

Transportation Advisory Committee

4:00 PM | January 18, 2023
King Street Meeting Room



Agenda

Call to Order

Public Comment

1. Approval/Adjustment of Agenda & Draft Minutes – 10/19
2. TAC Purpose and Ideas for Future Meetings
3. Adoption of 2023 Meeting Calendar
4. Transit Feasibility Study
5. 2020 Census Urbanized Area Changes

Public Comment

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3

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45

45

MINUTES

SECONDS

Public Comment



MINUTES

SECONDS

Public Comment



MINUTES

SECONDS



Apple County Public Transit Feasibility Study

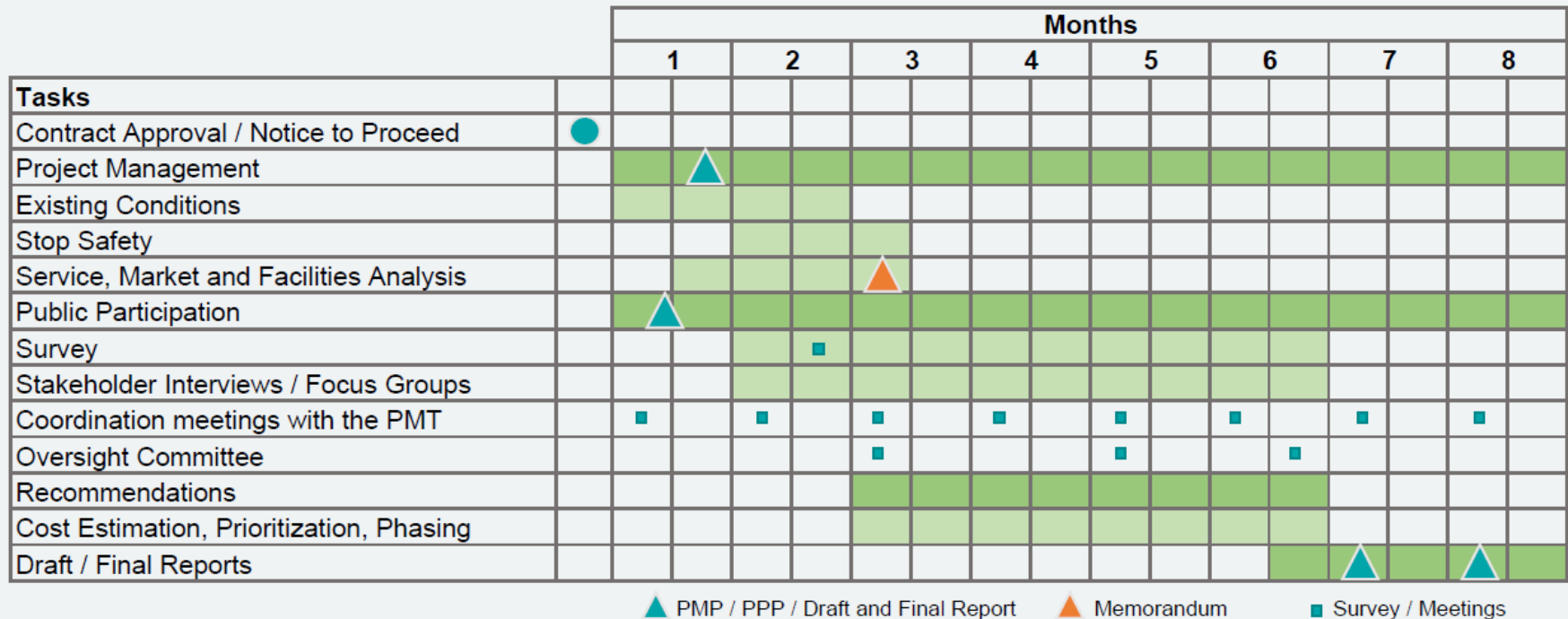
Quick overview:

- The fixed-route transit system is owned by Henderson County and is operated by WNCSource through a third-party contract that is rebid every three years.
- Mostly funded by Federal Transit Administration funds.
- Municipalities that benefit from the system are billed annually for half of the contract cost per rider that board and alight within their jurisdiction.
- That cost does not take into consideration cost of planning, programming, vehicles/buses, fuel, shelters, benches, bus stop signs, or maintenance.
- ACPT has three routes that run every hour from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM Monday through Friday.

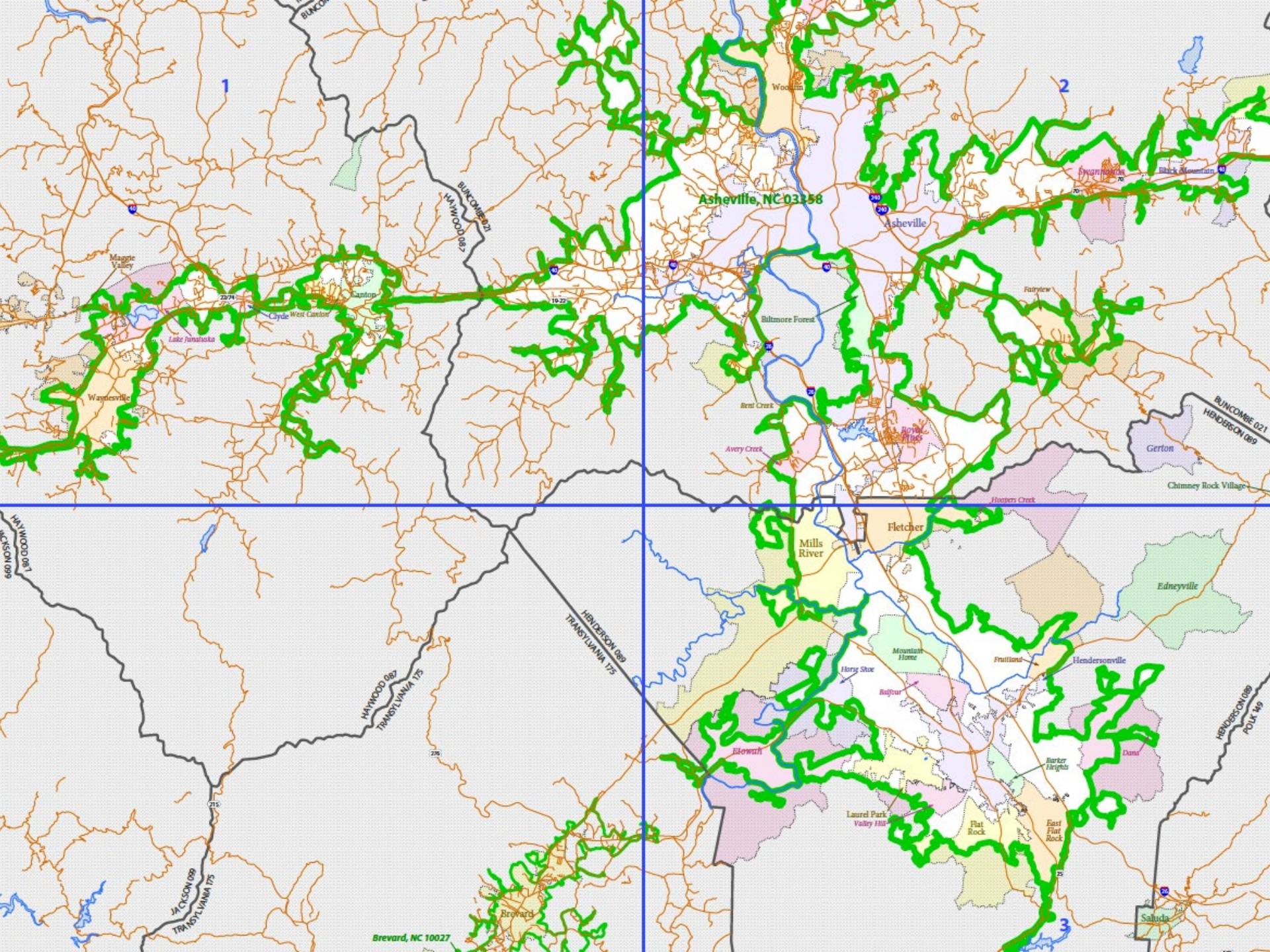
Apple County Public Transit Feasibility Study

- Study kicked-off in late December.
- Contracted with AECOM, which is the firm that also facilitated the FBRMPO regional study in 2021.
- Impetus for study is multi-faceted.
 - ACPT has not had any major planning efforts since 2004.
 - The effects of the pandemic have left transit systems across the nation in a vulnerable stage.
 - Transportation and movement patterns have changed and not fully rebounded. A new lens is needed to understand the future of transit.
 - The overall goal is to increase ridership, understand the feasibility of implementing regional recommendations, and revamp the system to best serve the community.

Proposed Schedule



- Technical analysis covering financial, safety, efficiency, perceptions, and satisfaction levels.
- Strong stakeholder and public engagement
 - Create a board appointed steering committee
 - Hear from “would be riders”
- Recommendations for potential system enhancements and implementation



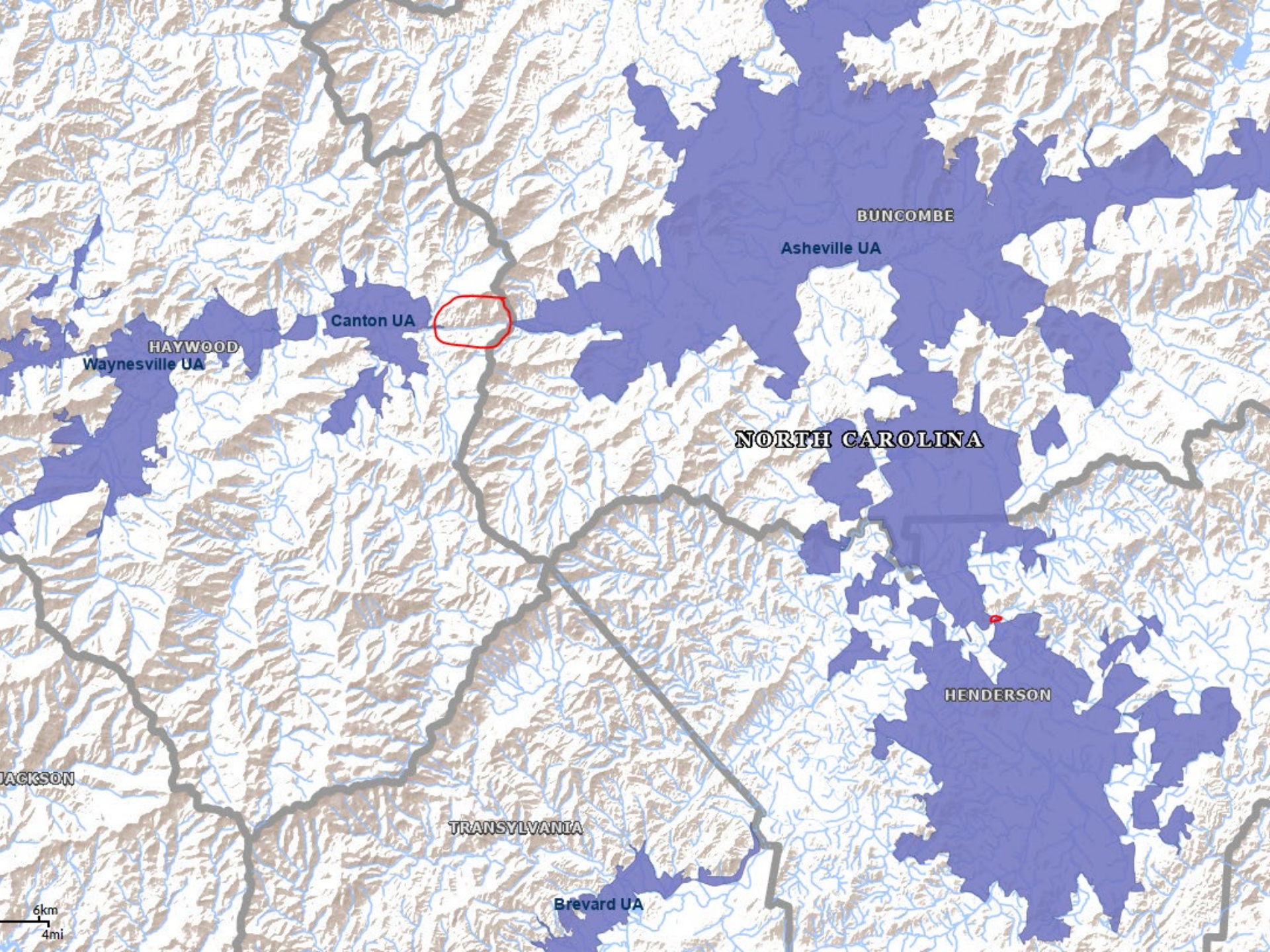
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2

Asheville, NC 03158

Brevard, NC 10027

3



BUNCOMBE

Asheville UA

Canton UA

HAYWOOD
Waynesville UA

NORTH CAROLINA

HENDERSON

TRANSYLVANIA

Brevard UA

JACKSON

6km
4mi

2020 Census Urbanized Area Changes

- Received information in early January.
- Consistent with previous decennial censuses, changes were made to criteria classifying urban areas following the 2020 Census.
- Key changes to the Census Bureau's urban area concept and criteria include:
 - The use of housing unit density instead of solely population density. The minimum population threshold to qualify as urban increased from 2,500 to 5,000 or a minimum housing unit threshold of 2,000 housing units.
 - The jump distance was reduced from 2.5 miles to 1.5 miles for 2020. Jump distance is the distance along roads used to connect high-density urban territories surrounded by rural territory.
 - No longer distinguishing between urbanized areas and urban clusters. All qualifying areas are designated urban areas.
- As a result of these changes, 1,140 areas containing approximately 4.2 million people, classified as urban in 2010 are now rural.

2020 Census Urbanized Area Changes

- Due to urban growth, urban areas have grown denser, changing from an average population density of 2,343 in 2010 to 2,553 in 2020. Additionally, 225 urban areas qualify based on the 2020 housing unit threshold that would not have qualified based on the new population threshold alone.
- Based on 2020 Census data, the Census Bureau identified 36 new urban areas that were classified as rural in 2010.

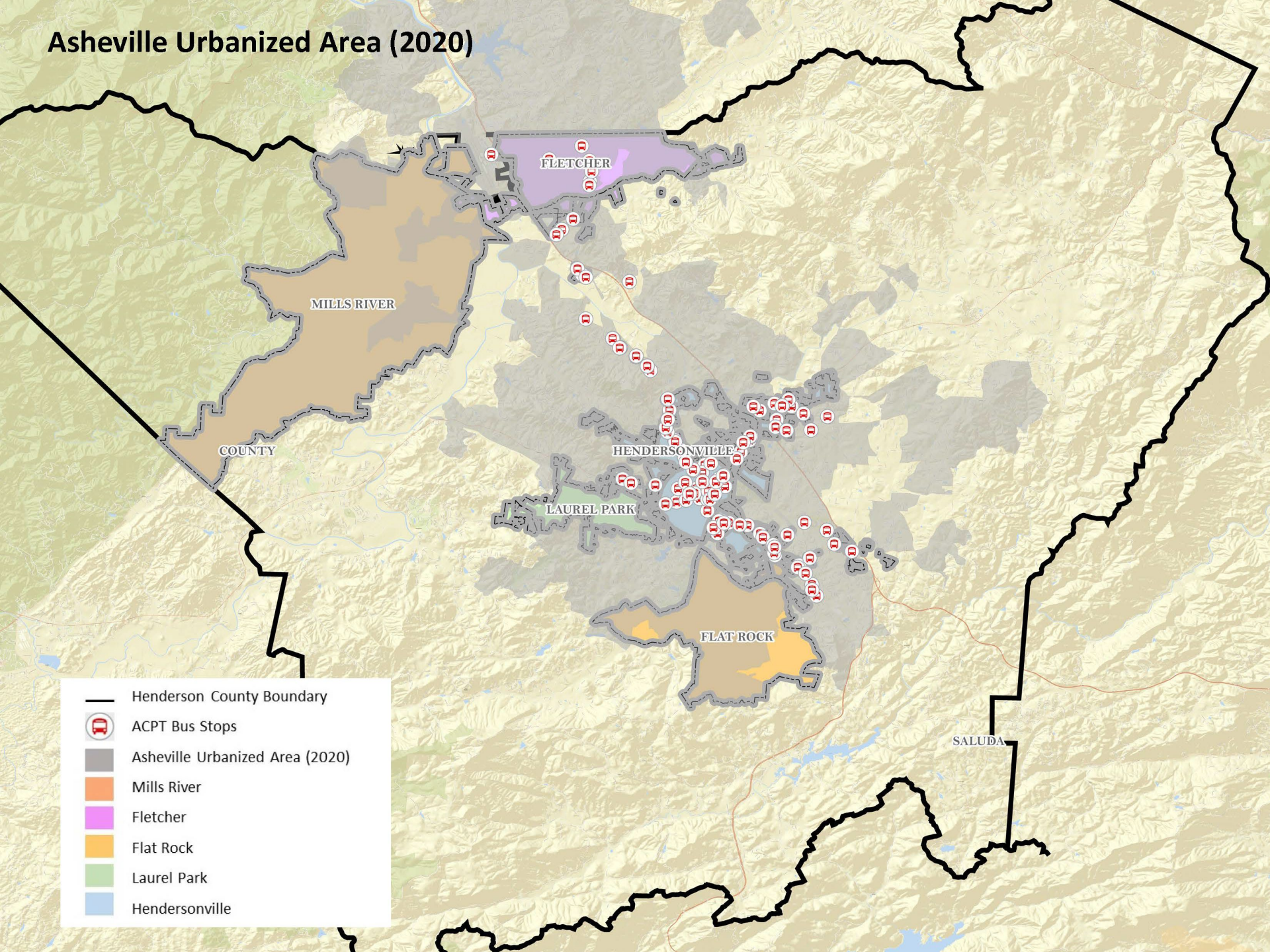
The states or territory with the largest rural populations are:

1. Texas (4,744,808)
2. **North Carolina (3,474,661)**
3. Pennsylvania (3,061,630)

What does this mean for Henderson County?

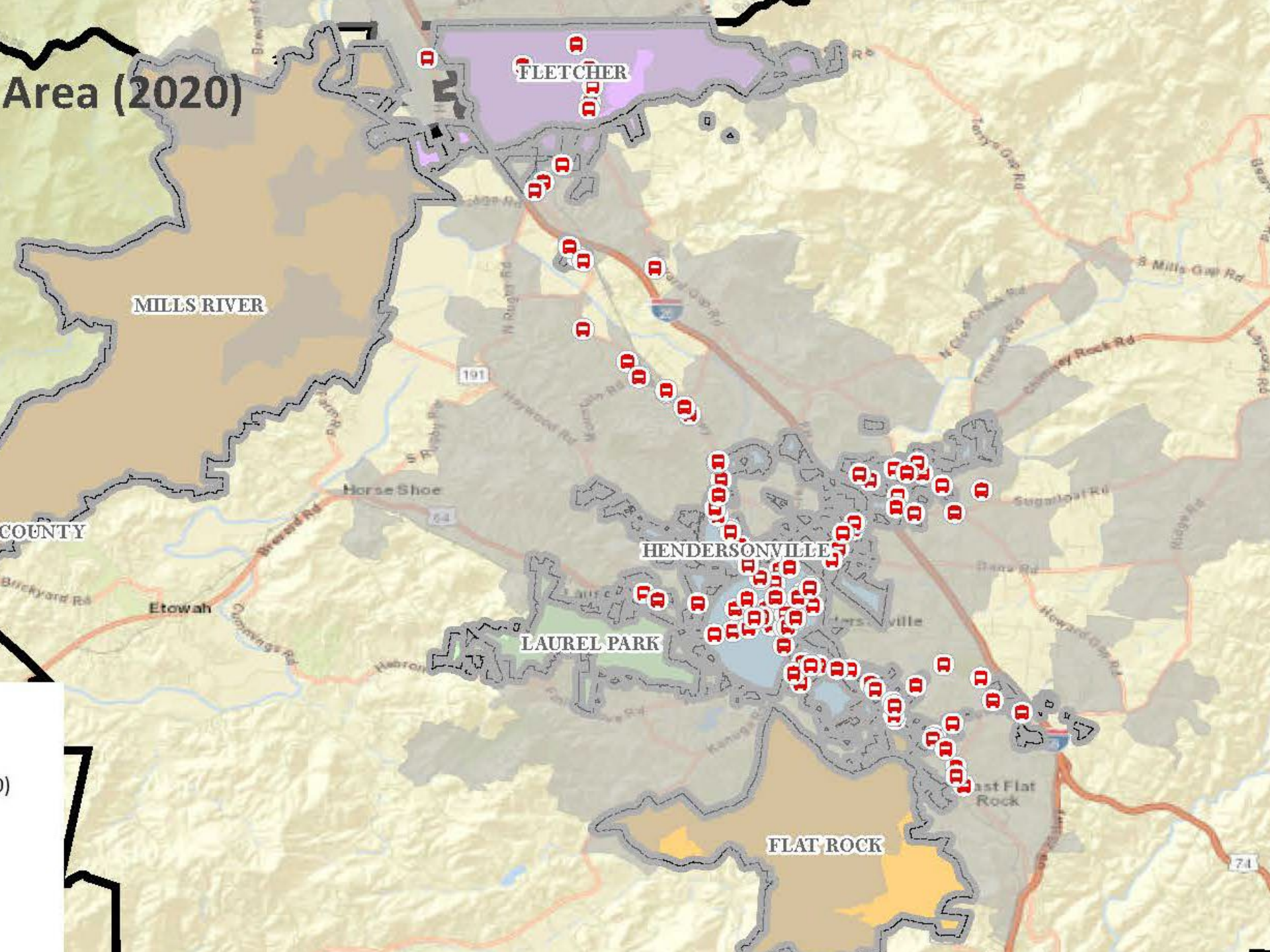
- The County's transit system, as well as Buncombe, Haywood, and Asheville, receives funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
- This funding is divided across the US using a formula that is dependent upon the Census identified urbanized areas.
- Changes in the UZA equivalates to changes in funding for all systems in the FBRMPO region.
- When using urbanized area transit funds, the system cannot operate outside the UZA.
 - Majority of Mills River no longer in UZA
 - Parts of Fletcher no longer in UZA
 - Many portions of Flat Rock are now in the UZA

Asheville Urbanized Area (2020)



-  Henderson County Boundary
-  ACPT Bus Stops
-  Asheville Urbanized Area (2020)
-  Mills River
-  Fletcher
-  Flat Rock
-  Laurel Park
-  Hendersonville

Area (2020)



MILLS RIVER

FLETCHER

HENDERSONVILLE

LAUREL PARK

FLAT ROCK

COUNTY

Etowah

Horse Shoe

Sugarloaf Rd

East Flat Rock

74

191

74

What does this mean for the FBRMPO?

- Regional changes in the Urban Areas affects the MPO.
- Connection to Asheville UZA is severed from Haywood County.
 - Part of the County is still considered Urban by the Census, but is its own entity.
- The MPO serves and plans for “at least the existing urbanized area and the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the transportation plan.” (23 USC §134(e)(2)(A))
 - Membership could be restructured without Haywood County and its municipalities if they are not deemed part of the Asheville Urban Area.
 - Haywood County, along I-40 and US-74 are considered to become urban within the MPO’s projections.