

**TOWN OF VALDESE
TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN PUBLIC INPUT MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024, 6:00 P.M.**

The Town of Valdese Town Council met on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. for a strategic plan public input session, led by the WPCOG. Members of the Council met at the Old Rock School, Waldensian Room, 400 Main St. W, Valdese, North Carolina. The following were present: Mayor Charles Watts, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Ogle, Councilwoman Rexanna Lowman, Councilwoman Heather Ward, Councilman Glenn Harvey, and Councilman Paul Mears. Also present were Interim Town Manager Bryan Steen, Town Clerk Jessica Lail, WPCOG Executive Director Anthony W. Starr, WPCOG Director of Community & Regional Planning Alison Adams, and various Department Heads and WPCOG Staff.

Absent: None

A quorum was present, but no action was planned.

At 6:00 p.m., WPCOG Director of Community & Regional Planning Alison Adams welcomed everyone and introduced staff members from the WPCOG who were present to help with the session. Ms. Adams explained the process of the public input session, ground rules, and next steps. Ms. Adams split the room into two groups, and participants completed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis in each group. After the exercise, participants picked their top four priorities by placing a sticker beside each priority. The WPCOG team will compile the information from the SWOT analysis, and the surveys sent out in the mail and online and present the outcomes to the Council at a later meeting.

There were approximately 47 people in attendance.

SWOT ANALYSIS TOP PRIORITIES FROM STICKER PLACEMENT:

STRENGTHS – Rec Center(Pool), Low Crime Rate, Old Rock School, Public Safety, Community Events, Natural Resources, Valdese Lakeside Park, Recreation Activities, Heritage, Location – Proximity to Cities, Community, Public Services, Unique Story, Events/Festivals, Retirement, Activities/Library/Old Rock School

WEAKNESSES – Sidewalk Safety, Lack of Industry, Lack of Small Businesses, Streets Re-paved, High Tax Rate, Old Infrastructure, Lose/Closing of Businesses, Laurel Road Traffic/Condition, Main Street Parking, Lack of Code Enforcement(Residential), Lack of Speed Controls

THREATS – Town Instability, Not Taking Advantage of Grants, Public Safety, Outsourcing Services, Becoming a Paper Town, Lack of Paid Volunteer Firefighters, High Property Tax Rate, Aging Roadways/Equity, Aging Buildings, Drugs, Lack of Planning, Political Division

OPPORTUNITIES – Rec Center, Rec Facilities, State Funding/Grants, Old Rock School, Passenger Rail, Filling Vacant Buildings, State & Regional Trails, Trade/Vocational Training/Jobs, Recruiting More New Businesses, Use Empty Industrial Buildings for Re-Developing, ALBA Waldensian Building for Possible New Fire/Police/Daily Activities for Seniors, Support School Sports

At 7:00 pm the public input session ended.

The next Public Forum/Agenda Review Council meeting scheduled Monday, January 29, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

Town Clerk
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Mayor