



KALEIDOSCOPE inc.

# CASE STUDY



## Overview

### Hinton Center

Early in each master site planning process, Kaleidoscope shares our firm belief that property and facilities are simply tools for the mission and program delivery. The new Tool Barn is a powerful symbol of the identity and mission of Hinton Center. The road to this recent celebration has been long.

Hinton Rural Life Center is a mission outreach and retreat center in Western North Carolina. They offer camps for youth and retreats for people of all ages to partner alongside their neighbors to enhance the long-term quality of life in rural areas. Hinton Center has partnered with Kaleidoscope in two formal engagements, a Master Site Plan in 2018 and a Strategic Plan in 2021. Kaleidoscope's ongoing relationship has helped Hinton Center navigate the shifting world around them and supported their leaders in defining and living into a thriving program for today and tomorrow.



**Company Name**  
Hinton Center

**Location**  
Hayesville, North Carolina

**Services**  
Master Site Plan (2018) and Strategic Plan (2021)

**"As President and CEO of Hinton Rural Life Center, I firmly believe that the partnership with Kaleidoscope for our campus and strategic planning has been transformative. With their guidance, our Board and Leadership Team have gained invaluable focus and tools, empowering us to fortify our organization for future ministries with confidence and clarity."**

# Problems:

## MASTER PLAN:


- A spike in usage in 2016 and 2017 led leaders to consider expanding capacity. But the site had various challenges, and an outside, expert perspective would help organize the factors at play in new construction, renovation, and phasing. Factors included audiences Hinton Center wanted to serve, limitations on the property in size and utilities, and projecting the various ministry models that were growing or needed support in order to grow.
- Staff and board leaders ultimately recognized that an industry expert would be able to properly analyze the current operations, and share the trends of the broader camping movement to help Hinton Center make sound, well-informed decisions about site and facility needs to support the long term vision.


## STRATEGIC PLAN:

- Emerging from the pandemic, staff recognized that there was a wide variety in the models, audiences, and programs that Hinton Center was offering. There was significant variance in quality, demand, and the resources required for each program. An outside perspective was needed to help give clarity to the organization's next steps of healthy operation and growth.
- Hinton Center was carrying a large debt load and funding to make up an operational deficit was increasingly relying on grant funding that did not have a definite, reliable future. Staff and board members needed help in understanding the various cost centers and evaluating programs from a viability perspective, in addition to a mission-impact perspective.



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## Outcomes

# How Hinton Center is Living their Plan

The Master Plan has allowed Hinton leaders to focus and prioritize in two key areas: ongoing maintenance and fundraising.

- The maintenance staff at Hinton Center has been able to focus their work with the long term master plan. Buildings that are going to be significantly renovated or even removed, for example, can get less focus. Conversely, there are small projects the staff have been able to complete that support future Master Site Plan initiatives like planned landscaping or repurposing some buildings.
- Hinton Center, using the vision and drawings from the Master Site Plan, have been able to reach out to donors and secure grant funding for large portions of their plan. Having a clear, phased plan for the facilities, and a story for their future usage, has allowed Hinton leaders to engage people in funding the next chapter.
- The completed plan and its accompanying documentation and rationale have allowed new volunteers joining the board to understand the challenges, opportunities, and objectives for the organization.

A core outcome of the Strategic Plan was refining the identity and programmatic vision for Hinton Center. Staff and board members have been able to evaluate and adapt programs for how they best serve the organization's mission.

- The Strategic Plan also provided a path for the organization to make changes to be more financially sustainable. Leaders have taken the recommendations and eliminated practices that did not have strong returns on investment. As a result, Hinton Center is in a stronger financial position today.



In 2024, the new Tool Barn, a core piece of the Master Site Plan, was completed. A clear symbol and tool of the missional focus and identity.