through Time Museum is an anchor tenant that offers appeal to all aspects of the driving tourism segment. There is a tendency to label the attraction as a motorcycle museum, but a more appropriate positioning would be a "cultural heritage museum." Wheels Through Time Museum has an extremely strong marketing and public relations platform that can be better leveraged and supported by the business community.

Embracing the market

Excerpt from Understanding and Attracting the On-Road Motorcycle Tourism Market to Northern Ontario

Motorcyclists are strongly drawn to businesses that understand and respect their passion for this activity.

One aspect of “motorcycle friendliness” is the response of the local residents to motorcycle travelers.

A welcoming attitude and willingness to be sociable and to share information is an important part of experiencing the local culture for motorcycle tourists.

Restaurants, campgrounds and other accommodation providers where motorcycle noise will not be an issue and where there is space to park, admire other machines and carry on maintenance and repairs go a long way.

The Town needs to better understand the motorcycle market and learn how to make them feel that they are welcomed. In conjunction with Wheels Through Time, conduct a series of seminars to educate the local business community. The Maggie Valley Chamber could coordinate and promote the seminars.

Topics should include:

- Better understanding the profile of the market
- Specific needs of the market
- How to make them feel welcomed
- Share best practices from other local businesses
- Create motorcycle friendly group email list to share related news
- Expand the list of businesses that want to be included as motorcycle friendly in promotional efforts.

Niche Marketing-All Segments of Driving Tourism

The following steps should be taken to improve marketing to expand the driving tourism market segment:

- Priority investment should be made in Search Engine Optimization to maximize online exposure to motorcyclists and the other driving tourism market segments.
- Upgrade the Smoky Mountain Rides website to better position Maggie as the regional “hub” for this market. It is important to make sure that driving tours be promoted that appeal to all segments of the driving tourism market. This is another opportunity to stress Maggie’s potential as a hub for the region.
- Maggie Valley operators should be encouraged to provide direct links to Wheels Through Time website. The museum appeal is not limited to the motorcycle market.
- Maggie should attempt to leverage Wheels Through Time’s strong public relations/media efforts through their own public relations efforts. Consideration should be given to investing in sponsorships that continue support Wheels Through Time’s media productions. Wheels

Through Time has made significant inroads into specialty TV markets that have and continue to provide the town with significant media exposure. Direct production investment from the 1% Fund should be considered to maximize this platform

-Tourism sites should prominently feature Wheels Through Time and Blue Ridge Parkway web links.

-Actively pursue cooperative web links with driving tourism sites. Many of these sites offer reciprocal links

www.ncmotorcycles.com

www.motodirectory.com

-Funded through the 1% Fund, driving tour maps should be upgraded for both motorcycle and auto driving markets. The maps should strongly position Maggie as the overnight base camp to explore WNC. These maps should appeal to all driving tourism segments.

-Ideally printed on water-resistant/waterproof paper and designed to fit into map bags, riders seek maps that show:

Length of loops

Ride features/type of ride

Location of gas stations

Location of repair shops

Places to stop, things to see and do, accommodation that is

Motorcycle friendly

FESTIVAL GROUNDS

Priority consideration should be given by the Festival Grounds to solicit motorcycle rallies and automotive shows.

3. REVITALIZATION BY IMPROVING YOUR CURBSIDE APPEAL

The current visual appeal of Maggie Valley is a threat to the long term viability of the business community. If a visitor is obeying the speed limit they have six minutes of drive time to evaluate the town. Gateway entrances to the town in both directions are surrounded by visual pollution. There are a number of empty buildings throughout the town that significantly damage the visual appeal of the town. Many older businesses are in need of façade improvements. Maggie still offers stunning mountain vistas, but the appeal at street level is a severe problem.

Traffic counts are incomplete for US 19, but significant traffic already exists. In 2012, counters registered 6,120,503 in total traffic. Getting a higher percentage of the visitor traffic to stop is the primary goal.

Maggie Valley has a unique challenge since geographically it is a narrow strip with a five-lane road cutting directly through the center of the town. The five-lane road has become a negative both in terms of visual appeal and making it easy to drive through without stopping. The layout of the town does not encourage pedestrian traffic.

Roger Brooks, President of Destination Development, Inc. that specializes in community branding, tourism and community development has assisted more than 400 communities to reinvent themselves. Brooks promotes the following 12 rules when leading community redevelopment

1) Recruit to create critical mass-

The 10-10-10 rules.

To achieve mass you need:

10 places that sell food

10 destinations retail shops

10 businesses that stay open after 6 PM

2) Downtowns needs to adopt the mall mentality

Consistent hours

Evenings – open late

Clustering – like businesses are clustered together

Recruit and promote the anchor stores

A sense of place – Create a central gathering place

Antique Malls sales are 10 times greater when antique stores are clustered

Automotive sales are seven times greater when car lots are together.

Food Courts sales are 5 times greater when they are clustered,

3) Attract and promote anchor tenants

Defend as something you go out of the way to visit

4) Living / Staying Downtown

Build critical mass by having people downtown after 5 PM

5) Pioneers with Patience

The need for both public and private sectors to take a long haul approach

6) Development of Gathering Places

Turn parks into places

Host public markets at night

7) Outdoor dining is major asset

8) Invest heavily in retail beautification

City owns the curbside and is responsible for the infrastructure

Individual businesses are responsible for the appearance of their facade

Adding trees every 30 to 50 feet increase retail sales by 18%

9) Activities and Entertainment

The power of bringing downtown to life through entertainment

10) Experiential Marketing

Sell a feeling not a place

11) Lease agreements define operating agreements

70% of retailing spending happens after 6 PM

Public Markets in the evening

12) The 7-8-7 Rule

70% of First times sales are based on curb appeal.

Women determine 80% of spending choices.

Women are looking for:

-Beauty/Curbside appeal

-Welcoming

-Safe

-Convenient

70% of Retail Spending occurs after 5 PM



North Carolina Main Street

NC Main Street –

Main Street is a national community development program. NC Main Street is a program under the administration of the North Carolina Department of Commerce. The program can provide the town with both technical assistance and act as an information resource to assist in Maggie Valley's revitalization.

Commitments to the following principals are worthy of serious consideration and should be included in the next phase of planning and execution.

Main Street's Four-Point Approach

Organization:

This approach involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a revitalization program

Design:

This approach means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing in its best assets such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets-is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attaching window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer.

Promotion:

This approach sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the downtown district.

Economic Restructuring:

This approach strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The downtown program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers.

The Eight Principles of Main Street Approach ®

The Main Street Four-Point Approach succeeds as proven time and time again across America. That success is guided by eight principles, which set the Main Street methodology apart from other redevelopment strategies. For a Main Street or downtown revitalization program to be successful it must embrace these eight time-tested principals.

Comprehensive:

No single focus can revitalize Main Street. For a sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four points, is essential.

Incremental:

Baby steps come before walking. Successful revitalization programs begin with basic activities that will demonstrate "new things are happening" in the commercial district. As public confidence in downtown districts grows and participates' understanding of the revitalization process becomes more sophisticated downtown is able to tackle increasing complex problems and more ambitious projects. These incremental changes lead too much longer lasting and dramatic positive changes in downtown area.

Self-Help:

No one else will save your downtown. Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. That means convincing residents and businesses owners of the rewards they'll reap by investing time and money in downtown-the heart of your community. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.

Partnerships:

Both public and private sectors have a vital interest in the district and must work together to achieve the common goals of downtown's revitalization. Each section has a role to play and each must understand each other's strengths and limitations to forge an effective partnership.

Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets:

Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.

Quality:

Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process—from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to educational programs. Shoestring budgets reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead concentrate on quality projects over quantity.

Change:

Skeptics turn into believers and attitudes downtown will turn around. At first, almost no one believes a downtown can really turn around

Changes in attitude and practice are slow but definite—public support for change will build as the downtown program grows and consistently meet its goals. Change also means engaging in better business practices, altering ways of thinking, and improving the physical appearance of the commercial district. A carefully planned downtown program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.

Implementation:

To succeed, downtown must show visible results that can only come from completing projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding. Smalls projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger ones, and continued activity creates confidence in the downtown program and encourage ever greater levels of participation.

Source: Town of Kenly, NC

*NC Downtown Development Association
Technical Assistance Team Report*

Investment in improving curbside appeal and revitalization will have an impact on all business categories.

- Lodging/Accommodations
- Vacation Rental
- Food and Beverage
- Retail shops
- General Service businesses
- Real Estate –Residential and Commercial
- Attractions

Improvement in the curbside appeal of the town will increase the potential for new business investment.

This project should be given priority consideration for long-term capital investment by the Town of Maggie Valley.

ACTIONS

Create a Revitalization Commission

Lead by the Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce, members should include the Town Manager, The Town Planner and at least once elected official and representatives from a broad base of the business community

- Apply to the NC Small Town Main Street Program. It should be noted that this is a very competitive self-help program. Three towns are selected from the western part of the state. Applications are due in June.

- Following the Main Street model create two subcommittees: Design and Promotions (for the revitalization plan).

- Develop job descriptions for citizen volunteers. These are working committees and clear expectations of what is expected to be a member of the committee should be established up front. North Carolina Downtown Development Association can be a training resource to help train members of the committee

- Create a vision for the master plan for downtown. Determine the priorities. These priorities should be turned over to the professional architect.

Conduct Research-Who is the Maggie visitor and why do they visit?

A research project should be conducted to learn more about the Maggie Valley visitors. The project should be designed to provide information on who the town's customers are and why they visit. This information will play a critical role in guiding the landscape plan development process. Additionally, the data will give the TDA and Maggie a better understanding how to adapt the marketing programs. The Haywood County TDA should fund the project.

The Design Team

A Request for Proposal (RFP) needs to be developed to retain the services of a professional landscape design firm that has extensive experience in community redevelopment. Plan should address topics such as:

- Improving the appearance of the five land highway
- Sidewalks
- Cross Walks
- The creation of gathering places
- Wayfaring
- Gateway Entrances

There are opportunities to apply for grants to fund the portions of the design plan. These following resources may be of assistance in researching grant opportunities

Business Façade-Matching Grant Fund

General infrastructure improvements are the responsibility of local government. Upgrades in the curbside infrastructure made by local government must be supplemented by investment from the private sector. To encourage this private investment a Matching Grant Fund should be created to support upgrades to business facades on the Town's main corridor.

It is recommended that an annual matching grant fund of \$25K should be established. The fund could provide matching grants of up to \$5000 per business based on design/selection criteria. This could fund \$50K per year of façade upgrades that would have a dramatic effect on the curbside appeal of Maggie Valley.

These matching grants have been used successfully in small town revitalization programs throughout the country. There are numerous examples of grant programs and selection criteria available online.

 [**Façade Improvement Matching Grant program - City of Minneapolis**](#)

[www.minneapolismn.gov/.../cped docs facade impr matching gra...](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/.../cped_docs/facade_impr_matching_gra...)

[**Facade Improvement Program Guidelines - Clearfield Revitalization ...**](#)

www.discoverclearfield.com/...

 [**City of Loveland, CO : Facade Improvement Program**](#)

www.ci.loveland.co.us › ... › Community & Strategic Planning

[**Downtown Revitalization Facade & Exterior Improvement Matching ...**](#)

mainstreetdodgecity.org/wp-content/uploads/.../Grant-Guidelines.pdf

[**columbus downtown façade pilot improvement grants available**](#)

cityofcolumbuswi.com/DntnFacadeGrantPilotPgm.pdf

 [**Facade Improvement Program - The Westerly-Pawcatuck Chamber ...**](#)

westerlychamber.org/pages/FacadeImprovementProgram/

It is recommended that the Town of Maggie research and adopt new ordinances on how vacant buildings should be maintained. This is a key component of the curbside/revitalization program. Vacant buildings that are not maintained contribute to the detriment of neighborhoods, property values and aesthetics of the town. Many municipalities have adapted ordinances that address vacant building which are determined to be a public nuisance. Numerous examples of vacant building ordinances and criteria are available online.

[Vacant Building Ordinance.tif - City of Albany, Georgia](#)

www.albany.ga.us/.../Vacant%2520Building%2520Ordinance.pdf

[ORDINANCE NO. 12'024 - City of Sandusky](#)

www.ci.sandusky.oh.us/fire/documents/12.024.pdf

[Vacant Building Ordinance : Home](#)

www.elpasotexas.gov/vacant/

[New Vacant Property Ordinance - City of Springfield](#)

www3.springfield-ma.gov ›

Funding the Curbside Appeal

The potential return on investments from this program will have a major positive impact on all segments of the Maggie Valley business community. However, the needs are great. The project will require a significant long-term funding source in order to be successful.

The most obtainable source of funding could be secured through the proposed Product Development Fund generated by a 2% increase in the existing room tax. This program may help answer concerns of local lodging operators who have the right to receive assurances that investments made from this type of fund will generate additional room night demand. It represents the biggest opportunity to turn pass through traffic into sales.

The following assumes that Maggie Valley would receive a significant portion of the revenues tax collected generated from the 2% room tax. The program would meet the desired outcome of the proposed legislation as it focuses on capital investments.

Annual investment in Curbside/Revitalization construction

Annual investment in the Business Facade Match Grant Fund

Monies not used would revert to the Curbside Project

Annual investment in the Winter Carnival. Details next section.

Funding should not be limited to the Product Development Fund only. Revitalization grants should be aggressively sought out. The potential for obtaining matching grants will be

enhanced by showing that you have matching fund sources through the Product Development Fund.

4. EXPANDING THE TOURISM SEASON – THE WINTER CARNIVAL

With a top elevation of 5400 feet combined with one of the largest snowmaking operations on the East Coast, the Cataloochee Ski Area is the demand generator for winter tourism visitation in Maggie Valley. Through this strong winter asset Maggie can extend and expand the winter tourism season. The lack of year-round activities was identified as a weakness during the S.W.O.T Process.

It is recommended that Maggie Valley begin a multiyear financial commitment for the creation of a winter carnival beginning in third week in November through first week of March, concluding when daylight savings time begins. This idea has been discussed in Maggie through the years. The event ranked third in the community input meetings. It is worthy of immediate investment because it can offer a much needed short-term boost to the economy.

The Winter Carnival can take advantage of the holiday spending season through December, then focus on winter adventure after the first of the year. The foundations to build the event already exist with the success of the Cataloochee Ski Area. The current discussion of adding a skating rink to Maggie Valley would provide an excellent anchor for the event.

There is tremendous growth opportunity during these four months. Current occupancy rates for December average 47% with January occupancy dropping to an average of 30%. The carnival has the ability take advantage of an asset that is under used during the winter months and provide an excellent location– The Festival Grounds.

It is recommend that \$25,000 per year be earmarked to invest in the event If these expenditures are funded from the Product Development Fund as recommended, the funds should be used for capital investment. Following the IRS guidelines for capital expense, the product life of the bought asset should be at least five years. These guidelines should be followed in order to maintain the integrity of the Product Development Fund legislation.

A multiyear commitment will allow the event to add new design layers each year. It promotes consistency with the repeat visitor. Holiday traditions through repeat visitation can become a financial annuity for Maggie Valley.

ACTIONS

-Develop a five year plan which grows the carnival in both décor and events.

Use annual investments from both the 2% Product Development Fund and the 1% Fund.

-Use the proposed skating rink as an anchor attraction. The skating ring should be the priority capital investment for this project.

-Activities and entertainment will bring life to the event. What reasons are you giving visitors to get out of their car and stay?

-Entertainment options will be important. During start up concentrate the entertainment between the hours of 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM to encourage lodging and dinner patronage. Schedule entertainment on Friday, Saturday and around key holidays.

-Photo opportunities for visitors make for great memories and great social media marketing opportunities. Investment in photo background where that visitors can take their own pictures

-Focus on what events or attractions that Maggie Valley can own and are consistent with the brand. An example would be The Grove Park Inn and the National Gingerbread House Contest began the holiday brand identifier for the resort.

-This event has the potential to create a signature event for Maggie. For example, host weekly Saturday bonfires accompanied by mountain storytelling.

Create the Maggie Winter Team

An ongoing Winter Task Force should be created. Lead by the Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce, the team should include an elected official, Festival Grounds Manager, a representative from Cataloochee Ski area and a representation from the different business categories in the Valley.

The primary functions of the Winter Team should be creating an organization, designing the concept and development of the five-year investment plan. A four-month carnival will take commitment from many people. This project requires long-term commitment of human capital. However, creating growth opportunities during these traditional slow months is worth the investment.

Funding the Carnival

It is recommended that you secure a commitment of \$25,000 per year from Product Development Fund, but expenditures from these funds should be restricted to capital projects.

Use the 1% Fund to help underwrite the entertainment expense of \$20,000 per year. Work with Haywood County TDA and other Maggie Valley businesses to leverage marketing opportunities.

5. EVENING TROLLEY SERVICE

The perception of excessive police presence during the evening hours was identified as a threat during then the S.W.O.T. analysis. The perception that Maggie is a DUI trap extends beyond the Valley. It is a sensitive issue, as the community is committed to be a safe and law abiding community.

Operating a trolley system can be an expensive undertaking. There is dialogue between the Town of Maggie Valley and Lake Junaluska to explore the possibility of operating joint trolley service. This could be the most economical way to offer a nighttime service to support local F&B operations.

In several conversations the possibility of offering trolley service to Harrah's was discussed. Careful financial study should be undertaken before making such a commitment. It is highly questionable if this expensive extension of a trolley service will positively have an impact on Maggie Valley tourism.

ACTION

Continue the discussion with Lake Junaluska and Waynesville to explore a joint venture trolley focused between the three towns and in the evening hours to support F&B outlets.

6. AMATEUR SPORTS MARKETING

This opportunity ranked fourth in the community input meeting. The possibility of this tactic boasting Maggie Valley's overnight visitation is doubtful within the five-year horizon of this plan. Several WNC communities have made significant investments in building sports facilities to attract this market segment.

Amateur sports tournaments can be great business for a community. The question that needs to be answered before committing a significant financial investment would be what capital investment would be required to compete within in this highly competitive market segment.

It is also recommended that careful tracking of room nights generated from the existing tournaments be tracked. This could provide valuable data in considering the investment in the long term.

ACTION

This does not represent an opportunity that can have significant affect within the five-year period of this plan.

7. BEHVAIORIAL CHANGE

Cohesive Community/Business Involvement

The following two Opportunities tied for 5th place in the community ranking:

More cohesive community

- Need to be more positive about each other's businesses

- Harmony

- Positive Attitude

Encourage more involvement from local businesses

- Generate more interest at Business After Hours Events

- Learn about each other's business

- Encourage referrals to each other's businesses

Ranking 8th in the Opportunities ranking was

- Establish who will be the business advocate for the community.

Perception that it is difficult to open a business in Maggie ranked 5th in the Threat category.

Behavioral changes must be a priority if Maggie Valley is going to be successful in revitalizing it's economy. The needs for behavioral/cultural changes were discussed in almost every meeting during the plan development process. It is hard to imagine how these tones of discourse between groups and individuals can attract new investment into the community. How you treat each other will reflect on how a potential new business owner may be treated.

A comment made during a one-on-one interview outlines how a negative environment is a direct threat to the tourism businesses. "What gets in the ear of the community, gets into the ear of the visitor." This is a very strong statement.

Visitors come to Maggie to escape the stresses of their daily life. They come to the Valley to enjoy the small town atmosphere and relax among the majestic mountain vistas. A positive environment is a key component of the Southern hospitality component of the Maggie Valley brand. There is no advantage to a negative environment. Changing the way the community treats each other and their visitors requires no capital investments.

"Small communities grow great through harmony, great ones fall to pieces through discord".

-Sallust

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
of
HOW TO GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE

1. Keep skid chains on your tongue. Always say less than you think. Cultivate a low, persuasive voice. How you say it often counts more than what you say.
2. Make promises sparingly and keep them faithfully, no matter what the cost.
3. Never let an opportunity pass to say a kind and encouraging word to or about somebody. Praise good work, regardless of who did it. If criticism is needed, offer it gently, never harshly.
4. Be interested in others--their pursuits, their work, their homes and families. Make merry with those who rejoice, and weep with those who mourn. Let everyone you meet, however humble, feel that you regard him or her as a person of importance.
5. Don't burden or depress those around you by dwelling on your minor aches and pains and small disappointments. Remember, everyone is carrying some kind of burden, often heavier than your own.
6. Keep an open mind. Discuss, but don't argue. It is the mark of a superior mind to be able to disagree without being disagreeable.
7. Let your virtues, if you have any, speak for them. Refuse to talk of other's vices. Discourage gossip. It is a waste of valuable time, and can be extremely destructive.
8. Be careful of another's feelings. Wit and humor at another person's expense may do more damage than you will ever know.
9. Pay no attention to disparaging remarks. Remember, the person who carried the message may not be the most accurate reporter in the world, and things become twisted in the retelling. Live so that nobody will believe them.
10. Don't be too eager to get the credit due you. Do your best, and be patient. Forget about yourself, and let others "remember". Success is much sweeter that way.

(Credit Ann Landers)

COMMUNITY BUSINESS ADVOCATE

Maggie Valley needs an advocate for the business community! To leverage these opportunities and offset the weaknesses Maggie Valley needs to:

Establish who will be the advocate for the business community.

Establish who can serve as liaison between potential new business owners and local government.

Establish an aggressive communication system with all business owners.

Create ongoing opportunities for all business owners to have direct interactions with each other so that they can understand each other's businesses, share best practices and encourage referrals within the community. The chance for a more cohesive business community is based on creating an ongoing dialogue with each other.

Cohesive Community/Business Involvement

The Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce could be restructured to serve the roles outlined above.

The current organization serves as the Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau. The primary focus of the organization has been to attract visitors to Maggie Valley. The Haywood County Tourism Authority absorbed the Maggie Valley Visitor Center operation in mid-2012. The primary responsibility for tourism promotion for Maggie needs to continue to shift to the Haywood TDA.

The current organization is based on a membership model. In years past this has created friction between member and nonmember businesses. In this model a Chamber can only represent 100% of the business community if all businesses have bought the annual membership. It should be noted that the majority of Chambers of Commerce are based on a membership model. However, there is opportunity to try a new operating model in Maggie Valley.

The Town of Maggie Valley needs someone to fulfill the role of being the business advocate. The need is higher than other communities because many business owners do not live within the town limits and therefore are unable to vote in town elections. This may be one of the reasons that the perception of a disconnect between the business community and local government exists.

If new investment is wanted it must be encouraged. Prospective new business owners need to feel that they are welcome in Maggie and that their investment is wanted and appreciated. New businesses need assistance on navigating the required permits and business licenses. They need to be introduced into the existing business community.

A successful strategy used in many communities is creating a “gathering place” for entrepreneurs. These gathering places offer an opportunity for people to exchange new ideas and ideas. The fostering of an entrepreneurial environment within a community can generate growth from existing businesses and help attract new investment. Entrepreneurs attract entrepreneurs.

ACTIONS

The Board of Directors of the Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce need to continue their work on writing a new charter that focuses the organization on being the business advocate for Maggie Valley. The new charter should also address creating an aggressive business communication system, create ongoing opportunities for business owners to connect, help inform and educate the business community about each other’s businesses and serve as liaison for potential new business owners.

To fulfill this role, the Town of Maggie Valley should make a five-year financial commitment to the new Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce of \$50,000 per year.

If the Town of Maggie Valley is serious about expanding its business community it must make a serious investment in create business advocacy. This critical role needs to independent of local town politics.

As reported by the NC Department of Travel and Tourism State and local tax revenues from travel to Haywood County amounted to \$11.35 million. This represents a \$192.85 tax saving to each county resident. This translates a savings in Maggie Valley of \$221,777 per year. Tourism investment is already providing tax saving returns to all residents of the Maggie.

This support from the Town will allow the organization to represent all businesses in Maggie Valley. When your business license is issued you will automatically become a member of the Chamber. Those businesses outside the Town limits will be charged a membership fee.

Maggie Valley would be one of the first towns in North Carolina where every business is a member of the Chamber of Commerce.

NOTE: The primary role of tourism marketing should be shifted to the Haywood TDA. However, considering the importance of tourism in Maggie, the Chamber should maintain tourism based website and publications.

8. INCREASE ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS:

As stated in the “Improving Curbside Appeal” sections of this plan, 70% of retail sales occur after 5 PM. With an annual average traffic count of over 6 million on U.S. 19, slowing down the traffic and getting people to stop brings the drive by traveller one step closer to becoming a customer. A series of mini-entertainment venues can help give visitors a reason to stop. This type of activity has been used in the past and it can be used today to bring much needed life to the town.

ACTION

Create at least 2 or 3 mini entertainment venues strategically located in the town.

- Locations near the town entrances and one more centrally located should be considered.
- Professional signage should be provided for each location
- Musicians must be registered to use the venues and sign a code of conduct requiring appropriate performance conduct as they will serve as ambassadors for Maggie Valley.
- No license should be required
- Performances should occur between 5:00 PM– 7:30 PM as to encourage visitors to visit other retail/F&B outlets after their performances
- The performances should be unplugged. No amplification allowed.
- Groups should be paid a small stipend to encourage participation,
If you paid \$35 per venue for three locations for three nights a week
the Town will be able to fund a 20-week season for \$6300
- The program should be tested on Thursday-Saturday nights during the summer months

The program can be funded by a request through the 1% Fund.

9. POSITIONING AS THE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE HUB

The following opportunities ranked in the top 10 during the community input sessions. All three topics can be addressed by shifting marketing priorities.

Fishing, Hiking, Elk, Mountain Biking

Increase the positioning that Maggie Valley is the overnight base to the entire region

Take advantage of Cherokee Reservation traffic

Combined Recommendations:

Several recommendations are being made both for the Haywood County TDA and Maggie Valley with the plan. If the Chamber redefines their role moving away from tourism promotion the gaps will need to be assumed by TDA. Maggie Valley represents 55% of all room tax collections for Haywood County. Improvements in Maggie's room tax collections increase the financial resources of the TDA.

The Haywood County TDA and Maggie Valley are at a competitive disadvantage with their online presence. Improvements in website design, Search Engine Optimization and a social media strategy needed to be addressed. These inefficiencies should take priority over media expenditures. Travel research has proven the importance of a community's online presence.

THE 2012 TRAVELER

Google commissioned Ipsos MediaCT, an independent marketing research company to conduct a travel study to better understand the role travel plays in the lives of US residents. Interviews were conducted from 4/24/12 to 5/17/12 yielding a total sample of 5,000 consumers who have traveled at least once for leisure reasons (or a minimum of 3 times for business purposes) in the past six months. An augment of 1,500 affluent leisure travelers and 1,000 cruisers were also recruited.

85% of leisure travel used the Internet to make travel plans.

56% of travelers say, "Always start my travel book and shopping process with a search"

63% of leisure travelers agree that search engines are my go-to source for travel information

96% of leisure travelers have started with hotel planning with a search

68% projected growth in 2013 searches from mobile devices

180% projected growth in 2013 searches from tablet devices

89% of leisure travelers watch video online

Travelers watch online video in all phases of travel planning

- 66% when thinking about taking a trip

- 64% when choosing a destination

- 62% when looking for ideas of activities to do a destination

- 57% when deciding on accommodations at a particular location

- 34% when deciding on which website to book

- 45% of travelers who watched online videos were prompted to book as a result

A new website goes online an average of every three-seconds

More than 64 million travel-related domain names have been registered so far.

The Internet is fourth only to electricity, the automobile and television in its influence on daily American life.

New Internet users are growing at a rate of nearly ten percent per month.

Ninety-four percent of all Internet users plan their travel using the web.

It's rare to find a community that isn't looking for some form of economic growth: residential, business, industry or tourism. The Internet is the most powerful and cost effective way to market your community.

There are two major challenges with a website:

Is it good enough to make the sale?

Can you customer even find it?

A few key website considerations:

Make the site informational but not wordy. Research has shown that users are more likely to read web content that is concise and factual. Use bullet points.

The site should answer any questions the visitor may have. They want to know.

"What is there to do? What does the town look like?" How do I get around? Where do I stay? Are there any package deals?

Think about organizing your site by activity type from a menu "What do you want to do?"

Include testimonials from satisfied customers – third party endorsements work.

Make literature available for download as PDF.

Establish reciprocal links with other tourism site.

Promote experiences and geography

Market experiences by travel types and activity

Source: Your Town –A Destination
The 25 Immutable Rules of Successful Tourism
By Roger A Brooks & Maury Forman

Avoid Consumer Confusion

There are four key websites to promoting Maggie. Overall, all sites have done a good job promoting the adventure element of the brand. However, when reviewing the sites there may be the potential of creating confusion with the consumer. Simply put, it does not appear that these sites are promoting the same product.

Haywood County TDA - a new website is underdevelopment.



Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center



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What's Your Adventure?

Find it in Maggie Valley...

Zipline

Maggie Valley, situated in **North Carolina's** stunning **Smoky Mountains**, is known for its unrivaled location and friendly, small town character. When you visit Maggie Valley, you're sure to discover the meaning of Southern hospitality wherever you go and whatever you do.

Maggie Valley boasts a rich mountain history and has everything you need, from unique shops and restaurants to great places to stay, no matter the season. If you like to get off the beaten path, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Blue Ridge Parkway are just a hop and a skip away. You can explore some of Southern Appalachia's best-kept secrets using Maggie Valley as your home base. Whether you spend the day paddling a whitewater river or hiking in the Smoky Mountains, you can come home to Maggie Valley for a restful evening or hit the town for a night of good food, music and dancing. When the weather starts cooling down, the action on the ski slopes begins to heat up on some of the southeast's best runs. You can stroll through history at Wheels Through Time, "The museum that runs," or explore Maggie's very own Quilt Trail as part of the Haywood County Quilt Trail.



Live Purchase Knob Webcam

If you are interested in Maggie Valley Click [HERE](#) to read the Maggie Valley Visitor's Guide or if you'd like more information sent to you.



Maggie Valley Area Lodging Association



Haywood County Hotel Motel Association



MARKETING RECOMMENDATIONS

Website

Even though TDA is to assume the primary role in tourism, Maggie Valley needs to maintain a separate website to insure the promotion of its' tourism assets. Investment in a new website for Maggie should be a priority.

In designing a new website the following ranked Opportunities should be included:

Continue to emphasis outdoor adventure

Increased emphasis on driving tourism

– The number one ranked community opportunity

Improve the positioning as a hub:

If you want to be the hub, you have to prove it. Consider including:

- Maps to the regional attractions showing driving times.
- Prove how much you can see and do within a 45-minute drive
- Design regional itineraries proving they need to stay in Maggie
- Hit them over the head with numbers:
 - Number of hotel rooms
 - Number of F&B Outlets
 - Number of vacation rental units
- Include online videos due to their growing importance in travel decisions
- Feature your anchors tenants
- Upgrade how you feature your events at Festival Grounds

The tourist dollar does not care about county or city lines. To justify the stay be prepared to promote the region

OTHER WEBSITES

It is also recommended that funding be dedicated to upgrade the websites for the Maggie Valley Lodging Association and the Haywood County Hotel/Motel Association. This investment should be made on the premise that these independent groups would attempt to reflect a **common brand platform** in the redesign.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Investment in Search Engine Optimization should be a priority for Haywood TDA and Maggie Valley. Research proves that online searches are the number one source for traveler information. If they cannot easily find your site you will not get them to visit.

The Haywood County TDA website ranks 29th in online referrals to the Maggie Valley Chamber site in 2012. TDA should be in the top five for the Chamber.

SEO requires a professional firm that has experience in creating and executing an integrated online strategy.

Continue emphasis on the outdoor adventure

Increased emphasis on driving tourism

Increased emphasis on Maggie as regional hub

Taking advantage of Cherokee search traffic

Emphasis on the attraction anchors-Blue Ridge Parkway, WTT, Cataloochee Ski Area, Ghost Town, Festival Grounds.

It is recommended that you look at firms like JB Media who have a proven track record.



ANCHOR BROCHURE

A new anchor brochure should be created that highlights the anchor tenants, F&B outlets and retail outlets that cater to the visitor. This has been used successfully in several small communities. The primary distribution point of this brochure should be lodging operators. It is recommended that you do not include the lodging options as to encourage operators to distribute the brochure. This project can be funded through the 1% Fund.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS

Partners are so important that it is impossible to even think that tourism programs can be successful when executed by a single entity. Maggie Valley needs to better embrace partnerships when it comes to their marketing efforts. The existing associations with the Valley would be better served if they presented similar goals when working with local governments and especially with the TDA. Maggie Valley should work toward a stronger partnership relationship with Smoky Mountain Host to better leverage Maggie Valley's position in the region and the state, taking advantage of leveraging the Valley's limited marketing resources.

"Tourism partnerships are very much like a marriage. You agree, disagree, and get upset, compromise and the move on to a decision that will make all parties reasonably happy. The only difference is that in tourism it's perfectly legal to have multiple partners. " Your Town - Brookes & Forman

Along with tourism partnerships the Town of Maggie Valley needs to expand their cooperative efforts with other municipalities and regional governments. It is unrealistic to assume that the Town can thrive as it's own island in Haywood County. The recent political climate in Raleigh indicates that municipalities will face increased financial pressure from new legislative agenda items. A quick look at the recent headlines may foreshadow the type of issues many small towns will face. Simply put, you are stronger when you work together.

10. CHANGE THE WAY THE 1% FUND IS DISTRIBUTED

The current distribution of this fund has created a fragmented approach that has not leveraged the revenues to the maximum advantage of the community. The resources available from this fund should be used on key strategic priorities which affect the entire spectrum of tourism business. These resources can be used to fund key components of this plan and have an impact on the entire business community.

Here's a sample of how the fund could be used during the upcoming year

Wheels –Support		
-Maps	\$6,000	
Fund the Landscape Plan	\$15,000	
Grant Money &		
Town of Maggie to Fund the balance		
Winter Carnival-Entertainment	\$20,000	
Mini-Venue Entertainment	\$7,000	
New Chamber web site	\$15,000	
Upgrade to Lodging Website	\$5,000	
Upgrade to Hotel/Motel website	\$5,000	
SEO Contract	\$10,000	Joint contract with TDA
Social Media Contract	\$10,000	Joint contract with TDA
Promoting Anchor/Retail/F&B Brochure	\$8,000	
Support of WTT Television Production	\$15,000	Leverage their PR
Brand Agency	\$10,000	
Total	\$126,000	

11. EAGLES NEST

During community meetings, this opportunity ranked 7th. The facility has potential to increase visitation and increase entertainment options. The challenge is the significant capital investment required to buy and operate the facility.

ACTION

It is recommended that the Town take no action to buy or lease the facility at this time. However, the Town should work with any potential buyer to assist in booking the venue in conjunction with their marketing efforts of the Festival Grounds. There could be an excellent strategic alliance.

12. FESTIVAL GROUNDS

This asset also ranked 7th in overall votes in the community input session. Changes in recent years have improved the productivity of the Festival Grounds. During the spring, summer and fall, the Festival Grounds Manager has been successful in making sure that the facility well utilized.

2013 Festival Grounds - Maggie Valley Events Schedule

April 20, Smoky Mountain Oyster & Seafood Festival

April 27 & 28, Southeastern Mini Trucking'

May 3 – 5, Thunder in the Smokies Spring Motorcycle Rally –

May 10 & 11, American Cancer Society's Relay for Life of West Haywood –

May 24 – 26, Maggie Valley Spring Rally

May 31 & June 1, Ole Smokey Tractor Club Spring Farm Fest -

June 22 & 23, PlottFest; to benefit Head-Start Mountain Projects of Haywood County

June 28 – 30, Maggie Valley Spring Swap Meet & Car Show.

July 4, Red, White & Boom 2013!

July 6 & 7, Maggie Valley Summer Arts & Crafts Festival; Open Saturday,.

July 11, RoadRUNNER Touring

July 19 & 20, Southeastern Gas & Petroleum Expo

July 26 & 27, Smokin' in the Valley - WNC BBQ Festival 2013

August 2 & 3, Popcorn Sutton Jam 2013!

August 16 – 18, Maggie Valley Summer Rally

August 23 & 24, 32nd Maggie Valley Moonlight

August 31 & September 1, Maggie Valley Labor Day Weekend Craft Show.

September 6 & 7, 40th Annual Fall Regional Shelby/Mustang & Ford Meet

September 13 - 15, Thunder in the Smokies Fall Motorcycle Rally

September 27 – 29, Maggie Valley Fall Swap Meet & Car Show

October 4 & 5, Maggie Valley Oktoberfest 2013

October 12 & 13, Maggie Valley October Leaves Craft Show

October 19 & 20, Maggie Valley Fall Arts & Crafts Festival

Being an outdoor venue there will always be limitations to the facility since it is subject to inclement weather

A successful venue is based hosting successful events. The business community has a vested interest in these events being successful.

If there is a desire for bigger and better, the business community needs to help embrace and promote the events. Success attracts success.

ACTIONS

The Festival Grounds should be given anchor tenant status.

Consistent with the overall plan, priority booking should be given to those events that support the driving tourism positioning of the plan including motorcycle, car, truck and cycling shows.

Continue to focus on growing existing events. The Popcorn Sutton Jam Festival is an excellent example of how an event can begin small and grow in a “major event.” This requires both the support and the patience of the community.

All tourism-related websites should do a better job of promoting Festival Grounds events and The Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce needs to promote the events on an ongoing basis to the entire business community.

The local business community needs to help promote all events at the Festival Grounds.

If Haywood County TDA moves forward with Everwondr program, The Festival Grounds should consider using this service to improve their electronic platform to promote events.

13. DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY-NON-TOURISM RELATED

This opportunity ranked in the top ten during community input sessions. The Town should give careful consideration to any entity that is interested in making an investment in Maggie Valley. However, clearly the primary strengths of Maggie Valley favor tourism investments. The primary focus should remain on revitalizing the town by building on the existing tourism foundation. A thriving tourism economy is the best way to attract other businesses. Success breeds success.

ACTION

In the long term, the Jonathan Creek area offers the greatest potential for product diversification due to their excellent highway infrastructure, favorable zoning and better access to utilities. The town should continue to work through the Haywood County EDC to promote this area to attract new business investments.

14. INCREASING THE SERVICE LEVEL

An increased emphasis on providing better customer service needs to be part of the overall plan. Happy customers will always be the most effective marketing tools.

ACTIONS

Create a partnership the Maggie Chamber/Lodging Association/ Haywood County Hotel-Motel/TDA to work with Haywood Community College to design training/service program. There is benefit to making this a countywide project. Haywood Community College is willing to work the partnership to develop this program.

Create incentives for those companies that participate and successfully complete the program. Possibilities:

- Enhance web listings on Maggie/TDA websites
- Enhanced listings in the Visitors Directory
- Business recognition in member communications.

Maggie Valley Chamber should promote individual service champions in all communication and work with local media outlets to highlight those individuals who have provide great service.

The Chamber should develop an annual awards program to award businesses and individual service employees who represent high levels of hospitality service.

15. GHOST TOWN-PROMOTING AN ANCHOR TENANT

The idea of promoting Ghost Town as an anchor has been mentioned through the plan. The operational success of Ghost Town would address a key weakness identified in the S.W.O.T. analysis-the lack of activities for families. Like Maggie Valley itself, Ghost Town evokes a strong emotional connection with those people who have visited the park through the decades. This connection can be leveraged to increase overall visitation. Ghost Town can become a very strong anchor tenant for Maggie.

ACTIONS

Similar to the recommendations made in the Driving Tourism opportunity the following steps should be considered:

- Ghost Town should be featured as anchor on all tourism websites.
- MV and the TDA should fund a web-base commercial on the park to be featured on the primary tourism sites
- This attraction should receive priority on in the recommended Search Engine Optimization efforts.
- The park should receive priority in the recommended Social Media Strategy efforts.
- The park should be highlighted in the Anchor/Retail/F&B Brochure.
- Where appropriate, all operators should be requested to establish links from their business websites to Ghost Town. Ghost Town should provide reciprocal links for tourism related sites

OTHER ANCHOR TENANTS

Cataloochee Resort and Ski Area, Festival Grounds and the Stomping Grounds should also be given similar consideration in terms of marketing priority.

- Sites should be featured on all tourism related websites
- Attractions should receive priority in SEO efforts
- Where appropriate other business operators should provide reciprocal web links.
- The attractions should be featured in the Anchor/Retail/F&B Brochure.

What organization should lead the ongoing implementation of the Moving Maggie Forward plan?

Maggie Chamber of Commerce - With a new mission and business model
A newly formed Business Council
Town of Maggie Valley

Recommendation

Based on community input, the Chamber is the organization that would be in the best position to implement the plan. The Board of Directors of the Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce need to continue their work on writing a new charter which places the emphasis of the organization on becoming the business advocate for Maggie Valley. The Town of

METRICS FOR SUCCESS

Results from the online business survey indicated that respondents ranked new business licenses issued and the number of new jobs created should be the primary metrics to measure the Moving Maggie Forward Plan success.

Business licenses do not reflect business growth within the Valley. Currently over 50% of the licenses issued by the Town of Maggie Valley are not within the town itself. At present there is no accurate system to track new job creation. It would be difficult to benchmark the plan's success against these metrics.

Recommendation

The combination of increases in local sales tax and occupancy tax collections would be the preferred benchmark for the Plan's success.

THE IDENTITY OF MAGGIE VALLEY

Listed below are the top ranked descriptive words the community identified as those that best described their perception of Maggie Valley:

Hub	26
Blue Ridge Parkway	19
Outdoor Adventures	17
Smoky Mountains	16
Elk	11
Southern Hospitality	10
Friendly	10
Relaxing	7
Views	7

There exists almost unanimous consensus in the community on Maggie Valley's strengths. All of these assets fit within into two primary categories:

OUTDOORS ADVENTURES

-Location

- Southern terminus of the Blue Ridge Parkway
- 141,000 acres of National Parks
- Ability to serve as a vacation hub for WNC visitors

-National beauty/mountain vistas

-Availability of outdoor recreation

- Fishing, hiking, elk watching, biking and skiing

WHEELS-DRIVING TOURISM

-Location

- Southern terminus of the Blue Ridge Parkway
- Highway access (I-40, Highway 9, Highway 74)
- Proximity to the Cherokee reservation
- Ability to serve as a vacation hub for WNC visitors
- Geographically central gathering place

-Wheels

- Includes vehilces with 2, 3 or 4

- Better leverage Wheels Through Time
- Expand and embrace the motorcycle enthusiast market
- Promote cycling
- Attract auto shows

OTHERS

Ghost Town

Cataloochee Resort

Cataloochee Ski

Festival Grounds

Affordable-offers strong value proposition

Small town atmosphere

Recommended Marketing Positioning Statement:

Maggie Valley is the Western North Carolina hub for driving tourism enthusiasts and seekers of outdoor adventure offering visitors an affordable small town atmosphere.

The need for a brand versus identity

Maggie Valley needs a brand and not just an identity

Definitions:

Identity:

Condition as to who a person or what a thing is.

Branding:

The process involved in creating a unique name and image for a product in the consumers mind. Branding aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers.

Branding is not just about slogans or logos. This is the most common marketing mistake made by organizations. The product must fulfill the promise made by the brand. The town's brand should be visible throughout the community. It should be included in your wayfaring signage, town entrances, featured on all community related websites and collateral. A strong brand will have a dramatic influence on the curbside appeal design.

“Branding a community is not an easy strategy to undertake. In the first place, it requires discipline of businesses, product development, marketing, communication and graphic design. Second, it requires buy-in from the community in order to send a consistent message. Third, it takes time. Communities that are in a rush to get the brand known inevitably fail as a result of poor planning and inadequate feedback. Budweiser didn't become the King of Beers overnight. -Your Town Brookes & Forman

ACTION

The services of a professional firm that has expertise in tourism brand development should be retained to create a brand for Maggie Valley. The Moving Maggie Forward Plan can be used as a foundation for the process. Funds for this process have been included in the recommendations for the 1% Fund Distribution

ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

1. DEVELOP A MALL MENTALITY

2. DRIVING TOURISM-WHEELS

Expand the driving market (2-3-4 wheel vehicles)

- Embrace the market
- Niche marketing
- Festivals Grounds-focus on events that support the market

3. REVITALIZATION BY IMPROVING THE CURBSIDE APPEAL

- Revitalization Commission
- Research
- Design Team
- Business Façade Matching Grant Fund
- Vacant Building Ordinances

4. EXPANDING THE TOURISM SEASON-THE WINTER CARNIVAL

5. EVENING TROLLEY SERVICE

- Partnership with Lake Junaluska/Waynesville

6. AMATEUR SPORTS MARKETING

- Not a short-term opportunity

7. THE NEED FOR BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

- Creating a cohesive community
- Increasing business involvement
- Shifting the focus of the Chamber to be the advocate for business

8. INCREASE ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS

- Creating small entertainment venues

9. MARKETING POSITION –OUTDOOR ADVENTURES/HUB

- Mall mentality
- Avoiding consumer confusion
- SEO
- Social media

- Anchor brochure
- The importance of partnerships

10. CHANGE THE WAY THE 1% FUND IS DISTRIBUTED

- Focus on the priority needs of the tourism community
- Funding source for the plan

11. EAGLES NEST

- Not a short-term opportunity for acquisition but it could be supported by Town in conjunction with Festival Ground marketing efforts

12. FESTIVAL GROUNDS

- The Winter Carnival
- Increased focus on booking events that support driving tourism
- Continued focus on growing events
- Business community's role in creating success

13. DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY-NON-TOURISM RELATED BUSINESS

- Short Term-Focus on revitalization through the existing tourism foundation.
- Long Term-Work with Haywood County EDC to promote Jonathan Creek

14. INCREASING THE SERVICE LEVEL

- Hospitality training-partnership
- Incentives for business participation
- Recognition of service champions

15. OTHER ANCHOR TENANTS

- Ghost Town,**Catlaoochee Ski, Stompin Grounds, Festival Grounds
- Promoting an anchor tenant

16. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

- A reinvented Chamber of Commerce

17. IDENTITY

Positioning Statement:

Maggie Valley is the Western North Carolina hub for driving tourism enthusiasts and seekers of outdoor adventure offering visitors an affordable small town atmosphere.

- Brand versus identity
- Need to complete a branding process with a professional firm

18. METRICS FOR SUCCESS

- Increases in sales and room tax collections.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

- You can build on a strong foundation
- Stay focused
Avoid distractions that take you off course
- Be nice to each other
You are stronger when you work together
Agree to disagree
- Embrace competition
Rising tides lift all boats
- Embrace partnerships