

Town of Rutherford College



2020 Action Plan



Adopted: 2020

Prepared by Western Piedmont Council of Governments

Mayor and Town Council

The Town Council acknowledges its role in Vision and Action Planning for the future of the Town and pledges that this document will be a living, changing, and evolving document to help guide the Town's path to the future.

Mayor

Gary McClure

Mayor Pro-Tem

Wayne Annas

Council Members

Kress Berry

James Huffman

Gerald Smith

Mark Stinson

Zachary Cagle

Town Manager

Kenneth Geathers Jr.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Action Plan and Background	3
Role of Council-State of Town	4
Actions Taken	5
Council Priorities & Implementation	8
APPENDIX	11

WHAT IS A COUNCIL ACTION PLAN?

A **Council Action Plan** is a formal statement of Council's top priorities for the upcoming budget year. The **Council Action Plan** sets the direction of the municipal organization and focuses staff on the delivery of key outcomes associated within the Council's chosen areas of focus.

A **Council Action Plan** is not a comprehensive, detailed work-plan for all the municipal operations, nor is it a comprehensive list of all the issues and initiatives that Council will undertake throughout the entire year. The purpose of the **Council Action Plan** is to articulate to both the community and municipal staff the Town Council's collective focus as it sets out to govern their terms and to direct municipal operations toward key deliverables that the board members deems to be of the highest interest to the community's ongoing prosperity.

Background

On March 20, 2020, the Town of Rutherford College held its ninth strategic planning meeting to develop a clear and concise action plan to guide the Town towards the future. The Town Council and Manager along with facilitation staff from the Western Piedmont Council of Governments evaluated past major accomplishments, issues, organizational effectiveness, priorities, and concerns for the future. These items were then used to set specific action points, goals, and programs to guide the Town over the next several years. The specific responses of each category discussed are included as an Appendix to this Action Plan.

This **Council Action Plan 2020-2021** will be used to establish the Town's priorities as it undertakes new initiatives and amends existing programs. It is a proactive statement of where the Town wants to be in the future. The **Council Action Plan** identifies key initiatives with corresponding goals to direct the Town's actions to help achieve its mission. The Town Council has committed to an annual review of this plan to measure progress and to update the plan to best suit the ever-evolving needs of the community.

The first **Council Action Plan** was completed in 2012 and adopted on July 9, 2012. This plan acts as a functional guide for the Town Administration throughout the coming year.

Relationship to Municipal Operations

As stated above, the **Council Action Plan** is intended to provide strategic direction to municipal staff with respect to the Council's key anticipated actions over the next three years. The relationship between the **Council Action Plan** and key municipal strategic and operational work plans is described below. It should also be noted that through the **Council Action Plan** process was identified, which would serve as a more detailed and comprehensive planning document for the organization.

ROLE of COUNCIL

The primary functions of a municipal Council are to establish administrative policy, to adopt bylaws governing matters delegated to local government through the North Carolina General Statutes, and the Town's Official Charter, for the protection of the public, and to levy taxes for these purposes. Municipal Council represents the citizens of Rutherford College, providing community leadership by serving as the legislative and policy-making body of the municipality. The Mayor and Council approve policy and budgets and provide direction to the Town Manager.

Council is responsible for:

- Providing good government for its community.
- Providing works, services, facilities, and other things that the municipality considers necessary or desirable for all or part of the community.
- Providing stewardship of the public assets of the community.
- Fostering the current and future economic, social, and environmental well-being of the community.

Actions 2019-2020

The Town completed many of the actions put forth in past Action Plans. Listed below are a few of the Action Plan items that were completed. Town Manager, Kenneth Geathers presented the past five-years of improvements identified and implemented by the Town by identifying the needs of the community through social media, and various Town Hall meetings to solicit public input. From those meetings there arose three (3) established areas of focus.

- **-Economic Development**
- **-Land Use Development/Infrastructure**
 - **Capital Improvements**
 - **Street Improvements**
 - **Grant Administration**
- **-Community Relations**
 - **Employee Development**
 - **Town Events**
 -

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rutherford College has experienced moderate growth over the past twenty (20) years when surrounding communities are experiencing a declining population. The economic stability of a community is primarily for tackling challenges for current and future growth. Looking for ways to strengthen the local economies by building on current assets to improve the overall quality of life, for its citizens, is a challenge for small towns. By reinforcing, and implementing the strategies below, it is anticipated that Rutherford College will continue modest growth in the next twenty years.

To date, the Town government has provided local businesses with over \$125,000 in loans and subsidies for various capital improvements such as HVAC installation and building maintenance

- Rutherford College now has public transit through co-opt with other Towns in the region
- Bojangles Restaurant opened in February 2018 and has been performing well
- Jessica's Mediterranean & American Eatery opened April 2019
- Pelican's-Snowballs opened April 2019
- The Town has been contacted by various developers regarding an Aldi's Grocery, Wendy's Restaurant and other commercial uses along Malcolm Blvd.'s corridor



- South Mountain Distillery has been open about 2 years and continues to perform well including sponsoring and hosting several events in the Town that bring in people and commerce
- JD's Smokehouse BBQ continues to be a popular restaurant for the locals and a regional draw bringing in both people and commerce.

LAND USE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Growth using long-range comprehensive planning is the foundation for which land use and infrastructure expansion decisions are based upon.

LAND USE

- Town Council adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan to help guide long range development and prepare the community for residential and commercial growth
- The plan identifies and recommends zones for potential economic growth
- Emphasizes land-use development in relation to housing needs and market trends
- Improves Town's existing zoning ordinances and other land use regulations
- Review the first draft of the Malcolm Blvd expansion to four (4) lane and making additional comments to decrease the expansion to a possible three (3) lane with turn features. (in development with NCDOT engineers)
- Through a cost-sharing co-opt with other local municipalities, the Town was able to help establish and continue public transit throughout eastern Burke County
- The Town has begun the development of approximately 5 acres of property for recreational purposes. Some of those uses include:
 - Adoption of a Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan
 - Design of a new park and upgrading older park facilities



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Town Council adopted a Recreation Plan for Greenway Development in March 2019
- Town Council adopted a Park Master Plan in April 2019
- Town Council adopted an Asset Management Plan in May of 2019
- Currently has 8 access points for internet capabilities throughout Town
- Completed installation of 400 feet of stormwater pipe along Childers Street

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

- To date the Town has received over \$1,000,000 dollars in loans and grants for commerce building and development
- The administration received a PARTF Grant to development a 5-acre Greenway Park
- Submitted application for Wastewater Asset Inventory & Assessment Grant

STREET IMPROVEMENTS

- The administration has completed 11 Phases of its resurfacing program throughout Town. The list of resurfaced streets includes:
Liberty/Butler/Azalea/Locust/Coleman/Tutherow/Green/Boyd/Icard/Windsor/Buckingham/Camelot/Adams/Spann/Priscilla/Pine/Charles/College Circle/West Street/Stratford/Carswell/Connie Lee/Rodrick/Fredrick/Cross/Lowman/Sharon Lane/Frank Street
- Phase XII of the Street Improvement Plan are Crump/portion of Adams/White/Childers Street
- To date the Town has paved over 4.60 miles or 38% of Town streets

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Throughout the year, Rutherford College promotes social events to promote community activities. Unlike larger towns, the atmosphere of a small town is slower, quieter, and more personal. There are fewer choices in the small town – where to eat, what movie to see, where to shop, where to hang out...the addition of community gatherings for social events and holidays is a great way to stay in contact with the citizens. These events provide a method of catching up and a relaxed environment for citizens to have fun and create a stronger bond with the town's government.

- The Town holds a Fall Festival every September. It is to show appreciation for the community and includes music, free food, a petting zoo, and various activities for the public.
- The Town Council recognizes the need to give back and honor those who have served our country. Thus, the Town holds an annual Veteran's Day Fish Fry every November.
- The Town has a Christmas at Town Hall and a Christmas Parade every December.



- In the summer, the Town sponsors a Movie Night in the Park for the public. The showings start in early June and run through late July.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020-2021

Council completed the development of the priorities during a retreat with the Town's Staff on March 2020. During the retreat, staff provided background on the operations of the Town and relevant and organizational metrics, as well as key projects, issues, and background. Council provided their insights regarding challenges and opportunities faced by the resort, where they see the resort and organization going, and overall guidance around the Town's focus.

The goal of the retreat was to help set the stage for Council and provide information sharing and planning exercise for the organization. It resulted in productive discussions, team building between the Council and the Town's Staff and the opportunity to set the direction for the next three years.

In the sections that follow, deliverables that are more specific are laid out within each priority along with proposed timelines for each associated deliverable. It should be noted again that these deliverables do not constitute a full work plan for all of the municipal operations, nor is it a comprehensive list of all the issues and initiatives that Council will undertake in the next three-year. The purpose of the **Council Action Plan** is to articulate to both the community and to municipal staff Council's current collective focus as it sets out to govern the community over the next three years.

Priority Area 1: TIMBER SALE FOR PARK PROPERTY (5 votes)

Consider the feasibility for bidding out the timber right for the park property. Also, make sure BMP's are used and proper stump removal.

Priority Area 2: ATTRACT A GROCERY STORE (4-tied- votes)

Consider an aggressive approach in the recruitment of a small grocery within the town's historical boundaries. Look at the now vacant Walgreens or the Brinkley Lumber Co. as a possible location site.

Priority Area 3: RECREATION –Proposed new Park (4-tied- votes)

Acquire the adjacent five (5) acres from the school system for Phase II of the new park to expand the park and perhaps create a community meeting area.

Priority Area 4: PUBLIC OUTREACH- Establish a Robo call system /notification tree (4-tied- votes)

Investigate purchasing a robot call system for the town citizens that can be used in times of emergency, community events and utility interruptions

Priority Area 5: STREET IMPROVEMENTS-Side walk lighting (3- votes)

Consider the feasibility of new and improved street lighting.

Priority Area 6: ATTRACT MORE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (1- vote)

Consider aggressively recruiting a variety of new restaurants to the town.

Priority Areas 7: General Mentions no votes

- Obtain the gazebo on old school property
- Ridge Street Paving
- Continue the Kansas City BBQ competition
- Partner with South Mountain Distillery on more events
- Establish a priority on store drain clean-up to address run-off
- Upgrade playground equipment in current park

Town of Rutherford College Action Plan Matrix-Ongoing			
Goals	Key area	Time Frame	Responsible Party
Timber Sale for Park Property	Public Utilities	0 – 2 yrs.	Town Council/Rec
Capital Improvement Plan	Public Utilities	Ongoing	Town Mgr./Council
Utilities Revenue	Public Utilities	0 – 2 yrs.	Town Mgr./Clerk
Attract Grocery Store	Economic Development	0 – 2 yrs.	Town Mgr./Planner
Improve Roads and Sidewalks	Public Services	Ongoing	Town Council
Public Services Revenue	Public Services	0 – 2 yrs.	Town Mgr./Council
Improve Stormwater Program	Public Services	Ongoing	Town Mgr./Council
Expand Town Park	Parks, Recreation and Culture	0 – 2 yrs.	Town Council
Recreational Programs-Town Events	Parks, Recreation and Culture	0 – 3 yrs.	Town Council
Community Room	Parks, Recreation and Culture	Ongoing.	Town Council
Attract Businesses	Economic Development	Ongoing	Pl. Bd/Council
Develop Relationships w/ Businesses	Economic Development	Ongoing	Town Council
Create Commercial Land Opportunities	Economic Development	Ongoing	Town Manager
Market the Town	Economic Development	Ongoing	Pl. Bd/Council
Grants for Economic Development	Economic Development	Ongoing	Town Manager
Partner with other Institutions	Partnerships	Ongoing	Town Council
Town and Public Relations	Partnerships	Ongoing	Town Manager
Technology Initiatives & Communication	Organizational Effectiveness	Ongoing	Town Manager
Utilize Planning Board	Organizational Effectiveness	Ongoing	Pl. Bd/Council
Grants	Organizational Effectiveness	Ongoing	Town Manager
Budgeting	Organizational Effectiveness	Ongoing	Town Staff

Staffing	Organizational Effectiveness	0 – 2 yrs.	Town Mgr./Council
Continue Updating Town Code, land use	Comprehensive Plan	2-3 yrs.	Planning Board

Plan implementation will be dependent on both the Town Staff and the Town Council acting on the recommendations in this report. The staff has the responsibility to take on these goals as a part of the operations of the Town and the Town Council must reinforce the desire and need for these actions to occur. The staff and Town Council should update and review progress on these action points throughout the year along with an annual review prior to the beginning of the budgeting process to ensure alignment of priorities and funding.

/WPCOG/TEK 05/09/2020

APPENDIX

Additional Priority Areas: OVERALL ISSUES and CONCERNS DISCUSSED at ACTION PLAN MEETING (votes –may vary)

- Spending revenue on a park (4-votes)
- Stormwater overflow onto streets following heavy rains (3-votes)
- Empty Walgreens and Brinkley, and Knotty Pine properties (3-votes)
- Need to procure additional park property (school property) contiguous to proposed new park (1-vote)
- Need better lighting for sidewalks (1-vote)
- Need to keep Right-of-ways mowed more often (1-vote)
- Concerned about lack of growth due to unavailable land (1-vote)
- Widening impacts of Malcolm Blvd. (1-vote)
- Future of the Lovelady fire Dept. (0-votes)
- Future of school gazebo (0-vote)
- Campus Street sinkhole repair (near fire department)
- Need notifications to public when there are utility repairs needed
- Pet waste and unleashed/uncontrolled animals
- Need for street cleaning
- Speeding along Malcolm Blvd.

Additional Priority Areas: OVERALL OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY TOWN COUNCIL at the ACTION PLAN MEETING (votes may vary)

- Purchase Brinkley Lumber Property for economic development purposes
- Rehabilitation empty buildings for new commercial opportunities
- Continue the Kansas City BBQ competition
- Sell timber rights of park property
- Development of school property

Additional Priority Areas: OVERALL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEW PARK FEATURES IDENTIFIED BY TOWN COUNCIL at the ACTION PLAN MEETING (no-votes)

- Venue for large events
- Continue to expand walkways
- Basketball/tennis courts
- Playgrounds
- Small shops (i.e. ice cream, coffee, sandwich shop)
- Baseball field at (dual-purpose)
- Recreation Center

Draft updated /WPCOG/TEK 05/09/2020