

Mountain Area Plan

(Adopted March 9, 1998)
Plan Review Workshop
Blount County Planning Commission
August 14, 2007

Blount County Land Use Plan: A Plan for Mountain Areas

- An interruption of the Policies Plan process
- Reaction to Three Sisters Tract sale 1997
- Rush job – planner's plan w/ some citizen input from policies plan process – 1976 plan technical basis
- Partial plan - adopted by Planning Commission
- Lots of opposition from mountain land owners and those opposed to zoning
- County Commission did not accept plan – directed that Policies Plan continue

Mountains

- Topography – elevation upward to 2000 feet or more
- Land Form – prominence of elevation from surrounding lowlands
- Slope – roughly 15 to 30 percent or more as break point
- Chilhowee mountains and mountains into GSMNP

Other Characteristics

- Slope Stability – propensity for steep slopes to slide or erode down slope
- Limited aquifers
- Thin/poor soil cover – limitations for housing
- Limited utility provisions – especially water
- Limitations on roads – slope, width, engineering difficulties, maintenance

Other Characteristics

- Fire hazards and emergency access
- Natural habitats
- Aesthetics - viewscales
- Recreation/open space potentials
- Historical family homesites – but not much general development pressure in past

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO ISSUES OF MOUNTAIN LAND DEVELOPMENTS

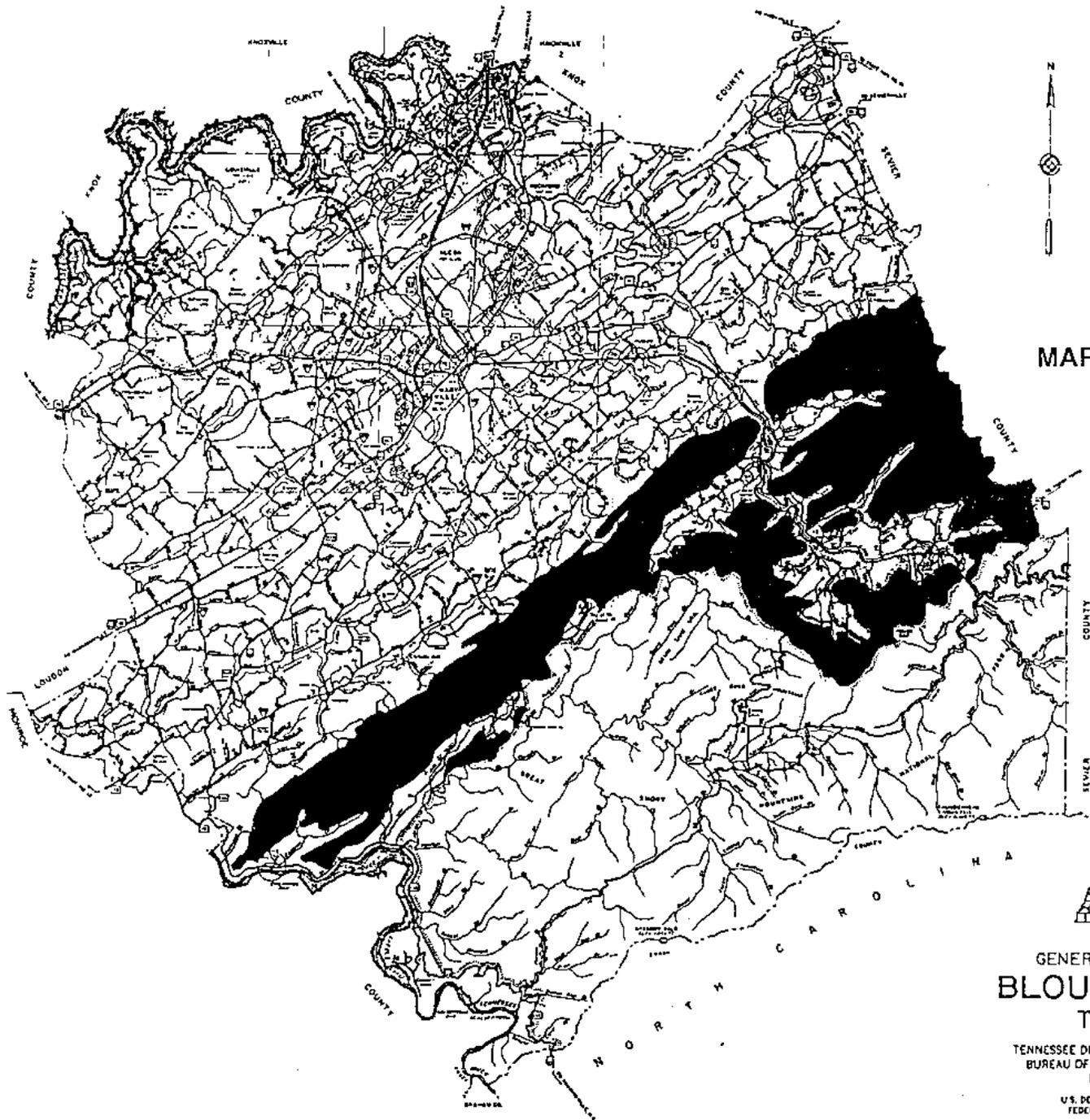
- Public Use - County buys land
- Land Conservancy - non-public entity such as Foothills Land Conservancy or private property owners purchase or restrict use of land - PDR
- Ridge-top Act - possibility for state enabling legislation (private act)
- Mountain Development Ordinance - not enabled in state statutes

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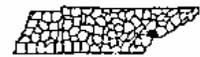
- Specific Regulations - septic field regulations and erosion control regulations
- Recommended Good Design - voluntary guidelines
- Subdivision Regulations (had at the time)
- Zoning (did not have at the time)

Definition of Mountain Area

Mountain area shall be defined as all land from the base of the north face of the Chilhowee Mountain range southward to the boundary of the Great Smoky Mountains national park in Blount County generally of elevation greater than 1,200 feet, except for areas of Happy Valley, the Flats in Top of the World, East and West Millers Cove, Tuckaleechee Cove and Dry Valley with slopes less than 15 percent.

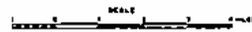


MAP 4 - MOUNTAIN AREAS FOR THIS PLAN



GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP
BLOUNT COUNTY
 TENNESSEE

PREPARED BY THE
 TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 BUREAU OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
 PLANNING DIVISION
 IN COOPERATION WITH THE
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION



Findings

- Mountain areas are characterized by highly sloping land, hazardous geology, and thin soils generally unsuitable for development.
- Development on highly sloping land of greater than 15 % slope creates several potential impacts on health, safety and welfare including
 - limited existing road capacity serving mountain areas,
 - steep road grades and difficult road geometrics,
 - difficulties with constructing viable septic fields,
 - increased potential for soil erosion,
 - increased potential for regional ground and surface water pollution and flooding,

Findings

potential impacts on health, safety and welfare continued

- increased potential for landslides and shifting of residential and other structures,
- limited availability of potable water for human consumption,
- limited availability of water for fire protection,
- limited access for fire protection services,
- increased public expense for provision of public services such as school buses, road maintenance and snow removal,
- degradation or destruction of wildlife habitat,
- degradation or destruction of important regional viewscapes,
- and disruption of functional openspace.

General Policies

- The rural and natural character of mountain area in the county should be preserved.
- New development should be designed to fit into the rural character of the mountain area.
- Our beautiful and scenic environment should be protected, including commonly shared mountain area views and ridgetops.
- The rivers and streams in and flowing from the mountain area should be protected as part of our natural environment and drinking water resource, and as part of our scenic and recreational resource.
- The health, safety, and welfare of present and future inhabitants in the mountain area, and those inhabitants in the rest of the county which may be affected by activities in the mountains, should be preserved and protected.

Specific Policies

- Land use and development in the mountain area should be managed and regulated in order to preserve the quality of our growing county.
- Zoning and other land development regulations should be formulated and adopted specific to the mountain area.
- Development on mountains and ridgetops should be regulated to protect sensitive areas of slope and viewscapes in the mountain area.
- The safety and quality of buildings in the mountain area should be insured through regulation.
- Billboards, signs, towers, and other structures in the mountain area which could impact the views of the county should be regulated.

Guiding Policy on Land Use and Development Regulations

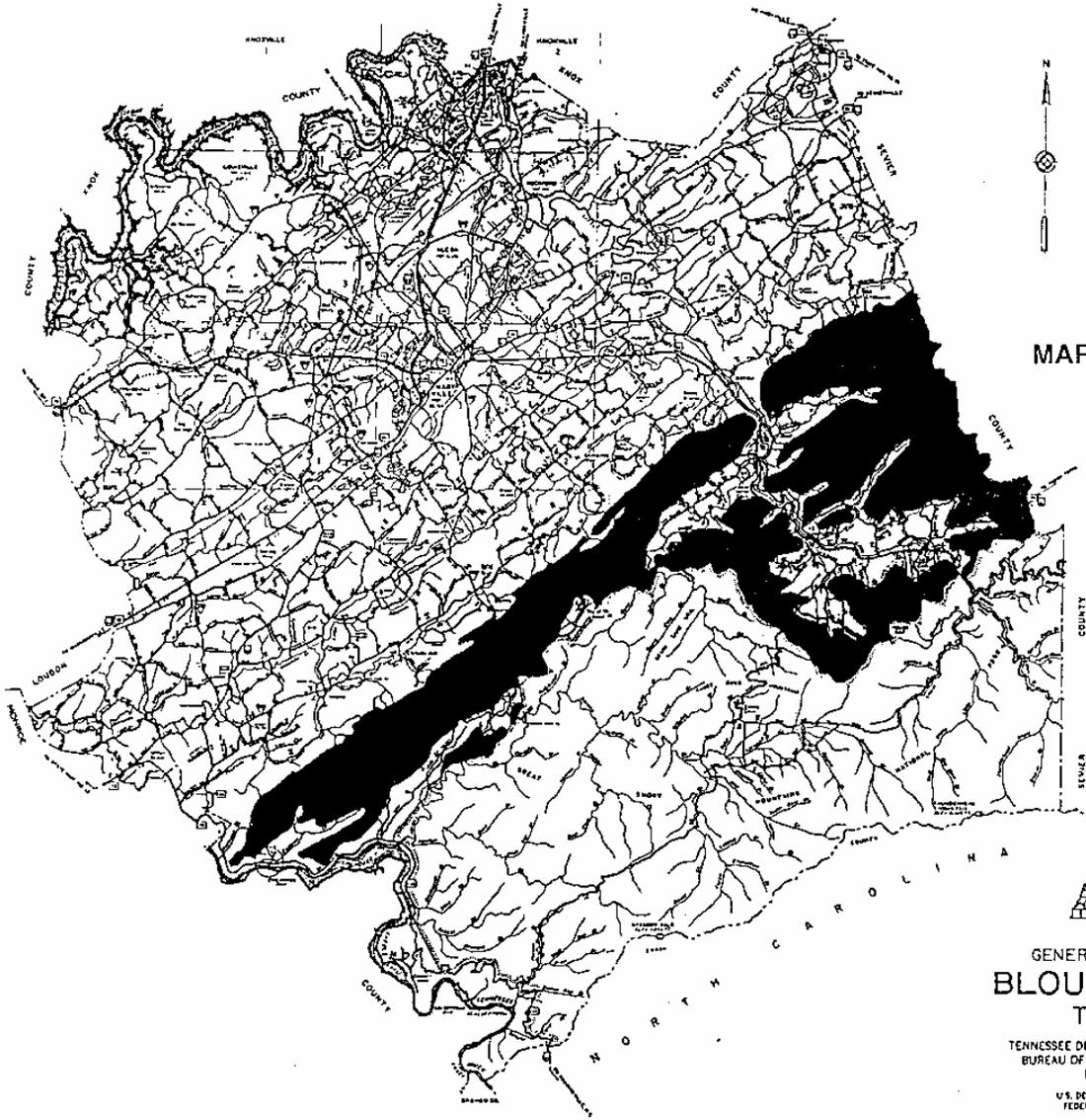
The guiding principle in any government actions in relation to the use and development of land should be to limit regulations to specific health, safety and welfare objectives balanced with responsible freedom in the use of land.

Plan for Action

- Review the Blount County Subdivision Regulations;
- Formulate and recommend to the County Commission a zoning plan;
- Study and recommend to the County Commission a building permit system;
- Study and recommend to the County Commission a building code;
- Research planning and land development literature to collate a set of recommended examples of good design; and
- Review existing special purpose regulations of county, state and federal governments which may be applicable to addressing issues of mountain area development.

Plan for Support and Coordination

- Explore avenues to identify and acquire mountain land specifically for public recreation, conservation and openspace use.
- Recommend to the state legislature special or general acts to regulate development on or near ridgetops at elevations greater than 1,200 feet in the county.
- Recommend to the state legislature special or general legislation to limit cutting of trees in the process of development of land for other than farming or forestry purposes.
- Coordinate with and support private sector efforts to limit development within mountain areas.

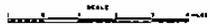


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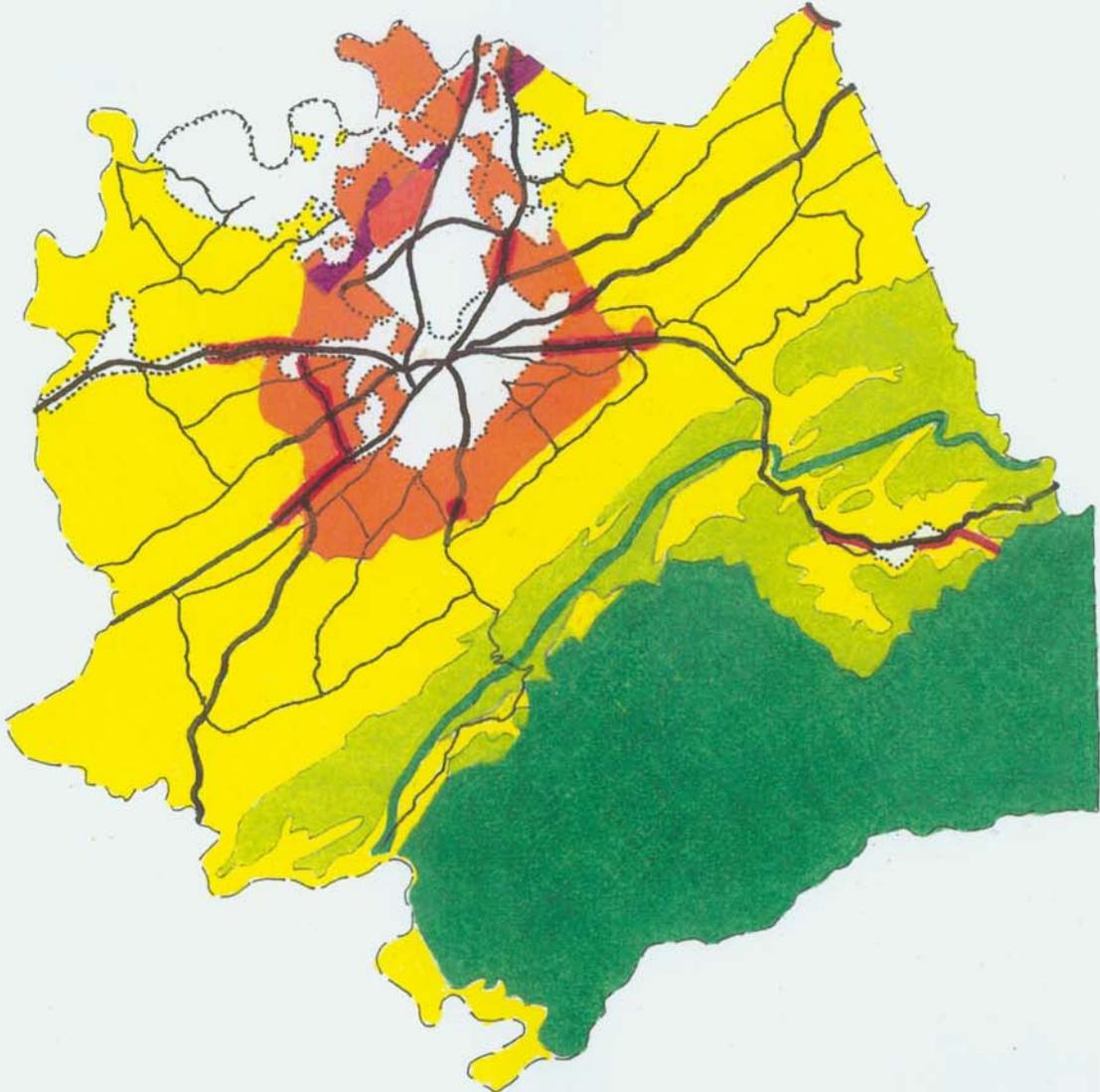


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Conceptual Land Use Map – Blount County



-  Commercial – High Density Development
-  Industrial – High Density Development
-  Airport – Semi-Autonomous Planned Area
-  Suburbanizing – High to Medium Density Development
-  Rural 1 – Medium to Low Density Development
-  Rural 2 – Low Density Development
-  National Park – Autonomous Planned Area

-  Arterial Roads – Some Medium Density Commercial
-  Collector Roads – Some Low Density Commercial

-  City Limits

Questions?

Comments