

ULI Advisory Panel - Cashiers, NC
February 20-25, 2022

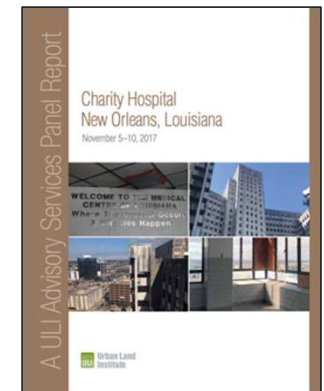


ULI Urban Land
Institute
Advisory Services Program

About the Urban Land Institute

Cashiers, NC February 20-25, 2022

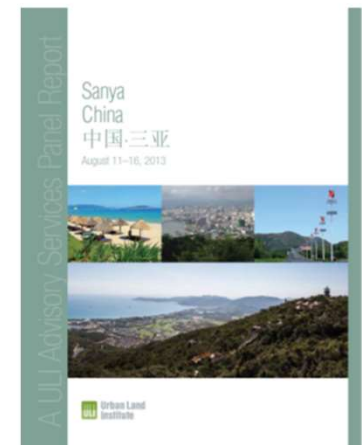
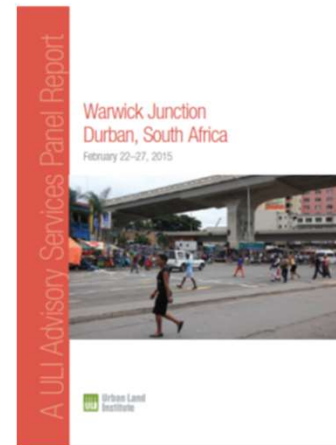
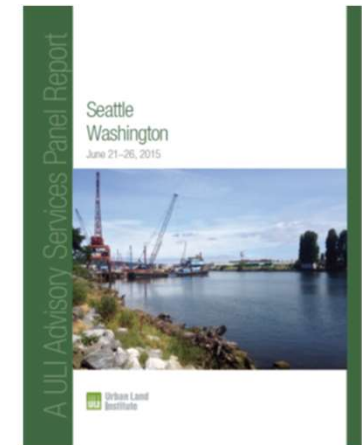
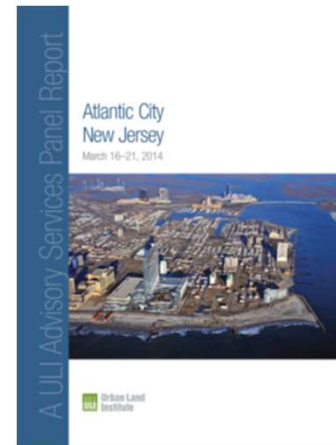
- The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.
- ULI is a membership organization with nearly 45,000 members worldwide representing the spectrum of real estate development, land use planning and financial disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service.
- The Urban Land Institute:
 - Conducts research
 - Provides a forum for sharing of best practices
 - Writes, edits and publishes books and magazines
 - Organizes and conducts meetings
 - Directs outreach programs
 - Conducts Advisory Services Panels



The Advisory Services Program

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- Since 1947
- 15 - 20 panels a year on a variety of real estate and land use subjects
- Provides independent, objective candid advice on important land use and real estate issues
- Process:
 - Reviews background materials
 - Receives a sponsor presentation and tour
 - Conducts stakeholder interviews
 - Considers data, frames issues and writes recommendations
 - Makes presentation
 - Produces a final report



Panelists

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Chair

Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow - Sustainable Development
Urban Land Institute, Washington, DC

Panel

Jonathan Bartlett, Senior Consultant, Business and Real Estate Strategy
Advance Planning Group - Jacobs
Decatur, GA

Meredith Byer, Director of Planning
Dewberry
Washington, D.C.

Tom Murphy, Senior Resident Fellow
ULI – the Urban Land Institute
Pittsburgh, PA

Ralph L. Núñez, NÚÑEZDESIGN, INC
Southfield, MI

Rick Reinhard, Principal Niagara Consulting Group
Rockville, MD

Lisa Rother, Community Planner
Montgomery County, MD

Ross Tilghman, President, Tilghman Group
Seattle, WA



Thanks to Our Sponsors

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- Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce
- Jackson County



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Introduction Rural By Design

Cashiers is a Special Place!





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No Place Will Stay Special By Accident!





What is Changing?

- National and global economy
- Demographics
- Technology
- Consumer attitudes & market trends
- Cost of land & housing
- Travel and Tourism
- Energy sources & transportation options
- The weather

There are two kinds of change:

- Planned change
- Unplanned change



Even Rural Communities Can Change

Jackson Hole, WY - Before



Jackson Hole, WY - After

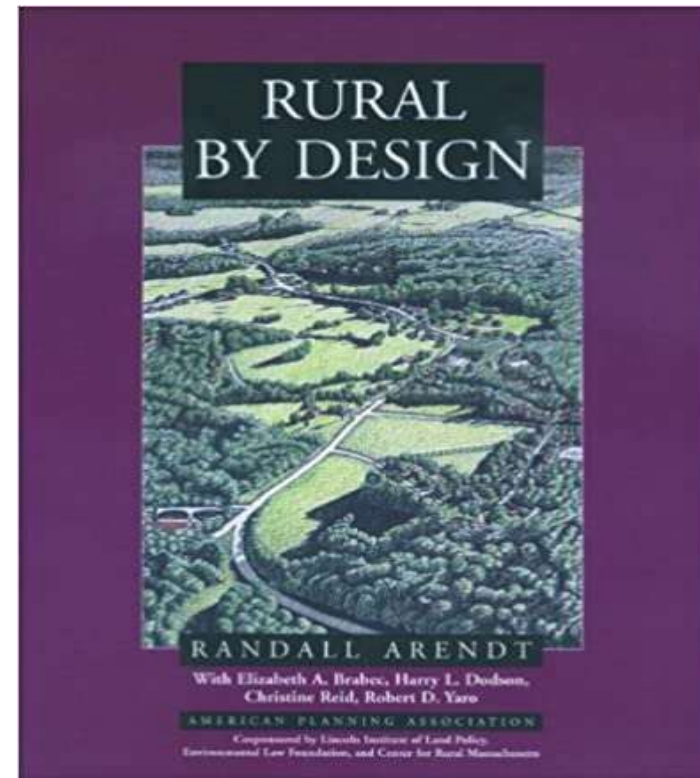


You Have A Choice!

Grow By Default



Grow By Design



“The best way to predict the future is
to create it yourself”

Abraham Lincoln

Growth is About Choices



Should development respect nature?
Should we invest downtown?
Should we design for people?
Should we grow on greyfields?

Should development ignore nature?
Should we invest on the highway?
Should we design for cars?
Should we grow in greenfields?



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Typical Housing Development

Nature & Place are Ignored

Conservation Development

Nature & Place are Honored





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Typical Apartments

Anywhere USA

Place Responsive Apartments

Adirondacks, NY





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Typical Gas Station

Anywhere USA

Better Gas Station

Adirondacks, NY





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Typical Motel

Anywhere USA

Mountain Motel

Jackson, WY





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Typical Dollar General

Anywhere USA

Better Dollar General

Montevallo, AL



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Typical Rural Road That Disregards the Landscape

Context Sensitive Rural Road That Respects the Landscape





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Typical Rural Road

No Sidewalks

Better Rural Road With Sidewalks





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Typical Rural Intersection

Another Rural Intersection



Key Question?

Do you want the natural character of Cashiers to shape new development?

Or

Do you want new development to shape the character of Cashiers?

Community Character Matters!



- “We take stock of a city like we take stock of a man. The clothes or appearance are the externals by which we judge.”
- Mark Twain

Build an Authentic Sense of Place

- The link between quality of place and the ability to attract and retain residents & talent is increasingly clear.
- A strong sense of place must be rooted in **authenticity**.
- Western North Carolina has world class natural landscape, great small towns, beautiful architecture.
- Trying to copy other places or subvert nature is a mistake.



Great Resort Communities



- Respect nature & history
- Have a distinctive & memorable character
- Have a pedestrian friendly village center
- Have a mix of uses & housing types
- Support local shops & restaurants
- Provide a variety of recreational activities
- Manage tourism



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Before

US 50

South Lake Tahoe, CA

After

US 50

South Lake Tahoe, CA



Priorities

- Create a long-range conservation plan to protect key natural areas, slopes and scenic vistas
- Build a robust network of pathways, trails and sidewalks in the village core to increase walkability
- Work aggressively with state and county government to accelerate construction of critical infrastructure including broadband, sewer & water infrastructure and a roundabout at the crossroads to reduce congestion & increase mobility
- Create an organization focused on bringing in a greater diversity of housing to address critical workforce & affordable housing needs
- Work closely with major landowners to insure that new development proposals respect nature and community character.

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Development Pressures

- Economic, Social, and Environmental change is happening
 - COVID-19 is the accelerant
- Tremendous stress on families and communities
- Yet opportunities exist to strengthen Cashiers



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Development Pressures

■ Labor Market Crunch

- County unemployment below 3%
- Hourly wages through the roof
- Existential Crisis for small businesses and institutions



Development Pressures

■ Remote Work

- Millions may work from home, forever
- Changes the second home proposition
- Changes what people need from Cashiers

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Rural real estate prices rise as people consider leaving cities

The virus is impacting how we spend money, how we shop and, perhaps, even where we want to live.



Americans leave large cities for suburban areas and rural towns

BY KRISTIN TATE, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR — 11:04:00 07:00 PM EDT
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL

4,337 COMMENTS

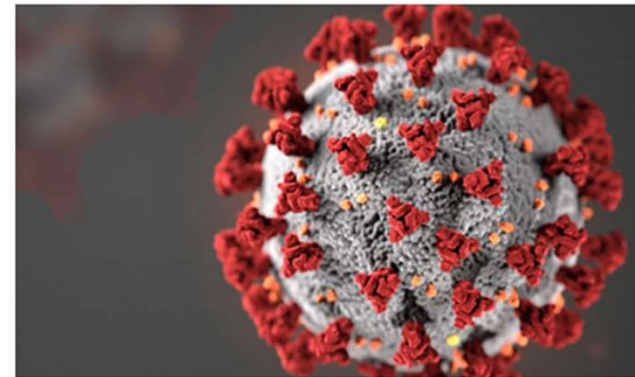
8,343 SHARES



Just In...

Va. Realtors: COVID-19 could shift preferences of homebuyers

SUN GAZETTE NEWSPAPERS Jul 7, 2020 Updated Jul 7, 2020



US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MORE INFORMATION

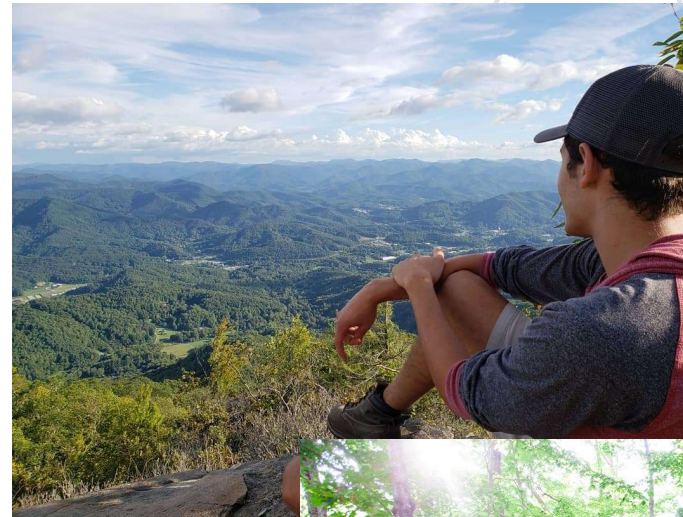


Development Pressures

■ Demographic Shifts

- Millennials in the 40s, buying second homes
- Dominant narrative for 20 years
- Need to define Cashiers for the next generation

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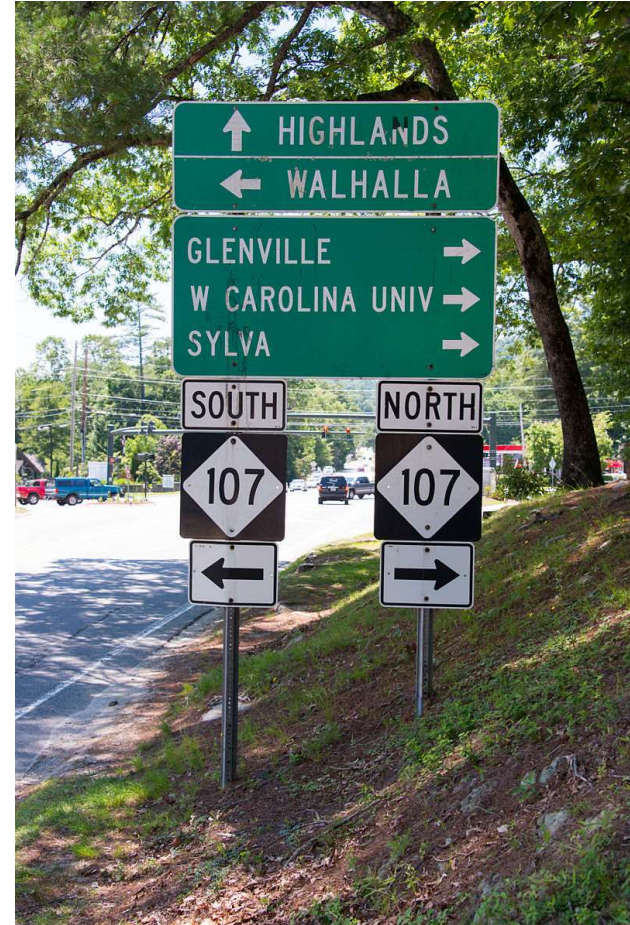
Development Pressures

- Climate Change
 - Sea level rise and extreme weather
 - Stronger demand for inland areas



Tipping Point

- Growth is coming to Cashiers
 - 800-1,000 lots in the pipeline
- Leverage growth to protect long-term value
 - Partners and collaborators
 - Engage with the County and Highlands
 - Balance luxury and affordability
 - Elevate people over cars



Opportunities

■ Housing

- Continued single-family development, ~200/year
- Increased housing diversity within village area
- Workforce housing in the core

■ Retail

- Modest demand for net-new neighborhood retail
- Additional retail as amenity, character driven

■ Hospitality

- Monitor STRs
- Additional hotels to keep visitors off the road

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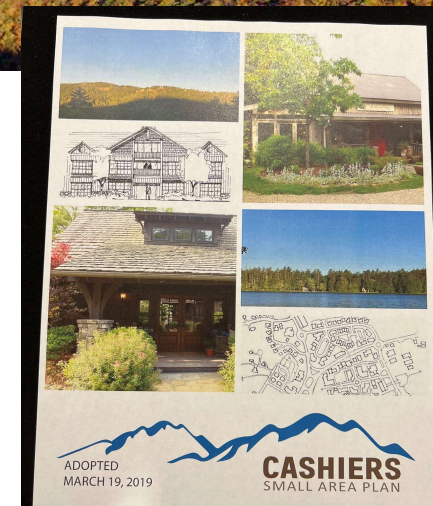
Village Center Needs	Units/SF/Keys (0-3 years)
Attainable Housing	
Seasonal Employee Apts	100+
For-Sale SF/TH	60
Rental Apts	40
Resident-Oriented Retail	25,000 SF
Hospitality (1-2 hotels)	120 total (50-60 each)

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Development Framework and Strategies

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- The Cashiers Small Area Plan identifies overarching design strategies to be implemented. The elements of a development framework to achieve the Plan's goals has four areas of concern:
 - Conservation
 - Mountain Aesthetic
 - Connectivity and Walkability
 - Mixed Use/Housing Diversity



FRAMEWORK CONTEXT

- Give the Cashiers Planning Council a lens to evaluate future development proposals
- Consider impacts on all residents including young families, business owners, retirees, workforce, generational residents and those who have moved here more recently.
- Broaden the process by expanding the Planning Council to include property owners outside of the commercial core.
- To further broaden this participation, the Council could implement term limits for its members or rotate the position of Chair on a yearly basis.

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CONSERVATION. DEVELOPMENT

- Prioritizes protection of natural resources and open space in an intentional way at the beginning of the development process.
- Identify key environmental features on each site and design development around these features in order to conserve and enhance these features

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CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT (continued)

- The area most appropriate for development is flat or gently sloped land. To achieve this, the Cashiers zoning ordinance should be amended to include better protection for steeper slopes
- Identify environmental features including, but not limited to streams, wetlands, steep slopes, forest, and ridge lines (view shed protection)
- Preserve contiguous areas of forest and ensure appropriate stormwater management implementation



MOUNTAIN AESTHETIC

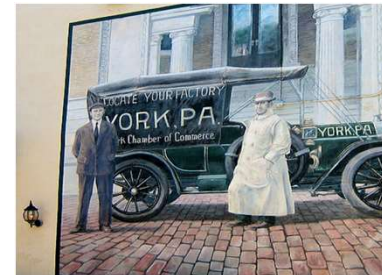
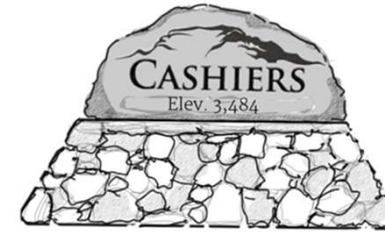
- Cashiers natural setting, historic development pattern and architecture traditions make this a distinctive place
- Building materials, colors, scale and lot size should be carefully considered to create the visual impact that continues the visual aesthetic of the community.
- Cashiers should develop visual design standards to continue to ensure that new designs fit with this aesthetic.
- Public buildings should set the precedent for private development and the Village Green is a good example of the mountain aesthetic using stone and wood to create a rustic feeling.



MOUNTAIN AESTHETIC

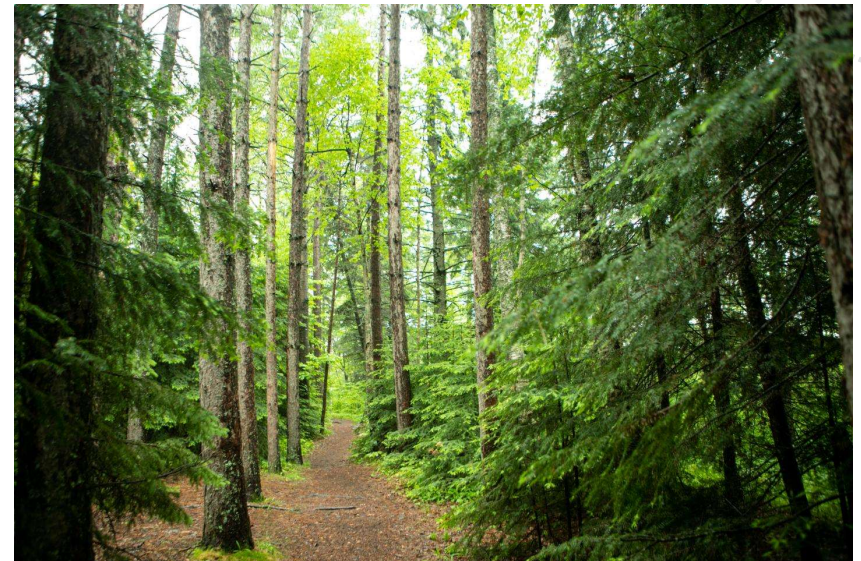
- To complement the mountain aesthetic in architecture and buildings, gateways and art throughout the community should reference the community's values and styles. An example of potential gateway treatment specific to Cashiers is shown here.
- Additional murals on buildings can enhance the understanding and appreciation of the unique place. Gateway signs should be designed and sized to let visitors know that they are entering a special place and encourage them to slow down.

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CONNECTIVITY AND WALKABILITY

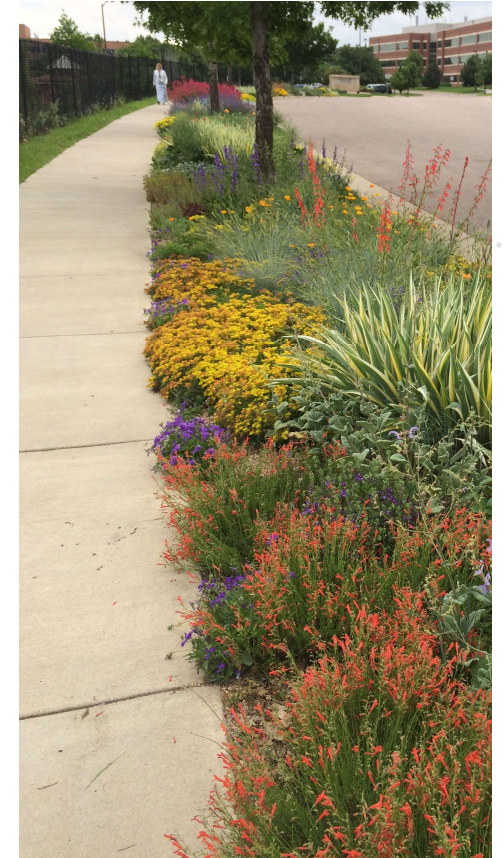
- Given the importance of hiking and outdoor activities in the area, a local trail system can augment a healthy, active lifestyle and nurture a strong community culture.
- A mechanism should be designed to tie together Cashiers policies, programs and recommendations for improving the walking and bicycling network.



CONNECTIVITY AND WALKABILITY

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- Sidewalks should be built along US 64 and Route 107
- Developing properties should incorporate connectivity elements into their projects and a fund must be established to provide sidewalks on properties that are not redeveloping
- In addition to sidewalks, landscaping including rhododendron hedges or street trees should separate the sidewalk from the road where possible to protect pedestrians and provide a more attractive streetscape for pedestrians, bikers and cars.
- Within proposed developments, there should be a network of sidewalks or trails that connect the property with their surroundings. This includes connections to trails such as the Greenway Ramble.



MIX OF USES AND HOUSING DIVERSITY

- People with different housing needs can live in the same community in a variety of housing types at a range of price points including rental and ownership
- Addition of missing middle housing (for full time employees who work in Cashiers) for working people can enhance the community by providing housing incomes for an increasingly diverse population

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MIX OF USES AND HOUSING DIVERSITY

- Mix of Uses
 - Includes residential, office, retail, restaurant, hotels, and green/recreation spaces.
 - Includes a diversity of housing types. This includes high end residential, the missing middle as well as affordable long-term rentals to attract the younger generation that may not be ready to buy.
- Placing housing above retail creates more diverse and affordable options for living in the core of the community



Transportation

- Continue building a comprehensive network for pedestrians, bikes and vehicles
- That network should respect, maintain and enhance Cashiers' mountain setting
 - Improve peoples' movement throughout Cashiers
 - Increase access to water, woods and services
 - Serve as organizing tool for land development -- new building enhances access, circulation in a mountain environment

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Transportation

- Mountain setting defines Cashiers physical character and limits road system
 - Winding, two-lane roads
 - Few alternate routes
 - Restricts ability of large vehicles
- Two-lanes roads should be retained
- Essential to manage development and circulation to avoid over-loading roads
- Keep people moving safely, even if slowly, to maintain two-lane roads



Transportation

- Recent studies recommended numerous beneficial improvements to sidewalks, paths, roads and parking
- Carefully applied, they can improve circulation and maintain Cashiers' rural, mountain character:
 - Prioritize trail development
 - Avoid inappropriate urban hardware like traffic signals – roundabouts and landscaped islands provide effective, efficient, safer and sustainable traffic control
 - Use local materials (granite) to pave parking areas, define edges, and indigenous plants to screen and shade parking



Transportation

- Create safe and attractive walking and biking connections
 - Reduces unnecessary car trips in Village Center
 - Fosters reputation for Cashiers as a quiet, green mountain retreat
- Approach differs from a Complete Streets template
 - Complete Streets include sidewalks, bike lanes and vehicle lanes together in the right-of-way
 - Cashiers is different – narrow streets, little right-of-way and steep terrain
 - Better to create walking and biking trails separate from roads (with the exception of some key sidewalks)

Transportation

- Expand the trail system to meander across the land and follow streams, not roads
 - Easements from property owners will be needed
 - Connect to public parking areas
 - Should be a shared-use trail for pedestrian and bikes, 10-foot wide, accessible to all ages and abilities
 - 4 miles of trails
- Build sidewalks at important locations
 - 3 miles of sidewalks are needed
 - Encourage landowner participation in providing easements for sidewalk construction

Transportation

- Make public parking convenient to the Village Center
 - Expect to build shared-parking
 - Locate shared-parking to the edge with easy connections to sidewalks and trails
 - Revise the Unified Development Ordinance to set *maximum* amounts of required parking, rather than minimums
 - Revisit requirements for retail, restaurant and residential uses to see if lower requirements can be used
 - Simplify the requirements to use a consistent measure of need
 - Encourage public use of parking at the Post Office, schools, library and similar facilities evenings and weekends for access to trails and recreation.
 - If available, designate portions of those lots for public daytime use

Transportation

Keep traffic moving

- Build the roundabout at the crossroads. It can fit within the boundaries of the existing intersection.
- Better for traffic year-around and better for pedestrians
- More sustainable and resilient since no electricity needed
- Roundabout can be a distinctive landscape and placemaking feature
- Create gateway features to calm traffic entering Cashiers
 - Roundabouts may also be beneficial on NC 107 at Frank Allen Road, and on US 64 at Slab Town Road
- Extend center left-turn lane at Ingles with new development and redevelopment on both sides of the road to reduce future traffic delay
- Monitor future traffic conditions to determine whether connector roads are needed for the Northeast and Southeast quadrants
 - Is there a need for greater local access or to by-pass the crossroads intersection?

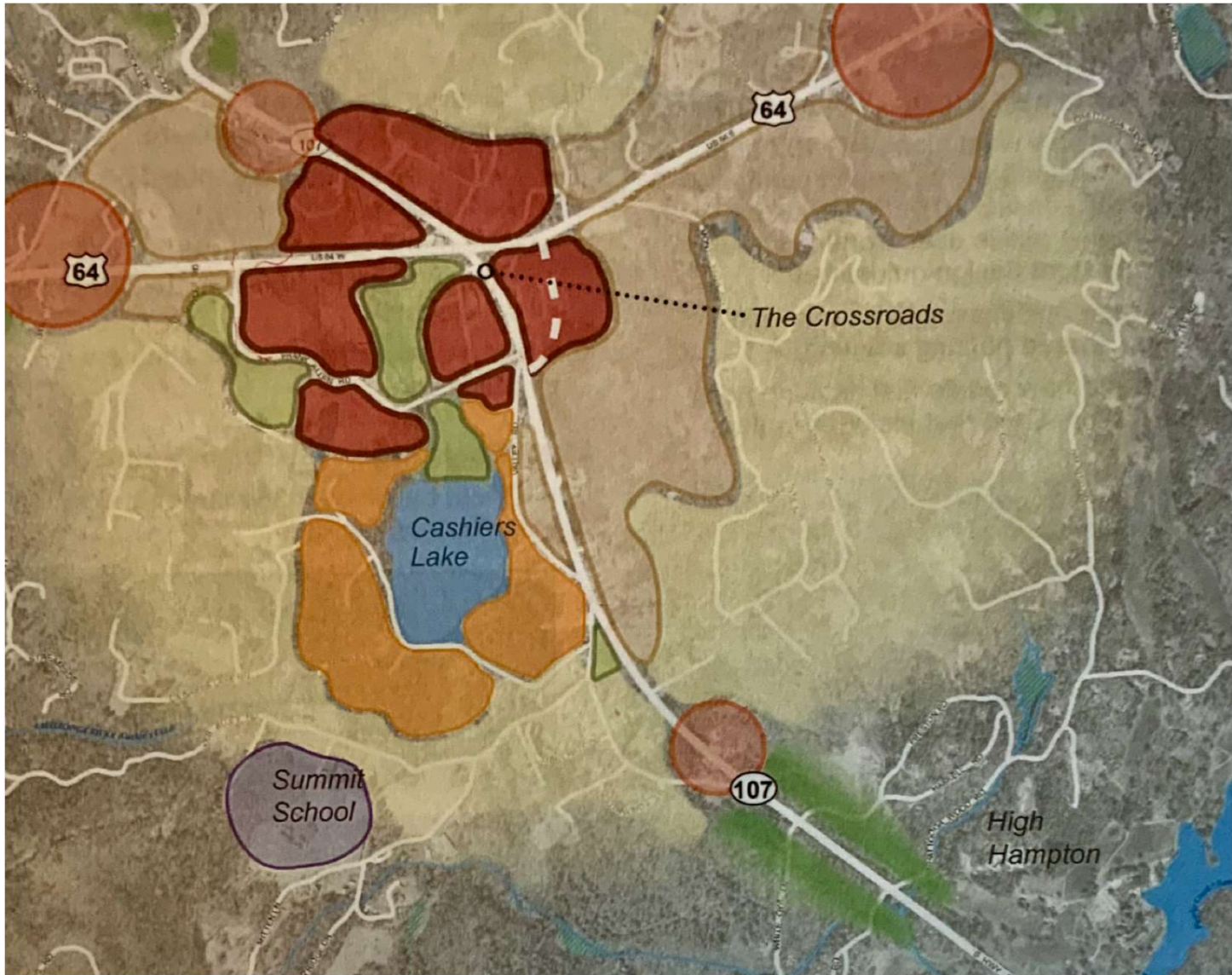
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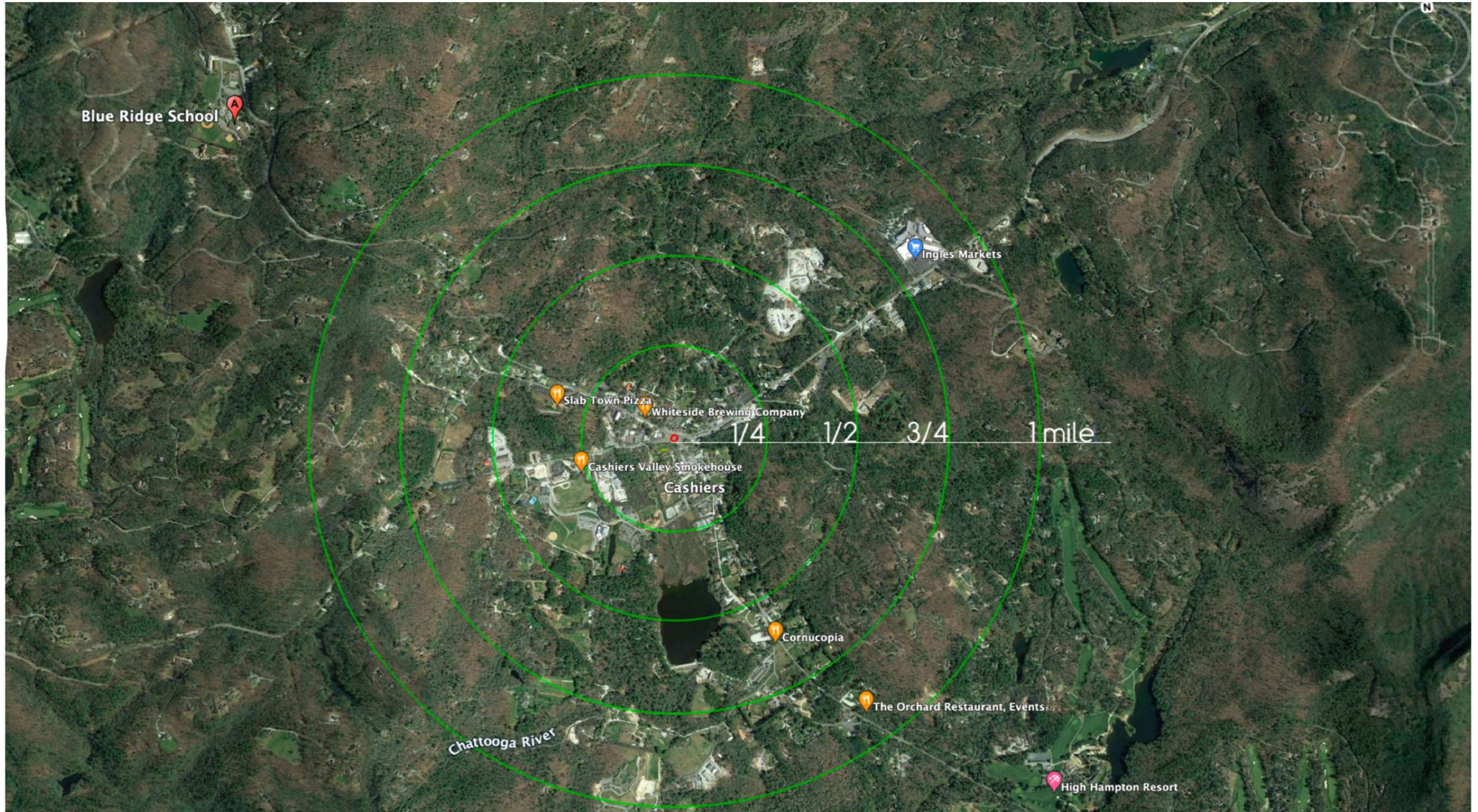


Transportation

Keep traffic moving

- Tie development approvals to available road capacity for local and regional roads
 - Local roads (non-highways) are low-volume roads with practical capacity limits of generally fewer than 1,000 vehicles per day
 - A single road can support approximately 100 to 120 single-family homes.
 - Roads with more than one connection to a highway can support more development, so long as the busiest segment carries no more than 1,000 daily vehicles
-
- Summary:
 - Build the roundabout now
 - Expand the trails and build the sidewalks
 - Create the gateways





|| Gateway Marker

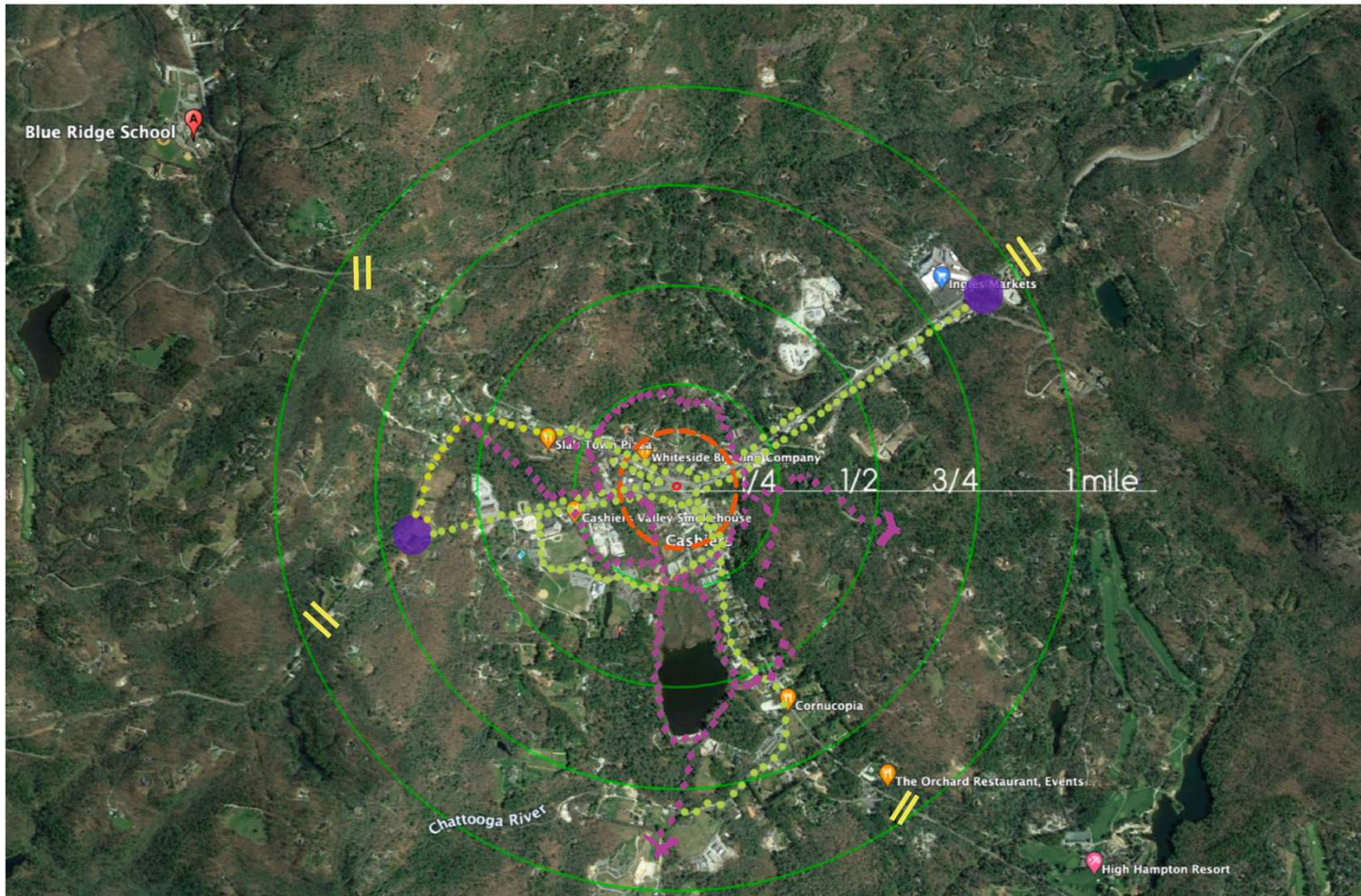
● Traffic Calming

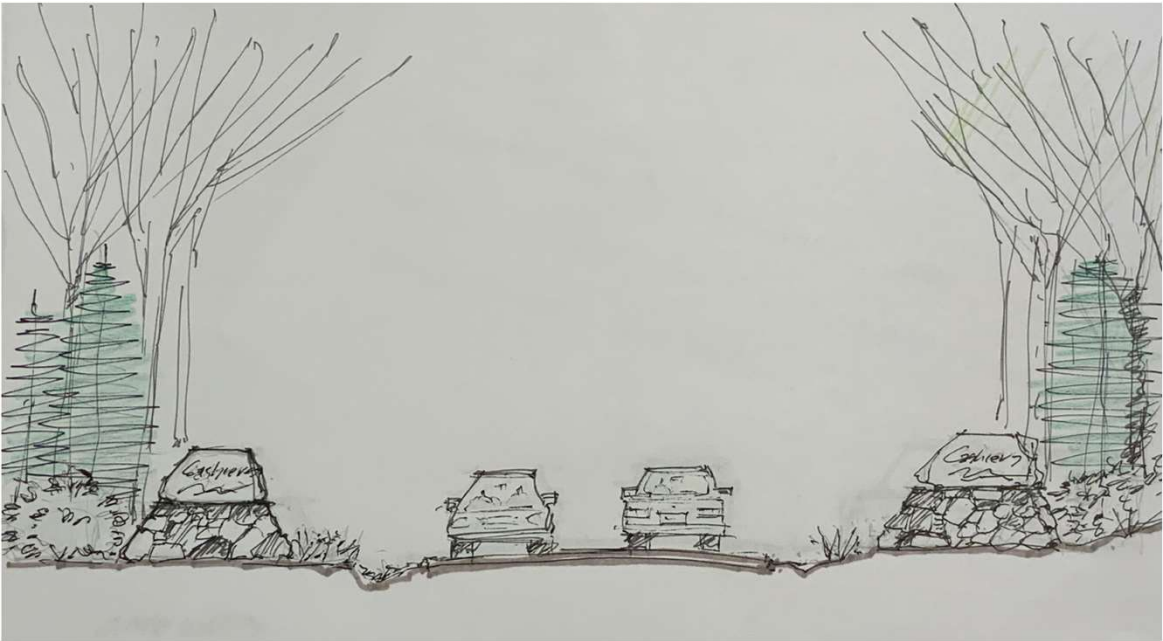
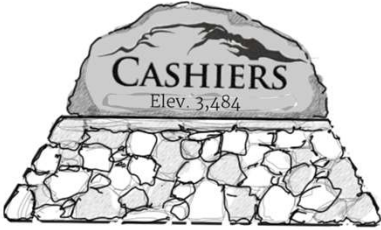
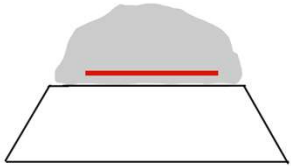
○ Roundabout

○ Walking Distance

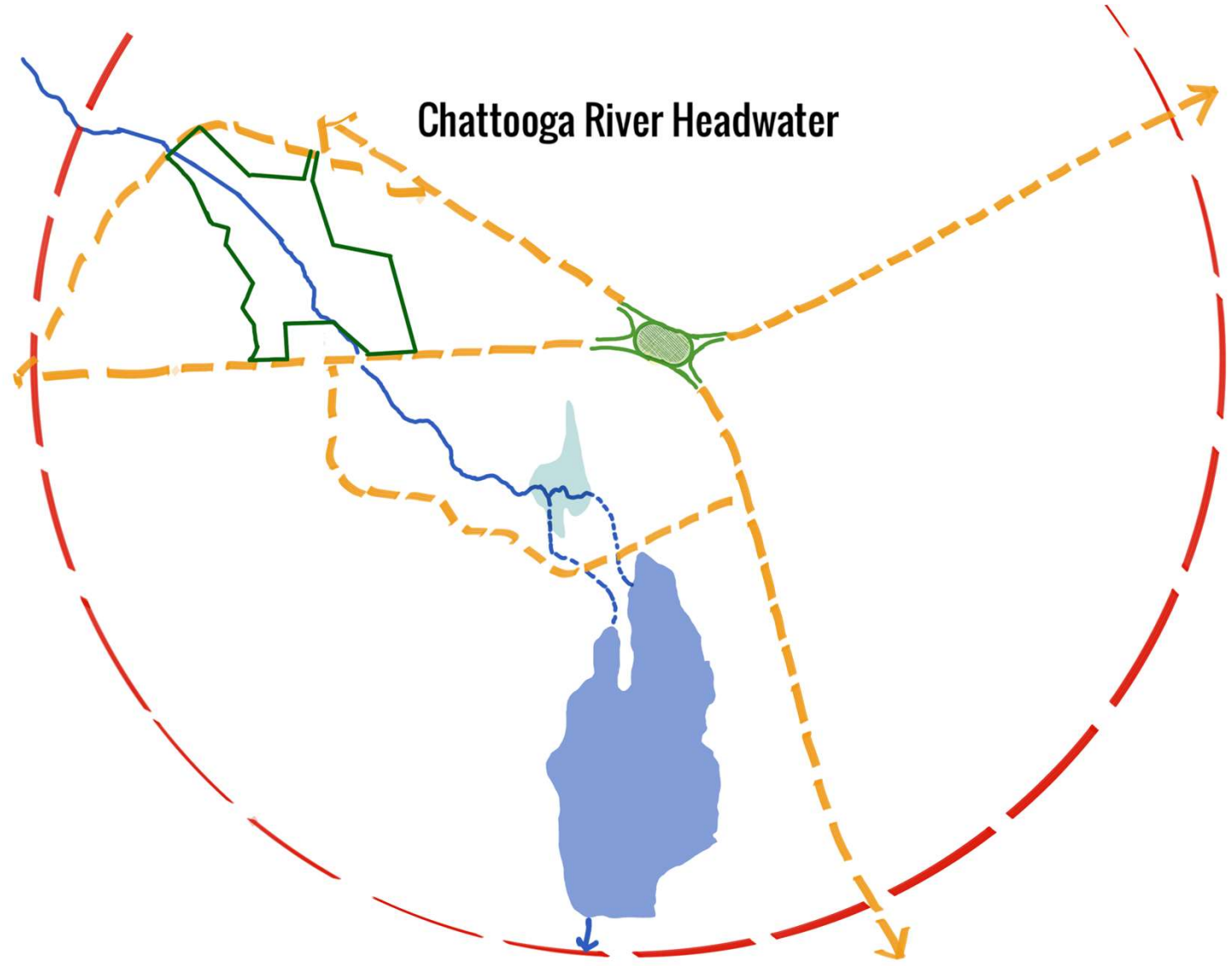
●●●● Sidewalks

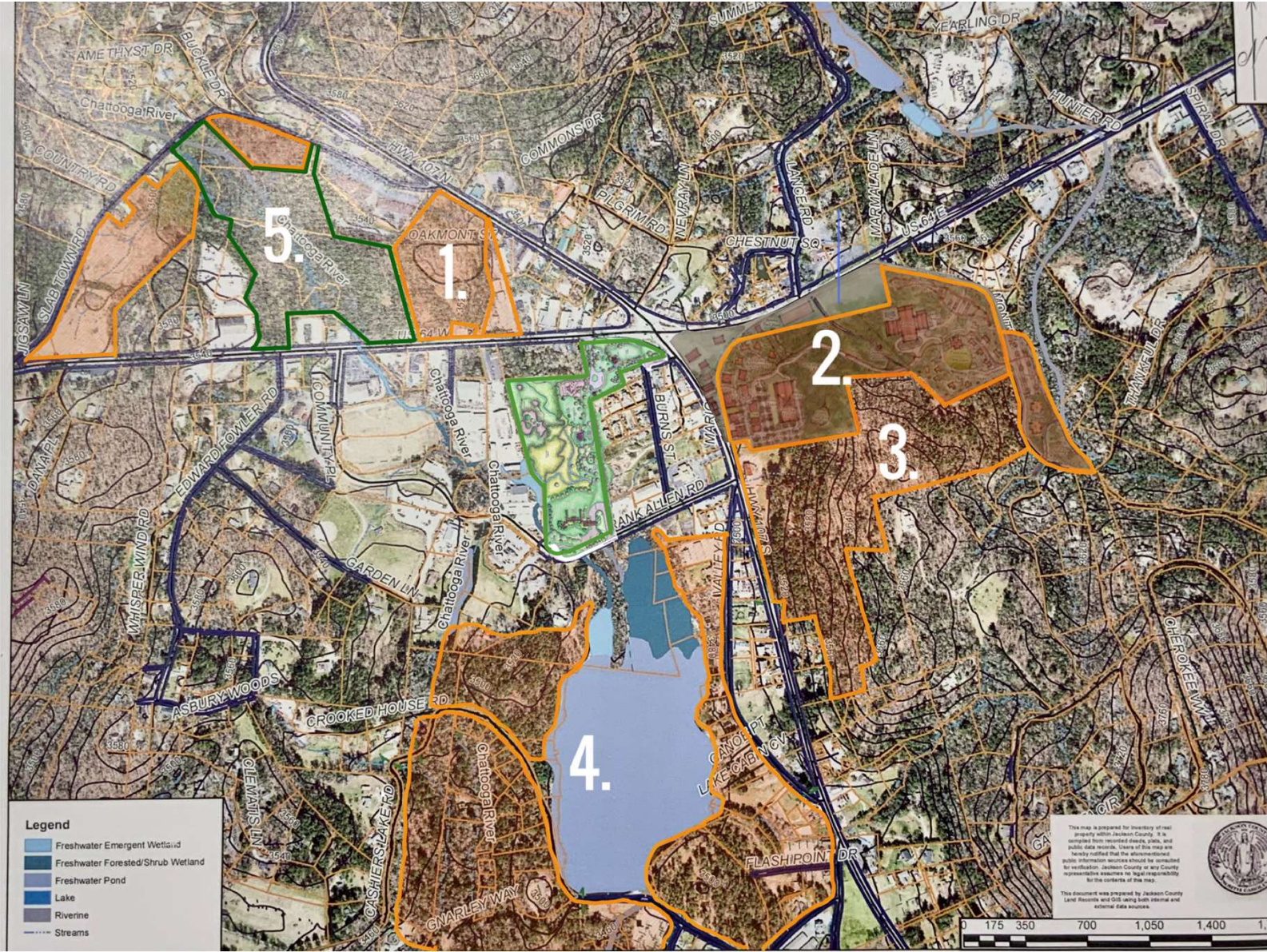
◆◆◆◆ Pathway/Boardwalk





Chattooga River Headwater



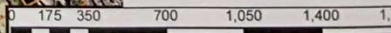


Legend

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine
- Streams

This map is prepared for inventory of wetlands within Jackson County. It is compiled from recorded deeds, plats, and public data records. Users of this map are hereby notified that the aforementioned public information sources should be consulted for verification. Jackson County or any County representative assumes no legal responsibility for the contents of this map.

This document was prepared by Jackson County Land Records and GIS using both internal and external data sources.



Site Size:

69,185 SF

DU/Acre:

8

Number of Homes:

12

Square Footage Range:

1,000 SF



Site Size:

97,929 SF/2.25 acres

DU/Acre:

7

Number of Homes:

16

Square Footage Range:

651 - 1500



Site Size:

31,000 SF

DU/Acre:

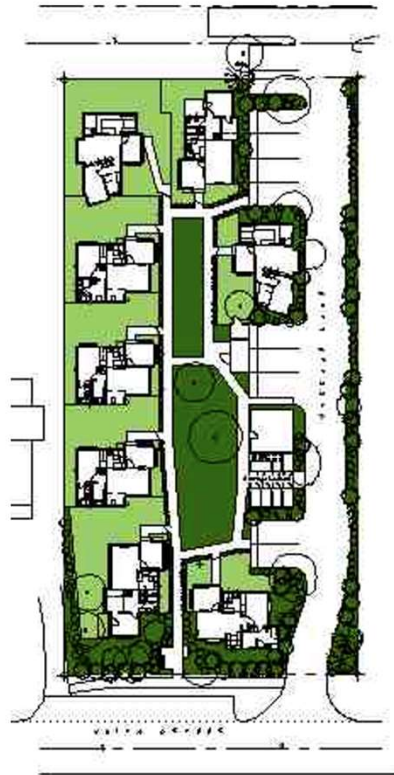
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Number of Homes:

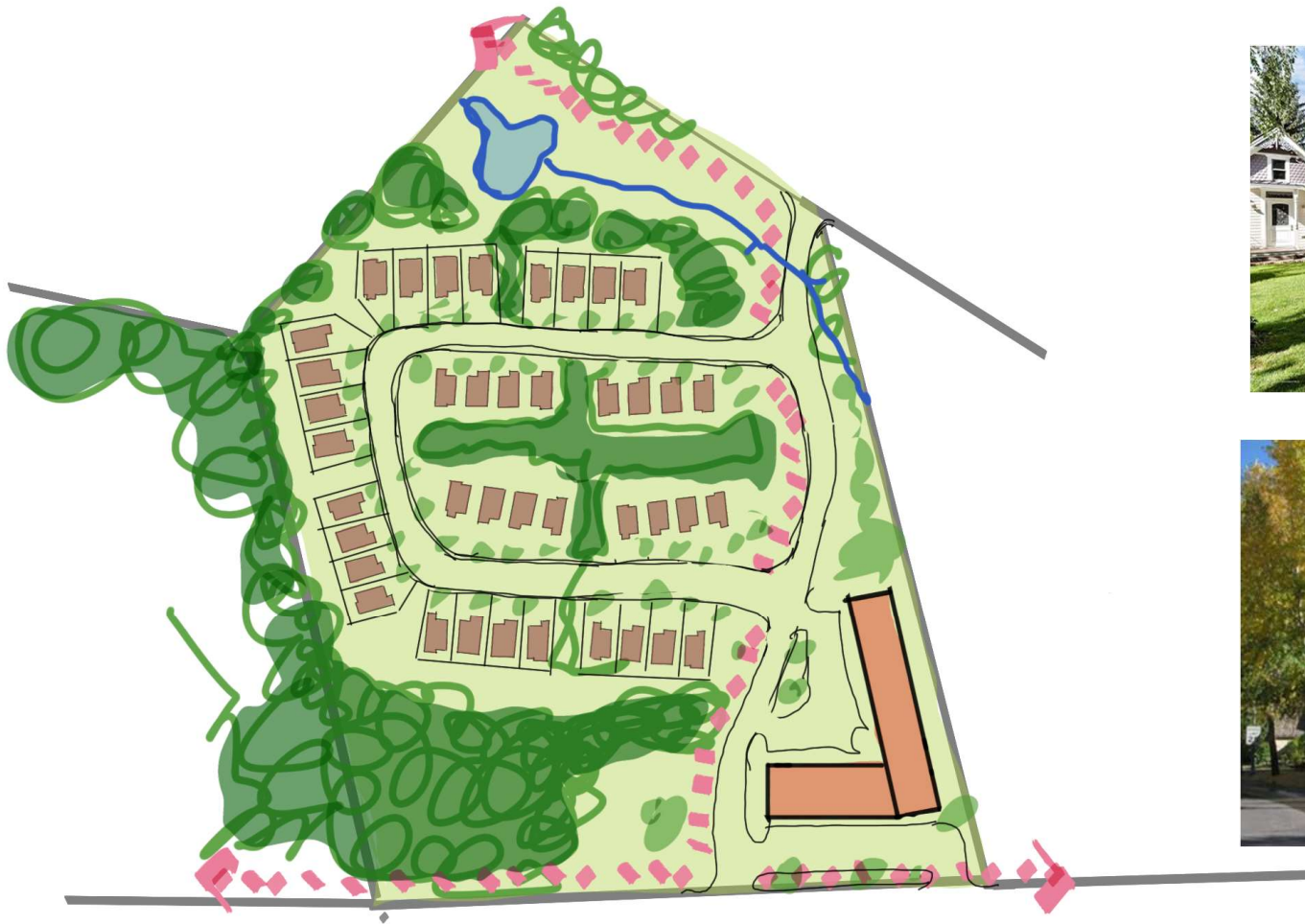
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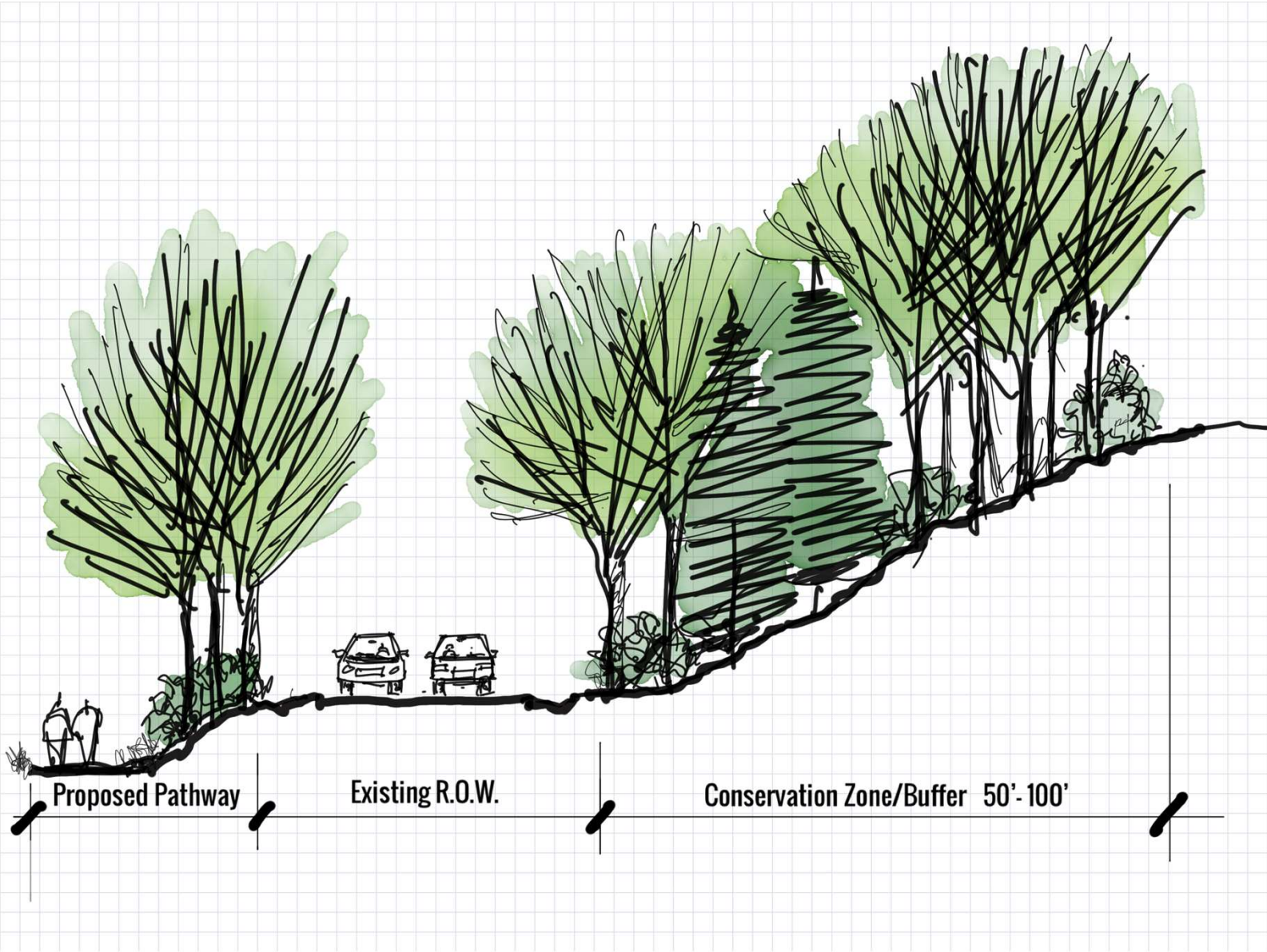
Square Footage Range:

All < 900 SF



Conceptual Plan for HCHF, NCDOT, Chamber Site

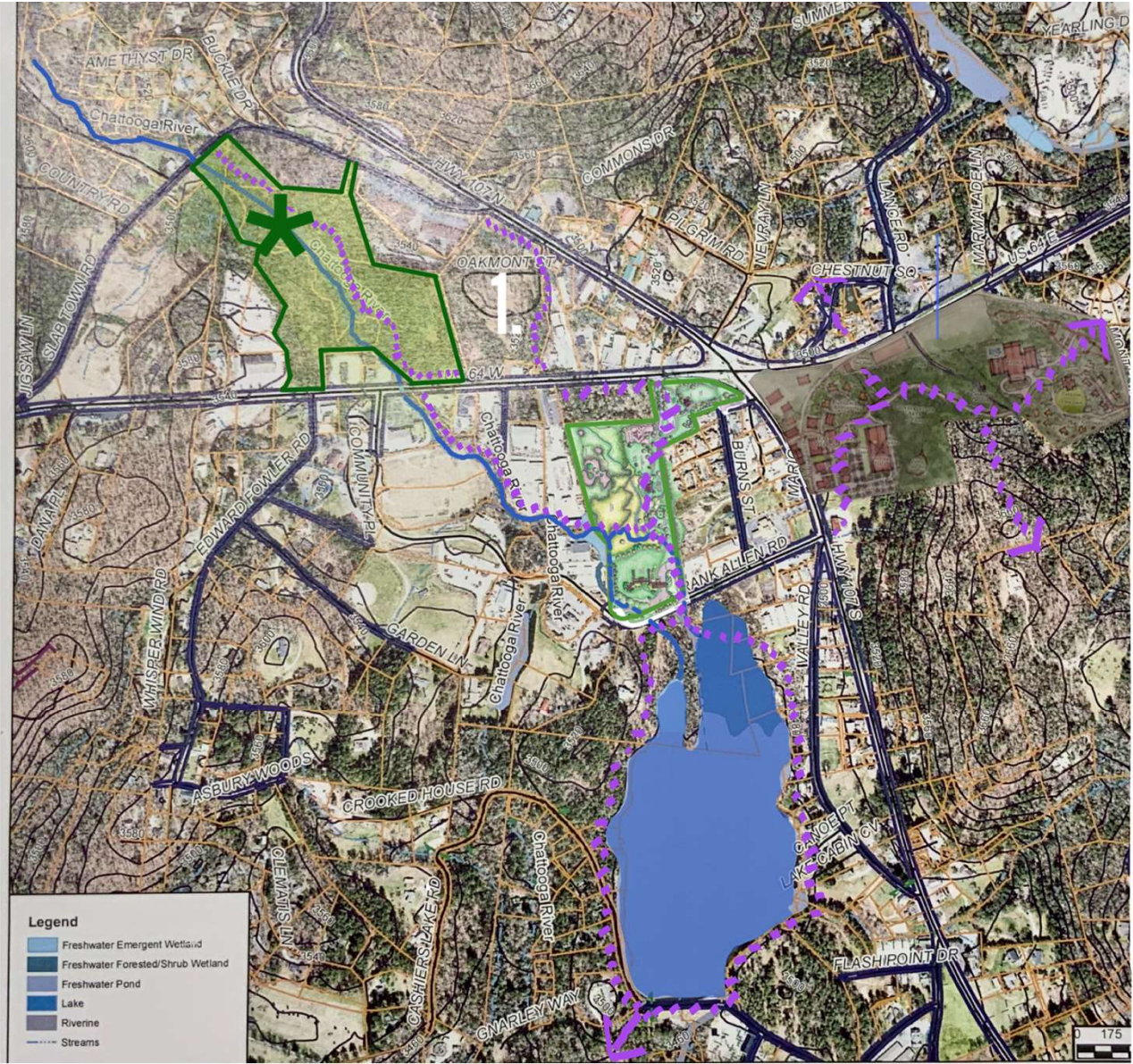


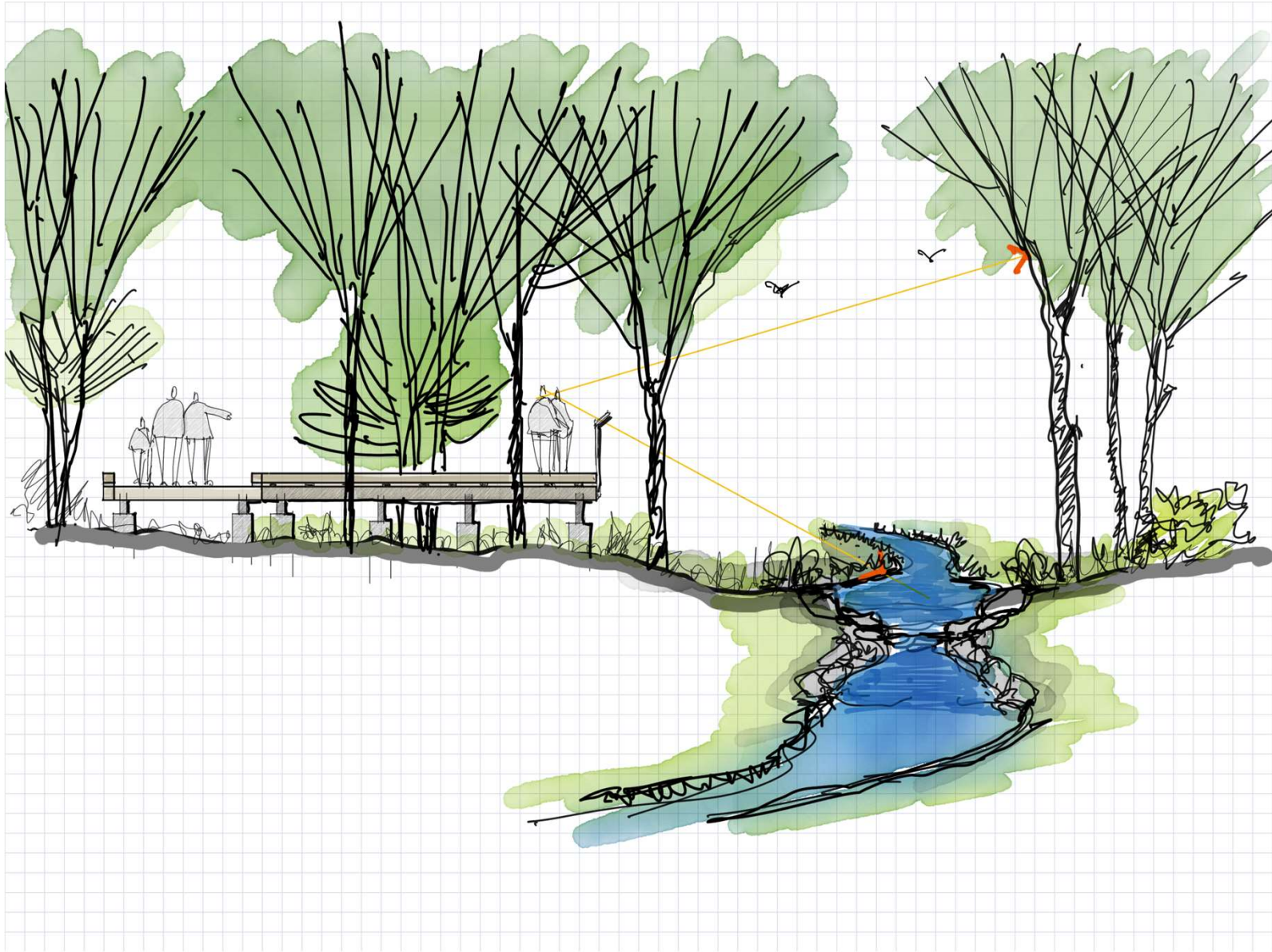


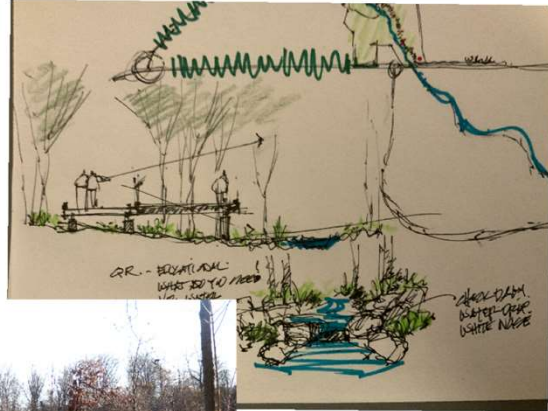
Proposed Pathway

Existing R.O.W.

Conservation Zone/Buffer 50'-100'







Need to build public infrastructure: Why?

- More residents
- More tourists
- Limitations to:
 - Road network
 - Water, stormwater and sewer capacity
 - Housing supply
- People won't stop coming

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Need to build public infrastructure: What?

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- Land and water conservation
- Trails and pathways
- Roundabout, sidewalks, broadband, water, stormwater and sewer
- Workforce housing
- Protecting the character

“Cashiers way” of public amenities: M.O.

- Need identified
 - Small group forms not-for-profit organization
 - Small group raises money (even seven figures)
 - Amenity is built (to high standard)
 - Not-for-profit runs amenity
-
- Results: Village Green, Boys and Girls Club, charter school, library, Humane Society

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“Cashiers way” of public amenities: Drawbacks

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- Works well for \$1-2M projects, less so for \$10-20M
- Works well for sexy projects, less so for dull (but critical) public infrastructure
- Cashiers should get a fair share of county, state, federal, and major not-for-profit funding
- If Cashiers doesn't get it someone else will

Recommendation: Synthetic tax-increment finance district and staff funding

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- Carve off a piece of incremental tax revenues from new development in Cashiers to help pay for infrastructure improvements in Cashiers; in other words, have those who benefit from infrastructure improvements help pay for them.
- Whether from county or charitable sources, establish a fund to augment staff and consulting personnel.

Recommendation: Sources of funding

- American Rescue Plan—\$1.8M in Jackson County, \$8.5B in NC
- Appalachian Regional Commission--\$235M annual budget
- Golden Leaf Foundation--\$59M in grants statewide
- Duke Endowment--\$156M in grants statewide
- Community Foundation of Western North Carolina--\$16M in grants
- Dogwood Health Trust--\$1.4B in assets
- Federal programs—HUD, EPA, USDOT, et al
- State programs—HFA, DEQ, NCDOT, et al
- New Market Tax Credits
- Opportunity Zones



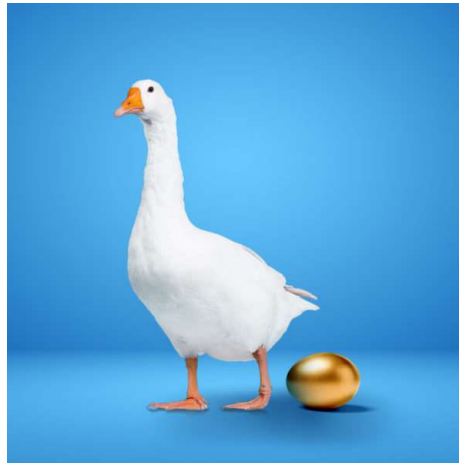
Recommendation: “Play the political game”

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- Present economic facts
- Hire lobbyists
- Use leverage
- Enlist partners (especially Highlands and other communities in Jackson County)
- Participate in countywide initiatives
- Contribute to campaigns

Tell your story

Don't starve the "Goose that Laid the Golden Egg"

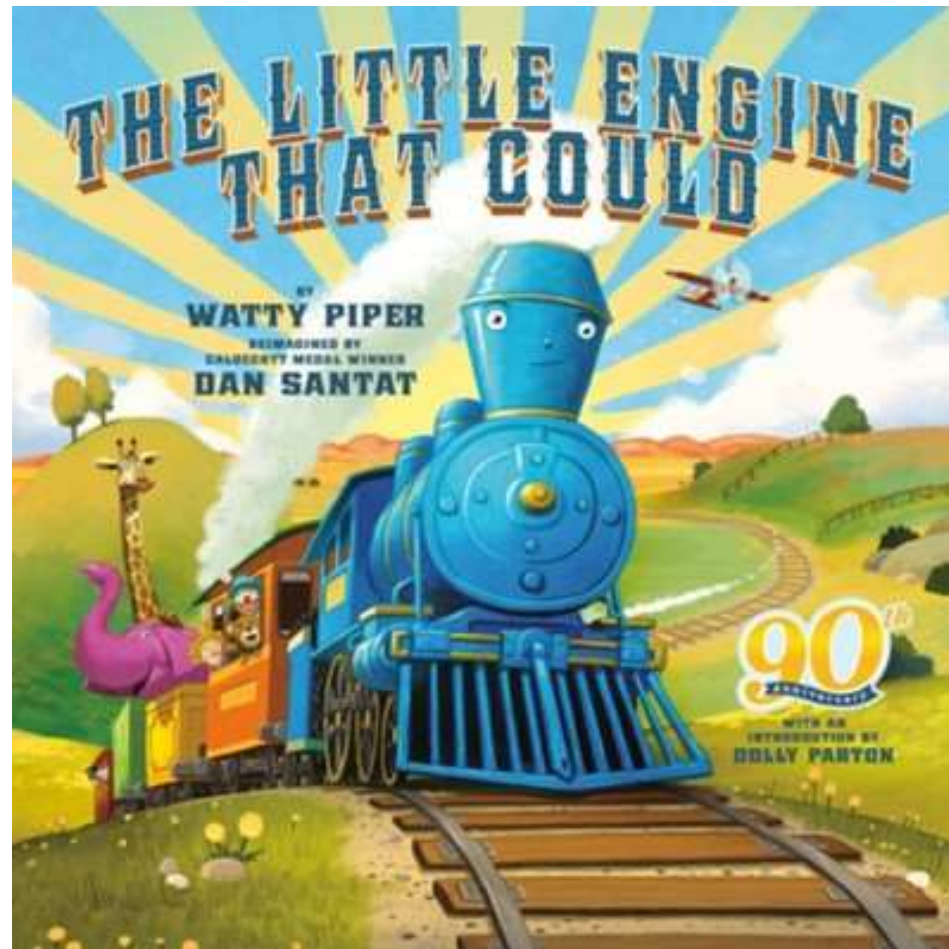


Tom

Cashiers, NC February 20-25, 2022

Cashiers, NC February 20-25, 2022

The Little Engine that Could



Cashiers, NC February 20-25, 2022

INTENTIONALITY

NIMBLE, CURIOUS AND AN APPETITE FOR RISK

- Strategic vision
- Structure
 - coordinated
 - aspirational
 - entrepreneurial
 - focused
- Incorporation or not?

FIVE INITIATIVES

- Conservation - a defining ethic
- For sale and rental attainable housing and small mixed-use development
- Trails
- Roads, sidewalks, sewers, water, storm water management, broadband
- Robust planning council

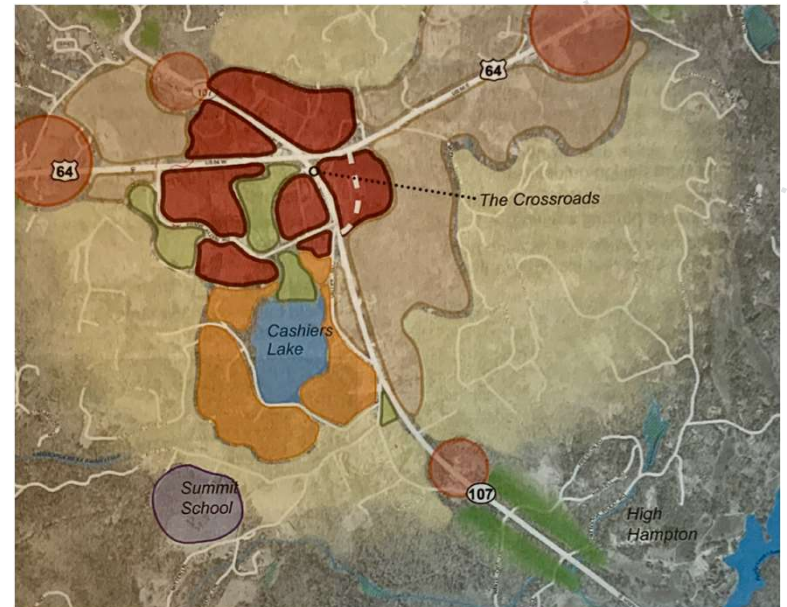
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Champions

- Conservation - Cashiers Land Trust
- Housing - Cashiers Community Development Corporation
- Trails - Vision Cashiers
- Infrastructure - Chamber of Commerce
- Quality and design - Cashiers Planning Council

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The Cashiers Community Development Corporation

- a 501-c-3
- 10 -15-member board with representation from the existing Cashiers organizations
- Clear mission statement
- Two paid staff
- Pursue public/private partnerships for affordable housing and small mixed-use developments
- Convenor of other champions to co-ordinate efforts



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ADVOCACY

- Paid staff to represent the interests of all the groups in raising funds
 - Federal
 - State
 - County
 - Philanthropic (outside cashiers)
 - Private
- Located within the chamber of commerce



Function	Champion	Role	Uses	Sources
Land Conservation	Cashiers Land Trust	Acquire 30 acres per year Identify and protect critical environmental features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire easements and purchase of land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Fund LWCF CDBG
Attainable Housing and Mixed-Use development	Cashiers CDC	60 units affordable for sale 40 units affordable rental Appropriate small-scale retail Convene the 5 Organizations to create accountability and connectivity Two Paid Staff positions Executive Director Convenor	Writing down the costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deferred Second mortgages Land Donations External Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recurring revenue from county Philanthropic grants ARC HUD NMTC
Trails	Vision Cashiers	4 miles of shared use trails = \$2.2 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the trails Maintain the trails Signage and wayfinding Coordinate with Land Conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and Federal grants Philanthropic sources
Road, Sidewalks, and Infrastructure	Chamber	3 miles of sidewalks = \$2.4 million Roundabout at intersection Safety improvements along major and minor road Better entrance signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One staff position Advocate at County and state level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Highway Federal Infrastructure Rural Broadband
Protect the Character	Planning Council	Review projects and create design standards Keeper of the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and utilize consultants Expand Membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Private Philanthropy

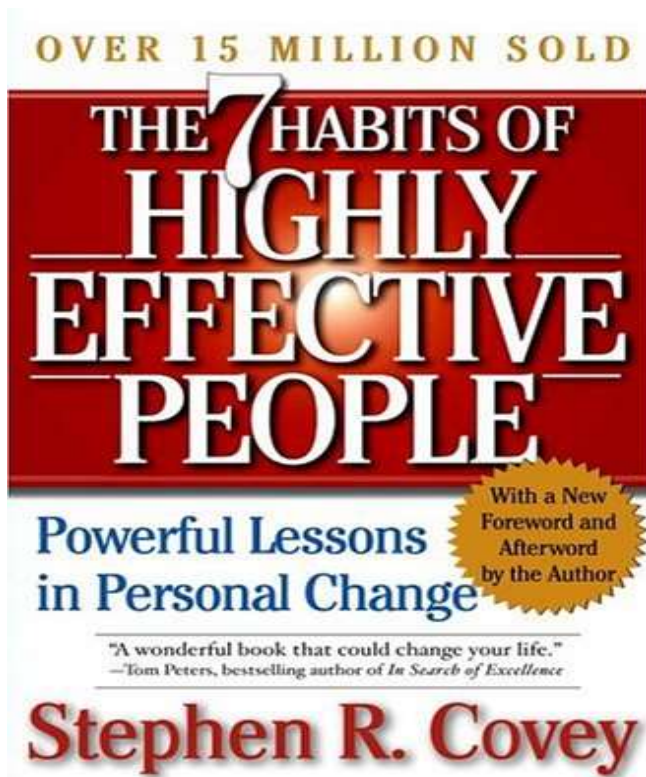
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Secrets of Successful Communities

Secrets of Successful Communities

- Develop a vision for the future
- Inventory local assets and resources
- Build plans around the enhancement of assets
- Pick and choose among development proposals
- Cooperate with neighbors for mutual benefit
- Protect nature and community character
- Have strong leaders & committed citizens

Successful Communities



- Begin with the end in mind
- Think win/win
- Seek first to understand and then to be understood

Some More Lessons Learned

- How much something costs is not the most important question
- Small projects can make a big difference big thing
- You have choices/ Don't accept substandard development
- It is never too late to make a community better

Hometown Heroes

“Never doubt that a small group of committed individuals can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”

-Margaret Mead



Erin and Ben Napier – Laurel, MS

It Is Not Always Easy



A Final Thought

**Vision counts, but
implementation is priceless!**

Thank You!

Urban Land Institute

www.uli.org