

Jackson County Land Use Plan 2040



Pinnacle Park– Photo Courtesy of Nick Breedlove

The Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan:

To create a guiding policy document for the County in addressing the impacts of growth over the next 25 years. This document examines existing development trends and growth. It also provides future growth projections and identifies goals and objectives that are designed to manage that growth. In addition, this plan includes a section that guides how these goals and objectives can be implemented over a 25-year time period.

Comprehensive Plan Update Process

- Steering Committee formed in 2014
- Administered public survey
- Steering Committee began research and presentations of plan elements
 - Education, Public Health, Recreation, Land Use, etc.
- Steering Committee broke out into Sub-Committees for each plan element
- Sub-Committees formed goals and objectives for each plan element and brought them back to the Steering Committee for review
- Planning staff created an action plan/implementation schedule for each goal.

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- Steering Committee held 5 public meetings to receive comments on the plan.
 - Sylva, Cashiers, Tuckasegee, Qualla and Savannah
 - 65 comments received and incorporated into the implementation schedule
- The Committee refined the document based on the public comments received to create the final draft
- Received recommendation from the Committee and Planning Board to take the plan to the Board of Commissioners.

Jackson County Demographics

- Population estimation for 2015 = 41,265 people
- 2014 Census median household income = \$38,928
- Population growth from 2000 to 2010 was the highest in the Cullowhee township
- Jackson County experienced the highest population growth in the surrounding counties = 21.59% from 2000 to 2010
- NC Office of State Budget and Management estimates Jackson County's population to be 44,873 by 2030 and 47,271 by 2040
- 1/5 of county population is between the ages of 18 and 24

Education

- Major Goals:
 - Build technology infrastructure to provide equity and access (broadband to remote areas)
 - Support pathways to vocational jobs.
 - Provide workforce housing for faculty and staff to promote recruitment and retention.
 - Promote physical activity to promote a healthy lifestyle.
 - Safe Routes to School

Public Health

- Major Goals:
 - Promote healthy eating and provide access to healthy food options
 - Community gardens on public land, food sustainability plan
 - Promote physical activity
 - Provide support to prevent substance abuse
 - Provide adequate healthcare access to residents through multi-agency approach supported by the County.
 - Support the animal control policies that provide safety to human and animal populations.

Infrastructure

- Major Goals:
 - Establish an asset management plan that is progressive and fiscally sound.
 - Provide open communication between utility providers through a Utility Consortium to include all utilities:
 - Sky Fi, Verizon Wireless, Frontier, Balsam West, TWSA, Duke and natural gas.
 - Expand reliable high-speed internet access and mobile phone access across the County.
 - Promote efficient use of limited infrastructure resources

Natural Resources

- Major Goals:
 - Preserve the habitat for identified endangered species
 - Preserve and protect natural habitats and corridors for migrating wildlife.
 - Encourage development that minimizes impervious surfaces.
 - Encourage development that is compatible with the natural environment.
 - Limit commercial and industrial development along the Tuck and other trout waters.
 - Protect the County's natural view-scape.
 - Ensure that the County is Dark Sky compliant.

Economic Development

- Major Goals:
 - Maintain a robust and sustainable tourism destination.
 - Build a workforce that will meet the needs of current and future employers.
 - County wide high speed broadband availability.
 - Create a marketing campaign for Jackson County to support existing business and attract new business.
 - County reserve land for economic development purposes.
 - Commit to becoming an entrepreneurial/small business capital.
 - Maintain and enhance quality of life for citizens, tourists, and small business owners.

Housing

- Major Goals:
 - Increase housing opportunities for a broad range of income levels and ages (owning, renting, and transitional).
 - Promote housing for WCU (students, faculty, and staff) that is compatible with the community, safe, and conveniently located.
 - Promote housing conveniently located to access alternate modes of transportation in order to minimize the use of single passenger vehicles.
 - Invest in strategic public improvements (pedestrian and recreation facilities) in existing communities to encourage appropriate residential development in the communities.

Transportation

- Major Goals:
 - Promote connectivity between schools, housing, business districts, recreation and community centers.
 - Provide a variety of multi-modal transportation options.
 - Improve safety for pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
 - Educate citizens about alternative modes of transportation.
 - Maintain transportation capacity for freight.
 - Enhance and support aviation infrastructure and facilities.
 - Maintain and enhance County transportation corridors.
 - Promote and expand local and regional transit options.

Recreation

- Major Goals:
 - Provide access to recreational opportunities near all major communities in the County.
 - Develop a Special Events Program to host large-scale events, increasing visitation to the County and generating revenue for the Parks and Rec Dept. to invest in sustaining programs and expanding opportunities.
 - Develop a multi-faceted program to expand bicycling as a form of recreation and active transportation.
 - Build, operate, and maintain an indoor pool in Cullowhee, suitable for hosting year-round swim meets for youth, fitness classes, and for physical therapy.

Cultural Resources

- Major Goals:
 - Identify our past and present historic and cultural resources and events to document them.
 - Create partnerships with the EBCI, WCU, etc.
 - Educate and communicate with the community and local governments.
 - Become a Certified Local Government.

Land Use

- Major Goals:
 - Balance future growth with the protection of the natural environment.
 - Ensure that development regulations meet existing and future challenges and opportunities.
 - Preserve the County's agricultural heritage and expand agricultural opportunities.
 - Maintain partnerships and coordinate planning efforts along the growth corridors.
 - Promote sustainable growth policies.

Action Items and Implementation

- Each objective is given an action item to accomplish the task
- Each action item is given a lead agency who will complete the task and partners who will work with lead agency
- Each action item is given a time frame for completion

Plan Element	Goal	Objective	Action Item	Lead Agency	Partner	Time Frame
Land Use	LU3	Develop a Cashiers small area plan	The County Planning Department will work with the Cashiers Planning Council to create a small area plan for Cashiers	Jackson County Planning Department	Cashiers Planning Council	Short Term

Questions and Comments