



# JACKSON COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## JACKSON COUNTY UDO Unified Development Ordinance Project

### Comments/Questions:

Interested in submitting a comment or question on the UDO project? Suggestions or questions can be submitted to [planning@jacksonnc.org](mailto:planning@jacksonnc.org).

All suggestions from the public, including those made at public meetings or submitted elsewhere, are being collected and added to our ongoing review effort for consideration. Please be sure to mention "Jackson County UDO" in the subject. Please note that all comments submitted may be posted online for public discussion.

Below is a list of comments received from our Citizen Survey **as of September 25, 2017:**

- 1. How familiar are you with the current land development related ordinances: (very familiar) 5 4 3 2 1 (not familiar at all)?**  
Average Responses: 2.68
- 2. How familiar are you with the new Jackson County Comprehensive Plan: (very familiar) 5 4 3 2 1 (not familiar at all)?**  
Average Response: 1.83
- 3. How would you rate the organization & format of the existing land use ordinances: (excellent) 5 4 3 2 1 (poor)?**  
Average Response: 2.54
- 4. The current development review related processes are: (very predictable) 5 4 3 2 1 (unpredictable).**  
Average Response: 2.78
- 5. The Jackson County Comprehensive Plan was recently adopted and established visions and goals for the County over the next two decades. What do you consider to be the priorities related to growth in Jackson County over the next 20 years?**
  - Affordable housing, available unrestricted property
  - High speed internet
  - Control over 2<sup>nd</sup> homes/residential development

- Mass transit, pedestrian traffic, green spaces, affordable housing
- Education
- Growth for development of student housing around Cullowhee. Traffic along major corridors and secondary roads adjacent to these. In particular, in Cullowhee but also feeders such as 116.
- Protection of ridge tops, control of sprawl
- Sufficient roadways to handle growth
- Traffic, encouraging small business, cost of living
- roads and a decent grocery store PLEASE!
- Sylva bypass, cashiers municipal incorporation
- Better roads, some fixture of traffic patterns at Ingles, 64, and abc store in Cashiers
- Jackson county cannot continue to rely on tourism as the top economic mainstay. If the county does not start making it feasible for industry to come in the local people who are trying to feed their family will suffer the most.
- Protecting the local environment and useful ergonomics
- Increased tourism, land sustainably, historical preservation, low income housing
- Roads! That intersection at Bogarts and Rite Aid MUST be corrected ASAP! I avoid it at all costs! Which means many businesses are impacted because I'm not the only resident in Whittier that doesn't travel there.
- Affordable housing
- 1- preserve scenic values, 2- end runoff into streams from hardened surfaces including all roads, 3- build bike and pedestrian lanes physically separate from autos which encompass all of the county, 4- keep strong slope protections, 5- cluster development so that the whole county does not get paved over.
- Not having a hostile attitude toward new construction!
- Property owner's rights to build and or use as they desire. If their construction causes damage elsewhere that is where courts and insurance comes in at. It's not our counties government place to decide how I can use my land. Their job is to figure the value and tax rate. Free up our (tax payers) land. Govern it.]
- More codes improving eliminating derelict structures, ugly signs, abandoned autos, and other eyesores from county roadways. County-wide ordinance against nuisance dog barking and gun shooting. Ordinance restricting ATV and dirt bike use outside of designated area like Wayehutta. More bike lanes. Extending end-of-line high speed internet must be a priority.
- Meeting the needs of the citizens while respecting the natural resources we enjoy.
- Maintain and grow public spaces such as greenways
- Zoning for businesses and planned growth in Cullowhee.
- Infrastructure, and roads
- Let more businesses un without so much restrictions. ex: TWSA
- limits and controls to regulate growth so that we don't negatively impact the environment more than we already are
- Roads
- Build a bypass for 107 to help with traffic in front of High School! Do more to get good paying jobs in the county
- Roads & Bridges.
- broadband expansion, more housing choices
- Factory not tourism
- Employment. Jackson County needs diversified employers before any growth can happen
- Managed growth protecting mountain landscape
- Better restaurants that's not fast food
- Provide infrastructure and get more aggressive with economic development. Also, permit people to use their land for development or reduce/eliminate the property tax on land that is devalued because of the ordinances.
- Affordable housing/renting and buying; environment and resources protection
- Restaurants, retail, affordable housing.

**6. How can an update to the existing land use ordinances improve the development review process?**

- Regular publicity and more open meetings
- A common set of definitions and process.
- Establish timelines for response and review
- The ordinances need to be clear and consider and involve input from all stakeholders
- New homes making less of impact on environment
- If Jackson county would make it more inviting for businesses in different areas of the county instead of placating the part time residents by over protecting our use of land maybe industry could come in and start to build economic growth
- Required acreage % for use for school or rec park for sports and fitness and health
- Keeps residents informed
- Make sure that local history isn't being torn down
- Simply repeal the steep slope bill.
- Enhance understanding so citizens can be knowledgeable of them
- Set priorities on zoning
- More input from community involved.
- make it easier to understand, and use. Would be nice if there were some actual teeth and enforcement of existing laws and regulations where it comes to land use, development, and especially sedimentation of our creeks and river systems
- It should speed it up
- I don't know enough to answer specifics, but review should be easy to follow, clear and transparent.

**7. What specific issues related to development or development standards need to be addressed in a land use ordinance update?**

- Clear understanding of restrictions and a one stop shop to take care of all details.
- Abolish TWSA
- Keep as natural as possible
- Disclosure of risks (flood, mud slides...) should be required for all land sales and development proposals.
- Apartments for student housing area vs local full time resident housing that is affordable.
- Less steps for public hearing across County boards and councils.
- Protection of natural resources
- Parking, uniform signage, green space requirements
- Steep slope building, safety in regards to new student housing (sidewalks, speed)
- TWSA charging TOO much and driving away any kind of modern business from coming to JC
- Clear cutting that is unnecessary
- Protection of water resources
- It won't matter if you cannot get twsa under control. The county gave that ability away and twsa has mondesire to have new customers
- Sediment, runoff, stream ecology, and traffic congestion
- Infrastructure development that meshes with environmental protections
- Environmental impact
- New land owners have NO idea about the steep-slope ordinance (or whatever you call it today). It negatively impacted the purchase my son made or 4+ acres. The seller ended up having to give him more land - yep! Gave him land so he could build 1 house on 6.97 acres. Ridiculous!
- Traffic, green space
- Contractors must be educated in building on steep slopes. Not anyone knows how to anchor a home to a mountain

- Impact on neighbors (noise, visual - higher standard of curb appeal, light pollution, nuisance activity in proximity of neighboring homes needs to be regulated - barking dogs, shooting, etc). Being in the county shouldn't make a homeowner vulnerable to unrestricted land use and nuisance activity.
- Recreational areas
- Impact fees to address road improvements, sidewalks and other associated needs
- To not change existing zoning.
- sedimentation, use of native plants in landscaping, environmental protection
- Make it easy for a big company to build in the county
- more development where there is already infrastructure
- Improvements in infrastructure and quality of life services.
- Terms and definitions being used uniformly throughout
- Need to do away with some ordinances
- The development ordinances do nothing to stop large development by wealthy individuals or corporations who can afford to set aside hundreds or thousands of acres of open space then sell the remaining lots for \$200-300,000 each. The small property owner is getting screwed. They can't use their land (steep slope), they can sell or sub-divide it, but they pay property tax on it as if we're useable. NOT FAIR!!!
- Slope regs. that protect environment and safety and natural beauty of mountains. Designation for residential, commercial, student housing and other rental properties.

**8. What has been your experience with development review under the current development regulations? Too time consuming? Adequate? Can you provide specific examples?**

- Adequate and staff appears knowledgeable.
- Too much old data such as traffic reports are used. Few long-range plans.
- Process takes too long and could be shortened yet remain as effective for review and approval.
- Adequate
- Too time consuming. This could be simplified.
- Public should be informed through multi media outlets as regulations are proposed and changed
- To controlling. And JOB KILLING lot of former small business owners are out of business because of the steep slope ordinance. That cost Jackson county jobs taxes growth etc
- Adequate.
- Seems to be working.
- Time consuming
- I have not known any
- I have no experience with this
- Adequate usually takes about a week
- Some are a joke. Quasi-judicial hearings for a cell phone tower or an apartment complex. Useless but it does give politicians, not true leaders, face time. By the way, who is going to pay the legal fees for the Cullowhee Planning District since the developer of the townhouses on South Painter Road takes them to court?
- Not enough protection and limits to avoid serious safety and environmental problems. Cullowhee Ledbetter Road and Montieth Gap.
- Excellent

**9. Name one project/development that you are most proud of in Jackson County & why?**

- MP Motorsports
- Recreation center & greenway.
- Greenway
- Commissioners funded that professional style turf while classes are overcrowded and UNDERFUNDED. FAIRVIEW school is old, crumbling and the cafeteria dining g area is so small

it is unsafe. Shame on commissioners for putting high school sports and performing arts ahead of elementary children.

- Greenway. It has created a wonderful space for residents to use for recreation and exercise.
- Expansion of sidewalk systems
- Bridge Park-citizens coming together for a needed project. The Greenway-utilized by so many people.
- Greenway/ promotes health and exercise
- Cullowhee river club
- Bridge for SCC, saves those coming from South from dealing with the high school traffic
- Rec center in Cullowhee. To take a hay field and make it inviting and accessible to all families was one of the best things we ever have done as a county.
- Library! What a great way to preserve our beacon on the hill and highlight the importance of literacy.
- Greenaway, maintains aesthetic value
- Cashiers Rec center it gives a place for locals to use year round
- Greenway. Finally getting something to support biking and walking, which is good for residents and good for tourism.
- Library
- Counsel on aging. they provide home needs such as ramps and free fire wood all winter to our seniors.
- Greenway bridge and greenway, if it can be extended.
- Greenway on Old Cullowhee Road
- Greenway, it invests in the health of residents
- Dam removal and river access
- Greenway, public purpose, promotes healthy life style.
- New library. That we used existing building and it has more space.
- The Cullowhee Community Garden, for its positive ecological and social benefits, and the collaborative partnerships involved
- Greenway
- The construction on 107
- greenway- we need more walking and exercise opportunities
- Not too proud of any
- Greenway
- The repairs to the Sylva pool
- The Jackson County Greenway!
- Greenway and recreation centers. It enriches our lives.
- Greenway and pedestrian bridge

**10. Name one project/development that you feel could have been done differently or improved in Jackson County & why?**

- Bypass into SCC.
- Rec. building in Cullowhee
- Bypass loop wasn't needed.
- Apt complexes in Cullowhee
- TURF, TURF, TURF. SMHS gym and chorus bldg.
- Cell tower ordinance. Too complicated.
- Greenway. Bridge is impressive; but overly designed and costly for carriage and purpose
- The apartments by Walmart
- 2nd red light in Cashiers, need at least turn lanes off 107. Or removal of it altogether.
- The building that is past the health department should have been handled better. I don't understand the roundabout in the middle of 116 and the multimillion dollar bridge. I understand that was a state thing but I feel as if the county did not advocate for their people and the use of that land.

- Greenway park...tighter security. It is so nice but truly isolated and gives me the creeps after all if the break ins.
- Widening of hwy 107 from Tuckaseegee to Shook Cove, not necessary, serves only group from Bear Lake Reserve. Improving the 2 lane from Cullowhee to Cashiers would have served a greater population and purpose.
- We should add sidewalks to Cashiers
- Student apartments around WCU. Inadequate roads, no bike or pedestrian trails.
- SCC exit ramp. Unneeded & obscenely too expensive.
- Steep slope ordinance. It is example of government overstepping its boundary.
- Cullowhee bridge area - a full and earlier commitment on the part of the county, Duke, and WCU should have used imminent domain to remove businesses and homes on both sides of the bridge, remove the dam, upgrade the TWSA intake, build a large park, identify a mile-long, zoned upscale business district with no grandfathering in of existing structures, and begin a whitewater feature. This was a half-success even with coming improvements. The body shop and trailer camp as well as the two poor structures on river right will prevent a world-class destination and public/private engine of tourism from being actualized.
- Current zoning in Cullowhee
- Apartment housing projects along Tuck and near WCU, no sidewalks, inadequate roads.
- Rec Center in Cullowhee. Needs 24-hour access and larger facility.
- Almost all our newer county buildings, and all the second/third home developments. Also, R-5000. These could have been done better by stopping sedimentation and runoff, and through using Native Plants in the landscaping to add to and help our environment
- The SCC bypass served no purpose
- the SCC road was not needed
- The animal shelter is a disgrace and building a new shelter needs to be a top priority.
- The Justice Center. It is one of the most poorly designed buildings ever with tons of wasted space not to mention security issues with court taking place there.
- The lack of planning for years resulting in an unsafe, ugly, commercial strip along 107. I appreciate the Cullowhee Planning council and wish it could have been in place 5 years ago.
- Student housing around Cullowhee.