



Agenda

Jefferson County Planning Commission

2045 Comprehensive Plan Update Work Session

Tuesday, June 13, 2023 at 5:30 – 7:00 PM

By order of the President of the Jefferson County Planning Commission the meeting will be broadcast live via ZOOM for viewing purposes only.

In-Person Meeting Location: County Commission Meeting Room located in the lower level of the Charles Town Library (side entrance on Samuel Street)
200 East Washington Street, Charles Town, WV 25414

ZOOM Broadcast Information*: Meeting ID: 896 9624 9269
Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89696249269>

**If watching live broadcast, please ensure your microphone is muted and be mindful that your video is streaming to others.*

2045 Comprehensive Plan Update Work Session

1. Municipality Presentations

- a. Ranson

2. Community Outreach Preparation

- a. Staff Presentation on Preliminary Public Input Session Findings
- b. Staff Presentation of Goals and Objectives Survey Questions

3. Livability Profile

- a. Staff Presentation of Community Data

2045 Comprehensive Plan Update Work Session Notes

May 9, 2023

Planning Commission Members: Mike Shepp, President; Wade Louthan, Secretary; Jack Hefestay, Donnie Fisher, and Aaron Howell, were present in person. A quorum of the Planning Commission was present for the Work Session.

Staff: Jennifer Brockman, Chief County Planner; Luke Seigfried, County Planner; Michelle Evers, Planning Clerk and Joe Guttmann, Comprehensive Plan Staffer were present in person.

Executive Summary

On 5/9/23 the Planning Commission held a work session to hear the presentation by representatives of Shepherdstown. Planning Commission also discussed the first Public Input Session and the Goals and Objectives survey.

Agenda

1. Municipality Presentations
 - a. Shepherdstown
2. Community Outreach Preparation
 - a. Staff Presentation of Public Input Session Outlines
 - b. Staff Presentation of Survey Questions

Item 1: Municipality Presentations

Andy Beall, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Phil Baker-Shenk, and Karene Motivans represented Shepherdstown's long term planning priorities. The Corporation of Shepherdstown is currently performing its own comprehensive plan update with a citizens committee. Mr. Beall discussed Shepherdstown's growth since 2014 which has included Shepherd Village property, The Bavarian, SU Potomac Place Residence Hall, Cool Green Auto Repair, and three parcels owned by George Kalathas. Future desired expansion includes an approximately 222 acre triangle to the west of town, the George Rushizky property, and the Maddex Square Shopping Centre. Two planning priorities were highlighted, to increase the town tax base and protect the historic district of Shepherdstown. Additional interests include walkability, protecting the Town Run water source, and to not create a town center outside of Shepherdstown. Andy Beall also mentioned an interest in collaborating with the County on design standards. Ms. Brockman explained the past complications in allowing for public comment on future development within Shepherdstown's GMB and suggested sending over an updated Memorandum of Understanding. Mr. Beall concluded with a concern in the housing prices in town and changes to state code barring local regulations to be placed on short term rentals.

Phil Baker-Shenk spoke as a member of the ADHOC committee reviewing the 2014 Comprehensive Plan and emphasized the committee's goal to focus on policies Shepherdstown can enact. Some of these goals could include new interconnectivity of town, county, and regional

trails and finding new solutions to food waste. Some of the top concerns among citizens is the importance of tourism to the economy, the Town Run watershed, and historic preservation in and around the town boundaries. Of particular note was the potential increased emergency response times created by trains utilizing railroad crossings on key roads. Karene Motivans also spoke to the importance of connections within the town grid. Ms. Motivans discussed the interest in design standards to be cohesive with Shepherdstown aesthetic. Mr. Shepp asked the number of people on the committee and how the review was announced. Mr. Beall responded that there are twelve members, one of which is ex officio, and that the meetings were announced online and the front of Town Hall.

Item 2: Community Outreach Preparation

Staff briefed the commissioners on the agenda and activity for the 1st Public Input Meeting. The input meeting will include a staff description of what a comprehensive plan does followed by a small group Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities activity and concluding with an individual survey. The commissioners discussed potentially providing door prizes in the future to boost participation. Staff also noted the importance of Planning Commissioners attending the public input meeting to help facilitate the small group activity.

Staff then presented the draft Goals and Objectives survey questions for Planning Commissioners to provide comments and edits. Commissioners suggested adding neutral answer responses to the demographic questions as well as changing the location question to a zip code response. Following the Work Session on 4/11/23 staff reached out to several local social media marketing firms to help promote public outreach. Staff mentioned they will prepare more information for Planning Commission at the 6/13/23 Work Session.

These notes were prepared by Luke Seigfried.

Jefferson County Planning Commission

Work Session



JUNE 13,
2023

Agenda Items

Item #1: Municipality Presentations

Item #2: Community Outreach Preparation

Item #3: Livability Profile

ITEM #1: MUNICIPALITY PRESENTATIONS

- Ranson

ITEM #2: COMMUNITY OUTREACH PREPARATION

- Staff Presentation on Public Input Session Findings
- Staff Presentation of Goals and Objectives Survey Questions

BY THE NUMBERS



- There were 42 total participants in person and 4 participants joined over Zoom
- The meeting stayed within the planned two hours
- Five small groups with 8-10 participants were formed to brainstorm ideas
- Cookies were served!

TRENDS FROM PUBLIC INPUT MEETING: STRENGTHS

#1: Natural beauty and open spaces

- Mountains, rivers, scenic views

#2: Historical spaces/sites

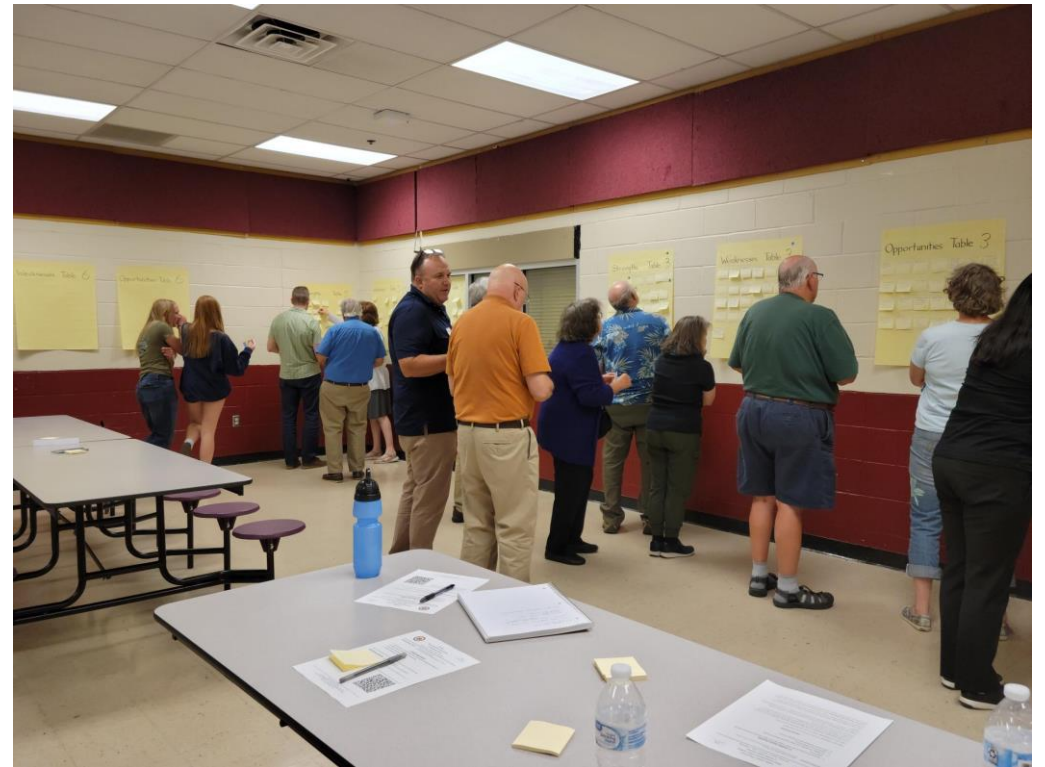
- Downtowns, battlefields

#3: Close proximity to DC Metro Area

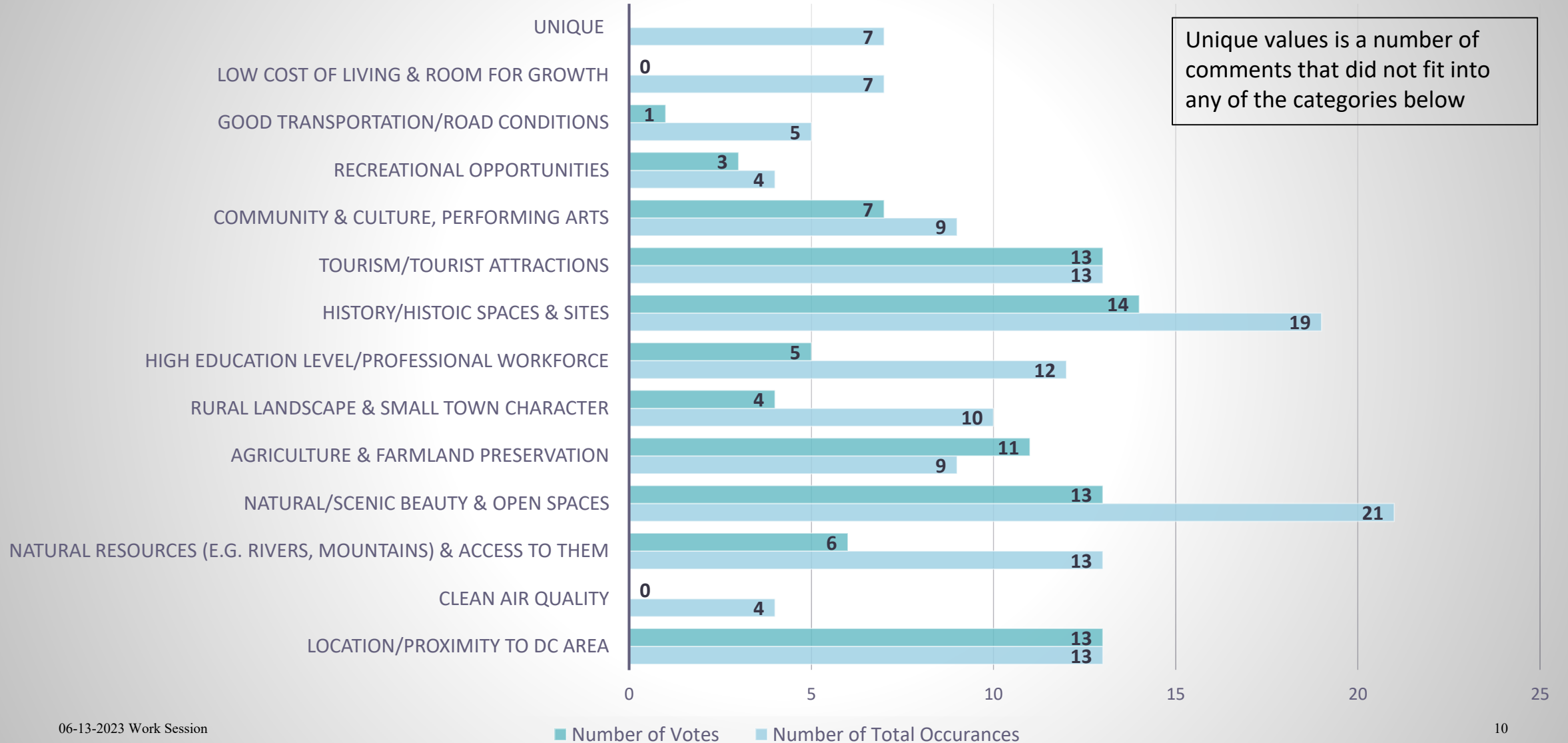
- Train access and commuting distance

#4: Tourism (historic, agritourism, and cultural)

- National Park, natural resources



Jefferson County Strengths: Trending Category Occurances and Votes



TRENDS FROM PUBLIC INPUT MEETING: WEAKNESSES

#1: Too many houses being built

- Residential growth is outstripping the county's infrastructure capacity

#2: Need for improved infrastructure

- Roads, water, and school improvements

#3: Mindset surrounding local politics and choices

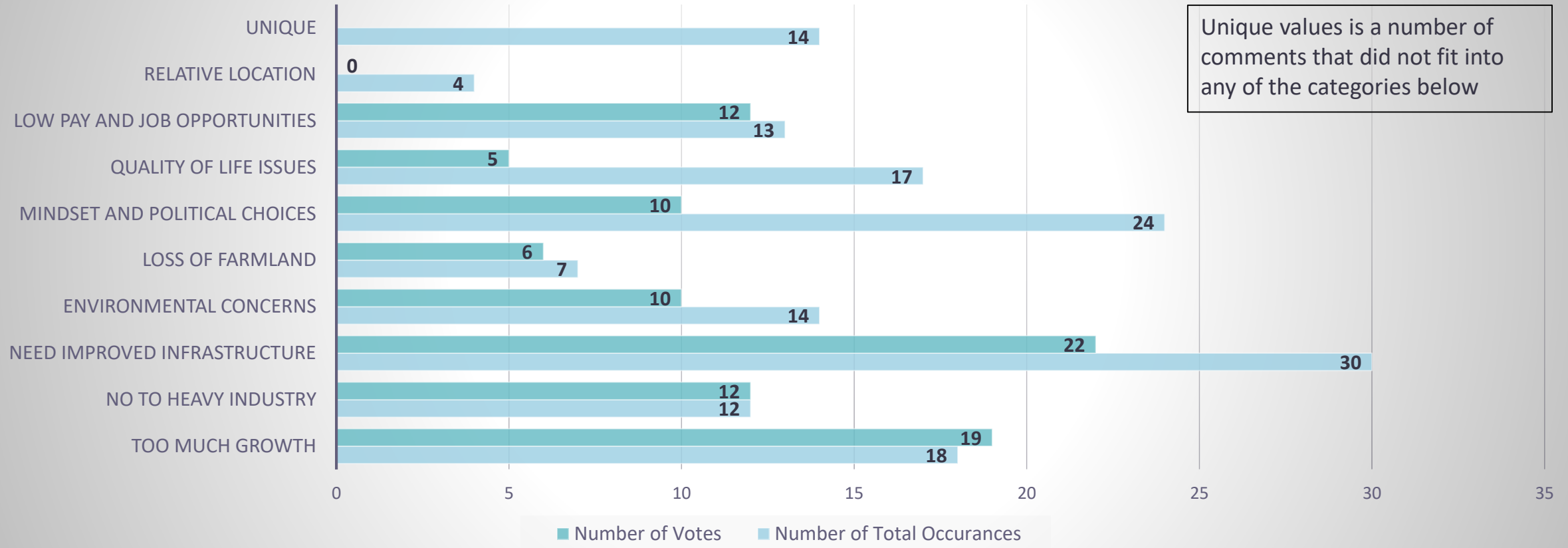
- Divisiveness, lack of dedication to decisions made by local commissions

#4: Income opportunities

- Public servants earn considerably less than neighboring states
- Need better job opportunities within Jefferson County, especially to keep young people



Jefferson County Weaknesses: Trending Category Occurances and Votes



TRENDS FROM PUBLIC INPUT MEETING: OPPORTUNITIES

#1: Expand and Improve Public Transit Systems

- Bike paths, Bus routes

#2: Responsible Development

- Infrastructure, communities, green space

#3: Preserving Natural Resources

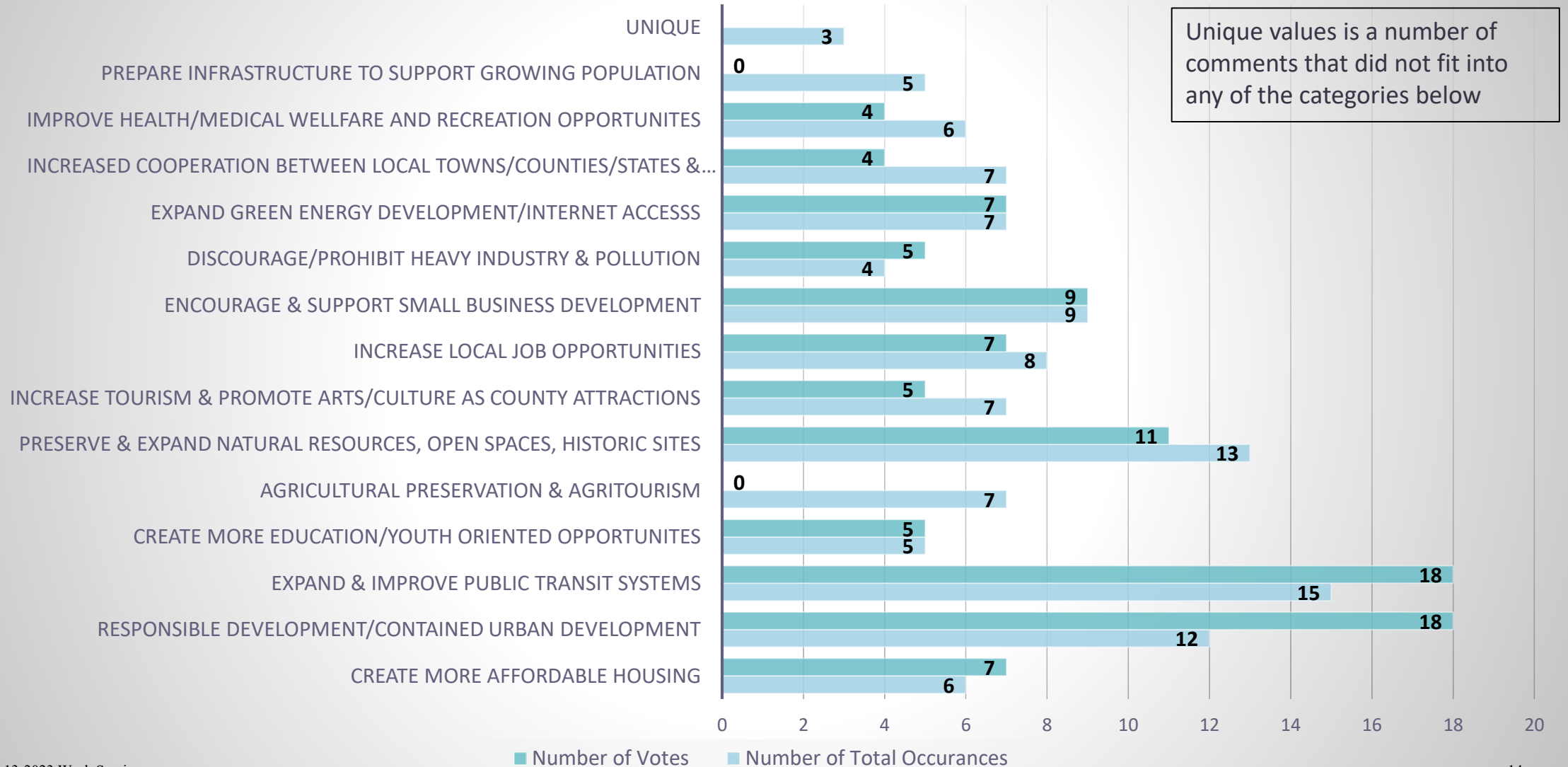
- Conservation measures, expanding green space

#4: Encourage & Support Small Businesses

- Attract tech-related jobs



Jefferson County Opportunities: Trending Category Occurances and Votes



TRENDS FROM PUBLIC INPUT MEETING: HIGHLIGHTS

Strength:

- The natural attractiveness of the county – it is “Almost Heaven”
 - Very strong agreement on this topic

Weakness:

- There is too much development without expanding the necessary infrastructure
 - Very strong focus on roads and clustering development in or near urban areas
 - Second strongest focus was on limiting heavy industry

Opportunity:

- Reinstatement of higher impact fees
 - Second strongest focus was on the need for Responsible Growth
 - Jefferson County should avoid the mistakes of Northern VA

These are summaries of the comments collected during the meeting

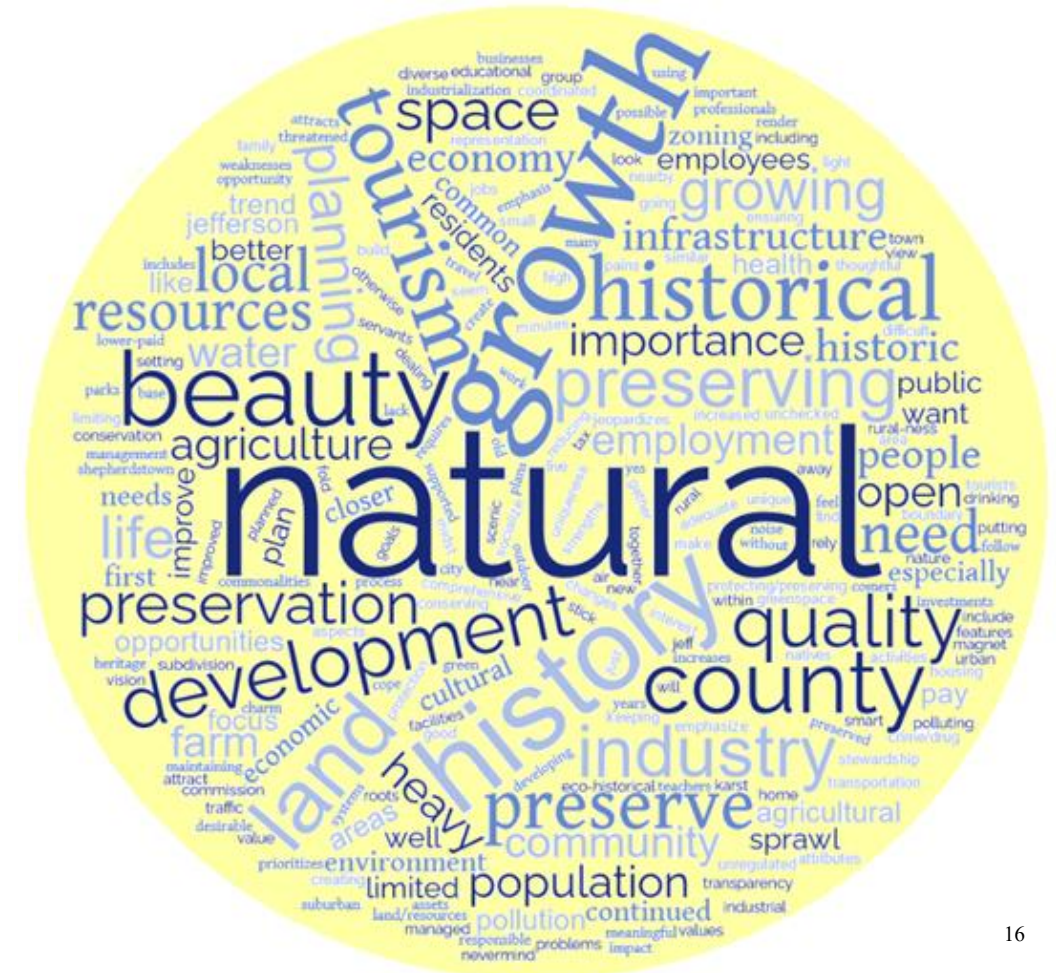
CONCLUDING INDIVIDUAL SURVEYS

“What do you believe are the most important topics your group discussed?” Respondents have stated;

- Preserve open space
- Planning growth around infrastructure/municipalities
- Unique county history

Half of all the respondents mentioned preserving natural beauty and controlled growth in the county. Other notable topics were county history, tourism, and heavy industry in the county.

*These are summaries of the comments
collected during the meeting*



CONCLUDING INDIVIDUAL SURVEYS

“In your own words, describe your vision for Jefferson County in the year 2045.” Respondents have stated;

- No additional heavy industry
- Infrastructure that meets the needs of the community
- Green/open spaces, clean air, and safe groundwater

Top results were Industry, Community, and Green with 30% of respondents using these words. Of the three concluding survey questions the Vision in 2045 question had the widest spread of results. Education, development, and tourism were secondary points that were brought up by around 16% of participants.

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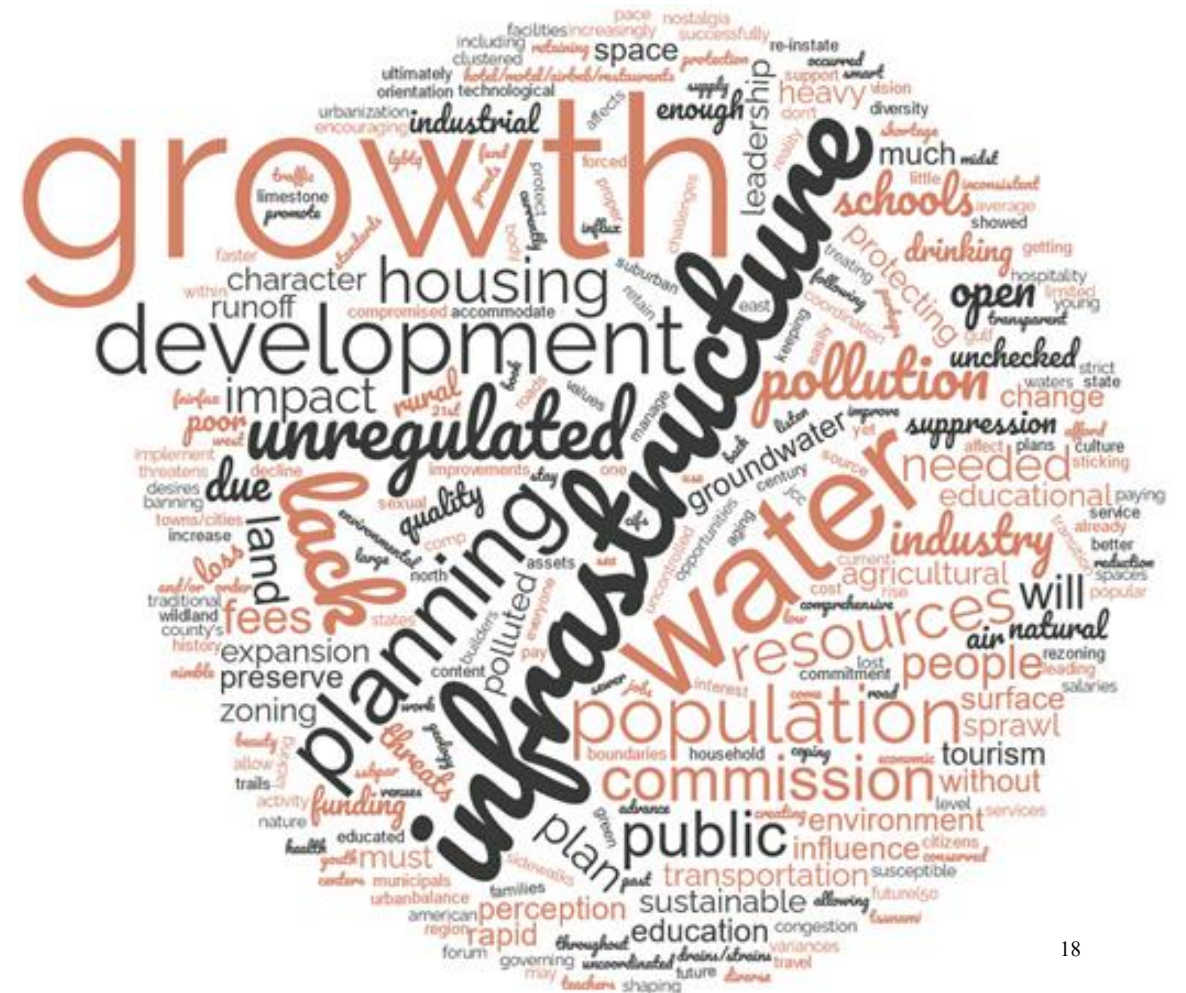


CONCLUDING INDIVIDUAL SURVEYS

“What are three challenges affecting the County now and into the future?” Respondents have stated;

- Jefferson County is seeing large growth
- There has been poor/uncontrolled planning of developments which has created sprawl
- Infrastructure has not kept up
- The Comprehensive Plan has not been followed

These are summaries of the comments collected during the meeting



SCHEDULE UPCOMING EVENTS

Goals and Objectives Online Survey

- Survey will be open for a month
- Staff would like to be able to use FY 2024 Budget to advertise the Public Survey
- What would be a good date to release the survey?

Booking future Public Input Meetings

- To avoid overlap with other events staff can book the future Input Meetings for the fourth Monday of the month.
- The 2nd Public Input meeting is on the Timeframe for August 28th, following the County Fair and the start of the 2023-2024 School Year.

Goals and Objectives Survey

Welcome to Jefferson County, WV's online survey! Every ten years our community updates the comprehensive plan describing what we want to see Jefferson County become over the next twenty years. We want your input as a member of the community on the questions below.

General Questions

How satisfied are you with the quality of life in Jefferson County?



How often do you use the amenities below in the county?

	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never
Sidewalks	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bike trails	☐	☐	☐	☐
Walking paths	☐	☐	☐	☐
Local parks	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public river access	☐	☐	☐	☐

Are you going out of the county for medical care?

- ☒ For all of my medical services
- ☐ For most of my medical services
- ☐ For some of my medical services
- ☐ I get all of my medical services in Jefferson County

Where are you getting your medical services?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Hagerstown area
- ☐ Winchester area
- ☐ Frederick, MD
- ☐ Leesburg/Loudoun County
- ☐ Berkeley County
- ☐ Other

Where would you like to see new housing in Jefferson County?

☐ I would like to see housing options on large lots developed in the unincorporated parts (outside of city limits) of the county

☐ I would like to see housing options near the municipalities and the unincorporated villages (such as Shenandoah Junction, Middleway, etc.)

☐ I would like to see housing options in and around the municipalities

☐ I would like to see housing options across the county

☒ Other

|

The emphasis on future new housing development in Jefferson County should be on...

You can pick up to three of the options below.

☐ Age restricted and senior living community housing

☐ Affordable homes and mobile homes

☐ Subsidized housing complex

☐ Single family detached houses

☐ Townhouses

☐ Garage apartments and accessory dwelling units

☐ Small apartment building (4-8 units)

☐ Large apartment complex

☒ Other

Do you agree or disagree with the statements below?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
A community should have low income and affordable housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is important for teachers, first responders, and nurses to live in the county they work in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Agricultural land should be developed for non-agricultural commercial growth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jefferson County is a good place from which to commute to work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

It is important to have access to public transit to and from D.C., such as the MARC train	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The county should develop a new business park to attract new commercial and/or industrial opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The rural and small town character of the county is important	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jefferson County should actively protect the health of the watersheds in the County	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

What environmental concerns should Jefferson County be most focused on?

Please rank the options below by rearranging the categories from most to least important.



Air pollution/Air quality



Extreme weather events



Fire



Flooding



Ground water contamination



Surface water runoff

Reset

Do you believe the following types of land uses benefit Jefferson County?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Agritourism facilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Retail stores	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal services (banks, law firms, salons)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Restaurants	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hotels, motels	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Suburban strip commercial centers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Agricultural uses (crop and farm animals)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Data centers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mixed use residential/commercial	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Movie theaters, bowling alleys, community water parks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Short term rentals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Concert venues, theatres, stadiums	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warehousing, self storage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Light industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Industrial manufacturing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Medical campuses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hydro/Aquaponics buildings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How does traffic congestion in Jefferson County impact your schedule?

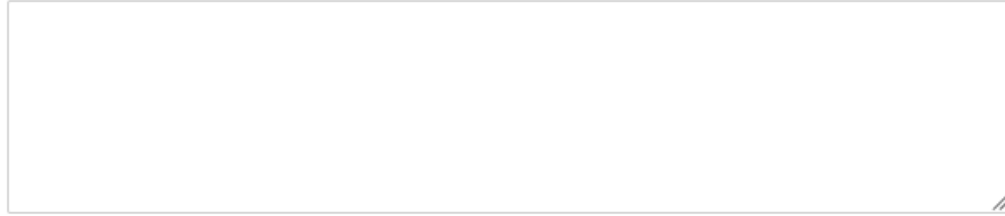
☐ I think about moving out of the county because the traffic congestion is so bad
☐ I only leave the house when I know there will not be traffic
☐ Traffic is only bad leaving or reentering the county
☐ The traffic in the county is tolerable
☐ Traffic in the county is not a problem
☐ Other

How do you view historical sites in Jefferson County?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Jefferson County should actively preserve historic buildings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Privately owned historic land should be allowed to develop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Historical sites should be used to attract tourists to Jefferson County	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

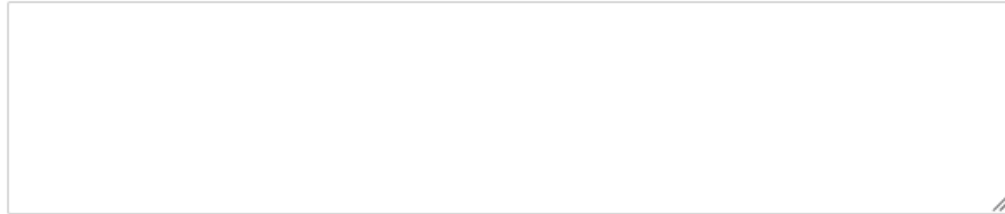
Are there any specific changes that have taken place in Jefferson County in the last 20 years that you HAVE NOT liked?

If you would like to go into further detail on any of the questions above please do so here.

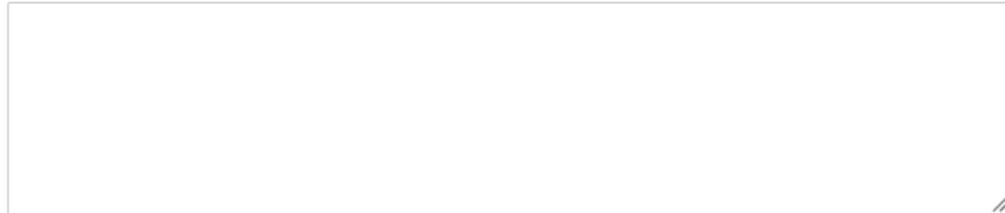
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Are there any specific changes that have taken place in Jefferson County in the last 20 years that you HAVE liked?

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Do you have any specific comments or suggestions you would like to make regarding the goals and objectives of Jefferson County over the next 20 years?

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Demographic Questions

How old are you?

☐ Under 18

☐ 18-34

☐ 35-49

☐ 50-65

☐ 66 and over

☐ Prefer not to answer

How long have you lived in Jefferson County?

☐ Under 3 years

☐ 4 to 10 years

☐ 11 to 20 years

☐ 21 to 30 years

☐ Over 31 years

☐ Prefer not to answer

What is your zip code?

If you do not know your zip code you can respond 12345.

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How much income does your household earn in a year?

☐ Less than \$10,000

☐ \$10,000 to \$24,999

☐ \$25,000 to \$49,999

☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999

☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999

☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999

☐ \$150,000 to \$199,999

☐ \$200,000 or more

☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you commute out of Jefferson County for work or school?

☐ No, I work or study in Jefferson County, WV

☐ No, I am not currently working or attending school outside of Jefferson County, WV

☐ Yes, I commute to either Frederick County, VA; Berkeley County, WV; or Washington County, MD

☐ Yes, I commute to either Loudoun or Clarke County, VA; or Frederick County, MD

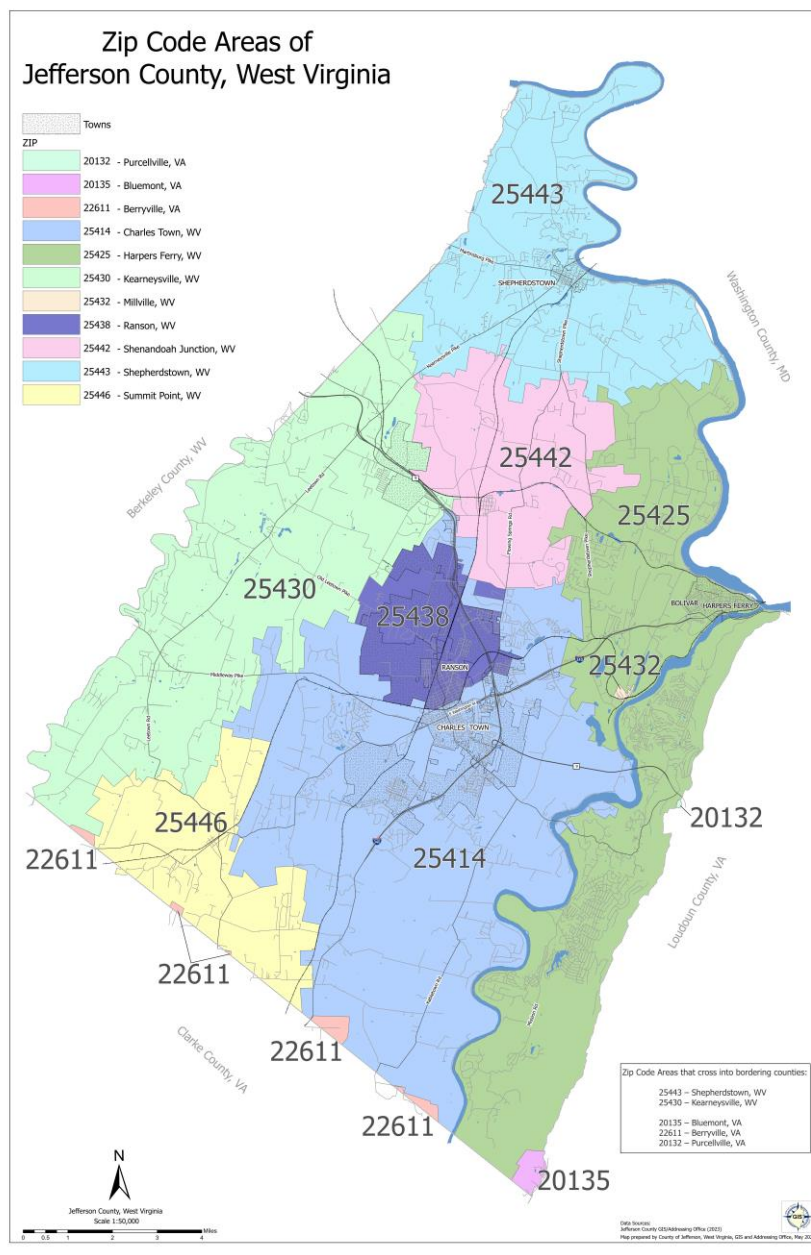
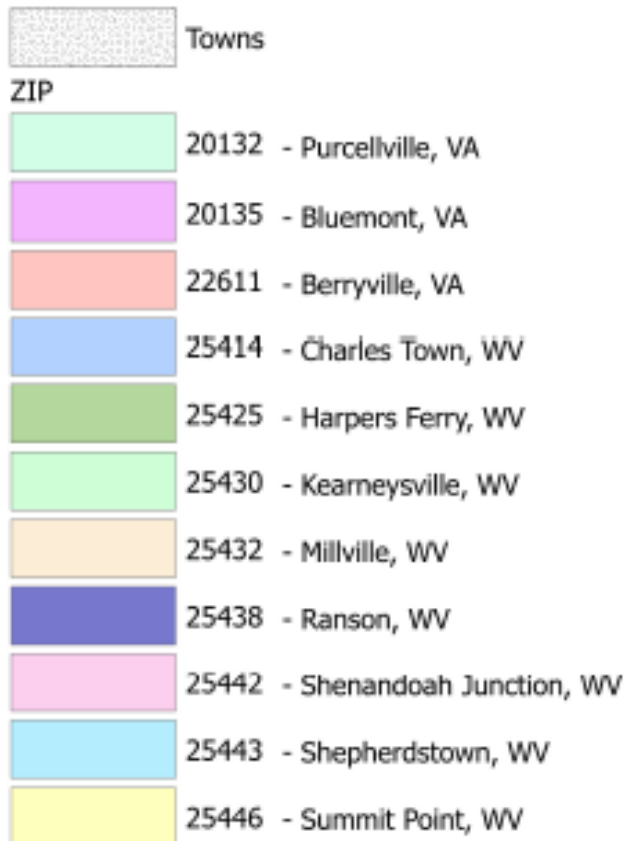
☐ Yes, I commute to Washington, DC or the surrounding area such as Montgomery County, MD; Fairfax or Arlington county, VA...

☐ Other

If you would like to receive information on future surveys and events for the 2045 Comprehensive Plan please add your email below.



Zip Code Areas of Jefferson County



Zip Code Areas that cross into bordering counties:

25443 – Shepherdstown, WV
25430 – Kearneysville, WV

20135 – Bluemont, VA
22611 – Berryville, VA
20132 – Purcellville, VA

ITEM #3: LIVABILITY PROFILE

- Staff Presentation of Community Data

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

AACAJC

African-American Community
Association of Jefferson County

- Preventing a roundabout at the Y junction of Middleway Pike and Summit Point Road
- Affordable housing and broadband access for low income residents with no caps on data
- Improving cultural heritage tourism opportunities and to enhance the African American tourist experience

JCCVB

Jefferson County Convention &
Visitors Bureau

- Attract more active and experiential tourism opportunities
- Need for more trails for cycling, mountain biking, horse riding, ATV driving, and walking
- Focus on the overall visitor experience including the need for infrastructure to accommodate more visitors to the county

What we need from the Planning Commission tonight...

- What is Planning Commission expecting from the County Fair?
- Are there any parts of the Public Input Meeting data staff should look at further?

An additional work session may be necessary in August

- 2nd Public Input Meeting Prep
- County Fair Prep
- Goals and Objectives Survey Results
- Drafting Goals and Objectives
- Future Land Use Survey 1st Draft
- Existing Land Use Map Review

Next Steps

- Scheduling and planning the 2nd Public Input Meeting
- Scheduling the release date and advertising the Goals and Objectives Public Survey
- Begin reviewing the Envision Jefferson 2035 Goals and Objectives
- Planning activities and working the County Fair



July 11, 2023

Next Work Session Meeting



Goals and Objectives Survey

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

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Local parks	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Are you going out of the county for medical care?



For all of my medical services



For most of my medical services



For some of my medical services



I get all of my medical services in Jefferson County

Where are you getting your medical services?

Check all that apply.



Hagerstown area



Winchester area



Frederick, MD



Leesburg/Loudoun County



Berkeley County



Other

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Jefferson County should actively protect the health of the watersheds in the County	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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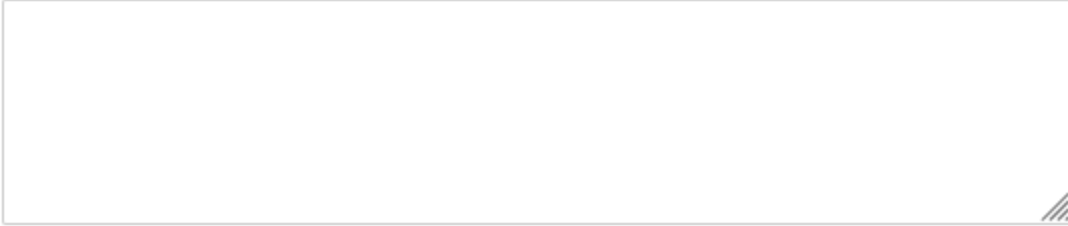
☐ Other (Please explain how traffic congestion affects you)

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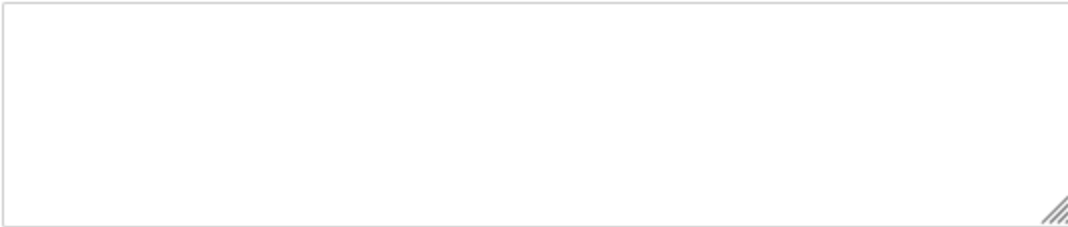
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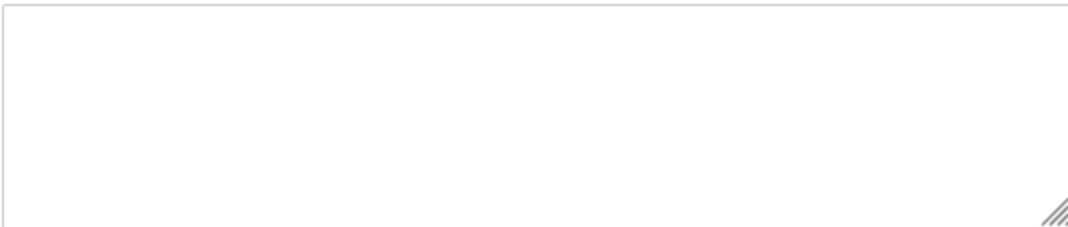
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- ☐ No, I work or study in Jefferson County, WV
- ☐ No, I am not currently working or attending school outside of Jefferson County, WV
- ☐ Yes, I commute to either Frederick County, VA; Berkeley County, WV; or Washington County, MD
- ☐ Yes, I commute to either Loudoun or Clarke County, VA; or Frederick County, MD
- ☐ Yes, I commute to Washington, DC or the surrounding area such as Montgomery County, MD; Fairfax or Arlington county, VA...
- ☐ Other

If you would like to receive information on future surveys and events for the 2045 Comprehensive Plan please add your email below.



Submit

1st Public Input Meeting: Summary of Individual Table Presentations

Date: 06/06/2023

Table 1: Jefferson County should focus on historic resources and natural resources and beauty as its strength, both preserving it and capitalizing on it by attracting tourists. In response to the decline in agricultural uses, the County needs to managing growth and improving job opportunities within the county in a manner that improves traffic issues and crime rates. The county should also focus on improving the tax base so that public service workers and teachers can have increased pay to better afford living and teaching in the county. Jefferson County should also look to increase its broadband internet access, and to attract and retain talent in its workforce population.

Table 2: Jefferson County should encourage future residential and retail growth to be located within the municipalities' urban growth area. Protecting and preserving the rural landscape and scenic corridors of the county is important. The county should also follow its current comprehensive plan with greater strictness, and be guided mainly by it when updating the new plan.

Table 3: A main strength of Jefferson County lies in the quality of life of its residents and the cultural, historic and environmental diversities and experiences the County offers. It is important to protect and develop the cultures within the county. One of the county's weaknesses is the threat of industrial growth and the pollution that accompanies it, which is concerning to the county's residents. Jefferson County has the opportunity to improve its public transit systems for local and commuter travel, and to improve the internet access and connectivity across the county.

Table 4: Jefferson County has a weakness in that its natural resources cannot support future development. The county's main strength is its many historical sites and landmarks, and its rural character and resources. In the future, the county should take the opportunity to preserve its historic and agricultural resources.

Table 5: Natural resources are a main strength of Jefferson County, as are its conservation programs. The county should take the opportunity to protect its rural and natural resources from unchecked urban sprawl. The County needs to reinstitute the Impact Fee program to support infrastructure such as sewer, water and schools. The county's weaknesses are that its infrastructure cannot support development and there is not a supportive system or suitable tax base for sustaining small businesses. The county must improve the tax base and increase tourism to historic, agricultural, recreational and natural resources. The county is also lacking activities for its youth, and so should take the opportunity to create new draws for young people

to stay in the county. The County also needs to develop low income housing opportunities especially for teachers and long-time residents who cannot afford the new house prices.

Overall, the main points drawn from the presentation of individual table groups was that the county's main strength is its natural and historic beauty and resources, and the group consensus was that this should mainly be preserved and/or utilized to encourage tourism and small businesses.

Several weaknesses mentioned in common were the tax base, development in rural areas, and lack of employment/youth activities within the county.

The most agreed-upon opportunities for the county were improving internet connectivity, the tax base, and preservation of natural resources and rural landscapes.

Red Dot Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities Analysis

The numbers indicate the number of times each statement or category of statements was selected by a participant as being something of most importance across all of the groups.

Strengths

Nature and the Natural beauty of the area - the mountains, rivers, rural feel; it's a physically attractive area – 14

Availability of cultural activities such as the events held at Shepherd (the CATF and others) and at the Old Opera House – 3

Location relative to the DMV and the connections that location allows – 2

Shepherd University and the community it provides – 1

Historic sites – 1

Weaknesses

Too much growth (especially new housing developments) without the necessary infrastructure – leading to crowded schools, inadequate roads for the amount of traffic – 11

Rockwool effect – don't want heavy industry/smokestack industries – this is the wrong kind of economic development – 8

Limited opportunities – not enough professional jobs available; Pay scale for public servants is way below neighboring states; lack of opportunities for young people – 5

Unaddressed pollution – worried about marring our natural beauty asset and pollution's impact on the residents of Jefferson County – 4

Trust issues - Lack of commitment to the current plan by Planning Commission and County Commission – 3

Oppression of diverse lifestyles – 2

Opportunities

Impact Fees (reinstatement of higher fees) – only mentioned at one table and did not get any initial votes. Prior to the red dot activity, impact fees were mentioned during the large group discussion and there was an audible "aha" moment in the crowd - 13

Responsible growth and planning that takes into account the available infrastructure; more restrictions on growth in the rural districts; keep good zoning with a minimum of variances; don't over-promote growth – don't make the mistakes of Loudoun and Fairfax - 8

Provision of services and infrastructure – broadband improvements, senior services, bike paths, regional bus, train and road improvements – 6

Economic development - more jobs for locals; emphasis on high tech (light industry), small businesses, and tourism – 5

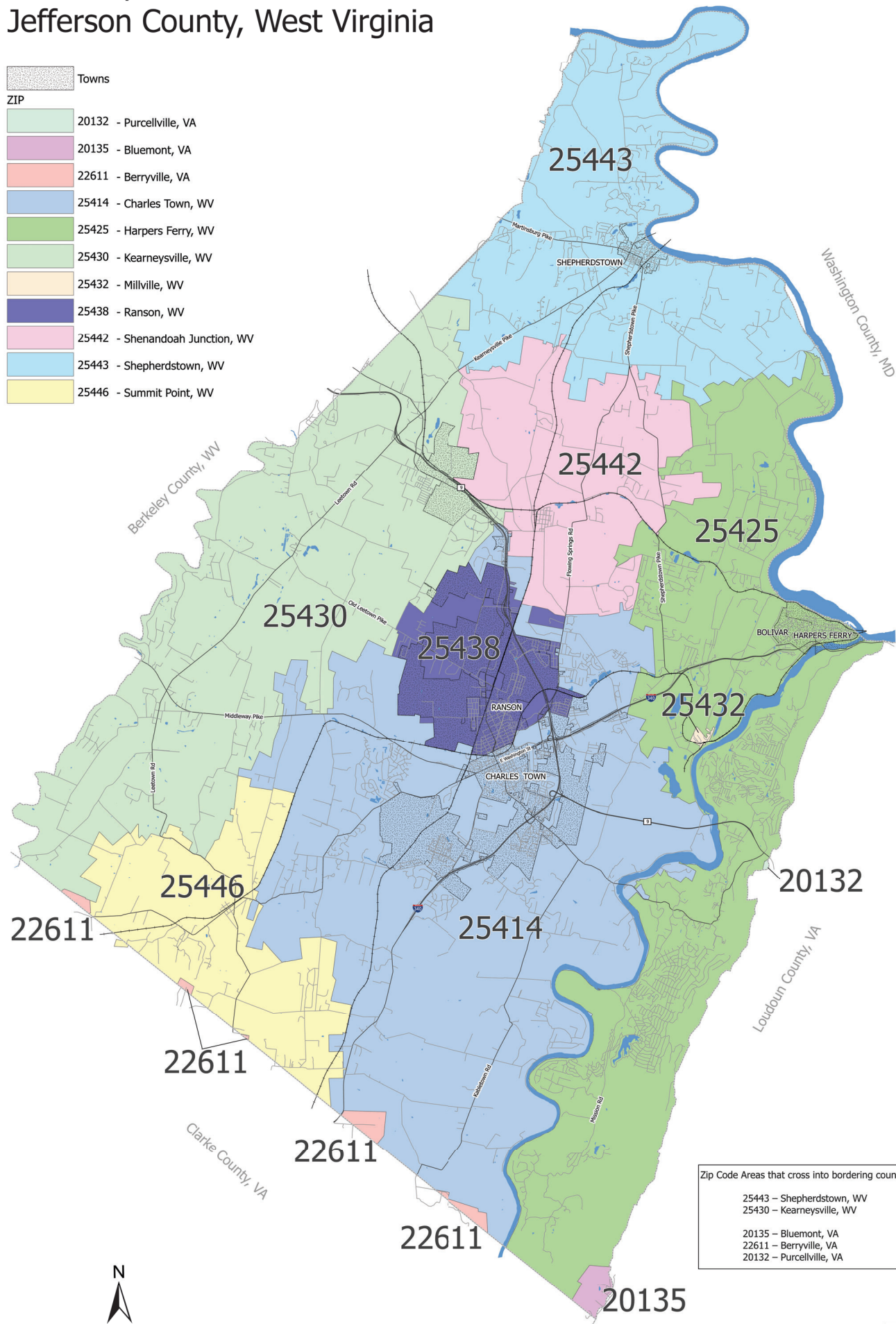
Need focus on low-income housing – 4

Preservation of history and farmland - 2

Environmental protection – 2

Zip Code Areas of Jefferson County, West Virginia

Towns	
ZIP	
20132 - Purcellville, VA	
20135 - Bluemont, VA	
22611 - Berryville, VA	
25414 - Charles Town, WV	
25425 - Harpers Ferry, WV	
25430 - Kearneysville, WV	
25432 - Millville, WV	
25438 - Ranson, WV	
25442 - Shenandoah Junction, WV	
25443 - Shepherdstown, WV	
25446 - Summit Point, WV	



Zip Code Areas that cross into bordering counties:	
25443 - Shepherdstown, WV	
25430 - Kearneysville, WV	
20135 - Bluemont, VA	
22611 - Berryville, VA	
20132 - Purcellville, VA	

Comprehensive Plan Information Gathering Meeting Summary w/AACAJC (African American Community Association of Jefferson County) and the JC NAACP

Date: 5/26/23

Participants: Luke Seigfried, Shenandoah Ragle, Joe Guttman, Jamila Jones-Fleet

Priorities:

- Preventing a roundabout at the Y junction of Middleway Pike and Summit Point Road
- Affordable housing and broadband access for low income residents with no caps on data
- Improving cultural heritage tourism opportunities and to enhance the African American tourist experience

Projects, Opportunities, and Concerns Highlighted by the Stakeholder: Three major concerns were discussed: opposition to a roundabout affecting Zion Baptist Church in Charles Town, affordable housing, and internet access. Zion Baptist Church and the nearby community around the Y junction of Middleway Pike and Summit Point Road is very worried about potential displacement in the event of road improvements. In particular, the community does not want a roundabout at that intersection. Ms. Jones-Fleet also highlighted the need for more affordable housing in the county. The AACAJC sees a possible opportunity to leverage the tax incentives available through the opportunity zone designation to provide more affordable housing. Currently, broadband is provided for low income residents with caps on the amount of data per month. The monthly data limit is too low, especially if a child has to watch a video for a homework assignment. Ongoing projects include the continued preservation of African American historic sites with the immediate need to prevent the demolition of the Weaver-Gill house in Harpers Ferry. There also is an interest in maintaining old cemeteries, buildings, and other county landmarks that hold historic significance to the African American community. Ms. Jones-Fleet discussed working with WVU through the Fulcrum Project to map cultural assets in the county.

Important Points: Numerous grants and donations helped refurbish Fisherman's Hall in Charles Town. The vision is to add a small amphitheater in the back for performance space and community get-togethers. There is a need for better coordination concerning tourism. This year, PBS WETA Washington's "Get Out of Town" program featured things to do in Harpers Ferry with some of the emphasis placed on Black history. Tourists who came to Harpers Ferry in response to the program found Storer College and other exhibits closed. This was seen as a missed opportunity. Ms. Jones-Fleet is working with the Appalachian Regional Commission on tying together towns along the Appalachian Trail that feature Black history and cultural events. Leveraging cultural and heritage tourism opportunities specific to Jefferson County were discussed as vehicles for economic development.

Willing to Come and present to Planning Commission: Yes

Comprehensive Plan Information Gathering Meeting Summary w/JCCVB

Date: 5/24/23

Participants: Luke Seigfried, Shenandoah Ragle, Joe Guttman, Annette Bates

Priorities:

- Attract more active and experiential tourism opportunities
- Need for more trails for cycling, mountain biking, horse riding, ATV driving, and walking
- Focus on the overall visitor experience including the need for infrastructure to accommodate more visitors to the county

Projects, Opportunities, and Concerns Highlighted by the Stakeholder: The JCCVB is particularly interested in growing more experiential, heritage, and recreational tourism sites and businesses in Jefferson County. The major ongoing project is the building of the Hilltop House Hotel, a luxury resort complex, in Harpers Ferry. Ms. Bates noted the project has prompted an upgrade of the Harpers Ferry water and sewer system which will also benefit other tourist enterprises in the immediate area. Opportunities exist for more craft brewing and especially distilling in the county by harnessing West Virginia's heritage of moonshining. Ms. Bates highlighted such brewing and distilling as an area where Jefferson County should have a comparative advantage whereas Virginia has an advantage with wineries. There has been some interest in weekend train service to Harpers Ferry. Areas of concern include the traffic congestion in and around Harpers Ferry and the entrance fee price increases for the national park. There is also a need for more hotel/motel rooms in the county. It was noted that visitors with positive experiences are more likely to return to the area as a tourist, future resident, or business entrepreneur. Ms. Bates highlighted the need for infrastructure to accommodate more visitors to the county.

Important Points: The COVID restriction era helped re-engage tourists with regional attractions. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park had its highest number of visitors since the mid-2000s. Funding for the JCCVB has increased from \$279,000 to nearly \$700,000 in the past decade. This has been helped by the occupancy tax on short term rentals. Jefferson County is now second only to Pocahontas County in receiving taxes from short term rentals. The Hollywood Casino has faced increased competition from casinos located closer to Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD has subsequently invested in more table games, building an event center, and opening a sportsbook. The JCCVB is pleased that Shepherd University has a tourism entrepreneurship concentration in their business program.

Willing to Come and present to Planning Commission: Yes

CreationDate	How are you affiliated with Jefferson County, West Virginia?	Where in the county do you live?	Which of the Comprehensive Plan components do you believe requires the most attention?	What would you like to see in the county moving forward?	Do you have any comments you would like to share regarding the 2045 Comprehensive Plan Update?	Where do you think the most beautiful part of Jefferson County is located?
5/18/2023 13:24	I live in the county	Harpers Ferry	Land_Use,Infras tructure			
5/19/2023 0:28	I live in the county	Kabletown District	Land_Use,Rural	Stop the destruction of our farmland by solar.	Stick to the plan.	Kabletown Rd area was before solar:
5/25/2023 23:39	Other(I own a real estate (property) in WV)		Transportation,I nfrastructure,Pu blic_Services,Co mmunity_Desig n	Contribution, support and assistance regarding improvement of roads and utilities, as well as planning for light retail to include a supermarket to serve Westridge Hills, Blue Ridge Acres, and surrounding residential areas.	Investment in the signage, accessibility, facilities, and promotion of the Appalachian trail. Invest in health/well-being focused resorts. Promote tourism as the source of economic growth. Consider passenger train service from Washington DC/Harpers Ferry direction to Charles Town WV. Integrate transportation with Silver Line Metro in VA. In Charles Town and Harpers Ferry, plan for/offer international academic programs / new campuses to attract international students and investment.	Harper Ferry
6/3/2023 19:49	I live in the county	Kabletown District	Land_Use,Housi ng,Public_Servic es,Safety			No where. All the housing developments are destroying it. Jefferson is becoming the new Loudoun County.
6/4/2023 23:49	I live and work in the county	Charles Town District	Infrastructure,P ublic_Services,E nvironmental,T ourism	Continued protection of natural resources that keep our unique attractions and services and consideration for our current, particularly, vulnerable residents		Too many
6/5/2023 22:28	I live in the county	Charles Town District	Housing,Infrastr ucture,Economi c_Development, Tourism	I'd like to see the county continue to develop its economy while assuring our county strives for economic equality	I'm deeply concerned about the possibility of severe gentrification in our community as it becomes wealthier. Here in Charles Town, there are lots of poorer families that have lived in this community since the late 1800s. Many of them are black. As Charles Town develops economically, I want to make sure our residents' housing does not rise excessively, which could kick out dozens of local families from our area.	Happy Retreat