

PUBLIC *Survey* RESULTS

West Jefferson, North Carolina

TABLE OF Contents

click to jump to page

General Questions

If you could describe your current perspective of West Jefferson as a community in ONE word, how would you describe it?	1
If you could describe your long-term vision (25 years from now) for West Jefferson in ONE word, how would you describe it?	3
Describe West Jefferson's most unique assets	5

Key Building Revitalization

If you could bring any cultural amenities/activities to West Jefferson, what would they be?	9
What amenity should be a priority to create/develop in West Jefferson? For example, a restaurant/brewery, cultural center, daycare, etc.	14
What area(s) of West Jefferson would be eligible locations for this new amenity?	17

continued on next page >>

Housing Assessment

Have you, or someone you personally, know struggled to find appropriate housing in West Jefferson?	20
What type of housing is most needed in West Jefferson? Select all that apply.	21
Historically, what are the major challenges related to housing in West Jefferson?	21
Do you believe West Jefferson should focus on revitalizing current homes or building new homes?	28

Workforce Development Strategy

In your opinion, what are West Jefferson's key workforce industries?	28
In order to strengthen workforce development within the region, what should West Jefferson's top priorities be?	30
Are there any resources for high school students wanting to pursue careers with West Jefferson's key industries/top employers?	33
Should West Jefferson create an incentive program for current and/or prospective residents?	34
If you answered "Yes" or "Unsure" to the last question, what incentive(s) do you believe would draw prospective residents and/or support current residents to West Jefferson?	34
Which companies/organizations (public and private) should be involved in this region's comprehensive workforce development strategy?	34

note: responses have not been edited for grammar/spelling errors to maintain their integrity.

1. If you could describe your current perspective of West Jefferson as a community in ONE word, how would you describe it?

- Great
- Unique
- Wonderful
- Intact
- Beautiful
- Invested
- Charming
- unsure.
- Behind
- Divided
- Led
- Family
- Partitioned
- growing
- United
- Friendly
- Caring
- short-sighted
- idyllic
- Energized
- creative
- Vibrant
- Tourist
- nice
- Divided
- Thriving
- Charming
- Welcoming
- Cliques
- Growing
- Beautiful
- Maturing
- Growing
- Fantastic
- Fractured
- Growing
- wholesome
- Lost

- Tourism
- Rural
- Family
- Welcoming
- Energetic
- Becoming
- Tourist town
- Peaceful
- Thriving
- Division
- Tourism
- Lacking
- Touristy
- Friendly
- Touristy
- Vibrant
- Awful
- Touristy
- Vital
- Growing
- Charming
- Growing
- Growing
- Vibrant
- wonderful
- Charming
- Tired
- Quaint
- Quaint
- Welcoming
- Peaceful
- Friendly
- An OK place
- Semi-quiet
- Everchanging
- vibrant
- Growing
- Happening
- Pleasant
- Pleasant

- Friendly
- Welcoming
- Trump-y
- Mayberry
- small
- Tourism
- Quaint
- transitioning
- Growth
- Diverse
- Close
- Tourism
- Friendly
- Outdated
- Vibrant
- Transitional
- Hometown
- Safe

2. If you could describe your long-term vision (25 years from now) for West Jefferson in ONE word, how would you describe it?

- Strong
- Consistant
- Thriving
- Flourishing
- Refuge
- Progression
- Prosperous
- more opportunities.
- Behind
- Cohesive
- Thriving
- Family
- Welcoming
- destination
- Prosper
- Expanded
- Amenity driven
- quaint
- destination

- Vibrant
- Transformation
- Active
- Community
- active
- Growing
- Thriving
- Rural
- Amazing
- Quaint
- Booming
- Fantastic
- Balanced (not too many tourists that residents are inconvenienced)
- Thriving
- Responsive
- Prosperous
- Inclusive
- sustainable
- Prosperous
- Flourishing
- Diverse
- Affordable
- Inviting
- Diversity
- A haven for the arts and a distinctive Appalachian Community.
- Pigeon forge
- Nice park along one of our streams with access to fishing and festivals much like Lansing park. snd
- propherous
- United
- Thriving
- Development
- Uncertain
- Safe
- Caring
- Sustainable
- Too many out of towers
- Family
- Central
- small-town
- Destination

- Loving
- Prosperous
- Maintain current vibe and expand/connect to outdoor adventure in county
- crowded
- Inclusive
- Remade
- Thriving
- I don't expect to be alive in 25 years
- Positive
- Growth
- Sustainable
- Still held back by old views/thinking of town leaders
- Bigger
- Busy
- close knit
- Rural
- Better
- Remain pleasant for all ... local and outsiders
- Growth
- Stability
- Diversity
- Mayberry
- small
- Lively
- Destination
- blowing rock
- Potential
- Potential
- Opportunities
- Managed tourism
- Thriving
- Progression
- Progressive
- Thriving
- Community
- Friendly

3. Describe West Jefferson's most unique assets

- Location, Downtown area, residents
- The businesses that keep the town sustainable bring in local community members

- The People, The Beauty, The Arts, The Businesses
- The people always there for each other Safe
- Friendly, Quaint Town. Reminds me of a Norman Rockwell Painting.
- Wherr tradition of the blue ridge melds with the new
- Small town, relatively safe community. Good place to raise a family, however there is not much for younger people to do in terms of recreation.
- Downtown/ mountains/ Wildlife
- None
- It's a small town in which many grew up, and so many have very strong roots here.
- Natural beauty and charm
- Downtown
- Murals and appreciation for local art, walkable streets, multigenerational stores/businesses, mountain views, community events (rod runs, music on the backstreet, Christmas in July, etc.), cheese plant
- small town charm, not as crowded. New River
- Geography, Accessibility, Cultural, Library, Park, Cheese Plant, Frescoes, Mt. Jefferson State Park, Civic Center, Virginia Creeper
- Community partnerships, arts - music, outdoor activities - hiking, fishing, scenery - - not sure how unique all this is from other mountain towns. I guess being known for Christmas in July is unique. Ashe County Cheese is an asset and unique in its own way too.
- Mountains, rivers, small businesses
- surrounding natural beauty, wealth of musical and artistic talent
- Charming presentation of the arts and culture
- charming and diverse downtown community that continues to evolve through revitalization and renewal, enriched greatly by the visual and musical arts and a strong, community-focused public library and neighboring town park; home to a growing variety of customer-friendly retail shoppes; surrounded by the natural beauty of Mount Jefferson, Paddy Mountain, near the New River and associated outdoor amenities to enjoy all four seasons; and a welcoming and caring faith community throughout the downtown area.
- Arts Council, active business leaders, Florence Center, potential for greater biking, hiking and horse riding center, library (perhaps our greatest asset{}
- Its welcoming attitude shown by businesses and year-round residents, the variety of businesses and activities while staying, as much as possible, true to the town and county's roots.
- I can't identify any "unique assets" but assets that are valuable to the town is music on the back street, farmers market, and the coffee shop.
- mountains.. River
- The scenery
- Art, music, location in the beautiful mountains. Climate. Improving restaurants.
- Mountains and people
- Location, Small Business Commitment, Safe, Welcoming, progressive while respecting the past
- Small

- It's people, local loving, welcoming family oriented people.
- Art and Christmas Trees
- Scenery, hiking, New River, arts, music, road connections, airport, cycling, access to Parkway
- Community oriented
- Public art, galleries, welcoming people, pedestrian friendly, attractive
- The land itself
- Appalachian charm, caring people, community.
- WJ's most unique asset is the people.
- Beauty
- Christmas in July, the Cruise Ins, and the other events that take place in downtown WJ. Also, there is a great feeling of community and everyone being welcome.
- Outdoors...New River, Railroad Grade Road. Friendly people.
- It's people
- Small, warm with a variety of resources
- West Jefferson is home to a diversity of shops, art galleries, antique stores, gourmet foods and tasty restaurants. It is also home to the Ashe County Farmers Market, Ashe County Cheese Plant, Craft Beer Brewery and Wine Shops.
- When I first arrived I was impressed with the public art from murals to statuary. That attention to public spaces and the continuing beautification of the town create a beautiful and unique townscape. I am also impressed by local businesses working together to do things such the October scarecrows. Gallery Crawls, various festivals, and free public concerts constantly invite people into the town.
- Location to nature
- Smallness of overall area.
- frescoes, cheese factory, many small businesses, arts council
- The people
- The embrace of mountain life, the love of good food, and the artisans.
- The atmosphere
- Shops, Murals, Restaurants, nice downtown streets.
- Quiet, small, nature, secluded
- Small town
- Walkable, interesting shops (good balance),
- Is the local people
- West Jefferson is completely unique in that we are a close knit community with a strong sense of commitment to our friends, family and neighbors. West Jefferson has so many residents that have incredible talents. Geographically, West Jefferson is unique in that it is nestled at the base of Mount Jefferson. West Jefferson also has unique ties to historical events. The most important asset is our children and the children in the surrounding area with the majority wanting to raise their families here when they get out of college or can find good jobs.
- Vibrant arts community, attractive appearance, open-mindedness
- Small town with active arts community in beautiful setting

- Climate,
- The people, hard working, true, and loving.
- Location
- Healthy downtown
- small town
- Geographic setting, small town feel to downtown, arts community, blended socio-economic population
- The mountains are great, proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway, lack of urban plan, anything goes.
- Safe, walkable, unique shops, art galleries
- I don't live in West Jefferson. I live in Creston.
- setting in the mountains, small population, agricultural heritage
- Small, peaceful town that supports the local arts, shops, and culinary aspects most people look for in today's world. It has a great Saturday Farmers Market featuring local home grown vegetables, honey, meats and many handmade gift items such as handmade knitted shawls, pottery, wood items, etc. They also have maple syrup tapped from this county. The Friday night art crawls are always a hit with locals and tourists alike. A great place to call home.
- Art Scene
- safe place to live compared to most
- Mount Jefferson
- Wj park with "pocohantis" returned to town
- the art scene, friendly people, volunteer activity and some good restaurants and not TOO touristy yet
- Beautiful surroundings
- Art and commerce
- Climate and scenery
- Climate and scenery
- It's people...
- Beautiful mountains, nearby river, hiking trails, art community, library, weather
- Access to nature, small businesses and restaurants, beautiful down town
- The people
- mtns
- Small town feel with opportunities for tourism
- Small town appeal; shopping/dining (but need more dining options); beautiful park; only cheese plant in NC; love the painted murals and all the beautification that has been done over the past few years
- location
- Businesses, Services, Real Estate and People
- Nature of course, the beautiful mountains, the awesome river, the rural farms, unique shopping experiences.
- Beautiful scenery, thriving downtown, close knit community
- Wide sidewalks and places to sit
- Friendly small town with a lot to offer a wide variety of people
- Beautiful landscapes, small town vibes

- The Arts
- Charming downtown with hometown meets some modern luxuries.
- Variety of shops, restaurants, activities and art for locals and tourists
- Easy walking in town

4. If you could bring any cultural amenities/activities to West Jefferson, what would they be?

- Concerts
- Business owners with balls and grit to do what is smart and common sense stuff
- A Performing Arts Theatre like the one in Banner Elk that brings in top performers from around the country
- Festivals
- Scenic Railway.
- Festivals that support the heritage of the area
- More Appalachian Heritage in terms of cultural amenities.
- unsure.
- Housing
- PFLAG meetings, and activities for children and youth to interact away from home.
- River walk/greenway connecting the towns, and a modernized community recreation and fitness center with pool
- More downtown events.
- Something for children, that is inclusive of children in the county (not prohibitive in cost). Maybe a space for cultural arts classes and camps or a space for year long recreation (gym?). Something that gets Ashe County kids excited about where they come from and a good reason to stay or come back after college.
- more focus on outdoor activities focused on river/camping and hiking
- Museum
- Enhanced gym facilities, continued annual skateboard event on Mt. Jefferson, film festivals
- Indigenous appreciation
- flex conference/presentation space
- more festivals
- The mountain setting is viewed as a destination or retreat away from the hustle bustle of urban areas. Because of our established presence of the arts and our popular literary festival, could we build upon that growth to provide creative community spaces or events for writers, songwriters and artists to develop new works and over time schedule performance events to highlight such works.
- More music opportunities, more theater - especially aimed at families an younger children
- A bookstore. More author/book readings, especially on the weekends. More affordable art (painting) experiences for local folks to participate in. Themed festivals (similar to the antique fairs, the automobile cruise-ins) on the Back Street.
- Museums, festivals, inclusive cultural experiences/activities. Not only around Appalachian culture but other cultures that are prominent in our population. Such as Hispanic, African American, ect.

- bike trails
- To include more diversity and cultural appreciation. More festivals and public events would be nice to see.
- Guided hikes.
- Better restaurants and more youth activities
- Kid/Family friendly activities, better shopping options, Child Care, better parking
- Putt Putt
- Interactive museum for children & adults
- Music
- Winter activities, spa,
- YMCA or community center
- Sculpture, amphitheater, street musicians
- Youth and young adult venues to keep people local
- Educational expansion
- This gets tricky. When you start bringing in (or even applying labels) to cultural amenities, you run the risk of changing the very thing you're trying to preserve.
- Target, Home Depot, Clothing stores
- I would love to see more festivals, fairs, or other activities.
- Large indoor fitness center like Watauga has. Continue the VA Creeper trail to Lansing
- YMCA
- Increase musical venues
- Concerts
- Business owners with balls and grit to do what is smart and common sense stuff
- A Performing Arts Theatre like the one in Banner Elk that brings in top performers from around the country
- Festivals
- Scenic Railway.
- Festivals that support the heritage of the area
- More Appalachian Heritage in terms of cultural amenities.
- unsure.
- Housing
- PFLAG meetings, and activities for children and youth to interact away from home.
- River walk/greenway connecting the towns, and a modernized community recreation and fitness center with pool
- More downtown events.
- Something for children, that is inclusive of children in the county (not prohibitive in cost). Maybe a space for cultural arts classes and camps or a space for year long recreation (gym?). Something that gets Ashe County kids excited about where they come from and a good reason to stay or come back after college.
- more focus on outdoor activities focused on river/camping and hiking

- Museum
- Enhanced gym facilities, continued annual skateboard event on Mt. Jefferson, film festivals
- Indigenous appreciation
- flex conference/presentation space
- more festivals
- The mountain setting is viewed as a destination or retreat away from the hustle bustle of urban areas. Because of our established presence of the arts and our popular literary festival, could we build upon that growth to provide creative community spaces or events for writers, songwriters and artists to develop new works and over time schedule performance events to highlight such works.
- More music opportunities, more theater - especially aimed at families and younger children
- A bookstore. More author/book readings, especially on the weekends. More affordable art (painting) experiences for local folks to participate in. Themed festivals (similar to the antique fairs, the automobile cruise-ins) on the Back Street.
- Museums, festivals, inclusive cultural experiences/activities. Not only around Appalachian culture but other cultures that are prominent in our population. Such as Hispanic, African American, ect.
- bike trails
- To include more diversity and cultural appreciation. More festivals and public events would be nice to see.
- Guided hikes.
- Better restaurants and more youth activities
- Kid/Family friendly activities, better shopping options, Child Care, better parking
- Putt Putt
- Interactive museum for children & adults
- Music
- Winter activities, spa,
- YMCA or community center
- Sculpture, amphitheater, street musicians
- Youth and young adult venues to keep people local
- Educational expansion
- This gets tricky. When you start bringing in (or even applying labels) to cultural amenities, you run the risk of changing the very thing you're trying to preserve.
- Target, Home Depot, Clothing stores
- I would love to see more festivals, fairs, or other activities.
- Large indoor fitness center like Watauga has. Continue the VA Creeper trail to Lansing
- YMCA
- Increase musical venues
- Creeper Trail bike path, more access areas to get in and out of the river
- One of the main things our community needs would be activities and inviting spaces for children and youth. The library has done an excellent job providing such activities, but their efforts should be supporting a greater focus on children and youth. In addition to sports, hiking, and time on the river, I routinely hear parents looking for things for their kids to do throughout the year.

- Outdoor activities
- Maybe more festivals.
- expand arts council
- More businesses that cater to locals instead of tourists. Most people travel out of town for certain activities because they don't have them here or they are too expensive for the general public
- Culture is one of our strongest assets, we need infrastructure/services to catch up.
- Concert Venues,
- Blue grass/ country music fest., Grow Christmas in July back to it's former grandeur. A true, December, Christmas festival.
- Live music
- YMCA, daycares,
- More eateries (though vastly improved), live music in public forum
- It's fine the way it is
- I think it would be incredible to create a maker space shop where individuals, young and old, could go to design and build their ideas. I believe this would be a way to encourage entrepreneurship within our community especially for individuals who do not have the machines or shops to do so. For years now, I have wanted to create a maker space lab in a van or trailer and drive to the different communities within Ashe County to encourage individuals to become inventors, artisans and entrepreneurs. I thought the maker space could also host special events based on ages or interests. It could be that if we had a maker space that there might be a way for the individuals to sell their creations in local businesses. I know this is anonymous but I would love to be involved in helping make this possible so my name is Thelma Kastl. I am an engineering, STEM and robotics teacher. I have taught 6th through college. I have done special interest workshops for daycare through 5th grade. Please reach out to me if I can help in any way. An ideal place for this might be the Jefferson Station.
- An indoor performance space in the downtown, a significant Christmas tree in the downtown, more focus on WJ as a Christmas town during the holiday season.
- outdoor theatre & movies
- Food fest
- A museum or visitor center with information about the people who lived here before the Cherokee, and the Europeans who settled here.
- Community facilities
- I think we are good in this area
- nothing
- Expand on the wonderful history museum, expand the arts community, focus more on sustainability (building on the environmental treasures of the region - not exploiting them), encourage diversity of residents and businesses (too many businesses are dominated by one or two families' interests)
- More forward-thinking leaders at the city and county level.

- Gardening/farming help, cultural center learning about Ashe county and Appalachia heritage, what part the railroad that ran through here has to do with it, learn more about the underground railway (helping slaves escape) that happened here, Christmas tree farming, more arts and craft festivals, carnival with rides for the kids, and a section where you can learn about things not close to here, like the ocean, to make kids want to explore the world. Photo opportunities everywhere with a social media campaign as advertisement to our area.
- Music venues and creative writing
- Greenway/trails, recreation center
- I think it is a great little place as it presently is, but do miss the annual Christmas in July which was shut down due to Covid.
- Dance classes
- More Native American
- Opera
- Mountain crafts being taught to future generations
- more variation in types of music-not just blue grass(ex. classical, rock and blues)
- Active agricultural events
- More diverse activities. Different music, art focused on different cultures. An overall more inclusive place.
- Let it roll on its own
- Let it roll on its own
- Live Music
- better live plays and concerts
- I would love to see a wellness space - like for community yoga, dance, etc. And creative space to share hobbies and skills, like photography, Web design, etc. I would like a space that brings awareness to the diversity and history of Appalachia as well as other cultures. This community is in general older, insular, and as I said Trumpy. I have no idea how we get people together to just share ideas and be exposed to different perspectives.
- Art and trade schools
- ski
- larger concert venue (like coyote joes in Charlotte, NC), swimming pool, activities for children and young adults
- Indoor sports practice facility for our youth (our weather hurts our middle school/high school teams during the months of March/April/May, which causes our softball and baseball teams to suffer. With moving up to a 3A conference in the coming school year, we need a facility where our athletes can practice even when the weather is bad)
- Would also love to see more AAU/Travel sports tournaments held here. We have a wonderful outdoor complex at Family Central and I don't feel it's utilized to it's full potential....more people traveling into our county = more people eating at our restaurants, shopping with our local stores, and staying in our hotels, which equals more revenue for our county.
- Outdoor community pool.....PLEASE!!!!!! THERE IS LITERALLY NOTHING FOR OUR YOUTH TO DO IN THE SUMMER, and an outdoor, public pool would be amazing.
- More Childcare options, especially during the summer for working parents.

- A large/nice dog park
- something like blue ridge music theater
- Diverse cultural amenities and more events, activities to offer public and tourists
- IBMA, or another type of bluegrass music event, capitalize on the many great musicians here, i.e, Phipps Store brings visitors and musicians from all over
- I think we already have enough cultural amenities and activities.
- More live theater
- More things to do after 7pm or on Sundays
- We lack any cultural amenities/activities so anything would be good! WJ lacks diversity.
- Downtown yoga
- More live music, art in the park, more activities around the farmers market.
- Community center with small theater for plays, comedy, music, a game room and fitness center
- More Backstreet entertainment in the Backstreet stage area

5. What amenity should be a priority to create/develop in West Jefferson? For example, a restaurant/brewery, cultural center, daycare, etc.

- Hotel/Restaurant
- I dont know why we need a daycare(we already have one), or cultural center (what the hell is that) , how about we attract business owners with balls and let them do what they do. Its their job to attract customers not some committee or government? AMERICA..... where the hell is it?
- Italian Restaurant, Other restaurants besides burgers and Fine Dining
- More parking
- Parking Deck
- Day care, local rec center with amenities like a pool, workout gym, rock climbing etc,
- Recreational centers! We don't need anymore breweries, galleries, churches or banks. We need activities for younger generations and places to do those activities. YMCA or a similar recreational facility.
- More food options, more daycares, more housing
- Housing
- Daycares! If we have adequate childcare, the workforce will increase, children will have a jumpstart on education, and parents will have support.
- Community fitness/recreation center with pool
- More things for the kids to do
- Although I don't think we can ever have enough good restaurants, a cultural center where folks from Ashe can work and be connected with visitors could grow a greater mutual respect and appreciation for this place. There's a major disconnect between people from here and visitors, neither of which are going anywhere.
- More restaurant choices, more live music, encourage more businesses to stay open LATER. Stop rolling up the streets at night at 9pm.
- Splash Pad
- cultural center or YMCA
- Mini golf, outdoor theater, walking park at least 1 mile loop
- daycare

- cultural center, daycare, upscale condos
- A cultural center ties in well with the emergence of our arts-focused presence in downtown West Jefferson. While we have the Civic Center for performance events, BRAHM in Blowing Rock is a beautiful structure that is home to a variety of impressive art exhibits and also features ample meeting space for special events, including economic and business development. We have limited meeting/conference space available in the West Jefferson area, and this could be a draw for business and organizational retreats. Revenue generation to support such a facility could also be somewhat challenging.
- daycare and center for teens
- A bookstore.
- Affordable housing, Childcare, inclusive family/youth oriented facilities
- daycare
- A better variety of restaurants/night life. Maybe some more museums and family friendly activities also.
- More food restaurants. Fitness center. Pool
- Restaurant and places for youth/ adults to go and have fun
- Daycare and better parking
- Daycare, activities center for children, YMCA, Public Parking
- Young people need activity, focusing on education & life skills.
- Theater, Costco
- More high quality restaurants, brewery in Jefferson, bigger indoor events facility, high quality gym with swimming pool etc., better quality hotels/spa. MORE PARKING, better trash management
- Homeless shelter
- A cultural plan with appropriate staffing and leadership to tie everything together.
- Housing and rec center
- More indoor winter activities for families shopping such as family appropriate shoe stores
- There are restaurants and the Civic Center already. What about more mom and pop B&Bs in West Jefferson?
- Things for young people. Pool, Putt Putt, Skate park
- As someone who has lived in Ashe for most of my life, I would love to see more recreational attractions, such as a bowling alley, skating rink, arcade, place for young adults to gather, etc. There is nothing for people to do besides go to restaurants.
- Large indoor fitness center
- Affordable housing
- Indoor family recreation
- Creeper Trail bike path
- I love the idea of a cultural center, particularly if it includes fun, educational activities for a variety of ages (children through adults and even seniors). This area has so very much to offer including but not limited to history, natural history, Appalachian culture, music, visual arts, performing arts, and crafts. A place where all of these things can be brought together and offered to both our local community as well as tourists would greatly benefit West Jefferson.
- Rv parks
- Route trucks and dumptrucks, etc. away from Jefferson Ave., keeping them on 221.

- a clothing department store, more housing for the elderly
- Affordable Housing. The rental Market is absolutely disappointing. The majority of locals cannot afford a decent place to live due to increasing rent.
- We need Jefferson Avenue open on Sundays. Additional daycare in WJ specifically would be great as Learning Thru Play has a monopoly.
- Restaurants, Concert areas
- I would like to see us work toward getting a YMCA for our young people. Were talking gym/ rec center for the elderly, courts for B-ball etc. and a pool for our young to learn swimming and a place for swim teams.
- YMCA. Should have sports facilities, a pool, and daycare.
- Daycare
- Music venue
- None
- I would love to say more restaurants but I know the need for daycare services is very high. I know that parents of school aged children are in desperate need of affordable and reliable child care, after school and during the summer. From conversations at local businesses, many parents have expressed concern because they are struggling with child care and COVID created additional challenges in the area.
- A craft center/museum for the Christmas tree industry with photographs of trees that have gone to the White House, information about Fraser firs, maps, etc. (No, I am not part of the tree industry. I just think it's remarkable.)
- amphitheater
- Live theatre
- A day care, not just for pre school, but for school age children also.
- Care for the homeless. There are more homeless people in Ashe County than people realize.
- Multi-use park
- Affordable housing, additional parking
- restaurant
- A quality Appalachian cultural center that partners effectively with the history museum, ASU Appalachian studies department, and the arts community.
- Publix
- Upgraded parks, rock wall climbing, YMCA, trampoline & gymnastics, more for children to want to stay and not move away after high school. Expansion of WCC in Ashe County for learning trades if you can't afford 4 yr college. Better daycare and after-school childcare options. And biggest for adults is more restaurants chain and non chain (not fast food)
- Bigger hospital
- Greenway
- More restaurants
- More for younger people to do...putt putt course, swimming pool, etc.
- Breweries, more non tourist business
- IHOP
- Additional day care centers, more parking, return of stoplights, ice cream store walk-dont walk signs
- I think good day care is always crucial to any working town and there is an ongoing effort to develop the cultural arts center in Lansing, which I hope will succeed. We need a GOOD Italian restaurant and maybe a Thai/Indian restaurant. We have several bar food restaurants.

- Daycare
- Daycare center
- See above
- See above
- Cultural Center
- An excellent Italian restaurant
- Creative space for skills development and cultural exchange
- Culinary trade school
- large resort
- Larger concert venue (like Coyote Joes in Charlotte, NC)
- Indoor sports practice/tournament facility for our youth/athletes....SO NEEDED!!!
- Outdoor Public Pool
- More childcare facilities/options
- Dog Park
- parking
- Restaurants, Shopping Stores, Big Chain Stores
- More restaurants would be good.
- We don't need anymore breweries, restaurants, or shops. We need daycare centers and more affordable housing for families and senior citizens. We also need more activities that cater to our youth and teens.
- More parking!
- Dog park
- More recreational centers for youth is crucial to combatting the many issues with youth in WJ, there is nothing for kids to do!
- Upscale dessert and coffee bar
- Daycare for town employees!
- Affordable daycare, reuse or replacement of jefferson station
- A location for visitors and locals to see photos (from years past), possibly some type of history - either vocal (on tape...press a button) AND/OR a daily tour by some type of vehicle (example is Key West)

6. What area(s) of West Jefferson would be eligible locations for this new amenity? Name the area/building/neighborhood.

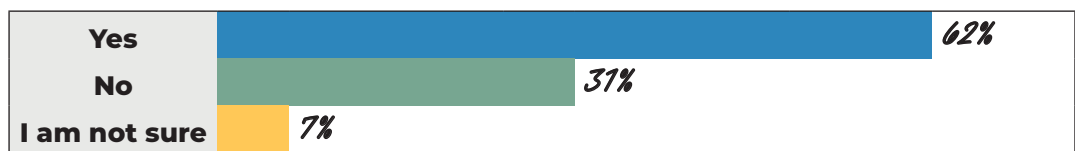
- 221/163 intersection
- How deep are your pockets..... everything for sell for the right price. I feel a-lot of socialist motives with the structure of these questions
- Performing Arts would be great across the street from movie theatre in the huge furniture store if that came available. We also need a drive in theatre.
- Downtown
- The old tobacco warehouse area
- Large plot of land off N Jefferson ave just beyond down town
- Old Lowe's Foods, Jefferson Station, Ashemont building, etc

- Jefferson or west jefferson or Glendale springs
- West Jefferson
- Glendale Springs; Warrensville; Lansing
- Empty lot downtown where the old funeral home was or the empty lot between the Methodist church and library/park
- A bigger Parks and Rec building that is actually focused on the children
- Jefferson Station is a great location and is currently hardly in use. West Jefferson school would also be great if it was renovated.
- old warehouses, vacant businesses downtown
- West Jefferson Park
- Not sure about areas in WJ ... there are more possibilities in the county at large
- Beaver creek, 163
- Jefferson Station
- West Jefferson condos within a walking distance
- Jefferson Station (areas of that structure) would be ideal and convenient for attendees to explore the downtown area (restaurants, shoppes, galleries).
- area near New River Brewing and over to West Jefferson Elementary
- Downtown West Jefferson, next to Bohemia or next to Sweet and Savory, or on the Back Street near the steps going up to the library. Attaching a bookstore to a coffee shop/restaurant is an excellent draw for visitors and locals.
- Jefferson Station
- between towns
- West Jefferson. Jefferson station.
- Jefferson station.
- Area near the Ford place or Walmart area
- Jefferson Station, Hale's tire (ugly corner), Warehouses on Long Street
- Between Smokey Mtn BBQ and Holiday Inn
- So many great locations in Ashe County. Of course downtown West Jefferson is a perfect place.
- Downtown Park, Hwy 221
- Old Lowe's grocery store (in fact, the whole of that mall), Jefferson Station, consider expanding into Jefferson, junction of 221/163
- Cultural Arts Staff could be housed at Town Hall or at Ashe Arts Center.
- Glendale springs and fleetwood
- The old Lowes Foods building
- When the Hotel completes renovations, that will be one place.
- Around the downtown area
- The huge building that used to be Lowes Foods near Mount Jefferson would be a wonderful place to have an attraction.
- Any place
- Anywhere

- Walmart/Lowe's Hardware area
- Linking the old railroad between West Jefferson and Lansing
- The first thing that comes to mind is Jefferson Station. The second is the old Jefferson School. Were the old hotel not being renovated to become a hotel again, that space would have been excellent. I know there are buildings and spaces that are not being fully utilized in town. Beyond that, there is space between the towns that can be developed for something new and still be walkable from downtown.
- Parking area behind Backstreet where old ugly business sits.
- there are several vacant buildings now
- Jefferson, fleetwood, Glendale springs
- Daycare, somewhere proximal to the residential district.
- South Jefferson Avenue,
- The land area behind the CVS
- Rebuild on family central location.
- Old Lowe's foods building,
- Near library/park
- Leave it like it is
- The old tobacco warehouse next to the public library. By using the old tobacco warehouse facility you could possibly give the daycare teachers and children access to the public library and the park. You could possibly include a maker space in a portion of the facility which allow the daycare access to the maker space encouraging children to be problem solvers and creators.
- Hice Avenue badly needs redevelopment, beginning with a bulldozer! The Jefferson Station development was poorly planned and is completely absent in street appeal, and the industries on the street clearly need to be outside of town in more industry-friendly areas. This area could be prime single-family residential property in a style that reflects the town's history, and could include a community gathering place, such as a pocket park.
- Behind Badger Funeral Home
- One of the existing older buildings
- Jefferson Station. The old Lowe's grocery building and that shopping center at the base of Mount Jefferson. The empty buildings next to Ingles. The old Heilig-Meyers building between the towns.
- Centralized
- Not sure
- Main Street and back street
- The Jefferson Station building, which should be either leveled, and start over, or significantly altered in facade so that it compliments the architecture of the town, rather than acts as an eyesore.
- The old Lowes Foods store.
- The old Lowes building, Mt Jefferson and our other parks, historical buildings that can be bought and refurbished to the time, plaques along the road or hiking trails, old courthouse. Turn the road between Walmart and the old Lowes building into the area for more restaurants and night time activities.
- I don't know
- connect West Jefferson Park with Ashe County Park and/or Lansing Creeper Park
- The new restoration of the Old Hotel Tavern is a great spot for outdoor dining, shopping

- Downtown Jefferson or West Jefferson
- Mt Jefferson Rd.
- Toward jefferson-vacated buildings, also new buildings to be built
- Downtown is the best place but not everything can be right ther. The road between the towns is an option and the Mt Jefferson Rd area has some availability.
- Mount Jefferson , business S 221
- Between the towns in the current learning center.
- Downtown
- The old hotel that is under renovation
- There are a lot of vacant buildings around town. Down town is of course popular. But there are other little buildings and strip mall type areas that may be good to get people to go to. I'm not sure.
- The empty condo building in wj
- lansing
- Old Lowes Foods building at base of Mt Jefferson
- The former/newest Lowe's Food location would be a great indoor sports facility!
- Would love to see a community outdoor pool at Ashe Park or West Jefferson Park (*The lower ballfields at Ashe Park would be a great location as these fields are hardly used anymore and there's a parking lot with restroom facilities and an old snack bar already there.
- Dog Park at Ashe Park or West Jefferson Park
- near walmart
- Not sure
- Not sure.
- Jefferson Station, old Lowes Foods building
- Downtown West Jefferson
- Ashe County
- There are hundreds, pick one
- No specific location but within walking distance of the historic district.
- It would be great if it could somehow be located adjacent to the library/park
- Jefferson station
- Former furniture factory with its history, a wonderful updated library, a great park in downtown for visitors to use the picnic tables AND an area for children to swing and play! It would be great to find a way to let visitors know about West Jefferson's history with how many jobs were created for locals with the Thomasville Furniture Factory....AND how painful it was locally for having it all sent to another country.

7. Have you, or someone you personally know, struggled to find appropriate housing in West Jefferson?



8. What type of housing is most needed in West Jefferson? Select all that apply.

Single Family Homes	65
Multi-family Homes (i.e. apartments)	43
Townhomes	35
Duplexes	18
Subsidized Housing	32
Housing Units for Rent	65
Housing Units for Sale	28
None of the Above	5
Total	291

9. Historically, what are the major challenges related to housing in West Jefferson?

- Quality/Price
- I dont know if we have ever had one. Get a job, work, and buy a house. Its simple. how about we teach our kids this so that future generations and sustain themselves and not rely on someone else for a handout. How about we start there.
- Not sure
- Price
- Affordability
- Unknkwn
- Too expensive in relation to the salaries that are paid. Many people are buying properties for 2nd homes or vacation rentals. Land restrictions, county regulations for perc tests and rising lumber costs make it impossible to build. Many homes sit vacant for reasons unknown to me.
- Charge too much for what it is.
- Lack of basic business knowledge and education about what's needed and being more development friendly to those willing to invest and take risks.
- High cost and expensive upkeep of older homes
- Cost!
- People set in their ways and reluctant to change
- Homes are not in the price range of most local folks.
- high prices, lack of single family homes
- Cost, Availability
- not sure about historically, maybe affordability or condition of houses
- Outside money coming in and paying cash
- nice /affordable properties for working professionals

- Affordable housing for young families and young professionals
- the lack of housing (and affordable) for working families and young professionals
- Not much to rent for long term and few opportunities for those with pets; housing for seniors near the library and a small grocery store in town accessible by foot
- Finding location(s) for apartment building. Inability for middle-class income families to find affordable single-family houses for sale. (It seems most construction has been and continues to be geared towards expensive summer homes for higher-income/retired folks.
- Poor quality homes(e: Mold, broken utilities, poor insulation) housing that is affordable for locals, Jobs that pay enough to pay rent or to buy a home.
- nothing nice.. but big \$ prices
- The properties are too expensive and the main rental company is horrible to rent from. They've messed over a majority of the county but people have no option.
- Cost for lower income families and individuals. Tourists and retirees cause prices to increase b
- High prices for small places or run down housing
- Locations that are affordable are dumps and need to be bulldozed.
- Quality of housing versus price of rent
- Cost
- Available Land
- No comment
- Rental housing that's acceptable for lower income individuals. A lot of the cheaper apartments in wj are a disgrace and not up to code
- Lack of availability and affordability
- Pricing
- Median income and the rental price increases in recent years
- As with everywhere else, affordability is a big barrier.
- Rent prices
- There are not enough townhomes and apartments for single individuals or those wanting an apartment. Also, I would love to see more townhomes that are actually affordable.
- Cost of rent
- Affordability
- Enough subsidized housing as well as landlords that will participate with requirements
- Space
- One of the primary things I have seen is simply availability. I hear a lot of people complaining about the cost of housing as well. With so much focus on beautification, one concern is also that housing be aesthetically pleasing while meeting the all of the needs of the inhabitants.
- Short supply of housing
- Lack of flat land
- market changes
- Pricing
- Second homes driving up year round resident cost.

- Outdated Buildings, Conservative mentality not allowing fresh opportunity
- Costs...the average family has been priced out of the housing market. We need good basic homes in the 150,000 range.
- I don't know.
- Price substandard housing rents for way too high, subsidized vouchers are way to low for single individuals
- Supply
- Out of town people
- Availability and affordability have been major problems. After the manufacturing industries left, families struggled to find housing that they could afford. There did not seem to be a high turnover of homes creating difficulties in finding places to buy or rent. This trend of local young adults struggling to find housing has increased with the recent influx of individuals, not from the area, purchasing summer homes/increasing price points of homes available.
- Ashe County's significant natural beauty attracts new housing and residential development to the outlying parts of the county (thinking of newcomers in particular). But many people who came here to enjoy second homes have become attached to the community and would be interested in becoming part of the downtown. There are so many attractive businesses within walking distance.
- Currently the long term rental housing market does not exist
- Second homes sometimes absorb affordable housing for families
- Too expensive for locals.
- Available land
- Not enough. Too expensive for young people
- I am not sure
- Hard to expand housing, without sacrificing the small town charm. Whatever is developed needs to have architectural designs that fit with the town - even lower income housing. And greenspace should be paramount to any further development.
- Lack of inventory.
- Because of covid and in influx of money received for it (especially if you have children), more people are looking to purchase a home. Those that have homes realize the strong market and are selling their home for more than it's really worth and putting renters out. If you can't find a home and still need to rent, you can't find anything.
- Low-income people can't find housing
- income of residents is too low
- Highway 221 is almost complete which makes West Jefferson more accessible for housing. Finding nice level land is also a problem anywhere in the mountains.
- Second homes/vacation homes driving cost of housing up
- Racism
- Cost
- No vacancies
- In the past 15 years, prices have continued to rise and many young people who work here can't afford to buy a home here. Also many people want to live in town but can't find anything for sale.

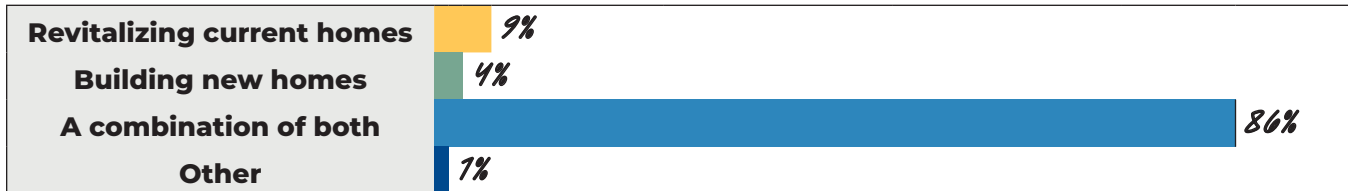
- Cost, availability
- Lack of investor\]
- ?
- ?
- Limited Availability
- Too many of houses in town now rentals owned by out of town people
- I have only lived here a year so I don't know in detail. Just from my own experience moving here I know that housing prices have increased like across the country, but here as well because it is becoming so popular for tourists and retirees. Rent thus also has increased. And it is more difficult to find rentals or homes for sale.
- Supply
- not enough
- Overpriced due to tourism and migration of retired folks from Florida
- Not enough rental properties; cost of rent; pet-friendly rentals; high cost of land/building
- affordable
- Affordable housing and subsidized programs
- Quantity of available units.
- Housing is too expensive for most families and there are not enough homes/apartments for rent. Most young people cannot afford to purchase a home in our area due to inflated real estate prices brought on by tourists and transplants/retirees moving here from out-of-state. The current climate is ruining any chance for young, native Ashe County residents to remain here and afford to live here.
- Price
- Low inventory
- Availability and affordability
- Affordable housing
- Unknown
- Quality/Price
- I dont know if we have ever had one. Get a job, work, and buy a house. Its simple. how about we teach our kids this so that future generations and sustain themselves and not rely on someone else for a handout. How about we start there.
- Not sure
- Price
- Affordability
- Unknkwn
- Too expensive in relation to the salaries that are paid. Many people are buying properties for 2nd homes or vacation rentals. Land restrictions, county regulations for perc tests and rising lumber costs make it impossible to build. Many homes sit vacant for reasons unknown to me.
- Charge too much for what it is.
- Lack of basic business knowledge and education about what's needed and being more development friendly to those willing to invest and take risks.

- High cost and expensive upkeep of older homes
- Cost!
- People set in their ways and reluctant to change
- Homes are not in the price range of most local folks.
- high prices, lack of single family homes
- Cost, Availability
- not sure about historically, maybe affordability or condition of houses
- Outside money coming in and paying cash
- nice /affordable properties for working professionals
- Affordable housing for young families and young professionals
- the lack of housing (and affordable) for working families and young professionals
- Not much to rent for long term and few opportunities for those with pets; housing for seniors near the library and a small grocery store in town accessible by foot
- Finding location(s) for apartment building. Inability for middle-class income families to find affordable single-family houses for sale. (It seems most construction has been and continues to be geared towards expensive summer homes for higher-income/retired folks.
- Poor quality homes(e: Mold, broken utilities, poor insulation) housing that is affordable for locals, Jobs that pay enough to pay rent or to buy a home.
- nothing nice.. but big \$ prices
- The properties are too expensive and the main rental company is horrible to rent from. They've messed over a majority of the county but people have no option.
- Cost for lower income families and individuals. Tourists and retirees cause prices to increase b
- High prices for small places or run down housing
- Locations that are affordable are dumps and need to be bulldozed.
- Quality of housing versus price of rent
- Cost
- Available Land
- No comment
- Rental housing that's acceptable for lower income individuals. A lot of the cheaper apartments in wj are a disgrace and not up to code
- Lack of availability and affordability
- Pricing
- Median income and the rental price increases in recent years
- As with everywhere else, affordability is a big barrier.
- Rent prices
- There are not enough townhomes and apartments for single individuals or those wanting an apartment. Also, I would love to see more townhomes that are actually affordable.
- Cost of rent
- Affordability
- Enough subsidized housing as well as landlords that will participate with requirements

- Space
- One of the primary things I have seen is simply availability. I hear a lot of people complaining about the cost of housing as well. With so much focus on beautification, one concern is also that housing be aesthetically pleasing while meeting the all of the needs of the inhabitants.
- Short supply of housing
- Lack of flat land
- market changes
- Pricing
- Second homes driving up year round resident cost.
- Outdated Buildings, Conservative mentality not allowing fresh opportunity
- Costs...the average family has been priced out of the housing market. We need good basic homes in the 150,000 range.
- I don't know.
- Price substandard housing rents for way too high, subsidized vouchers are way to low for single individuals
- Supply
- Out of town people
- Availability and affordability have been major problems. After the manufacturing industries left, families struggled to find housing that they could afford. There did not seem to be a high turnover of homes creating difficulties in finding places to buy or rent. This trend of local young adults struggling to find housing has increased with the recent influx of individuals, not from the area, purchasing summer homes/increasing price points of homes available.
- Ashe County's significant natural beauty attracts new housing and residential development to the outlying parts of the county (thinking of newcomers in particular). But many people who came here to enjoy second homes have become attached to the community and would be interested in becoming part of the downtown. There are so many attractive businesses within walking distance.
- Currently the long term rental housing market does not exist
- Second homes sometimes absorb affordable housing for families
- Too expensive for locals.
- Available land
- Not enough. Too expensive for young people
- I am not sure
- Hard to expand housing, without sacrificing the small town charm. Whatever is developed needs to have architectural designs that fit with the town - even lower income housing. And greenspace should be paramount to any further development.
- Lack of inventory.
- Because of covid and in influx of money received for it (especially if you have children), more people are looking to purchase a home. Those that have homes realize the strong market and are selling their home for more than it's really worth and putting renters out. If you can't find a home and still need to rent, you can't find anything.

- Low-income people can't find housing
- income of residents is too low
- Highway 221 is almost complete which makes West Jefferson more accessible for housing. Finding nice level land is also a problem anywhere in the mountains.
- Second homes/vacation homes driving cost of housing up
- Racism
- Cost
- No vacancies
- In the past 15 years, prices have continued to rise and many young people who work here can't afford to buy a home here. Also many people want to live in town but can't find anything for sale.
- Cost, availability
- Lack of investor\]
- ?
- ?
- Limited Availability
- Too many of houses in town now rentals owned by out of town people
- I have only lived here a year so I don't know in detail. Just from my own experience moving here I know that housing prices have increased like across the country, but here as well because it is becoming so popular for tourists and retirees. Rent thus also has increased. And it is more difficult to find rentals or homes for sale.
- Supply
- not enough
- Overpriced due to tourism and migration of retired folks from Florida
- Not enough rental properties; cost of rent; pet-friendly rentals; high cost of land/building
- affordable
- Affordable housing and subsidized programs
- Quantity of available units.
- Housing is too expensive for most families and there are not enough homes/apartments for rent. Most young people cannot afford to purchase a home in our area due to inflated real estate prices brought on by tourists and transplants/retirees moving here from out-of-state. The current climate is ruining any chance for young, native Ashe County residents to remain here and afford to live here.
- Price
- Low inventory
- Availability and affordability
- Affordable housing
- Unknown
- Options for young professionals and affordable options for seniors
- Probably needing more housing within the walking distance of restaurants, stores and post office.

10. Do you believe West Jefferson should focus on revitalizing current homes or building new homes?



11. In your opinion, what are West Jefferson's key workforce industries?

- GE
- Look at the big fish. they are there the silent majority that have kept the town alive and tax dollars coming in for years.
- Tree Farms and Chemical Plant
- Construction and Cooperatives
- GE, AEV in Jefferson
- Restaurant, Walmart lowes Aev ge aviation
- AEV is the only stable one. GE used to be, but with recent layoffs, I wouldn't put faith into them being around long-term. Most people work outside of the county, like myself.
- Aev
- None
- Factories, healthcare, tourism, and construction
- GE, AEV, Agriculture
- Fastfood because there is nothing else
- Tourism and restaurants
- manufacturing, xmas trees, tourism
- Tourism
- GE, local businesses, restaurants
- GE, AEV, state and government jobs
- GE, Mount Jefferson State Park, restaurants
- Ambulance manufacturing, aviation, construction
- GE, AEV, Ashe Memorial, small business, SkyLine, Construction trades
- Hospital, school system, GE aviation, AEV
- AEV, GE Aviation, Ashe Memorial Hospital, Walmart, Ashe County Board of Education
- GE, Restaurants, School system
- not sure we have any
- Restaurants and agriculture
- Hospitality. Construction.
- Christmas trees and factory work

- Retail & Food Service
- Trade
- Emergency Vehicles & Breweries
- GE / AEV / Christmas Tree
- Tourism, AEV, GE,
- Wjpd, skyline, and local businesses and owners in city limits
- Hospitality, retail and small business
- Hospital, GE, AEV, tourism
- Retail and manufacturing
- Tourism
- You got me. Don't know
- restaurants, retail, Skyline, Christmas tree lots
- Manufacturing and tourism
- Service
- Manufacturing
- Restaurants, GE
- My first thought is tourism and service industries. Many entrepreneurs have found a place to set up shop or open restaurants. There are also more visible factories like Leviton but also not so visible options like GE Aviation.
- Service
- Retail, restaurants.
- ambulance company, GE Aviation, Christmas tree industry
- Factories, healthcare, restaurants
- Manufacturing (GE, AEV), hospitality (including food service), tourism (including those who provide goods such as Ashe County Cheese)
- Factories, Blue Ridge Energy
- AEV/Ambulance, Schools, Tourist related/Hospitality. We need more high tech industry like GE.
- GE and food services
- Tourist attractions, restaurants
- Crafts and tourism
- Building
- Within West Jefferson, key workforce industries: GE, BREMCO, Skyline, USPS, Ingles and the Cheese Plant. I would include the AEV facility at the old Hanes/Gates building.
- GE Aviation, AEV, hospitality support (i.e., restaurant workers), Christmas trees
- Service industry
- No comment
- AEV, BREMCO, Skyline, Christmas trees, property upkeep, auto motive mechanics.
- Tourism,some industries
- Local shop owners, GE, AEV, Ashe Hospital, Ashe Co schools
- ambulance companies
- McFarland publishing, GE, Vannoy construction, the collective power of the small businesses
- There really aren't any beside Christmas trees.

- Ambulance conversion, GE, Appalachian State University and Lowes.
- Tourism
- tourism and service industry, agriculture
- American Emergency Vehicles, AEV, General Electric, Ashe Memorial Hospital
- Tourism, farming, restaurants
- Only one is G E Leviton is winding down
- Fast food
- GE and rev in jefferson, sales, fast food
- GE, AEV, the service industry and schools
- Agriculture, AEV, Northwest Ambulance, GE, County
- Aerospace, tourism, soft drinks
- Whatever the private sector offers
- Whatever the private sector offers
- Aev, GE, grocery stores and restaurants
- GE, Hospital, and Leviton
- There are a fair number of retail and restaurants, a fairly large hospital and senior housing facility, a number of real estate businesses, there is some factory work as well
- Agriculture

12. In order to strengthen workforce development within the region, what should West Jefferson's top priorities be?

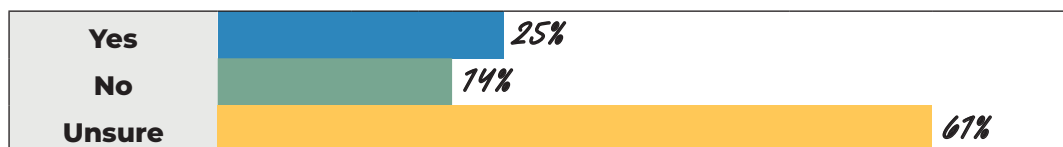
- Town, County & Community College partnership with manufacturing
- Business owners that hire and contribute to the community.
- Attract Corporate Companies
- Getting people to work
- More Industries to come to Ashe County not just West Jefferson
- Bringing in companies that would provide jobs (like Amazon wanted to be here but were shut out)
- Marketing the county as a place for businesses/industries/factories to come and thrive. Offer tax incentives, etc.
- Provide more opportunities for employment at a livable wage.
- Educate the existing workers and then entice them to work for a realistic wage for them and employer.
- As stated before, daycares. Also, revitalization of the economy, including adding stores for locals instead of trendy and artsy stores that are not conducive to local income rates
- Continuing education opportunities and assistance for entrepreneurs
- Developing our youth so they don't fall victim to our drug problem
- Training people from here.
- to embrace the tourism aspect of the economy, and to encourage more entertainment, restaurants and activities and LESS antique /tourist trap shops.
- Manufacturing, Clean Energy, Hospitality
- Community College - strengthening partnership
- Increasing wages

- available childcare options
- Attracting new industry to the new Industrial Park
- Work with business and education sectors to identify ways to develop an employment needs assessment and then create programs to develop a workforce training/recruitment effort to address those needs. We also have to address the housing problem in our area if we are to retain or recruit people to work in this area;
- attract small, specialized electronics and high tech, training for plumbers, electricians, builders, automotive workers
- Education, “a one-stop shopping” publicity for job seekers where job availability could be more easily found, encouraging the Town, Chamber of Commerce, the banks, Leviton, and other large businesses to include some form of outreach to the community college and high school students on their web sites and in the newspaper.
- Bring in more industries that pay a living wage
- Jobs other than Tourism
- Amenities for workers. i. e. Childcare, more diverse job options, better pay, etc.
- Good manufacturing jobs
- More opportunities and better wages
- Providing better training of trade skills
- Education
- Education & housing
- Store Fronts Downtown
- Pay minimum wage everywhere....or more. Publicize. Tell customers....hey, we pay well in WJ so no need to tip so much.
- ?
- Subsidized health care insurance
- Focus on keeping the people local, shop local and live local. These areas are catered more for the wealthy tourist
- Affordable housing and expanded childcare programs
- Niche manufacturing—something that can't be outsourced or relocated from Ashe to another area. There are a lot of talented crafts people in the area. Apprenticeship programs would be a great way to carry on those traditions.
- Jobs then homes
- More attractions and businesses
- Make people work, train young people with a skill in high school
- Bring in jobs for locals
- Continued development of current manufactures; recruitment of new manufacturing as possible
- Increase minimum wage
- There are segments of the populations that certainly feel the focus should be on factories and other options that provide livable wages to a large number of people. In the current climate, that is harder to do. Certainly inviting industry into the area is important. Likewise, supporting the cultural piece is vital to maintaining a clean, healthy environment that so many people value in West Jefferson.

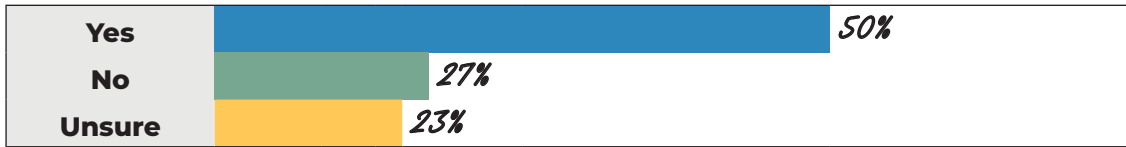
- Investment in public schools
- Get people off subsidies and back to work.
- More technical training opportunities
- Keeping people local. Cater more to the people that live here instead of people just visiting once.
- Retaining HS graduates and bringing home college graduates post-graduation. Utilize thoughtful planning/zoning to retain small town feel while developing the industry that will provide income in lean tourism times.
- Members of the community allowing growth and influx of new business opportunities
- Investment in CTE/Vocational education in the high school and community college from the community. More community investment and cooperation with the high school CTE programs.
- Bring in industry, hold job fairs
- More childcare centers
- Continue development of tree industry, choose/cut
- The local people
- This is a difficult question. Creating career opportunities for individuals to be successful. Most individuals want employment that will give them a house, car, vacations and security.
- Develop a focus on attracting tech-industry businesses that are not necessarily dependent on proximity to airports and interstates; help local industry provide a higher level of workforce training (GE Aviation does this particularly well); develop more affordable housing.
- Training program for potential subcontractors. It is impossible to find electricians,plumbers to work on small jobs
- Bolster community college programs
- Better work place readiness and career technical education.
- Blend of job opportunities
- Connection with WCC and school system, incentives to keep bring young folks here.
- improve and talk up the schools
- Strong education system, including the local community college campus. Opportunities to support small business entrepreneurs, build upon the opportunity provided by recent improvements in access through work on Rt. 221.
- Diversify, diversify, diversity.
- EDUCATION, Expanding community College and make it affordable to learn. Have other things in high school besides CNA and shop-HVAC, computer science & IT, carpentry, electrical, mechanical, marine technician, administrative-legal/medical, law enforcement.
- Education
- Raising wages and providing good education
- Providing a diverse job market for all types of labor skills.
- Focusing on small business incentives especially those focusing on sustainable industries/solar, wind power, etc.
- Jobs that pay well
- Enticing more businesses to open
- Increased wages, paid training programs
- A lot of that depends on what the industries do for their employees, but decent housing is certainly key. This has always been an industrial town, but industry has struggled to stay. We can always use more industry that is committed to the community and the people.

- Labor
- Supporting WCC as the presumptive workforce development agency in the community. Cooperate with towns and counties. This is less a town issue than an overall county issue and it is presumptuous for the town to assume the lead in this area.
- Educating families on the importance of education
- Educating families on the importance of education
- Attract larger companies to come to the area
- Bring in or create niche manufacturing jobs
- This is an aging community - invest in workforce areas that will retain and attract young people, not wealthy retirees who drive the prices of everything up. Technology skills for all ages. More diverse small businesses - there are a lot of things people drive to Boone for that we could have here.
- Improved Education
- education through community college which needs to be expanded
- Making living expenses in this area affordable for locals
- Uncertain
- diversity of workforce
- Workforce development programs
- Manufacturing
- Creating more jobs that are not related to tourism and retail. WJ should be actively trying to draw manufacturing jobs to our area that can sustain residents.
- Training/ education
- Attracting better paying jobs
- Better transportation and better jobs. The industries out here, excluding some of the larger, better paying ones; are horribly low paying, offer no benefits, etc. People out here work like slaves to live in poverty.
- Technical school training.
- Retention of current employees, brining the aldermen & alderwomen up to speed on the long term retention plan for employees, businesses, etc. They need to understand that making a living in West Jefferson is for the good of the entire population. Not just to serve them.
- Training in trades: construction, hvac etc.
- Grant money OR government money to remove the old Thomasville Furniture Factory AND all the environmental cleanup that will be needed.

13. Are there any resources for high school students wanting to pursue careers with West Jefferson's key industries/top employers?



14. Should West Jefferson create an incentive program for current and/or prospective residents?



15. If you answered “Yes” or “Unsure” to the last question, what incentive(s) do you believe would draw prospective residents and/or support current residents to West Jefferson? Choose your top two.

Relocation expenses	15
Housing Stipend (Rent or Mortgage)	24
Student Debt Repayment	24
Discounted or free co-working/office space	16
One-time cash payment (ex. \$10,000)	10
Start-up capital for a new business (ex. \$10,000)	30
Business Development Advising	15
Recreation Package (free passes/vouchers to state/national parks and outdoor activities)	18
A combination of some of these options	32
Other	5
None of the above	13
Total	202

16. Which companies/organizations (public and private) should be involved in this region’s comprehensive workforce development strategy?

- GE, WCC, WJ Community Partners
- BUSINESS OWNERS!
- Leaders in the community TDA and Chamber
- All
- Automobile Manufacturer
- Any who wish

- Vannoy Construction, Skyline, BREMCO, AEV, GE, Chemi-Con, Wilkes CC, Ashe Schools, Appalachian State University
- Idk.
- N/a
- Vannoy, GE, AEV, churches, schools
- Large manufacturers like GE, Ashe Chamber of Commerce, local government
- All of them. We are a small family town. (Which is why my family moved here) every business, no matter how big or small, should help imput on structuring our workforce. I mean, most of our people have to go out of Ashe County for work.
- All of the major businesses in the area (school system, hospital, tree farms, construction, mechanics, plumbers, small businesses, restaurants, parks and rec, etc.) working together with the high school (esp. vocational classes) and WCC to provide area-relevant classes, internships, and apprenticeships.
- most of them!!!
- New Businesses, Wilkes Community College, Vannoy Construction
- Ashe County Public Library
- Local businesses that can't afford to pay good wages
- WCC, Chamber, school system, GE
- County Economic Development, WCC Workforce Development
- Town, County (and EDC), Chamber of Commerce, Industry Representatives, Local businesses challenged with finding adequate staffing, companies based here that employ many individuals with diverse educations/skill sets (LifeStore, SkyLine, Vannoy Construction, Ashe Memorial)
- UNC Chapel Hill faculty, Appstate Business faculty, Baptist Hospital system
- GE Aviation, Ashe Memorial Hospital, Wilkes Community College, Ashe County Chamber of Commerce, Town of West Jefferson, Ashe Co. Public Library,
- Local Government and Apphealthcare Community Health team (they distribute a community needs assessment survey every 3 years)
- construction/park and rec/city managers
- I'm not sure
- Chamber. Tourist development. Town and county planning
- Ashe Memorial Hospital, Tree Farms, Schools and small business owners
- GE, AEV, Boondocks Brewing, Life Store, Lowes
- WJ Business Association
- I believe it should be community driven, local residents should come first. Their voices should be the loudest. This is a beautiful community, with generous people. They should benefit first, they should guide the development.
- Ashe Chamber, TDA, County Government - Commissioner's, WJ Alderman
- GE, AEV, breweries, restaurants, Town of WJ, United Chemicon, airport, schools/college, WJCP representative(s), WJ Small Business Association
- WJ Alderman, let's hear what ideas and support they have. They know what's best for the town, right?
- ASU, WCC, appropriate NC State departments

- Housing authority
- I don't know
- Good question. It's hard to know who is genuine in their efforts and who wants to be involved for financial gain. Whoever is involved should approach activities with a high degree of transparency.
- Sorry. Don't know
- Ashe County Government, West Jefferson town hall, Jefferson town hall, Ashe County public schools
- Employers
- Schools, local companies
- Private citizen opinion; town board/manager
- unsure
- A combination of successful industry, non-profit organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, and local business owners who are active in community development would bring a balanced view to a development strategy. It might also be an interesting exercise to bring in students either from the high school (like those involved with the Chamber's initiative) or WCC students who are based in Ashe simply to hear their views of what is available to keep them in West Jefferson or Ashe County as a whole.
- Greenwood camp ground and vannoy
- All that are in the area.
- current thriving businesses, Chamber of Commerce, industry development persons
- HUD
- Downtown business, manufacturing, local tourism
- All
- YMCA, Schools, Community College, ASU/ECU should be included.
- GE, BREMCO, Skyline
- County and city government NC Works
- Appalachian State, Blue Ridge Electric
- None
- The key industries afore mentioned. Local agencies such as a representative from county commissioners, building inspector, police force, social services and school system. I also think it might be important to include someone from the department of transportation. Local churches and other civic organizations have a direct contact with many individuals and their needs, so possibly someone from that area.
- Representatives from the county's top employers, school system, WCC, arts community, downtown business interests, hospitality and restaurant businesses, local government (town and county); probably others
- not sure
- WCC....
- All of them.
- A diverse group representing a variety of interests
- As many as possible. A wide variety creates more ideas, solutions.

- BBB, town council
- Chamber of Commerce, schools, arts organizations, local civic clubs
- Education (more robust community college offering), better health care.
- GE, local university and community college, farming industry, state/County government, federal government grants for bringing industry in to provide more jobs.
- All
- not sure
- Any that choose to participate
- Any group which focuses on developing a more sustainable and environmentally friendly community. Christmas tree herbicides and pesticides are polluting our water and air.
- All that will engage
- Not sure
- College
- Our town is not in the position to offer incentives to individuals, but they have offered some to the industries themselves and now they should be providing incentives to draw workers here. It doesn't take much to get people here, although many are retired. However, the retired transplants are the majority of our volunteer force, which is strong.
- Manufacturing, agriculture, construction
- WCC, schools, industry (manufacturing, tourism, retail, service) leaders, NCWorks, local governments
- ?
- ?
- It's residents, and local companies already in the area
- Ashe campus of Wilkes Community College and the High County Council of Governments
- Unsure
- Vanoy, GE, AEV, etc
- community college
- Ashe Memorial Hospital, Skyline
- All of them
- government, education, health services, senior/community centers, emergency services
- ESC, Senior Center, WCC, Small Businesses
- All manufacturers.
- GE, Leviton, Wilkes Community College, AEV, Novant, Appalachian State
- All the major employers
- Local businesses
- AEV, GE, the Christmas tree farms, NCWorks, the hospital, Vannoy construction, Ashe county schools, Walmart, the millions of aging centers/rehabs/health orgs
- AEV, hospital, school system, GE.
- All businesses should be allowed to participate.
- Local government to provide monetary solutions to childcare: build, staff and reduced costs to parents
- Create a group of long time WJ residents AND new residents for their opinion AND concern for keeping the "small town" appeal

- in order to retain the friendly neighborhood experience
- Look for ways to demolish the very empty sections of the “old” Thomasville Factory along with having an environmental plan that
- West Jefferson does NOT have to pay for the clearing of ANY environmental “issues” that “they” (government/environmental organizations did not cause!!!!)