II. Recommendations

This chapter presents recommendations for each mode of transportation in the 2013 Lake Lure/Chimney Rock Village CTP as shown in Figure 1. More detailed information on each recommendation is tabulated in Appendix C. Because many of the issues in this area are due to operational issues and seasonal tourism, the NCDOT Municipal and School Transportation Assistance Group (MSTA) within the Traffic Management Unit worked with the Transportation Planning Branch (TPB) and the municipalities in the development of the CTP. MSTA had previously completed a Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Traffic Operations Plan in 1994 which was well received in the area. Please refer to Appendix J for a complete update of the traffic operations study completed by the Municipal and School Transportation Assistance (MSTA) Group of NCDOT in conjunction with this CTP. Please also refer to the following plans that were referenced during the development of this CTP: 2012 Lake Lure Town Center Master Plan (Phase I), Town of Lake Lure 2007-2027 Comprehensive Plan, Chimney Rock State Park Master Plan, Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Traffic Operations Study of 1994 prepared by MSTA, Chimney Rock Village Comprehensive Plan of 2011, Thoroughfare Plan for Lake Lure & Transportation Status Report for Chimney Rock of 1993, Chimney Rock State Park Annual Attendance Sheet, and Thoroughfare Plan Report for the Rutherford County Urban Area of 1999.

The N.C. Department of Transportation adopted a "Complete Streets" policy in July 2009. The policy directs the Department to consider and incorporate several modes of transportation when building new projects or making improvements to existing infrastructure. Under this policy, the Department will collaborate with cities, towns and communities during the planning and design phases of projects. Together, they will decide how to provide the transportation options needed to serve the community and complement the context of the area. The benefits of this approach include:

- making it easier for travelers to get where they need to go;
- encouraging the use of alternative forms of transportation;
- building more sustainable communities;
- increasing connectivity between neighborhoods, streets, and transit systems;
- improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

Complete streets are streets designed to be safe and comfortable for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists and individuals of all ages and capabilities. These streets generally include sidewalks, appropriate bicycle facilities, transit stops, right-sized street widths, context-based traffic speeds, and are well-integrated with surrounding land uses. The complete street policy and concepts were utilized in the development of the CTP. The CTP proposes projects that include multimodal project recommendations as documented in the problem statements within this chapter. Refer to Appendix C for recommended cross sections for all project proposals and Appendix D for more detailed information on the typical cross sections.

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1 For more information on Complete Streets, go to: http://www.nccompletestreets.org/
2.1 Unaddressed Deficiencies

There were no unaddressed deficiencies.

2.2 Implementation

The CTP is based on the projected growth for the planning area. It is possible that actual growth patterns will differ from those logically anticipated. As a result, it may be necessary to accelerate or delay the implementation of some recommendations found within this plan. Some portions of the plan may require revisions in order to accommodate unexpected changes in development. Therefore, any changes made to one element of the CTP should be consistent with the other elements.

Initiative for implementing the CTP rests predominately with the policy boards and citizens of the town of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village. As transportation needs throughout the state exceed available funding, it is imperative that the local planning area aggressively pursue funding for priority projects. Projects should be prioritized locally and submitted to the Isothermal RPO for regional prioritization and submittal to NCDOT. Refer to Appendix A for contact information on regional prioritization and funding. Local governments may use the CTP to guide development and protect corridors for the recommended projects. It is critical that NCDOT and local government coordinate on relevant land development reviews and all transportation projects to ensure proper implementation of the CTP. Local governments and NCDOT share the responsibility for access management and the planning, design and construction of the recommended projects.

Prior to implementing projects from the CTP, additional analysis will be necessary to meet the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) or the North Carolina (or State) Environmental Policy Act\(^2\) (SEPA). This CTP may be used to provide information in the NEPA/SEPA process.

2.3 Problem Statements

The following pages contain problem statements for each recommendation, organized by CTP modal element. The information provided in the problem statement is intended to help support decisions made in the NEPA/SEPA process. A full, minimum or reference problem statement is presented for each recommendation, with full problem statements occurring first in each section. Full problem statements are denoted by a gray shaded box containing project information. Minimum problem statements are more concise and less detailed than full problem statements, but include all known or readily available information. Reference problem statements are developed for TIP projects where the purpose and need for the project has already been established.

\(^2\) For more information on SEPA, go to: \texttt{http://www.doa.nc.gov/clearing/faq.aspx}
Identified Problem
The purpose of this project is to improve the mobility along US 64/74A through the town of Lake Lure and to improve access to Chimney Rock State Park.

Justification of Need
Chimney Rock Village and the town of Lake Lure are not merely municipalities in western North Carolina but are also key tourist destinations. US 64/74A is the only through route serving this area, connecting to Asheville in the west and Rutherfordton in the east. Lake Lure is an approximately 720 acre lake with about twenty-one miles of shoreline and a beach that is accessed from US 64/74. In addition, the towns are in the heart of the Hickory Nut Gorge with Chimney Rock State Park as a major growing attraction in the gorge.

US 64/74A is a two lane facility with 12 foot lanes and a speed limit of 35 miles per hour (mph) through the municipalities with parking spaces directly off the road between store fronts and the edge of pavement in Chimney Rock Village and along the beach front in Lake Lure. Left turns into the Chimney Rock State Park entrance located in the heart of Chimney Rock Village and vehicles turning into and out of parking spaces back up traffic along US 64/74A. Also, there is a significant amount of pedestrian traffic crossing US 64/74 in Lake Lure to access the beach and in Chimney Rock Village to access the shops.
Currently, the average annual daily traffic volume on US 64/74A is 2,200 vehicles per day (vpd) and is expected to get up to 2,400 vpd in 2040. However, in the warmer months (spring-fall) the traffic increases heavily due to visitors. For example, in January of 2012 the park had 2,049 visitors and in July the park had 35,348 visitors. During these times, US 64/74A becomes extremely congested. Chimney Rock State Park anticipates growth in the next few decades; from 2011 to 2020 Chimney Rock State Park expects to grow 5.23%, and from 2020 to 2030 the Park expects to grow at 2.08%.

Community Vision and Problem History

The community vision developed for the CTP states: The town of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village have a safe, aesthetically pleasing, user friendly, integrated, and environmentally sensitive multi-modal transportation system for its community with regional connectivity that makes it easy for visitors to access the area and its attractions, and aids the economic progress of the area.

Goals and objectives developed for the CTP that directly relates to the proposed Lake Lure Parkway are:

- Goal: Have a safe transportation system by directing traffic away from US 64/74A where currently angle parking (or echelon parking) exists on both sides of the streets and may cause accidents when backing out.
- Goal: A transportation network that meets the needs of the community and supports proposed land use patterns.
- Objective: Create linkage between the Lake Lure, Chimney Rock Village, & Chimney Rock State Park.

Chimney Rock State Park developed a master plan in 2011 that includes a 5-year action plan, 25-year master plan and 100-year vision plan. This plan includes a new access and circulation strategy whose primary goal is to help alleviate automobile congestion on US 64/74A through Chimney Rock Village and Lake Lure. Chimney Rock State Park has plans for a new state park entry road with bicycle lanes from Lake Lure that connects to the lower portion of First Street (C Avenue).

The current entrance/exit to the park in Chimney Rock Village will serve as an outbound (exit) roadway from the Meadows to Chimney Rock Village as stated in the Chimney Rock State Park Master Plan on page 10-6: “the former entrance road will become a one-way egress road to Chimney Rock Village. Peak visitation in the park occurs in the early morning and mid-day hours, before Chimney Rock Village merchants are open for business. Transforming the current entrance road into a one-way exit road will deliver state park visitors to Chimney Rock Village where they can shop and dine during later morning, afternoon and evening hours. The Meadows will be designed to direct existing traffic flow into the Village of Chimney Rock.” Please refer to the Chimney Rock State Park Master Plan for more details.
CTP Project Proposal

Project Description and Overview
Lake Lure Parkway is proposed to be a two lane major thoroughfare with 11 foot lanes, paved shoulders and a speed limit of 45 mph that begins at the intersection of US 64/74A and Arcade (A) Street. The proposed parkway would filter down south of the Lake Lure town center and come back up north to merge into US 64/74A. The roads that would connect to the proposed Lake Lure Parkway from the town center are C Ave and A Ave/1st Street. Roundabouts are recommended at the 2 intersections of Lake Lure Parkway and US 64/74A for improved traffic flow.

Natural & Human Environmental Context
Based on a planning level environmental assessment using available GIS data, the proposed project is in the vicinity of two wells and is within a natural heritage element area. There are also trout streams located east of the proposed project. The Chimney Rock State Park is located southwest of the proposed project. Macrosite boundaries are also present in this region.

Relationship to Land Use Plans
Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village are both vacation areas. The area contains both lakes and mountains, along with streams and parks. There are a lot of forest land and resort areas. There are also several golf courses in the area. Commercial businesses are located in Lake Lure’s town center, and downtown Chimney Rock Village. In the Town of Lake Lure 2007-2027 Comprehensive Plan (June 2007), the future land use plan anticipates increases in residential and commercial development.

Linkages to Other Plans and Proposed Project History
This CTP was developed in coordination with the 2011 Chimney Rock State Park Master Plan and the 2012 Lake Lure Town Center Master Plan (Phase I), which includes the proposed project. Additionally, Appendix I contains complete recommendations for traffic operations within the area that were developed in conjunction with this CTP by NCDOT’s Municipal and School Transportation Assistance Group (MSTA) – Traffic Management Unit.

The proposed project was not identified in the 1993 Lake Lure/Chimney Rock Thoroughfare Plan (not adopted).

Multi-modal Considerations
There are no multi-modal projects proposed along this route.

Public/ Stakeholder Involvement
There were two public involvement sessions held, and neither had any written comments regarding the Lake Lure Parkway. Many individuals were verbally in agreement with this concept seeing how it connected with Chimney Rock State Park’s vision of the new entrance and how it would reduce traffic on US 64/74A.
The following facilities within Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village do not have capacity issues, but were identified as candidates for upgrading to NCDOT design standards to improve mobility, safety and/or to accommodate bicycles. Some of the facilities are local roads and improvements are recommended as a result of aligning the CTP with the 2012 Lake Lure Town Center Master Plan (Phase I) and the MSTA report recommendations. Implementation of the proposed projects should be coordinated through NCDOT’s Highway Division 13 office.

**NC 9, Local ID: RUTH0002-H**
NC 9 from US 64/74A to the southern planning boundary currently has two 10 foot lanes. The recommendation is to widen the road to 11 foot lanes with 4 foot paved shoulders to accommodate bicyclists. Currently the Ingles off of NC 9 is vital to the community. This area continues to grow with the new private school and public library, along with a new medical complex, being constructed off NC 9.

**Arcade (A) Ave, Local ID: RUTH0003-H**
Arcade Street from US 64/74A to 1st Street currently has one lane and is a town/local facility. As noted in the 2007 Lake Lure Town Center Master Plan, this facility will serve internal circulation. It is recommended to upgrade this facility to a two lane minor thoroughfare with 11 foot lanes, paved shoulders, a grassy buffer and sidewalks. A speed limit of 25 mph is recommended.

**1st Street, Local ID: RUTH0004-H**
1st Street between Keeter Lane and A Ave currently has one lane and is a town/local road. It is recommended to widen this facility to a two lane minor thoroughfare with 11 foot lanes and 4 foot paved shoulders.

**Island Creek Road (SR 1185), Local ID: RUTH0005-H**
Island Creek Road (SR 1185) is a two lane minor thoroughfare with 10 foot lanes from NC 9 to US 64/74A. The recommendation is to widen the road from 10 foot lanes to 11 foot lanes with 4 foot paved shoulders. Island Creek Road will also be in close proximity to the new private school, public library and new medical complex. Hence, there is a great need to widen the road.

**Keeter Lane, Local ID: RUTH0006-H**
Keeter Lane between US 64/74A and 1st Street currently has one lane and is a town/local road. This road is located within the town center, and the town of Lake Lure would like to turn this into a multi-use/complete streets design for the town center to encourage more biking and walking. It is recommended to widen this facility to a two lane minor thoroughfare with 11 foot lanes with 4 foot paved shoulders.

**Old Sand Branch Road, Local ID: RUTH0007-H**
The following deficiency was identified during the development of the CTP. There is a need for a roadway connection from Boys Camp Road to Rumbling Bald Resort. Not only would a connection on the western side of the lake between these areas provide
a loop system around the lake, but it would allow timelier access for emergency responders and improve public safety. Old Sand Branch Road is suggested to be improved from a dirt road to a two lane, 10 foot lanes with 4 foot paved shoulders, from the end Carsons Way Lane to the north for about 1700 feet (or 0.32 miles) through property identified by PIN 1603403. The remainder of Old Sand Branch Road will be untouched. Making this improvement would shorten time of first responders who may need to service a 911 call and allow law enforcement to patrol the area. Currently, emergency responders must use Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1306), Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306), and Bills Creek Road (SR 1008) to access the Rumbling Bald Resort area from Lake Lure. Connecting Boys Camp Road to Rumbling Bald Resort would shorten this time and distance for emergency responders and provide a loop system for highway, transit, pedestrian and bicycle routes. Another goal is to facilitate transportation connectivity for the Lake Lure community as a whole. This is a long-range vision the town and the village both share. Although both towns are in support of the proposed connection, Rumbling Bald Resort is a private, gated resort area that does not wish to open its community to all traffic. This connectivity would only be used by emergency responders unless Rumbling Bald Resort consents to other uses. The proposed project was previously identified in the 1993 Lake Lure/Chimney Rock Thoroughfare Plan, which was never adopted. The need to facilitate connectivity is identified in the Transportation/Circulation Section of the 2007-2027 Town of Lake Lure Comprehensive Plan.

C Avenue, Local ID: RUTH0008-H
C Avenue between Keeter Lane and the Proposed C-Ave/Proctor Road Connection currently has one lane and is a town/local road. It is recommended to widen this facility to a two lane minor thoroughfare with 11 foot lanes and 4 foot paved shoulders.

Proposed C-Ave/Proctor Road Connection, Local ID: RUTH0009-H
The Proposed C-Ave/Proctor Road Connection is expected to be between C Avenue and Proctor Road, and is currently non-existent. This 600’ connection is being proposed by MSTA as a possible future connection from Lake Lure’s Town Center to the Lake Lure Parkway. However, this is currently just a concept and the connection from the Lake Lure Town Center to the Lake Lure Parkway is a local decision. Please refer to the MSTA plan for details.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION & RAIL

The Public Transportation and Rail elements of the Town of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village CTP are shown in Figure 1, Sheet 3. The following recommendations were identified during the development of the CTP and will help achieve the CTP goals of creating a choice of transportation modes and coordinating multi-modal routes. There is currently no public transportation in Lake Lure or Chimney Rock Village. A private transit system is desired. Chimney Rock State Park has a desire to have a transit circulatory route for their visitors as well, which is included in the 2011 Chimney Rock State Park Master Plan as the Hickory Nut Gorge Transit Circulator. Additionally, it is
recommended to use existing and future parking lots as park-and-ride lots throughout both towns for transit. Project proposals are listed below:

**Proposed Transit Route, Local ID: RUTH0001-T**

The proposed transit route will utilize the following facilities:

- US 64/74A from Terrace Drive (SR 1304) to Bills Creek Road (SR 1008)
- Bills Creek Road (SR 1300) from US 64/74A to Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306)
- Boys Camp Road from US 64/74A to Bald Hill Ct.
- Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306) from Bills Creek Road (SR 1008) to Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1314)
- Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1314) from Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306) to Chilly Creek Lane

The following park-and-ride lots are recommended to serve locals and tourists along the proposed transit route. Additionally, the intersection of US 64/74A and Bills Creek Road (SR 1008) is recommended as a pick-up/transit stop location.

- **RUTH0002-T**: Existing parking lot at the intersection of Terrace Drive and US 64/74A
- **RUTH0003-T**: Existing unpaved parking lot on Boys Camp Road
- **RUTH0004-T**: Existing municipal building center parking lot on US 64/74A near Keeter Lane.
- **RUTH0005-T**: Existing Ingles parking lot at the intersection of NC 9 and Girls Scout Camp Road
- **RUTH0006-T**: Future parking lot east of NC 9, across from Girls Scout Camp Road
- **RUTH0007-T**: Existing parking lot at the intersection of Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306) and Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1314)
- **RUTH0008-T**: A new park-and-ride lot is recommended at the intersection of Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306) and Redwing Road to serve the locals and tourists.

The transit recommendations meet several goals and objectives from the CTP Core Committee:

- **Goal**: Develop a user friendly, multi-modal transportation system that is efficient and seamless.
  - **Objective**: Provide limited transit/tram/shuttle service during peak season and special events
  - **Objective**: Multi-modal connection (including transit) between key destinations: Lake Lure Town Center, Chimney Rock Village, Chimney Rock State Park entrances (Boys Camp Road and US 64/74A).
  - **Objective**: Shuttles from established parking areas to town centers.
Goal: Improve mobility within the area by providing alternative transportation services.
- Objective: Minimize car trips within Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village.

BICYCLE

The Bicycle element of the Lake Lure & Chimney Rock Village CTP is shown in Figure 1, Sheet 4. The following routes identified by the CTP Core Committee will help achieve the CTP goals of creating a choice of transportation modes and developing and maintaining a transportation system that runs smoothly and timely. Some areas overlap with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, which are recommended as multi-use paths.

US 64/74A, Local ID: RUTH0001-B
Currently, there is a multiuse path in the planning and design stage on US 64/74A from Southside Drive to the eastern edge of the Flowering Bridge (approximate length of 3200 feet). A bike route is recommended along US 64/74A from Washburn Road to edge of planning boundary (eastern edge). The existing cross section is 2-12 foot lanes with a speed limit of 35 mph. Five foot paved shoulders are recommended to accommodate bicyclists.

NC 9, Local ID: RUTH0002-H
A bike route is recommended along NC 9 from US 64/74A to the southern County border. The existing cross section is 2-10 foot lanes with a speed limit of 30 mph. The CTP proposes widening the road to a 22 foot cross section (11 feet per lane) with 4 foot paved shoulders to accommodate bicyclists. The new school and public library will be located in this area.

Boys Camp Road, Local ID: RUTH0002-B
A bike route is recommended along Boys Camp Road from US 64/74A to Bald Hill Court. This is an unpaved local/town road, with one 8 foot lane. The town would like to add bicycle accommodations along this facility. NCDOT recommends the town upgrade the facility to a two lane cross section with paved shoulders to accommodate bicyclists.

Bills Creek Road (SR 1008), Local ID: RUTH0003-B
A bike route is recommended along Bills Creek Road (SR 1008) from US 64/74A to edge of planning boundary (eastern edge). The existing facility has a cross section of 2-10 foot lanes with a speed limit of 25 mph. Four foot paved shoulders are recommended to accommodate bicyclists.

Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1314), Local ID: RUTH0004-B
A bike route is recommended along Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1314) from the edge of planning boundary (northern edge) to US 64/74A. The existing facility has a cross section of 2-10 foot lanes with a speed limit of 25 mph. Four foot paved shoulders are recommended to accommodate bicyclists.
**Chimney Rock Park Road, Local ID: RUTH0005-B**

A bike route is recommended along Chimney Rock Park Road from US 64/74A to approximately one mile on Chimney Rock Park Road to the existing parking area. Currently, this park facility is used as the entrance and exit to the park. According to the Chimney Rock State Park master plan developed in 2011 that includes a 5-year action plan, 25-year master plan and 100-year vision plan, the current entrance/exit to the park in Chimney Rock Village will serve as an outbound (exit) roadway from the Meadows to Chimney Rock Village (pg. 10-6).

**Island Creek (SR 1185) Road, Local ID: RUTH0005-H**

A bike route is recommended along Island Creek Road (SR 1185) from NC 9 to US 64/74A. The existing cross section is 2-10 foot lanes with a speed limit of 30 mph. The CTP proposes widening this road a 22 foot cross section (11 feet per lane) with a minimum of 4 foot paved shoulders to accommodate bicyclists.

The proposed recommendations meet several goals and objectives developed for this CTP, which include:

- **Goal: Have a safe transportation system**
  - Separate bicycles from motor vehicles whenever possible.

- **Goal: Develop a user friendly, multi-modal transportation system that is efficient and seamless.**
  - **Objective:** Multi-modal connection (including bicycle) between key destinations: Lake Lure Town Center, Chimney Rock Village, Chimney Rock State Park entrances (Boys Camp Road and US 64/74A).

**PEDESTRIAN**

The Pedestrian Element of the Lake Lure & Chimney Rock Village CTP is shown in Figure 1, Sheet 5. The towns of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village have a vision to provide sidewalks everywhere possible to encourage walking, especially constructing sidewalks along US 64/74 to connect both towns. The following routes identified by the CTP Core Committee will help achieve the CTP goals of creating a choice of transportation modes and developing and maintaining a transportation system that runs smoothly and timely. Some areas overlap with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, which are recommended as multi-use paths.

**NC 9, Local ID: RUTH0002-H**

Lake Lure has plans to relocate the existing charter school to east of NC 9 and the Ingles Grocery Store, at the intersection of NC 9 and Island Creek Road (SR 1185). For this reason, sidewalks are recommended along NC 9 from Girl Scout Camp Road to 0.35 miles to the intersection of NC 9 and Island Creek Road (SR 1185).

**NC 9, Local ID: RUTH0001-P**
An off road pedestrian path is recommended on the western side of NC 9 at Girls Scout Camp Road, near the Ingles Grocery Store.

**Girls Scout Camp Road, Local ID: RUTH0002-P**

Sidewalks are recommended along Girls Scout Camp Road from NC 9 to 0.1 miles west of NC 9 at the proposed off road pedestrian path. The recommended improvements meet several goals and objectives from the CTP Core Committee, which include:

- **Goal: Have a safe transportation system**
  - Separate pedestrians from motor vehicles whenever possible.
- **Goal: Develop a user friendly, multi-modal transportation system that is efficient and seamless.**
  - **Objective:** Multi-modal connection (including pedestrian) between key destinations: Lake Lure Town Center, Chimney Rock Village, Chimney Rock State Park entrances (Boys Camp Road and US 64/74A).
  - **Objective:** Sidewalks from established parking areas to town centers.
- **Goal: A transportation network that meets the needs of the community and supports proposed land use patterns:**
  - Provide sidewalks along US 64/74 in the vicinity of the town centers.
  - Provide sidewalks within 1.5 miles of schools.

**MULTI-USE PATH**

There are no existing multi-use paths in the Town of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village. The CTP includes proposed multi-use paths in the following locations:

**US 64/74A, Local ID: RUTH0001-M**

A multiuse path is recommended along US 64/74A from Henderson County to the Flowering Bridge and from Jack London Road to Washburn Road. Currently, the portion on US 64/74A from Southside Drive to the eastern edge of the Flowering Bridge (approximate length of 3200 feet) is in the planning and design stage by the local governments.

**Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306), Local ID: RUTH0002-M**

A multi-use path is recommended along Buffalo Creek Road (SR 1306) from Bills Creek Road (SR 1008) to Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1314).

**Local ID: RUTH0003-M**

A multi-use path is recommended south of US 64/74A from Chimney Rock Park Road to 1st Street (C Avenue). The total distance for this path would be 0.5 miles.

**Local ID: RUTH0004-M**
A multi-use path is recommended from Boys Camp Road to Quail Ridge Boulevard at Buffalo Shoals Road (SR 1314). The total distance for this multi-purpose path is 1.3 miles.

**Local ID: RUTH0005-M**

A multi-use path is being recommended on US 64/74A from Southside Drive to the eastern edge of the Flowering Bridge/Broad River (approximately 5000 ft. in length).