



The Recodify Cashiers project is an effort to update the development regulations that apply within the Cashiers Commercial District in Section 9.3 of the Jackson County Unified Development Ordinance (or “UDO”). The standards in the UDO address what kinds of land uses may be permitted in what areas, how those uses must be configured, and the procedure used by the County to review development application proposals.

Task 2, Policy Guidance Review, of the Recodify Cashiers project included a series of discussions about the applicable policy guidance in place in Cashiers, such as the Cashiers Small Area Plan adopted by the County in 2019. Part of the activities included in Task 2 included eight interviews with 22 different project stakeholders to discuss the project and collect input on issues facing the community, recent trends in development, and topics the project should address. These stakeholders included representatives from various community groups, property owners, members of the development community, and other interested parties.

This summary report details the input collected during these stakeholder interviews. The table below identifies the various interview dates and stakeholders who provided comments:

INTERVIEW DATE	PARTICIPANTS
2.21.23 1P-2P	Gary Wein, Highland Cashiers Land Trust Nicole Hayler, Chattooga Conservancy Thomas Bates, Cashiers Resident
2.21.23 2P-3P	Owen Shultz, High Hampton Representative Brian Peterkins, High Hampton Representative Tim Green, Cashiers Property Owner Fritz Rybert, Property Owner - Peachtree Group
2.21.23 3P-4P	Ben Harris, Contractor / Cashiers Chamber of Commerce/ Thomas Taulbee, Jackson Co. Planning Board / Cashiers Chamber of Com. Sarah Jennings, Cashier Chamber of Commerce Representative
2.21.23 4P-5P	Paul Robshaw, Vision Cashiers Representative Mary Palmer Dargan, Develop Cashiers Responsibly / Landscape Architect Ashlie Mitchell, Village Green Representative
2.21.23 5P-6P	Mark Zachary, Cashiers Multi-Generational Property Owner
2.22.23 9A-10A	Ken Fernandez, Realtor, Old Cashiers Realty Ann Austin, McKee Properties / Cashiers Historical Society Kati Miller, Realtor, Caliber Fine Properties
2.22.23 10A-11A	Terry Allen, Engineer, Terry Allen Engineering Troy Lucas, Landscape Architect, Daniels Communities
2.22.23 11A-12P	Mike Benitez, Developer, Elevated Builders Sam Lupas, Developer, Landmark Realty Group Turner Insc0, Developer / Property Owner Representative





This list of stakeholders were identified by County staff and the project team based on the diverse array of perspectives about development issues in the community. The feedback collected during these interviews is used as a starting point for further exploration and deeper discussions with other members of the Cashiers community.

The following pages provide a summary of the input collected from the 22 stakeholders interviewed. While individual responses are held in confidence, the following pages do provide a summary of paraphrased comments, organized into the following six different topic areas.

1. Issues of Community Concern
2. Recent Development Proposals
3. Thoughts on the Current Development Process
4. Cashiers' Community Character
5. Goals for the New Development Standards
6. Administration

It is important to note that these are the opinions of a small group of stakeholders and are not viewed as a comprehensive listing of all views and perspectives. Rather, this is a list of topics and ideas provided as starting points for further review and discussion. This information will be integrated into subsequent presentations and discussions as part of a comprehensive approach to engagement with the Cashiers community about how and in what ways the development regulations should be modified. The responses listed on the following pages are paraphrased and not provided in any particular order.

## **1. ISSUES OF COMMUNITY CONCERN**

The following are comments about issues facing the community or issues of concern for interviewees:

- A. Stakeholders would like to see dark skies requirements applied to exterior lighting
- B. There should be an increased focus on water quality protection and the need to maintain public open spaces/public lands
- C. Utilities are a roadblock to development
- D. The code does not address or contemplate having buildings nestled into the hillside (to reduce visibility)
- E. There are many questions about what to do about short term rentals in Cashiers
- F. We need more opportunities to age in place and land uses to support places for children
- G. We want to preserve trees, and to maintain shady highways
- H. We want to reduce development on steep slopes
- I. We want better water quality
- J. We cherish nature
- K. There is lots of traffic coming to Cashiers to work
- L. What about the tax situation - Cashiers provides more in tax revenues than it requires in terms of County expenditures
- M. There are significant traffic problems in the community
- N. This area gets more rainfall than surroundings, and the new code should address this
- O. Parking lots and stormwater management are a problem





## 2. RECENT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

While not mentioned that often during interviews, there were a few comments about recent projects proposed in Cashiers, which are paraphrased below:

- A. McCauley site plan proposal was a problem. The community didn't like the density, proposed changes to topography, lack of apparent stormwater management, potential traffic creation, how potable water and wastewater were proposed to be handled, greenspace was cobbled together instead of being deliberate
- B. The Kessler plan was more in keeping with Cashiers; it left some land undisturbed
- C. The Kessler project did a better job with road planning and interface with properties to the south
- D. McCauley - too dense, Tuscan architecture, did include affordable housing, the project also brought grant funding

## 3. THOUGHTS ON THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

The following is a list of comments about the current development review standards and the development review process for Cashiers, as described in Section 9.3 of the Jackson County UDO:

- A. The one thing to fix with this process is permitting. The quasi-judicial process is not good
- B. The building articulation standards are a problem
- C. Butterfly bush is invasive. The project should go back over the recommended plant list and re-examine what plants are native and which ones are not
- D. Things in the code that work now: erosion control & sedimentation, stormwater too. County has its own program, but it works
- E. There is a lack of communication in the development process and a lack of the ability to negotiate with applicants
- F. Some residential builders have not had any problems with the current code; there have been improvements to the code recently
- G. Prefer fee-in-lieu for sidewalk rather than out-and-out requirements to install sidewalk
- H. Regulations and planning committees weighted towards real estate interests
- I. County focuses too much attention on new problems instead of addressing old problems like potable water and drinking water quality
- J. Against four story buildings. Also against 3-story buildings unless you can't see them
- K. SUP process allows opponents to jump on applicants and doesn't allow representatives to tell the story of their applications
- L. Appendix B of the Fire Code has a very conservative fire water storage standard which is leading to very large water storage tanks





#### 4. CASHIERS' COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The following are observations about Cashiers' community character from interviewees:

- A. Not many large tracts left in Cashiers, mostly just smaller parcels. Lots of steep slopes, ridges, and wetlands in the larger area
- B. Folks in the community feel a greater sense of stewardship over the natural environment than they have in the past
- C. Conservation of land is not an amenity; its an identity. Conservation should be "baked in" to new development. The community needs an informational awareness campaign - conservation makes Cashiers unique
- D. Desire to keep the community small - no more large commercial centers (like Ingles); no more strip commercial centers
- E. The State will not consider incorporation since it has been rejected by the community on more than one occasion
- F. Cashiers is "vanilla"
- G. Visitors should be able to park once and walk around Cashiers
- H. Highlands is a 'main street' kind of community with uniform architecture - Cashiers is different - more eclectic and less formal
- I. Tree save: what's important is not what gets saved, but rather, what gets replanted

#### 5. GOALS FOR THE NEW DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

This section describes a short list of suggestions for changes to the Cashiers' development standards:

- A. Need architectural control
- B. New code needs to provide examples of how to properly do stream restoration, examples of restoration plants, and forms of wetland restoration buffers that will work in this context
- C. Buffer restoration standards would help with how to do with trails and pedestrian connections; we need to better collocate trails and buffer restoration.
- D. Make pedestrian feature construction an effort to restore riparian buffers as well
- E. We need a heavier reliance on landscaping
- F. Need better stormwater control
- G. Perhaps "distant" areas in the community removed from the core could use a different sidewalk material or configuration
- H. Could a Community Improvement District help with expenditures like sidewalk?
- I. The new code needs better marching orders for how things look
- J. Want better water quality, more potable water availability
- K. We want 'dark sky' exterior lighting standards
- L. Need flexibility in the development review process
- M. There is considerable community support for greenspace/open space requirements
- N. There is a desire for historic preservation to promote the "charm of cottage shopping"
- O. Need to have incentives for the adaptive re-use of these older buildings





## 5. GOALS FOR THE NEW DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS (continued)

- P. Need to address short term rental problems; learn from Highlands' experience
- Q. Street connectivity is confounded by topographic conditions, buffers, and wetlands - we need to make the grid more loose
- R. When streets can not connect, then sidewalks should
- S. Road widths in subdivisions are an issue; the Fire Code should control says the Fire Marshal, but this results in wide streets - how to resolve
- T. There is support for alleys provided the alleys do not create conflicts between cars and pedestrians on trails/sidewalks

## 6. ADMINISTRATION

This section includes opinions about County staff and the Planning Council:

- A. Jackson county staff is the best staff to work with across 5 counties
- B. Could there be/should there be a Cashiers-based County planning staffer?
- C. We need more competent leadership on the CPC- more people to sit on the Council; consider adding more people with experience who may be non-voting members
- D. Extend CPC membership to areas outside the village district boundaries - should expand to areas like 'slabtown' and Cashiers lake
- E. County has a good staff that is qualified
- F. County staff is helpful
- G. CPC process is cumbersome, and CPC lacks real authority

Thank you to all the participants for sharing their views and perspectives. This information will be used by County staff and the project team to explore and refine concepts for the updated development requirements as the Recodify Cashiers project moves forward. Questions about this summary may be posted on [www.recodifycashiers.com](http://www.recodifycashiers.com).

