

JACKSON COUNTY PLANNING OFFICE

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MEMO

To: Board of Commissioners
Cc: Don Adams, County Manager and Michael Poston, Planning Director
From: Caroline LaFrienier, Planner II
Date: February 25, 2020

RE: Cullowhee Small Area Plan- Process Update and Adoption Draft

Planning Process-

- The project started in March of 2019 with a kick off meeting and community stakeholder meetings. There was a full day of stakeholder meetings with members of the Cullowhee community and Western Carolina University (WCU).
- A survey was distributed on social media, via email and on the Planning Department website. Over 300 people responded to the survey and 31% of respondents stated that they have lived in Cullowhee for over 10 years.
- The Public Workshops/Design Charrette was held in April, and lasted 3 days. The Charrette consisted of:
 - A walking tour of old Cullowhee
 - A Visioning Workshop
 - Tabling on WCU's campus
 - A Coffee Talk of the "Future of Cullowhee"
- The charrette, the survey and the stakeholder meetings provided the consultants with the majority of the information required to draft the plan.
- The Cullowhee Planning Council reviewed and commented on several drafts of the Cullowhee Small Area Plan. After incorporating the comments and revisions from the Planning Council, we have our Final Adoption Draft.
- The Cullowhee Planning Council held a public hearing on January 28th, 2020 to give the community an opportunity to comment on the Final Draft. On February 3rd, the Cullowhee Planning Council recommended adoption of the Cullowhee Small Area Plan to the Board of Commissioners. The Jackson County Planning Board reviewed the Cullowhee Small Area Plan on February 13th, 2020 and also recommended adoption of the Plan to the Board of Commissioners.

The purpose of the Cullowhee Small Area Plan is to establish a framework for accommodating growth and development while maintaining the character, environmental quality and livability of the area.

- To accomplish this, the plan takes an inventory of the current conditions, and then gives recommendations on how to achieve the vision and goals identified. The overarching goals for Cullowhee are:
 - To build Cullowhee’s image and identity and promote business and economic development
 - To grow in a predictable, context appropriate manner
 - To increase housing options
 - To provide recreational opportunities and protect, enhance and respect the area’s natural beauty
 - To enhance multi-modal transportation options
- Some examples of recommendations in the plan are:
 - LU-2 Improve the design of new housing development to reduce conflict and improve compatibility with existing neighborhoods
 - LU-5 Revitalize old Cullowhee
 - I-3 Develop programs and initiatives to encourage biking and walking and enhance mobility options
 - PN-2 Study preservation, environmental education and restoration opportunities along the Tuckasegee River and Cullowhee Creek.
 - PN-4 Protect cultural resources in the Cullowhee area.
- There is also an action plan with implementation strategies, proposed time frames and partners for each recommendation given.