

was made possible by Transylvania Youth Soccer Association. Our economy and downtown remain vibrant thanks to partnerships with Heart of Brevard, Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority and Transylvania Economic Alliance.”

— **Maureen Copelof**,
Brevard mayor

How has your community maintained its uniqueness in the face of growth this year?

“Uniqueness comes not from building strip malls and megadevelopments with our precious mountains in the background, but instead comes from protecting open space, building where density already exists and balancing growth with protecting our county’s rural character. We are struggling with this. Crab Creek staved off a major storage facility, but many new developments are coming, and our loosey-goosey land rules promise more of the same unless we can tighten up those rules.”

— **David Weintraub**,
executive director,
Center for Cultural Preservation
in Hendersonville

“For many years, Fletcher has been considered a bedroom community to Asheville. However, we have an opportunity to embrace growth while still maintaining our hometown feeling. We are expecting and have already made investments in serving our community in relation to growth. We would like to continue pushing forward our Heart of Fletcher [Town Center] Project and also investing in recreation. We have added amenities such as basketball, tennis and pickleball courts at Bill Moore Community Park but would also like to extend our greenway.”

— **Preston Blakely**

“The people of Woodfin have been energized by the opening of Silver-Line Park on the French Broad River and the coming together of neighbors to support Woodfin Elementary School and MANNA FoodBank.”

— **Jim McAllister**

“Clearly defining our vision and holding numerous public input sessions to hear what citizens value about

Brevard has ensured that Brevard’s unique characteristics are front and center as we manage growth. We tie all of our decisions back to our vision and values when working on economic development, infrastructure upgrades, zoning changes, etc. This focus has allowed us to sustain the historical downtown, beautiful natural environment and close community connectedness that make Brevard unique.”

— **Maureen Copelof**

“In Canton, an economic crisis, growth and other challenges have been constant in 2023. From zero hour of the mill closing, we have been purposeful in desiring to build a future that is directly tied to our past; we can still be a mill town without a mill. Canton’s next chapter will be one that allows us to maintain our beliefs, unique history and principles while at the same time bringing in new ideas and innovation.”

— **Zeb Smathers**

“We work to blend old and new. The reimagined Laura E. Corn Mini Golf transferred some favorite elements of the old course and brought in new features, including handicapped-accessible holes. We continue to support such community favorites as Rhythm & Brews, Bearfootin’ Art Walk and our farmers market, but strive to improve what we already have, as with a new streetscape for Seventh Avenue.”

— **Barbara Volk**

What changes have you noticed in your community in 2023? What changes are you looking forward to in 2024?

“We elected a new mayor! I have been a Woodfin Township resident for the last seven years and am looking forward to seeing how our newly elected mayor, **Jim McAllister**, rises to the occasion in this elevated leadership role.”

— **Ashanti Ternoir**,
community member and
service provider

“For my rural community of Sandy Mush, I am excited that we have seen growth and engagement in our young

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BARBARA VOLK



ALLISON WALKER



DAVID WEINTRAUB



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