

# Key Notes from Meeting

Buncombe County 2043 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting

6:00 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.

October 12, 2021

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

## 1. Brainstorming Long-Range Opportunities by Planning Topic

### a. Land use, housing, transportation

- i. Housing that is affordable to a wide range of people is harder and harder to find in Buncombe County.
- ii. Access to the surrounding regions via alternative transportation is important for our future.
- iii. We need transit, too.
- iv. Create opportunities for all incomes to live in Asheville/BC
- v. Tools to bring more modest density (missing middle) to municipalities; need transit to connect these communities
- vi. Housing that is affordable to a wide range of people is harder and harder to find in Buncombe County. Access to the surrounding regions via alternative transportation is important for our future.
- vii. Small area plans needed – local context important; equity lens for communities that have historically been negatively impacted
- viii. Zoning incentives for protecting current affordable housing (mobile home parks)
- ix. Inclusion of vulnerable neighborhoods in the process
- x. We need to preserve the affordable housing we have and repair and upgrade existing housing stock
- xi. Road diet for 70 through Swannanoa to create protected bike lanes would immediately improve the ability to commute via bicycle in one of the "flattest" portions of the county.
- xii. Aging housing stock: opportunity to incentivize and create more resilient homes
- xiii. One of the ways to address transit is to also reduce its need by developing communities that are walkable and bike able.
- xiv. Lyle Cove ex. Gentrification /displacement; protection through tax structure
- xv. We have land use, housing, and transportation in one category. Two of those, housing, and transportation, are traditional barriers to employment. Childcare is a third significant barrier that really needs to be addressed, both in quantity and quality.
- xvi. One of the ways to address transit is to also reduce its need by developing communities that are walkable and bike able. It is great if you don't have to hop in a car to go to the grocery store or the drug store, or even to go to work. Our pattern in the past has been to develop traditional suburban large shopping locales like Tunnel and Airport Rds. Modern forms of Haywood Rd would be better as housing communities are developed in the county in the future.



- xvii. We need to preserve the affordable housing we have and repair and upgrade existing housing stock
- xviii. Childcare is a very hard problem for most. It is only offered for traditional jobs, not the tourist support jobs we have a lot of.
- b. Working lands and rural protection
  - i. Protection of mountain lands in private ownership
  - ii. We should look beyond just farmland and conservation easements and encourage forest management solutions for not only healthy forest, carbon capture, and runoff control with the benefit for landowners of present use value tax values.
- c. Environment, recreation, community health
  - i. Protect resources for sense of place, health, and economy
  - ii. Water is a great asset.
- d. Resiliency and hazard mitigation
  - i. How do we get ahead of climate change and extreme weather?
  - ii. Storm water management is critical for resiliency and flood mitigation. It seems that all areas are suffering from flood damage frequently and that will only get worse with more development.
- e. Sustainable development and infrastructure
  - i. Federal dollars: infrastructure to support future affordable housing
  - ii. Topography a challenge for extending utilities to potential development areas
  - iii. Sustainable and balanced development needed
  - iv. Broadband for rural areas can improve education and the ability to work from home
- f. Economic development
  - i. Facilitating equitable path for business ownership and job creation
  - ii. Economic benefits for existing residents and attract new residents to the area
  - iii. Support workers that make businesses possible
  - iv. Support more businesses that can create more sustainable jobs (non-service sector); medium-sized companies and create local businesses (ex. small batch manufacturing)
  - v. Focus on helping ag businesses to use resilient ag practices (food security)
  - vi. Small manufacturing companies...I'm reading Recast Your City now and it's a great reference for using maker spaces to develop small business
- g. Other topics
  - i. County as hub/part of the larger region; collaboration with neighboring communities
  - ii. Need Federal and State to support enhancing QOL, meeting needs
  - iii. Education – gap for educating youth that draws families to the County; invest in educating youth
  - iv. During our introductions, many mentioned being multigenerational, or their offspring becoming entrepreneurs or finding success here. I'm really concerned that my children (ages 10, 10, 11 and 12) won't have the opportunity to live and work here in adulthood. Even being at the high-achieving, college-bound end of the spectrum with a lot of advantages.
  - v. Being multigenerational, I had the same fears about my being to live here. And still am.



- vi. It's hard to see what work they'll find in their interest areas that will sustain them with high costs of living. Buncombe has some of the lowest economic mobility for people born here in WNC.

## **2. Defining Public Engagement Objectives - Feedback on Examples**

- a. *Community members will be given the choice and access to engage in the planning process through multiple activities.*
  - i. Need to make sure that landowners and business owners that don't live in the County are engaged in the process
  - ii. Providing childcare and meals at meetings is important for diverse engagement
  - iii. Engaging youth is critical
- b. *Educational opportunities will advance the community's understanding of critical planning issues.*
  - i. This is a critical objective. Need to elevate its importance.
  - ii. Idea for a public awareness campaign
- c. *Public engagement efforts will seek to engage a diversity of residents that is representative of the community.*
  - i. Past public engagement efforts didn't adequately engage people of color
  - ii. Need to leverage groups that have communities trust to get residents motivated and engaged
  - iii. Diversity is important, both ideologically and demographically is very important to the success of any project that will span the next twenty years of county policy
- d. *Participants' opinions will be respected, well documented, and will help inform policy direction in the Plan.*
- e. *Public engagement efforts will seek to inspire trust and continued interest and involvement in the process.*
  - i. Need to include transparency within this objective
  - ii. Example of a neighborhood video showing that neighborhood trust is being built
- f. *Clear documentation, project publicity, and engagement activities will articulate how public inputs have been used to help inform policy direction throughout the process.*
- g. *Community engagement will be record breaking and surpass statistics of past planning efforts.*

## **3. Other Comments**

- a. It would have been helpful to have been provided this info in the agenda for prior consideration.

