

Public Policy Institute

2016 Haywood County Land Use Survey



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2016 the Public Policy Institute (PPI) at Western Carolina University (WCU) facilitated a survey concerning community issues and land use planning for Haywood County. The survey found several points of interest for County leaders:

- Support for a common land use regulation was the majority opinion; 66% agreed there should be a land use plan, 20% disagreed, and 14% were unsure.
- Support was also high for additional industrial land use regulation; 64% supported them, 24% opposed them, and 13% were unsure.
- Residential land use regulation was more evenly distributed among respondents, with 48% supporting additional regulations, 40% opposing, and 12% not sure.
- Support for additional commercial development regulation stood at 50%, while 36% of respondents opposed, and 12% were not sure.
- When asked about the severity of land development as a problem, 39% said the problem is a major one, 35% think of it as a minor issue, 22% reported that it was not a problem and 4% were not sure
- When asked what was the largest problem facing Haywood County from a set list, the highest two responses included a lack of community standards (33%) and land development (27%).

I. SURVEY METHODS & SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

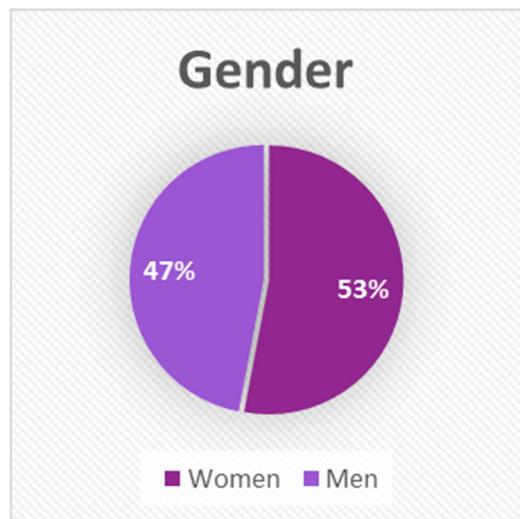
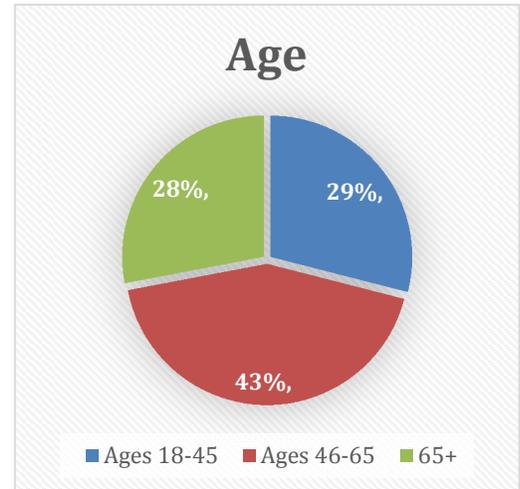
The Public Policy Institute contracted with Public Policy Polling to conduct a phone survey of Haywood County residents. A random sample was selected from all registered voters that had voted at least once in the last three elections. Of this sample, we received 817 usable responses from residents between March 18 and March 20. With Haywood County's population of 59,868 residents,¹ this represents a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5% for responses.

Of the 817 respondents, 53% of respondents identified themselves as women, with the remaining 47% self-identifying as men. The sample is reflective of Haywood County in terms of gender, as 52% of county residents were female as of 2014.²

The vast majority of respondents (91%) identified themselves as White, 3% identified themselves as African American, and 6% identified themselves as something other than the two options given. Census data suggests this sample varies from the population at large, though only slightly, with 96.5% of Haywood County residents identifying as White, and slightly over one percent identifying as African American.³

Sample age demographics were a good representation of current census data. About 28% of respondents said they were over the age of 65, compared to the 24% reflected in U.S. Census data.⁴ In the survey, 29% of respondents said they were between the ages of 18 and 45, while 43% were between the ages of 46 and 65. In Haywood County, 58% of residents are between the ages of 18 and 65 according to the most recent census. The data is weighted by age to more closely represent the age demographics of the county.

Two demographic questions towards the end of the survey may be of particular interest in relation to land use and survey respondents' vested interest in it. Of those surveyed, 90% of respondents own land in Haywood County. Thirty-two percent of respondents said they lived inside town limits, compared to the 67% that live outside of town limits. Some respondents, about 2%, were not sure.



¹ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/37087,00>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

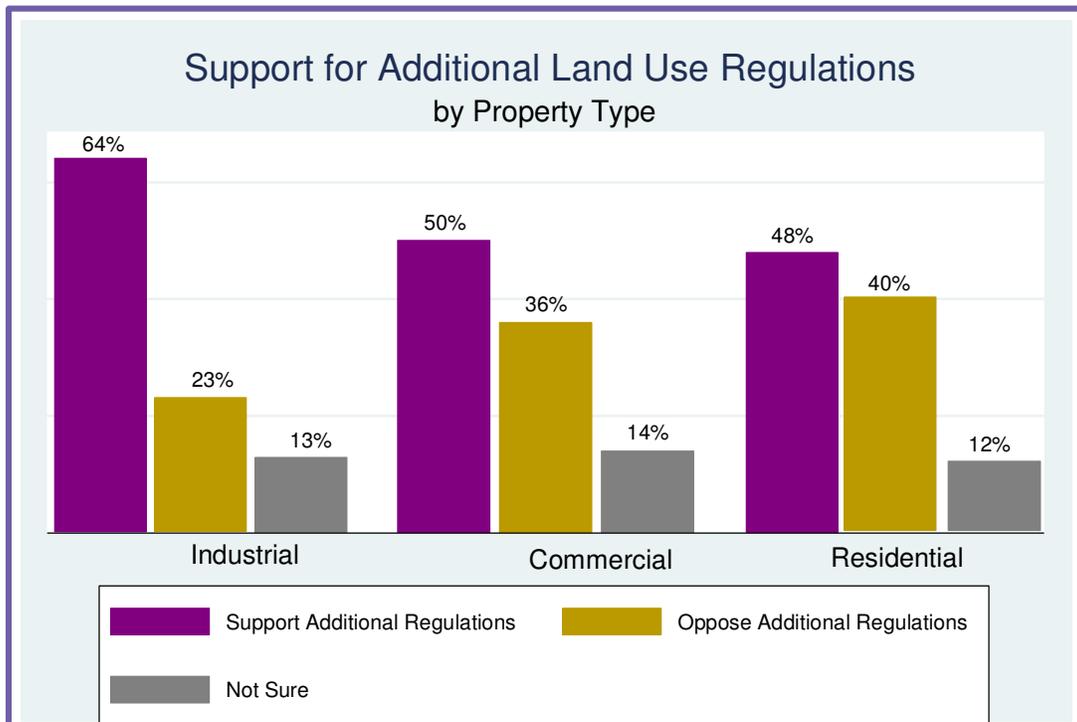
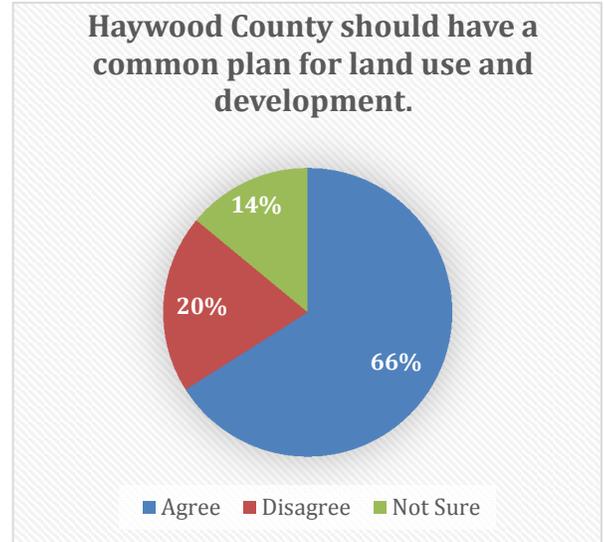
⁴ Ibid.

II. SURVEY RESULTS

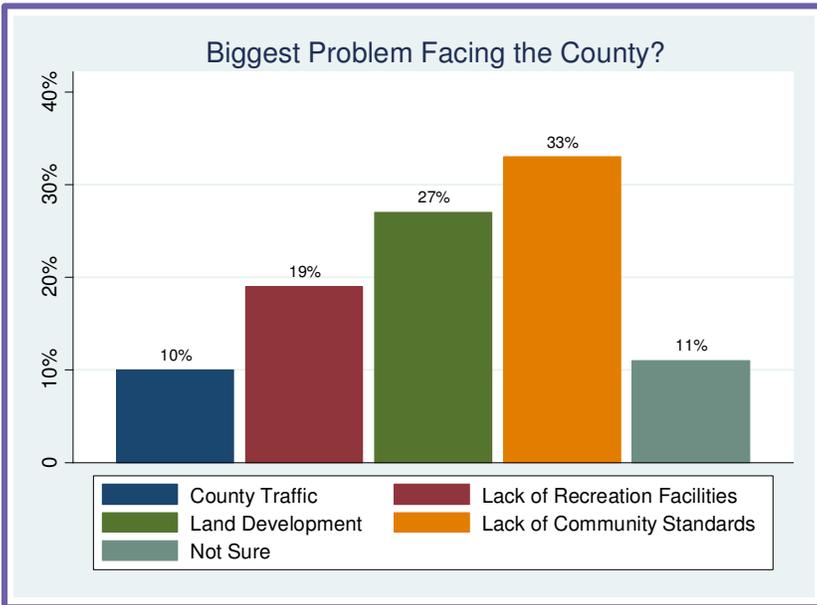
Concerning overall land use development (Q6 in the Appendix below), **66% of respondents agreed with the statement “Haywood County should have a common plan for land use and development.”** Twenty percent disagreed, and 14% were not sure. Within this, 70% of women and 61% of men that responded agreed that Haywood County should have a development plan. As far as race, 63% of African American respondents agreed that the county should have a development plan, compared to the 67% of White respondents.

When asked if they supported or opposed additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for industrial development (Q7), 64% supported additional regulations, 23% of respondents opposed additional regulations, and 13% were unsure. These were fairly consistent across all races and genders.

Support for additional commercial development (Q8) regulation stood at 50%, with 36% of respondents opposed, and 12% were not sure. Broken down, 56% of women and 49% of men supported the additional regulation. As with the previous question, African American respondents favored regulation for commercial development at a notably higher rate than White respondents (66% compared to 50%).



When respondents were asked if they supported or opposed additional regulations for residential development (Q9), 48% supported, 40% opposed, and 12% were not sure. Broken down into gender, 50% of women and 45% of men supported additional regulations, while 35% of women and 47% of men were opposed. There was a noticeable difference in how White and African American respondents viewed additional regulation for residential development. Two-thirds of African Americans were in support of more regulation, while less than half of White respondents agreed with additional regulation on residential areas.



*Respondents were asked what they thought was the **biggest problem** facing Haywood County from a list of options (Q5 in the Appendix below). The most common response, from a third of respondents (33%), was “a lack of community standards related to property use.” When asked a specific questions as to what degree the lack of community standards was a problem in Haywood County (Q4), 37% identified it as a major problem, 35% said it was a minor problem, and 21% disagreed that community standards related to property use were an issue in the county.*

At 27%, land development was the second most common response to the question of the biggest issue facing the county (Q5). When asked a more specific question about land development (Q3), **39% of respondents said land development is a major problem in Haywood County, 35% indicated it was a minor problem, and 22% reported that it was not a problem at all.** Broken down, 39% of White respondents identified this as a major problem, with almost half of African Americans agreeing. However, 23% of White respondents and 12% of African American respondents said land development was not a problem at all in the county.

Around 19% of respondents thought that “a lack of recreational facilities and ball fields” is the biggest issue facing Haywood County, and while 64% agreed that this is a problem, only 24% say it is a major problem. 34% of the respondents did not see this as a problem for Haywood County. Racially, 20% of White respondents identified this as the biggest problem facing Haywood County, with only seven percent of African American respondents agreeing.

Respondents unsure about which of the available issues was biggest, made up 1%. “Traffic outside of town limits” received the remaining 10% of responses to the question. Most respondents (44%) found traffic outside of town limits to be a minor problem. 27% said traffic is a major problem, with a similar 26% disagreeing and voting that traffic outside of town limits is not a problem at all.

APPENDIX: Question Wording and All Results

Q1 Would you say traffic outside of town limits in Haywood County is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all?

Major problem..... 27%
Minor problem..... 44%
Not a problem at all 26%
Not sure..... 3%

Q2 Would you say the lack of recreational facilities and ball fields in the County is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all?

Major problem..... 24%
Minor problem..... 40%
Not a problem at all.....34%
Not sure..... 2%

Q3 Would you say land development, such as the location of businesses, residences, or structures is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all?

Major problem..... 39%
Minor problem..... 35%
Not a problem at all..... 22%
Not sure..... 4%

Q4 Would you say that a lack of community standards, such as the types of businesses, residences, or structures allowed on a property, is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all?

Major problem..... 37%
Minor problem..... 39%
Not a problem at all..... 21%
Not sure..... 3%

Q5 Thinking back to the last few question on this poll, what do you think is the biggest problem facing Haywood County from the following list of choices: traffic outside of town limits, a lack of recreational facilities and ball fields, land development, or a lack of community standards related to property use?

Traffic outside of town limits..... 10%
A lack of recreational facilities and ball fields..... 19%
Land development 27%
A lack of community standards related to property use..... 33%
Not sure..... 11%

Q6 Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Haywood County should have a common plan for land use and development. If you agree that Haywood County should have a common plan for land use and development, press 1. If you disagree, press 2. If you're not sure, press 3.

Agree..... 66%
Disagree 20%
Not sure..... 14%

Q7 Do you support or oppose additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for industrial development such as asphalt plants and chemical factories?

Support additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for industrial development..... 64%
Oppose additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for industrial development..... 23%
Not sure..... 13%

Q8 Do you support or oppose additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for commercial development such as shopping centers and convenience stores?

Support additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for commercial development 50%
Oppose additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for commercial development 36%
Not sure..... 14%

Q9 Do you support or oppose additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for residential development such as houses and apartments?

Support additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for residential development..... 48%
Oppose additional regulations for land use in Haywood County for residential development..... 40%
Not sure..... 12%

Q10 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

Woman 53%
Man..... 47%

Q11 If you are white, press 1. If African American, press 2. If other, press 3.

White 91%
African American..... 3%
Other..... 6%

Q12 If you are 18 to 45 years old, press 1. If 46 to 65, press 2. If older than 65, press 3

18 to 45..... 29%
46 to 65..... 43%
Older than 65..... 28%

Q13 Are you a Haywood County property owner?

Yes..... 90%
No..... 10%

Q14 Do you live inside or outside of town limits?

Inside town limits 32%
Outside town limits..... 67%
Not sure..... 2