

Shared Community Vision



Spruce Pine Strong

Where should the town focus its efforts – over the next 5-8 years – in ways that address community needs identified at the town meetings, utilize and build upon existing community assets, and contribute to making the town a visually attractive, healthy, vibrant, and memorable community for both residents and visitors?

Revitalize the Town

- Be open to innovation ... continuously seek ways to improve/grow the economy (making the town an economic hub of the tri-county area)
 - Build a business park
 - Create a business center
 - Improve the existing outdoor farmer's market May thru October ... and add an indoor market for the remainder of the year
 - Promote activities with Penland and Mayland that focus on small town growth and development opportunities
 - Seek alternative energy opportunities
- Begin by focusing on – and promoting – the downtown area
 - Clean up downtown eyesores (e.g., re-build burned out buildings or purchase buildings, and create public green space or an open area gathering place)
 - Create a town government center (i.e., a new town hall) that serves as a one-stop anchor for government services
 - Develop a program that will encourage and assist owners to renovate all buildings downtown
 - Establish consistent façade requirements for downtown building fronts
 - Expand the downtown area (e.g., toward the post office)
 - Make the Carolina Theater a downtown anchor, and organize year-round activities for the theater
 - Monitor and promote occupancy of all downtown buildings

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- Promote specialty shopping and dining downtown ... to include new restaurants and retail stores (e.g., shoe and clothing stores)
- Provide for public restrooms
- Recruit 1-2 anchor stores downtown (e.g., similar to Mast General Store)
- Provide an increased emphasis on tourism
 - Become the hub for making connections/linkages to the Blue Ridge Parkway, Roan Mountain, Appalachian trail, and mine tours
 - Establish a museum that highlights mining, animals, and natural resources of the area
 - Establish a railroad museum (possibly in the existing depot)
 - Establish uniform signage throughout town and for the downtown area
 - Improve the aesthetics of areas that serve as focal points or entrances to town
 - Recruit a multi-use hotel-motel facility
 - Solicit new restaurants
- Strengthen the Penland connection (i.e., linkages with the arts community)
 - Promote the downtown as a center for the development of arts, crafts, and guild activities

Capitalize on Beauty of the Area for Outdoor Recreation

- Improve outdoor recreation activities for both residents and transients
 - Create a dog park
 - Develop an inter-connected system of walking and bike trails with identification markers, to include a regional network (e.g., walkway from Altapass to Penland and a walkway/bikeway from Spruce Pine to Bakersville)
 - Improve and expand existing parks
 - Develop an outdoor field facility for soccer, football, baseball, and softball
 - Make Brad Regan Park more accessible to pedestrians
 - Renovate the ball fields
 - Riverside Park: build an outdoor amphitheater, complete the proposed park extension to the waste water treatment plant, and add a fishing pier

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- Use the Toe River as a focal point for outdoor recreation activities, and increase recreational uses of the river
 - Keep the river area clean
 - Sponsor events (e.g., fishing, canoeing, and rafting)

Build a Healthy Community

- Build a family-oriented sports-recreational and event center that includes: a multi-purpose wellness and fitness center and a year-round swimming pool
- Create a more walkable community
- Increase the percentage of the town budget allocated to recreational activities (both indoor and outdoor)

Plan-Develop-Promote the Community

- Anticipate additional planned residential neighborhoods
- Coordinate local events and activities with other communities
- Develop a marketing plan for Spruce Pine that focuses on tourism, the downtown, small-scale businesses, and outdoor recreation opportunities
- Employ a grant writer and an economic development coordinator
- Encourage pro-active leadership and planning ... at all levels and in both the public and the private (to include non-profit) sectors
- Focus on attracting the *creative class* or *yuppie* population
- Involve lots of people ... empowerment will help to unify and strengthen the community

Strengthen Town Infrastructure

- Begin burying power lines in town
- Build more sidewalks
- Expand high speed internet for industries, small businesses, and residents ... provide free wi-fi internet service in some parts of the town (e.g., downtown)
- Expand the public library
- Expand the town boundaries
- Extend water/sewer services past Minpro
- Lobby to complete the widening of US 19E (from Spruce Pine to I-26) as soon as possible
- Work to bring passenger train service to Spruce Pine