

# West Jefferson

## *Additional Opportunities*

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After completing each phase of the research portion of the project, Atlas identified a variety of strategic opportunities for West Jefferson to consider. Although the scope of work has been identified for this specific project, Atlas recommends West Jefferson review the results and recommendations below for future community and economic development projects in order to address some of the challenges identified along the way.

**Greenway:** Although West Jefferson is situated along the Blue Ridge Parkway, there is a need for more outdoor amenities. Additional activities, such as bike trails, a greenway, RV campgrounds, and rock climbing, can not only draw more residents to outdoor spaces but visitors as well. Neighboring [Wilkes County](#) is currently in the process of developing an [Outdoor Action Plan](#) and could serve as a prime example on how to begin expanding outdoor recreation activities and amenities.

**Indoor/Outdoor Facility:** Roughly 40% of survey respondents chose “Indoor/Outdoor Facility” when asked what amenity should be a priority for West Jefferson. Many of the ideas included an outdoor pool, sports facilities, dog park, and mini golf courses. In order to begin plans for any of these projects, collaboration among community groups is necessary. Although some of these amenities could be provided by one entity, e.g. the City or County government, other amenities might require someone to start a business. In order to encourage business development for amenities that are especially desirable by the community, West Jefferson could offer specific incentives to aid in the development of those ideas.

**Creative Space(s):** Although this idea might fall under the indoor/outdoor facility umbrella, many suggestions regarding a creative space included ideas such as a place for dance classes, yoga classes, photography, and other hobbies or skills that can be shared among the community. West Jefferson could evaluate already existing spaces that could meet the needs for this type of amenity rather than looking at a new build or building restoration.

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**Restaurants:** More restaurants was among the top three choices for what amenity should be a priority for West Jefferson. Although West Jefferson has a variety of restaurants downtown, such as Boondocks Brewing, Black Jack's, New River Brewing, Slice WJ, and Craft Bistro, which provides locals with a wonderful fine dining experience, residents expressed an interest in expanding the types of restaurants available. Italian, Indian, and Thai were cuisines mentioned. West Jefferson might not be able to support these restaurants individually, but the concept of a food hall could be explored. One building could house 2-3 food options where patrons could mix and match their meals, while business owners could cut overhead costs by working in a smaller, shared space.