

A List of Green Spaces In and Around Highlands
Compiled by R. Shaffner for the Land Use Committee and Highlands Historical Society
March 21, 2005, Rev. 2013

Among Highlands' main and most beautiful attractions for visitors and residents alike are the forested entrances to the town. A substantial buffer of trees and dense shrubbery adorn both sides of the five main roads, giving the cool impression that the town is itself a part of the National Forest. To establish buffers wide enough to veil commercial development and prevent destruction of vegetation along these roads would help preserve the town's village atmosphere and avoid the strip development that has spoiled Gatlinburg's once lovely charm.

Recommendations for Preserving Roadside Buffers

[colored and numbered in **RED** on the map]

Buffers of trees and shrubs on both sides of all five roads entering and leaving Highlands:

- 1. North 4th Street (Hwy 64)** from the Town Limits to Chestnut Street
- 2. Horse Cove Road** from the Town Limits to the Library
- 3. Walhalla Road (Hwy 28)** from the Town Limits to the junction with Satulah Rd.
- 4. Dillard Road (Hwy 106)** from the Town Limits to the entrance of Highlands Plaza
- 5. Franklin Road (Hwy 64/28)** from the Town Limits to 1st Street

Other Roadside Buffers of Trees and Shrubs That Give Highlands Its Natural Beauty

Essentially, buffers along all roads in Highlands where possible, but especially

Both sides of 1st St., 3rd St. from the Walhalla Rd. to Spring St., and **6th St.**

Both sides of 5th St. from South St. to Church St. and from Carolina Way to the north end

Both sides of South, Spruce, Chestnut, and Hickory streets

Both sides of Satulah Mountain Road

Both sides of the roads up to Big and Little Bear Pen mountains

Vital Green Spaces* Worth Preserving Within the Town

*(Green Spaces here are either forested or open)

[Colored and numbered in **RED** on the map]

- 6. Black Rock Mountain Trail**, trail needed from the Bowery Road to Black Rock Mountain
- 7. Old-Growth Hemlock Forest** south of the Rhododendron Trail between Lower Lake and the Bowery roads, a remnant of the primeval forest [Parcel [0500893](#) PIN 7540.20-81-3459]
- 8. Edwards Tract**, northeast section completing the Kelsey Trail Preserve at the north end of 5th St. [Parcel [1434053](#) PIN 7540.15-52-7925]
- 9. Cook/Werder Tract**, the block between Chestnut and Hickory streets, east of 4th St. [Parcel [0518271](#) PIN 7540.14-42-4750] Condominiums already planned for this property.
- 10. Southeast corner of 4th and Chestnut streets**, grassed and shaded lot, a potential park [Parcel [0504489](#) PIN 7540.18-42-5239]
- 11. Macon Savings Bank Open Land** across Carolina Way, ideal space for a park [Parcel 0502243 PIN 7540.18-40-8954] Now Macon bank. Land across the street being converted into Pine Street Park.
- 12. Catholic Church Green Space**, between the Catholic and Episcopal churches on 5th St. [Parcel [0504845](#) PIN 7540.19-50-0677]
- 13. Kelsey Memorial Park** at 5th and Church streets, created by Highlands Improvement Society in 1929 [Southeast triangle of Parcel 0504837 PIN 7540.18-40-5372]—Publicly owned.
- 14. Cleaveland/DeVile Lot** on West Main, partially wooded lot west of the Stone Lantern behind the Loafer's Bench [Parcel [0502871](#) PIN 7540.18-40-1516]

15. **Sullivan Pine Forest** between Oak Street and the Recreation Park, planted and donated to the Town by William Sullivan during the 1940s [west part of Parcel 0522918 PIN 7540.18-32-6021 and Parcel 1424390 PIN 7540.18-32-0492]—Publicly owned.
16. **Highlands Recreation Park** [east part of Parcel 0522918 PIN 7540.18-32-6021 and Parcel 1444018 PIN 7540.18-32-6021] —Publicly owned.
17. **Crane Tract** off Oak Street, a beautiful expanse of green space [Parcel 0502607 PIN 7540.13-22-1594]
18. **Lake Sequoyah shoreline**, fifty-foot vegetation buffer, needs protection of its trees and shrubs rather than just the grass [Parcel 9810868 PIN 7530.11-66-3327 for the dam, etc.]
19. **Rabbit Hole**, the block bordered by 3rd and 4th streets, the Walhalla Rd., and Spring St., currently zoned residential to preserve it from commercial development and currently buffered on all four sides [Parcel [0502554](#) Pin 7540.18-41-5637]
20. **Woods behind and the lot west of Nick’s Restaurant** off Satulah Road [Parcel [1441329](#) PIN 7449.06-39-9470 and Parcel [0532636](#) PIN 7449.06-39-9543]
21. **Pierson Inn corner lot** at South St. and Walhalla Rd. The best and most convenient site for a park. [Parcel [0503794](#) PIN 7449.06-49-1469].
22. **Norway Spruce Forest** off South 5th St., planted by Prof. Harbison during early 20th century, S of Crosby Center [Parcel 1438455 PIN 7449.06-49-6264 and Parcel 0520182 PIN 7449.06-49-6193]
23. **Satulah Summit**, Anne Hobson Haack’s 8-acre tract on the mountain, adjoining her gift of Hobson Park [Parcel [1433083](#) PIN 7449.11-56-2258]
24. **Ellis (Wiley) Tract** between Satulah and the Fodderstacks (40.46 acres, Parcel [0541011](#) PIN 7449.04-74-4840)
25. **Southwest section of the Ravenel–Monroe Tract** adjoining Ravenel Park [Parcel 1435780 PIN 7449.08-79-7331]
26. **The Greenways Trail**, which currently runs from Sunset Rocks down to Nature Center on East Main, then to 5th St., Pine St., North 4th, the Rec Park, Oak Ln., Raoul Rd., Cullasaja Dr., and across the Mirror Lake Bridge (marked in **BLUE** on the map) [Includes Parcel 9813826 PIN 7540.13-23-4080]
27. **Suggested Rerouting of Greenways Trail** for more green space. Proceed from the Nature Center through the Botanical Garden to Lower Lake Rd., up Rhododendron Trail to the Bowery Rd., onto Upper Lake Rd., through the new Rhododendron Park, across Big Bear Pen Rd. to Bear Pen Gap, down the Kelsey Trail to 5th Street, up Hickory St. hill, down 4½ St. hill, Chestnut St. to 4th St. and the Rec Park, etc. (marked in **BROWN** on the map).

**A Few Other Green Spaces That Exist Near the Center of Town
(between 1st and 6th streets and South and Spruce streets)
[identified here but not designated on the map]**

1. **Bryson tract** east of North 5th St. [Parcel 0502970 PIN 7540.19-51-5574]
2. **Pinebrook Homeowners Assoc. tract** on Spruce St. [Parcel 1441542 PIN 7540.19-51-0446]
3. **Ogle tract** enclosed by Pinebrook tract on Spruce St. [Parcel 1441543 PIN 7540.18-41-9540]
4. **Boehm tract** east of Mountain Findings on Spruce St. [Parcel 1441508 PIN 7540.18-41-7587]
5. **Highlands Community Theatre tract** on Spruce St. [Parcel 0502066 PIN 7540.18-41-8302]
6. **Crosby home site** at 5th and Spruce streets [Parcel 0502379 PIN 7540.19-51-0201]
7. **Bryant home site** on East Main, east of the Library [Parcel 1442206 PIN 7540.19-50-3457 and Parcel 1442207 PIN 7540.19-50-5485]
8. **Kenna home site** on East Main [Parcel 0501437 PIN 7540.19-50-6594]
9. **Barton site** at SW corner of East Main and Leonard Rd. [Parcel 0504095 PIN 7540.19-50-3144]
10. **Highlands Hiker site** on East Main [Parcel 0503702 PIN 7540.19-50-2147]
11. **Falls on Main** between the shops and East Main [Parcel 0504322 PIN 7540.19-50-0189]
12. **Edwards–Crisp tract** east of South 5th St. [Parcel 0500748 PIN 7449.06-49-8521]

13. **Cochran home site** at corner of 4th and Spring streets [Parcel 0500047 PIN 7540.18-40-0276]
14. **Old Edwards Inn cottages** on Spring St. [Parcel 0501137 PIN 7540.18-30-9399]
15. **Highlands Methodist Church property** on Spring St. [Parcel 0502518 PIN 7540.18-30-8494 and Parcel 0500331 PIN 7540.18-30-7562]
16. **Highlands Inn Park** behind the Inn [NW corner of Parcel 0503086 PIN 7540.18-40-4638]
17. **Town Parking Lot** along Oak Street [N and E borders of Parcel 1423639 PIN 7540.18-41-1078]
18. **Stackpole property** at Oak and Maple streets [Parcel 0511489 PIN 7540.18-31-7313]
19. **Thurmond property** west of Main St. Inn [Parcel 0502513 PIN 7540.18-31-5162]
20. **Baptist Church green space** east of the Parsonage [Parcel 0503772 PIN 7540.18-31-4196]
21. **Mountain High Lodge front yard on Main St.** [S part of Parcel 1435345 PIN 7540.18-31-1412 and Parcel 0516324 PIN 7540.18-21-9525]
22. **Lard open spaces off Helen's Barn Ave. at** NW corner of 2nd and Spring streets [Parcels 0520509, 0520510, 0520511, 0520512, 0520513, and 0520514 PINs 7540.18-21-9011, 7540.18-21-9030, 7540.18-20-9968, 7540.18-20-9997, 7540.18-30-0925, and 7540.18-30-0964]
23. **Pair property** at NE corner of 2nd and Spring [S part of Parcel 0503983 PIN 7540.18-30-1893]
24. **Forested Creek** west of South 3rd Street [NE part of Parcel 0500533 PIN 7540.18-20-8395]

Town Land Already Protected by the Highlands–Cashiers Land Trust (12 tracts, 149.9 acres)
[colored and numbered in **GREEN** on the map]

1. **Dixon Park** or the Sagee Mountain Tract off the Bowery Rd. (17.4 acres of undisturbed woods from Erme Dixon in 2003) [Parcel 1443320 PIN 7550.03-31-9119]
2. **Lot 29 Sagee** on Split Rail Row (1.9 acres by anonymous donor in 2004) [Parcel 0501504 PIN 7550.03-30-1785]
3. **Rhododendron Park** on Big Bearpen Mountain (25.0 acres from Beverly and Hillrie Quin in 2004) [Parcel 1434895 PIN 7540.16-73-8413 & Parcel 1434896 PIN 7540.16-83-7995]
4. **Kelsey Trail Preserve** at north end of 5th Street (11.46 acres)
3.66 acres from Edwards family 1998 [Parcel 1434052 PIN 7540.15-63-3338]
7.8 acres from Betty Lindsey in 2001 [Parcel 0521980 PIN 7540.14-42-1639]
5. **Bridgers Tract** on northwest corner of 4th and Foreman roads (0.85 acre from Highlands Biological Foundation in 1991) [Parcel 0521980 PIN 7540.14-42-1639]
6. **Hampton Inn Green Space** along west side of Dillard Road from Log Cabin Lane to Talley Road (1.19 acres from Philip McNeill in 2001) [Parcel 1431893 PIN 7540.17-20-3754]
7. **American Legion Tract** at Horse Cove Rd. and 6th Street (0.5 acre in 2000) [Parcel 0504833 PIN 7540.19-50-9228]
8. **Doug Lacy Lots** off South 5th St. (2.0 acres from Doug Lacy in 2004) [Parcel 1445134 PIN 7449.06-48-8908]
9. **Sunset Rock Park** (10.0 acres off Horse Cove Road from the Ravenel family in 1914) [Parcel 1435779 PIN 7449.08-78-6128]
10. **Valley of the Giants** off Ravenel Ridge below the Fodderstacks (11.6 acres of a beautiful and rare old-growth forest from Ray McPhail, Will Stoltz, and Alan McRae in 2003) [Parcel 1443998 PIN 7449.11-55-2581]
11. **Satulah Summit** (67.0 acres)
Original purchase of 54.06 acres by Highlands Improvement Society in 1909 [Parcel 0504865 PIN 7449.04-54-7246]
Jenkins/Baldwin tract of 4.52 acres on Wolf Ridge Ltd. Rd. in 1997 [Parcel 0532305 PIN 7449.12-86-0230]
John Hobson Park of 8.42 acres off Worley Rd. from Anne Hobson Haack in 1998 [Parcel 1441474 PIN 7449.10-46-8079]
12. **Sixth Street Bog** across from Assembly of God, last remaining peat bog in the Highlands area (less than 3 acres) [Parcel 0504120 PIN 7540.19-60-1213, Parcel 0504274 PIN 7449.07-69-0829, Parcel 0504275 PIN 7449.07-69-0889, & Parcel 0504276 PIN 7449.07-69-1849]

Town Land Already Protected by the Highlands Biological Station

[colored and numbered in **GREEN** on the map]

13. **Highlands Biological Station**, including Lake Ravenel [west part of Parcel [0504863](#) PIN 7540.19-71-1159]
14. **Rhododendron Trail** between Lower Lake and the Bowery roads [east part of Parcel [0504863](#) PIN 7540.19-71-1159]

Land Outside the Town Already Protected by the Land Trust

15. **Wright (Henry) Tract** off Highway 64 at Chestnut Ridge between Highlands Falls and Cullasaja clubs (22.0 acres of old-growth forest from the Nature Conservancy in 2001) [Parcel 9811797 PIN 7551.03-00-4556]
 16. **Lindsey Olive Nature Preserve** off Flat Mountain Road (4.0 acres of rare and uncommon plant species typical of the old growth forest from the N.C. Botanical Garden in 2004) [Parcel 1434052 PIN 7540.15-63-3338]
 17. **Pinky Falls Nature Preserve** off Flat Mountain Road (5.7 acres of a series of low waterfalls and cascades on Big Creek just above Randall Lake from the N.C. Botanical Garden in 2004) [Parcel 0504868 PIN 7541.03-11-7492]
 18. **Skinner Tract** in Horse Cove at Rich Gap (0.15 acres from David and Ann Skinner Williamson and Dennis and Sandra Skinner Singer in 1996) [Parcel 0524411 PIN 7459.01-07-4566]
 19. **Gertrude Harbison's Spring** on the Walhalla Road (0.8 acre from Dorothea Harbison, Ann Harbison, James and Christina Harbison Newton, and Stan and Jessie Harbison Sheldon 1992) [Parcel 0525958 PIN 7449.04-52-8613]. **Addition to Gertrude Harbison's Spring** needed between the spring and Walhalla Rd. [Parcel 0536238 PIN 7449.04-52-4732]
- Recent: Hickory Hill Road:** property donated by the town to the Land Trust

Conservation Easements Within the Town Already Protected by the Land Trust or by Deed (2 tracts and 1 lot covering almost 27 acres)

[colored and numbered in **PURPLE** on the map]

1. **Sargent Easement** at 6th Street and Horse Cove Rd. (7.0 acres by Hugh A. Sargent in 1996) [Parcel 1429389 PIN 7540.19-60-3718]
2. **Lot 316 on East Main**, west of Presbyterian Church (1 lot deeded by Margaretta Ravenel to the Presbyterian Church with the stipulation that it remain perpetually open in 1885) [west part of Parcel 0504837 PIN 7540.18-40-5372]
3. **Reid Easement** along Arnold Road near Lake Sequoyah (12.0 acres of green space by Robbie and Marion Reid in 2004) [Parcel 0543033 PIN 7530.11-65-2183]
4. **Wyatt/Wightman Easement** on Upper Clear Creek Rd. (7.0 acres by the Robert Wyatt in 2001) [Parcel 1438061 PIN 7449.03-12-7752]

Conservation Easement Within the Town Already Protected by the Nature Conservancy

5. **Tracy (Thomas) Tract** off the Bowery Rd. in 2001 [Parcel 1437411 PIN 7550.03-02-1671]

Conservation Easements Outside the Town Already Protected by the Land Trust

6. **McCall Easement** in Horse Cove (31.0 acres from Russell and Carolyn McCall in 1003-04)
 7. **Simmons Easement** in Clear Creek (86.0 acres of wooded hillsides, open pastures, streams, and ponds from Christine Simmons in 1999)
- Gregory Easement** off Buck Creek Rd. (22.0 acres from Henry and Amanda Gregory in 2004)

Areas Worth Greening Up

Highlands Plaza. Many trees required by two Special Use Permits were either never planted or allowed to die. The planting of large shade trees would create an attractive mini-park, with benches around the periphery, and would certainly enhance if not improve business at the site. [Parcel 0500533 PIN 7540.18-20-8395 and Parcel 0510804 PIN 7540.18-20-5407]

Reeves Hardware Stock Yard along Spruce Street, where trees formerly grew

South Side of the Dillard Road in the Vicinity of Munger Road

Harris Lake shoreline

Scenic Views Significantly Altered Within the Past 10 Years

A current trend in Highlands toward large-scale “homes that are viewed” has begun to reverse a previous tradition of moderate “homes with a view.” New construction that once blended with nature or was mostly concealed now stands out conspicuously on the mountains and ridges surrounding the town. In recent years, protecting mountain views has become a national issue, especially in second-home communities, like Highlands, where scenic views are valued as an economic asset and a tourist attraction in addition to their natural beauty.

Ravenel Ridge, south of Sunset Rocks, development begun ca. 1996

Satulah Mountain, homes erected within the past ten years or so

Big and Little Bear Pen mountains, homes erected within the past ten years or so

Green Spaces Significantly Altered Since 1967

Townsite Condominium Apartments at 6th and Main, begun in 1967

Highlands Village Square at 5th and Oak streets, begun in 1975

Highlands Plaza on the Walhalla Road, begun in 1977

Trillium Place at 6th and Main, 19 apartments begun in 1980

Highlands Manor off north 5th Street, begun in 1981

Mill Creek Village off north 6th Street, begun in 1981

Shelby Place off Walhalla Road, begun in 1981 but stopped on appeal

Mountain Brook Center on north 4th Street, begun in 1982

Carolina Square, east of Mountain Brook Center, built in 1982

Bank of America (originally Carolina Mountain Bank) at 4th and Pine, built in 1982

Mountain High Motel on West Main Street, built in 1983

Wright Square on West Main Street, replaced Helen’s Barn tract in 1986

Highlands Suite at 2nd and Main, built in 1987

Carolina Way, east of Carolina Square, begun in 1988

First Citizens Bank at 4th and Laurel, built in 1990

Centura Bank on West Main Street, built in 1993

Philip DeVille Building at northwest corner of 5th and Main in 1997

Falls on Main at East Main Street, built in 2000

Village Walk at Mill Creek, begun in 2002

Regions Bank at 1st and Spring, built in 2003

Landmark Green Spaces Significantly Altered Before 1967

Primeval Forest, Ravenel’s Old-Growth Hemlock Forest, between Bear Pen and Whiteside mountains (1,600 acres of largest remaining tract of virgin forest in the Southern Appalachians, lumbered during the mid 1940s)

Altitude Oak on Main Street in front of Highlands Inn (a symbol of the Town since its founding, bore a plaque announcing Highlands’ average altitude of 4,118, removed in 1938)

Christopher Whittle’s Park, today’s 369 to 383 East Main Street (Three lots, once used as a town “park” containing large maples, replaced in 1947 by a new Highlands Art Gallery auction house)