
2001 Comprehensive Plan Fayette County, West Virginia

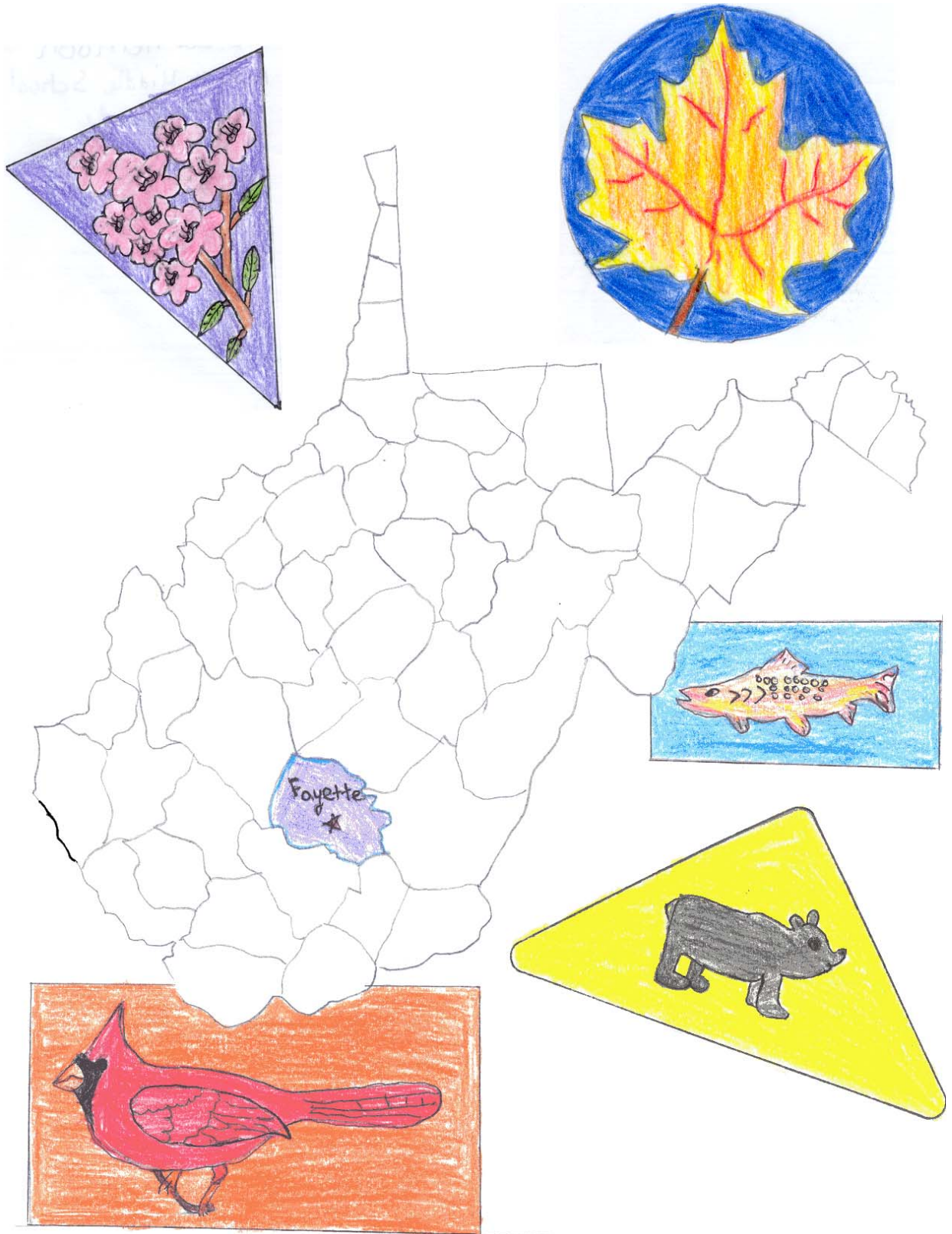




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CHAPTER ONE
—◆—
Introduction



I. OVERVIEW

A County Comprehensive Plan is in effect but needs to be updated. The basic ordinances on zoning and land subdivision regulations are also in effect, but are in need of major revision as well. In other cases, such as with the appearance codes, the programs are new to the County and recognition of their necessity has resulted from the preparation of the U.S. Route 19 Corridor Land Use Management Plan.

In July of 1999, the Fayette County Commission announced its intent to update its 1980 Fayette County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The project is funded in part by a grant from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development through its Small Cities Block Grant Program. The 4-C Economic Development Authority appropriated other funding.

In December of 1999, the Fayette County Commission contracted with Whitney, Bailey, Cox, and Magnani, LLC, a Charleston-based Planning, Architecture, and Engineering Firm, to prepare a Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance for Fayette County, West Virginia.

II. THE NEED TO UPDATE THE 1980 FAYETTE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A. Introduction

Zoning in Fayette County has been based on the Comprehensive Plan from its inception in 1966. The Zoning Ordinance and map were drafted with sufficient knowledge of County conditions and growth trends and has proven to be a workable tool. As indicated in the preceding sections, growth management, in order to be effective, should be structured around both the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. In the pursuit of the closer linkages between the 1980 Comprehensive Plan and the 1971 Zoning Ordinance (last updated in 1980), an analysis of the zoning ordinance was undertaken during the planning process. Every attempt has been made to more closely structure the goals and strategies of the Plan with realistic implementation measures and contemporary development techniques.

The comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance update was necessary to provide Fayette County with new management tools for preserving the area's natural environment while encouraging and sustaining the economic growth of the County.





The County's Comprehensive Plan attempts to limit growth in existing population centers; channel commercial growth in the downtowns of Fayetteville, Oak Hill, and Mt. Hope; while maintaining the rural undeveloped character of the countryside. However, the text of the Comprehensive Plan does little to convey this. There are a number of excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan that contradict even the fundamental goal of the Plan. The Zoning Ordinance, on the other hand, is binding on developers and the Planning Commission. This Ordinance mandates the wholesale conversion of the countryside to residential subdivisions and prescribes strip commercial development along the major roadways outside Fayetteville, Oak Hill, and Mount Hope.

This contradiction between the County's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance seems to go almost entirely unnoticed. This may be because people don't read the Comprehensive Plan (because it is written in planning jargon) or the Zoning Ordinance (because it has been attempted to be written in indecipherable legal jargon). Another explanation is that neither document can be interpreted properly due to the vast number of contradictions between the two respective documents. Perhaps the Planning Commission fears litigation from developers if they explicitly limit development in the countryside, as the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan recommends.

B. Role of Planning

When the Comprehensive Plan for a County has been adopted, zoning becomes the principle means for making it effective from a legal standpoint. The functions of zoning are to control the use of land and buildings as well as regulate the density of development in order to guide future land use development in the manner, which achieves the goals outlined in the County Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning has proved to be an extremely important public law. Zoning is capable of shaping the environment of the communities that use it. Its application may be apparent only in small ways even after years of use. But the shaping will occur and will produce a prosperous and livable environment if the law is based on the same wisdom and foresight applied in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan.



C. Implementation Authority

Planning is a recognized governmental process. It operated under the general objectives established by the West Virginia code and is regulated by the citizens by their elected representatives. The County's Planning and Zoning Commission, as an advisory agency to the County Commission, is charged with the duties of developing and updating the Comprehensive Plan, administering the legal tools at its disposal for implementing the plan, and carrying on other activities that relate to development and improvement.

In order to give public sanction to the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission can avail itself of several regulatory tools or ordinances, including zoning, land subdivision regulations, and building and housing codes.

Programs concerned with specific projects may also be put into effect, such as public works projects needed for improvement to the water distribution system. Less routine programs would include appearance codes for transportation corridors in Fayette County. Some of the aforementioned programs are already being carried out by the County and are mentioned here only to inform those citizens unfamiliar with the present county activities.

D. History of Planning and Zoning in Fayette County

Zoning in Fayette County has been based on the Comprehensive Plan from its inception in 1966. The Zoning Ordinance and map were drafted with sufficient knowledge of County conditions and growth trends and had proven to be a workable tool. As indicated in the preceding sections, growth management, in order to be effective, should be structured around both the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. In the pursuit of the closer linkages between the 1980 Comprehensive Plan and the 1971 Zoning Ordinance (last updated in 1980), an analysis of the zoning ordinance was undertaken during the planning process. Every attempt has been made to more closely structure the goals and strategies of the Plan with realistic implementation measures and contemporary development techniques.



E. Analysis of the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan

Conventionally prepared zoning laws are not always tailored to the needs of the rural and semi-rural communities. This holds true in Fayette County. Fayette County's Comprehensive Plan is an advisory document that does not have the force of law. Furthermore, the 1980 Comprehensive Plan contradicts the Zoning Ordinance.

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Fayette County's Comprehensive Plan articulates the County's goals. Fayette County's Zoning Ordinance applies these goals to the sometimes conflicting claims of private property rights. This explains why the Comprehensive Plan recommends that the countryside be preserved while the zoning Ordinance prescribes cookie-cutter development.

1. 1980 Plan Overview (Page 1)

The 1980 Comprehensive Plan identified the Plateau region as the center of commercial and economic growth for most of the County. This region includes Oak Hill, Fayetteville, and Mount Hope. This region, to this day, still has been the recipient of development and growth in Fayette County.



Residents, business owners, elected officials, and economic development professionals, today, are making the argument that economic and commercial development initiatives are shifting south toward Beckley (along U.S. Route 19) and possibly west toward Charleston (along U.S. Route 60).

2. Population (Page 2)

The population forecast for Fayette County in the 1980 Plan was 67,282 for the year 2000. Current estimates place the year 2000 population estimate at 48,664. Planners for the 1980 Plan grossly overestimated the year 2000 population.

Planners in 1980 projected that the industrial, commercial, and residential development would continue over the next two decades. Planners also expected that the area south of Hico and the area between Fayetteville and Oak Hill would accommodate this anticipated growth. Although the growth never materialized between Hico and the New River, the water facility improvements currently under construction may spur some of the growth anticipated in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan.

3. Existing Land Use

a. General (Page 10)

The 1980 Plan characterized Fayette County, accurately, as steep rolling hills dissected by narrow "V" shaped stream valleys. The Plateau region, which has accommodated the majority of land development in the County, was characterized as relatively level topographically, with gently rolling hills bisecting the County along a northeast-southwest axis. This topography, along with the transportation network, has influenced development within Fayette County.



b. Residential (Page 11)

Residential land uses occupied 8.4 percent of the developed land with the County. The greatest concentration of residential development in the County was along Route 19 between Fayetteville and Mt. Hope. Approximately one-third of this residential development within the corridor occurred in the municipalities. Other major residential concentrations were found along U.S. Route 60 in Smithers, Montgomery, Ansted, Glen Ferris, Boomer, Charlton Heights, and Kanawha Falls. Overall, the residential density for the County was approximately four dwelling units per residentially developed acre. This development also occurred in a linear pattern along major stream valleys and highways that sometimes destroyed the environment, impacted scenic vistas, and created traffic congestion.

c. Commercial (Page 11)

Commercial activities occupied 0.2 percent of the developed land in the County. Aside from the central business districts in the County, most of the commercial land use was highway-oriented and in close proximity to residents, schools, and employment centers. Commercial activities in 1980 primarily included grocery stores, fast-food restaurants, bowling alleys, car washes, gas stations, and car dealers.

d. Industrial (Page 12)

Industrial activities in Fayette County occupied 0.4 percent of the developed land area. The Union Carbide plant at Alloy represented the largest industrially developed area in the County. Residential development never materialized in the area due to topographic constraints. Industrial development also occurred in the Plateau area. These developments included Crown Corporation, Fayette Hydraulics, and Quality Packaging (all in the vicinity of Oak Hill). The Plateau region was, and continues to be, favorable for industrial development in the County due to available developable land, water and sewer, access and visibility, and proximity to labor supply.



e. Agricultural (Page 15)

Agricultural activities occupied 41 percent of the developed land in the County in 1980. Most of this agricultural land was in the Plateau and New Haven region of the County. There were 205 farms in 1980 with average farm size being 113 acres.

The presence of agricultural activities in the Plateau region posed a problem for Planners in 1980 that went unnoticed. One of the County's primary goals in the 1980 Plan was to preserve farmland in Plateau. However, one of the County's other primary goals was to expand industrial and commercial development in the Plateau region. These competing goals were never rectified in the zoning ordinance or other development guidance systems.

Another important note about the reporting of agriculture activities in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan was the lack of emphasis on the importance of agriculture in the local economy. Agricultural land was the predominant land use with the developed areas and second to forest/undeveloped land in overall use classification. However, all discussions of economic development in the 1980 Plan did not mention the importance of agriculture in the local and regional economy.

4. Future Land Use

a. Goals (Page 22)

The 1980 Plan encouraged an orderly and spatially efficient pattern of development that was functionally linked with existing and proposed transportation facilities and public utilities. The Plan was intended to be flexible enough to allow innovative concepts regarding the location and intensity of future development, especially within the Plateau area of the County. The 1980 Plan never achieved this goal of orderly and spatially efficient development. Furthermore, no implementation measures were adopted to encourage innovative development; particularly in the Plateau area.



A summary of the major land use recommendations outlined in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan, and whether they were implemented, follow:

Goal 1: Promote the Fayette Plateau as the primary area for residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

Result: This region has accommodated growth. It should be argued that it has occurred because of the transportation network and topography and not because of good planning.

Goal 2: Expand industrial and commercial activities along U.S. Route 19, but maintain recreation/open space areas as buffer zones separating residential areas from the highway and industrial activities.

Result: The 1980 Plan has been ineffective in buffering highway and industrial uses from residential uses. Residential developments abut commercial developments. Industrial plants are in full view from neighboring residential uses and the highway. Little has been required to filter views between incompatible uses.

Goal 3: Intensify residential land uses within existing public service areas and municipal urbanizing areas.

Result: This is a good goal; however, no implementation mechanism existed to ensure the realization of this goal.

Goal 4: Provide residential neighborhoods with a local service center. These services should include a school, park, and neighborhood commercial shopping area.

Result: This is a good goal as well. However, this would have required working closely with the Board of Education. There is no evidence of the County Commission and Board of Education working closely. These two entities have been working and planning independently of each



other; and, in fact, independent of any other County organizations. In order for any goal like this to be achieved, the County Commission and Board of Education will have to be willing to share information, work concurrently on community challenges, set mutually agreeable goals, and program long-term capital improvements.

Regarding accommodating commercial shopping centers within residential neighborhoods, this is a function of zoning and market demand. Appropriately sited and sized commercial areas must be planned in conjunction with residential areas.

Goal 5: Encourage the development of a sub-regional shopping center within the Plateau region at a location that maximizes accessibility to the greatest number of County residents.

Result: The drafters of this goal never anticipated the influx of discounters, category-killers, or the market draw of super-regional discount retailers like Wal-Mart and K-Mart. Sub-regional shopping centers cannot compete with smaller commercial centers. Fayette County currently faces fierce competition from super malls in Beckley, Summersville, and Charleston. Furthermore, it is not necessary to plan for additional sites for commercial development in Fayette County when the municipalities along Route 19 and Route 60 are strategically located and offer advantages such as visibility, access, vacant and often under-utilized space, and population concentrations.



Goal 6: Reserve land along Route 19 between Hico and the New River as a planned development area. Develop standards to insure compatibility among all the land uses, foster innovation in site planning and development, and encourage sound design practices.

Result: This goal has been partially achieved with the \$50 million regional water project that has been recently funded. The introduction of water into this section of the Route 19 Corridor will improve service delivery to existing residents and spur new development. However, there are no provisions in the existing Plan or Zoning Ordinance to mitigate the impacts of incompatible uses, foster innovation in site planning, or encourage sound design practices. Furthermore, due to the importance of tourism in the regional and national economy, some of the land between Hico and the New River may need to be preserved for eco-tourism. Eco-tourism is the marketing of the County's natural assets to visitors who are in search of natural settings to visit for recreation or vacation.

Goal 7: Maintain the New River Gorge area as a natural and scenic area.

Result: The County has worked closely with the National Park Service to attain this goal.

Goal 8: Enhance the availability and variety of recreational opportunities to County residents.

Result: Although a good goal, results from student surveys and input at Town Meetings reveal that this has been an unrealistic goal.

Goal 9: Continuation of improvement of the County school system should result in an educational system which will house and transport school children in a safe, healthy, and adequate learning environment.



Result: Recent student surveys and input received at Town Meetings reveal that this goal, too, has not been realized.

b. Residential (Page 24)

Planners in 1980 projected future residential growth to be primarily single family detached residential units. The higher population projected for the year 2000 was anticipated to be housed in higher density single family detached unit settings. Due to competing development objectives, preservation vs. development, Planners should have drafted ordinances to preserve open space and farmland while requiring higher residential densities on the more developable properties in the County.

Planners also made a blunder by encouraging the fuller utilization of entire tracts of land for residential uses by requiring larger lots, which would offer more privacy for the homeowner. Due to the limited availability of land for development, this would have been an inefficient means of developing the County's resources. This development practice, in effect, would have been sprawl. Sprawl can be defined as developing land with no provision for paying for the excess water and sewer lines required to service houses, eliminating forest stands with no provision for preserving large tree stands, destroying the landscape, converting productive farm land into subdivisions, and isolating neighborhoods from much needed services which the Plan was proposing to accomplish in Goal 4 previously discussed. The drafters of the 1980 Plan grossly erred in their assumption that residential developments utilizing entire tracts of land are generally the most economical and efficient with respect to the provision of water, sewerage, and other community services.

c. Commercial (Page 25)

The 1980 Plan also proposes conflicting policies in regards to commercial development. The policy for commercial development on p. 25 encourages commercial development within the incorporated areas and their immediate environs. The policy, as proposed here, proposes to "...maintain and strengthen ...central business districts as centers



of economic activity for local residents." The policies proposed on pp. 22-23 encourage development along U.S. Route 19 between population centers.

Furthermore, the Plan goes on to propose additional conflicting policies by proposing additional commercial development to "...supplement the older commercial centers" without identifying why a policy is needed and where the additional commercial development should supplement the older commercial development other than just vaguely along U.S. Route 19.

d. Industrial (Page 26)

The Plan proposes industrial development along Route 19 within the Plateau area. Specifically near Lochgelly and Fayetteville. The Plan did little to propose how to hold these properties for industrial uses.

e. Planned Development (Page 28)

The Plan proposes a planned development along Route 19 near Hico. A recommendation consistent with the recommendations of the Route 19 Corridor Land Use Management Plan.

f. Recreation/Open Space (Page 29)

The 1980 Plan proposed buffers along Route 19 to separate incompatible uses. The Corridor Management Plan also recommends buffers but for different reasons. The Corridor Management Plan recommends screening, landscaping, and buffering to protect viewsheds, filter views into development sites from Route 19, and to encourage environmentally sensitive development practices. Promoting recreation, as proposed in the 1980 Plan, is not practical. How appealing is recreation area when wedged between a highway and strip retail establishment or industrial park? Furthermore, how safe would it be for use as a recreation area?

5. Land Use Plan and Implementation Strategy (Page 33)

a. Land Use Goal-Residential

- Housing is not being developed orderly with physical stability, aesthetic quality, and



functionally utility as desired in the 1980 Plan.

- Older residential areas have not been renewed or rehabilitated; instead they have been left to decay among the vegetation, along roads, and in hollows.
- The aesthetic, natural, social environment contributing to sound neighborhoods has not been protected and, the lack thereof, has contributed to the decay of community and neighborhoods in Fayette County.

b. Land Use Goal-Commercial

- Commercial facilities have been approved by the County and developed to conflict with existing commercial centers and incompatible land uses (i.e. neighborhoods and recreation areas).
- Higher density and development standards were never created, until recently (only for Route 19), to regulate strip commercial development.
- Mt. Hope has never been the focus of any revitalization effort except for the recent development of a 17 acre industrial park.
- The County is still struggling to identify, service, and develop planned employment center sites to provide opportunities for job development.
- Sites for economic development have not been properly identified and protected for their long-term development.

c. Land Use Goal-Open Space/Recreational

- Unique natural areas have not been protected from development.
- Land use development has not been planned or managed to protect the aesthetic qualities of the environment.

F. Conclusion

Comprehensive planning and community revitalization are crucial challenges facing Fayette County government. Without a comprehensive plan for development and preservation, the County's future welfare is greatly at risk. The plan update Fayette County is undertaking is not about overhauling an existing plan or budgeting money for

farmland and viewshed preservation or building new roads and schools. Comprehensive planning is much more. It is a thoughtful planned development pattern that overlays many of the decisions made by the County Commissioners, County Planning Commissioners, and County agencies. It impacts taxes as well as the quality of life that residents esteem. The incorporated localities also influence land-use policies within, and outside of, their borders.

Doing things the other way, rezoning individual parcels of land without regard to a plan, creates a patchwork of development as well as significant legal precedents for further assaults on land use planning in Fayette County. That practice affects water and sewage, transportation, public safety, schools, and environmental protection.

The lack of a comprehensive plan also results in outdated views of which land should be used for badly needed economic development in Fayette County. Sites once proposed for economic development have been converted to residential and commercial use. Preservation goals become more difficult as individual rezoning decisions encourage farmland owners to hold out for a more lucrative development plan, especially as farming income becomes more uncertain. Furthermore, proper land use planning can help discourage the thinking that today's farmland is just an inventory for tomorrow's development.

The challenge for Fayette County is two-fold: to provide adequate reasonable services for established communities and to rationally plan for further development within those communities or other places in the County as depicted in the County Plan. Both tasks require a clear vision and a roadmap to reach the goals.

III. THE PURPOSE OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to enable local officials and citizens to anticipate and deal constructively with changes within their community. Communities are dynamic; not static. They are living or dying. Change is inevitable in every community, whether the community is living or dying. Communities engage in planning to understand what has happened and why, to acquire insight into possibilities for the future, and to influence future development. A comprehensive plan is a vehicle through which local government officials and citizens can express their goals for the future of their community and identify specific activities that will be required to achieve these goals. If goals are supported by the community, activities responsibly prioritized and capital improvements and programs properly planned and financed, the Plan will:





- Create conditions favorable to the public's health, safety and welfare;
- Reduce the waste of physical, financial and human resources;
- Provide the framework for the County to efficiently and economically use its natural resources; and
- Properly dispose, convey or recycle its waste.



This Comprehensive Plan provides a basis for intelligent discussions and decision-making by and between residents, businesses and special interests and the County's elected representatives on the future development of Fayette County. It fosters an environment conducive to decision-making that serves the interests of both public and private parties; that ultimately leads to decisions that balance economic objectives with environmental conservation.

The adopted Comprehensive Plan represents the backbone for decision-making in Fayette County. The Comprehensive Plan is the guide for the day-to-day decisions regarding development and growth. To be used effectively, this Plan must be accepted, understood, and supported by the elected officials who are charged with the responsibility of decision-making. The citizens, who reap the benefits of proper planning, must also support the Plan.

To be effective, the Plan is geared toward the social, economic, and environmental conditions that prevail today, yet promotes a balance between environmental protection and the provision of adequate services and facilities required by the populace of the future. By adopting this Plan, decisions will be made, monies will be spent, and programs will be initiated, all of which can be implemented in an enlightened manner.

The Comprehensive Plan addresses the following issues as they relate to various parts of the County: Commercial Development, Economic Development and Tourism, Housing and Residential Development, Environmental Quality, Utilities, Public Services/Civic Issues, Historic Resources, Transportation, and Community Appearance.

IV. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

It has been said that those who do not study the past stand to repeat it. Therefore, in the interest of establishing a baseline from which to plan the future of Fayette County, it is important to understand the County's history. The evolution of the County has been studied, prior to the drafting of this plan, to understand how changes in the regional and national economy have affected its residents and businesses. Fayette County reached great heights and suffered major setbacks since its inception. Our hope is that the recommendations spelled out in this Plan draw from the lessons provided by the best and most challenging events in the County's history.

The County was created by an act of the Virginia General Assembly in 1831, from parts of Greenbrier, Kanawha, Logan, and Nicholas counties. It was named in honor of the Marquis (Gilbert Motier) de LaFayette (1757-1834), a French military hero and American ally during the American Revolutionary War. When West Virginia



declared its statehood in 1863, Fayette County became part of southern West Virginia.

Geographically, Fayette County is divided into three distinct, physically different areas: The Valley area to the west; the Plateau to the south; and the River Basin to the north and the east.

The County's three major rivers, the Meadow, the New, and the Gauley, are largely responsible for shaping the land. Formed nearly 100 million years ago, the New River, which flows north, cut quickly through the land of Fayette County to create the spectacular cliffs of the New River Gorge - the second-oldest gorge in the world. The New River joins the Gauley River at Gauley Bridge to create the great Kanawha River. There are also a number of creeks in the County that feed the three major waterways.

To avoid the New River Gorge, pioneers in the 1700s and 1800s developed two major western overland routes that snaked through Fayette County. The first was the Buffalo/Midland Trail through Ansted, Rich Creek, Jodie, Bell Creek, Kelly Creek and Cedar Grove. The second, known as "The Loop," ran through Thurmond, Prince, Oak Hill, Cotton Hill and Deepwater.

In addition to its breathtaking natural beauty and fair climate, Fayette County has a rich history that encompasses the battles of the Civil War, the boom of the coal industry and, most recently, the growth of tourism and recreation. During the Civil War, the County saw a number of battles. In fact, Fayetteville was the first-ever site to see the use of calculated indirect firing - now in universal use in militaries across the globe. But as Fayette County grew and developed, no time in history affected it more than the era of King Coal.

When the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway was completed in 1873, coal mines and coal towns opened up every few miles along its tracks. When the golden spike linking the east and west was driven into the ground on January 29, 1873, near Sunnyside on the New River, more than two dozen coal fields sprung up in a blink of the County's eye. For more than half the 1900s, mining and the mining industry were the No. 1 employers in the County. Coal towns created fuel for the nation and a legendary reputation for the state as tales of the Dungen Hotel and the riotous town of Thurmond were carried across the country by the rail cars that transported coal.

Today, most of the mines that once fueled life in the Gorge are gone. Instead, fed by tales of educated whitewater rafting guides, tourists look up from rafts floating along the New River and try to imagine what life was like when men and women climbed ropes and footbridges up and across the steep cliffs in the New





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**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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River Gorge. In fact, the whitewater rafting industry has served as a catalyst to revitalize the area and its history.



Often, those who do not come to ride the river come to drive across it. On 22 October 1977 the New River Gorge Bridge, the world's longest steel-arch bridge, took its place among the country's modern marvels. With the area changes in transportation and lifestyle, including the designation of the New River Gorge as a National Park, people from other parts of the State, Country and world passed through the County.

As a consequence from the shift away from a coal-based economy, in tandem with the highway improvements throughout the County (primarily U.S. Route 19), Fayette County's economic structure began to shift. The County economy, once based primarily on coal extraction, became increasingly based on services. This shift, coupled with the present lack of a major industry, created challenges for transportation, land development and household income once dependent on the mining industry. From the late 1800s to the 1950s, Fayette County was anchored by industries like farming and mining. By 1997, the County's top employment industries were services, government and retail trade.

Indeed, much has changed since the County adopted comprehensive plans in 1967 and 1980, but the changes have not been solely economic. Differences from the years proceeding those plans include the upgrade of U.S. Route 19, the designation of the New River Gorge as a National Park, and the explosion of tourism in West Virginia in general and Fayette County in particular. The widening of U.S. Route 19 affected not only the landscape, but also increased north/south traffic from Canada to the southern states, opening the County to the paths of adventure/thrill-seekers and sightseers.

Because of this transition, Fayette County has entered an era of economic restructuring that will have long-term implications on the County's quality of life. Several towns in the County have begun to see hints of revitalization. Life has come back to the incorporated communities in the County. Fayette County is ripe for expansion along the U.S. Route 19 Corridor.

Without the benefit of planning, growth in the area could occur without regard to the existing environment and quality of life within the County; similar to historic development patterns characterized by the exploitation of human and natural resources. Good planning can prevent the exploitation of the County's human and natural resources. It can ensure good circulation, adequate locations for community facilities, sufficient open space, and a basic order. Planning can prevent the siting of nuisances in residential neighborhoods, protect and enhance land values, and protect historically significant sites or environmentally sensitive areas. Proper planning can prevent the encroachment of commercial and industrial uses into stable residential neighborhoods. Proceeding without a plan leaves the County vulnerable and poses a threat to economic development,





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sustainable living, the natural beauty and quality of life in Fayette County.



V. LOCATION AND REGIONAL SETTING

Fayette County is located in south-central West Virginia. The County is bound by Raleigh and Summers Counties to the south, Kanawha County to the west, Nicholas County to the north, and Greenbrier County to the east. Montgomery, Mount Hope, Oak Hill, and Fayetteville are the larger municipalities and the primary areas of concentrated development in the County.

U.S. Route 19 bisects the County from north to south and is considered the primary connector route between the municipalities of Beckley and Sutton in West Virginia. U.S. Route 19 is intersected by Route 60 in the southern part of the corridor. Route 60 is an important east-west route that connects Fayette County with Charleston to the west and Interstate 64 to the east.

VI. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The Comprehensive Plan 2001 for Fayette County is composed of a total of seventeen chapters. Chapter One introduces the reader to, and provides a description of the County, in terms of its history, location, and landmarks. Chapter Two provides valuable information on some of the planning activities that were successfully completed in the County during the recent past. Chapter Three discusses the planning process and lists the eight exercises conducted during the process.

Chapter Four is a documentation of a socio-economic analysis and a market analysis for Fayette County and the surrounding counties in south-central West Virginia. Chapter Five discusses existing and future land use for the County.

Chapters Six through Fourteen focus on the various elements of the Plan: Commercial Development, Economic Development and Tourism, Housing and Residential Development, Environmental Quality, Utilities, Public Services/Civic Issues, Historic Resources, Transportation, and Community Appearance. Each of these chapters follows the same format for consistency. Each of these chapters documents assets, liabilities, and recommendations from the four planning districts: Danese/Meadow Bridge District; New Haven District; Plateau District; and Valley District.

Chapter Fifteen discusses implementation techniques. Chapter Sixteen focuses on the Capital Improvements Program. Chapter seventeen introduces funding mechanisms (both public as well as private funding sources).





CHAPTER TWO

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Background



I. OVERVIEW

A wide array of County programs involving planning, technical assistance, incentives and regulatory actions have been implemented in Fayette County over the past fifty years. Fayette County has been a leader in the State of West Virginia in providing direction to its citizens for addressing specific public needs. The needs have related to land use, solid waste management, transportation, open space, and sewer and water facilities. They have established how local government will respond to specific public needs with a course of action to achieve the goals of the community—the Comprehensive Plan.

More recently, in 1992, the Fayette County Commission formed the Fayette Transition Team as a long-range planning advisory body. Formation of that group was facilitated by discussions between National Park Service Planners and the County Commission President regarding sustainable development of the local economy. In its early stages, the Transition Team accumulated base data in terms of local, regional, and national trends and surveyed local residents to determine the wants and needs of the area.

This chapter summarizes the accomplishments of the County related to effective planning. Numerous organizations are responsible for the successes in planning in the County. This chapter recognizes those organizations and programs that most effectively had a role in managing growth and development in Fayette County.



Community Resource Coordinator Dave Pollard describes the great success Fayette County has had in planning and recognizes the agencies involved.

II. TRANSITION TEAM

A. Regional Water Project

The Fayette County Transition Team coordinated the local effort to plan and build a public water system for areas of Fayette County never before served by public water. The Transition Team secured approximately \$50 million in funding for this project. Construction will be completed in 2001.

B. Water Resources Plan

The Fayette County Transition Team's water resources plan has been adopted as an official County policy document. The Transition Team is currently bringing together funding plans for water line extensions; both in the regional systems and in the Public Service Districts.

C. Regional Sewerage

Members of the Transition Team have worked with Del. John Pino to get amendments adopted by the Bureau of Environmental Health Services that will permit Fayette County to use "alternative" treatment methods for sewage. Those methods include, among others, wetlands systems for individual homes and communities and low-pressure dosing systems. Also, in 1997, the team secured a portion of funds from the state's Budget Digest for the Regional Sewerage project.

D. Comprehensive Plan

The Fayette County Transition Team was instrumental in obtaining Federal, State and local funds to hire a consultant (Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani) to facilitate a planning process and update to the 1980 County Comprehensive Plan. Because of their efforts, Fayette County will become one of only a few counties in the state to have adopted a comprehensive plan and county zoning ordinance. These growth management tools will protect the County's beauty and natural resources while encouraging economic development. The Plan and Ordinance were completed in 2001.

E. Corridor L Tourism

The Corridor L Regional Tourism Enhancement Commission, working directly with the Fayette County Community Resource Coordinator, originated the idea to designate the corridor as the New River Adventure Trail. The Transition Team already has TODS/Logo (Tourism-Oriented Directional





Signing) signs erected and new businesses are being added to those signs regularly.

F. Tourism Conference

The annual tourism conference facilitated by the Corridor I Regional Tourism Enhancement Commission, working directly with the Fayette County Community Resource Coordinator, is an annual success. A number of speakers and presenters at the event are sought by other organizations, supporting the networking value of the conference.

G. Retiree Attraction/Retention

The Transition Team is pursuing designation as a Certified Retirement Community. Designation as a retirement community would make funds available to the County for future marketing efforts, along with providing personnel to guide the County in those endeavors. Also, thanks to the hard work of the Transition Team, Bruce Novak, who serves on the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, was awarded a scholarship to the Rural Aging Conference held in Charleston in the summer of 2000. Participation in the conference enabled Mr. Novak to bring back crucial information to the team regarding the proper method to assess your community for senior and retirement needs and preparing a marketing plan directed toward seniors and retirees.

H. Bridge Day Census

Members of the Transition Team and Fayette County Chamber of Commerce organized a Bridge Day Census to collect the data necessary to obtain a large corporate sponsor for the event. The two entities secured funds and hired a consultant (Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani) to conduct the survey during Bridge Day 2000. The study resulted in a \$30,000.00 U.S. EDA grant to develop plans to expand the economic impact of the event.

I. Economic Development Forums

The Transition Team and Fayette County Chamber of Commerce also collaborated in organizing quarterly economic development forums, which keep residents and business owners apprised of growth and development in Fayette County. Each forum has a different focus.

J. Glen Jean Railroad

The Transition Team secured funding for a feasibility study for a scenic railroad from Glen Jean to Thurmond. This project has generated much community and legislative support.



K. 1996 Housing Study

Unique lodging opportunities for tourists was cited as a need by this Plan. Since that time, private developers have been responsible for creating nearly one hundred new upscale chalets and condos to service this need.

III. 1967 FAYETTE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A. New River Gorge Bridge

A primary recommendation of the plan was to build a bridge across New River, connecting North Fayette County to the Plateau. Construction on that bridge began in 1971 and was completed in 1977.

B. National Park:

Another recommendation of the 1967 plan was the creation of a National Park showcasing New River Gorge. The New River was designated a National Park in 1978.

IV. 1980 FAYETTE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

A. Highway Upgrade

Due to major downturns in the County's coal economy, it was recommended that resources be concentrated in the Plateau area, where Appalachian Corridor L provided a vital transportation link that could spur economic development. Concentration on upgrading this highway played a significant role in the growth of what is now a \$125 million per year tourism industry.

B. Georgia-Pacific

The abundance of the area's hardwood resources resulted in the location of the Georgia-Pacific in Mount Hope. This strand board plant at Mount Hope added considerably to the tax base of the region while creating 130 jobs.



V. 1993 COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

The primary goal listed in this planning initiative was providing potable water service to northern Fayette County. This planning process ultimately resulted in the creation of the position of Community Resource Coordinator. The Community Resource Coordinator spearheaded a local effort to secure a \$50 million water system that not only provides a critical service for residents, but also opened a large area for economic development in Fayette County.

VI. 1996 UPPER KANAWHA VALLEY MASTER PLAN

A. **National Scenic Highway**

The Plan called for creating strong links to the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association in an effort to restore traffic levels along the corridor for economic development. The recent designation of the Midland Trail as a National Scenic By-Way has kick-started the desired increase in traffic. Highways across the nation receiving a similar designation have been significant recipients of economic growth.

B. **Montgomery Technology Park**

The plan called for construction of a shell building to attract new employers to the area. A planned technology park in Montgomery will fulfill that goal.

C. **Montgomery City Hall**

It was recommended that the Montgomery City Hall be moved to a more central location in an effort to accommodate space for better service delivery and a new library. The City Hall has been relocated and was the impetus for the preparation of a downtown streetscape enhancement plan. A consultant (Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani) completed the streetscape enhancement plan in 1999. The Upper Kanawha Valley Chamber of Commerce is identifying funds to pay for the construction of the improvements.

VII. 1997 CORRIDOR L TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN

A. **Signs**

A need for tourist-related signs along U.S. Route 19 was cited in this Plan. Since that time, the Transition Team and Corridor L Board have been successful in obtaining a TODS/Logo (Tourism-Oriented Directional Signage) Signage Program along the highway, which was previously prohibited by Federal Highways Association and West Virginia DOH Guidelines.



B. Museums

The need to develop museums showcasing area history and culture was cited in this Plan. The Jail Museum was created as a direct result and several existing area museums have experienced increased traffic due to the distribution of brochures and publicity materials funded and designed through the Corridor L process.

C. Marketing the Tourism Industry

The need to showcase the local tourism industry was highlighted by this Plan. Since that time, the New River CVB has created a high-quality County brochure. A tourism conference, which is now the second largest conference of its kind in the state, not only provides valuable opportunities for local tourism entities, but also has a \$25,000 direct annual impact on the local economy.

VIII. 1998 ROUTE 19 CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

A. Aesthetic Guidelines

This Plan, completed by Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani, recommended the creation of aesthetic guidelines. The guidelines serve as a means of protecting the scenic character of the U.S. Route 19 corridor. The guidelines also give assurances to zoning officials that construction activity would have a positive impact on the quality of life and beauty of the natural environment.

Since the plan was adopted in April 1998, a zoning ordinance text and map amendment followed that required compliance with the corridor design guidelines. Since the adoption of the text and map amendment, more property in the U.S. Route 19 corridor has been zoned for commercial development than in history.

B. Office Park

A multi-million dollar office park was developed outside of Fayetteville. The developer and tenants complied with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance; recognizing the importance of protecting their investment.



CHAPTER THREE

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Planning Process





*Planning Consultant,
Patrick Ford explains the
citizens-directed planning
approach to a crowd of
more than 200 at New
Haven School.*



I. CITIZEN-DIRECTED PLANNING PROCESS

The Fayette County Comprehensive Plan 2000 is a collaborative effort between the Fayette County Transition Team, Fayette County Planning and Zoning Commission, residents of the County's four planning districts and the municipalities of Fayetteville, Mount Hope, Oak Hill, Ansted, Gauley Bridge, Meadow Bridge, Smithers, and Montgomery.

The process included an analysis of existing conditions within the four County planning districts and identification of specific strategies to ensure orderly development within each district. The planning process also had numerous opportunities for citizen participation. The opportunities came in the form of:

- Steering Committee meetings;
- Worksessions with the four planning districts;
- Interviews with key people in the community;
- Meetings with local representatives; and
- Open houses and public meetings.

This approach successfully identified issues, opportunities, constraints and attitudes among the widest possible spectrum of interests in the County.



CHAPTER THREE - PLANNING PROCESS

II. APPROACH

The Consultants followed an eight-exercise approach as they compiled data, solicited input, analyzed information and made recommendations. This approach required residents in each planning district to actively participate in each of the following exercises:

- Defining Boundaries;
- Developing Vision;
- Identifying Key Players and Partners;
- Recommending Organizational Sponsor;
- Identifying Assets and Liabilities;
- Recommending Activities and Set Priorities;
- Preparing a Work Plan; and
- Preparing Final Plan Recommendations and Identify Funding Sources.

Exercise 1: Defining Boundaries

Involved setting finite boundaries for each of the four County planning districts. These districts are different than the geographic districts described in Chapter One of this Plan and the 1980 Comprehensive Plan. Districts defined were Danese/Meadow Bridge, New Haven, Plateau, and Valley. Specific planning strategies were developed for each district.

Exercise 2: Creating a Vision

An overall vision for each planning district in the County was prepared by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

Exercise 3: Identifying Key Players, Partners and Organizations

Involved identifying key agencies at the local, State and Federal level that could assist the County with implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. These organizations will be responsible for carrying out specific activities identified in the Plan.

Exercise 4: Choosing an Organizational Sponsor

Identified a group within the County that would be committed to ensuring that recommendations from the Plan were implemented.

Exercise 5: Identifying Current Assets and Liabilities; Opportunities and Threats

Brought attention to issues of concern and recognized the positive aspects of the four planning districts. The focus of this exercise was to maximize and strengthen the community's assets while mitigating, or eliminating, the effects of its liabilities and threats.





CHAPTER THREE - PLANNING PROCESS

Exercise 6: Recommending Activities and Setting Priorities

Specific recommendations were developed to address the assets, liabilities, opportunities and threats within each of the four planning districts.

Exercise 7: Preparing a Work Plan

Began preparation of the draft of the comprehensive plan. It included categorizing the issues and activities and placing them in various elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Exercise 8: Preparing Plan Elements and Creating Final Recommendations

The concept of linking the actions with implementation strategies and agencies was a dominant theme in this exercise.

III. MEETINGS

The planning process involved the organization and facilitation of one County-wide kick-off meeting. This was followed by eight (8) public forums. The forums were comprised of two rounds of four public forums (two forums for each planning district). The first round of the two forums involved the documentation of the planning district's input on the County's assets and liabilities. The first round of meetings was also used to record the planning district's opinion on a vision for the County. The second round of public forums was used to present the planning recommendations that evolved out of the issues conveyed in the first public forums.

Residents in New Haven have their own idea of what improvements are necessary in their planning district. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee conducted community-input meetings throughout the planning process.





CHAPTER THREE - PLANNING PROCESS

Those who attended the forums were kept informed through mailings and invitations to public presentations. The results of each forum were presented to the Steering Committee (comprised of the Joint Committee and the Chairman of each of the four planning districts) at their regularly scheduled monthly meetings. The citizen input from these forums was gathered, analyzed, interpreted and formatted in a manner suitable for use by the Steering Committee for incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan. A written follow-up report, addressing the aforementioned issues, was presented to the Steering Committee.

IV. PLAN ELEMENTS

The work was done in focus groups of interested citizens. Each focus group elected its own Chair, Vice Chair, and Scribe. Four focus groups were created (one focus group representing each of the four planning districts) by the Steering Committee. The focus group members were selected from a pool of countywide survey respondents representing critical population segments, businesses, agencies and grassroots special-interest groups. Their purpose was to discuss and debate specified subjects to ascertain the issues that needed to be addressed and to formulate specific proposed actions. These groups focused on the following issues:

- Commercial Development;
- Economic Development and Tourism;
- Housing and Residential Development;
- Environmental Quality;
- Utilities/Infrastructure;
- Public Services/Civil Issues;
- Historic Resources; Transportation; and
- Community Appearance.

V. THE PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The County Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission and Community Resource Coordinator have recognized the comprehensive plan as an important advisory tool for ensuring that the growth of Fayette County is managed in an orderly and rational manner. Many of the activities of government encourage conformance with the comprehensive plan, such as the capital improvement program, the water and sewer master plan, and the various zoning map processes. Proposed regulations and standards are reviewed to determine if they conform to the comprehensive plan. While formally adopted regulations must take precedence over the advisory status of the comprehensive plan, it has an influential role in providing guidance in a number of regulatory and fiscal decision-making processes





CHAPTER THREE - PLANNING PROCESS

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CHAPTER FOUR



Socio-Economic & Market Analysis



I. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

A. Overview

This profile comprises a detailed analysis of the demographics of Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh, and Kanawha counties in south central West Virginia. Issues determining the counties' current social and economic characteristics and their impact on the future population were also closely examined. This profile includes data on population, race, educational attainment, housing trends, and labor force characteristics.

B. Population

The population of Fayette County increased by 17 percent between 1970 and 1980. Other counties in the region experienced a similar trend (both Nicholas and Raleigh counties each experienced an increase of approximately 24%). Between 1980 and 1990 the population in all four counties decreased considerably. While Raleigh County indicated an increase in population (3.1%) between 1990 and 2000, Fayette and Nicholas County's population stabilized during this period. Kanawha County indicated a decrease of 3.6 percent during this period.

Table 1.0 Population Trends

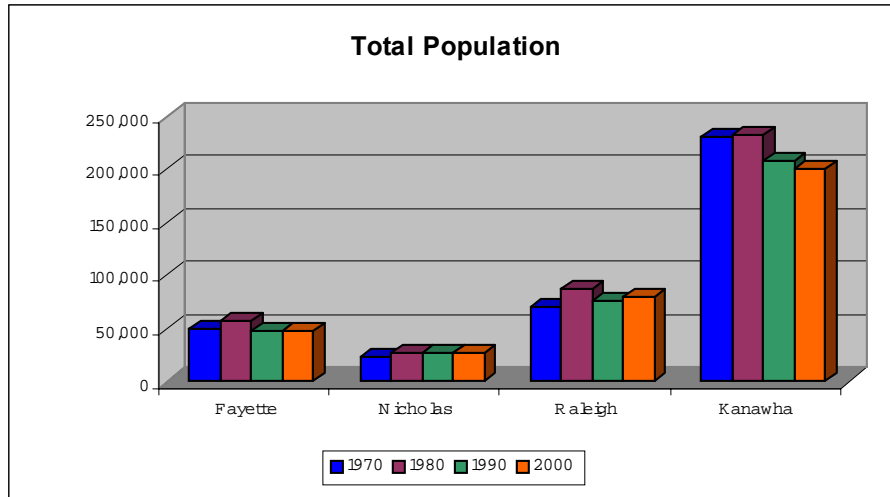
County	1970	1980	% Change 1970- 1980	1990	% Change 1980- 1990	2000	% Change 1990- 2000
Fayette	49,332	57,863	17.3%	47,952	-17.1%	47,579	-0.8%
Nicholas	22,552	28,126	24.7%	26,775	-4.8%	26,562	-0.8%
Raleigh	70,080	86,821	23.9%	76,819	-11.5%	79,220	3.1%
Kanawha	229,515	231,414	0.8%	207,619	-10.3%	200,073	-3.6%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council
Population Estimates Program, Population Division - U.S. Census
Bureau
U.S. Census Bureau - State and County Quickfacts





Figure 1.0



C. Population Projections

Projections are used to establish policy for future actions in order to attain a desired population. The evaluation of forecasts, with local knowledge and participation, can lead to a better understanding of the present situation, new insight into future possibilities, and more attainable visions of the future.

Projections should be viewed as predictions or early warnings. Where projections show substantial loss, it calls for reflection and action to avert the change to the extent possible. Where projections show substantial increases, it calls for reflection and action to assure that the growth creates a desirable future for the county residents.

The figures in Table 2.1 show that Fayette County's population is projected to experience a 1.2 percent increase between 2005 and 2010 and 1.6 percent increase between 2010 and 2015. Nicholas County's population is expected to increase by 1.1 percent between 2005 and 2010 and 1.3 percent increase between 2010 and 2015. Raleigh County shows a small increase (1%) between 2005 and 2015. Kanawha County, regardless of its large population concentration, shows a slight increase (0.6%) between 2010 and 2015.





Table 2.0 Population Estimates

County	2005	2010	2015
Fayette	48,850	49,422	50,217
Nicholas	27,884	28,190	28,569
Raleigh	78,419	79,042	79,900
Kanawha	203,191	203,263	204,460

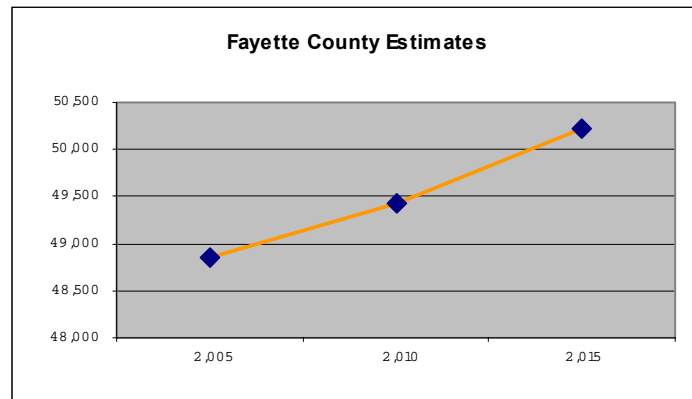
Source: West Virginia Bureau of Business and Economic Research

Table 2.1 Population Estimates (percent change)

County	% Change 2005-2010	% Change 2010 -2015
Fayette	1.2%	1.6%
Nicholas	1.1%	1.3%
Raleigh	0.8%	1.1%
Kanawha	0.0%	0.6%

Source: West Virginia Bureau of Business and Economic Research

Figure 2.0



D. Age Group Proportions

The proportion of the elderly (over 65 years of age) population in Fayette County increased from approximately 13 percent in 1970 to 17 percent in 1990. Nicholas and Kanawha counties experienced a similar increase during the same period (10% in 1970 to 14% in 1990). Raleigh County indicated an increase of 11 percent in 1970 to over 13 percent in 1990. Fayette County experienced an increase in its middle-age population (49% in 1970 to 56% in 1990). This trend was evident in the other counties in the region as well.

Table 3.0 Age Group Proportions

	1970	% of	1980	% of	1990	% of
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		Total 1970		Total 1980		Total 1990
Fayette						
0-19	18,831	38%	19,411	34%	13,748	27%
20-64	24,329	49%	30,585	52%	28,173	56%
65+	6,172	13%	7,867	14%	8,319	17%
Nicholas						
0-19	9,108	40%	9,950	35%	8,116	30%
20-64	11,140	50%	15,210	54%	16,259	56%
65+	2,304	10%	2,966	11%	3,730	14%
Raleigh						
0-19	26,340	38%	28,662	33%	21,118	28%
20-64	35,746	51%	47,757	55%	45,100	59%
65+	7,994	11%	10,402	12%	10,601	13%
Kanawha						
0-19	83,171	36%	67,970	29%	53,659	25%
20-64	124,721	54%	135,823	59%	132,031	61%
65+	21,623	10%	27,621	12%	32,496	14%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council

E. Median Age

In 1990, the median age in Fayette County was approximately thirty-six (36.3) years of age. This was a considerable increase, from twenty-nine (29.9) years of age in 1980. The other counties in this area followed this trend as well, confirming a growth in the elderly population and a decline in the younger age groups.

Table 4.0 Median Age

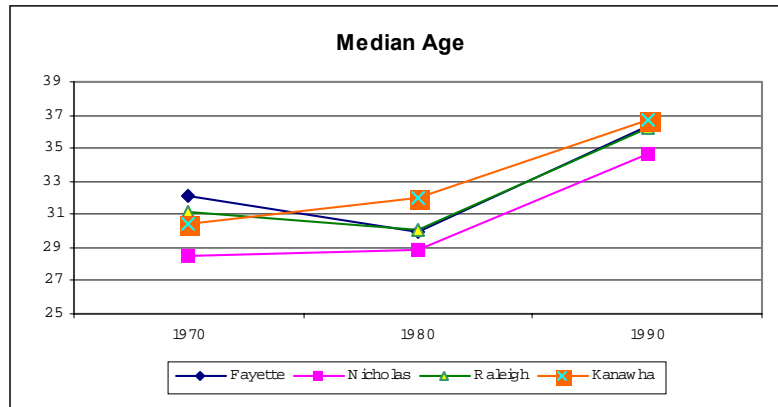
County	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970-1980	% Change 1980-1990
Fayette	32.1	29.9	36.3	-6.9%	21.4%
Nicholas	28.5	28.9	34.7	1.4%	20.1%
Raleigh	31.1	30.1	36.2	-3.2%	20.3%
Kanawha	30.4	32.0	36.7	5.3%	14.7%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council





Figure 4.0



F. Racial Composition

Fayette County, like the surrounding counties, has had a predominately White population over the last several decades. In 1990, 93 percent of the racial composition was White, while 6.5 percent was Black. The percentage of Blacks reduced to 5.6 percent in 2000. Over the past three decades, Fayette County indicated a decrease in the number of Black people, as well as in the percentage of the total population. Nicholas County consists of an all-White population (99.5% in 1990 and 98.8% in 2000). Kanawha County indicated a decrease in the White population from 92.5 percent in 1990 to 90.5 percent in 2000. The population in the category other than Black or White increased from 1 percent in 1990 to 2.5 percent in 2000.

Table 5.0 Racial Composition - 1970

1970	White	Black	Other	Total	% White	% Black	% Other
Fayette	43,987	5,240	105	49,332	89.2%	10.6%	0.2%
Nicholas	22,513	4	35	22,552	99.8%	0.0%	0.2%
Raleigh	62,963	6,880	247	70,090	89.8%	9.8%	0.4%
Kanawha	215,908	12,957	650	229,515	94.1%	5.6%	0.3%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council





Table 5.1 Racial Composition - 1980

1980	White	Black	Other	Total	% White	% Black	% Other
Fayette	53,276	4,321	266	57,863	92.1%	7.5%	0.4%
Nicholas	28,051	3	72	28,126	99.7%	0.0%	0.3%
Raleigh	79,408	6,862	551	86,821	91.5%	7.9%	0.6%
Kanawha	215,953	13,776	1,685	231,414	93.3%	6.0%	0.7%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council

Table 5.2 Racial Composition - 1990

1990	White	Black	Other	Total	% White	% Black	% Other
Fayette	44,589	3,094	269	47,952	93.0%	6.5%	0.5%
Nicholas	26,643	10	122	26,775	99.5%	0.0%	0.5%
Raleigh	70,486	5,777	556	76,819	91.8%	7.5%	0.7%
Kanawha	192,151	13,673	1,795	207,619	92.5%	6.6%	0.9%

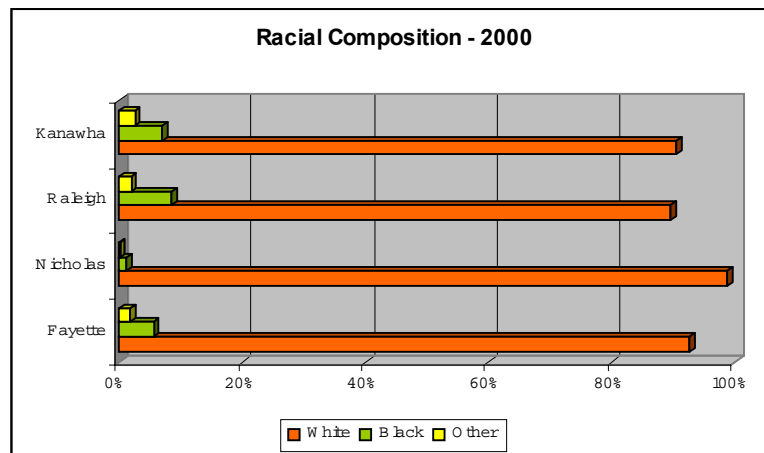
Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council

Table 5.3 Racial Composition - 2000

2000	White	Black	Other	Total	% White	% Black	% Other
Fayette	44,106	2,664	808	47,579	92.7%	5.6%	1.7%
Nicholas	26,243	292	26	26,562	98.8%	1.1%	0.1%
Raleigh	70,981	6,733	1,505	79,220	89.6%	8.5%	1.9%
Kanawha	181,066	14,005	5,001	200,073	90.5%	7.0%	2.5%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council

Figure 5.0



G. Median Household Income

Household income data provides valuable information regarding the spending power and lifestyle of a community. Household income data also reflects local economic conditions. Fayette County experienced an increase in median household income between 1970 and 1980. The other counties in the region experienced increases as well. However, all of the counties indicated a decrease between 1980 and 1990. Fayette County had the lowest median household income in the four-county region between 1970 and 1990. Between 1990 and 1995, all counties indicated substantial increases in their median household incomes. Kanawha County indicated a 25 percent increase while the other three counties indicated increases between 34 and 36 percent. The 1997 estimates indicate that Kanawha County's median household income increased 9 percent between 1995 and 1997. Fayette County indicated an increase of 4.1 percent during the same period.

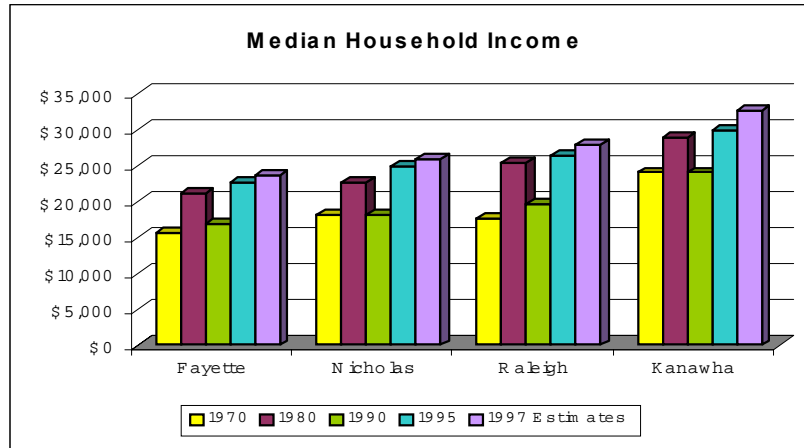
Table 6.0 Median Household Income (in 1989 constant dollars)

County	1970	1980	1990	1995	1997 Estimate s	% Change 1970- 1980	% Change 1980 - 1990	% Change 1995- 1997
Fayette	\$15,708	\$21,053	\$16,774	\$22,655	\$23,578	34.0%	-20.3%	4.1%
Nicholas	\$18,172	\$22,731	\$18,116	\$24,783	\$25,872	25.1%	-20.3%	4.4%
Raleigh	\$17,662	\$25,410	\$19,566	\$26,350	\$27,864	43.9%	-23.0%	5.7%
Kanawha	\$24,001	\$28,974	\$23,999	\$29,872	\$32,546	20.7%	-17.2%	9.0%

Source: West Virginia Bureau of Economics
U.S. Bureau of the Census; U.S. Census Bureau - State and County Quickfacts

Figure 6.0





H. Per Capita Income

The per capita income increased (over 60%) in each of the four counties in the region between 1980 and 1990. In 1970, Fayette County had a higher per capita income than both Nicholas and Raleigh counties. Fayette and Nicholas counties indicated similar trends in 1990 (\$8,650). This figure was substantially lower than that of Raleigh and Kanawha counties. Beckley and Charleston, located in Raleigh and Kanawha counties, respectively, are major employment centers and attribute to the higher per capita incomes in these counties.

Table 7.0 Per Capita Income

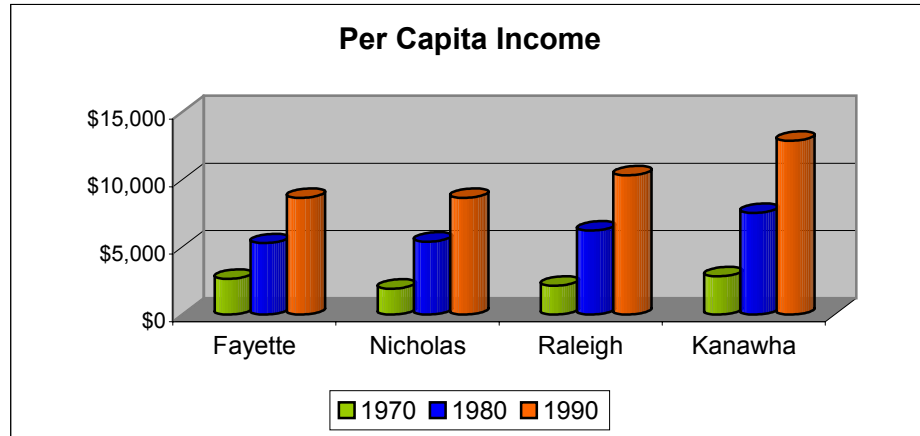
County	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970 - 1980	% Change 1980 - 1990
Fayette	\$2,648	\$5,295	\$8,653	100.0%	63.4%
Nicholas	\$1,920	\$5,405	\$8,652	181.5%	60.1%
Raleigh	\$2,135	\$6,224	\$10,316	191.5%	65.7%
Kanawha	\$2,829	\$7,541	\$12,887	166.6%	70.9%

Source: *Region VI Planning and Development Council*





Figure 7.0



I. Poverty Status

Fayette County has had the highest poverty rate of the four counties for over 25 years, and the gap is widening. The poverty rate increased substantially in all counties between 1980 and 1990. Between 1990 and 1995, the percent of persons living below the poverty level in Fayette County increased from 24.4 percent to 25.8 percent. A similar increase was evident in Kanawha and Raleigh Counties as well. In Nicholas County however, the percent of persons living below poverty decreased from 24.4 percent to 17.1 percent between 1990 and 1995. The 1997 estimates indicate a decrease (1995-1997) in the percent of persons living below poverty in all four counties.

Note: The poverty threshold for a family of four persons in 1990 was \$16,073 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty thresholds are revised annually to allow for changes in the cost of living as reflected in the Consumer Price Index.

Table 8.0 Poverty Status (number of persons below poverty level)

County	1970	1980	1990	1995	1997 Est.
Fayette	14,312	9,580	11,348	12,419	10,087
Nicholas	6,560	4,659	6,471	6,634	5,339
Raleigh	16,388	11,197	15,049	16,662	13,784
Kanawha	37,673	24,319	31,423	6,702	28,610

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council
U.S. Census Bureau - State and County Quickfacts

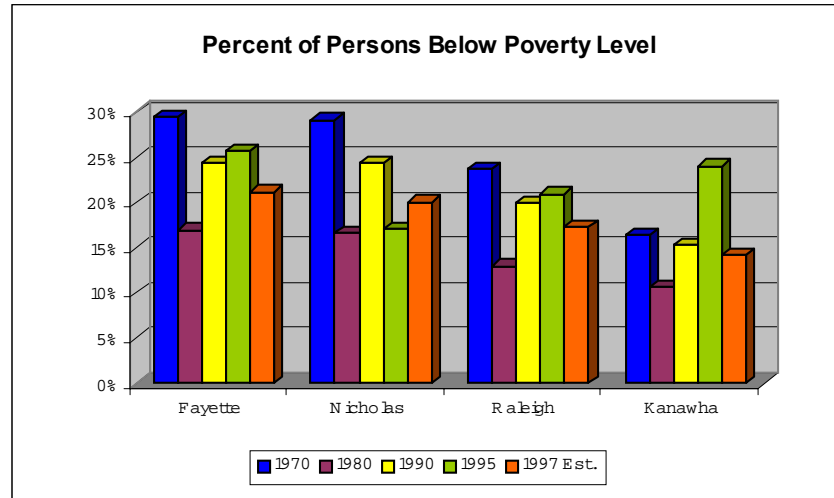
Table 8.1 Poverty Status (percent of persons below poverty level)

County	1970	1980	1990	1995	1997 Est.
Fayette	29.5%	17.0%	24.4%	25.8%	21.2%
Nicholas	29.2%	16.7%	24.4%	17.1%	20.1%
Raleigh	23.7%	13.0%	19.9%	21.0%	17.4%
Kanawha	16.5%	10.6%	15.3%	24.1%	14.3%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council
U.S. Census Bureau - State and County Quickfacts



Figure 8.0



J. Unemployment

Between 1970 and 1980, the percentage of persons unemployed in Fayette County increased by almost 10 percent (from 5.8% to 14.2%). There was a slight decrease between 1980 and 1990 in Fayette County. The other counties, however, experienced a significant increase in the rate of unemployment between 1970 and 1990. Kanawha County, one of the larger employment hubs in the State, showed an unemployment rate considerably lower than the surrounding counties (7% in 1990). Even though Fayette County experienced a decrease between 1980 and 1990, the unemployment rate is still considered high. Fayette County had the highest unemployment rates of the four counties in 1980 and 1990.

Table 9.0 Unemployment

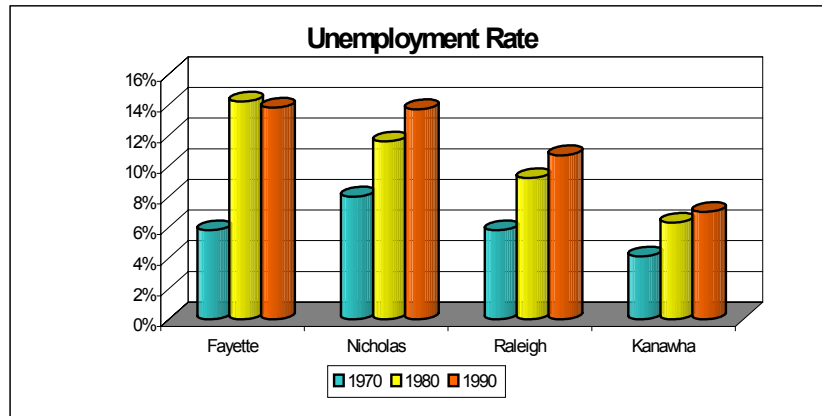
County	1970	1980	1990
Fayette	5.80%	14.20%	13.80%
Nicholas	8.00%	11.60%	13.70%
Raleigh	5.80%	9.20%	10.70%
Kanawha	4.10%	6.30%	7.00%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council





Figure 9.0



K. Educational Attainment

Data on the educational attainment of persons above the age of twenty-five, who had graduated from high school in one of the four counties, showed an increase between 1970 and 1980. Between 1980 and 1990, however, Fayette County experienced a decrease in the percentages of high school graduates (33.5% in 1980 to 31.7% in 1990). However, Fayette County experienced an increase in the percentage of persons graduating from college (1-4 years). Similar increases were evident in Nicholas and Raleigh counties. Kanawha County showed a dramatic increase in college graduates between 1980 and 1990.

Table 10.0 Educational Attainment (persons 25 years+)

	1970				1980				1990			
	HS Grads	1-3 Years College	4 Years College	5+ Years College	HS Grads	1-3 Years College	4 Years College	5+ Years College	HS Grads	1-3 Years College	% 4 Years College	% 5 Years College
Fayette	5,380	1,550	1,104	812	13,630	4,200	1,521	1,208	10,673	4,445	1,849	922
Nicholas	2,733	650	452	384	7,262	1,346	775	327	7,142	1,951	808	56
Raleigh	9,159	2,885	1,963	1,362	21,814	7,025	2,977	2,050	17,179	9,298	3,339	2,067
Kanawha	42,313	13,197	12,788	8,110	66,176	23,619	13,263	10,602	49,471	28,407	16,334	8,556

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council



Table 10.1 Educational Attainment (% persons 25 years+)

	1970				1980				1990			
	HS Grads	1-3 Years College	4 Years College	5+ Years College	HS Grads	1-3 Years College	4 Years College	5+ Years College	HS Grads	1-3 Years College	% 4 Years College	% 5 Years College
Fayette	19.6%	5.6%	4.0%	3.0%	33.5%	10.3%	3.7%	3.0%	31.7%	13.2%	5.5%	2.7%
Nicholas	22.6%	5.4%	3.7%	3.2%	38.3%	7.1%	4.1%	1.7%	38.8%	10.6%	4.4%	0.3%
Raleigh	23.4%	7.4%	5.0%	3.5%	35.9%	11.6%	4.9%	3.4%	31.8%	17.2%	6.2%	3.8%
Kanawha	32.7%	10.2%	9.9%	6.3%	38.8%	13.8%	7.8%	6.2%	91.7%	52.6%	30.3%	15.9%

Source: *Region VI Planning and Development Council*

L. Land Area

Fayette County's land area comprises 664 square miles. It is similar in size to Nicholas (649 sq. miles) and Raleigh (607 sq. miles) counties. Kanawha County is comparatively larger in area (903 sq. miles). In 2000, Kanawha indicated the largest number of persons per square mile (221.6) while Nicholas County had the smallest population per square mile (40.9).

Table 11.0 Land Area - 2000

Fayette	664 sq. miles
Nicholas	649 sq. miles
Raleigh	607 sq. miles
Kanawha	903 sq. miles

Source: *Region VI Planning and Development Council
U.S. Census Bureau - State and County Quickfacts*



Figure 11.0

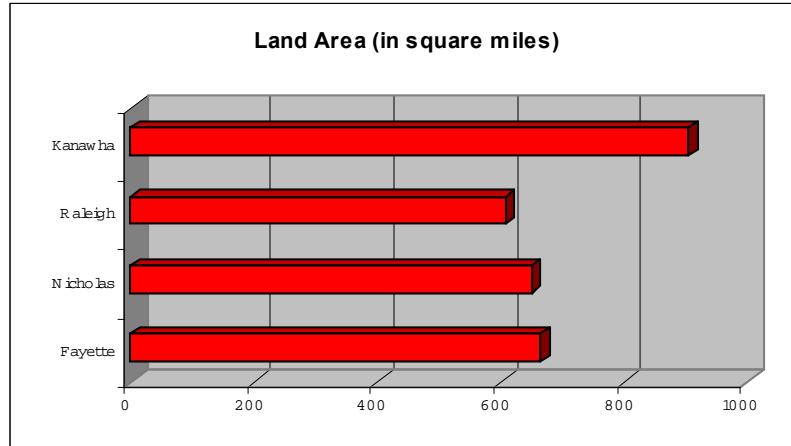


Figure 11.1

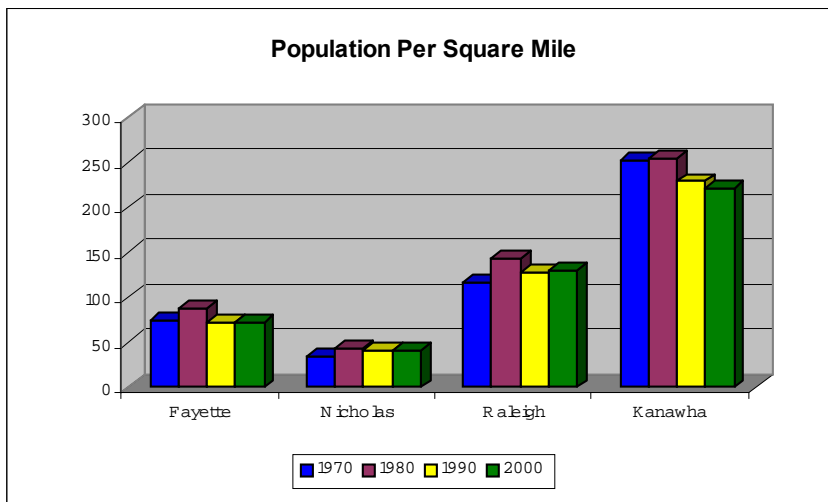


Table 11.1 Population Per Square Mile

County	1970	1980	1990	2000
Fayette	74.0	87.3	72.3	71.7
Nicholas	35.0	43.7	41.7	40.9
Raleigh	116.0	143.5	127.0	130.5
Kanawha	253.0	255.1	228.9	221.6

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council
U.S. Census Bureau - State and County Quickfacts

M. Total Housing Units

Fayette County experienced an increase in total housing





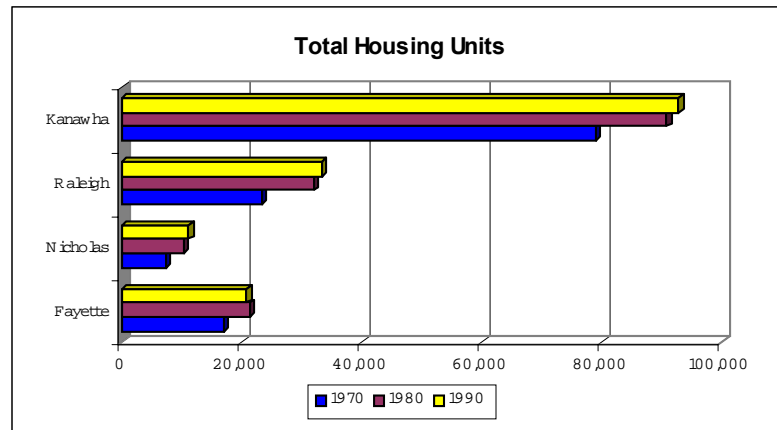
units between 1970 and 1980 (from approximately 16,929 to 21,472, respectively). Between 1980 and 1990, the number of housing units decreased by approximately 700 units. A decline in the number of units is usually indicative of a decline in population. Between 1970 and 1990 the total housing units showed steady increases in Nicholas, Raleigh, and Kanawha counties.

Table 12.0 Total Housing Units

County	1970	1980	1990	% 1970-1980	% 1980-1990
Fayette	16,929	21,472	20,841	26.8%	-2.9%
Nicholas	7,442	10,424	11,235	40.1%	7.8%
Raleigh	23,478	32,089	33,278	36.7%	3.7%
Kanawha	78,999	90,823	92,747	15.0%	2.1%

Source: *Region VI Planning and Development Council
West Virginia Bureau of Economics*

Figure 12.0





N. Housing Unit Vacancy

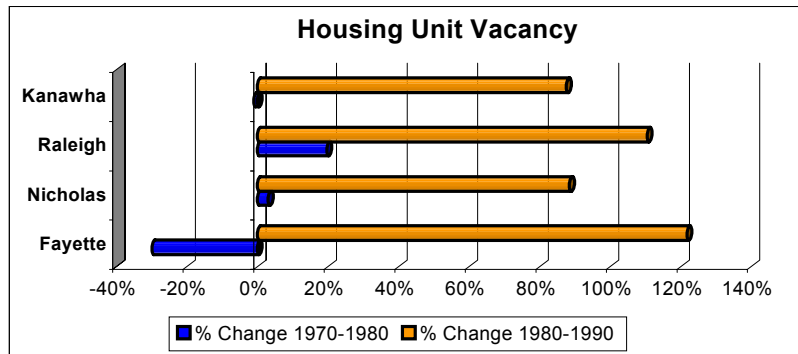
Between 1970 and 1980, there was a decrease in the number of vacant housing units (30%) in Fayette County. However, between 1980 and 1990 the number of vacant units more than doubled (122%). This trend, if continued, will present a bleak picture for the County. The County must examine issues of abandonment, flight, and vacancy. In Nicholas and Raleigh counties, a similar trend was observed over the same time period.

Table 13.0 Housing Unit Vacancy

County	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970-1980	% Change 1980-1990
Fayette	1,639	1,149	2,549	-29.9%	121.8%
Nicholas	651	671	1,265	3.1%	88.5%
Raleigh	1,506	1,803	3,795	19.7%	110.5%
Kanawha	4,326	4,283	8,034	-1.0%	87.6%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council
West Virginia Bureau of Economics

Figure 13.0



O. Tenure

Between 1970 and 1980, the percentage of owner-occupied units in Fayette County increased (65% to 78%). A similar trend was evident in Nicholas and Raleigh counties during the same time period. A high percentage of homeowners is a positive attribute for the County since, typically, homeowners have a record of taking better care of their properties while investing more of their time and money in the community.



Table 14.0 Housing Tenure

	Total Occupancy	Owner Occupancy	% Owner Occupancy	Renter Occupancy	% Renter Occupancy
Fayette					
1970	16,629	10,967	65.0%	5,962	35.0%
1980	19,861	15,419	77.6%	4,442	22.4%
1990	18,292	13,974	76.4%	4,318	23.6%
Nicholas					
1970	7,442	4,999	67.2%	2,443	32.8%
1980	9,470	7,678	81.1%	1,792	18.9%
1990	9,970	8,093	81.2%	1,877	18.8%
Raleigh					
1970	23,478	15,584	66.4%	7,894	33.6%
1980	30,154	23,463	77.8%	6,691	22.2%
1990	29,483	22,268	75.5%	7,215	24.5%
Kanawha					
1970	78,999	48,059	60.8%	30,940	39.2%
1980	86,446	59,363	68.7%	27,083	31.3%
1990	84,713	58,022	68.5%	26,691	31.5%

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council
West Virginia Bureau of Economics

P. Household Size

Fayette County experienced a decrease in household size from 1970 (3.92) to 1990 (3.08). This trend of shrinking households is also evident in Nicholas, Raleigh, and Kanawha counties.

Table 15.0 Household Size

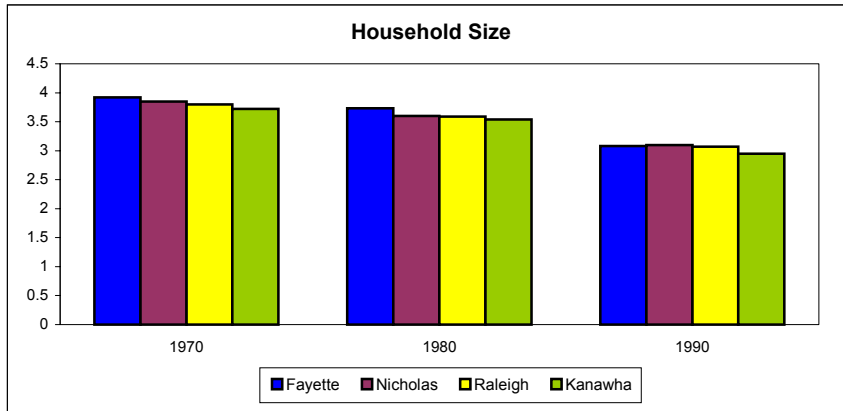
County	1970	1980	1990
Fayette	3.92	3.73	3.08
Nicholas	3.85	3.60	3.10
Raleigh	3.80	3.59	3.07
Kanawha	3.72	3.54	2.95

Source: Region VI Planning and Development Council
West Virginia Bureau of Economics





Figure 15.0



Q. Conclusion

In studying Fayette County's socio-economic profile in relation to planning efforts to encourage and sustain economic growth, the following factors present the most significant portrait of the County and its residents:

- The population decreased by 17 percent between 1980 and 1990 and by less than 1 percent between 1990 and 2000.
- The proportion of the elderly population increased from 12 to 16 percent between 1970 and 1990.
- The median age rose from 29 years of age in 1980 to 36.3 years in 1990.
- The White population increased from 89 percent in 1970 to 93 percent in 2000.
- The median household income was the lowest in the four-county region between 1970 and 1997.
- The per capita income was lower than the surrounding counties in 1990.
- The poverty rate has been higher than that of the surrounding counties for over twenty-five years.
- The unemployment rate was the highest in the region in 1980 and 1990.
- The percentage of those graduating from college has increased between 1970 and 1990.
- The number of housing units decreased by approximately 700 units between 1980 and 1990.
- The number of vacant units more than doubled between 1980 and 1990.
- The percentage of owner-occupied units decreased slightly between 1980 and 1990.





**CHAPTER FOUR - SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE
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- The household size decreased from 3.9 in 1970 to 3.0 in 1990.



The majority of these trends, with the exception of the increased college-graduation rate, do not present a favorable profile for Fayette County. Using the management tools prescribed in the Plan, and recommendations made during the planning process, the County should address and attempt to reverse the conditions causing these circumstances.

II. MARKET ANALYSIS

A. Study Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this market analysis is to provide a general overview and assessment of existing retail and service characteristics in Fayette, Kanawha, Nicholas, and Raleigh counties. This analysis examines the following existing characteristics in Fayette County with respect to the surrounding counties:

1. Total retail sales;
2. Number of establishments;
3. Retail sales per household;
4. Retail sales gap;
5. Estimated square footage of gross leasable area; and
6. Effective buying power.

This analysis also explores potential implications of retail development in the four-county study area with an emphasis on Fayette County and the dynamics that will shape its future.

This analysis includes information and data on past economic, population, and income trends. Population and household projections are also included. This information serves as a basis for identifying future commercial and retail growth. Field investigations were performed to identify general development patterns as well as the location and character of development patterns in the four-county area.

Retail merchant and consumer surveys (in the form of directly administered and mail-in surveys) were not done as a component of this analysis. This information was obtained through secondary sources such as the Fayette County, West Virginia Chamber of Commerce and previous studies conducted by Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC (WBCM).



B. Market Analysis Process and Methodology

WBCM's approach to this study is to provide a basic assessment of existing retail services in Fayette, Kanawha, Nicholas, and Raleigh Counties. This study is not, however, intended to appraise the feasibility of establishing a specific type of retail facility to serve Fayette County and the surrounding area. It could be used to evaluate existing retail conditions and the implications these conditions will have on future development in the County.

This analysis incorporates data and information produced by the following sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Claritas, Inc.; Directory of Major Malls, Inc.; R.S. Means Company, Inc.; State of West Virginia, Development Office; U.S. Census Bureau; West Virginia University, Regional Research Institute; and Woods and Poole Economic, Inc. WBCM relies on the information from these sources to be accurate and does not attempt to verify the methodologies used. (For details of the methods used by each source, the reader is recommended to refer to the source).

It is important for us, however, to provide some insight into the *Census of Retail Trade* for the years 1987, 1992, and 1997, since the predominance of data used in this analysis comes from this source. The *Census of Retail Trade* is published every five years. While the reports released in 1987, 1992, and 1997 were conducted under similar conditions and procedures, some of the data sets are not inherently comparable. This should be taken into account particularly in the case of 1997 data versus previous recorded data. The following are indicated as factors that affect the comparability of data:

1. Changes and/or revisions to the Standard Industrial Classification Manual (SIC), which is used to determine the "Kind of Business Classification" in the *Census of Retail Trade*.
2. Changes in the boundaries of a jurisdiction due to annexation and/or redefinitions of previously defined standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSAs), metropolitan statistical area (MSAs), primarily metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs), and consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs).
3. Changes in the method used to count business establishments. In 1987 for example, when two activities or more were carried on at a single location under a single ownership, all activities generally were grouped together under a single establishment. The entire establishment was





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classified on the basis of its major activity and all data were included in that classification.



In lieu of the above, it is important that the reader exercise caution when reviewing data prior to 1997 mainly for the following categories: food stores; apparel and accessory stores; eating and drinking places; and miscellaneous retail stores. These business categories show significant changes in the data due to reclassifications and/or redefinitions.

C. The Fayette County Marketplace

Fayette County is situated in the mountains of south central West Virginia. It is a relatively rural area with less than half a dozen population centers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county had an estimated population of 46,785 in 1999. U.S. Route 19 and U.S. Route 60 link Fayette County to its neighboring counties (Kanawha, Nicholas, and Raleigh). The interstate system of I-77 and I-64 (both within fifteen minutes of the County) provides access to Fayette County from surrounding states and Canada.

Historically, coal mining played the lead role in the County's local economy. Today, however, tourism and outdoor recreation maintain a pivotal role in Fayette County as well as the entire State's economy. According to a report released in May of 1996 by the West Virginia Division of Tourism, the State's tourism industry experienced its sixth consecutive year of growth in 1995. Moreover, tourism contributed nearly \$4 billion to West Virginia's economy. The surge in tourism and outdoor recreation over the past decade in Fayette and Nicholas counties alone, coupled with the availability of large tracks of land along the recently upgraded U.S. Route 19 corridor, has fueled the development of superstores and factory outlets along U.S. Route 19. U.S. Route 19 was widened and re-aligned from Interstate-79 (Flatwoods) to Interstate-64 (Beckley).

D. Overview: Demographic Analysis Within The Trade Area

It is standard practice to conduct a demographic analysis as an initial step when conducting a market analysis. The socio-economic data and information presented in this analysis is not intended to replicate data in the Socio-Economic Profile. Rather, it is intended to supplement this existing information. The following socio-economic parameters have been evaluated to determine their effects on the four-county market area:

1. Population projections and estimates;
2. Median household income; and
3. Effective buying power.





In addition, retail data related to the following parameters has been evaluated:

1. Retail sales trends;
2. Retail establishments;
3. Retail sales/expenditures per household;
4. Retail sales gap; and
5. Estimated square foot of gross leasable area.

E. Description of Trade Area

A trade area is generally described as the geographic boundary that surrounds a subject location (i.e., new or existing retail store), from which 70 percent to 80 percent of the customers are typically drawn. The geographic boundary can also be defined by driving times from the home of customers to the subject location. In lieu of these criteria, the primary trade area is often described as a two-mile polygon or radius of a subject location. The secondary trade area is often described as a three-mile polygon or radius of a subject location.

Since this analysis is not intended to appraise the feasibility of establishing a specific type of retail facility in a designated location to serve Fayette County and the surrounding area, the primary trade area will be defined as Fayette County. The secondary trade areas will be defined as Kanawha, Nicholas, and Raleigh counties. The total trade or study area will be used to describe the four-county area.

F. Population Trends and Projections

The population of the primary trade area (Fayette County) was 57,863 in 1980. This area, however, experienced a decline in population (17.1%) by 1990. During this period, West Virginia experienced employment declines in well-paying industries such as manufacturing and mining. These changes reduced spending power throughout the State. In addition, these changes resulted in an increase in the out-migration of individuals and families in search of employment and educational opportunities.

Current population projections indicated that Fayette County will likely experience a steady increase in population (Table 1). Both Nicholas and Raleigh counties are also expected to gain population over the next twenty years. However, Kanawha County, which is currently the most populous county in the trade area, is projected to experience a decline in population over the next fifteen years.





Even so, Kanawha County is anticipated to perform well and maintain a significant market share in the overall study area, despite its projected loss of population. Its lowest projection estimate remains significantly higher than each of the other three counties in the year 2020.

Table 1: Population Projections

County	1999	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Fayette	47,930	48,664	48,850	49,422	50,217	51,120
Kanawha	202,011	204,219	203,191	203,263	204,460	206,603
Nicholas	27,595	27,659	27,884	28,190	28,569	28,992
Raleigh	79,066	78,119	78,419	79,042	79,900	80,964

Source: West Virginia University, Regional Research Institute
1999 Estimates - Population Estimates Program,
Population Division - U.S. Census Bureau

G. Household Trends And Projections

Before an analysis of past and future household projections is discussed, it is important for the reader to understand the methodology used to determine the number of households. Since the number of households is a function of the population (i.e., total number of persons), the total population is simply divided by the number of persons per household to yield a value for the number of households in each county. The number of persons per household (based on the combined four-county area) also was used in this calculation. This allowed a "control" to be set, since the focus was on the four counties as a single trade area. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average number of persons per household in the four-county area in 1997 was 2.54. The 1997 population for each county was divided by 2.54 to determine the number of households.

Based on these calculations, there were a total of 19,288 households in the primary trade area (Fayette County) in 1980. This area, however, experienced a decline in the number of households (4.4%) by 1990. The rate of decline in the number of households in the primary trade area was not as drastic as the rate of decline in its overall population. This occurred primarily as a result of having fewer persons per household in 1990 (approximately 2.6 persons) when compared to the number of persons per household in 1980 (approximately 3.1 persons).





There was an estimated 18,870 households in the primary trade area in 1997. The entire trade area in 1997 had an estimated 140,394 households. During the period between 2000 and 2020, the number of households in Fayette County is expected to increase by 8.5 percent (Table 2). Kanawha County is expected to have a 4.5 percent increase in the number of households during the same period. The number of households could increase in Kanawha County, even though the population is expected to decrease, based on the concept of a shrinking household size (families having fewer children, more people getting married at a later age). Nicholas County is expected to have an 8.3 percent increase and Raleigh County a 7.1 percent increase in the number of households.

Table 2: Household Projection Estimates

County	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Fayette	19,466	19,698	20,172	20,751	21,124
Kanawha	81,688	81,932	82,964	84,488	85,373
Nicholas	11,064	11,244	11,506	11,805	11,980
Raleigh	31,248	31,621	32,262	33,016	33,456

Source: West Virginia University, Regional Research Institute
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

H. Median Household Income

The household incomes for the four-county trade area in 1989, 1993, 1995, and 1997 respectively are \$19,614, \$22,565, \$25,915, and \$29,538 (Table 3-A; the figures are an average for the four counties and the data is not adjusted for inflation). The median household incomes for the primary trade area in the same years as noted above are less than the four-county average. The median household incomes for the primary trade area (Fayette County), respectively, are \$16,774, \$19,323, \$22,655, and \$26,247.

In 1997, the estimated median household income for Fayette County was slightly lower than the other three counties. This data is interesting, particularly when compared to the number of households in each county. For example, Nicholas County has a smaller number of households when compared to Fayette County; however, Nicholas County has a greater median household income than Fayette County by almost 8.5 percent.





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Table 3-A: Median Household Income*

County	1989	1993	1995	1997 est.
Fayette	\$ 16,774	\$ 19,323	\$ 22,655	\$ 26,247
Kanawha	\$ 23,999	\$ 27,016	\$ 29,872	\$ 32,943
Nicholas	\$ 18,116	\$ 21,356	\$ 24,783	\$ 28,479
Raleigh	\$ 19,566	\$ 22,566	\$ 26,350	\$ 30,482
4 County Average	\$ 19,614	\$ 22,565	\$ 25,915	\$ 29,538

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani
US Census

* Median household income data in nominal dollars; not adjusted for inflation.

Table 3-B: Effective Buying Power by County*

Year	Fayette	Kanawha	Nicholas	Raleigh
1997	\$ 495,281,000	\$ 2,620,023,000	\$ 309,396,000	\$ 948,844,000

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani
US Census

* In nominal dollars; not adjusted for inflation.



I. Effective Buying Power

The effective buying power of each county was determined by multiplying the number of households and the median household income. This method is somewhat different from the process used by the real estate industry. This industry typically estimates the buying power and sales potential of an area by multiplying the number of households and the average household income. A non-real estate approach was selected primarily because average household income data was not as readily available as median household income data in most sources. Hence, it would be somewhat difficult to check the reliability of the data without having other data to use as a comparison.

Kanawha County had a buying power of \$2,620,023,000 in 1997 (Table 3-B). This figure was much greater than the other three counties in the trade area. Fayette County had a buying power of \$495, 281,000. This figure is relatively close to the amount (\$493,448,000) estimated by the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce. Fayette County's buying power-exceeded Nicholas County by \$185,885,000, even though Nicholas County has a higher median income. Raleigh County had a buying power of \$948,844,000.

J. Retail Mix

This section describes the type and number of business establishments in the four-county area. Data reported in the *Census of Retail Trade* for the years 1987, 1992, and 1997 was analyzed. As previously indicated in the section titled Market Analysis Process and Methodology, some of the data sets in the *Census of Retail Trade* are not officially comparable. This information should be considered particularly in the case of the following business categories: food stores; apparel and accessory stores; eating and drinking places; and miscellaneous retail stores.

In addition, this section provides data on the estimated square footage of gross leasable area by business category in 1997. This data was gathered through field inspections and secondary sources such as the Directory of Major Malls, Inc. It is important to note that this data does not inherently describe "actual" square footage of each business type. This is due to how businesses were counted in the *Census*. For example, when two activities or more were conducted on a single location under a single ownership, all activities generally were grouped together under a single establishment. The entire establishment was classified on the basis of its major activity and all data was included in that classification.





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Table 4: Retail Mix by County

A: Fayette County

Business Category	# of Establish.	# of Establish.	# of Establish.	% Change	% Change	% Change
	in 1987	in 1992	in 1997	1987 to 1992	1992 to 1997	1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	17	14	14	-17.6	0.0	-17.6
General Merchandise Stores	17	13	13	-23.5	0.0	-23.5
Food Stores ^(a)	46	49	25	6.5	-49.0	-45.7
Automotive Dealers	18	18	25	0.0	38.9	38.9
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	27	22	15	-18.5	-31.8	-44.4
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	19	22	10	15.8	-54.5	-47.4
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	58	64	26	10.3	59.4	-55.2
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	47	38	20	-19.1	-47.4	-57.4
Totals	249	240	148	-3.6	-38.3	-40.6

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available

(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report

(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report

(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report

B: Kanawha County

Business Category	# of Establish.	# of Establish.	# of Establish.	% Change	% Change	% Change
	in 1987	in 1992	in 1997	1987 to 1992	1992 to 1997	1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	65	66	72	1.5	9.1	10.8
General Merchandise Stores	37	36	42	-2.7	16.7	13.5
Food Stores ^(a)	175	151	75	-13.7	-50.3	-57.1
Automotive Dealers	84	89	112	6	25.8	33.3
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	134	123	143	-8.2	16.3	6.7
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	99	93	62	-6.1	-33.3	-37.4
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	363	369	90	1.7	-75.6	-75.2
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	244	247	121	1.2	-51.0	-50.4
Totals	1,201	1,174	717	-2.2	-38.9	-40.3

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available

(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report

(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report

(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report





Retail Mix By County (Continued)

C: Nicholas County

Business Category	# of Establish. in 1987	# of Establish. in 1992	# of Establish. in 1997	% Change 1987 to 1992	% Change 1992 to 1997	% Change 1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	11	14	16	27.3	14.3	45.5
General Merchandise Stores	16	13	9	-18.8	-30.8	-43.8
Food Stores (a)	19	20	n/a	5.3	n/a	n/a
Automotive Dealers	18	20	29	11.1	45.0	61.1
Apparel and Accessory Stores (b)	13	8	11	-38.5	37.5	-15.4
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	9	10	8	11.1	-20.0	-11.1
Eating and Drinking Places (c)	25	32	8	28.0	-75.0	-68.0
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	19	16	11	-15.8	-31.3	-42.1
Totals	130	133	92	2.3	-30.8	-29.2

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available
(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report
(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report
(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report

D: Raleigh County

Business Category	# of Establish. in 1987	# of Establish. in 1992	# of Establish. in 1997	% Change 1987 to 1992	% Change 1992 to 1997	% Change 1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	26	20	29	-23.1	45.0	11.5
General Merchandise Stores	21	18	18	-14.3	0.0	-14.3
Food Stores (a)	70	69	38	-1.4	-44.9	-45.7
Automotive Dealers	32	34	59	6.3	73.5	84.4
Apparel and Accessory Stores (b)	40	33	33	-17.5	0.0	-17.5
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	31	36	21	16.1	-41.7	-32.3
Eating and Drinking Places (c)	87	97	47	11.5	-51.5	-46.0
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	57	74	38	29.8	-48.6	-33.3
Totals	364	381	283	4.7	-25.7	-22.3

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available
(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report
(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report
(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report





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Retail Mix: Aggregate of 4 County Area

E: Four-County Area

Business Category	# of Establish. in 1987	# of Establish. in 1992	# of Establish. in 1997	% Change 1987 to 1992	% Change 1992 to 1997	% Change 1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	119	114	131	-4.2	14.9	10.1
General Merchandise Stores	91	80	82	-12.1	2.5	-9.9
Food Stores ^(a)	310	289	138	-6.8	-52.2	-55.5
Automotive Dealers	152	161	225	5.9	39.8	48.0
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	214	186	202	-13.1	8.6	-5.6
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	158	161	101	1.9	-37.3	-36.1
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	533	562	171	5.4	-69.6	-67.9
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	367	375	190	2.2	-49.3	-48.2
Totals	1,944	1,928	1,240	-0.8	-35.7	-36.2

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available
(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report
(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report
(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report

F: Four-County Area

Business Category	# of Establish. in 1987	Percent of Total in 1987	# of Establish. in 1992	Percent of Total in 1992	# of Establish. in 1997	Percent of Total in 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	119	6.1	114	5.9	131	10.6
General Merchandise Stores	91	4.7	80	4.1	82	6.6
Food Stores (a)	310	15.7	289	15.0	138	11.1
Automotive Dealers	152	7.8	161	8.4	225	18.1
Apparel and Accessory Stores (b)	214	11.0	186	9.6	202	16.3
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	158	8.1	161	8.4	101	8.1
Eating and Drinking Places (c)	533	27.4	562	29.1	171	13.8
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	367	18.9	375	19.5	190	15.3
Totals	1,944		1,928		1,240	

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available
(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report
(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report
(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report





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Table 5: 1997 Estimated Square Foot of Gross Leasable Area

A: Fayette County	1997 Est. Square Foot
Business Category	of GLA
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Sto	1,120,000
General Merchandise Stores	494,000
Grocery Stores	500,000
Automotive Dealers	400,000
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	712,500
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	300,000
Food and Beverage Stores	130,000
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	160,000
Total	3,816,500

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani n/a = Not Available
 Directory of Major Malls, Inc.
 R.S. Means Company, Inc., 1998 Square Foot Costs
 US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

B: Kanawha County	1997 Est. Square Foot
Business Category	of GLA
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Sto	5,760,000
General Merchandise Stores	1,596,000
Grocery Stores	1,500,000
Automotive Dealers	1,792,000
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	6,792,500
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	1,860,000
Food and Beverage Stores	450,000
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	968,000
Total	20,718,500

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani n/a = Not Available
 Directory of Major Malls, Inc.
 R.S. Means Company, Inc., 1998 Square Foot Costs
 US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

C: Nicholas County	1997 Est. Square Foot
Business Category	of GLA
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Sto	1,280,000
General Merchandise Stores	342,000
Grocery Stores	n/a
Automotive Dealers	464,000
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	522,500
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	240,000
Food and Beverage Stores	40,000
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	88,000
Total	2,976,500

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani n/a = Not Available
 Directory of Major Malls, Inc.
 R.S. Means Company, Inc., 1998 Square Foot Costs
 US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

D: Raleigh County	1997 Est. Square Foot
Business Category	of GLA
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Sto	2,320,000
General Merchandise Stores	684,000
Grocery Stores	760,000
Automotive Dealers	944,000
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	1,567,500
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	630,000
Food and Beverage Stores	235,000
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	304,000
Total	7,444,500

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani n/a = Not Available
 Directory of Major Malls, Inc.
 R.S. Means Company, Inc., 1998 Square Foot Costs
 US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia



The retail markets in both Fayette and Raleigh counties have specialty shops and services such as Midland Trail Campground and Wood Life Carvings. This is due to increased tourism and a growing number of artists and craftsmen in West Virginia. The majority of the specialty stores as well as major department stores in Kanawha County are housed in mall facilities such as the Charleston Town Center (905,049 sq. ft. of GLA) and the Kanawha Mall (345,000 sq. ft. of GLA). These facilities in Kanawha County are described as regional centers because of their size, product offerings, and market draw.

Fayette County has experienced a significant decline in the number of business establishments in virtually every business category since 1987 (Table 4-A). However, Fayette County has experienced an increase in the number of automotive dealers (38.9%) between 1987 and 1997. Surprisingly, there were more automotive dealers (225 establishments) throughout the entire trade area in 1997 (Table 4-E). In 1987, however, the retail market in the four-county area was different. There were more eating and drinking places (533 establishments) followed by miscellaneous retail stores (367 establishments). There were only 152 automobile dealers in 1987.

Big-box retailers such as Wal-Mart, Target, and K-Mart have had a significant influence on the retail market in West Virginia as well as the United States. These stores offer a wide variety of merchandise including housewares, homefurnishings, apparel, beauty aids, and automotive parts and services. Therefore, it is difficult to truly discern a reduction in the number of establishments. There may be a loss of "mom and pop" stores in the four-county area; however, this is not reflected in a loss of revenue. As further explained in the section below, general merchandise stores like Wal-Mart and Target have experienced an increase in overall sales between 1987 and 1997.

K. Retail Sales

This section describes sales growth, or the amount of revenue earned by business establishments, in the four-county area. Data reported in the Census of Retail Trade has been analyzed for the years 1987, 1992, and 1997. The reader should note that all revenue figures are in nominal dollars and not adjusted for a particular year of inflation.



Table 6: Retail Sales By County

A: Fayette County

Business Category	Sales in 1987	Sales in 1992	Sales in 1997	% Change	% Change	% Change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	1987 to 1992	1992 to 1997	1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	9,795	10,718	n/a	9.4	n/a	n/a
General Merchandise Stores	29,119	39,836	58,141	36.8	46.0	99.7
Food Stores ^(a)	50,727	70,320	60,145	38.6	-14.5	18.6
Automotive Dealers	43,223	49,068	n/a	13.5	n/a	n/a
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	5,918	8,186	6,406	38.3	-21.7	8.2
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	8,421	10,198	6,388	21.1	-37.4	-24.1
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	12,634	18,764	n/a	48.5	n/a	n/a
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	10,073	8,880	n/a	11.8	n/a	n/a
Totals	169,910	215,970	131,080	27.1	-39.3	-22.9

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available

(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report

(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report

(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report

B: Kanawha County

Business Category	Sales in 1987	Sales in 1992	Sales in 1997	% Change	% Change	% Change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	1987 to 1992	1992 to 1997	1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	79,611	119,893	230,350	50.6	92.1	189.3
General Merchandise Stores	231,048	315,756	385,765	36.7	22.1	67.0
Food Stores ^(a)	313,699	364,406	335,177	16.2	-8.0	6.8
Automotive Dealers	388,081	467,811	758,165	20.5	62.1	95.4
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	66,288	83,067	112,622	25.3	35.6	69.9
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	63,251	59,978	63,409	-5.2	5.7	0.2
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	134,292	174,370	335,177	29.8	92.2	149.6
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	85,897	98,629	79,345	14.8	19.6	-7.6
Totals	1,362,167	1,683,910	2,300,010	23.6	36.6	68.8

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available

(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report

(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report

(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report





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Retail Sales By County (Continued)

C: Nicholas County

Business Category	Sales in 1987	Sales in 1992	Sales in 1997	% Change	% Change	% Change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	1987 to 1992	1992 to 1997	1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	12,492	19,008	26,624	52.2	40.1	113.1
General Merchandise Stores	16,660	27,634	33,846	65.9	22.5	103.2
Food Stores ^(a)	33,054	38,084	n/a	15.2	n/a	n/a
Automotive Dealers	36,109	44,239	41,770	22.5	-5.6	15.7
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	2,425	1,808	5,951	-25.4	229.1	145.4
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	3,082	5,220	4,533	69.4	-13.2	47.1
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	9,145	11,424	n/a	24.9	n/a	n/a
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	6,620	4,852	n/a	26.7	n/a	n/a
Totals	119,587	152,269	112,724	27.3	-26.0	-5.7

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available

(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report

(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report

(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report

D: Raleigh County

Business Category	Sales in 1987	Sales in 1992	Sales in 1997	% Change	% Change	% Change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	1987 to 1992	1992 to 1997	1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	40,914	42,862	76,819	4.8	79.2	87.8
General Merchandise Stores	88,046	118,497	168,728	34.6	42.4	91.6
Food Stores ^(a)	92,509	126,976	100,807	37.3	-20.6	9.0
Automotive Dealers	114,455	143,351	181,420	25.2	26.6	58.5
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	12,280	11,261	17,529	-8.3	55.7	42.7
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	18,187	23,894	13,311	31.4	44.3	-26.8
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	34,156	49,295	103,020	44.3	109.0	201.6
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	13,066	23,382	17,874	79.0	-23.6	36.8
Totals	413,613	539,518	679,508	30.4	25.9	64.3

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available

(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report

(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report

(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report





Retail Sales: Aggregate of 4 County Area

E: Four-County Area

Business Category	Sales in 1987	Sales in 1992	Sales in 1997	% Change	% Change	% Change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	1987 to 1992	1992 to 1997	1987 to 1997
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	142,812	192,481	333,793	34.8	73.4	133.7
General Merchandise Stores	364,873	501,723	646,480	37.5	28.9	77.2
Food Stores ^(a)	489,989	599,786	496,129	22.4	-17.3	1.3
Automotive Dealers	581,868	704,469	981,355	21.1	39.3	68.7
Apparel and Accessory Stores ^(b)	86,911	104,322	142,508	20.0	36.6	64.0
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	92,941	99,290	87,641	6.8	-11.7	-5.7
Eating and Drinking Places ^(c)	190,227	253,853	438,197	33.4	72.6	130.4
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	115,656	135,743	97,219	17.4	-28.4	-15.9
Totals	2,065,277	2,591,667	3,223,322	25.5	24.4	56.1

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

US Census Bureau, Census of Retail Trade: 1987, 1992, and 1997

n/a = Not Available

(a) = Classified as "grocery stores" in 1997 report

(b) = Classified as "clothing and clothing accessory stores" in 1997 report

(c) = Classified as "food and beverage stores" in 1997 report

As previously indicated, general merchandise stores have performed extremely well in the four-county area. The rate of revenue growth by general merchandise stores in both Fayette and Nicholas counties have exceeded the growth rate of the trade area as a whole by 25 percent (Tables 6-A and 6-C). This growth rate among general merchandise stores is also supported by data on the shopping habits of students. In a survey conducted at seven schools (including high, middle, and elementary schools) in Fayette County, Wal-Mart was ranked as one of the top three places where students conducted most of their shopping. The other top two places where students shopped were Crossroads Mall in Beckley and Charles Town Center in Charleston.

Surprisingly, general merchandise stores in Kanawha County have not experienced the rate of retail sales growth like Fayette and Nicholas counties. General merchandise stores in Kanawha County, however, maintained a market share of approximately 60 percent in terms of overall revenue in 1997.

Between 1987 and 1997, each county experienced a decline in overall sales in the area of furniture and homefurnishings. For example, Fayette County experienced a decrease in revenue (24.1%) during this period. Despite these declines, market surveys indicate that furniture and other wood products made in West Virginia will increasingly gain popularity. This niche market will be fueled by the abundance of trees and forests in the mountainous portions of the State.



L. Retail Sales Per Household

This section discusses where people in the four-county area are spending their money. In addition, this section discusses how much money is being spent in a particular business category. Data reported in the Census of Retail Trade for the years 1987, 1992, and 1997, is evaluated based on the number of households in the trade area.

Households throughout the trade area in 1997 spent a significant amount of their income on goods and services provided by general merchandise stores. The dollar amounts for Fayette, Kanawha, Nicholas, and Raleigh counties respectively are \$3,081, \$4,850, \$3,115, and \$5,420, (Table 7: A to D).

However, households in the entire trade area spent a greater share of their income on automotive related expenses in 1997 (data for Fayette County not available). The aggregate total of sales per household for automotive related expenses was \$6,990, while the aggregate total of sales per household for general merchandise was \$4,604.



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Table 7: 1997 Retail Sales Per Household*

A: Fayette County	\$ Sales	Households	\$ Sales Per
Business Category	in 1997	in 1997	Household
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	n/a	18,870	n/a
General Merchandise Stores	58,141,000	18,870	3,081.12
Grocery Stores	60,145,000	18,870	3,187.32
Automotive Dealers	n/a	18,870	n/a
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	6,406,000	18,870	339.48
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	6,388,000	18,870	338.53
Food and Beverage Stores	n/a	18,870	n/a
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	n/a	18,870	n/a

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
 State of West Virginia, Development Office
 US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

US Census Bureau, 1990 Census
 Woods & Poole Economic, Inc.

n/a = Not Available
 All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997

* Household data determined by the 1997 population estimate for each county divided by the four county average of 2.54 persons per household.

B: Kanawha County	\$ Sales	Households	\$ Sales Per
Business Category	in 1997	in 1997	Household
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	230,350,000	79,532	2,896.32
General Merchandise Stores	385,765,000	79,532	4,850.44
Grocery Stores	335,177,000	79,532	4,214.37
Automotive Dealers	758,165,000	79,532	9,532.84
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	112,622,000	79,532	1,416.06
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	63,409,000	79,532	797.28
Food and Beverage Stores	335,177,000	79,532	4,214.37
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	79,345,000	79,532	997.65

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
 State of West Virginia, Development Office
 US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

US Census Bureau, 1990 Census
 Woods & Poole Economic, Inc.

n/a = Not Available
 All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997

* Household data determined by the 1997 population estimate for each county divided by the four county average of 2.54 persons per household.





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1997 Retail Sales Per Household* (Continued)

C: Nicholas County	\$ Sales	Households	\$ Sales Per
Business Category	in 1997	in 1997	Household
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	26,624,000	10,864	2,450.62
General Merchandise Stores	33,846,000	10,864	3,115.38
Grocery Stores	n/a	10,864	n/a
Automotive Dealers	41,770,000	10,864	3,844.75
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	5,951,000	10,864	547.76
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	4,533,000	10,864	417.24
Food and Beverage Stores	n/a	10,864	n/a
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	n/a	10,864	n/a

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
State of West Virginia, Development Office
US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

US Census Bureau, 1990 Census
Woods & Poole Economic, Inc.

n/a = Not Available
All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997

* Household data determined by the 1997 population estimate for each county divided by the four county average of 2.54 persons per household.

D: Raleigh County	\$ Sales	Households	\$ Sales Per
Business Category	in 1997	in 1997	Household
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	76,819,000	31,128	2,467.81
General Merchandise Stores	168,728,000	31,128	5,420.40
Grocery Stores	100,807,000	31,128	3,238.43
Automotive Dealers	181,420,000	31,128	5,828.13
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	17,529,000	31,128	563.12
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	13,311,000	31,128	427.62
Food and Beverage Stores	103,020,000	31,128	3,309.52
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	17,874,000	31,128	574.20

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
State of West Virginia, Development Office
US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

US Census Bureau, 1990 Census
Woods & Poole Economic, Inc.

n/a = Not Available
All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997

* Household data determined by the 1997 population estimate for each county divided by the four county average of 2.54 persons per household.





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1997 Retail Sales Per Household: Aggregate of 4 County Area

E: Four-County Area	\$ Sales	Households	\$ Sales Per
Business Category	in 1997	in 1997	Household
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	333,793,000	140,394	2,377.54
General Merchandise Stores	646,480,000	140,394	4,604.76
Grocery Stores	496,129,000	140,394	3,533.83
Automotive Dealers	981,355,000	140,394	6,990.01
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	142,508,000	140,394	1,015.06
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	87,641,000	140,394	624.25
Food and Beverage Stores	438,197,000	140,394	3,121.19
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	97,219,000	140,394	692.47

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
State of West Virginia, Development Office
US Census Bureau, 1997 Census of Retail Trade: West Virginia

US Census Bureau, 1990 Census
Woods & Poole Economic, Inc.

n/a = Not Available
All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997



M. Retail Sales Gap

The previous section provided a basis as to the type and amount of purchases made by households in the trade area. This section expounds upon the previous section by measuring how well each county is performing with respect to capturing potential sales dollars or the available amount of income each household has for a given retail product or service (Table 8). Potential sales figures were calculated by multiplying the number of households in each county and the typical expenditure amount per household for a given retail product or service. The information below describes the 1997 average annual expenditures per household in West Virginia.

Table 8.1: 1997 Average Annual Expenditures Per Household in West Virginia

Expenditure Category	Expenditure Amount
Building Materials & Garden Supplies	\$1,070
General Merchandise	\$1,689
Grocery Stores	\$2,821
Automotive Dealers	\$3,435
Clothing and Clothing Accessories	\$435
Furniture and Homefurnishings	\$602
Food and Beverage Stores	\$1,226
Miscellaneous Retail	\$386

Source: Claritas, Inc.
U.S. Census Bureau,
Statistical Abstract of the United States; 1999

Potential sales data have been compared to actual sales that occurred. This method determines the sales gap. If fewer dollars were actually spent within a given trade area than the potential sales amount, the trade area is experiencing a "leakage." This means that people are probably shopping outside a given trade area or, for some other reason, do not spend as much in the given trade area as they normally would. This could be attributed to a variety of factors such as the quality of goods, availability, and/or the variety of merchandise. Another possibility is that people may be shifting their shopping patterns and behaviors by purchasing goods and services through mail order and Internet based retailers. Lastly, people may be shifting their shopping patterns and behaviors from a convenience and cost standpoints by purchasing goods and services at big-box stores like Wal-



Mart that carry a variety of merchandise in large quantities at lower prices. If more dollars were actually spent in a given trade area than the potential sales amount, the trade area is experiencing a "surplus." A surplus could indicate that a given trade area is attracting more shoppers or, for some other reason, people are spending more money than they normally would.

It is difficult to discern the overall performance of the primary trade area (Fayette County) due to the non-availability of some data sets in the 1997 Census of Retail Trade (Table 8-A). The available data, however, indicates a surplus in the following business categories only: general merchandise and grocery stores. Surprisingly, each of the other three counties in the trade area experienced a surplus in the category of general merchandise. This information is interesting because every county, except Kanawha, has experienced a decrease in the number of establishments in the general merchandise category.

In 1997, Fayette, Nicholas, and Raleigh counties experienced a leakage in the furniture and homefurnishings category. Kanawha County, however, experienced a surplus. This difference supports the notion that Kanawha County is attracting customers from around the trade area. Also, consumers are beginning to purchase more goods and services in stores that offer a wide variety of merchandise. The overall trade area performed significantly well in 1997 (Table 8-E). There was a surplus in every category. Based on the available data, Raleigh and Kanawha counties contributed the most to economic growth in the four-county area.





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Table 8: 1997 Retail Sales Gap*

A: Fayette County	\$ Sales in 1997	\$ Sales Potential	\$ Sales Gap	
Business Category				
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	n/a	20,190,900	n/a	
General Merchandise Stores	58,141,000	31,871,430	26,269,570	Surplus
Grocery Stores	60,145,000	53,232,270	6,912,730	Surplus
Automotive Dealers	n/a	64,818,450	n/a	
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	6,406,000	8,642,460	22,364,460	Leakage
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	6,388,000	11,359,740	4,971,740	Leakage
Food and Beverage Stores	n/a	23,134,620	n/a	
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	n/a	7,283,820	n/a	

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey: 1994-1995 and 1997-1998
Claritas, Inc.
US Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999

n/a = Not Available
* All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997

B: Kanawha County	\$ Sales in 1997	\$ Sales Potential	\$ Sales Gap	
Business Category				
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	230,350,000	85,099,240	145,250,760	Surplus
General Merchandise Stores	385,765,000	134,329,548	251,435,452	Surplus
Grocery Stores	335,177,000	224,359,772	110,817,228	Surplus
Automotive Dealers	758,165,000	273,192,420	484,972,580	Surplus
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	112,622,000	36,425,656	76,196,344	Surplus
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	63,409,000	47,878,264	15,530,736	Surplus
Food and Beverage Stores	335,177,000	97,506,232	237,670,768	Surplus
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	79,345,000	30,699,352	48,645,648	Surplus

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey: 1994-1995 and 1997-1998
Claritas, Inc.
US Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999

n/a = Not Available
* All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997





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1997 Retail Sales Gap* (Continued)

C: Nicholas County	\$ Sales	\$ Sales	\$ Sales	
Business Category	in 1997	Potential	Gap	
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	26,624,000	11,624,480	14,999,520	Surplus
General Merchandise Stores	33,846,000	18,349,296	15,496,704	Surplus
Grocery Stores	n/a	30,647,344	n/a	
Automotive Dealers	41,770,000	37,317,840	4,452,160	Surplus
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	5,951,000	4,975,712	975,288	Surplus
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	4,533,000	6,540,128	2,007,128	Leakage
Food and Beverage Stores	n/a	13,319,264	n/a	
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	n/a	4,193,504	n/a	

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey: 1994-1995 and 1997-1998
Claritas, Inc.
US Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999

n/a = Not Available
* All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997

D: Raleigh County	\$ Sales	\$ Sales	\$ Sales	
Business Category	in 1997	Potential	Gap	
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	76,819,000	33,306,960	43,512,040	Surplus
General Merchandise Stores	168,728,000	52,575,192	116,152,808	Surplus
Grocery Stores	100,807,000	87,812,088	12,994,912	Surplus
Automotive Dealers	181,420,000	106,924,680	74,495,320	Surplus
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	17,529,000	14,256,624	3,272,376	Surplus
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	13,311,000	38,007,288	24,696,288	Leakage
Food and Beverage Stores	103,020,000	18,739,056	84,280,944	Surplus
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	17,874,000	12,015,408	5,858,592	Surplus

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey: 1994-1995 and 1997-1998
Claritas, Inc.
US Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999

n/a = Not Available
* All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997





1997 Retail Sales Gap*: Aggregate of 4 County Area

E: Four-County Area	\$ Sales	\$ Sales	\$ Sales	
Business Category	in 1997	Potential	Gap	
Building Materials & Garden Supplies Stores	333,793,000	150,221,580	183,571,420	Surplus
General Merchandise Stores	646,480,000	237,125,466	409,354,534	Surplus
Grocery Stores	496,129,000	396,051,474	100,077,526	Surplus
Automotive Dealers	981,355,000	482,253,390	499,101,610	Surplus
Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores	142,508,000	64,300,452	78,207,548	Surplus
Furniture and Homefurnishings Stores	87,641,000	84,517,188	3,123,812	Surplus
Food and Beverage Stores	438,197,000	172,123,044	266,073,956	Surplus
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	97,219,000	54,192,084	43,026,916	Surplus

Source: Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey: 1994-1995 and 1997-1998
Claritas, Inc.
US Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999

n/a = Not Available
* All sales data in nominal dollars for the year 1997





Table 8.2: Supportable Square Footage of Retail Space in Fayette County

Business Category	Leakage Amount	Supportable Square Feet (Gross Amount)
Clothing and Clothing Accessories	\$22,364,460	89,458
Furniture and Homefurnishings	\$4,971,740	17,445

N. Assessment of Existing Conditions

U.S. Route 19 and Interstates 77 and 64 have contributed to the growth of retail development in Fayette County as well as the other three counties in the trade area. Retail trade development comprises a substantial portion nonresidential land use in Fayette County. While big-box retailers have contributed to overall revenue growth in each county, this form of development has affected the character and quality of life of these areas through a reduction in rural and agricultural land, destruction of viewsheds, and creation of abnormally high percentage of low paying service-oriented jobs in Fayette County.

In addition, the loss of population and changes in the overall economy over the last three decades has certainly affected Fayette County. It has resulted in a lower generation of household income particularly when adjusted for inflation. The value of the dollar in 1980 was greater than the 1990 value.

Table 9: Median Household Income*

	1970	1980	1990
Fayette County	\$15,708	\$21,053	\$16,774

* In constant \$1989 (CPI-U)
Source: U.S. Census Bureau





In Fayette County, along U.S. Routes 19 & 60, the quality and appearance of the downtown areas in Fayetteville, Oak Hill, Mount Hope, Ansted, and Montgomery has deteriorated. This deterioration takes place in the form of poorly maintained building facades, overhead utility wires, vacant lots, over-sized bill boards, unkempt open spaces, and broken sidewalks. These conditions often discourage citizens and visitors from shopping in these areas. As a result, the downtown suffers a leakage of retail sales to other areas.

Fayetteville and Oak Hill, respectively, have shown signs of revitalization in various aspects. Fayetteville is a quaint town with historically, significant buildings that surround a courthouse square. The relative niche that is capitalized on is supported by the tourist trade and rafting industry. Oak Hill, on the other hand, appears to be less focused on the tourism industry and more focused on servicing the primary market area. Both Oak Hill and Fayetteville have managed to keep their vacancy rates low in their respective central business districts.

Based on the leakage data in 1997, Fayette County has the potential to support the following types of businesses (Table 8.2):

1. Approximately 89,458 square feet of retail space (gross) for clothing and clothing accessories. The County could support a three-level departmental store at a single location in Fayetteville or Oak Hill or two smaller apparel stores in each of these municipalities.
2. Approximately 17,446 square feet of retail space for furniture and homefurnishings. The County could support one furniture store in either Fayetteville or Oak Hill.

O. Conclusion and General Recommendations

Fayette County's role in strengthening its retail viability involves maintaining a fully competitive position with the regional market and local areas that have similar business characteristics.

The County should strongly consider filling the niche in the clothing/apparel and furniture/homefurnishings industries by attracting quality businesses into the area. The County should also take a step toward identifying areas along U.S. Route 19 for places that are of interest and cater to the local population that currently travels to Beckley or Charleston to shop.





In addition to these efforts, Fayette County should continue to monitor statewide trends. The following is a list of various industries that will likely influence Fayette County's economy over the next twenty years:

1. Wood products;
2. Tourism and outdoor recreation;
3. Agriculture;
4. Warehousing; and
5. Manufacturing.

These industries will more than likely influence Fayette County's economy in a positive fashion in the long term. Industries such as the tourism industry often spin off several smaller support businesses that provide local job opportunities for residents. This industry should be encouraged, supported, and expanded in harmony with the economic development goals of the County to sustain this industry year-round, and should be viewed seriously in terms of its positive economic impact to the County as well as the region.

On a concluding note, improving the overall quality of life in the County is the first step toward broader economic development. Communities that offer an improved quality of life to residents often attract stable families that have the capacity to consume and invest, thereby creating and nurturing retail demand on a regular basis.

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---INSERT FOUR-COUNTY MARKET AREA MAP HERE---





CHAPTER FIVE

—◆—
Land Use





I. OVERVIEW

Fayette County has been helpless against developers and builders when it has attempted to prevent the destruction of the County's countryside, farmland, scenic vistas, and environmentally sensitive areas. Fayette County has also been ineffective in determining whether the highest and best use of properties with road frontage and visibility from its major transportation corridors are for either business/industrial parks employing hundreds of workers or warehouses employing three workers. Industrial land is like farmland and open space; no one is making it anymore. Without appropriate zoning laws and subdivision regulations that effectively implement the County's Comprehensive Plan, Fayette County has essentially given developers and builders the right, if not the mandate, to turn the countryside into a sprawling sea of residential development that will cause the County's tax base to contract. This dire consequence results from the fact that the services and infrastructure required to meet the demands of development costs the County more than the revenues the residential development will generate.

The lack of effective land use planning, accompanied by properly managed administration and strong enforcement, in Fayette County is noticeably visible throughout the County. Monotonous residential subdivisions obliterate the rural landscape; sterile shopping malls dominate the viewscape in the County's entry corridors; hundreds of abandoned and occupied houses line the County's serpentine roads; hillsides have eroded due to inappropriate siting of buildings and roads; and hideous roadside and stream-bank trash dumps and scrapyards are sprinkled throughout the countryside. Scores of abandoned houses and sometimes-occupied houses with broken windows, toppled chimneys and roof leaks dot the country landscape. Without effective planning, land use regulations and enforcement, this is not surprising.

Fayette County's landscape affords many areas of breathtakingly rugged natural beauty and historic icons. From ridges of mountains one can look down on enchanting hollows; spend a romantic afternoon on a lookout point along the New River Gorge; or visit one of many historic towns or villages with their quaint mix of uses. This pleasurable effect is short-lived despite all of the natural beauty. It is all lost when one has to drive by cookie-cutter residential subdivisions and torturous roads, the sides of which are lettered with junk or trash, to reach these destinations.

The time is ripe to help concerned citizens make the link between land use, environment and economic health. Quality of life





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issues have dominated civic and political agendas in the '90s and will continue into the 21st Century. Debates in West Virginia in general and Fayette County in particular have hinged on traffic, tree clearing, mountaintop removal, loss of open space, and community appearance.





Fayette County must build to a level of service that meets its quality of life agenda. This includes properly zoning land for business and industry (economic development). Counties must properly balance the mix of land uses in their community. Government cannot be expected to pay for the services demanded by its residents, without raising taxes, with a tax base comprised solely of residential uses. If this scenario would be played out, elected officials would be forced to raise taxes to cover the costs of services demanded by local residents. In general, residential land uses do not generate the revenues needed to cover the costs of the services the residents demand. Economic development, conversely, pays in taxes 135% of the cost needed to service it. Residential development pays only 66% of the cost needed to service it.

The following development strategy for the County is the starting point for preserving the County's countryside, managing development along the County's major corridors, and revitalizing its towns and villages. If the County's rural landscape is to be preserved (i.e. its classic rural settlement patterns) this strategy, and the corresponding future land use plan, must be adhered to.

II. LAND USE PLANNING CONCEPT

Recommendations for the development of the County's future land uses are presented on the Future Land Use Map, which categorizes the overall development into eight districts.

- **Development Service Districts;**
- **Activity Centers and Incorporated Towns;**
- **Planned Unit Development Districts;**
- **Rural/Agricultural Conservation Districts;**
- **Community Centers;**
- **Neighborhood Conservation Districts;**
- **Resource Conservation Districts; and**
- **Highway Corridor Districts.**

The districts are described in terms in their respective roles in guiding and managing County growth and development. The description of plan districts includes discussion of the general types, intensities and character of development that should be encouraged within these areas. Districts are derived from a combination of factors, including existing land use patterns; projected growth and development trends; the natural capacity and suitability of the land to support development; the availability and adequacy (existing and proposed) of infrastructure (such as





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roads, sewer and water); and the community goals and objectives contained in this Plan.





The Future Land Use Map and this accompanying text establish a framework and basis for further refined classification of land into zoning districts pursuant to comprehensive plan adoption and the drafting and adoption of a land development code. In addition to serving as a general guide for land use policy, the land use planning concept should also serve as a guide to County decision-makers regarding capital improvements programming for community facilities and infrastructure.

The following sections are dedicated to a detailed discussion of the districts:

III. DEVELOPMENT SERVICE DISTRICTS

A. Designation of Development Service Districts

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the U.S. Route 19 Corridor between Mt. Hope and Hico as the Central Development Service District. This plan also identifies the U.S. Route 60 Corridor between Gauley Bridge and Montgomery as the Western Development Service District.

A Development Service District is an area that generally has served, and is expected to continue to serve, as the principal residential, commercial and industrial center of the County. This area, by definition, comprises the more suitable locations for future growth and development. Growth in and around this area will prevent the outward sprawl of development into other areas of the County and concentrate future residential growth in areas where residents can be provided with utilities, services and employment opportunities in an economical manner. In addition, the impact upon the County's road system will be minimized since families will have the opportunity to physically locate close to the jobs and services they require. These considerations, in addition to the need to preserve the open character of the County's outlying rural areas, indicate that the area designated as a Development Service District should accommodate most of the County's residential, commercial and industrial growth into the twenty-first century.

The municipalities of Fayetteville, Mount Hope and Oak Hill have been designated as Activity Centers within the Central Development Service District. The municipalities of





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Montgomery and Gauley Bridge have been designated as Activity Centers within Western Development Service District. These Activity Centers serve as focal points for commercial, industrial and higher density residential development.





It is important to note that the Development Service District is subject to greater development pressure than many other areas of the County, particularly rural and/or agricultural areas. This district has in place, or provides the opportunity to put in place, the kind of services required by development. These services include an existing or planned transportation system that can accommodate the movement of people and goods. The services also include sewer and water facilities that can service development at greater residential densities and can service industrial and commercial uses. The District is characterized by development activity that suggests that efforts to preserve farmland, or to establish significant resource protection programs, would be less effective in these areas as compared to other areas of the County.

The major challenge of the Development Service District concept is to map, in advance, those areas where the County will accept a responsibility for providing infrastructure or will accept the responsibility for working with the development interests of the County to ensure that infrastructure is in place. However, this does not imply that the full costs of development will be borne by the County or municipal taxpayer.

Growth in the Development Service District can be more effectively managed in the areas that have the provision of central sewer and water facilities. The challenge is to ensure those public services and facilities, as well as the highway systems, keep pace with the conversion of land in these areas from rural to urban. Likewise, the Plan is intended to provide protection for natural resources and elements of rural character that are pervasive as well as desirable in these areas. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that the overall character of a Development Service District, in contrast to other areas of the County, will be much more urban in character; in contrast to the rural, agrarian and development-sensitive natural settings in the County. This Development Service Districts will be those areas where urbanization will occur if the County accumulates its share of the regional growth. To generate this growth, the County should be proactive with respect to planning and providing adequate infrastructure. In providing opportunities for development in this area, the





County can better achieve its resource protection and its agricultural conservation objectives by reducing pressure for development in other areas of the County dominated by farming activity or sensitive natural resources.





B. Planning for the Development Service District

Ensuring high quality of new development within the Development Service District is a major objective of the Land Use Management Plan. Meeting this objective is critical since the majority of future County growth can be expected to occur in this area. To improve the visual and functional qualities of development within the Development Service District, the County will need to develop land use management ordinances to establish performance standards for landscaping, control of access, lot coverage and buffering from adjacent transportation corridors and incompatible uses. Future commercial and industrial forms of development, within the Development Service District, should be carefully evaluated to ensure compatibility with existing and planned residential areas.

Strip forms of commercial development, along major County roads, have not always enhanced the visual quality of development. Furthermore, these developments have impaired the ability of roads to serve through-traffic. Areas designated for commercial development should be large in size (ten to fifteen acres) and should be located at intersections providing space for well-planned service roads.

Such sites should use access provided by service roads and should be adequate in size to accommodate several uses with shared access, thereby minimizing multiple outlets to the major road system. Larger commercial lots should provide space to accommodate landscaping between buildings, parking areas, and roads. Reverse lot frontage development, which places parking areas behind commercial and office buildings, would also improve the appearance of development. Clustering of residential development should be encouraged within the Development Service District to maintain open space and preserve environmentally sensitive areas. Such development, even when exclusively residential in nature, should be buffered and separated by landscaping from major routes or adjacent incompatible land uses.

Permitted development density and intensity should not be uniform throughout the Development Service Districts. Existing single family neighborhoods should be buffered from





non-residential and high-density residential developments. The Activity Centers, identified in the Comprehensive Plan, are intended to accommodate higher land use intensities and serve as focal points in the development centers within the Development Service Districts. This designation assures variety in development form and identifiable commercial and residential centers of activity within the overall Development Service District.





Since the highest residential densities will be encouraged in the areas designated as Activity Centers, lower densities should be prescribed in other portions of the Development Service Districts. Finally, it is important to note that residential density designations, within the Development Service District, will be influenced by the existing development pattern already established. Creation of zoning districts and standards for development will require focus on a site-by-site level to frame districts and standards that respect existing neighborhood patterns, densities and soil conditions in the absence of central sewer systems.

IV. ACTIVITY CENTERS AND INCORPORATED TOWNS

A. **Designation of Activity Centers**

The Development Service District should accommodate the majority of the projected future County growth. This leads to the need to further refine the degree to which the location and form of development is managed within this area. Historic settlement patterns in certain locations, or proximity to the intersection of major County roads, suggests several areas that may serve as regional development centers within the Development Service District. **The designated Activity Centers in this Plan are: 1) Mount Hope, 2) Oak Hill, 3) Fayetteville, 4) Montgomery and 5) Gauley Bridge.** While the location and existing pattern of development has served as the rationale for their designation, each Activity Center identified in the Comprehensive Plan has a distinct quality or character that suggests a pattern for its future development.

Activity Centers represent opportunities to cluster future development into regional centers that serve the commercial services and retail shopping needs of current and future County residents. Each Activity Center should provide opportunities to establish a recognizable center of development with its own unique sense of place within the County. Development within each Activity Center should vary based on the existing pattern of development and the future development mix that occurs.

Each Activity Center should generally include a mixed-use regional center for residential, office, retail and service development. Light industrial development may also be





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appropriate in some Activity Centers. Industrial development should take the form of well-planned business and industrial parks. Each Activity Center reflects the unique character and the diversity of development that has evolved over the years.





B. Planning for Activity Centers

Preparation of more specific plans for each Activity Center should be undertaken by the County to identify how the qualities and form of their development may best be managed. The function of these areas is to serve as nodes of activity, within the Development Service District. Adherence to this Plan will concentrate higher density residential development, and the associated commercial, employment and public service functions, in these nodes of activity. This land use management strategy will encourage a diverse mix of uses which will ultimately strengthen and enhance the viability of the respective community.

Development standards for Activity Centers should be framed to establish a clear sense of community character. Elements that should be included in the development of Activity Centers are: 1) mixed-use developments; 2) pedestrian access; and 3) greenways/bike paths linking various developments. A mechanism for the establishment of new Activity Centers, as the need arises, in the Development Service District should be developed. This will assure a means of managing development over time.

Standards for commercial and industrial development within Activity Centers should enhance the character of the community and create or reinforce a community theme. In many areas, this will require development or adaptive use of vacant or underused buildings.

V. PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

Planned Unit Development Districts, although not shown on the Future Land Use Map, are established to provide for areas within the Development Service District where more intense residential and mixed-use development can be accommodated outside designated Activity Centers.

Rather than mapping each of their future locations in advance, Planned Unit Development Districts will be designated in accordance with performance standards to be structured in a County Development Code. These designations will be limited to locations within the Development Service District where public benefits, in the form of highway improvements, provision of affordable housing, provision of parks, provision of sites appropriate for construction of schools or other needed community facilities, are provided as a part of the development approval





process in exchange for higher densities. Threshold size and location requirements for their designation would also be framed in County ordinances to guide decisions concerning their location.





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Designation of sites as Planned Unit Development Districts should be determined on the basis of zoning action whenever projects are evaluated and approval awarded to those development proposals that offer specific County or neighborhood benefits and /or demonstrated capability to implement County Comprehensive Plan objectives. Examples of objectives for which approval might be granted include:

<u>Type of Objective</u> <u>Achieving Objective</u>	<u>Potential Methods of</u>
Community Facilities	Approvals may be awarded for proximity to existing or developer-provided facilities (i.e. sewer lines, schools, fire departments and recreational facilities).
Transportation	The receiving road network must meet minimum standards for level of service or the facility must be upgraded to accept development. Approvals may be awarded for making improvements that are consistent with the overall Transportation Plan.
Economic Development	Approvals may be granted for development proposals that provide jobs that strengthen the economic base of the County. Evaluation would be based on the number and type of permanent jobs created.
Historic Preservation	Approvals may be awarded if identified historic sites are preserved through easements or restored by the developer.
Open Space & Parks	Approvals may be awarded if development is clustered and open space, parks and recreation facilities are provided.

While encouraging higher density residential development in portions of the Development Service District, in exchange for the provision of public benefits, this concept does not encourage densities that are substantially higher or incompatible with





surrounding neighborhoods. Future development in existing residential or mixed use PUD Districts should be permitted to continue in the density and pattern for which respective subdivisions were designed at the time they were approved.

Furthermore, PUD District densities for new sites adjacent or near established neighborhoods should be required to buffer the edges to minimize impacts to established neighborhoods. This approach acknowledges existing development patterns and recognizes historic development conditions.

In short, higher residential densities or mixed use development will be permitted only in such areas of the Development Service District where infrastructure, in the form of sewer, water and transportation system, would not be adversely impacted or could be accommodated within a defined geographic area. It is recognized that to permit higher densities in many portions of the Development Service District would be disruptive to community character and expectations of existing residents.

VI. RURAL/AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

The Rural/Agricultural Conservation District is intended to maintain and conserve rural character and farmlands in the County consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's objectives. Rural/Agricultural Conservation District land areas are intended to provide for a full range of agricultural and farming activities and related uses along with some low-density residential development.

The conflicts between farming and rural non-farm development (residential) should be minimized. As the needs of farming are acknowledged and non-agricultural land uses extend into agricultural areas, farms often become the subjects of nuisance lawsuits. As a result, farmers are sometimes forced to cease operations. Many others are discouraged from making investments in farm improvements. In recognition of the farmer's "right-to-farm" without being restricted by neighboring residential areas, hours of operation of farm equipment, restrictions on odor-producing fertilizers, and other restrictions designed to limit the perceived negative impacts associated with reasonable farming practices, no restrictions should be imposed on farming activities within the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District. The general intent of the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District is to encourage farming and maintain rural qualities in areas so designated in the County.

Rural/Agricultural Conservation, as a component of the Comprehensive Plan, is limited to traditional farming but extends to all aspects of the County's rural character. Agricultural land refers not only to tilled fields, but also open fields, pastures and woodlands which are either prospects for additional





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farm acreage or are valuable as they are for the contributions to the environment and to the rural appearance of the County. Agriculturally-related or support industries (farm implement dealers, supply services, storage and process facilities, etc.) should be permitted within this District in recognition of their important support of the farming community.



A. Residential Density

Residential development and density in the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District should be minimized to avoid future conflicts between farming activities and rural homes. Two options are recommended for residential density in the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District. A property owner or developer should be able to choose the option, which best suits his needs. The first density option is based on a sliding scale approach. Using this option, density is determined by the size of the parcel. The second option provides property owners the incentive of higher possible densities if certain standards of rural residential development are met. These density bonus incentive standards include such conditions as: development clustering, visual enhancement to reinforce rural character, rural highway access controls, and restricting sensitive lands or agricultural lands with conservation easements.

B. Sliding-Scale Approach

Under this option, the base density for lots of twenty acres or less should automatically be one dwelling unit per five acres. One additional lot should then be allowed for every additional twenty acres. A 100-acre parcel for example would yield eight lots. This provision is based on the assumption that parcels of twenty acres or less do not typically constitute adequate land area for productive farming operations. The disadvantages of this approach is that it will most likely cause the creation of large lot subdivisions which are land consumptive and do not promote conservation of agricultural lands. To off-set this conditions, property owners using the sliding-scale approach should be allowed to reduce lot sizes through limited clustering provisions. Under this option, small lots (five acres and under) would be encouraged, but larger ones would also be permitted.

C. Density Bonus Approach

As an alternative to the sliding scale approach, property owners can opt for higher densities in return for residential subdivision design that better achieves rural character and agricultural conservation objectives. Under this approach, the base residential density in the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District should be one dwelling unit per ten acres, but may be increased to one dwelling unit per eight acres, or one dwelling unit per five acres if certain development standards are met as a condition of density increase.





Using this option, residential density in the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District should be determined as follows:

Base residential density of **one dwelling unit per ten acres** may be permitted, provided:

1. Clustering of development on the site provides for all dwelling units and lots to be located within 50 percent of the total site area of the parcel.
2. The remaining fifty- percent of the site is permanently established as open space, either in farm or forest use, and restricted from further development through covenants or easements.
3. All residential lots created through the act of subdivision are served by one point of access to County roads.
4. Residential structures in the subdivision are located at least one hundred feet from the existing County road right-of-way and screened from the right-of-way by an existing or landscaped buffer.
5. All residential structures are setback at least one hundred feet from all active farm operations.
6. A central water supply system is developed.
7. Lots can be any size desired by the owner, typically ranging from one acre to five acres in size, provided the Health Department standards for septic systems are satisfied.

Base residential density may be increased to **one dwelling unit per eight acres** if the following conditions are met:

1. Clustering of development on the site provides for all dwelling units and lots to be located within 40 percent of the total site area of the parcel.
2. The remaining 60 percent of the site should be permanently established as open space, whether in farm or forest use, and restricted from further development through covenants or easements.
3. All residential lots should be served by one point of access to County roads.





4. Residential structures in the subdivisions should be located at least 150 feet from the existing County road right-of-way and screened from the right-of-way by an existing or landscaped buffer.
5. All residential structures should be setback at least one hundred feet from active farm operations.
6. A central water supply should be developed.
7. Lots can be any size desired by the owner, typically ranging from one acre to three and a half acres in size, provided the Health Department standards for septic systems are satisfied.

Base density may be increased to **one dwelling unit per five acres** if the following conditions are met:

1. Clustering of development on the site provides for all dwelling units and lots to be located within 30 percent of the total site area of the parcel.
2. The remaining 70 percent should be permanently established as open space, either in form of forest use, and restricted from further development through covenants or easements.
3. All residential lots created through the act of subdivisions should be served by one point of access to County roads.
4. Residential structures in the subdivision should be located at least 200 feet back from the existing County right-of-way and screened from the right-of-way by an existing or planted landscape buffer.
5. All residential structures should be setback at least one hundred feet from active farm operations.
6. A central water supply system should be developed.
7. Lots can be any size desired by the owner, typically ranging from one acre to one and one-half acres in size, provided the Health Department standards for septic systems are satisfied.





Through the clustering approach, the developer is able to decrease lot sizes in return for setting aside permanent open space. This provides many benefits including lower land costs for the lot purchaser and decreased road construction costs since lots are grouped together as opposed to scattered throughout the site. The community benefits through the provision of open space, farmlands and rural character. Despite the smaller lot size, the overall density of the subdivision remains unchanged.

Using this approach, a property owner with the one hundred acre farm can create up to twenty lots (one dwelling unit per five acres) provided they are clustered onto thirty acres of the farm and the remaining seventy acres would be left for farming or open space. The homes would also have to be setback 200 feet from the County road and located on a single access road with driveways. Numerous individual driveways onto County roads would not be allowed. The homes would have to be screened from County roadway views, thereby protecting the rural character. Homes would also have to be setback from active agricultural operations in order to minimize farming impacts on home sites.

The same scenario on a forty acres site would yield eight lots on twelve acres and would leave twenty-eight acres in open space or farming. Average lot size for lots on both the one hundred and forty-acre parcels would be one and one-half acres.

The open space land could be left in its natural state of maintained for farming or forestry purposes. Control of the open space land can be left with the original property owner or dedicated to a homeowners association. Regardless of which density determination option is used, the base density of a parcel or tract should be calculated on the amount of grass area of land present. Land areas encumbered by natural development constraints, such as steep slopes, can be included in the base density calculation of a tract, provided the environmentally sensitive area is protected. Minimum lot sizes for clustered development in the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District should be a function of soil suitability for septic tank or alternative private sewage disposal systems.

The above described residential density provisions recognize that while rural character and agricultural conservation are important objectives, there remains a need to allow farmers and rural property owners to subdivide and sell single family home lots as the need arises. The Plan recommends that rural residential subdivisions be directed





to areas of the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District, which have good proximity to existing residential areas and commercial and public services. Rural residential subdivisions should not be encouraged in remote areas where County roads are not adequate for increased traffic or in areas where existing agricultural activities predominate.

The Rural/Agricultural Conservation District is, therefore, provided in the Comprehensive Plan to preserve rural character and open space, to foster agricultural activities and opportunities, and to protect valuable natural resources. It is further intended to prevent premature urbanization in areas where public utilities, roads, and other public programs do not propose infrastructure suitable for development at higher densities.

VII. COMMUNITY CENTERS

A. Designation of Community Centers

Within the Rural/Agricultural Conservation District, there are existing villages and crossroad settlements that perform a number of important community functions. These settlements serve as centers for rural residential development and provide for commercial services for surrounding rural areas. The ability of these Community Centers to accommodate some portion of the future growth of the County is a function of their location and the existing scale of development and range of services provided to surrounding rural areas. Characteristics common to most of these rural Community Centers are the existence of homes, post offices, country stores, agricultural supply operations, home occupations, and structures which house public facilities or civic organizations (such as fire stations and churches). Each Community Center is very different in size, character and function and plays an important role in serving its surrounding area.

The concept of the Community Center is included in the Comprehensive Plan in order to recognize and provide for the special needs of these rural centers. These centers include such places as Hico, Glen Ferris, Ansted, Meadow Bridge, Thurmond, Kincaid, Mossy and Pax. These Community Centers are often very different in size, character and function; however, each serves an important role to its surrounding area.





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These rural service centers serve a multitude of functions in Fayette County. They range in scale from a fork in the road where a general store and souvenir shop are located, to a rapidly expanding community that is beginning to emerge as a service center of regional scope. Many have historic qualities, which suggests future development should be limited in scale and be compatible in character. Their distribution throughout the County is shown on the Future Land Use Map.





In spite of their unique individual qualities, these settlements share much in common and collectively they play an important part in Fayette County life. In general, Community Centers tend to be basically residential in character. They often offer some employment through limited commercial services as well as a public function as rural service centers. The County should preserve and enhance the present character of the Community Centers in order that it may continue to serve traditional roles in County life.

B. Planning for Community Centers

In the future, it is possible that additional Community Centers might be identified. However, their future designation should be a function of their need to serve as service centers in the context of their existing location in the County. These new Community Centers should be limited to providing the most basic commercial services for the convenience of the rural population.

Generally, the areas shown as Community Centers should:

- Remain small in population size;
- Remain small in physical area;
- Continue to provide limited, highly localized commercial services (such as a gas station, general store or visitor/souvenir center);
- Continue to provide limited employment opportunity;
- Consist of a population density which is greater than the surrounding rural areas which they serve; and
- Maintain a unique "sense of place" as identified by their existing character, scale, density and architectural style.

The need for central water and sewer is not anticipated in the Community Centers. The County recognizes that there will be exceptions to this policy. Meadow Bridge, for example, already has water. In other communities, where technology permits the feasible treatment of wastewater (i.e. where soils are potentially suitable), these systems (water and sewer) can allow greater clustering of residences and opportunities for commercial use in Community Centers. In order to assure the continued small size of the Community Centers, any central water sewer system, which is eventually





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provided, should be built to serve land areas and development only within the immediate proximity of the Community Center itself and not extend into adjacent rural areas.





VIII. NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Neighborhood Conservation Districts, which are not pre-mapped on the Future Lands Use Plan Map, are established for residential subdivisions that already have been developed in the County. It is here that established densities may be inconsistent with those recommended for future development patterns. The Plan proposes a series of Neighborhood Conservation Districts to provide special treatment of these existing development conditions.

Creation of the Neighborhood Conservation District component of the Plan is intended to minimize the concerns of existing property owners regarding the impact of new plans and development codes that will shift the future direction and location of development. Neighborhood Conservation Districts should help allay concerns about future development standards applying to existing residential areas. Future infill development in the Neighborhood Conservation Districts should be permitted to continue in the density and pattern for which respective subdivisions were designed at the time they were approved. This approach acknowledges existing development patterns and respects historic development conditions. Designation of specific Neighborhoods should occur when the County updates its zoning ordinance.

Implementation of the Neighborhood Conservation District concept should be accomplished through mapping of existing, larger County subdivisions and incorporation into the overall County zoning structure when implemented. The text of any Future County Development Code should permit their continued development and prescribe standards for protection of these existing residential neighborhoods.

IX. HIGHWAY CORRIDOR DISTRICTS

A. Designation of A Highway Corridor District

The Highway Corridor District is intended to address architectural and aesthetic controls as well as special access and buffering requirements along the County's major highways. Designated Highway Corridor Districts are shown on the Future Land Use Map. The corridors along the following routes are designated as Highway Corridor Districts:

- U.S. Route 19 within Fayette County.
- U.S. Route 60 within Fayette County.





Highway Corridors, as defined in this section, encompass a land area 1,000 feet from the right-of-way or anything within view of the route (whichever is greater).

The Highway Corridor District is an area within which certain specific public objectives relating to aesthetics and architectural plan review should be administered by the County through overlay zone regulations. Views afforded to drivers and passengers, in the major transportation routes in Fayette County, provide a lasting visual and therefore mental impression of the County's character. Although the visual experience forms only a small part of a person's overall experience in the County it, nevertheless, is of special public concern and requires public attention if the County's image is to be positive now and in the future.

Not all development in Fayette County requires the same level of public scrutiny. The most critical visual areas lie along the major transportation routes since all citizens and visitors share them. Hence, areas within view from the major transportation route right-of-way or within 1,000 feet from the right-of-way are identified and recommended for application of special landscaping and design standards.

The visual character along these highway corridors is diverse. The character ranges from areas that are primarily rural, natural and scenic to areas with disorganized and cluttered roadside development. The objectives for the Highway Corridor District are not to preclude the diversity that already exists; rather, they are to encourage and articulate the variety of visual experiences along the current highways as well as along the corridor of the proposed future routes of the County's major roads.

The purpose of the Highway Corridor District is to protect and improve the quality of visual appearances along these linear corridors and to provide guidelines to ensure that buffering, landscaping, lighting, signs and proposed structures are internally consistent and of a quality that contributes to the County's character.

B. Planning in Highway Corridor Districts





Future development of lands, within the Highway Corridor District, shall be subject to the standards of the particular base zoning district in which they occur as well as the following standards that are specific to the Highway Corridor District. These standards are not intended to restrict or prevent the construction of buildings within each corridor nor are they intended to require the removal of existing structures. The Highway Corridor District standards are not setback requirements, although certain minimum setbacks will be required to protect highway rights-of-way and maintain sight clearances for traffic safety.





Standards specific to the highway corridors should provide for:

- Increased buffering requirements, which provide for a mix of canopy, understory tree, and shrub level plantings, to partially screen buildings and parking areas from view;
- Special standards for sign height, building design, size, materials, and lights to maintain and enhance visual qualities;
- Special consideration of new development within this district, including assessment of visual impact of development, assessing pre-development visual conditions, and how the proposed development will affect them;
- The acknowledgment that the existing villages are integral to the unique visual character of the corridor;
- Landscaping to soften lighting and groupings of signs to identify entrances to the site;
- Use of service roads as a tool to achieve access control within the Highway Corridor District;
- Use of reverse lot frontage concepts to shield off-street parking areas behind buildings and landscaping. A reverse frontage lot is a residential through or corner lot, intentionally designed so that the front lot line faces a local street rather than facing a parallel major thoroughfare; and
- Designation of scenic easements along highway corridors within significant natural views or vistas.

X. RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

This County's land development objectives indicate that special emphasis should be placed on the preservation of natural resources, sensitive natural areas, and waterfront areas. Given the development pressures from the Beckley and Charleston areas, there will likely exist demand for home sites in the County. Without a firm commitment to preserve the natural beauty and environmental resources in these areas, the County could find these important natural assets exploited.

The Future Land Use Map therefore designates land areas along all tributary streams of the County as the Resource Conservation District. These areas include wetlands that are adjacent to tributary streams as well as floodplains, stream valleys, steep slopes, and soils with development constraints. In most cases,





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only passive recreation use and low density residential development is appropriate in the Resource Conservation District, provided the development design is protective of environmentally sensitive features. The qualities of Fayette County's Natural resources are an important component of the County's heritage and a major factor influencing the County's continued economic and environmental well being.





-INSERT DEVELOPMENT POLICY MAP-





Performance standards for development within areas designated to Resource Conservation Districts should be framed to implement protection policies. Such policies or standards should provide that:

- No development should be permitted on slopes exceeding 30 percent where soils are unsuitable;
- Development in flood plains should be limited and responsibly managed;
- Clearing of woodlands and forests should be minimized to the extent possible;
- In general, only very limited low density residential development should be permitted in those areas of the Resource Conservation District which are developable; and
- The State and private conservation organizations should actively pursue programs to purchase and/or acquire easements for privately owned lands in the Resource Conservation District so they can be preserved.

XI. SUMMARY OF THE LAND USE PLANNING CONCEPT

The Future Land Use Map represents the cumulative application of the districts described earlier in this section. The map is, in reality, the result of an "overlying" of separate maps, one representing each of the concepts presented. Whenever conflicts develop as to which category of use should apply, the more specific or highly restrictive category should govern policy. For example, the Resource Conservation District is the most restrictive and, therefore, would provide the overriding policies in the area where it is applied.

The basic intent of the land development concept is that the County channel most of its future residential, commercial and industrial development into and around the Development Service Districts, Activity Centers, Planned Unit Developments, and Community Centers, and should preserve land in the Resource Conservation and Rural/Agricultural Conservation Districts. Existing residents' neighborhoods should be recognized and protected within Neighborhood Conservation Districts. The aesthetic and functional characteristics of major County roads should be preserved within the Highway Corridor Districts. The location of the districts will serve as the basis for county structuring of zoning classifications with the intent and purpose to frame land use controls and performance standards for development consistent with each Development Service District.

The Future Land Use Plan proposes to guide development to those undeveloped areas where major public facilities are in place or planned, while reducing development pressures in those areas where facilities cannot be provided as efficiently. The Plan





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channels anticipated future growth into a more harmonious and efficient pattern that is consistent with community goals and objectives.





-INSERT DISTRICT BOUNDARIES MAP-





-INSERT EXISTING LAND USE MAP-





-INSERT EXISTING ZONING (OVERALL) MAP-





-INSERT EXISTING ZONING (INSET A-D) MAP-





-INSERT EXISTING ZONING (INSET E-G)-MAP-





XII. INTRODUCTION TO PLANNING DISTRICTS

Planning is a continuous process. This Comprehensive Plan is intended to capture a vision of the future of Fayette County. As such, it provides a basis for a wide variety of public and private input, actions and decisions that should be undertaken in the County over time. This Plan is not a static document because communities are not static. They are dynamic. Communities are continually evolving and changing. This Plan provides general guidelines and recommends activities to the County in order that piecemeal improvements and day to day development decisions can be properly evaluated against their long-range impact upon the County and their relationship to existing settlement patterns.



Planning Commissioner Gene Kistler describes the planning districts to a crowd at New Haven School.

This Plan has two primary implementation components. They are the land use policies, previously described, and the recommended activities that follow. The users of this document must understand that some elements of this Comprehensive Plan, such as land use planning, are comprehensible at a Countywide scale and indicate the proposed conceptual development pattern of the entire County. However, it is not a detailed blueprint. The implementation strategies to achieve the land use recommendations, conversely, will occur at a very local, detailed scale—within the planning districts. For this reason, the vision, goals and activities have been generated locally, within the planning districts, and will be implemented within the framework of the land use plan.





This need to plan locally has been the impetus to prepare activities, to achieve countywide land use objectives, within a planning district framework. This has been addressed by dividing the County into four geographic sectors—planning districts. Certain kinds of issues or policies, such as collector road networks or major land use patterns are not at a countywide level of significance, but still do affect more than a single community. The planning district approach allows a process by which issues can be identified and solutions developed locally. By being able to show a greater level of detail in roads and streets, community facilities, preservation strategies, and economic development initiatives, the activities generated for the planning districts reinforce the importance of understanding the complexity and inter-relatedness of the County's communities. This should help guard against focusing too narrowly on solutions in one area that might work to the detriment of neighboring areas.

In each planning district, the residents and stakeholders in their respective planning district have adopted a vision for their respective district and a number of goals that they have committed to collectively work together to attain. Accompanying these goals are a series of activities. These activities, and issues, are included in the following chapters of this Comprehensive Plan. The remainder of this chapter will describe the character of each planning district, for the benefit of the reader, and the adopted vision and goals for each of the planning districts.

XIII. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE PLANNING DISTRICT

A. Vision and Goals

In undertaking this "interpretation of findings" from the citizen participation process, attitudes were sampled within the relevant topical areas. For the purpose of organizing the attitudinal findings within the context of the planning process, the County's range of vision and goals encompass activities in the following general categories: land use, commercial development, economic development and tourism, housing and residential development, environmental quality, utilities, public services/civic issues, historic resources, transportation, and community appearance.





The vision and goals are a comprehensive set of guiding principles. The vision describes how and where growth and development should occur, and call for a land stewardship ethic to guide individual and group actions. The following vision and goals have been developed for the purpose of coordinating the quality, scale, theme, and timing of future development within Fayette County. These adopted vision and goals set the physical, social, economic, and cultural framework around which the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan is designed. The comprehensive plan is organized, designed and implemented so as to orchestrate development in the County relative to (a) future land uses, (b) scale and intensity of land uses, (c) planning and developing support infrastructure, and (d) promulgation of development strategies that maintain, in some areas, and enhance, in other areas, the quality of life of current and future residents.

Following is a definition of vision and goal as the words relate to the comprehensive planning process for Fayette County:

VISION: A broad foresight of an ideally attainable goal in the future.

GOAL: An end toward which efforts are directed and which is aimed at being accomplished. A basic, wide area of concern.

The following vision statement is accompanied by a number of goals to guide future development.

VISION: Create a heightened appreciation for the natural, historical and cultural resources in the District and provide opportunities for economic development and commerce to expand the tax base and the local workforce.

GOALS:

- Preserve historic and cultural resources.
- Protect ground water.
- Maintain roads.
- Instill pride in the community and work together to eliminate roadside dumping.
- Maintain waterways to prevent premature flooding.
- Establish development guidelines to require environmentally sensitive land development practices.





- Recognize the importance of the contribution of local natural agrarian and mineral resources to the local economy.
- Recruit and accommodate retirees in this District.
- Provide public transportation to the District to service elderly and low-income residents.
- Provide local job opportunities for District residents.

This was a critical stage in the planning process. The vision and goals, adopted by the County Commission, were used and will continue to be used to develop land use recommendations and development strategies throughout the County. This exercise ensures that the Comprehensive Plan has been, and will continue to be, constructed on a firm social, economic, moral, and legal foundation.

B. Existing Land Use

The Danese/Meadow Bridge District is primarily rural in nature. Rural land uses include farms, forest, parks, and vacant land. U.S. Route 60 traverses the northeast portion of the District. Scattered along the length of U.S. Route 60 is a mix of commercial, rural residential, single family residential and public uses. There is one industrial area on U.S. Route 60 near Maplewood. Just north of this area, near the Meadow River, is one mine/quarry area. There is also a mining/quarry area just to the north of U.S. Route 60 near Hilton Village.

Route 41 branches southwest from U.S. Route 60. The north most portion of this road has a small amount of rural residential development. South of Babcock State Park, along the central portion of Route 41, there is a mix of rural residential, single family residential, commercial and public uses. Along the southern portion of Route 41, near Layland, there is an area of industrial development. Just south of Layland, along Route 4, there are three mine/quarries and a few rural residential and single family residential areas.

Routes 60, 31, 20 and 22 extend throughout the southern portion of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. The rural residential, single family and public uses typically follow these roads. In addition to the residential development, in the southeastern corner of the District, there are a few industrial and mine/quarry land uses located off of Route 20 and Route 31.





C. Existing Zoning Districts

The Agricultural & Rural Residence District (R-R) is the predominant zoning throughout the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. The second largest zoning district is the Land Conservation District (L-C). With a few small exceptions, the Land Conservation District completely encompasses and extends slightly east of the New River National River land and Babcock State Park. This Land Conservation District spans the entire western boarder of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District with three exceptions.

In the southern portion of the District, along Route 41 and the New River, there are two Agricultural & Rural Residential Districts (RR-1 & R-1) and one Land Conservation District (LC-1). Throughout the rest of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District only three small areas, that are not zoned Agricultural & Rural Residential (R-R), have been recorded. In the northern portion of the District, between U. S. Route 60 and Route 11, is one small area zoned General Business (B-2). At the intersection of Route 41 and Route 31, the area is zoned Heavy Industrial (I-2). In the southern portion of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District, near Spring Dale, there is one area zoned General Business (B-2).

D. Overall Physical Character

1. Natural Features

The soil of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District is almost entirely the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association. Along the New River, in the western portion of the District, the soil is in the Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association. The Calvin-Gilpin association is found in the southern most portion of the District. It is located directly adjacent to a portion of the New River and along the boarders with Summers and Greenbrier Counties. The Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association is described as moderately deep, well-drained, moderately coarse textured and medium textured, mostly sloping to very deep soils on dissected uplands and deep, moderately well-drained, mostly sloping steep soils on foot slopes. The slopes in this area generally range between 3 percent and 70 percent. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association is described as rough broken sandstone cliffs and rock outcrop areas on uplands and moderately deep, well-drained, moderately coarse textured and medium textured, very steep soils on uplands. The Calvin-Gilpin association is described as moderately deep, well-drained, medium textured,





mostly sloping to very steep soils on dissected uplands and mountains.

Planning assessments based on soil types rate the limitation of specified uses. A rating of slight indicates few known limitations. Moderate indicates limitations that can normally be overcome. Severe indicates one or more soil properties that seriously limit a specified use. Using soils that have a severe limitation increases the probability of failure and adds to the cost of installation and maintenance. It does not indicate that it is impossible to locate the specified use in the soil area.

Due to the slope and depth of the seasonal water table, the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association area has severe limitations associated with sewage disposal fields and impoundments. Depending on the specific location within this soil area, intense building development and roadways will have severe to moderate limitations. Specific areas within the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association are very well suited to woodland and open land wildlife, whereas other locations in this association are poorly suited to these types of wildlife. This entire soil area is unsuited to support wetland wildlife. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association has even more severe limitations for intense development. Once again these limitations are due to the steep grades and shallow bedrock.

In general, this area is not likely to be suited to support open land and woodland wildlife. It is not suited for wetland wildlife. The Calvin-Gilpin association has severe limitations for sewage disposal fields, impoundments, intense building development and roadways. This soil area is well suited to support woodland wildlife, somewhat suited to support open land wildlife and not suited to support wetland wildlife.

A large portion of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District is considered prime nesting area for migrating bird species. The nesting area encompasses the entire west central portion of the District and includes Babcock State Park and the New River Gorge.

The Danese/Meadow Bridge District has several geographically large areas of wetlands. The District does have a few small wetland areas scattered intermittently. The largest and most dense clusters of small wetlands are in the center of the District between U.S. Route 60 and Route 41. There are also





larger areas of wetlands located directly adjacent to the New and Meadow Rivers.

There are two significant flood prone areas in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. These are both located in the southern portion of the District. One flood prone area is near Bellwood and the other is near Meadow Bridge.

The Danese/Meadow Bridge District is divided into the Gauley River and New River Drainage Areas. The dividing line follows U.S. Route 60 and Routes 60/18 and 20. To the west of this divide is the New River Drainage Area. This area constitutes the larger portion of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. To the east of the divide is the Gauley River Drainage Area.

2. Service Areas

There are four different Water Service Areas located within the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. Clifftop Community Water serves the Clifftop area that is located in the northern portion of the District, adjacent to Babcock State Park. Just south of Babcock State Park is the beginning of the Danese PSD that serves the communities along the central portion of Route 41. This service area also branches west towards the New River. To the east, and adjacent to Route 20, Bellwood Community Water serves Bellwood. In the very southern portion of the District, adjacent to the Summers County border, Meadow Bridge Municipal Water serves the area around Meadow Bridge. The majority of the land area of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District is not located within a water service area.

There is only one wastewater system service area within the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. Located in the southern portion of the District, is the Town of Meadow Bridge Wastewater Treatment Plant. It services the same approximate area as the Meadow Bridge Municipal Water service.

There are no Gas Service Areas located within the Danese/Meadow Bridge District.

3. Transportation

U.S. Route 60 is the primary road in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. From the New Haven District, U.S. Route 60 crosses the northeast section of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District before passing into Greenbrier County. Hilton Village and Maplewood are located along this portion of U.S. Route 60. Just





north of Hilton Village, Route 41 branches southwest off of U.S. Route 60. Route 41 passes along the eastern edge of Babcock State Park, through Danese and then on to Quinnimont before crossing the New River and entering Raleigh County.





Route 22 branches off of Route 41 between Quinnimont and Hemlock. Route 22 passes through Red Spring and then into Summers County. South of Route 41, Route 60/18 branches southwest off of U.S. Route 60 in Maplewood. Route 60/18 ends when it intersects with Route 31. Route 31 continues south through Beelick Knob and Meadow Bridge. Route 20 is located in the southeast corner of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. From Greenbrier County, Route 20 passes through Spring Dale and Meadow Bridge, where it intersects with Route 31, and then passes into Summers County.

There are no public or private airstrips in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. There are three rail lines in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. One line follows the New River and one follows the Meadow River. The third rail line branches from the Meadow River line and follows Sewell Creek, Laurel Branch and Route 20.

4. Community and Recreation Facilities

There are some community service/gathering facilities within the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. These facilities include senior citizen centers and schools. There is also some community recreational facilities including Camp Washington Carver. Historic homes, churches, cemeteries and schools are located in this District. The historic Town of Thurmond is located along the New River, in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. In 1861 General Lee had an encampment on Sewell Mountain. Please refer to the attached plans for listings and locations of these facilities.

In addition to the community recreation facilities, there are two state/national recreation areas. In the northwest portion of the District is Babcock State Park. A portion of the New River Gorge National River is located along the western boundary of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District.





XIV. NEW HAVEN PLANNING DISTRICT

A. Vision and Goals

In undertaking this "interpretation of findings" from the citizen participation process, attitudes were sampled within the relevant topical areas. For the purpose of organizing the attitudinal findings within the context of the planning process, the County's range of vision and goals encompass activities in the following general categories: land use, commercial development, economic development and tourism, housing and residential development, environmental quality, utilities, public services/civic issues, historic resources, transportation, and community appearance.

The vision and goals are a comprehensive set of guiding principles. The vision describes how and where growth and development should occur, and call for a land stewardship ethic to guide individual and group actions. The following vision and goals have been developed for the purpose of coordinating the quality, scale, theme, and timing of future development within Fayette County. These adopted vision and goals set the physical, social, economic, and cultural framework around which the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan is designed. The comprehensive plan is organized, designed and implemented so as to orchestrate development in the County relative to (a) future land uses, (b) scale and intensity of land uses, (c) planning and developing support infrastructure, and (d) promulgation of development strategies that maintain, in some areas, and enhance, in other areas, the quality of life of current and future residents.

Following is a definition of vision and goal as the words relate to the comprehensive planning process for Fayette County:

VISION: A broad foresight of an ideally attainable goal in the future.

GOAL: An end toward which efforts are directed and which is aimed at being accomplished. A basic, wide area of concern.





The following vision statement is accompanied by a number of goals to guide future development.

VISION: New Haven should be a locally managed, mixed-use sustainable community.

GOALS:

- Maintain Proactive Planning.
- Establish local control of land use.
- Maintain the beauty of the District.
- Diversify employment base to include commerce, industry, and tourism.
- Preserve scenic vistas.
- Balance preservation with economic development.
- Mandate environmentally conscious development.
- Preserve farmland for future generations.
- Establish strong lines of communication between government and residents.
- Provide full services in the District (water, wastewater treatment plants, roads and schools).
- Explore and identify creative means of providing facilities/services.
- Expand the tax base.
- Evolve into a well-informed community.
- Responsibly manage the District's land.
- Educate the workforce to meet the demands of a rapidly changing economy.
- Preserve history and culture.
- Coordinate planning between County and municipalities.

This was a critical stage in the planning process. The vision and goals, adopted by the County Commission, were used and will continue to be used to develop land use recommendations and development strategies throughout the County. This exercise ensures that the Comprehensive Plan has been, and will continue to be, constructed on a firm social, economic, moral, and legal foundation.





B. Existing Land Use

The New Haven District is primarily rural. Rural land uses include farms, forest, parks and vacant land. U.S. Route 60 and U. S. Route 19 are the main routes through the District. The majority of the commercial land use is clustered linearly along U.S. Route 60. There are also industrial, institutional, commercial rafting companies and single family residential uses along U.S. Route 60. U.S. Route 19 is a limited access highway, and has very little development along the route in this District.

There are four primary enclaves of residential development to the northeast of U.S. Route 60 and north of U.S. Route 19. This development follows Routes 60/6, 3, 60/8 and 4 which branch off of U.S. Route 60. The more intense single family residential clusters tend to be located closer to U.S. Route 60.

As the enclaves of development near the Gauley River National Recreation Area they tend to become less dense and are typically rural residential. Along these four routes are also some scattered institutional land uses and two commercial areas.

To the east of U.S. Route 60 and south of U.S. Route 19 there are a few scattered clusters of rural residential development. There are little or no commercial, industrial and institutional land uses in this area, other than those that are adjacent to U.S. Route 60. In this area, there is one mining/quarry area off of route 41.

West of U.S. Route 60 are intermittent hollows that are developed. Primarily single-family residential and rural residential, these land uses line the existing roads. There are also some institutional uses scattered along these clusters of development. In the southwestern most portion of the New Haven District is one industrial use and one mining/quarry area.

C. Existing Zoning Districts

The Agricultural & Rural Residence District (R-R) is the predominant zoning throughout the New Haven District. By land area, the second largest zoning area is the Land Conservation District (L-C). The L-C Districts are located towards the edges of the New Haven District. On the north border, with Nicholas County, the L-C District encompasses and expands slightly beyond the Gauley River National Recreation Area.





Just to the west of the Gauley River National Recreation Area is an area of Land Conservation District (LC-1) which encroaches into the Valley District. The most western portion of the New Haven District is predominantly zoned L-C. This zone encompasses Hawks Nest State Park and extends south along the New River to encompass and go slightly beyond the New River Gorge National River and Babcock State Park.

With few exceptions, the other residential, business, and industrial zones follow U.S. Route 60 and U.S. Route 19. Agricultural & Rural Residence District (RR-1), General Business District (B-2), Highway Business District (B-3), Light Industrial District (I-1) and Heavy Industrial District (I-2) are the zones scattered along the length of U.S. Route 60. U.S. Route 19 has two areas zoned General Business District (B-2) and two areas zoned Light Industrial District (I-1).

The Planned Development District (PD) is located in five areas within the central western portion of the New Haven District. There are two Planned Development District zones directly adjacent to U.S. Route 19, one located just north of U.S. Route 19, and two located just south of U.S. Route 19.

D. Overall Physical Character

1. Natural Features

The soil of the New Haven District is almost entirely the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association. In the northwestern most corner of the District the soil is in the Muskingum-Shelocta association, Along the New River, in the western portion of the District, the soil is in the Steep Rock Land - Dekalb-Gilpin association. The Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association is described as moderately deep, well drained, moderately coarse textured and medium textured, mostly sloping to very deep soils on dissected uplands and deep, moderately well drained, mostly sloping or steep soils on foot slopes. The slopes in this area generally range between 3 percent and 70 percent. The Muskingum-Shelocta association is described as moderately deep, well-drained, medium-textured, mostly very steep soils on strongly dissected uplands and deep, well drained, sloping to deep soils on foot slopes. The general slopes in these areas range from 10 percent to 75 percent, with some areas of severe erosion. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association is described as rough broken sandstone cliffs and rock outcrop areas on uplands and moderately deep, well-drained, moderately coarse





textured and medium textured, very steep soils on uplands.





Planning assessments based on soil types rate the limitation of specified uses. A rating of slight indicates few known limitations. Moderate indicates limitations that can normally be overcome. Severe indicates one or more soil properties that seriously limit a specified use. Using soils that have a severe limitation increases the probability of failure and adds to the cost of installation and maintenance. It does not indicate that it is impossible to locate the specified use in the soil area.

Due to slope and depth of the seasonal water table, the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association area has severe limitations associated with sewage disposal fields and impoundments. Depending on the specific location within this soil area, intense building development and roadways will have severe to moderate limitations. Specific areas within the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association are very well suited to woodland and open land wildlife, whereas other locations in this association are poorly suited to these types of wildlife.

This entire soil area is unsuited to support wetland wildlife. Due to the steep slopes and the shallow bedrock, the Muskingum-Skelacta association area has severe limitations for intense building development, sewage disposal fields, and roadways. In general, this area is suited to support open land and woodland wildlife. It is not suited for wetland wildlife. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association has even more severe limitations for intense development. Once again these limitations are due to the cliffs, steep grades and shallow bedrock. In general, this area is not likely to be suited to support open land and woodland wildlife. It is not suited for wetland wildlife.

Along the New River Gorge, from Hawks Nest State Park to the border of the New Haven District, is a prime nesting area for migrating bird species. This stretch of nesting area reaches east from the New River toward U.S. Route 60.

The New Haven District has few geographically large areas of wetlands. The District does have a few small wetland areas scattered intermittently. Northeast of Lookout there is a cluster of slightly larger wetlands. The most notable areas of wetlands are located directly adjacent to the Gauley, New and Meadow Rivers.





There are no significant flood prone areas noted in the New Haven District.

The New Haven District is divided into the Gauley River and New River Drainage Areas. The dividing line dissects the district almost in half. Beginning in the northwest corner of the District, the dividing line heads east then cuts south to Hico. From Hico the dividing line closely follows U.S. Route 60 to the southeast edge of the New Haven District. All of the land to the northeast of the dividing line is in the Gauley River Drainage Area. The land to the southwest is in the New River Drainage area.

2. Service Areas

The New Haven Public Service District serves most of the planning district.

There is one wastewater system service area within the New Haven District. The Town of Ansted Wastewater Treatment Plant is located in the northwest portion of the New Haven District. It serves the Ansted community.

There are no Gas Service Areas located within the New Haven District.

3. Transportation

The primary vehicular transportation routes through the New Haven District are U.S. Route 60 and U.S. Route 19. From the Valley District, U.S. Route 60 crosses into the New Haven District and heads southeast connecting Chimney Corner, Hawks Nest State Park, Ansted, Hico and Lookout. U.S. Route 60 crosses the southeast border of the New Haven District and passes into the Danese/Meadow Bridge District before crossing into Greenbrier County. U.S. Route 19, a limited access highway, connects to Interstate 79 approximately sixty miles north of Fayette County. As U.S. Route 19 crosses the Meadow River, it passes into Nicholas County from the New Haven District. Heading southwest, U.S. Route 19 intersects U.S. Route 60 in Hico and continues across the New River towards Fayetteville. Eventually it merges into Interstate 64/79 near Beckley.

Many smaller roads branch off of U.S. Route 60. Routes 60/3, 3, 4, and 41 all branch to the north of U.S. Route 60. Branching to the south, off of U.S. Route 60, are Routes 11, 82, 7, 5 and 60/25. These





smaller roads connect the local communities of the New Haven District to the larger through roads.





One of the two private airstrips in Fayette County is located within the New Haven District. Kessler Field airstrip is located off of Route 5 and U.S. Route 19 near Graydon in the central western portion of the New Haven District. The two main rail lines in the New Haven District parallel the banks of the Gauley, Meadow and New Rivers. One small rail line spurs toward Lookout. Another small rail line branches from the Meadow/Gauley River lines and follows Glade Creek to the intersection with Little Glade Creek.

4. Community and Recreation Facilities

There are some community service/gathering facilities within the New Haven District. These facilities include senior citizen centers, churches, schools and libraries. There are also community recreation facilities in the form of neighborhood parks and the Meadow River. Many historic homes and Civil War sites, schools, churches and cemeteries are located in the New Haven District. There are also historic coal camp towns and examples of historic stonework. Please refer to the attached plans for listings and locations of these facilities.

In addition to the community recreation facilities, there are three state/national recreation areas. A portion of the Gauley River National Recreation Area is located along the western edge of the New Haven District. Along the southern edge of the District is the New River Gorge National River. Hawks Nest State Park is located in the northwest corner of the New Haven District.

XV. PLATEAU PLANNING DISTRICT

A. Vision and Goals

In undertaking this "interpretation of findings" from the citizen participation process, attitudes were sampled within the relevant topical areas. For the purpose of organizing the attitudinal findings within the context of the planning process, the County's range of vision and goals encompass activities in the following general categories: land use, commercial development, economic development and tourism, housing and residential development, environmental quality, utilities, public services/civic issues, historic resources, transportation, and community appearance.





The vision and goals are a comprehensive set of guiding principles. The vision describes how and where growth and development should occur, and call for a land stewardship ethic to guide individual and group actions. The following vision and goals have been developed for the purpose of coordinating the quality, scale, theme, and timing of future development within Fayette County. These adopted vision and goals set the physical, social, economic, and cultural framework around which the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan is designed. The comprehensive plan is organized, designed and implemented so as to orchestrate development in the County relative to (a) future land uses, (b) scale and intensity of land uses, (c) planning and developing support infrastructure, and (d) promulgation of development strategies that maintain, in some areas, and enhance, in other areas, the quality of life of current and future residents.

Following is a definition of vision and goal as the words relate to the comprehensive planning process for Fayette County:

VISION: A broad foresight of an ideally attainable goal in the future.

GOAL: An end toward which efforts are directed and which is aimed at being accomplished. A basic, wide area of concern.

The following vision statement is accompanied by a number of goals to guide future development.

VISION: Diversify the economic base, while being sensitive to the environment and cognizant of the importance of quality development to provide job opportunities for residents of various socio-economic classes.

GOALS:

- Sustain tourism throughout the year.
- Educate the community to reach the national median.
- Create diverse economic base to provide job opportunities for residents of various socio-economic classes.
- Emphasize the important role the environment will play in the future of the District.
- Encourage commercial enterprises in addition to the traditional outdoor activities such as rafting and mountain climbing.
- Improve building codes in the County.





- Continue the planning and construction of infrastructure recognizing that these improvements will be a catalyst for future development in the District.
- Develop a new business/industrial park in the District.

This was a critical stage in the planning process. The vision and goals, adopted by the County Commission, were used and will continue to be used to develop land use recommendations and development strategies throughout the County. This exercise ensures that the Comprehensive Plan has been, and will continue to be, constructed on a firm social, economic, moral, and legal foundation.

B. Existing Land Use

The Plateau District is the most intensely developed district in Fayette County. U.S. Route 19 passes through the center of the District from north to south. Along this portion of U.S. Route 19 are three municipalities. From the north, just south of the New River, is Fayetteville, the County seat. In the center of the District is Oak Hill. The southernmost municipality on U.S. Route 19 is Mount Hope, near the border with Raleigh County. These municipalities are comprised of a mix of residential, commercial, public and industrial land uses.

The other major through road in the Plateau District is Interstate 77. This road is located in the southwest corner of the District. Routes 15 and 23 parallel I-77. There is a mix of rural residential, single family residential, commercial and public uses located along this corridor. Just off of I-77, near Pax and Long Branch, there are two mining/quarry areas. The Plum Orchard Wildlife Management Area is located in this southern portion of the County between I-77 and U.S. Route 19. Just north of the Plum Orchard Wildlife Management Area is Route 612, which branches off of Route 15 toward Oak Hill. There is a mix of rural residential, single family residential and public facility land uses along this road. There is a small area of commercial land use near Mossy. North of Route 612, but running almost parallel, is Route 61. This route has a similar mix of rural residential, single family uses, public uses and a small amount of commercial land uses. Off of Route 61 there is one mining/quarry area. North of Route 61, in the most northern portion of the Plateau District is Route 16, which passes through Beckwith to Fayetteville. Beyond Fayetteville, Route 16 roughly follows U.S. Route 19 south. The northern portion of Route 16 is primarily Single family residential with isolated areas of rural residential, commercial and public land uses.





Branching southeast of Fayetteville is Route 9. Near Gatewood, Route 14 branches off of Route 9 and heads back to Oak Hill. The primary land use in this area is single family residential. Other uses include rural residential and public land uses including Fayette County Park and Plum Orchard Lake. Off of Route 9, and south of Conrad, is one mining/quarry area. East of Oak Hill, toward the New River Gorge, are four mine/quarry areas. There are also rural residential, single family residential and public uses recorded in this area. Although the primary clusters of development are located along the previously mentioned roadways, there are some scattered areas of rural development between these primary routes. The majority of the land between these development corridors is rural. Rural land uses include farms, forest, parks, and vacant land.

C. Existing Zoning Districts

The three municipalities along Route 19 are encompassed by a complex layout of various zoning districts. This mix of zoning districts creates a wide swath in the center of the Plateau District from the north to the south border. Every zoning district including agricultural, residential, business, industrial and land conservation is represented in this swath. The various Residence Districts occupy the largest portion of the land area.

To the west of U.S. Route 19, the majority of the land is zoned Agricultural & Rural Residence District (R-R). There are a few isolated areas of Residence District (R-2), General Business District (B-2), Light Industrial District (I-1) and Heavy Industrial District (I-2). To the east of U. S. Route 19 is one large area zoned Agricultural & Rural Residence District (RR-1). Just south of this area is a large area zoned Agricultural & Rural Residence District (R-R). Along the entire northern and eastern edge of the Plateau District, completely encompassing and extending slightly beyond the New River Gorge National River, is the Land Conservation District (L-C).

D. Overall Physical Character

1. Natural Features

All four general soil types of Fayette County are located within the Plateau District. The largest two soil types are the Muskingum-Shelocta association and the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association. The District is approximately divided in half, from north to south, with the Muskingum -Shelocta association on the west side, and the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association to the east.





The remaining two soil types are located to the north and east border of the District along the New River. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association follows the length of the New River. The Calvin-Gilpin association is located directly adjacent to the New River in the southern most portion of the Plateau District.

The Muskingum-Shelocta association is described as moderately deep, well-drained, medium-textured, mostly very steep soils on strongly dissected uplands and deep, well-drained, sloping to deep soils on foot slopes. The general slopes in these areas range from 10 percent to 75 percent, with some areas of severe erosion.

The Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association is described as moderately deep, well drained, moderately coarse textured and medium textured, mostly sloping to very deep soils on dissected uplands and deep, moderately well drained, mostly sloping of steep soils on foot slopes. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association is described as rough broken sandstone cliffs and rock outcrop areas on uplands and moderately deep, well-drained, moderately coarse textured and medium textured, very steep soils on uplands. The Calvin-Gilpin association is described as moderately deep, well-drained, medium textured, mostly sloping to very steep soils on dissected uplands and mountains.

Planning assessments based on soil types rate the limitation of specified uses. A rating of slight indicates few known limitations. Moderate indicates limitations that can normally be overcome. Severe indicates one or more soil properties that seriously limit a specified use. Using soils that have a severe limitation increases the probability of failure and adds to the cost of installation and maintenance. It does not indicate that it is impossible to locate the specified use in the soil area.

Due to the steep slopes and the shallow bedrock, the Muskingum-Shelocta association area has severe limitations for intense building development, sewage disposal fields, and roadways. In general, this area is suited to support open land and woodland wildlife. It is not suited for wetland wildlife. Due to slope and depth of the seasonal water table, the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association area has severe limitations associated with sewage disposal fields and impoundments. Depending on the specific location within this soil area, intense building development and roadways will have severe to moderate limitations.





Specific areas within the Dekalb-Gilpin-Ernest association are very well suited to woodland and open land wildlife, whereas other locations in this association are poorly suited to these types of wildlife. This entire soil area is unsuited to support wetland wildlife. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association has even more severe limitations to intense development. Once again these limitations are due to the steep grades and shallow bedrock. In general, this area is not likely to be suited to support open land and woodland wildlife. It is not suited for wetland wildlife.

The Calvin-Gilpin association has severe limitations for sewage disposal fields, intense building development and roadways. This soil area is well suited to support woodland wildlife, somewhat suited to support open land wildlife and not suited to support wetland wildlife.

A large portion of the Plateau District is designated as prime nesting area for migrating bird species. The nesting area line passes through Beckwith, Dempsey, Oak Hill and then to the southeast border of the District. The prime nesting area is to the east of the dividing line and it encompasses the New River Gorge National River.

The Plateau District has few geographically large areas of wetlands. The District does have a few small wetland areas scattered intermittently. The largest wetland is located just north of the Plum Orchard Wildlife Management Area along Mossy and Painter Creeks. There are also larger areas of wetlands located directly adjacent to the New River.

There are three significant flood prone areas in the Plateau District. The northern most flood prone area is located along Arbuckle Creek and runs through Oak Hill and Minden. The second flood prone area follows White Oak Creek from Carlisle through Glen Jean to Mount Hope. The third flood prone area is located in the southwest corner of the District near Interstate 77. This area runs from Long Branch to the border with Raleigh County.

The Plateau District is divided into the two drainage areas. The dividing line follows a north - south path just west of U.S. Route 19 and divides the District approximately in half. The Kanawha River Drainage Area is to the west and the New River Drainage Area is to the east.



2. Service Areas

There are five different Water Service Areas located within the Plateau District. Fayetteville Municipal Water is located in the northeast portion of the District and serves the area around Fayetteville. This service area branches west through Dempsey and eventually connects to the Page-Kincaid PSD. This PSD follows Route 61 to Kincaid and then into the Valley District. In the central portion of the Plateau District, the Arbuckle PSD serves the Minden area. South of this area, and just east of U.S. Route 19, Mount Hope Municipal Water serves the Mount Hope area. In the very southwest corner of the District, Pax Municipal Water (Purchaser Status) serves Pax, Long Branch and a portion of Route 27. The majority of the Plateau District is served through a public/private venture between New Haven Public Service District and West Virginia American Water.

There are eight wastewater system service areas within the Plateau District. All but one of these service areas is located along the U.S. Route 19 corridor. The City of Fayetteville wastewater system is the northern most and serves the Fayetteville area. South of this district, and serving the Oak Hill area, is the City of Oak Hill Industrial Park Package Plant, City of Oak Hill Minden Plant and the City of Oak Hill Route 61 Plant. Just east of this area is the Arbuckle PSD that serves the Minden area. Branching south from Oak Hill is the White Oak PSD that serves the Carlisle, Dewitt and Glen Jean areas. The southern most wastewater service area is the Town of Mt. Hope Wastewater Treatment Plant that serves the Mount Hope area. West of the Plum Orchard Wildlife Management Area, along Interstate 77, is the Town of Pax Wastewater Treatment Plant, which serves the Pax and Long Branch area. The majority of the Plateau District is located outside a wastewater service district.

A significant portion of the central area of the Plateau District lies within a gas service district. Gas service follows the development along the U.S. Route 19 corridor. Oak Ridge, Fayetteville, Minden, Oak Hill, Carlisle, Dewitt, Glen Jean and Mount Hope are all located in this central gas service area. Two smaller gas service areas are located along Route 61 in western portion of the Plateau District. One serves Ingram Branch, and the other serves Kincaid.



3. Transportation

The primary route of vehicular transportation through the Plateau District is U. S. Route 19 that cuts directly through the center of the District. Interstate 77, which crosses the southwest corner, is the other major thoroughfare in the Plateau District. U.S. Route 19 enters the Plateau District after crossing the New River from the New Haven District to the north. Moving south, U.S. Route 19 passes through Fayetteville, Oak Hill, Glen Jean and Mount Hope before entering Raleigh County.

Route 16 crosses the New River into the Plateau District in the northwest corner of the District. It passes southeast through Beckwith and Oak Ridge before turning south in Fayetteville to follow U.S. Route 19. Branching to the east of route 16 from Fayetteville is Route 9. Route 9 passes through Garten, Gatewood, and Cunard as it heads toward the New River. Route 14 branches off of Route 9 and heads southwest to meet Route 16 near Oak Hill.

Also branching east from route 16 is Route 25. This road connects Glen Jean and Dewitt and then crosses the New River near Thurmond. Route 61 and Route 612 branch to the west from U.S. Route 19 in Oak Hill. Route 61 passes through Kincaid and the Valley District. Route 612 connects with Route 15 near Mossy, East Kingston and I-77. Below Plum Orchard Wildlife management Area, Route 27 branches from Route 23 near Long Branch and Pax to connect with U.S. Route 19. Route 23, in the southwest portion of the District, parallels I-77 from Long Branch to where it intersects with Route 612 near Mossy and Route 15 picks up. Route 15 continues to parallel I-77 into the Valley District.

There is one private airstrip in the Plateau District. It is located east of U.S. Route 19 between Fayetteville and Oak Hill. There are a few railroad lines in the Plateau District. One line follows along the bank of the New River. Another line crosses into the Plateau District from Raleigh County and follows Route 16 north. Near Glean Jean this line branches east and west. The eastern line heads towards the New River and Thurmond before looping back to the west towards Oak Hill. The line that heads west turns sharply north before ending near Carlisle. From the Valley District, another rail line follows Route 61 to where it branches at the Oak Hill junction. One branch heads north towards Summerlee. The other branch heads southwest past the Plum Orchard Wildlife Management





CHAPTER FIVE - LAND USE

**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FAYETTE COUNTY, WEST
VIRGINIA**

Area and then follows I-77 across the Raleigh County border.





4. Community and Recreation Facilities

There are many community facilities in the Plateau District. These facilities include senior citizen centers, schools, libraries and community centers. There are also some community recreational facilities including country clubs and neighborhood parks. Many historic homes, business, public buildings and landmarks are located in the Plateau District. There is also the Fayetteville historic district and some Civil War sites. Please refer to the attached plans for listings and locations of these facilities.

In addition to the community recreation facilities, there are two state/national recreation areas. A portion of the New River Gorge National River is located along the north and east borders of the Plateau District. In the southwest portion of the District is the Plum Orchard Wildlife Management Area.

XVI. VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT

A. Vision and Goals

In undertaking this "interpretation of findings" from the citizen participation process, attitudes were sampled within the relevant topical areas. For the purpose of organizing the attitudinal findings within the context of the planning process, the County's range of vision and goals encompass activities in the following general categories: land use, commercial development, economic development and tourism, housing and residential development, environmental quality, utilities, public services/civic issues, historic resources, transportation, and community appearance.

The vision and goals are a comprehensive set of guiding principles. The vision describes how and where growth and development should occur, and call for a land stewardship ethic to guide individual and group actions. The following vision and goals have been developed for the purpose of coordinating the quality, scale, theme, and timing of future development within Fayette County. These adopted vision and goals set the physical, social, economic, and cultural framework around which the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan is designed. The comprehensive plan is organized, designed and implemented so as to orchestrate development in the County relative to (a) future land uses, (b) scale and intensity of land uses, (c) planning and developing support infrastructure, and (d) promulgation of development strategies that maintain, in some areas, and enhance, in other areas, the quality of life of current and future residents.





Following is a definition of vision and goal as the words relate to the comprehensive planning process for Fayette County:

VISION: A broad foresight of an ideally attainable goal in the future.

GOAL: An end toward which efforts are directed and which is aimed at being accomplished. A basic, wide area of concern.

The following vision statement is accompanied by a number of goals to guide future development.

VISION: Valley should be a locally managed, mixed-use sustainable community.

GOALS:

- Establish a sustainable employment base.
- Provide safe, decent and affordable housing.
- Identify developable land for future employers.
- Provide basic services to all residents including, but not limited to, water, sewer and infrastructure.
- Community centers should be established to serve the District.
- Encourage "High Tech" (clean industry) development in the District.
- Establish lines of communication with governing agencies to achieve development objectives.
- Support institutions of higher education within the County.
- Educate the population and work force.
- Improve the image/appearance of the District so it will be inviting and visually appealing.
- Incorporate the river into the future of the Valley District.

This was a critical stage in the planning process. The vision and goals, adopted by the County Commission, were used and will continue to be used to develop land use recommendations and development strategies throughout the County. This exercise ensures that the Comprehensive Plan has been, and will continue to be, constructed on a firm social, economic, moral, and legal foundation.





B. Existing Land Use

The Valley District is primarily rural. Rural land uses include farms, forest, parks and vacant land. The land development pattern primarily follows U.S. Route 60 and Route 61/29 along the Kanawha River, Route 16 along the Gauley River, and Routes 61/24 and 61 that branch south.

In the northern most portion of the County, along the Gauley River and Route 16, there is some intermittent single family development as well as a few churches, schools and cemeteries. The Alloy plant is also located in this district. In this area, there are also some rural and single family development, churches and cemeteries along the County borders with Kanawha and Nicholas County. The Kanawha River and U.S. Route 60, also in the northern portion of the District, are lined with intermittent development. This development is comprised of a mix of single family residential, institutional, commercial and industrial land uses. There are two quarry/mines located within the northern portion of the District.

Branching south of Route 61/29 and the Kanawha River is Route 61/24 that follows Armstrong Creek and Route 61 that follows Loop Creek. Along these routes, the development is primarily single family and rural residential. There are also institutional and commercial land uses in this area. One industrial area and five quarry/mines are noted in the central portion of the District.

The southern most portion of the District, where Interstate 77 and Route 15 pass through, has very little development. There is a church, cemetery and two quarry/mines. There is very little industrial development noted within the entire Valley District.

C. Existing Zoning Districts

The Land Conservation District (LC-1) is the predominant zoning throughout the Valley District. In the northern most portion of the District, along the County line, there are two areas zoned Agricultural & Rural Residential (RR-1). Some of the existing clusters of single family residential land uses, in the northern portion of the Valley District, are located outside of the RR-1 zones and in the LC-1 district.

Just north of the Kanawha River, along U.S. Route 60, are the towns of Smithers, Boomer, Charlton Heights and Glen Ferris. These towns have more intricate zoning patterns than the majority of the Valley District. The zoning patterns reflect, but do not exactly mirror, the existing land use patterns. The zoning includes Agricultural and





Rural Residence (R-R), Land Conservation (L-C), Residence (R-1 and R-2), Highway Business (B-3), Light Industrial (I-1) and Heavy Industrial (I-2).

South of the Kanawha River, along Routes 61 and 61/24, are relatively large tracts zoned Agricultural & Rural Residence (RR-1). There are also some areas zoned Residence (R-3) and Heavy Industrial (I-2). These zones do not completely reflect the current land uses. Some residential, commercial and institutional uses are in the Land Conservation District (LC-1).

In the southern most portion of the Valley District, along Interstate 77 and Route 15, the zoning is primarily Land Conservation District (LC-1) with two small exceptions. One area is zoned Highway Business (B-3) and one area zoned Light Industrial (I-1).

C. Overall Physical Character

1. Natural Features

The soil of the Valley District is almost entirely the Muskingum - Shelocta association. In the northeastern portion of the County, along the New River, the soil is in the Steep Rock Land - Dekalb-Gilpin association. The Muskingum-Shelocta association is described as moderately deep, well-drained, medium-textured, mostly very steep soils on strongly dissected uplands and deep, well-drained, sloping to deep soils on foot slopes. The general slopes in these areas range from 10 percent to 75 percent, with some areas of severe erosion. There are also be some limited areas of naturally occurring land at less than 10 percent slope. The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association is described as rough broken sandstone cliffs and rock outcrop areas on uplands and moderately deep, well-drained, moderately coarse textured and medium textured, very steep soils on uplands.

Planning assessments based on soil types rate the limitation of specified uses. A rating of slight indicates few known limitations. Moderate indicates limitations that can normally be overcome. Severe indicates one or more soil properties that seriously limit a specified use. Using soils that have a severe limitation increases the probability of failure and adds to the cost of installation and maintenance. It does not indicate that it is impossible to locate the specified use in the soil area.

Due to the steep slopes and the shallow bedrock, the Muskingum-Shelocta association area has severe





limitations for intense building development, sewage disposal fields, and roadways. In general, this area is suited to support open land and woodland wildlife. It is not suited for wetland wildlife.

The Steep Rock Land-Dekalb-Gilpin association has even more severe limitations for intense development. Once again these limitations are due to the steep grades and shallow bedrock. In general, this area is not likely to be suited to support open land and woodland wildlife. It is not suited for wetland wildlife.

A broad area along the Gauley River and the intersection of the Gauley and Kanawha Rivers is documented to be a prime nesting area for migrating bird species.

The Valley District has few geographically large areas of wetlands. The District does have a few small wetland areas scattered intermittently. The largest and most dense cluster of these small wetlands is in the northern most portion of the District near the Kanawha County line. There are also larger areas of wetlands located directly adjacent to the Kanawha, Gauley and New Rivers.

There are a few significant flood prone areas in the Valley District. In the northern portion of the District there is one flood prone area located around Jodie. Just west of this area, along the border with Nicholas County, is another flood prone area. Also, in the northern portion of the District, near the border with Kanawha County, is a flood prone area that follows Smithers Creek. South of the Kanawha River, in the central portion of the Valley District, are three flood prone areas. One relatively small area is located between Montgomery Heights and the Kanawha River. The other two areas are larger and they follow Armstrong and Loop Creeks. There are no significant flood prone areas in the southern-most portion of the District.

All three drainage areas of Fayette County are present in the Valley District. A very small section in the east central portion of the District falls within the New River Drainage Area. The northeastern most portion of the District is within the Gauley River Drainage Basin. The majority of the central and the entire southern portion of the District lie within the Kanawha River Drainage Area. This drainage area comprises the largest portion of the District.

2. Service Areas





There are six different Water Service Areas located within the Valley District. The Gauley River PSD serves the northern portion of the Valley District along the County line and most of the length of the Gauley River. The area primarily to the north of the Kanawha River and along U.S. Route 60 is served by the Kanawha Falls PSD.

Immediately to the south of the Kanawha River, and serving Montgomery Heights and Deepwater, is the Deepwater PSD. Southeast of the Kanawha River is the Kanawha Falls Public Service District. By the year 2002, this PSD will serve the areas of Kanawha Falls and Boonesborough. Within the central part of the District are the remaining two water service areas. The Armstrong PSD serves the communities along Armstrong Creek and Powellton Fork. The Page-Kincaid PSD serves the communities along Loop Creek, Beards Fork and Mulberry Fork. The majority of the land area and the entire southern-most portion of the Valley District are not located within a water service area.

There are seven wastewater system service areas within the Valley District. Although these areas overlay the water service areas, they are not as extensive. The Kanawha Falls PSD is located primarily along the Kanawha River with a portion reaching northward and just crossing the Kanawha County boarder. Also, north of the Kanawha River, is the City of Smithers Wastewater Treatment Plant that serves the City of Smithers. Just across the Kanawha River is the City of Montgomery Wastewater Treatment Plant that spans the Fayette/Kanawha County line to serve the Montgomery area. Immediately south of the Kanawha River, the Deepwater PSD serves Montgomery Heights and Deepwater. In the central portion of the Valley District are three wastewater service areas. The Armstrong PSD follows Armstrong Creek. The Page-Kincaid PSD serves a portion of the Loop Creek area. The Page-Kincaid PSD-Beards Fork Wastewater Treatment Plant serves the Beards Fork community. The southern most portion of the Valley District is not served by a wastewater system.

A significant portion of the north and central area of the Valley District lies within a gas service district. Gas service is located at the most northwest corner of the Valley District and follows the County line to where it joins the Gauley River. Gas service follows the majority of the portion of the Gauley River that is located within the Valley District. Just to the east of the intersection of the





Gauley and New River is a small gas service area. The north and south sides of the Kanawha River also have gas service. Branching to the south, gas service follows Armstrong creek from the Kanawha River to Powellton. The southern most gas service area within the Valley District is around Page.





3. Transportation

The primary vehicular transportation routes through the Valley District are U.S. Route 60 and Interstate 77. U.S. Route 60 is located on the north side of the New and Kanawha Rivers.

The two primary roads that branch north off U.S. Route 60 are Route 39/16 and Route 2. These both cross into Nicholas County and merge into Route 16. Following the south bank of the Kanawha River is Route 61/29. Two primary routes branch south off of Route 61/29. Route 61/24 follows Armstrong Creek and branches, but eventually dead ends within the Valley District. Route 61 runs south and eventually intersects with U.S. Route 19 near Oak Hill. Interstate 77 is a major limited access highway that crosses east to west through the southern portion of the Valley District. Route 15 parallels Interstate 77 and serves local traffic.

There are no public or private airstrips in the Valley District. The only rail lines in the Valley District parallel the north and south banks of the Kanawha River, the south bank of the New River, and the Gauley River. One line also follows Route 61 and Loop Creek.

4. Community and Recreation Facilities

West Virginia University Tech is the largest community facility in the district. Other community service/gathering facilities within the Valley District also exist. These facilities include senior citizen and community centers. Community recreational facilities, including parks such as the Civitan Park and The Scrabble Creek Little League Ball Park, are located in this district. Many historic homes, business, public buildings and landmarks are located in the Valley District. Most of the previously mentioned historic and community facilities are located in the northern portion of the Valley District. Please refer to the attached plans for listings and locations of these facilities.

In addition to the community recreation facilities, there are two state/national recreation areas. A portion of the Gauley River National Recreation Area is located in the northeast corner of the Valley District. South of this, along the New River, is the Hawks Nest State Park





XVII. CONCLUSION

This Plan, and in particular the land use concept, indicates the proposed conceptual development pattern of the County. Local conditions, values and objectives change as a result of evolving economic and political pressures and the Plan should subsequently be responsive to these changes. This Plan is not a document that encourages regimentation. It is, however, a guide that encourages patterns of development which, in turn, permit orderly and efficient community growth to occur within the overall context of a rural county setting.

The impact of the Comprehensive Plan, in the long-term, will be measured by the degree to which the Plan's activities are translated into reality. These activities, no matter how carefully conceived, can have little effect in guiding growth and development in this County, if they are not implemented.

The following is a chapter by chapter summary of major activities developed by County staff and officials, residents, business owners, land owners and stakeholders over the course of the planning process.





CHAPTER SIX

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Commercial Development





CHAPTER SIX - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

I. OVERVIEW

An integral part of ensuring a high overall quality of life is guaranteeing residents and those who work in Fayette County easy access to the goods and services they need as part of their normal daily activities. Everyday needs should be convenient and easily accessible. The location of commercial centers and the types of stores and services offered should be appropriate and meet local demand.

The Commercial Development element of this Comprehensive Plan outlines policies and strategies to ensure a balance of commercial centers and the types of stores and services needed by the residents. Commercial development should be properly planned and designed. Development must be consistent with the overall community enhancement goals of the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan.

There is enormous economic potential in Fayette County. The potential lies within the County's spending power, its available and trainable labor pool, its location advantages and underutilized, developed land and buildings.

Fayette County's commercial development is largely attributed to the tourism industry. The retail market consists mainly of stores (specialty) and tourist-related services. This is due to increased tourism and the growing number of artists and craftsmen in the State. In general, Fayette County has experienced a decline in the number of businesses in various business categories partly due to the influx of big-box retailers who have had a significant influence on the retail market in the State and throughout the nation. While a lot of Fayette County's retail market is concentrated in and around the towns of Fayetteville, Mount Hope, Oak Hill, Ansted and Montgomery, there is some amount of commercial enterprise in the County's unincorporated areas.

Abandoned buildings in planned growth areas should be targeted for redevelopment prior to identifying vacant properties for new construction.





CHAPTER SIX - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The Danese/Meadow Bridge District offers the following assets related to commercial development:

- Great potential for organic farming.
- The area offers great potential in terms of land development.
- Many businesses are locally owned and operated.
- The readily available workforce is a positive factor for any industry that is looking to locate in this region.
- The area is located in close proximity to larger cities such as Beckley in Raleigh County.
- Babcock State Park has one of the best public swimming pools in the County.
- The mining industry is still a thriving business in this district.

B. **Liabilities**

This district is also presented with the following liabilities that should be addressed to ensure they do not continue to deter development.

- Utilities are limited in terms of water service and septic treatment. This is a major deterrent to potential development.
- The area also lacks any type of major employer that could serve as an anchor by providing a large number of jobs.
- There is a lack of training for available workforce. This limits their capability to find well-paying jobs locally.
- There is a lack of winter activities for visitors and residents. The tourist activity is concentrated around the summer season.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been formulated to strengthen the assets and rectify the liabilities in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District.

1. Marketing





- The County and the Chamber of Commerce should support the 4-C Economic Development Authority with their marketing initiative to attract businesses into the area.
- The development of commercial uses (i.e., retail, service and office) should be encouraged. These uses will eventually increase local tax revenues, which will contribute to paying for improved County service delivery to future residents.
- An awareness of the importance of supporting local businesses should be created and emphasized. A local business association, where business owners can learn to operate collectively rather than independently in the community, should be created. The business association would work closely with 4-C Economic Development Authority. The following issues should be considered an integral part of the vision of this association:
 - **Business retention and recruitment.**
 - **Business promotion.**
 - **Advertising.**
 - **Grant applications for low- interest loans.**
 - **Promotional materials.**
 - **Creation of multiple destinations.**
 - **Business practice seminars.**
 - **Business assessment programs.**
- The Fayette County Chamber of Commerce should coordinate the efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations so that they complement one another, thereby reducing duplication of effort.
- The Chamber should work with local businesses to develop programs to keep local shoppers in the community. Many businesses are locally owned and operated. Local residents should be encouraged to patronize local businesses.
- Appropriate marketing material should be prepared to attract retail activity into the area. In order to reverse the outflow of retail spending from the County, a concerted effort should be made to improve the quality and types of stores in the area. The strengths and weaknesses of the market should be identified, and specific marketing and recruitment strategies should be developed as part of the exercise.
- The County should encourage interested groups to hold cultural festivals on an annual basis to attract locals and visitors into the area.





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- The County should solicit state, regional and national coverage of activities on a regular basis.

2. Recreation

- A feasibility study and market analysis should be conducted to determine the feasibility and demand for the following types of recreational activities: a golf course, a mini golf course, a movie theatre, and a bowling alley.
- Opportunities to develop Sewell Mountain for skiing should also be identified. This would serve as a major tourist attraction for Fayette County.
- The County should focus on developing hiking and biking trails, tennis, track, and outdoor recreation opportunities for the local population as well as tourists. This would not only improve the economy of the area by capitalizing on its attraction but would also preserve the environmental integrity of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District.
- The County should work with relevant agencies to identify and create recreational programs to cater to all age groups of the population, particularly retirees.
- Develop, with private interests, off-road activities (i.e. hum-vee rental, 4-wheel vehicle trails, motor-cross, and bicycles). The Kiwanas Club has been working on this initiative.
- The possibility of locating hunting clubs on private land should be explored.

3. Business Types

- The possibility of clustering businesses (fast food, TCBY, etc.) wherever appropriate, should be explored.
- Create opportunities for agri-business within the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. This area offers a lot of potential for promoting the agriculture business.
- The feasibility of introducing a financial institution in the District should be explored.
- The Chamber of Commerce and other agencies, including County offices, should actively support locally-owned inns and lodges located in the District.





CHAPTER SIX - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- The County should identify locations for hotels/motels based on demand, to cater to tourists, particularly during the summer months. A market for this should first be determined.
- A suitable location in the heart of the Danese/Meadow Bridge District should be identified to accommodate a pharmacy.
- The entertainment industry (theatres, bowling alleys, etc.) should be further developed to retain tourists and visitors for longer periods of time.

4. Adaptive Uses

- An inventory and assessment of old school buildings should be conducted to determine the feasibility of retrofitting them for various types of uses (i.e. commercial and community uses).

III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. Assets

The New Haven District offers the following assets related to commercial development:

- Adequate amount of land that is available for development.
- Locally available workforce in the region, a positive feature for industries that are looking to locate in the area.
- Several businesses are locally owned and operated.
- Capability to reach several markets in and around the area.
- Located in proximity to tourist destinations in Nicholas and Summers counties.
- Businesses are moving to Fayette County in response to the demand for services and goods. There is a tremendous potential for growth throughout the region.

B. Liabilities

The following liabilities should be addressed with respect to commercial development in the New Haven District:





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- There is a need to diversify the local employment base within this district.
- While there is a readily available workforce in the area, there appears to be a lack of training and educational opportunity for this workforce.
- This area also lacks major employers to anchor the area and provide large more jobs.
- There is need for retail stores to serve the New Haven district.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to strengthen assets and correct liabilities in the New Haven District.

1. Marketing

- The 4-C Economic Development Authority should pursue a three-tiered marketing approach to economic development focusing on:
 - **Attracting new companies through proactive marketing;**
 - **Attracting new retail development to serve the local market and tourists; and**
 - **Attracting retirees.**
- The 4-C Economic Development Authority should also consider establishing a marketing initiative that emphasizes the ability of the State and Fayette County to support non-union facilities.

2. Entertainment

- The County should assist in identifying a suitable location to build a movie theatre in the district. A feasibility study and a demand analysis (through a questionnaire) should be conducted to measure the support for such a facility. This facility could also cater to the tourist interest.

3. Business

- The 4-C Economic Development Authority should identify specific businesses (in the retail and service sectors) that are absent. The Authority should consider introducing these businesses in the district so revenue is not lost to neighboring areas and counties. Specific





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programs should also be developed with businesses to keep local shoppers in the community.

- The 4-C Economic Development Authority and the County should encourage the development of commercial uses to increase local tax revenues.





CHAPTER SIX - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in the Plateau District:

- U.S. Route 19 provides good access to the area. The highway system connects even the remote parts of the County.
- A number of towns in this district have kept small-town character intact.
- Offers an interested and available workforce that could be trained for local jobs.
- There are a number of organizations in place for business development that focus on business retention, recruitment, and promotion.
- Many businesses are locally owned and operated. These business owners take pride in their businesses and offer a sense of stability to the area.
- The district is readily accessible, based on proximity, to many markets in Kanawha and Raleigh counties.
- The 4-C Economic Development Authority has made concerted efforts to retain businesses in the area.
- The District offers adequate facilities in terms of health care.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities related to commercial development should be addressed in Plateau District:





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- There is a lack of overall services, entertainment, and retail stores.
- Nicholas and Raleigh counties reap benefits from hotel/motel taxes from tourists who enjoy recreational opportunities in Fayette County.
- Need for safety codes, building codes and a set of procedures to enforce the codes.
- Area retail businesses in the area appear interested in trying to move to Beckley and the Kanawha Valley. This should be viewed seriously, as the impacts could prove costly. Studies indicate consumers currently travel to Beckley for the variety and availability of goods and services.
- There is an overall lack of major employers to anchor the area and provide more jobs to local residents.
- There is a need for training programs for the local unskilled adult workforce.
- There is a poor attitude among the local people toward zoning. Residents have not been educated on the concept of zoning and, as a result, fail to understand its benefits.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed for Plateau District to strengthen its assets and correct its liabilities.

1. New Businesses

- Identify the market for services, entertainment, and retail stores. Based on Plateau's strategic location and its proximity to Charleston and Raleigh counties, market niches should be identified that could provide opportunities to develop retail/service destinations in the Plateau District. Niche markets could include target businesses located in or planning to move to Beckley and the Kanawha Valley, and attract them to Fayette County.
- Develop initiatives to keep local shoppers in the community.

2. Building Standards

- The County should employ a Code Official who would be instrumental in controlling signs, appearance of buildings, and eliminating slum and blight. The Code Official could also work on identifying violators of zoning and sign regulations.
-





CHAPTER SIX - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- The Code Official should also inspect all properties in the commercial district on an annual basis. The inspector would work with residents and business owners to advise them on the regular maintenance and upkeep of their property.
- The County government should adopt building and housing codes.

3. Tax Breaks

- The 4-C Economic Development Authority should continue to work with existing businesses and develop incentives to attract new businesses.
- Property owners should use incentives and property tax breaks to encourage people to upgrade and fix up their properties. Landlords should consider allowing tenants to make improvements to their property in exchange for rent credit. Both parties would need to agree on the nature and cost of the improvements. All landlords and tenants should be made aware of what their rights are to enable them to understand what the roles and responsibilities are for each party.
- Encourage the development of commercial uses to increase local tax revenues.

4. Land Use and Zoning

- Restrict permitting any encroachment of commercial or industrial development in stable residential areas.

V. VALLEY DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. Assets

- ELKEM Metals is a well-known local industry that provides over four hundred jobs to local residents.
- WVUTECH is a well-established institution in the County that provides over six hundred jobs.
- Health care industry is an asset to the County and provides between three hundred and four hundred jobs.
- Mount Olive prison is another major employer that provides approximately three hundred and sixty jobs.
- Low crime rate.
- Many businesses are locally owned and operated.
- The area boasts of a locally available workforce.





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- Strategically located between the City of Charleston and Raleigh County.
- Approximately thirty acres of potentially developable land at Boomer Bottom.
- Local banks in the area are willing to finance local projects.

B. Liabilities

- The overall condition of the infrastructure is poor.
- Valley District is not easily accessible to surrounding areas.
- Land costs in the area are considered very high.
- The district lacks comparison-shopping and grocery shopping opportunities.
- The local population does not support local businesses and prefers to shop outside the area. Also, area residents do not patronize local restaurants.
- Existing commercial space is under utilized.
- The hospital and college are self-contained institutions.
- Rent is so high that it is cost-prohibitive to operate some businesses.
- Lack of parking to serve existing commercial space.





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- Lack of training opportunities for the local workforce.
- Several buildings are being retrofitted for inappropriate uses.
- The district is constantly losing sales to restaurants outside of Valley.
- A complete lack of coordinated marketing efforts among businesses to create multiple destinations.
- The district lacks local performance standards for land development, resulting in a loss of population.
- The County once attempted to put a hotel in the district. This effort failed.
- Services along the Midland Trail are limited.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations address the assets and liabilities in the Valley District with respect to commercial development.

1. Local Business

- The County should work with local restaurant owners and encourage them to take measures to improve the 1) quality; 2) variety; and 3) service in the local restaurants so business is not lost to neighboring communities.
- Commercial opportunities within the Valley District should be identified based on the desires and needs of the local population and also on what the market could support. An attempt should be made to create a community that can be self-sufficient in terms of its retail and service needs so sales are not lost to businesses outside of the Valley District.
- The County should encourage the development of commercial uses to increase local tax revenues.

2. Central Business District Development

- The County and the local chamber of commerce should provide technical assistance in the identification of a good mix of services and retail establishments to locate within the downtowns of the Valley District.
- All vacant and underutilized space in the downtowns should be identified and the possibility of retrofitting these structures to house these services should be explored. Agencies like UKVEDC and 4-C should lead this initiative.





CHAPTER SIX - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Smithers should investigate the possibility of establishing Michigan Avenue as the main retail district and improve vehicular and pedestrian access to that street.
- The Town of Smithers should hire a consultant to provide technical assistance to upgrade Smithers' retail district by identifying streetscape improvements including façade treatments, better lighting, parking lot landscaping, additional sidewalks, and street trees.
- The feasibility of converting the former school on Cannellton Hollow Road, north of Smithers, for social service uses, like a day care center, abused women's shelter, or office space for management and counseling, should be determined.

3. Organizations

- The County and the local chamber of commerce should work together to create awareness of the importance of supporting local businesses. The concept of a local business association should be introduced where businesses learn to operate collectively rather than independently in the community. The business association would work closely with UKVEDC. The following issues should be considered an integral part of the vision of this association:
 - **Business retention and recruitment.**
 - **Business promotion.**
 - **Advertising.**
 - **Grant applications for low-interest loans.**
 - **Promotional materials.**
 - **Creation of multiple destinations.**
 - **Business practice seminars.**
 - **Business assessment programs.**
- The efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations should be coordinated so that they complement one another, thereby eliminating duplication of effort.
- An effort should be made to further develop the incubator concept that is currently being implemented at West Virginia Tech.

4. Parking

- A parking study should be conducted by the municipalities to identify parking opportunities





(both on-street and off-street) to serve the local businesses.

- The concept of shared parking areas and parking located away from the roadway behind buildings should be explored. Design guidelines should be developed that allow additional parking areas to blend in with the current design scheme.

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CHAPTER SEVEN



Economic Development & Tourism





I. OVERVIEW

Economic development is the process of creating wealth through the mobilization of human, financial, capital, physical, and natural resources to generate marketable goods and services. In order to reap the benefits of private and public sector activities, the business environment must be understood. This includes the knowledge of broad economic trends and specific retail needs. Elements like small business development, commercial revitalization, business retention, and recruitment should be integrated into a thoughtful economic development program.

Tourism has been a significant part of the Fayette County economy for nearly 30 years. With the development of New River Gorge National River in 1978, the tourism presence and impact has grown at a rapid pace. For instance, persons taking commercial whitewater rafting trips on the New and Gauley rivers totaled approximately 71,000 in 1983. By 2000, that number had grown to 220,000. Visits to National Park Service facilities in Fayette County have gone from 774,000 in 1991 to in excess of 1.2 million in 1998.

The New River Gorge, which offers camping, hiking, rock climbing and water sports, remains vital to the County's economy.



Despite the rapid growth, average stay per visit remains at 2.1 days, the vast majority of which comes on the weekends between April and October. The seasonal issues and inability to use weekday capacity has limited investment not only in terms of those providing direct tourist services, but also in the spin-off of lodging, dining and shopping facilities.



**CHAPTER SEVEN - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& TOURISM**

**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FAYETTE COUNTY, WEST
VIRGINIA**

--- INSERT STATE/NATIONAL RECREATION AREAS MAP ---





In fact, while there has been rapid expansion in the numbers of tourist cabins and Bed & Breakfast Inns, it has been nearly 20 years since a new hotel facility has been built in the county. A franchise has been obtained for a Days Inn at Oak Hill, but the site has been idle since it was excavated in 1998. This lack of standard hotel facilities has resulted in leakage to the Beckley area where available rooms have proliferated at the junctions of I-64, I-77 and just south of the terminus of U.S. Route 19. In addition, Fayette County whitewater operators have at times turned business away due to a lack of standard hotel accommodations in close proximity to their own facilities.

Another negative has been the lack of a nearby convention center. New River Convention and Visitors Bureau reports that have had the opportunity to bid for several large conventions with groups that made contact with them, but have had to turn them away for lack of a facility.

It is expected that the completion of a regional water system that will service the U.S. Route 19 corridor north of New River Gorge Bridge will provide development impetus to begin dealing with the facility problem. Thus, it is critical that the county identifies potential hotel sites and work with property owners and developers to bring in appropriate lodging. The county should also play a roll in working with landowners and developers who can create unique lodging opportunities that fit with the outdoor image of the community.

The area has already established a world-class reputation for the quality of its whitewater and recent gains in the climbing and mountain biking components are expected to soon yield the same kinds of recognition as the whitewater industry has gained. This type of reputation can be parlayed into growth in the tourism sector and the business sector if the quality of life issues are properly marketed in concert with the county's economic development strategies.

In addition to identifying and marketing sites for potential lodging opportunities, the county and its tourism industry should work together to solve critical development issues such as wastewater treatment, branding and setting mutual goals to expand investment in the tourism economy and tax base. The county, with its tourism partners, should develop a cohesive strategy to make projects such as the proposed Sun Mountain development near Mount Hope and the Wildlife Theme Park near Glen Jean a reality, as such developments would have a major impact on lengthening stays and on developing the area as a true tourist destination.





Several projects identified at the Corridor L Regional Tourism Conference in March of 2001 (refer to Chapter 15: Implementation) should be endorsed by the county as steps to be taken to deal with the seasonal issues and to increase the use of unused weekday capacity (project descriptions listed later in this section). In addition, the county should place a priority on assisting West Virginia University Institute of Technology on developing riverside trail and marina plans at Montgomery, pursue recreational use development of the riverfront near Gauley Bridge, and develop a scenic greenway route that links New River Gorge National River with Meadow River National Recreation Area, Gauley River National Recreation Area and Gauley Bridge. Route 19 going north to Route 129, past Summersville Dam, on to Gauley Bridge and then returning to the Fayetteville area via Route 60 and then Route 16 presents tremendous opportunities if the area is properly signed and interpreted and supported with brochures and audio driving tours. The benefits to the small communities along this route are obvious in increased traffic going through towns that have been virtually cut off by modern transportation corridors.

The County has taken advantage of the TODS/Logo sign program through the West Virginia Division of Highways along U.S. Route 19, but should work to develop a signage program that can direct the traveler to tourism and shopping opportunities once they have left the highway. Some signs of this are seen in Fayetteville with attractive signage showing the way to MB'S Better Blooms, but the use of such signage is haphazard and inconsistent.

An effort should also be mounted through the County, Chambers of Commerce and the Convention and Visitors Bureaus to better educate the public on the benefits of the tourism industry. The misconception concerning tourism and its potential to drive the economy still persists in attitudes that purvey the industry as one offering only part-time, minimum wage jobs. A concerted effort should be mounted to calculate the tax base impact of the industry in the county as well as the wage-base impact and this information should be used in a public information campaign to educate the average citizen as well as elected officials. Use of this information in this way will yield positive results in terms of the ability to come together to promote positive expansion of the industry.

Another area of the tourism industry that has gone untapped in Fayette County is that of the manufacturing side. Fayette County is strategically located in the center of the East Coast population with excellent access to major transportation corridors. It is also strategically placed in terms of proximity to the East Coast whitewater outfitter's base and to strong retail markets. This offers excellent opportunities to attract manufacturing facilities and/or distribution facilities for all kinds of outdoor recreation apparel and equipment.





Historically, Fayette County has primarily been a manufacturing community. Fayette County continues to face the problems associated with the re-training and the education of its workforce. Clearly, many displaced workers from the industrial sector will not, and may never, fit into the new service-based economy developing in the region due to increased tourism activity. In order to accommodate the needs of these residents and also to maintain a healthy, diverse economic climate, the County must place a priority on developing business parks that harness the abilities of that sector of the workforce. As a means of meeting this need, it is recommended that the County:

- Work closely with 4-C Economic Development Authority to attract the target industries identified in its regional marketing plan.
- Attempt to attract a mix of those industries by providing shell buildings at the Mount Hope Industrial Park.
- Attempt to locate suitable industrial activity on the County-owned property at Glen Jean once the National Guard has extended water and sewer infrastructure to their portion of the site.
- Locate a minimum of two more sites for business park designation and pursue the development of water and sewer infrastructure to those sites, site preparation funding, and eventually, develop shell buildings on those identified sites.

Over the past thirty years, Fayette County has experienced an increase in unemployment. The percentage of residents living below poverty has increased since 1980. The median household income has shown a negligible increase between 1980 and 1995. These factors resulted in jeopardizing the vitality of the economic base of the County. It has also demanded the implementation of strategies targeted towards fostering economic restructuring and increasing employment opportunities for County residents. This chapter strives to serve as a guide for the enhancement of employment opportunities and skills and training opportunities in the County's four planning districts within the framework outlined in the previous paragraph.

II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT

A. Assets

The following points are listed as assets in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District. These assets must be strengthened and encouraged:

- Several local attractions for young people (outdoor sports, natural beauty).





- Organic farming has proved to be a lucrative business in the recent past.
- The community has a sense of ownership towards local rafting and mining industries.
- Babcock and Washington Carver State Parks are considered great assets in the district.
- Historical and cultural festivals held periodically often bring the local residents together in the district.
- The district is accessible to major highways in the county.
- National trout streams for fishing are a popular tourist attraction in this part of Fayette County.
- Hunting areas in the district are patronized by locals and visitors.
- The Midland Trail is a popular recreational area within the district.
- The area benefits from its proximity to Raleigh County.

B. Liabilities

The Danese/Meadow Bridge District is presented with the following liabilities that should be considered seriously by local officials:

- No recreation for retirees.
- The timber industry and mountain top removal has been affecting the environment and has caused great concern among the locals.
- This part of the State has constantly suffered from the negative stereotype of being called and considered southern West Virginia.
- There is a lack of motel space or vacation housing for tourists.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to strengthen the assets and correct the liabilities related to economic development in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

1. Job Training
 - Programs with area higher education institutions should be developed, such as WV Tech and Glenville State College, to provide training to workers that need new skills or need to be re-





trained (i.e. 4-C is working on a program with Bluefield State College).

- The County should recruit residents who can work from any location (including their home) and are drawn by peaceful surroundings and natural beauty.





- The County should coordinate with the regional training providers to analyze and discuss current and future skill needs of employers in the local area. The group should include a cross-section of employers, educational/training institutions, West Virginia Job Service, local economic development organizations, and other interested parties. This group must focus on improving training curricula and introducing training programs for special groups, particularly the retired population.
- Economic development in the District should attempt to improve the overall quality and compensation of jobs available to Fayette County workers, possibly by attracting more manufacturing and high technology jobs.

2. Job Creation

- A study should be conducted to identify measures to further develop the timber industry (furniture manufacturing and wood products industry).
- The County should make concerted effort to ensure that the timber and mining industries do not negatively affect the natural viewscape and environment.
- The 4-C Economic Development Authority should continue to identify and target major employers that would anchor the area and provide a large number of jobs. A marketing program should be designed to achieve this. The following items should be addressed as part of this program:
 - **Prepare a cost and location analysis of doing business in the district as compared to other competitive locations.**
 - **Develop marketing materials that convey the strengths of the district relative to location and business climate in selected competitive locations.**
 - **Conduct a labor supply and market supply analysis in the region to determine the feasibility of attracting high technology industries into this District.**
- The 4-C Economic Development Authority should continue to generate prospects through a variety of approaches including selected industry memberships, public relations, trade shows, and industry tours.





3. Land Use and Zoning

- The Fayette County Community Resource Coordinator should work with a consultant to develop a long-term plan for how infrastructure service can be extended, what it will cost, who is paying, and how long it will take, to identify and prepare sites for development.
- It must be ensured that suitable areas of land are identified for the expansion of commercial and employment uses are reserved.
- Fayette County zoning ordinance to update permitting (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances) procedures.
- The County should work with local farmers to ensure that all large, active farms are preserved.
- An effort should be made to increase off-road recreational activities.

4. Tourism

- The County should work with the Chamber of Commerce to establish a tourism-oriented sign program promoting the Midland Trail.
- U.S. Route 60 must be protected against unwarranted land uses and the visual elements of the transportation corridor should be strengthened.
- A birding component to the local tourism industry should be developed.
- Land must be preserved to buffer viewsheds and river activities, which contribute significantly to eco-tourism.
- A tourism development program should be developed by the New River Convention and Visitors Bureau that emphasizes the goals and promotes the heritage of Fayette County.
- The Chamber should promote Fayette County as the white water rafting center of the East Coast. A whitewater hall of fame should be considered as part of this consideration. They should also consider recruiting a national sponsor.
- More initiatives, like biking, hiking, and rock climbing should be developed and supported. The objective is to encourage tourists to spend more time and money in Fayette County.
- The tourism industry should work with relevant agencies to promote Fayette County as a destination.



III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The New Haven District is presented with a number of assets with respect to economic development and tourism that should be preserved:

- The area is well known for its natural beauty.
- There are large parcels of land available for development.
- A number of citizens and community leaders have commissioned and participated in growth management exercises in the past. The area has a number of persons who are proponents of orderly development.
- Capability to reach many markets, based on its location (youth for sports, retirees for lifestyle).
- Well known for its Civil War and coal heritage.
- Well known for its music and other Appalachian traditions.
- Hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities draw a number of tourists to this area.
- A number of towns that have retained their small-town character intact.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities must be addressed in the New Haven District, with respect to economic development and tourism:

- Economic development could threaten the rural/agricultural setting if it is not conducted in a careful and orderly manner.
- There is a need for motel space or vacation housing for tourists.
- There is a lack of services, entertainment, and retail store.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been developed in terms of Economic Development and Tourism initiatives for the New Haven District:

1. Job Creation

- The County should recruit more environmentally-friendly industry, related to eco-tourism, with





the goal of improving the overall quality and compensation of jobs available in Fayette County.





- Fayette County should encourage new industries in the County to hire residents of the County.
- Small high-tech businesses compatible with the available fiber optics should be identified. These businesses will boost the local economy and generate local jobs.
- As part of the "NAFTA Corridor" (Interstates 64 and 77, from Canada, through America's main industrial regions, to Mexico), Fayette County should identify sites (away from residential areas) suitable for warehousing and distribution (excluding toxic and hazardous waste) and recruit those operations. This industry is one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. Economy.
- Existing industries in the County (i.e. wood products industry and furniture manufacturing) should be nurtured without encouraging random timber clear-cutting practices for industries that require this resource or industries that need the land to accommodate their facility. Timber industry practices should be properly managed to ensure they do not negatively impact the environment.

2. Job Training

- The County should coordinate with local training providers to analyze and discuss current and future skill needs of employers. The group should comprise employers, local educational/training institutions, West Virginia Job Service, local economic development organizations, and other interested parties.
- The focus of this task force should be to improve training curricula and introduce new programs that are applicable to local businesses.
- The County should work with the State Bureau of Employment Programs to seek assistance in identifying employers' skill needs, job seekers' skills, and training programs.
- Programs should be developed with area higher education institutions, such as Glenville State College and WV Tech, to provide training to workers that need new skills or need to be re-trained (i.e. 4-C is working on a program with Bluefield State College).

3. Land Use and Zoning





- The Fayette County Community Resource Coordinator should work with a consultant to develop a long-term plan for extending infrastructure, what it will cost, who is paying, and how long it will take, in order to identify and prepare sites for development.





- The County should identify land that is suitable for development.
- The development of linear multi-tenant commercial establishments that require indiscriminate land clearing and earth moving should be discouraged.
- Suitable areas of land should be reserved for the expansion of commercial and employment uses.
- The Fayette County Zoning Ordinance should be updated to include proper permitting procedures for zoning (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances).
- The County should take proactive measures (through zoning) to ensure that existing and planned industrial/business development does not encroach or threaten the rural/agricultural setting or stable residential areas.
- An inventory and assessment of old and abandoned school buildings should be undertaken that could be cleaned up and adapted for uses suitable for business development.
- The need and feasibility of introducing a furniture manufacturing business in the District should be determined. Abandoned structures that could be retrofitted for these types of businesses should also be identified.
- Strategies should be developed to encourage and promote business development. An appropriate location to build a business park should be identified. A multi-use business park should be created. The County should ensure that land is available to satisfy the expansion and relocation needs and prevent the sprawl of industrial and commercial development along local roads. Industries that could locate in this area based on criteria and impacts on the environment and the local population should be identified and targeted.
- Large, active farms should be preserved to maintain the rural, rustic nature of the viewscape.
- The efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations should be coordinated on a consistent basis.
- Suitable areas of land for the expansion of commercial and employment uses should be reserved.
- Ordinances should be studied to determine the effectiveness in protecting the County local, state, and national parks.





- Ordinances should be developed to accommodate revenue-generating tourism-related uses that display the County's history, culture, and assets. Such uses may include museum or white water hall of fame.

Campgrounds are common in Fayette County and serve many outdoor enthusiasts who frequent the County.



4. Tourism

- A tourism-oriented sign program to promote the Midland Trail should be considered by the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce.
- U.S. Route 60 should be protected against unwarranted land uses and the visual elements of the transportation corridors should be strengthened.
- The County should consider developing a birding component to the local tourism industry.
- Land within the district should be preserved to serve as a buffer for viewshed protection and river activities; all which contribute to the eco-tourism industry.
- A tourism development program should be established that is consistent with the heritage of Fayette County.
- Fayette County should be promoted as the white water rafting center of the East Coast. The County and the Chamber of Commerce should consider recruiting a large corporation to sponsor this.



- More initiatives, like biking, hiking, and rock climbing should be developed and supported in the district. The objective is to encourage tourists to spend more time and money in Fayette County.
- The tourism industry should be encouraged to work with relevant agencies to promote Fayette County as a destination.
- The County should consider developing seasonal housing for tourists.
- The County should recruit residents who can work from any location and are attracted to peaceful surroundings and natural beauty.
- The County should examine the feasibility of developing trails in the district.
- Ansted should develop a revitalization strategy for its business district. The County should provide technical assistance to Ansted in this endeavor. The plan should focus on physical, economic, social, and environmental issues. Strategies developed in this plan should be consistent with the goals of the County's comprehensive plan and focus on improving the overall economy of the area.
- A tram should be constructed in the New River Gorge from the New River up to a specified location on the ridge.

IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT

The Plateau District in Fayette County offers a number of assets with respect to economic development and tourism.

A. **Assets**

- The natural environment is of great interest to tourists from all over the world.
- Route 19 provides easy access to the area.
- 4-H Camp in Beckwith.
- The award-winning historic Fayette Theater is located within this district. The Mount Hope Theater Group is well known throughout southern West Virginia.
- The district is well known for its Civil War and coal heritage.
- Music and other Appalachian traditions are also famous within this district.





- Hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities draw a number of tourists to this area.
- This district has a number of towns that have retained their small town characters.
- The railroads within the district are of interest and should be harnessed for tourism opportunities.
- The highway system makes the area accessible from various parts of the State. Area is also accessible to several local markets.
- Bridge Day, an annual event held in October, is patronized by tourists and visitors from various parts of the country and all over the world.
- Three golf courses (2 public, 1 private) are an asset to this district.
- Communities within this district take pride in their cultural heritage and family life.
- Museums within the district draw a number of outsiders.
- New River National Park is a popular tourist attraction.
- Convention and Visitors Bureau promotes tourism. The Chamber of Commerce is also effective in promoting the County to other regions.
- Visitor and tourist accommodations and seasonal housing for tourists are in demand.
- The County has been successful in marketing to a variety of vacation-seekers (i.e. retirees, extreme sport enthusiasts).
- The tram at Kaymor, owned by the National Park Service, should be revisited with the Park Service.

B. Liabilities

Plateau District is also confronted with a few liabilities that should be addressed with respect to economic development and tourism.

- The district lacks job opportunities.
- There is a lack of services, entertainment, and retail stores in the area.
- Tourism is not as well developed as it could be.
- Nicholas and Raleigh Counties reap benefit from motel/hotel taxes from tourists who enjoy recreational opportunities in Fayette County.
- Tourism is seasonal and does not generate enough income to support the County through the entire year.
- The County suffers from the negative stereotype of being located in southern West Virginia. The threat of





labor problems is perceived in communities south of U.S. Route 60. This perception does not help with the regions business recruitment efforts.

- Only a few young people in the area are interested in farming. If immediate measures are not taken, they could lose the farming industry.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed with the intention to improve the economic and tourism climate in the Plateau District:

1. Job Creation

- The County should strive to recruit more manufacturing and high technology jobs with the goal of improving the overall quality and compensation of jobs available to Fayette County workers.
- The County should establish a marketing initiative that emphasizes the ability of the State and Fayette County to support non-union facilities.
- As part of the "NAFTA Corridor" (Interstates 64 and 77, from Canada, through America's main industrial regions, to Mexico) Fayette County should identify sites suitable for warehousing and distribution and recruit those operations. This industry is one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. Economy.
- Existing industries in the County, such as the wood products industry, should continue to be promoted.
- Area economic development agencies should construct an industrial shell building. An industrial building (approximately 40,000sqft.) should be constructed to be marketed for single- or multi-tenant use. The building should be built as a shell and customized as needed for prospective tenants. Ceiling heights (min. 24 feet), bay spaces (min. 30 feet), and adequate loading dock and truck maneuvering space must be taking into consideration.
- The 4-C Economic Development Authority should continue to identify, recruit, and contact prospective industries.
- The employment rate in Fayette County should be increased by ensuring and encouraging new industries in the County to hire local people.





- The efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations should be well coordinated.





2. Job Training

- Programs should be developed with area higher education institutions, such as WVU Tech, Glenville State College, Marshall, University of Charleston, and West Virginia University, to provide training to workers that need new skills or need to be re-trained (i.e. 4-C is working on a program with Bluefield State College).
- Skills and talents of the available workforce should be constantly identified and harnessed.
- Suitable areas for workforce training should also be identified. A labor market study should be conducted to determine the coordination and relationship between the needs of local employers and the educational/training level of the workforce. Training programs should be introduced that would educate the local population and eventually prepare them for employment locally.
- The County should focus on identifying appropriate training programs for the unskilled adult workforce, based on local employment possibilities and opportunities.
- The Fayette County Community Resource Coordinator should hire a consultant to develop a long-term plan for how infrastructure services can be extended (similar to the Plateau Water Project), what it will cost, who is paying, and how long it will take, in order to identify, and prepare sites for development.

3. Land Use and Zoning

- The County should identify land suitable for development. Stringent design guidelines should be developed for future development to ensure the preservation of trees and viewsheds.
- Suitable areas of land should be reserved for the expansion of commercial and employment uses.
- The Fayette County Zoning Ordinance should be updated to address proper permitting (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances).
- The County must strive to preserve large, active farms in order to maintain the rustic, rural character and integrity of the natural viewscape.
- Development should not be permitted to encroach into stable residential areas.





- The County Government should involve the community more in the review of land use proposals.





4. Tourism

- The County should work with the local Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop vacation housing for tourists. Seasonal housing should not be mixed with residential areas.
- A tourism development program should be that is consistent with the heritage of Fayette County.
- Fayette County should be promoted as the white water rafting center of the East Coast. The County should consider a large corporation to serve as a sponsor for this industry.
- The County should develop and support more initiatives, such as biking, hiking, and rock climbing in the District. The objective is to encourage tourists to spend more time and money in Fayette County.
- The tourism industry should be encouraged to work with relevant agencies to promote Fayette County as a destination.
- The County should consider targeting a wide range of markets (sports seekers, retirees).
- A birding component should be considered as part of the local tourism industry.
- Land should be preserved to serve as a buffer for viewshed protection and river activities; both of which are critical to eco-tourism.
- A County-wide park and culture preservation strategy should be developed to enhance recreational and cultural opportunities.
- The development of botanical gardens should be considered as a component of eco-tourism initiatives.

V. VALLEY DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

- Hospitality.
- Location in "Advantage Valley."
- The Hawks Nest Lodge conference center and golf course (Thompson Farm) are an asset to the County.
- The UKVEDC has a database available to interested businesses and industries. This has proven very useful to potential investors.
- Local attractions (river pier, bridge, Miller Building Community Center built in 1850s, Kanawha Falls, Civil War battle sites, Mary Ingalls Trail, craft centers,





and a museum in Gauley Bridge) are of great interest to tourists.

- Hiking, biking, and fishing opportunities draw a number of people from all over the nation.
- Camp grounds and the Midland Trail Association also attracts a number of tourists into the area.
- This section of U.S. Route 60 has received the designation of Federal Scenic Highway Status.
- The County is easily accessible to surrounding areas (youth for sports, retirees for lifestyle).
- The local rivers (New River and Gauley River) provide recreational opportunities for fishing, boating and other water sports.
- Employees of the prison travel from 23 counties.
- Montgomery General Hospital is a renowned and highly accredited institution in the area.
- Promotional brochure of attractions in the County offers good information to tourists.
- West Virginia University Institute of Technology is a well-known institution that employs a number of people.

B. Liabilities

Valley District is presented with the following liabilities that need to be addressed in order to improve the economic climate of the area:

- There appears to be an under-utilization of existing commercial and industrial space within the County.
- There is not enough parking within the Valley District.
- The lack of restaurants within Valley District has resulted in a loss of sales to restaurants outside the area.
- There is a lack of coordinated marketing efforts among businesses to create multiple destinations.
- There are limited services along the Midland Trail. This could be further improved.
- The County seems to be trying to target too many markets (sports seekers, retirees) without adequate resources and proper planning.
- This district constantly suffers from a negative stereotype of being called southern West Virginia.
- There is no marina on the river. The access to the river is also limited (only 2 in Montgomery).





- There is a lack of available land for motel space or vacation housing for tourists.
- The current population is aging. There are few young people in the area.
- There is a lack of major employers to anchor the area and provide a large number of jobs.
- The management/service in local inns and restaurants is of poor quality.
- While there appear to be opportunities in the horizon for growth, commercial/office space is lacking to support this growth.
- The prison pay scale is low compared to other areas.
- There is a need for training and/or awareness of how to interpret zoning matters.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to address economic development and tourism opportunities in the Valley District:

1. Tourism

- Areas within the community should be identified for the development of hotel/motels and vacation housing for tourists.
- A tourism-oriented sign program should be established to promote the Upper Kanawha Valley with the Midland Trail.
- The Montgomery Community should be opened up to the Kanawha River by creating greenways to the river off of those streets that end at the river. The Valley District should be enhanced by introducing public overlooks and pocket parks in those areas.
- A birding component should be developed to enhance the local tourism industry.
- Land that needs to serve as a buffer for viewshed protection and river activities that are vital to eco-tourism must be preserved.
- A tourism development program that is consistent with the heritage of Fayette County should be established.
- Fayette County should be promoted as the white water rafting center of the East Coast. The County should consider recruiting a national corporation to sponsor this industry.





- The tourism industry should be encouraged to work with relevant agencies to promote Fayette County as a tourist destination.





- The County should identify and research the possibility of providing services (commercial and recreational uses) along the Midland Trail.
- U.S. Route 60 should be protected against unwarranted land use. The visual resources should be strengthened.
- A shuttle service should be introduced to and from destinations (i.e. rafting area to the central business districts).

2. Visual Enhancements

- Technical assistance should be provided in determining the possibility of connecting the north and south sides of Smithers via an enhanced pedestrian walk. This would allow for a pedestrian connection of the proposed motel on U.S. 60 (where it intersects with Clay Street) with the retail district on Michigan Avenue.
- A gateway should be introduced into Montgomery's central business district. The gateway could be in the form of train-stop kiosk located on both sides of the CSX Railroad. The design could be bear elements of the streetscape design for Third Avenue (which includes a design for an enhanced pedestrian crossing).

3. Recreational Opportunities

- The County should consider constructing an active park along the Gauley River, expanding the existing, passive park. It should include bike trails along the Rich Branch Fork, over the pass and back down Cane Branch and fishing access points along the river.
- The construction of a boat ramp should be completed on the Gauley River to provide access to the New River.
- Public river access should be provided along Routes 60 and 61 for recreation.

4. Marketing

- A marketing initiative should be introduced that emphasizes the ability of the State and Fayette County to support non-union facilities.





- Targeted industries should be marketed more aggressively. Major employers that would anchor the area and provide a large number of jobs. A marketing program should be designed to achieve this objective. The following items should be addressed as part of this program:
 - Prepare a cost and location analysis of doing business in the County as compared to other competitive locations.
 - Develop marketing materials that convey the strengths of the County relative to location and business climate in selected competitive locations.
 - Generate prospects through a variety of approaches including selected industry memberships, public relations, trade shows, and industry tours.

5. Financing

- The County should work closely with the UKVEDC, 4-C Economic Development Authority, and the WV Development Office to provide existing businesses with opportunities to expand, using available incentives for financing, provision of land and utilities, and other factors such as tax abatement.
- The County should work with the local finance and banking community to increase the availability of seed and start-up capital for new and existing local projects.

6. Job Creation

- As part of the "NAFTA Corridor" (Interstates 64 and 77, from Canada, through America's main industrial regions, to Mexico) Fayette County should identify sites suitable for warehousing and distribution and recruit those operations. This industry is one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. Economy.
- Existing industries such as the wood products industry should be promoted in the County.
- The County should recruit residents who can work from any location and are drawn by peaceful surroundings and natural beauty.





7. Land Use/Planning Initiatives

- The Fayette County Community Resource Coordinator should hire a consultant to develop a long-term plan for how infrastructure services can be extended, what it will cost, who is paying, and how long it will take, in order to identify and prepare sites for development.
- Large, active farms in the region should be preserved and (through zoning) and the encroachment of development into these open spaces should be discouraged. Suitable areas of land should be reserved for the expansion of commercial, industrial, and employment uses.
- The development of linear multi-tenant commercial establishments that require indiscriminate land clearing and earth moving should be discouraged.
- The Fayette County Zoning Ordinance should be updated to include proper permitting procedures (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances).
- The County should work closely with 4-C, the Fayette County Chambers of Commerce, and the Planning and Zoning Commission to develop local performance standards for land development.
- The County should make the proposed technology park in Montgomery a high priority.

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CHAPTER EIGHT



Housing & Residential Development





I. OVERVIEW

The housing situation is complex in every county. Economics and politics, along with the practices of private businesses, public agencies and residents drive it. Housing affects the social fabric of neighborhoods and the strong emotions that people maintain with respect to their immediate environment. Although the condition of much of Fayette County's housing stock is mediocre, the following recommendations will help to preserve and maintain the existing housing stock, address those properties that need attention, strengthen the existing residential neighborhoods, and enhance the development of new housing in the future. Good housing and safe neighborhoods are essential to Fayette County's economic and social growth.

*Houses in Fayette County,
for the most part, are
nestled in pristine,
pastoral settings.*



In the recent years, the U.S. Route 19 Corridor has reaped the benefits of regional demographic changes that will continue to affect the housing needs of the County. The Route 19 Corridor has experienced isolated increases in population as well as housing units. These isolated growth areas within the Corridor are a reflection of future trends that can be expected to spread throughout the County. Fayette County must capitalize on this trend and plan for this anticipated growth in population. Consequently, the primary housing goal in the Fayette County area should be to provide fair and adequate housing to people of all ages and income levels. This may be accomplished by encouraging land uses for residential purposes in ways that protect the environment, enhance property values, stimulate visual interest, protect existing neighborhoods and affirm community values.





Mobile homes are common in Fayette County and reflect the need for affordable housing. Note the apartments adjacent to the mobile home park.



II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The Danese/Meadow Bridge District offers a few assets that relate to housing.

- The district offers the potential to develop land for residential related uses.
- The area offers several residential opportunities for retirees.
- The district offers good quality housing that is affordable.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities related to housing should be addressed within the Danese/ Meadow Bridge District:

- There are a number of abandoned houses throughout the district.
- Private water and sewerage system capacity is limited within the district. This is a deterring factor when it comes to development.
- The infrastructure, particularly roads, is of poor quality. This often inhibits residential developers from investing in the area.
- There is a lack of adequate rental properties that are in good condition.
- There appears to be a poor attitude toward zoning. Residents do not understand the benefits of zoning.



C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to improve the quality of the housing stock in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

1. Planning

- The County should consider introducing the concept of a senior living complex, complete with gardening area and space for shared (couples) and single living.
- Seasonal housing should be developed for tourists. This would encourage tourists to spend longer periods of time in the area.
- The County should recruit individuals who can work from any location (including their home) and wish to live near peaceful surroundings and natural beauty.
- The County should work with consultants and developers to identify land suitable for residential development.
- Residential densities within the district should be established to support the vision of the community.

2. Construction

- The County government should adopt and enforce building and housing codes throughout the County.
- New housing for families, which would include mainly three-bedroom, two-bath, single-family dwellings, should be developed in Fayette County.
- The County should consider developing assisted living housing for the aging population.
- The County should encourage the development of high-quality rental properties within this district.

3. Programs

- A real estate prospectus should be introduced in the form of a brochure to solicit developer interest in the developable residential areas of the County.
 - The County should strongly consider demolishing housing that is in dilapidated condition. State Budget Digest Funds are available for funding to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures.
-



III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT

A. Assets

The following are the assets related to housing in the New Haven District:

- Land is available for various types of residential development within the district.
- Affordable housing is available in various areas of the New Haven District.

B. Liabilities

The following is a list of liabilities that need to be addressed in the New Haven District.

- There is a lack of rental properties that are in good, habitable condition.
- There is a need for assisted living housing within the New Haven District.
- There is a need for a community facility for retirees.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to strengthen the assets and correct the liabilities within the New Haven District:

1. Planning

- The County should consider developing a senior living complex, complete with gardening area and space for shared (couples) and single living within the New Haven District.
- The County should consider developing seasonal housing for tourists to encourage them to stay in the area for longer periods of time.
- The County should promote the area to individuals who can work from any location and wish to live near peaceful surroundings and natural beauty.
- The County should work with a consultant to identify land suitable for residential development.
- Residential densities that contribute to the vision of the community should be established.
- The County should encourage the development of small-lot single-family detached, attached, and



multi-family units to meet the current and future needs of low- and moderate-income persons.

- The County should review its zoning regulations for opportunities to encourage additional affordable housing options through increased design and permitting flexibility.
- The County should work with private non-profit developers to produce low/moderate income housing.

2. Construction

- The County should adopt stringent building and housing codes and plan for orderly development within the New Haven District.
- The construction of new single-family detached housing in Fayette County for middle- and upper-income households should be encouraged in the district.
- The market for assisted living residential communities in Fayette County should be identified. If the market could support such a community, developers should be identified who could build an assisted living community.

3. Programs

- A real estate prospectus should be prepared to solicit developer interest in the developable residential areas of the County.
- The County should seek State Budget Digest Funds for funding to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures within the New Haven District.

IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT

A. Assets

The Plateau District is presented with the following assets that relate to housing:

- This district offers the opportunity to attract retirees to the area.
- Sprawl within the Plateau District has been contained, somewhat, by the terrain.
- Most of the housing within the Plateau District is affordable.
- Four-season living is attractive.





**CHAPTER EIGHT - HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

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- The district offers a low cost of living and a good quality of life.





B. Liabilities

The following are the liabilities related to housing in the Plateau District:

- There is a need to develop residential areas within the Plateau District.
- There is evidence of mobile homes and dilapidated housing near historic and high quality homes throughout the district. This is a zoning issue.
- There is a need to eliminate dilapidated houses throughout the district.

State legislation gives the County Commission the power to remove abandoned and dilapidated structures.



- There is a lack of building codes throughout the County.
- The infrastructure (roads, bridges, and water) has to be improved before any land is opened up to residential development.
- There is a lack of rental property.

C. Recommendations

1. Planning

- The County should consider introducing a senior living complex, complete with gardening area and space for shared (couples) and single living. Based on the responses to a recent survey, either Oak Hill or Fayetteville could be a potential location.



- The County should consider developing seasonal housing for tourists to retain them in the area for extended periods of time. It must be ensured that seasonal housing does not encroach into residential areas.
- The County should consider targeting individuals and families to the district, who could work from any location (including their home) and wish to live near peaceful surroundings and natural beauty.
- The County should work with a consultant to identify land suitable for residential development.
- The County should establish residential densities that adhere to the vision of the community.
- Towns in Fayette County should work with the County Commission to direct growth around existing population centers (i.e. towns). Towns should prepare to grow via annexation of these growth areas.
- The local population should support the County's planning efforts to attract retirees.

2. Construction

- The municipal and County governments should adopt building and housing codes throughout the County.
- New single-family detached housing in Fayette County for middle- and upper-income households should be encouraged.

3. Programs

- A real estate prospectus should be created to solicit developer interest in the developable residential areas of the County.
- The County should take the concept of tearing down dilapidated housing seriously. State Budget Digest Funds are available for funding to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures.
- The County should establish volunteer legal assistance to help expedite the tremendous amount of paperwork that is involved with property ownership issues created when the original owners abandon property. These procedures should also be streamlined over time.





V. VALLEY DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following asset related to housing in Valley District should be strengthened:

- The Valley District consists of a number of stable neighborhoods.

Fine examples of residential villages in rural settings are common in Fayette County.



B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities need to be corrected with respect to housing in Valley District:

- Employees of the prison travel from 23 counties.
- Land costs in the districts are considered high relative to comparable land in surrounding jurisdictions offering similar access, amenities, and infrastructure.
- There is evidence of some dilapidated structures in the neighborhoods.
- The area has been losing population over the recent decades.
- Current population in the area is aging.
- There has not been any new speculative housing since 1970's.
- There is a lack of adequate housing in the \$100,000 price range (\$90,000 to \$120,000). There is also a need for affordable housing priced between \$45,000 and \$60,000.
- There is a need for more rental properties in the district.

- Many existing rental properties are not properly managed. This is reflected in the tenants (number and type), condition of buildings, and stigma associated with some of the rental properties in the District.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to improve the quality of the housing stock in the Valley District:

1. Planning

- The County should consider developing a senior living complex, complete with gardening area and space for shared (couples) and single living.
- The County should consider developing vacation housing for tourists.
- The County target individuals and families who can work from any location and wish to live near peaceful surroundings and natural beauty.
- The County should work with a consultant to identify land that is suitable for residential development.
- Community members need to be made aware of alternative funding sources for houses. The community cannot rely solely on banks for funding.
- Residential densities, which support the vision of the community, should be established.
- The County should consider building detached single dwellings within the \$100,000 price range.
- The County should consider building an assisted-living development within the district.

2. Construction

- The County government should consider adopting stringent building and housing codes throughout the County.
- A mix of new housing in varying price ranges should be encouraged in Fayette County.





3. Programs

- A real estate prospectus should be developed to solicit developer interest in the developable residential areas of the County.
- The County should demolish all dilapidated housing within the Valley District and improve its housing stock. Funding sources are available for this purpose from the West Virginia Housing Development Fund. The Fayette County Economic Opportunity Commission Weatherization and Home Repair Program offers funds for repairs and renovation. This should be further investigated to improve the quality of the housing stock in the district. State Budget Digest Funds are another source of funding that assists in tearing down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures.

4. Rental Property

- The County should consider constructing single-family detached and attached dwellings that would serve the need for rental properties for low- to moderate-income households.
- New housing units should be limited to small-lot single-family detached, attached, or multi-family units to meet the current and future needs of low and moderate-income persons.
- The County's zoning regulations should be reviewed for opportunities to encourage additional affordable housing options through increased flexibility and permitting.
- The County should work with private non-profit developers to introduce low/moderate income housing.
- The management of rental properties should be improved within Valley District.

5. Home Improvements & Maintenance

- The County should ensure that decent and affordable housing is available for all public housing tenants. This action will encourage and facilitate resident pride and participation in the operation and management of public housing.





- The County should request permission from the West Virginia Housing Development Fund to allow the existing Home Repair Program to act as a model for Fayette County.
- The County should utilize the FHA existing home improvement loans/growth program for improving existing homes.
- The County should establish a self-sufficiency home improvement plan and make home improvement funds available to residents that are participating in the program. The County should pursue funding for the following programs:
 - The Home Ownership Program.
 - The Proposed Model Program.
 - The Housing Rehabilitation Program.
 - The Rental Demonstration Program.

6. Homeowner's Education

- Vocational programs should be expanded, which would use existing structures in need of repair in the County as a means of teaching carpentry and technical building maintenance to interested individuals. This program would provide job training as well as enhance the existing housing stock.



Sites such as this in Fayette County create a poor image of the County and have lasting negative impressions on visitors.



CHAPTER NINE

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Environmental Quality





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

I. OVERVIEW

Fayette County is in need of a plan to address environmental resource management and environmental protection. The purpose of this plan will be to apply planning, legal, and management techniques in the identification of the optimum use of natural and man-made assets within the County. The plan should also assure the best possible life for all citizens at the least social and economic cost.

This Comprehensive Plan in general and this element of the Plan in particular identify the County's natural attributes (subsurface hydrology, geology, topography, and soils) as well as techniques to develop properties constrained by these attributes. This Chapter sets guidelines for future planning and responsible development. It takes steps to preclude pollution and environmental degradation in any significant form. The Environmental Quality element identifies measures necessary to develop a symbiotic relationship between environmental constraints, people, and their habitats through sound and environmentally sensitive land development practices.

II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following are the assets in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District with respect to Environmental Quality:

- Fresh ground water is in abundance in this area.
- The district is famous for its natural beauty. This feature draws a number of tourists from various parts of the country.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities need to be corrected in order to improve the quality of life in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

- Beaver dams have caused flooding in creeks.
- The timber industry, though logging and mountaintop removal, has negatively affected the environment.
- Roadside dumping has caused great concern to area residents.





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to address environmental quality in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

1. Air & Water Quality

- It must be ensured that all existing water sources are protected and water quality should be restored so that it may be used for domestic purposes.
- Air quality should be protected through performance standards that regulate uses that are likely to produce non-neighborly impacts.

2. Resource Management

- The Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association should be encouraged to protect historic resources along the Midland Trail.
- The County should ensure that land is preserved to buffer viewsheds and rivers.
- The County should develop aesthetic guidelines for future development to preserve trees and viewsheds.
- The National Park Service and the Department of Natural Resources should be urged to curb careless behavior by residents and visitors who litter or pollute water along the New River.
- Clustering (grouping development to preserve open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas) should be encouraged in the district.
- Indiscriminate clear cutting and earth moving should be strongly discouraged by County officials.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, and ordinances.
- The County should minimize the clearing of woodlands and forests.
- It must be ensured that landscape and site treatment are used to unify development image and character via defining edges, defining entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- The County should establish design guidelines and ordinances for development on hillsides (slopes exceeding 20 percent).





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

-INSERT GENERAL SOILS MAP-





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- The County should limit and responsibly manage development located in flood plains.
- All waterways should be regularly cleaned.
- The County should preserve open spaces within the Danese/Meadow Bridge District for eco-tourism.
- The County should consider developing a fish hatchery within the district.
- The County should work with the State and local Department of Natural Resources officials to humanely trap and relocate beavers and other wildlife to an area more conducive to their needed habitat.

III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets are identified in the New Haven District, with respect to environmental quality:

- The New Haven District is renowned for its natural beauty.
- The quality of water in the district is considered clean.
- The New River Gorge is an asset to this area and attracts visitors from all over the world.
- The State Park and Mill Creek are other major attractions within this district.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities need to be addressed to improve the environmental quality in the New Haven District:

- If not properly planned, economic development could threaten the rural/agricultural setting and stable residential neighborhoods.
- Roadside dumping and other garbage problems are of major concern to area residents.
- There is currently no landfill in Fayette County.
- Attempts to conduct recycling programs have not proved successful.
- There is a need for a comprehensive study to address the watershed and the impacts of development could on the watershed.





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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-INSERT TERRAIN SLOPE MAP-





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to improve the environmental quality in the New Haven District:

1. Resource Management

- The County should limit and responsibly manage development located in flood plains.
- The County should develop a program for road clean up in the New Haven District.
- The County should work with the Department of Natural Resources to develop wildlife protection/watershed plan for the area.
- The County should emphasize the importance of recycling and introduce pick-up points at strategic locations within the district.
- The County should hire a consultant to research potential uses of "old" garbage (i.e. fuel and fertilizer).
- The Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association should be encouraged to protect historic resources along the Midland Trail.
- The County should ensure that land is preserved to buffer viewsheds and rivers.
- The County should develop aesthetic guidelines for future development to preserve trees and viewsheds.
- The National Park Service and the Department of Natural Resources should be urged to curb careless behavior by residents and visitors who litter or pollute water along the New River.
- Clustering (grouping development to preserve open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas) should be encouraged in the district.
- Indiscriminate clear cutting and earth moving should be strongly discouraged by County officials.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, and ordinances.
- The County should minimize the clearing of woodlands and forests.
- It must be ensured that landscape and site treatment are used to unify development image and character via defining edges, defining entrances,





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.

- The County should establish design guidelines and ordinances for development on hillsides (slopes exceeding 20 percent).





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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-INSERT PRIME NESTING AREAS FOR MIGRATION SPECIES MAP-





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

2. Air & Water Quality

- Air quality should be protected through performance standards that regulate uses that are likely to produce non-neighborly impacts.
- All existing water sources should be protected and all water should be restored to be suitable for domestic use.
- The County should work with the State to do a comprehensive study of area watersheds and their impacts by future developments.
- The County should work with the Department of Natural Resources to develop a wildlife protection/watershed plan.

IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in the Plateau District:

- The Plateau District is renowned for its natural beauty.
- The quality of water in the district is considered clean.

B. **Liabilities**

The Plateau District is confronted with the following liabilities with respect to environmental quality:

- Trash is evident along highways and in communities throughout the district. Roadside dumping is a major problem in this area.
- This district is faced with the issue of constant and indiscriminate clearing of trees.
- There are several issues related to property ownership. When the original owner abandons a piece of property, the paperwork for the County to access the property, remove it if necessary, and bill the client, is tedious.
- The district does not have an effective recycling system in place.
- The tributaries to the New River are heavily polluted with human waste.





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed with respect to environmental quality in the Plateau District:

1. Resource Management

- The County should ensure that land is preserved to buffer viewsheds and the New River.
- The County should work with the National Park Service and the Department of Natural Resources to curb careless behavior by residents and tourists who litter or pollute waterways throughout the County.
- The County should implement a program (i.e., Adopt a Highway) that would allow and encourage the community to get involved and take pride in keeping their environment and community clean.
- The County should make an effort to minimize or mitigate the clearing of woodlands and forests.
- The County should ensure that landscape and site treatment are used to unify development image and character via defining edges, defining entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.
- The County should consider developing and implementing a County-wide recycling program.
- The County should introduce and enforce stringent garbage disposal laws within the district.

2. Air & Water Quality

- The County should make efforts to protect air quality through performance standards that regulate uses that are likely to produce non-neighborly impacts.





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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-INSERT FLOOD-PRONE AREAS MAP -





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

V. VALLEY DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following are the assets related to environmental quality in the Valley District:

- This area has been given the Scenic Highway Status (National Scenic Highway U.S. Route 60).
- The Valley District is famous for its natural beauty and draws tourists from all over the country.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities should be addressed in the Valley District with respect to environmental quality:

- The Valley District has constantly been faced with the indiscriminate clearing of trees that is slowly destroying the environment.
- The Valley District lacks a garbage disposal and recycling program.
- The public sewerage system is inadequate to serve the Valley District.
- The area is faced with poor air quality, noise, and glare.
- Roads in the district are dirty and unkempt.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been developed to address and improve the assets and liabilities in the Valley District:

1. Roads and Highways

- The County should encourage the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association to protect historic resources along the Midland Trail.
- The County should support the efforts of the UKVEDC to encourage the community to get involved and to take pride in their environment and community.

2. Resource Management

- The County should preserve land to buffer viewsheds and the river.





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- The County should identify, manage, and protect environmentally sensitive areas in the U.S. Route 60 Corridor.





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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-INSERT DEPTH TO SEASONAL WATER TABLE MAP-





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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-INSERT SURFACE WATER STUDY MAP-





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

-INSERT GROUNDWATER QUALITY (OVERALL) MAP-





-GROUNDWATER QUALITY (AREA 1,2,3) MAP-





-COAL RESOURCES MAP-





CHAPTER NINE - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- The concept of clustering should be introduced and encouraged within the Valley District (grouping development to preserve open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas).
- The district should discourage the development of linear multi-tenant commercial establishments that require indiscriminate land clearing and earth moving.
- The County should make an effort to minimize the clearing of woodlands and forests to protect the integrity of the natural environment.
- The County should introduce stringent clear-cutting practices. Specifically the regulations should state that the contractor must be responsible for the preservation of the ground cover, existing ground forms, landscape features, and vegetation. It should be further required that prior to the start of cutting, barricades shall be erected to protect freestanding trees.

3. Air & Water Quality

- Air quality should be protected through performance standards that protect uses that are likely to produce non-neighborly impacts.
- Regulations should be adopted to protect and improve the air quality of Fayette County:
 - **Avoid the trapping of polluted air.**
 - **Isolate sources of air contamination.**
 - **Identify sources in topographical drainage ways.**
 - **Protect vulnerable activity areas.**
 - **Plan more efficient systems of movement of air.**





- INSERT WETLANDS MAP -





CHAPTER TEN

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Utilities





CHAPTER TEN - UTILITIES

I. UTILITIES OVERVIEW

PLEASE REFER TO:

"FAYETTE COUNTY WATER RESOURCES ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION
PLAN"

OCTOBER 1998





II. INFRASTRUCTURE

The lack of basic infrastructure has plagued Fayette County's development efforts for decades. When the county could rely on coal to provide healthy severance taxes and a wealth of jobs, the infrastructure issues were merely reflected in public health and convenience issues. Thus, past efforts to provide water and wastewater service was based on meeting that public need. Unfortunately, as the coal presence dwindled, lack of population density made it very difficult for the county to compete for the limited funding sources available for providing these basic services.

With the passage of state legislation creating the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council an infusion of some \$300 million in initial funding was provided in 1996 for state water and wastewater needs. Fayette County was very aggressive in pursuing these funds and has created opportunities for future development. A \$50 million regional water project that is now complete not only provided water for residents of North Fayette County, but also opened up that area for future development that includes both residential and commercial uses. In addition, a water treatment plant with large excess capacity puts Fayette County in a competitive position few counties in southern West Virginia enjoy.

Unfortunately, the missing component is providing for wastewater needs. This problem is magnified by the cost of providing these services and also by the lack of funds remaining in the Infrastructure Council. A movement is afoot at the state level to provide an additional \$100 million in Infrastructure funding through Gray Machine proceeds. For Fayette County to take advantage of what may again be a limited window of opportunity, it is essential that they take the following steps:

- Administratively zone several sites throughout the county for industrial/business park development. These sites must be adjacent to critical infrastructure components such as transportation networks, water, three-based power and eventually, wastewater treatment. Natural gas availability is another utility that must be strongly considered in these administrative zoning efforts.
- Once sites have been identified, the county must work with its legislative delegation, 4C Economic Development Authority, Upper Kanawha Valley Economic Development Corporation, Central Appalachia Empowerment Zone, Upper Kanawha Valley Empowerment Community, Region 4 Planning and Development Council, and all other appropriate agencies to develop full-blown engineering feasibility studies that will provide a roadmap for development of these sites.





- Plans to provide wastewater treatment in the areas served by the Fayette Plateau Regional Water System are also crucial to the development of economic opportunity. The county has begun efforts to procure funding for a complete engineering feasibility study for this purpose. Once that funding has been secured, the county should turn its full attention to developing strategies for funding wastewater extensions that protect the tourism industry and its all important New and Gauley River watersheds and also provide for development of the administratively zoned sites.
- The county Water Resources Study should be used as a guideline for developing future potable water extensions and efforts should be made to prioritize both water and sewer projects within the county so that competition for limited funds is not encouraged on the county level.
- On roadway transportation, efforts should be made to develop consensus for and to deliver to State agencies a plan for serving the economic development needs of the Route 19 corridor and Route 60 corridor while also limiting access and egress on these busy expressways.
- Roadway transportation efforts should also be focused on developing a potential "wish list" to serve economic needs of the county.
- Close associations should be developed between the county and industries that provide natural gas and telecommunication services so those plans can be put in motion to serve key development areas of the county.

If Fayette County follows these steps in infrastructure development it should provide an organized platform for achieving development goals while also providing for the needs of the individual citizen. It should be noted that providing for these needs will be a lengthy and involved process but one that is certain to provide long-term dividends. Revisiting the plans should be a regularly scheduled process, but wavering from the goals of providing for public health needs, economic development needs and for protecting the lucrative tourism economy should not be a consideration.





CHAPTER TEN - UTILITIES

**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FAYETTE COUNTY, WEST
VIRGINIA**

-INSERT PLAN AREA AND WATER SERVICE AREAS MAP-





-INSERT WASTEWATER SYSTEM AREAS MAP-





-INSERT GAS SERVICE DISTRICTS MAP-





CHAPTER ELEVEN



Public Services/Civic Issues





I. OVERVIEW

Civic issues are relevant to all groups of people in one form or another in their daily lives. These issues include a variety of subjects ranging from civic pride to crime prevention and health-related issues. Family support including strengthening and supplemental services, church sponsored activities, medical care, and institutional involvement form integral parts of the social fabric in the Fayette County community.

II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District with respect to public services/civic issues:

- The District is proximate to a number of regional colleges that are attended by persons throughout the area.
- Oak Hill Hospital is a reputable hospital that is proximate to the District. Medical care at Oak Hill Hospital is considered good.
- The West Virginia University Tech Branch in Oak Hill, which is proximate to the District, is an asset to the community.
- Citizens and community leaders have commissioned and participated in growth management exercises in the past. The local officials are proponents of planning.
- The crime rate in the District is low as compared with the surrounding areas.

B. **Liabilities**

The Danese/Meadow Bridge District is confronted with the following shortcomings with respect to public services/civic pride:

- There is a lack of coordination between the municipal and County governments. As a result of this, services are often duplicated by these agencies.
- There is a limited amount of emergency services available in the District.
- The Meals on Wheels and other senior programs are somewhat limited in terms of their availability in the District.
- Public transportation is considered inadequate within the Danese/Meadow Bridge District.





- The standardized test scores in the local schools are low. This has caused concern throughout the County.
- There is lack of medical facilities in the District.
- The unemployment rate in the region is high. This is typical throughout the southern parts of the State.
- Poverty is an issue of concern in this region. There are a high number of children living at or below poverty level.
- The region has suffered from a negative stereotype historically associated with southern West Virginia.
- A poor attitude exists among people toward zoning issues. This is a result of a lack of education and understanding on the advantages of zoning.
- There is a lack of development guidelines for the Danese/Meadow Bridge District as well as the other areas in the County.
- Buildings are not inspected regularly, as there is no proper inspection procedure in place. This has resulted in the deterioration of a number of structures in the District.
- The local clinic closed down in August 2000. There is a concern that the area may not be able to support another clinic.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated to address the assets and liabilities related to public services/civic issues in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

1. Education/Training

- The County should work with the local institutions, such as West Virginia University Tech and Glenville State College, to develop programs that will provide training to workers who need new skills or to be re-trained (ex. 4-C is working on a program with Bluefield State College).
- The County should place importance on technology development training for the area residents.
- The County should consider developing an adult/high school training center in the area.

2. Enforcement

- The County should work with the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association to encourage the protection of historic resources along the Midland Trail.
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- County governments should adopt and enforce building and housing codes in all planning districts in Fayette County.





-INSERT COMMUNITY FACILITIES I MAP-





-INSERT COMMUNITY FACILITIES II MAP-





- The County should develop aesthetic guidelines for future development to preserve trees and viewsheds.
- The County should regulate the appearance, height, material, and size of signs and billboards along U.S. Route 60.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that will be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, or zoning ordinances in the region.
- The County should work with the relevant organizations to establish design guidelines and ordinances for development on hillsides (slopes exceeding 20 percent).
- The Fayette County Zoning Ordinance should be updated to include proper permitting procedures (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances). It should be ensured that the protection of air quality is addressed through recommendations in the zoning ordinance.
- The County should ensure that landscape and site treatment regulations are used to unify development image and character via defining edges, defining entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants. Outdoor lighting fixtures should be shielded and directed inward to prevent glare for motorists.
- The local planning, zoning codes, and enforcement codes should be strengthened.
- The County should establish building codes and an inspection process to improve the quality of structures in the area.

3. Government

- The County should coordinate the efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations.
- The County Commission and the County School Board should work together to mitigate any community impacts of the consolidation of secondary schools.
- The County should ensure that 911 service is adequate and effective throughout the planning districts.
 - **In order to help dispel the negative attitudes concerning zoning, the local government (i.e. The Transition Team)**





should educate the community. The County should periodically update the community on local government programs and initiatives (i.e. water and sewer development, permitting processes, inspection process).

- The County should expand police service to reinforce the overall security and safety of communities throughout the County.
- The completion of the enhanced 911 should be a priority to not only improve emergency service but also to complete a Countywide street name and numbering system.

4. Civic

- The senior center should be used for various cultural and community activities to bring residents together.
- The County should also work towards introducing a youth center in the area for people under 21 years of age.
- The County should introduce a "Meals on Wheels" in the area.
- The County should consider adapting abandoned school buildings to such uses as senior centers, town centers, and multi-purpose community centers.

5. Health Care

- The Meals-on-Wheels service should be expanded from surrounding areas into the Danese/Meadow Bridge Area.
- The County should seek funding to introduce twenty-four hour emergency clinics within the Danese/Meadow Bridge Area.

III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT

A. Assets

The following are the assets with respect to public services/civic pride in the New Haven District:

- The District boasts of a low crime rate, an incentive for people to locate in the area.
- Community pride is evident in this District. Residents are proud to live in the area and display a sense of ownership and pride.





- Citizens and community leaders have commissioned and participated in growth management exercises in the past. Local officials have been considered to be proponents of planning.





B. Liabilities

The following are the liabilities that need to be addressed in the New Haven District with respect to public services/civic pride:

- There is poor communication between government and residents of the District. As a result of this, a number of problems tend to go unnoticed.
- Poverty is a major issue in this region. There are a large number of children who live at or below the poverty level.
- The area has suffered from a negative stereotype historically associated with southern West Virginia.
- There is a poor attitude among residents toward zoning. This is due to the overall lack of understanding on their parts on the purpose and benefits of zoning.
- The high school dropout rate in the area is high.
- There is a lack of places within the New Haven District for teenagers to "hang out".
- There is a lack of available area within the District for adult education centers.
- The New Haven District also lacks day care centers.
- There is an overall lack of services in the New Haven District.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to address the assets and liabilities in the New Haven District:

1. Education/Training
 - The County should work with local institutions, such as West Virginia University Tech and Glenville State College, to develop programs that will provide training to workers who need new skills or to be re-trained, (ex. 4-C is working on a program with Bluefield State College).
 - An Elder Hostel program could be developed using the housing and course resources available at WVUIT. (Elder Hostel is a non-profit, educational organization that offers inexpensive, short-term academic programs hosted by educational institutions around the world).





2. Enforcement

- The County government should adopt and enforce building and housing codes in New Haven District as well as the other planning districts in Fayette County.
- The County should develop guidelines to preserve trees and viewsheds.
- Fayette County should establish standards for landscaping, access, lot coverage, and buffering between adjacent transportation corridors and unsightly uses.
- The appearance, height, material, and size of signs and billboards should be regulated in the U.S. Route 60 Corridor.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, or zoning ordinances.
- The County should establish design guidelines and ordinances for development on hillsides (slopes exceeding 20 percent).
- The Fayette County Zoning Ordinance should be updated to include proper permitting procedures (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances).
- The County should ensure that landscape and site treatment regulations are used to unify development image and character via defining edges and entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.
- The County should establish guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of the existing structures.
- The County should emphasize the importance of protecting air quality through its local zoning authority.
- It should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward to prevent glare for motorists.

3. Civic

- The County should seek funding for the establishment of a multi-purpose center that provides day-care services, adult education services, and a place for the elderly to gather.
 - The County should promote competition between County high schools to produce video that shows
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the positive aspects of the County. The winning video should be played at all Fayette County rest areas as well as at Tamarack in Raleigh County.





4. Government

- The efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations should be better coordinated.
- The County should promote the region as one entity that is proud of its low crime rate.
- The towns in Fayette County should work with the County Commission to direct growth around existing population centers (i.e. towns). All towns should prepare to grow via annexation of these growth areas.
- The County should limit the development of non-essential services in rural areas that would be cost-prohibitive and possibly detrimental to older rural communities.
- The County Government should establish a liaison committee that would be responsible for conducting meetings that address a wide array of concerns from residents. These meetings should be held in different communities throughout the County.
- A survey should be conducted at all middle schools and high schools to determine what type of places teenagers frequent. Funds should be identified to develop these places for teenagers in the area.
- The County should arrange to periodically educate the community on various land use, zoning, and permitting procedures (i.e. overlay districts, permitting, enforcement).
- Recycling should be mandatory and enforced in all communities in Fayette County.
- The completion of the enhanced 911 system must be a priority to not only improve emergency service but also to complete a County-wide street name and numbering system.

5. Health Care

- The County should work with the local legislators to actively seek funding for a twenty-four hour health clinic that could serve the New Haven District.





IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified with respect to public services/civic issues in the Plateau District:

- There are a number of adult education programs and technical classes in the Plateau District.
- West Virginia Tech, as well as Mountain State University and Marshall, is establishing new education programs to support the chemical and coal industries
- There are a number of residents in the community who are already doing things to improve the community.
- The District is proud of its low crime rate.
- The West Virginia University Tech Branch in Oak Hill is an asset to the District and the County.
- Citizens and community leaders have commissioned and participated in growth management exercises in the past. A number of residents and officials supporter planning in the District.
- Plateau Medical Hospital (240 employees) is a full-service community hospital that provides health services to a number of people in the region.

B. **Liabilities**

The following are the liabilities that need to be addressed related to public services/civic issues in the Plateau District:

- The local educational system is not considered competitive with systems in other locations.
 - The County should monitor the aging population to ensure that the number of health clinics and nursing homes keep pace with the local demand.
 - Poverty is of major concern in the Plateau District. There are a large number of children living at or below poverty level.
 - This community, like the others, has suffered from the negative stereotype historically associated with southern West Virginia.
 - The District lacks housing and building codes. As a result of this, a number of structures are in poor condition.
 - The local parks are poorly managed and are thus not frequented by residents.
 - There is a need to enforce safety and building codes in the area.
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- The Plateau District lacks a 24-hour "prompt care" health facility.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to address the assets and liabilities in the Plateau District:

1. Education/Training

- The County should work with local institutions, such as West Virginia University Tech and Glenville State College, to develop programs that will provide training to workers that need new skills or to be re-trained (ex. 4-C is working on a program with Bluefield State College).
- An Elder Hostel program should be developed using the housing and organization that offers inexpensive, short-term academic course resources available at WVUIT (Elder Hostel is a non-profit, educational programs hosted by educational institutions around the world).
- County legislators should work with the Board of Education and volunteers to implement various programs that would help to raise secondary schools' test scores. One program could be to initiate a community-based strategic planning process called Toward the Year 2020 (TTY 2020), directed toward enabling public schools to:
 - Respond effectively to a rapidly changing environment.
 - Respond to the changing needs of Fayette County and its citizens.
 - Provide an educational program that reflects current and evolving knowledge practiced in education.

2. Enforcement

- The County government should adopt building and housing codes in Plateau District as well as other areas in Fayette County.
 - The County should develop guidelines to preserve trees and viewsheds.
 - Fayette County should establish standards for landscaping, access, lot coverage, and buffering between adjacent transportation corridors and unsightly uses.
 - The County should give importance to regulate the appearance, height, material, and size of signs and billboards in the corridor.
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- The County should identify individuals or organizations that will be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, or zoning ordinances in the region.
- The County should establish design guidelines and ordinances for development on hillsides (slopes exceeding 20 percent).
- The Fayette County Zoning Ordinance should be updated to include proper permitting procedures (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances).
- The County should ensure that landscape and site treatment regulations are used to unify development image and character via defining edges, defining entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.
- The County should regulate air quality through local zoning regulations.
- The County should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward as to prevent glare for motorists.
- The County should establish guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the existing structures.

3. Civic

- The County should consider implementing an Adopt-a-Highway program throughout the Plateau District.
- A competition should be promoted in County high schools for students to produce a video highlighting the positive aspects of Fayette County. The winning video should be played at all Fayette County rest areas as well as at Tamarack in Raleigh County.

4. Government

- The efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations should be well coordinated and promoted.
 - The County should promote the region as an area with a low crime rate.
 - The municipalities in Fayette County should work with the County Commission to direct growth around existing population centers (i.e. cities and towns). This will require the municipalities to prepare comprehensive development plans,
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revitalization strategies, annexation strategies, and development codes and ordinances.

- The County should limit the development of non-essential services in rural areas that would be cost-prohibitive and possibly detrimental to older urban communities.
- The County should ensure that local parks are well staffed and better managed. A volunteer group should be formed and encouraged to provide services in helping to maintain the County parks.
- The completion of the enhanced 911 system must be a priority to not only improve emergency service, but also to complete a County-wide street name and numbering system

5. Health Care

- Local legislators should actively seek funding for a twenty-four hour health clinic that could serve the Plateau District.

V. VALLEY DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following are the assets in the Valley District with respect to public services/civic issues:

- The local hospital, Montgomery General Hospital, is highly accredited and caters to the local population.
- The Valley District boasts a low crime rate, which is an incentive for people to reside in the area.
- This area is well known for its friendly and hospitable people.
- Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association is an asset to the District as well as the County.
- Citizens and community leaders have commissioned and participated in growth management exercises in the past. Some local officials are considered to be progressive thinkers.
- Local community action groups have been started in Jodie and Paint Creek.
- Of the 791 Fayette County students who responded to a survey (grades 5-12) over half indicated they would be interested in helping to make Fayette County a better place to live and work.
- West Virginia Tech, as well as Mountain State University and Marshall, is establishing new education programs to support the chemical and coal industries.





B. Liabilities

The following liabilities should be addressed in Valley District with respect to public services/civic pride:

- There is a lack of local zoning ordinances and building codes for the District as well as the region.
- The area lacks a sense of community pride.
- There has not been any follow-up on past planning efforts. As a result of this, good plans for the region have not been implemented.
- Poverty is of major concern to area residents. There are a large number of children living at or below poverty level.
- Like the other areas in the County, this District has suffered from the negative stereotype historically associated with southern West Virginia.
- There is a poor attitude among residents toward zoning. This is due to the overall lack of understanding on their parts on the purpose and benefits of zoning.
- The local citizens are apathetic about condition of their community.
- WVU Tech is a transient school, meaning that students do not live on campus.
- The Valley District has a high number of single parents who are struggling financially.
- The District lacks garbage disposal and recycling programs.
- There is a lack of communication and understanding between the government decision-making process and how the community interprets these decisions.
- There is a need to improve communication problems between 4-C, Fayette County, and UKVEDC.
- Public servants need to represent interests of the County residents and businesses.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to address the issues related to public services/civic issues:

1. Education/Training

- The County should work with the relevant institutions, such as WVU Tech and Glenville State College, to develop programs that will provide training to workers who need new skills





or to be re-trained (ex. 4-C is working on a program with Bluefield State College).

- An Elder Hostel program should be created using the housing and course resources available at WVUIT (Elder Hostel is a non-profit, educational organization that offers inexpensive, short-term academic programs hosted by educational institutions around the world).

2. Enforcement

- County government should adopt stringent building and housing codes to improve the quality of all structures, residential and non-residential, and in turn improve the quality of life in the area.
- The former school on Cannellton Hollow Road, north of Smithers, should be considered for conversion for social services uses, such as a day care center, abused women's shelter, or office space for management and counseling.
- Fayette County should establish standards for landscaping, access, lot coverage, and buffering between adjacent transportation corridors and unsightly uses. The County should also develop guidelines to preserve trees and viewsheds.
- The County should regulate the appearance, height, material, and size of signs and billboards in the U.S. Route 60 Corridor.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, or zoning ordinances.
- The County should establish design guidelines and ordinances that not only permit, but also instruct individuals on how to develop hillsides (slopes exceeding 20 percent).
- The Fayette County Zoning Ordinance should be updated to include proper permitting procedures (i.e. occupancy, use, and variances).
- It should be ensured that landscape and site treatment regulations are used to unify development image and character via defining edges and entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.
- The County should establish guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of the existing structures.





- The County should regulate air quality through its local zoning authority.
- It should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward as to prevent glare for motorists.





3. Government

- In order to help dispel negative stereotypes concerning zoning and the local government, groups such as the Transition Team should strive to educate the communities on a regular basis.
- The County should coordinate the efforts of Fayette County's municipalities, local businesses, and tourism organizations so their services may complement one another. These regions should also promote the region as one with a low crime rate.
- The towns in Fayette County should work with the County Commission to direct growth around existing population centers (i.e. towns). These towns should prepare to grow via annexation of these growth areas.
- Communities such as Gauley Bridge, Montgomery, Smithers, Boomer Bottom, and Jodie should be encouraged to share resources and think regionally rather than locally.
- The County should work with the State to seek State Budget Digest Funds to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures.
- The County should involve its residents in all planning processes so local people are kept abreast of all issues and support growth efforts and follow up on plans.
- The completion of the enhanced 911 system must be a priority to not only improve emergency service, but also to complete a County-wide street name and numbering system.

4. Health Care

- In-home services such as home care, nutrition services, and primary outpatient medical care is a need that will continue to increase as the population ages. These services should be made a priority in this planning District as well as throughout the County.

5. Civic Responsibilities

- Free summertime day camps, that provide children with nutritional meals, arts and crafts, and sports activities, should be introduced.
- The County should introduce a competition in County high schools to produce video that shows





the positive aspects of Fayette County. The winning video should be played at all Fayette County rest areas as well as Tamarack in Raleigh County.

- The County should appoint a committee to oversee the Adopt-a-Highway program to ensure all major roads in the County are in the program.
- The County should focus on directing growth toward existing population centers.





CHAPTER TWELVE
—◆—
Historic Resources





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

I. OVERVIEW

The history is a building block for the future. Our history represents our identity and culture. If a plan is to be comprehensive, it must realize the significance of the past as a key element in planning for the future. A community's history and culture can often be preserved through education and preservation. Both of these factors can take several forms. Historic sites can serve as a monument to the past, while providing a place for gathering, reflection and celebration. An old church can still hold worship services similar to those held one hundred years ago. Old homes could be restored so they can provide comfort or they can be refurbished as offices. A number of programs exist to help individuals and groups temporarily or permanently protect sites and structures that are considered significant.

Fayette County is rich in historic resources and has an abundance of historically significant sites. Sites include residences, churches, monuments and homes located throughout the County. Disregarding the historic and cultural significance of these resources has resulted in deterioration of many historically and culturally significant buildings and sites in Fayette County. If immediate measures are not taken, this rich heritage will be lost forever.



Maintain the historic character of the County's rural towns and villages while encouraging their development as commercial and cultural centers.





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FAYETTE COUNTY, WEST
VIRGINIA**

-INSERT HISTORIC RESOURCES I MAP-





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FAYETTE COUNTY, WEST
VIRGINIA**

-INSERT HISTORIC RESOURCES II MAP-





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District with respect to historic resources:

- This area is renowned for holding several historical and cultural festivals that bring people from various parts of the Country.
- Midland Trail is well known and is a favorite place for visitors throughout the year.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liability should be addressed with respect to historic resources:

- There is currently no policy or law in place to protect the local historic resources. As a result of this, several resources are being left to deteriorate.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been formulated to protect the integrity of the historic resources in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

1. Heritage Preservation

- The County and other relevant organizations should consider establishing a tourism development program that is based on and focuses on educating people about the heritage of Fayette County.

2. Building Preservation

- The County should encourage the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association to protect historic resources along the Midland Trail. This is one of the most important resources in the County.
- The County should support the preservation and revitalization of Thurmond/Prince (its railroad, river, and history) and strive to revive its presence in the County.





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in New Haven District with respect to its historic resources:

- This area is well known for its natural beauty that attracts tourists from all parts of the nation and world.
- The New Haven District boasts of a number of towns that have retained their small-town character.
- The local community respects its Appalachian and cultural heritage and is proudly displays it to visitors.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liability should be addressed in this district in order to protect its historic integrity:

- The County is slowly losing historic resources in all of its planning districts due to the lack of preservation and protection measures.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been formulated to protect the historic integrity of the New Haven District:

1. Heritage Preservation

- The entire County should support the efforts of the Fayette County Convention and Tourism Bureau and the Southern West Virginia Convention and Tourism Bureau in promoting the County.
- Tourism programs in Fayette County should be based on the Civil War and coal heritage.
- Tourism development programs should include attention towards fine arts rooted in Appalachian culture (i.e. music and crafts).
- An annual festival should be organized to highlight Appalachian fine arts.





- INSERT CIVIL WAR SITES MAP -





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

2. Building Preservation

- The County should encourage the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association to protect historic resources along the Midland Trail.
- The County should strongly consider introducing guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of the existing historic structures.
- The County should implement historic preservation and design review programs for selected areas in Fayette County.

IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following asset has been identified in the Plateau District with respect to historic resources:

- This area is famous for the Civil War and coal heritage and draws a number of visitors to these sites.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities should be addressed with respect to historic resources in the Plateau District:

- There are currently no policies in place to protect historic resources in this district as well as throughout the County. As a result of this, a number of historically significant properties have been left to deteriorate.
- The area lacks a fireproof museum for the preservation of historic artifacts and books.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been developed to protect the historic integrity of the Plateau District:

1. Heritage Preservation

- The County should support the efforts of the Fayette County Convention and Tourism Bureau and the Southern West Virginia Convention and Tourism Bureau. Tourism programs in Fayette County should be based on the Civil War and coal heritage.





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

- Tourism development programs should include attention towards fine arts rooted in Appalachian culture (i.e. music and crafts).
- An annual festival should be organized to highlight Appalachian fine arts.
- The County should consider constructing a fireproof museum for historic artifacts and books.
- Existing museums should be included and promoted in all of the County's tourism development efforts.
- The County should provide technical assistance to municipalities so that they can adopt and implement historic district ordinances.

2. Building Preservation

- The County should establish guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of all existing historic structures.
- The County should implement historic preservation and design review programs for selected areas in Fayette County.
- Communities should make every effort to identify and retain older buildings, including residences, with historic character.

V. VALLEY DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified with respect to historic resources in the Valley District:

- The Hawks Nest Lodge Conference Center and Golf Course are well known in this district and attract a number of visitors from various parts of the country.
- Local attractions such as the Gauley River Pier, Gauley River Bridge, Miller Building Community Center (built in 1850s), Civil War battle sites, and the Mary Ingalls Trail are of great importance and interest to tourists.
- Midland Trail is a major asset to this area and also attracts a number of people throughout the year.





CHAPTER TWELVE - HISTORIC RESOURCES

B. Liabilities

The following liabilities should be addressed with respect to historic resources in the Valley District:

- Currently there are no rules or policies in place to protect historic resources in the district as well as in the County. As a result of this, a number of structures have been left to deteriorate.
- There is no incentive to preserve historic structures, thus causing them to look neglected and abandoned.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated to preserve the historic integrity of the Valley District:

1. Heritage Preservation

- The County should encourage the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association to protect historic resources along the Midland Trail.
- The County should establish a tourism development program that is based on the heritage of Fayette County and protects the historic and cultural integrity of the County.

2. Building Preservation

- Communities within the district as well as throughout the County should make every effort to identify and retain older buildings, including residences of historical significance and character.
- The County should promote the adaptive reuse of historic structures as a method of preservation as well as economic generation.
- The County should establish stringent guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of the existing historic structures.
- The County should implement historic preservation and design review programs for the downtown areas in Fayette County.





CHAPTER THIRTEEN

—◆—

Transportation





CHAPTER THIRTEEN - TRANSPORTATION

I. OVERVIEW

A transportation plan typically identifies the location, character and capacity of transportation facilities that are, and would be, compatible with the planned land uses in the County. Roads and streets should be the conduit for optimal community development while providing a safe and efficient means for all modes of travel. The transportation network should accommodate the planned pattern of employment and institutional related facilities. At the same time, transportation improvements should not be constructed that would produce severe and lasting impacts on the County's stable residential and commercial areas.

Many of the roads in Fayette County hug the rivers, streams and ridges and provide splendid views during the Fall season.



Public awareness, understanding and acceptance of a transportation plan contribute to community awareness of the role of transportation in the lives all residents. Heavy through-traffic can be a nuisance and a distraction from an otherwise quiet and safe environment. Advance knowledge of the designation and location of major traffic arteries can result in greater community stability, in which residents have the assurance that traffic conditions will remain relatively consistent in future years.

Early knowledge of planned major streets and their locations permits the proper planning of other facilities and uses in the comprehensive plan. This includes the prescription of the land uses and provision of public facilities such as schools, parks, and utility improvements. Thus, the private developers and the public sector should know the future location of streets and highways in order to proceed intelligently with individual project plans.





CHAPTER THIRTEEN - TRANSPORTATION

**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FAYETTE COUNTY, WEST
VIRGINIA**

-INSERT EXISTING TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES MAP-

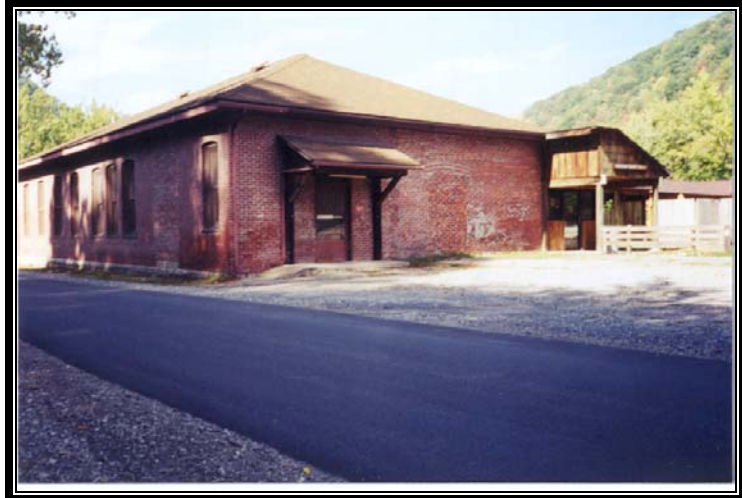




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Transportation planning can be accomplished conceptually or in-depth. The level of detail depends on the availability of background data, time, money and local needs. This chapter is a guide for the general location of the channels that should convey traffic in the planning districts.

Shifts in transportation orientation and a depletion of mineral resources have resulted in the abandonment of many train depots in the region.



II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT

A. Assets

The following assets have been identified with respect to transportation in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

- Oak Hill Hospital provides transportation for seniors. This is a major asset in helping this group of elderly citizens get to and from the hospital.
- This area is easily accessible to the major highways in the area and throughout the County.

B. Liabilities

The following shortcomings have been listed with respect to transportation in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

- The area in general offers limited public transportation for its residents. Most people rely on their own means to get to places.





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- The quality of the roads in the district is poor and indicates a lack of periodic maintenance. Several roads need to be upgraded.
- Orphan roads are a problem.
- There is no public airport to serve the local area.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to address the issues related to transportation in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

1. Airports

- The County should identify a source to fund an airport that is centrally located and that would serve private, small planes. The airport could also provide New River Gorge sightseeing tours, glider services, and space to park private planes.

2. Public Transportation

- Fayette County should consider implementing a Demand Response Para-transit System. This is a means of providing shared ride transportation that does not necessarily follow a fixed route. Passengers access the system through advanced notification. This transportation system would meet the transportation needs of County residents, while catering, in particular, to the needs of the elderly, disabled, and lower income groups.
- The County should strive to develop public transportation in all its planning districts.

3. Roads/Bridges

- The County should work with the West Virginia Department of Highways to encourage that department to improve secondary roads throughout the County.
- The County should also urge the WVDOH to rebuild bridges in various areas.
- A study should be conducted to identify and develop roads of appropriate scale and capacity to serve long-range traffic demands while respecting the environment.





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- It should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward to prevent glare for motorists.
- The County should emphasize the importance of fixing and maintaining its roads on a regular basis.

III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following asset has been identified with respect to transportation in the New Haven District:

- This district has easy access to the County's major thoroughfares and highway system (U.S. Routes 19 and 60).

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities have been listed on transportation issues in the New Haven District:

- The condition of the roads in this district is poor, particularly the secondary roads.
- The area lacks a public airport. People have to depend on other means of transportation to get to and from the area.
- The public transportation in the area is limited. People usually depend on their own transportation and drive to various parts of the County and region.
- In general, the area is limited in terms of its infrastructure services (water, sewage, and roads). This has always been a great concern to area residents.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been developed to address the transportation needs in the New Haven District:

1. **Roads/Bridges**

- The County should work with the West Virginia Department of Highways and encourage that department to improve secondary roads in the area.
- The County should also urge the WVDOH to rebuild bridges.





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- A study should be conducted to identify and develop roads of appropriate scale and capacity to serve long-range traffic demands while respecting the environment.
- The County should identify and develop formal gateways on U.S. Routes 19 and 60 at strategic locations in Fayette County. These gateways would provide a sense of place and also inform visitors of their arrival into the County.
- It should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward to prevent glare for motorists.

2. Airports

- The County should explore sources to fund a centrally-located, private, small-plane airport that would also provide New River Gorge tours, gliding and space to park private planes.

3. Public Transportation

- Fayette County should implement a Demand Response Para-transit System. This is a means of providing shared ride transportation that does not necessarily follow a fixed route. Passengers access the system through advance notification. This transportation system would meet the transportation needs of County residents, while particularly catering to the needs of the elderly, disabled, and lower income groups.
- The County should work toward developing transportation for seniors to travel within the area.

IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in the Plateau District with respect to transportation:

- U.S. Route 19 provides good access to this area. It also offers some very scenic views that draw people from afar.
- The railroads in this area are of great interest to tourists and railroad enthusiasts.
- The highway system is an asset to this area, as well to other parts of the County.





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- The privately owned airport in this area is an asset the district.

B. Liabilities

- Secondary roads are in poor condition because they have not been upgraded in a long time.
- There is a need for a public airport in this area to serve the local population.
- Public transportation within the area is limited. As a result of this, most residents rely on their own transportation to get to places.

C. Recommendations

1. Public Transportation

- Fayette County should consider implementing a Demand Response Para-transit System. This is a means of providing shared ride transportation that does not necessarily follow a fixed route. Passengers access the system through advanced notification. This transportation system will meet the transportation needs of County residents, while catering to the needs of the elderly, disabled, and lower income groups.
- The County should seek funding for a small regional airport that would serve all four planning districts.

2. Roads/Bridges

- The County should work with the West Virginia Department of Highways and encourage them to improve secondary roads throughout the area. These roads should be of appropriate scale and capacity to serve long-range traffic demands while respecting the environment.
- The County should encourage the WVDOH to rebuild bridges throughout the area.
- It should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward as to prevent glare for motorists.
- The County should work with the Department of Highways to introduce the concept of clustering in order to maximize the development potential while limiting entrances to U.S. Route 19.
- Interchanges are needed at specified at-grade intersections along U.S. Route 19. The County





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should work with the Department of Highways and help them identify these locations.

V. VALLEY DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in the Valley District with respect to transportation:

- U.S. Route 60 in this area has received the scenic highway status and is very popular among visitors to Fayette County.
- This area has good access to the interstates as well as the County's major thoroughfares, U.S. Routes 60 and 19.

B. **Liabilities**

The following shortcomings have been identified in the Valley District that relate to transportation:

- The large portions of the Valley District are inaccessible due to the poor quality of the local roads. The secondary roads appear to be in poor condition.
- The area is limited in terms of its public transportation. Most residents rely on their own transportation to go places.
- The area lacks a public airport.

C. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been formulated to improve the transportation network in the Valley District:

1. Roads/Bridges

- The County should work closely with the West Virginia Department of Highways and encourage that department to improve secondary roads throughout the area. Roads should be of appropriate scale and capacity to serve long-range traffic demands while protecting the integrity of the environment.
- The County should consider hiring a consultant to prepare a land use management plan for U.S. Route 60 similar to the U.S. Rt. 19 Corridor Land Use Management Plan.





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- The County should work with the Department of Highways to widen the four-lane stretch of U.S. Route 60 from Quincy to Smithers. Widening this 12-mile stretch would increase speed of service to the Mt. Olive Correctional Complex.
- The County and DOH should also consider upgrading U.S. Route 60 to four lanes from Charleston to Gauley Bridge.
- Smithers should establish Michigan Avenue as the main retail district and improve vehicular and pedestrian access to that street.
- Michigan Avenue should be extended in Smithers through the Longacre site and connected to U.S. Route 60. This would help create a continuous connection through Smithers and the main retail district, while getting local traffic off U.S. Route 60.
- The County should pursue funding through local legislators to rebuild bridges.
- An access road should be considered from Armstrong Creek to Mossey.
- Interchanges are needed at specified at-grade intersections along U.S. Route 19. The County should work with the State to identify these locations.

2. Airport

- The County should seek funding for a centrally-located, private, small-plane airport that would also provide New River Gorge tours, gliding and space to park private planes.

3. Public Transportation

- Fayette County should consider implementing a Demand Response Para-transit System. This is a means of providing shared ride transportation that does not necessarily follow a fixed route. Passengers access the system through advanced notification. This transportation system will meet the transportation needs of County residents, while catering particularly to the needs of the elderly, disabled, and lower income groups.
- The County should identify and help fund the creation of park-and-ride lots.





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CHAPTER FOURTEEN
—◆—
Community Appearance





CHAPTER FOURTEEN - COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

I. OVERVIEW

The physical appearance of a community is often a reflection of its economic and social stability. Communities that are stable, economically sound and well integrated usually display a positive appearance that leaves an impression on a resident and visitor. Community appearance can be enhanced and improved with projects and programs of all sizes. While some of these improvements may require a significant amount of money, individuals and organizations that volunteer their time may make other improvements. Physical improvements can be made in small increments and yet bring significant changes in a community.



Consultant Patrick Ford and Planning Commissioner Bill Caudill discuss problems with abandoned houses in the County.





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A community like Fayette County should take pride in the fact that it draws an immense number of visitors. In turn, it should provide residents and visitors with a sense of character, hospitality and an inviting appearance.

This chapter identifies a number of simple and complex projects and activities throughout the County that would produce a positive impact by improving the community image in the four planning districts.

II. DANESE/MEADOW BRIDGE DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified with respect to community appearance in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

- The area boasts of several quaint, well maintained homes and farms.
- This area is renowned for its natural beauty. Its scenic views serve as an attraction to tourists.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities have been identified in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District with respect to community appearance:

- There are a number of abandoned houses in the area. This projects a sense of neglect and a lack of upkeep. Other houses are poorly maintained.
- There is a need for stringent development guidelines in this planning District as well as in other parts of the County.
- Roadside dumping is of major concern to area residents. Trash is evident in several places and is left to deteriorate over several days.
- There is a poor attitude among residents toward the concept of zoning. Many people do not understand its advantages and view it as an impediment to development.
- This part of the County is often forgotten and neglected as compared to other areas.





C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated to address issues related to community appearance in the Danese/Meadow Bridge District:

1. Built Environment

- The County should work closely with relevant agencies to establish a tourism-oriented sign program to jointly promote the Midland Trail and U.S. Route 19 Corridor.
- Efforts should be made to eliminate "eyesores" (i.e., dilapidated and deteriorating structures) throughout the area in order to improve its overall appearance.
- Efforts should be made by the County to remove junk cars, trash, and abandoned structures on a regular basis.

2. Natural Environment

- Efforts should be made by the County to minimize the clearing of woodlands and forests so the natural integrity of the land is protected.
- It must be ensured that landscape and site treatment are introduced to protect the area's image and character via defining edges, defining entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.
- Land that could protect viewsheds and river activities must be preserved.

3. Enforcement

- The District should be protected from unwarranted land uses and strengthen the visual elements of the transportation corridors.
- The County should develop stringent guidelines to preserve trees and viewsheds in future development activities.
- The County should work with the National Park Service and the Department of Natural Resources to establish new laws and/or enforce existing laws to curb careless behavior of residents and visitors who litter or pollute the water along all rivers in the County.





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- Fayette County should consider introducing performance standards for landscaping, access, lot coverage, and buffering along adjacent transportation corridors and between unsightly uses.
- The County should consider the concept of clustering. This will ensure that development is grouped, thus preserving open spaces and scenic vistas.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, or ordinances.
- The County should establish guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of existing structures.
- It should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward as to prevent glare for motorists.
- The County should consider seeking State Budget Digest funds for funding to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures.
- A garbage ordinance should be introduced and enforced to prevent any further deterioration of the area's image.

III. NEW HAVEN DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. Assets

The following assets have been identified in the New Haven District with respect to community appearance:

- This District is well known for its natural beauty. Its scenic vistas draw a number of tourists.
- The local residents project a sense of community pride and ownership.
- A number of towns in this District have preserved their small town character and kept their hospitable image intact.





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B. Liabilities

The following shortcomings have been identified in the New Haven District with respect to community appearance:

- Roadside dumping and other garbage problems are serious issues in this area. Residents complain to local officials on a regular basis.



Roadside dumping is counterproductive to the County's efforts of protecting the landscape and other visually aesthetic components of the County's viewsheds.

- There is evidence of abandoned houses in various parts of this District. This projects a sense of neglect and lack of upkeep.
- This District lacks development guidelines. As a result of this, development appears haphazard and thoughtless.
- There is a poor attitude toward zoning among the local population. This could be attributed to a lack of understanding and education.



C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated to improve the community appearance in the New Haven District:

1. Built Environment

- The County should work with relevant agencies to establish a tourism-oriented sign program to jointly promote the Midland Trail (U.S. Route 60) and U.S. Route 19.
- Efforts should be made identify and remove derelict structures on a regular basis.
- The County should work with the Department of Highways to identify and create formal gateways on U.S. Routes 19 and 60 into Fayette County. These gateways would invite visitors and provide tourists with a sense of place.
- The County should work with the West Virginia Department of Highways to minimize the number of new entrances and exits on U.S. Route 19 in order to control access.
- The County should seek State Budget Digest Funds as a means of funding to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures. This would be a large step in improving the overall community appearance.

2. Natural Environment

- The County should consider establishing a District-wide beautification program.
- The County should lay emphasis on preserving reserve land that to buffer viewsheds and river activities.
- The County must ensure that the natural beauty along scenic vistas from U.S. Routes 19 and 60 is preserved.
- Efforts should be made to minimize the clearing of woodlands and forests and protect the integrity of the land.
- The County should take measures to ensure that landscape and site treatment are used to unify development image and character via defining edges, defining entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reduce urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.
- The natural beauty of the County should be preserved at all costs. This should be the goal of all organizations, both private and public.





3. Enforcement

- The County should consider partnering with the National Park Service, Department of Natural Resources, and the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association to establish a scenic corridor project to protect against unwarranted land uses and strengthen the visual elements of the transportation corridors.
- The County should develop aesthetic guidelines for future development to preserve trees and viewsheds.
- The County should work with the Department of Natural Resources and the National Park Service to establish new laws and/or enforce existing laws to curb careless behavior by residents and visitors who litter or pollute the County's waterways.
- Fayette County should establish performance standards for landscaping, access, lot coverage, and buffering between adjacent transportation corridors and unsightly uses.
- Efforts should be made to introduce and encourage the concept of clustering, whereby development may be grouped and open spaces and scenic vistas, preserved.
- The development of linear multi-tenant commercial establishments that require indiscriminate land clearing and earth moving should be discouraged throughout the District.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guideline for development, preservation, building codes, or ordinances.
- The County should require that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward on private properties to prevent glare for motorists.
- The County should work with relevant agencies to identify, manage, and protect environmentally sensitive areas in the U.S. Routes 19 and 60 corridors.
- Any logging debris along U.S. Route 60 should be cleaned up immediately.
- Efforts should be made to clean up all 'ugly' sites within the District.





CHAPTER FOURTEEN - COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

IV. PLATEAU DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified in the Plateau District with respect to community appearance:

- In the recent past, there have been a number of individual, voluntary efforts that have improved the community appearance in the Plateau District.
- A number of small towns within this District have kept their small town character intact.
- This District boasts of a number of quaint, well maintained homes and farms that are of immense interest to visitors.
- This area is famous for its natural beauty and scenic environment that draw people from all over the country.

B. **Liabilities**

The following liabilities have been identified with respect to community appearance in the Plateau District:

- There are mobile homes and dilapidated housing near historic or expensive homes, which have resulted in a decline in property values. This has caused concern among area residents.
- The County Junk Yard Ordinance is ineffective in regulating abandoned automobiles. There are a number of cars that have been abandoned in the area. This projects a poor and neglected image of the District to outsiders.
- Trash is evident along the highways and in the residential areas of the District. This projects a sense of neglect and a lack of upkeep to outsiders.
- There have been complaints of indiscriminate clearing of trees. This is causing a great deal of disturbance to the natural integrity of the land.
- The area lacks building codes. A number of buildings appear to be in deteriorated and dilapidated conditions.
- There is a general lack of understanding regarding the purpose of zoning. Residents do not view zoning as a tool to preserve property values and do not view the concept favorably.





C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated to address the issues related to community appearance in the Plateau District:

1. Built Environment

- The County should consider expanding the Adopt-a-Highway program into the Plateau District. This program is currently being put in place in other parts of the County and is a helpful means to clean up trash along the highways.
- The County should focus on removing derelict structures along U.S. Route 60 from Montgomery east toward Fayetteville and along U.S. Route 61 from Montgomery to Oak Hill. This will greatly improve the appearance of the area.
- The County should identify and create formal gateways on U.S. Routes 19, 60, 61, and 16 into Fayette County. These gateways not only will serve as entryways into the County, but also will provide a sense of place to outsiders.
- The County should work with the West Virginia Department of Highways to minimize the number of new entrances and exits on U.S. Route 19.
- The County should discourage the development of linear multi-tenant commercial establishments, throughout the District, that require indiscriminate land clearing and earth moving.
- The County should establish stringent guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of the existing structures. Neighborhood conservation districts and zoning districts should be introduced to ensure community preservation.
- The County should require that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward to prevent glare for motorists.
- The County and relevant agencies should encourage communities to identify and retain older buildings, including houses, in their central business districts.
- The County should seek State Budget Digest Funds for funding to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures to improve the overall community appearance.
- An abandoned car task force should be appointed by the County Commission to draft an "automobile graveyard ordinance" to stop the proliferation of abandoned cars throughout the County.





2. Natural Environment

- The County should work with relevant agencies to establish a beautification program to preserve communities and enhance their appearance in the Plateau District as well as in other parts of the County.
- The County should require protection and reservation of all land that needs to serve as a buffer for viewsheds and river activities.
- It should be ensured that stringent guidelines are developed to preserve trees and viewsheds in all parts of the District.
- The natural beauty along U.S. Route 19 should be preserved.
- It should be ensured that the clearing of woodlands and forests is minimized in all parts of the County.
- The County should ensure that landscape and site treatment are used to unify development image and character via defining edges, defining entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.

3. Enforcement

- The County should work closely with the National Park Service and the Department of Natural Resources and encourage them to establish new laws and/or enforce existing laws to curb careless behavior by residents and tourists who litter or pollute the river corridors throughout the County.
- Fayette County should establish performance standards for landscaping, access, lot coverage, and buffering between adjacent transportation corridors and unsightly uses.
- The concept of clustering, whereby development is grouped and open spaces and scenic vistas are preserved, should be introduced and encouraged.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guidelines for development, preservation, building codes, or ordinances.
- It should be ensured that the environmentally sensitive areas in the U.S. Route 19 Corridor are identified, managed, and protected.
- The County should continue to regulate the appearance, height, material, and size of signs





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and billboards in the U.S. Route 60 and 19 corridors.





V. VALLEY DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. **Assets**

The following assets have been identified with respect to community appearance in the Valley District:

- This area has been designated as a Scenic Highway. It draws a number of people from various parts of the world.
- This District contains a number of quaint towns that have retained their small-town character.
- There is evidence of a group of people along the river who are taking the initiative to improve their properties.
- This area is well known for its natural beauty and scenic environment that draws people from afar.
- There are a number of programs and services that are available to residents to improve housing.
- Approximately \$100,000 has been committed for the construction of a train shelter in Montgomery (UKVEDC). This should be used as an example of how funds have been successfully used for public improvement projects.
- The Armstrong Creek community is clean and sets a good example for other communities in the area.

B. **Liabilities**

- There are a number of deteriorated and dilapidated structures in various parts of the District. There are approximately thirty structures in Montgomery alone.
- There is evidence of a number of structures within the District that have been readapted for inappropriate uses.
- The aging population is not physically or financially able to improve property. As a result of this, there is a lack of property maintenance and upkeep.
- There is a lack of a sense of pride among some homeowners. People are somewhat ashamed to call themselves residents of the area due to its run-down condition.
- There have been reports in the area on the indiscriminate clear-cutting of trees. This has caused great concern among residents.





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- The overall appearance of the corridor is considered poor and the area needs a lot of work to improve its image.
- The overall air quality, noise, and glare in the area are considered poor.
- Roads within this District appear dirty and unkempt, projecting a feel of abandonment and neglect.
- There is poor attitude on the part of area residents toward zoning and overall lack of understanding regarding the purpose of zoning and its benefits.
- The community center constructed in Armstrong Creek is a model community for other communities to emulate; however, further up the hollow problems persist that warrant immediate attention, including drug trafficking.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed to address issues related to community appearance in the Valley District:

1. Built Environment

- The City of Montgomery should consider introducing a focal point in the central business district. Preferably, the point of focus could be a train-stop kiosk located on both sides of the CSX Railroad. This could eventually be extended the streetscape design for Third Avenue, which includes a design for an enhanced pedestrian crossing.
- The Montgomery community should become accessible to the Kanawha River through the introduction of greenways to the river off of those streets that end at the river. Placing public overlooks and pocket parks in those areas could also enhance this District.
- Smithers' retail district should be upgraded by improving the streetscape with façade improvements, better lighting, parking lot landscaping, additional sidewalks, and street trees.
- The north and south sides of Smithers should be connected via an enhanced pedestrian walk. This would allow for pedestrian connection of the proposed motel on U.S. 60 (where it intersects with Clay Street) with the retail district on Michigan Avenue.





- An active park should be constructed along the Gauley River, expanding the existing passive park. It should include bike trails along the Rich Branch Fork, over the pass and back down Cane Branch. Also, the number of access points for fishing along the river should be increased.
- The County should ensure that the construction of the boat ramp at the Gauley River is completed so that it would provide access to the New River.
- The County should identify and create formal gateways on U.S. Route 60 into Fayette County. These gateways would serve as focal points in the County and also provide visitors with a sense of place and arrival.
- The County should work closely with the West Virginia Department of Highways to minimize the number of new entrances and exits on U.S. Route 60.
- The County should introduce and encourage the concept of clustering within Valley District. This would comprise the grouping of development whereby open spaces and scenic vistas would be preserved.
- The County should seek State Budget Digest Funds for funding to tear down and/or remove abandoned and dilapidated housing and other structures in order to enhance the overall appearance of the District.
- The County and the Town of Montgomery should work together to identify, fund, and construct improvements to the streets and sidewalks in Montgomery's downtown.
- A street sweeper should be purchased and shared by all municipalities on a regular basis.

2. Natural Environment

- It must be ensured that land is preserved to protect viewsheds and buffer river activities.
- The County should take stringent measures to ensure the minimizing of clearing of woodlands and forests.
- Landscape and site treatment should be introduced to unify development image and character via defining edges and entrances, softening parking lots, providing shade, reducing urban-heat build up, and filtering pollutants.





3. Enforcement

- The County should partner with the National Park Service, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association to establish a scenic corridor project to protect against unwarranted land uses and strengthen the visual elements of the transportation corridors.
- A tourism-oriented sign program should be introduced that would jointly promote the Upper Kanawha Valley and the Midland Trail.
- The County should take measures to remove all derelict structures along U.S. Route 61 from Montgomery toward Oak Hill and U.S. Route 60 from Chimney Corner to Montgomery.
- The County should work with the West Virginia Department of Highways to introduce the Adopt-a-Highway program along all major transportation corridors throughout the Valley District.
- The County should develop guidelines to preserve trees and viewsheds.
- The County should work with the National Park Services and the Department of Natural Resources to establish new laws and/or enforce existing laws to curb careless behavior of residents and visitors who litter or pollute the banks along the New River.
- Fayette County should establish performance standards for landscaping, access, lot coverage, and buffering adjacent to transportation corridors and between unsightly uses.
- It should be ensured that the natural beauty along scenic vistas from U.S. Route 60 is well preserved.
- The County should introduce and encourage the concept of clustering within the District, whereby development would be grouped and open spaces and scenic vistas would be preserved.
- The County should identify individuals or organizations that would be responsible for the enforcement of any community guideline for development, preservation, building codes, or ordinances.
- The County should establish guidelines for the rehabilitation of buildings and the preservation of the existing structures as a major step in improving the image of the community.





- It should be required that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed inward as to prevent glare for motorists.
- Communities within the Valley District should make every effort to identify and retain older buildings, including modest residences, in town centers throughout the County.
- The County should work with the communities in this District to identify, manage, and protect environmentally sensitive areas in the U.S. Route 60 Corridor.
- The County should regulate the appearance, height, material, and size of signs and billboards in the U.S. Route 60 Corridor.
- Trails should be included in all area clean-up projects within the District. Teenagers and school clubs should be encouraged to take on annual area clean-up projects.
- Temporary dump stations (similar to Quincy) should be introduced in the Valley District twice a year for dumping. This would need to be enforced and monitored. Sites could include Jodie, Gauley Bridge, and Kimberly.
- The Armstrong Creek community should be considered for community gateway improvements.

4. Volunteerism

- A beautification program should be encouraged in the area.
- Volunteer groups should be introduced, particularly through the local high schools that would assist the elderly with yard work and minor home repairs.
- Relevant organizations should establish and/or encourage civic groups such as the Home Owner's Association or Garden Clubs that would instill civic pride and help beautify the community.
- The County should establish and/or encourage existing volunteer groups to assist in tearing down dilapidated buildings to improve the overall community image.





CHAPTER FOURTEEN - COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

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Implementation





CHAPTER FIFTEEN - IMPLEMENTATION

I. OVERVIEW

This Comprehensive Plan outlines the future direction of Fayette County. This future direction is premised upon the implementation of the comprehensive set of activities in this Plan. In order to operationalize these activities and the locally expressed goals, an implementation agenda must be put into action. This agenda can be achieved through various planning program components.

The impact of the Comprehensive Plan, in the long term, will be measured by the degree to which the Plan's implementation recommendations are translated into reality. These recommendations, no matter how carefully conceived, would have little effect in guiding growth and development in the County, if they are not implemented.

The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan serves as only one element of a continuous growth management process for Fayette County. The responsibilities for implementing the Plan must be shouldered by both the public and private sector alike. The Plan serves as the design framework around which relevant future land use decisions are based. Its implementation must be directed by growth management tools—zoning, subdivision and site plan ordinances, and architectural design guidelines, which are fully integrated into the Plan's "vision" for the County. The concept of "linkage" between the Plan and these tools has been a dominant-planning theme in this effort. The following sections address the specific unifying "linkages", which will promote a successful growth management process wherein "growth by design" is fully achieved.

One of the most valuable lessons learned during the County's planning process is that quality built environments and design excellence require exhaustive work by both the private sector (in defining specific market opportunities and project designs) and the public sector (in ensuring project land use compatibility within the context of the Comprehensive Plan). The Comprehensive Plan, by itself, is insufficient to implement "growth by design"; nor can zoning, site plan and subdivision ordinances alone fully ensure that private development will be sensitively created.

The Plan's vision is ultimately defined by the many discrete public and private decisions, which address matters of location, density, scale, infrastructure, visual quality and phasing of any particular development proposal. Accordingly, the tools and methods to be incorporated into the growth management effort must focus on each individual aspect of the land development process.





II. URBAN AND RURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Fayette County Comprehensive Plan recognizes that quality urban design emerges from satisfying issues related to project feasibility, design continuity and site-specific sensitivities. Within any given real estate orientation and site planning exercise, certain fundamental design principles should be carefully tested within this context. Because of the local importance of quality design and the potential pressures for change, creation of effective design review standards should be developed in support of the Comprehensive Plan.

A. Cautions and Comments

1. Analysis

Several communities that have adopted appearance codes have been gathering experience in successful administration and enforcement of aesthetic legislation. The following is a guide to good appearance code regulations.

2. Actions

- Develop and adopt a code of standards for appearance review. A code of standards gives guidance to applicants and avoids the charge that the community is totally arbitrary in appearance and design review.
- Develop clear procedural guidelines to issue to every applicant. Step-by-step instructions help developers and business people understand procedures, time lines, and the necessary submittals. The whole process is much smoother if there is clear communication from the beginning.
- Ensure that the Fayette County Planning and Zoning Commission (or design review body) includes persons who have expertise in making aesthetic judgments; architects are particularly valuable. This is not an area in which the lay person can operate as effectively as an expert. There are judgments involved that call for education and background in the principles of





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design. If no experts are available within the Planning and Zoning Commission, an expert staff member or consultant should be involved.





- Provide some procedure for conferring with the Planning and Zoning Commission before final design. A pre-application conference with staff and/or a preliminary hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission will give the applicant an opportunity to discuss plans before a great deal of time or money is expended. If a certain design is inappropriate, the applicant will know in advance.
- Keep time delays to a minimum. One of the biggest objections by developers and business people to appearance review is the extra time required to get a building permit. In addition, the Planning and Zoning Commission should be prepared to hold extra meetings if necessary to speed up an approval.
- Be careful not to restrict creativity. It would be unfortunate if plans were denied simply because they are unusual. Uniformity in design review should mean application of basic design principles, not conformity in design.
- Efforts should be made to publicize the appearance review codes and procedures. Two benefits should derive from this: (1) developers will be aware of the requirements; and (2) the community will benefit from an awareness of the built environment. Both the developer and community should be able to take pride in their product. A practical suggestion for publicizing the process is to give annual awards for the best design effort.

B. Purpose of Design Guidelines

The purpose of these criteria is to establish a checklist of those items that affect the physical aspect of the County's environment. Pertinent to appearance is the design of the site, building and structures, planting, signs, street hardware, and miscellaneous other objects that are observed by the public.





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The following criteria are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation, or variety. They are to assist in focusing on design principles, which can result in creative solutions that will develop a satisfactory visual appearance within the Corridor, preserve taxable values, and promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the County.





C. Design Guidelines for Development Service Districts

Each type of commercial area possesses its own specific challenges. The issues raised by these challenges are as follows: a) landscape and open space; b) relationship of building site; c) relationship of buildings and site to adjoining area; d) landscape and site treatment; e) harmony and facade design; f) signs; g) access and circulation; h) health; and i) glare.

1. Landscape and Open Space

- Issue: The large-scale and permanent loss of scenic views, characteristic landscapes, and open space is the most devastating visual result of conventionally-regulated commercial highway development in rural areas. The practice in Fayette County has been to permit new development to line both sides of its major transportation corridors, eventually obscuring open fields, pastures, or woodlands behind commercial frontage lots. This kind of homogeneous development contributed greatly to the loss of the character along these corridors.
- Recommended Approach: When zoning commercial areas, the County should not succumb to the broad brush approach of designating all roadside areas for new commercial development. The County should examine the rural landscape to identify the amenities and visual resources, which are present. Rather than allowing linear developments, commercial zoning must be drafted which can break the standard pattern of development. This may be accomplished by designating commercial nodes in compact, centralized areas (located at major road junctions), with visually important rural landscapes protected in-between. In addition, new commercial development should be required to be grouped in such a manner that open space and scenic views are retained.
- Design Guidelines:





- 1) Excellent alternatives exist to commercial strip zoning along roadway frontage in the County's transportation corridors. These alternatives employ some basic modifications to traditional zoning approaches. Each of the following recommended approaches offers a real opportunity to protect the unique characteristics of the transportation corridors.





- 2) Commercial Cluster Development: Instead of allowing commercial developments to be located uniformly along frontage lots, commercial cluster development requires new buildings to be sited in groups, with varying setbacks and well-landscaped areas between the structures and the roadway. This approach maximizes open space around each cluster and helps to preserve scenic views of the surrounding rural landscape. Clustering can be accomplished on a large scale with the development of shopping plazas or office parks. Clustering can also be accomplished at a lesser scale through the sensitive placement of mini-malls or detached, multiple-tenant buildings which respect traditional architectural values.
- 3) Nodal Commercial Development: Nodal development requires new businesses to be grouped at major intersections, rather than being lined up along the entire length of a highway. This development type could be implemented by designating business zones only at such intersections. The land between business zones would be maintained in a less intensive use such as residential or agricultural use.
- 4) Multi-Intensity Zoning: Another way to help control commercial sprawl, traffic congestion, and mixing of conflicting land uses is to designate separate lengths of highway frontage for different intensities of land use. Rather than zoning the entire corridor for all types of business activity, the roadway could be divided into several distinct sections. Each section would have an appropriate level or intensity of permitted land use adjacent to the property. Factors for determining appropriate intensities could include road width, number of travel lanes, maximum speed limit, existing development patterns,





sight-distances, and special accessibility constraints.

A typical highway could, for instance, be classified into three different types of commercial zones: General Business, Large Business, or Limited Business/Residential.





The **General Business** zone would normally be designed to provide a wide range of goods, services, and attractions to meet the everyday needs of County residents. This district should be located with convenient access to residential areas. This district is often designated around a pre-existing grouping of convenience stores and retail shops.

Large Business districts are designated at special locations reserved for major new employers. These districts should be established where adequate utilities are available and preferably at or near the intersection of two arterial roads. This zone should be structured to allow only buildings over a certain size. This zone should be regulated to permit only particular types of uses (such as offices, hotels, and light industries). If this is not done, this valuable land could be divided and sold off to a variety of lower-value businesses (such as gasoline stations, burger stands, factory outlets, and car dealerships), reducing opportunities to boost local employment and property tax revenues.

The **Limited Business/Residential** zone should be designed to help provide for a variety of rural, residential, and tourist-related commercial uses in areas, which are presently not heavily developed. Typical uses allowed in such a district would be residential, home occupations, medical/professional offices, veterinary clinics, real estate offices, antique shops, tourist homes, farm stands, and "sit-down" restaurants (not fast-food restaurants). By excluding most types of retail operations (which are permitted in the General Business zone), this district can





retain its traditional rural character for a longer period of time.

2. Relationship of Building Site

- Issue: Buildings have been constructed in the County in a manner, which obstructs views from the public rights-of-way.
- Recommended Approach: The siting of a building is influenced by many concerns such as site access, topography, the building's function, desired image, and need for parking. Yet, unless the building or development is totally screened from the roadway, it should also be sited and oriented in such a way as to have a positive visual presence on the corridors in the County.
- Design Guidelines:
 - 1) The site should be planned to accomplish a desirable transition with the Corridor and to provide for adequate planting, safe pedestrian movement, and parking areas.
 - 2) Site planning, in which setbacks and yards are in excess of zoning restrictions, is encouraged to provide an interesting relationship between buildings.
 - 3) Parking areas should be treated with decorative elements, building wall extensions, plantings, berms, or other innovative means to screen parking areas from view from public ways.
 - 4) Without restricting the permissible limits of the applicable zoning district, the height and scale of each building should be compatible with its site and existing (or anticipated) adjoining buildings.





- 5) Newly installed utility services, and service revisions necessitated by exterior alterations, should be underground.

3. Relationship of Buildings and Site to Adjoining Area

- Issue: No attempt has been made to halt the visible degradation of the landscape in the Corridor. The architectural style of adjacent buildings is incompatible, landscaping is practically non-existent, and there is no harmony in the corridors within the County.
- Recommended Approach: Buildings should be properly arranged on a site so that they are in harmony with adjoining areas and provide for an efficient and viable long-term use. Landscaping should also be used, visually, to unify a diverse building environment.
- Design Guidelines:
 - 1) Adjacent buildings of different architectural styles should be made compatible by such means as screens, sight breaks, and materials.
 - 2) Attractive landscape transition to adjoining properties should be provided.
 - 3) Harmony in texture, lines, and masses is required. Monotony should be avoided.

4. Landscape and Site Treatment

- Issue: The absence of landscaping and site treatment in the County has contributed to weakly defined edges, lack of overall character and quality, poorly defined entry points, and of large expanses of uninterrupted parking and development.
 - Recommended Approach: Landscaping and site treatment should be used to unify development image and character, define edges (parkways),
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identify entrances, soften parking lots, provide shade, reduce urban heat build-up, filter pollutants, maintain human scale, and introduce visual interest with seasonal changes.

- Design Guidelines:
 - 1) Where natural or existing topographic patterns contribute to beauty and utility of a development, they should be preserved and developed. Modification to topography will be permitted where it contributes to good appearance.
 - 2) Grades of walks, parking spaces, terraces, and other paved areas should provide an inviting and stable appearance for walking and, if seating is provided, for sitting.
 - 3) Landscape treatment should be provided to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas and important axes, and provide shade. Spectacular effects should be reserved for special locations only.
 - 4) Unity of design should be achieved by repetition of certain plant varieties and other materials as well as by correlation with adjacent developments.
 - 5) Plant material should be selected for interest in its structure, texture, and color, and for its ultimate growth. Plants that are indigenous to the area and others that will be hardy, harmonious to the design, and of good appearance should be used.
 - 6) In locations where plants will be susceptible to injury by pedestrian or motor traffic, they should be protected by appropriate curbs, tree guards, or other devices.
 - 7) Parking areas and traffic ways should be enhanced with landscaped spaces containing trees or tree groupings.
 - 8) Where building sites limit planting, the placement of trees in parkways or paved





areas is encouraged. Screening of service yards, and other places that tend to be unsightly, should be accomplished by use of walls, fencing, planting, or combinations of these measures. Screening should be equally effective in winter and summer.

- 9) In areas where general planting will not prosper, other materials such as fences; walls; and paving of wood, brick, stone, gravel, and cobbles should be used. Carefully selected plants should be combined with such materials where possible.
- 10) Exterior lighting, when used, should enhance the building design and the adjoining landscape. Lighting standards and building fixtures should be of a design and size compatible with the building and adjacent areas. Lighting should be restrained in design and excessive brightness avoided.

5. Harmony and Facade Design

- Issue: In most cases, the scale of new commercial structures along the County's corridors is inharmonious with pre-existing traditional buildings and their rural surroundings in the towns along the Corridor. For example, a 10,000 square foot, rectangular, one-story building is altogether incongruous in a farming district where homes and traditional structures are much smaller and where the overall architectural massing includes vernacular additions.





- Recommended Approach: Within zoning districts, lot sizes which are kept consistent with the surrounding pre-existing lot dimensions help to provide for harmony in scale and help to retain the general development of the community. This solution may not apply when commercial or industrial uses are moving into areas of open farmland or where new lot sizes will likely differ from traditional parcel sizes. Also, within the zoning ordinance, restrictions placed upon the bulk, height, and total floor space allowed within any given commercial or industrial structure could do much to protect current building scale. Future floor space could be provided through later additions to the main structure. These would not necessarily be physically separate; but requiring breaks in rooflines and in exterior walls. This design measure would help these additions to express the basic design principles governing the respective towns' older, surrounding architecture.

Proposed commercial development should be harmonious with traditional facades in the County's transportation corridors if the County's character is to be respected and reinforced. This is not to say that all buildings should be of the same architectural style. However, some minimum design guidelines must be applied to new commercial development if it is to fit comfortably and graciously within the existing surroundings.

Local zoning may include a Historic District Ordinance in all the County's municipalities similar to Fayetteville, or Neighborhood Conservation Districts. These districts would give the County or municipalities the ability to regulate improvements and changes in building facades, appearance of signs, landscaping, and site planning. These types of zoning are most appropriate where historic buildings are geographically concentrated, as is often the case in downtown districts, or in urban, town, or village fringe areas where the traditional





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housing stock is being demolished or converted to commercial uses.





In other areas in the County, where preservation and/or conservation district zoning may not be appropriate or where there is property owner resistance to these types of regulations, other means may be employed to help protect the County's character. One example is a site plan review process, which shall include certain minimum requirements for the exterior appearance of any new or altered buildings. This approach is typically applied to non-residential and multi-family uses. The Site Plan may require scale drawings of proposed building facades, showing locations and types of all windows, doors, and exterior materials. The process normally evaluates whether the proposal meets minimum requirements for fitting in with the other uses in the County. These provisions may include a requirement for facing a masonry block building in brick of an appropriate color; a requirement for pitched roofs; and a requirement that window size and spacing conform to the general window proportions and rhythms characteristic of traditional buildings in the area.

- Design Guidelines:
 - 1) Architectural style is not restricted. Evaluation of the appearance of a project should be based on the quality of its design and relationship to surroundings.
 - 2) Buildings should have good scale and be harmonious with permanent neighboring development.
 - 3) Materials should have good architectural character and should be selected for harmony of the building with adjoining buildings.
 - 4) Materials should be selected for suitability to the type of buildings and the design in which they are used. Buildings should have the same materials or
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those that are architecturally harmonious. The same materials should be used for all building walls and other exterior building components wholly or partly visible from public ways.

- 5) Materials should be of durable quality.
 - 6) In any design in which the structural frame is exposed to view, the structural materials should be compatible within themselves and harmonious with their surroundings.
 - 7) Building components, such as windows, doors, eaves, and parapets, should have good proportions and relationships to one another.
 - 8) Colors should be harmonious and should use only compatible accents.
 - 9) Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware on roof, ground, or buildings should be screened from public view with materials harmonious with the building or they should be so located as not to be visible from any public ways.
 - 10) Exterior lighting should be part of the architectural concept. Fixtures, standards, and all exposed accessories should be harmonious with building design.
 - 11) Refuse and waste removal areas, service yards, storage yards, and exterior work areas should be screened from view from public ways, using materials as stated in criteria for equipment screening.
 - 12) Monotony of design in single or multiple building projects should be avoided. Variation of detail, form, and siting should be used to provide visual interest. In multiple building projects, variable
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siting or individual buildings may be used to prevent a monotonous appearance.

6. Signs

- Issue: Signs are essential in drawing customers to businesses in the major transportation corridors in the County. Signs perform the dual function of attracting attention to a particular business, while also directing motorists in the proper direction to find the business. However, signs can be detrimental to any commercial area when they overwhelm either the motorist or the surrounding landscape. Excessive size and number of competing signs is one of the largest causes for visual pollution in Fayette County.





- Recommended Approach: A comprehensive sign ordinance for the County can effectively regulate the proliferation of signs, through a combination of well-reasoned standards governing new signs and an equitable amortization provision to bring existing non-conformities into line with the County's official sign policy. An equitable amortization period would strike a reasonable balance between the owner's property interest in the non-conforming use and the interest of the municipality in the integrity of its zoning ordinance.

- Design Guidelines:
 - 1) Every sign should have good scale and proportion in its design and in its visual relationship to buildings and surroundings.
 - 2) Every sign should be designed as an integral architectural element of the building and site to which it principally relates.
 - 3) The colors, materials, and lighting of every sign should be restrained and harmonious with the building and site to which it principally relates.
 - 4) The number of graphic elements on a sign should be held to the minimum needed to convey the sign's major message and should be composed in proportion to the area of the sign face.
 - 5) Each sign should be compatible with signs on adjoining premises and should not compete for attention.
 - 6) Identification signs of a prototype design and corporation logos should conform to the criteria for all other signs.

7. Access and Circulation





- Issue: As commercial areas in the County become more densely developed and as traffic volumes rise, congestion and traffic accidents increase. Many of these accidents are in large part due to poorly controlled vehicular circulation and poorly designed road access points.





- Recommended Approach: Solutions to traffic problems should be specific to particular situations in each zoning district. However, some guiding principles can be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan for commercial district development. Some of these solutions also require the involvement of the West Virginia Department of Transportation (such as signal installation, synchronized timing of lights, and additional new traffic lanes). Other types of traffic management and access design solutions can be implemented by Fayette County or the municipalities.

In preparing commercial district zoning, the two most important issues are: (1) how much additional traffic can the roadway accommodate safely and efficiently; and (2) by how much would this spare capacity be reduced if all vacant roadside parcels were permitted to be developed with land uses generating a large number of turning movements by vehicles entering and leaving the various new commercial premises. Once these questions have been answered, appropriate types and intensities of adjacent land-use can be determined for the district.

Within any particular development, it is also important that separate access points be provided. This will reduce the number of circulation snarls caused by traffic trying to enter and exit any particular development at the same location simultaneously.

Wherever possible, access should be provided from existing side-streets where they abut the premises on a second road frontage. Where this solution is not available, the County can require that existing undeveloped parcels along the roadway be limited to a single access point (or curb-cut). Such a regulation would prevent a succession of entrances and exits being created by a landowner or developer who divides the parcel into a number of separate frontage lots.





If such a lot pattern is created, all lots from the same original parcel should be accessed from a central point (much in the same way that traffic enters and exits from shopping plazas).

- Design Guidelines:
 - 1) More than one vehicular access point is discouraged. An exception may be made in the case of larger multi-tenant retail centers.





- 2) Service for buildings should be provided in the rear.
- 3) Service trucks are permitted to access from the main street corridor provided such trucks have direct access to the rear of the building.
- 4) An entranceway, whether to a parking area or interior roadway, should be accentuated by street trees as long as site lines for traffic are maintained. All entryways should be bordered by landscaping. After cars enter parking areas, landscaping should be reduced so that motorist can determine where different functional areas—visitor parking, pick-up or drop-off points, and building entrances—are located. The relationship between parking areas and the building's entrance should be direct and clear.
- 5) Vehicular entrances/exits to a site should be consolidated at a single location a sufficient distance away from the intersections.
- 6) If two or more lanes are provided in one direction of a two-way entrance, a planted median strip of at least six feet in width, between incoming and outgoing traffic, should be provided.
- 7) Aisles intersecting with entrance drives should be spaced a minimum of twenty feet from the property line to allow for smooth turning movements.

8. Air Quality

- Issue: Some commercial uses in the Corridor may generate dust, dirt, fly ash, smoke, fumes, vapors, gases, odors, scents, and aromas which could damage the property of neighbors, reduce their property values, and/or cause them personal
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discomfort. None of these conditions is conducive to a healthy and pleasant commercial area.





- Recommended Approach: Effective solutions can be implemented by zoning ordinance amendments, which exclude types of premises likely to produce these unneighborly impacts. However, many of the businesses that one may not want to prohibit (such as restaurants, gasoline stations, and veterinary clinics), which could very conceivably produce unwanted sounds or scents, can also be controlled through use of the Special Permit procedure, in which specific conditions of approval are attached to the permit.
- Design Guidelines: Any activity, operation, or device, which causes or tends to cause the release of air contamination into the atmosphere shall comply with the rules and regulations of the state.

9. Glare

- Issue: Overspill from tall, unshielded, or unfocused floodlights; parking lot luminaires; and security lighting can cause glare and unwelcome illumination on neighboring properties. This is particularly bothersome with regard to windows in bedrooms or motel units, but can also cause traffic safety problems if intense, direct rays from such fixtures are cast into the line of vision of drivers traveling along the public roads.
- Recommended Approach: Fayette County should require that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded and directed to prevent illumination from falling onto adjacent lots and streets. Levels of illumination should also be required to be within a reasonable range of intensity to avoid creating an urban appearance. Generally, a greater number of shorter poles with less intensely-lit lanterns are preferable to a smaller number of very tall fixtures with extremely bright luminaires.
- Design Guidelines:





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- 1) Required Performance Level: All uses, operations, and activities shall be conducted so as to comply with the performance standards governing glare prescribed in this section.





- 2) Method of Measurement: Illumination levels shall be measured with a photoelectric photometer having a spectral response similar to that of the human eye, following the standard spectral luminous efficiency curve adopted by the International Commission on Illumination.
- 3) General Requirements: Uses should be subject to standards shall not produce glare so as to cause illumination in residential districts in excess of 0.5 foot candles. Flickering or bright sources of illumination shall be controlled so as not to be a nuisance in residential districts.

With the implementation of comprehensive design controls, new commercial uses in all three of the above districts can be harmoniously integrated with the surrounding natural and agricultural landscape and with vernacular building styles.

D. Design Guidelines for Activity Centers

The following recommendations can guide and support the process of business district preservation and revitalization in the County's municipalities:

1. Historic Districts and Design Review

A historic preservation and design review program for the business districts should be implemented. This program should apply to any existing or proposed historic districts. A Corridor Protection District should be introduced to recognize the collective value of historic areas and corridors and to create additional measures of protection from outside intrusion. A Design Review District and a Design Review Board should also be established. The intent of these districts and boards would be to preserve, protect, enhance, and maintain the existing architectural values, historic character, and cohesive image of the business districts. The review and approval process is intended to create an atmosphere for compatible growth and to assure that new





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structures, rehabilitated existing structures, and related landscape improvements are in harmony with the character of the area.





In order to make such a program a reality, several steps should be carried out. First, an ordinance should be adopted, based upon the existing historic district designation and the proposed Corridor Protection District. This ordinance should incorporate the necessary administrative requirements in accordance with the West Virginia Code. It should also address such concerns as the definition of boundaries, the make-up of the Design Review Board and its powers and duties, application requirements, jurisdiction, and the appeal process.

Second, an inventory and assessment of the architectural, historic, and visual characteristics of the areas within the districts should be carried out to guide the Board in making fair decisions and to assist in the development of sensitive guidelines. These guidelines should be constructed in a generic framework in order that they may be applied uniformly to subsequent redevelopment efforts. However, within the downtown, detailed site-by-site assessment of existing conditions should be a mandatory requirement of all development applications. With these assessments, specific design recommendations can be addressed and applied to suit the site-specific needs.

Third, design review guidelines should be developed and adopted for use by the Board as a tool to make fair decisions and to encourage appropriate development. These guidelines should differentiate areas of different character including urban, suburban, and open space densities.

The scope and boundaries subject to design review should include all areas designated within the historic district of the towns and extend to include any existing or proposed zoned areas that are subject to commercial development. The final boundaries should be coordinated with the land use plan and zoning districts.

2. Downtown Design Review Guidelines

The Design Review Board should base its conclusions upon a set of design standards, which are applied





uniformly and fairly. The standards must be specific enough to clearly state that decisions are made on an objective basis (not just personal opinion or taste) and yet be general enough so that the Board has enough latitude in responding to a variety of cases. The purpose of the following Design Review Guidelines for business districts is to establish such a balance. The Board should review, revise, and adopt a set of formal design review standards based upon the following factors:





- General Guidelines

The following recommendations address broader observations of general policy leading to the proposed guidelines. There are important concerns that should be considered with regard to the image and character of the business districts as they continue to evolve and change over time. These recommendations can guide decision-making in the future. The recommendations are based upon the premise that maintaining a sense of history through the retention of historically significant buildings makes the community more viable from an economic standpoint.

- 1) Historic Buildings and New Construction

There should be a balance of existing structures and good quality new construction in the business districts in order to retain a sense of historic continuity and increased vitality.

Recommended: The construction of new buildings and the demolition of older ones can erode the character of a business district. Every effort should be made to identify and retain older buildings including modest residences along the Main Street of the County's municipalities. The retention of older buildings should be encouraged through adaptive use. Property acquisition, tax credits, and/or special funding are methods which could encourage compliance.

Not Recommended: Demolition and new construction where important buildings are removed or where the visual continuity of the area is disrupted.

- 2) Continuity of Streetfront Activity

Uninterrupted continuity of pedestrian-related uses and activities should be





encouraged in the business districts, particularly in areas of present activity.

Recommended: Pedestrian-related uses should be strengthened through the adaptive use of existing buildings and the incorporation of new uses. Storefronts, entrances, and windows, which relate to the street, rather than those with an inward focus, should be emphasized in new buildings.

Not Recommended: Street-oriented parking lots or decks, blank building faces, and non-pedestrian related uses (such as warehouses) along major pedestrian-oriented streets.

3) Lighting

Recommended: Adequate light levels, together with a coordinated street and pedestrian lighting system with fixtures that are visually in keeping with the downtown character, should be encouraged. Lighting in public areas, as well as private open spaces and parking areas, should be compatible in design and coordinated with placement. For example, incandescent or metal halide lighting should be used where appropriate. This type of lighting provides warmer illumination, which is more in keeping with the historical setting.

Not Recommended: Over-illumination or inadequate lighting and poorly coordinated selection of fixtures, which are not in character with the business districts. For example, the use of low pressure sodium, which emits a harsh orange colored light that is inconsistent with the surroundings, should be discouraged.

4) Signs





Recommended: The visual impact of all signs, both public and private, should be minimized yet fulfill their function. There should be an effort to coordinate the location and appearance of signs via the use of design standards. The keys to good sign design are shape, consistency of color, form, and placement of message. Grouped signs that are close to, or mounted on, buildings are preferred to scattered or freestanding signs. Provision of design assistance to businesses as well as the development of a manual on good design practices, are excellent ways to gain private sector cooperation.

Not Recommended: Signs that collectively contribute to visual clutter and are poorly coordinated.





5) Open Space and Parking

Recommended: All private and public open space should carefully relate to the street in terms of design, visibility, and access. Parking decks or surface parking lots should be adequately screened. These areas should be designed to blend in with the character of the business districts, be of high quality, and be well-maintained.

Not Recommended: Open spaces, which are in contrast with the character of the business districts, are strongly discouraged. These contrasts may include excessive size, improper screening, poor materials, and weak or inadequate pedestrian amenity.

- Guidelines for New Construction

New construction or new buildings that are to be constructed in the holes of the existing fabric of the business districts, should relate to and respect the continuity and character of existing blockfronts and groupings of buildings. Existing blockfronts and grouped buildings are a strong determinant of the character of downtown. The goal is to maintain quality, character, and visual continuity. The following guidelines address these concerns. All structures used as precedents must undergo strict design review to ensure compatibility with the character of the downtown.

1) Height

Recommended: New buildings should be constructed to a height compatible with existing surrounding buildings. New buildings should have the same number of stories and be within 10 percent of the average height of existing buildings as seen from the street.





Not Recommended: New buildings that vary significantly in actual height and number of stories so as to contrast with the characteristics of surrounding buildings.





2) Width and Proportion

Recommended: The width and proportion of new buildings (the relationship of a building's width to its height) should be similar to, and compatible with, existing buildings along the same street. When larger buildings are proposed, they should be designed so that the major elements of the facade reflect the width and proportion of the surrounding buildings.

Not Recommended: New buildings that vary significantly in width and in relation of height to width from that of surrounding buildings. It is recognized that the nature and space needs of some uses may not necessarily allow the adherence to this guideline.

3) Relationship to Street

Recommended: New buildings should have setback relationships to the street consistent with their neighbors. Variations in the setbacks of new buildings should not exceed 10 percent of the average of that of the surrounding buildings.

Not Recommended: New buildings with setbacks and locations on sites, which vary significantly from the existing character along the street or downtown in general. For example, a new building which has a deep setback or is placed in contrast to that of its neighbor's should be discouraged. Large plazas and parking in front of new buildings should be avoided.

4) Street Level Vitality

Recommended: The street level of new buildings should be the primary orientation and access for pedestrians. An abundance





of windows should be provided to facilitate window shopping and to create visual interest.

Not Recommended: Street level facades that have dull, alienating, and blank walls that provide little visual interest. A primarily internal orientation with little or no street oriented access should be avoided.

5) Roof Forms

Recommended: The roofs of new buildings should be consistent with surrounding buildings in type, shape, and material.

Not Recommended: New buildings with roofs that differ significantly in shape, pitch, and materials.

6) Directional Expression of Facades

Recommended: The facades of new buildings should be compatible with the directional expression of surrounding facades whether that expression is vertical, horizontal, or non-directional.

Not Recommended: The construction of new buildings that contrast dramatically in directional expression with their neighbors should be avoided. This factor is generally determined by the structural form of the building, the placement and shape of openings, and the architectural detailing.

7) Proportion of Openings

Recommended: The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height, of window and door openings should be similar and compatible with those on surrounding facades.





Not Recommended: New buildings, where the size or proportion of window and door openings vary dramatically from that of surrounding facades.

8) Solids and Voids Within a Facade

Recommended: The rhythm and ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) should relate to, and be compatible with, surrounding facades.

Not Recommended: Construction of new buildings which lack any orderly rhythm of solids and voids or that express a significant variance in the ratio of openings to solid planes in relationship to surrounding facades.

9) Materials and Textures

Recommended: The selection of materials and textures for a new building should be compatible with, and complement, surrounding buildings. This is particularly important in residential areas due to the predominance of frame construction.

Not Recommended: Materials and textures that vary significantly from surrounding facades and cause the building to visually stand out against surrounding buildings.

10) Color

Recommended: The selection and use of colors for a new building should be coordinated and compatible with surrounding buildings, particularly in areas where consistent color families predominate.

Not Recommended: New buildings, which vary significantly in color from surrounding buildings. An exception will be made where





continuity of color is not an important factor.

11) Architectural Details

Recommended: The architectural details of new buildings should relate to, and be compatible with, the architectural detailing of surrounding buildings.

Not Recommended: Overly simplified, unarticulated, or bland new buildings that are devoid of details, particularly in areas where buildings with rich detailing and ornamentation are common.

12) Relation to Historic Styles

Recommended: New buildings should be compatible with the historic and architectural character of the area should also be recognized as products of their own time.





- Guidelines for Signs and Awnings

Commercial signs are a vital component of a business district. However, a balance must be struck between the need to identify and call attention to individual businesses and the broader need for a positive identity and image for the Main Street of any business district. Signs should not be a detraction but an enhancement in the business districts. Excessive competition for visibility and an overemphasis on being seen from the automobile have often resulted in a shopping environment characterized by visual clutter with oversized, poorly placed, and badly designed signs.

Awnings, too, can either add to or detract from the character of the business districts. This depends on the care and attention given to their use. The goal is to ensure that the use of signs and awnings not only add to the overall image of the business districts but also enhance the buildings and storefronts of which they are a part. The following guidelines should be used as supplemental and supportive of a sign ordinance which should be included in the bag of tools that is available to the Board during design review.

- 1) Sign Design, Materials, and Color

Recommended: Sign design and graphics should be coordinated with the character of the building as well as the nature of the business concerned and should be of professional quality. Materials should be selected in relation to each structure so as to appear to be a natural part of the total building. Colors should relate to and complement the materials and color scheme of the building including accent highlights and trim colors. Natural materials should be used as much as possible. The use of subtle, muted colors should be encouraged and the number of





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colors on any one sign should be limited to three.

Not Recommended: Signs that are not compatible with their building and storefront due to poor design, inappropriate materials, or uncoordinated colors should be discouraged.



2) Sign Illumination

Recommended: The illumination of signs should be subtle and understated, yet visible at night and in keeping with the character of the building. Signs should be indirectly lit with an invisible incandescent light source in keeping with the character of each building. The purpose should be to light the sign, not the surrounding area.

Not Recommended: Overly bright and internally illuminated plastic signs should be avoided. Lighting that causes excessive glare for motorists, pedestrians, or surrounding areas should also be discouraged.

3) The Role of Awnings

Recommended: Awnings can be a visual asset to a building and provide continuity along a blockfront. They can also provide weather protection for pedestrians and be energy efficient. The use of awnings should be carefully coordinated with each building so as to be compatible. Awnings can provide continuity among buildings of disparate character by using them continuously along a blockfront. Similar colors and patterns can emphasize this continuity. Where buildings are similar in character, awnings can emphasize that similarity. The degree of applicability will vary in cases especially those concerning existing structures.

Not Recommended: Care should be taken to avoid over-conformity as a result of too much similarity among buildings of differing character. Excessive variation in type, color, and pattern could also create a lack of continuity.



4) Awning Types and Locations

Recommended: The selection of awning types, materials, and their placement should be carefully coordinated and be compatible with the characteristics of the building and conditions along the street. Standard slanted fabric awnings, whether fixed or retractable, are generally appropriate for most buildings. Other shapes, such as boxed or curved awnings, may be appropriate if carefully designed. Placement in relation to storefront openings and signs should be carefully considered. In certain instances, canopies and marquees may be appropriate if carefully coordinated with the architecture of the building. The selection of awning materials should be coordinated and compatible. Fabrics should be selected for strength, durability, and stability.

Not Recommended: Awnings that are metal, overly ornate, or are not carefully coordinated with the building and storefront. The size, type, and placement of awnings should not interfere with existing or proposed street trees or other elements along the street.

5) Awning Colors

Recommended: The selection of awning colors should be coordinated and compatible with the buildings, as well as the surrounding buildings, to create a coherent overall color scheme. Solid colors, wide stripes, and narrow stripes should be considered where appropriate.

Not Recommended: Overly bright colors or complex patterns that are not carefully coordinated with the building and storefront.





6) Signs on Awnings

Recommended: The front panel of an awning may be used for a sign where appropriate. Letters may be sewn on or silk screened on the front drop or valance of an awning when it is a part of an overall and coordinated scheme.





- Guidelines for Private Site Elements

The relationship between existing and new buildings along a corridor and the landscape features within a property's boundary or the building site help define its character and should be considered a vital part of any project.

Private site elements are generally associated with private responsibilities and involve retaining, preserving, and maintaining existing elements as well as the creation of new elements within a given site. These elements can include driveways, walkways, out-buildings, garages, lighting, fences, walls, benches, terraces, signs, fountains, canal systems, drainage ditches, trees and planting, and archeological features. All of the following criteria apply to both improvements and modifications related to rehabilitation projects and new construction.

All site improvements and modifications should be compatible with the character of the existing surroundings for the purpose of contributing to the continuity and character of the County's transportation corridors. All site elements should relate to individual features, materials, and their arrangement so as to provide a wall of continuity along the street and enhance the building on the site.

- 1) Site Features

Recommended: All modifications to, or the addition of, site features such as garages, other structures, parking areas, and drives should be compatible with the existing surrounding sites and buildings. Improvements should also contribute to the character of the site and not detract from the buildings or the surrounding area.

Not Recommended: New site features that vary significantly from the surrounding





conditions or detract from the building or the surroundings should be discouraged. For example, parking areas, garages, or storage buildings (particularly the prefabricated metal type) should not be built near the front or in areas that are visible from the street.





2) Walls and Fences

Recommended: Walls, fences, hedges, and gates should be continued where appropriate. Maintenance and repair of existing walls and fences is also important and should be carried out in lieu of replacement.

Not Recommended: The use of walls, fences, and gates which are incompatible with the surrounding sites or inappropriate to the existing site conditions. For example, chain-link, split rail, or stockade fences should be discouraged in areas where iron fences predominate or where fences are not used or necessary. Similarly, concrete or concrete block wall should be discouraged in areas where stone walls or hedges predominate.

3) Ground Surfaces

Recommended: Ground surface materials such as paving, ground cover planting, and terraces should be compatible with existing surrounding sites, site conditions, and the character of the building. Compatibility with public sidewalk materials should be encouraged.

Not Recommended: The use of ground surfaces that vary significantly from the surrounding conditions, do not fit the site configuration, or detract from the character of the building. For example, front yards that have an extensive mixture of concrete paving materials and walks with little grass or ground cover planting should be avoided where the surrounding sites have large areas of grass and few paved areas. Hard surfaced paving such as walks should not conflict in character with adjacent sidewalk materials.





4) Planting

Recommended: Private landscaping plays a major role in determining the overall character of the corridors and provides continuity. Efforts should be made to relate what is done on one site with that of its neighboring sites. In many instances, large trees on private property along the streets and sidewalks contribute to an avenue effect in a downtown area. The continuation of this precedent should be encouraged. Periodic maintenance should be carried out to ensure the proper health and appearance of landscaping.

Not Recommended: The use of planting that varies significantly from surrounding conditions, does not reinforce continuity, or detracts from the character of the building. For example, the intensive use of mixed shrubbery and small ornamental trees in an area where large lawn or ground cover areas with large shade trees prevail is inappropriate. The removal of existing shade trees or not providing them where they might contribute to the continuity of street trees along the street should be avoided.

5) Lighting

Recommended: The character of lighting fixtures should be indirect, understated, and compatible with the character of the surrounding area and the building. Light levels should provide for adequate safety, yet not detract from or overly emphasize the site or building. Incandescent lighting or metal halide is recommended where appropriate.

Not Recommended: Light fixtures and levels of light should not detract from or over-





emphasize the site, the building, and their surroundings. For example, numerous ornate fixtures with a bright, highly visible light source or bright floodlights illuminating a building or site should be discouraged, particularly where surrounding lighting is subdued or understated. Low pressure sodium is strongly recommended.





6) Utilities

Recommended: All necessary utilities and other site appurtenances such as overhead wires, utility poles, antennas, and exterior heat exchangers should be placed where they are least likely to attract attention or should be screened with landscaping. Placing utility services underground is encouraged where it can be accomplished.

Not Recommended: Utilities and other site appurtenances, which are located where they detract from the site as seen from the street and other visible areas. For example, highly visible overhead utilities connecting to the front facade should be relocated to less visible areas or placed underground.

E. Other Design Review Possibilities

1. Design Review Process

A design review process generally works best when it is perceived as positive and helpful rather than punitive and reactive. Also, the educational and awareness-raising role of design review cannot be over emphasized. In this light, the following suggestions, which have worked well in other communities, are strongly recommended for consideration by Fayette County's municipalities:

- Institute pre-application conferences where the reviewing board and applicant can informally discuss the merits of a project prior to formal submittal.
- Create a fully-illustrated design review manual setting good and bad examples and explaining the intent of the standards.





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- Prepare a slide show, videotape, or poster illustrating good and bad examples.





- Develop and offer a Design Assistance Program to assist building owners in design decisions. The towns and County should institute a program that would make landscape architects, architects, and designers knowledgeable about downtown design issues available at little or no cost to eligible owners. This program would apply to facades, storefronts, signs, and landscaping.
- Training programs for Review Board members could be conducted by consultants to make Board members more comfortable with design decisions based upon fair and equitable input.
- The use of student interns from local colleges and Universities to help develop and carry out any of the above efforts should be encouraged.

2. Sign Ordinance

- A well-enforced sign ordinance should be developed for the County's business districts, entry corridors, gateways, and Interstate pass-throughs, which includes the elimination of existing non-conforming signs and prevention of new signs that are not in keeping the character of the community.

3. Billboard Ordinance

- The County should differentiate between signs and billboards when developing ordinances that establish appearance codes.
 - The role of the Interstate in Fayette County is unique when compared to many of the other counties in the State of West Virginia. Due to its unique role, Fayette County regulates signs differently along the Interstate compared to Development Centers and Activity Centers in the County. Interstate 77 crosses Fayette County in the southwest corner without having been a stimulus for any appreciable economic development around its three exits (Mossy, Mahan and Pax). The County, regardless of this misfortune, still
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recognizes the importance of having an Interstate in its County. For this reason, the County permits billboards along this vital transportation corridor in the County and State.





- Billboards, along Interstate 77 in Fayette County, serve as the primary use in the viewshed of the Interstate due to the very nature of the relationship between the land along the Interstate and the Interstate. If access were provided into the parcels of land fronting the Interstate in Fayette County, it would have served as a catalyst for a number of development opportunities on these properties. Consequently, the access would have raised land values, stimulated development, expanded the tax base, created additional jobs in the County, and improved the public welfare of residents and businesses in the County. However, since access cannot be provided to all properties fronting Interstate 77, these properties have experienced marginal development at best.
- By permitting billboards on I-77, the County is affording the property owners along the Interstate an opportunity to reap economic benefits that would not have otherwise been available to them when compared to their counterparts in the County who own land fronting other major transportation corridors (i.e. U.S. Route 19 and U.S. Route 60). Properties along U.S. Routes 60 and 19 have the advantage of at-grade intersections that afford them immediate access, high visibility, slower design speeds, more defined street edges, and visual chaos that forces drivers to drive at slower speeds with greater awareness. This in turn eliminates the need for billboards along the County's major transportation corridors; with the exception of Interstate 77. The County's sign ordinance should reflect this differentiation and prohibit billboards on all transportation routes other than Interstate 77.
- Billboards on Interstate 77 generate revenue for property owners along the Interstate, provide opportunities for County identification along the Interstate, will serve as a means to attract travelers to Fayette County destinations, and





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ultimately improve the welfare of the County. Billboards, in effect, are the principal uses in the Interstate 77 Corridor, due to poor visibility from the roads where they have access, lack of adequate infrastructure, and low traffic volumes.





- Billboards are not the principal use on the U.S. Route 60 and 19 corridors. These corridors in Fayette County serve the County's Activity and Development Centers. They are the growth areas of Fayette County. Billboards in the County's Development and Activity Centers would only add visual clutter to these growth areas. It has been proven in studies conducted by the Federal Highway Administration that visual clutter affects everything from work performance and mood to blood pressure to blood pressure and facial muscle activity. If the County would contribute to this clutter, the welfare and, perhaps, the health of the public could conceivably be affected over a long period of time and exposure. In light of these findings, the County should not encourage competing principal uses on U.S. Routes 60 and 19.
- An ordinance that prohibits billboards on the County's major transportation corridors (i.e. U.S. Route 19 and U.S. Route 60), excluding I-77, and permits billboards on Interstate 77 would reduce visual clutter in the built environment along all of the County's transportation corridors. Billboards would not compete with a built environment along I-77. They would, however, compete with a number uses on U.S. Route 60 and 19. Among other uses, they would compete with buildings, infrastructure, and scenic viewsheds.
- The ordinance recommended would reduce visual clutter by regulating competing principal uses along all of the County's transportation corridors. The ordinance that ultimately helps the County achieve this objective should propose standards that would prohibit billboards from sharing property with another principal user. The regulation would mean that billboards could not crowd structures (i.e. buildings and utilities) and scenic vistas (which would also be considered the principal use).

4. Sign Inventory and Evaluation





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- Directional, informational, and regulatory signs are necessary for the proper functioning of business districts. However, if improperly placed, poorly organized, in poor condition, or too many in number, they can contribute to visual clutter.





- An evaluation of the existing signs by officials of the towns, county, and state should be conducted to identify opportunities for improvement. Redundant signs can be removed, necessary signs may be clustered, smaller signs may be installed, an improved mounting system may be employed, and the design of individual signs may be improved. If a logo is created for the community, it can often be incorporated in public signs.

5. Factors for Evaluation

The following factors and characteristics, which affect the appearance of a development, will govern the Planning and Zoning Commission's evaluation of a design submission:

- Conformance to ordinances and the Appearance Code.
- Logic of design.
- Exterior space utilization.
- Architectural character.
- Attractiveness.
- Material selection.
- Harmony and compatibility.
- Circulation (vehicular and pedestrian).
- Maintenance aspects.

III. GROWTH MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

If future growth is to be orchestrated via strengthened linkages between the planning process and land development controls, County officials and private landowners/developers must develop a mechanism for public/private dialogue at the project inception stage. At the same time, while promoting communications between the developer and the regulator of the land development process, the County does not want to place an undue burden on any applicant. As such, this process should be structured so that the involved parties can fully explore planning issues, concerns and site opportunities, at the pre-planning level. "Pre-planning conferences" and "urban design conferences" should be conducted prior to the site plan and/or subdivision stages of the planning process.





In order to encourage development projects, which meet the requirements of the land use plan and planning district activities described in Comprehensive Plan, certain land use objectives and project site design principles must be advanced. These objectives include (1) the recognition of internal and external land use relationships, (2) the importance of coordinating growth and development, (3) the identification of building locations and massing, (4) the preservation of open space and creation of recreational amenities and (5) the establishment of appropriate pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems. When viewed in its entirety, the County's growth management program, consisting of the

Comprehensive Plan, facilities master plans, regulatory ordinances, development standards, and "design" review process, must seek to optimize these objectives. To be effective, the "design partnership" concept must be applied through close working relationships among the private developer, County staff and officials, and their design consultants on each development application. In this regard, prior to formal submission of any particular master plan, site plan or subdivision plat, and preliminary worksessions should be conducted to ensure that all major planning and development issues are properly addressed. The following framework should be followed in coordinating public/private dialogue at the conceptual site planning stage:

A. Project Land Use and Density

1. Functional organization of the site.
2. Land use relationships.
3. Net developable area.
4. Performance-based density.
5. Land use yield.
6. Compatibility with Comprehensive Plan.

B. Transportation and Circulation

1. Identify transportation hierarchies.
2. Vehicular access and circulation.
3. Pedestrian access and circulation.

C. Design Standards

1. Compatibility of scale.
2. Compatibility of design.
3. Landscape style.
4. Architectural style.





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D. Environment

1. Inventory of assets.
2. Quality of ecological setting.
3. Preservation of natural systems.
4. Quality of environmental design.
5. Open space and conservation.

E. Public Infrastructure

1. Adequate public facilities.
2. Utility and traffic impact analysis.

The dialogue should conclude only upon the mutual satisfaction of Fayette County's private interests that the project concept and its refinements can answer, in the affirmative, this question: Is this the very best we can do for this property at this point in time?

In achieving this end, private landowners and developers will need to become fully cognizant of the specifics of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as the overall nature and intent of the growth management process. In response, their understanding should be reflected in the pre-planning work sessions with County officials. A key element of this process is the recognition of the urban and environmental design guidelines. The Plan recommends the incorporation of these land use regulatory measures, which place a greater degree of accountability on the private sector. Thus, it is incumbent upon the developer/applicant to initiate the next stage in the planning process by providing the County with illustrative concepts and schematic land use plans, which serve to further refine the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. It is important that these concept plans be viewed as precursors to formal preliminary and final plat and plan submissions. While the intent of this dynamic public/private planning exercise is to ensure full appreciation of and compatibility with all urban and environmental design issues, it is not intended to preclude creativity in site-specific architectural and landscape design.





IV. STREAMLINING REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

A. Land Use

Planning is a continuous process. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to capture a vision of the future of Fayette County. As such, it provides a basis for a wide variety of public and private actions and decisions that should be undertaken in the County over time. The Plan is not a static document because communities are not static. Communities are dynamic. They are continually evolving and changing. The Plan provides general guidelines and recommendations to the County in order that piecemeal improvements and day-to-day development decisions can be properly evaluated against their long-term impact upon the County.

The Land Use element outlines the proposed conceptual development pattern of the County. However, it is not a detailed blueprint. Local conditions, values and objectives change as a result of evolving economic and political pressures. The Plan should subsequently be responsive to these changes. The Plan is not a document that encourages regimentation. It is a guide that encourages patterns of development that, in turn, permit orderly and efficient community growth.

B. Zoning

Initially, the County's policies should be revised so that they may closely follow the recommendations articulated throughout this Plan. By updating the Fayette County Zoning Ordinance to incorporate such recommendations, a proper type and sequence of growth will be detailed that will efficiently utilize existing or anticipated infrastructure while preserving those areas of the County vital to its identity.

Specifically, the new zoning ordinance will be written and adopted encouraging the implementation of several recommendations set forth in this Plan. Ideally, several new zones and/or performance regulations should be created and others modified to engage portions of the Future Land Use Plan detailed in the Plan. County officials should resist the amendment and alteration of zoning policies that deviate from the recommendations made in this Plan unless those officials are convinced that the Plan failed to consider some unforeseen condition, or that a significant change in the character of the community has changed since the Plan's adoption, which would necessitate a change in zoning policy.





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The following actions will be taken by the County to implement the Land Use Plan:

1. Preparation of a performance zoning ordinance that reflects the goals and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Providing reasonable consideration to the Future Land Use Plan map in a preparing new zoning map for the ordinance.
3. Characterizing the new zoning ordinance to ensure they meet the following guidelines:
 - Be flexible and dynamic;
 - Be equitable;
 - Be brief and easy to understand;
 - Be enforceable;
 - Be easily administered;
 - Be sensitive to the cost effects of regulation;
 - Keep districts to a minimum;
 - Provide for public hearings on major land use changes;
 - Be streamlined to avoid costly development review delays, including greater use of administrative approvals; and
 - Be current, monitored, amended, and evaluated in its entirety at least every five years, in cycle with the major update of the comprehensive plan.
4. Including the following statement of intent in the new zoning ordinance:
 - "Fayette County's geography requires careful planning and efficient land use management. In view of this, primary considerations of the new zoning ordinance will be to implement the Future Land Use Plan and provide practical, predictable, equitable and simple solutions that minimize or eliminate the conflicts between the County's existing and planned land uses. Likewise, local residents' concerns are a primary consideration of the zoning ordinance."
 - By their very nature, zoning cases force a confrontation between landowners and the public interest, or landowners against each other.





- Most zoning ordinance in West Virginia have regularly forced a "winner-take-all" solution to zoning conflicts. For instance, whenever a rezoning has encountered objections, the Planning Commission and County Commissioners have had two choices—either to permit the rezoning to the alleged detriment of the objectors or to prohibit the rezoning to the objection of the landowner or developer who proposed it.
- If the rezoning permits a use or activity, surrounding landowners have little protection from any of the negative impacts. Most ordinances in West Virginia have few protective performance criteria to assure compatibility among adjacent properties. Accordingly, a zoning ordinance will be developed with substantial efforts given to finding equitable solutions to recognized and potential conflicts that zoning cases might cause.
- A performance zoning ordinance can provide more equitable provisions based upon the Future Land Use Plan. This new zoning ordinance should be prepared according to the following guidelines:
 - 1) The ordinance shall clearly distinguish among zoning districts based upon the intent of the Future Land Use Plan designations and other reasonable considerations.
 - 2) Zoning districts shall be as few in number as possible, each with a clearly different purpose.
 - 3) Zoning districts shall direct development to those areas capable of being adequately served by public utilities and road networks.
 - 4) Zoning districts shall be planned to handle long-term needs.
 - 5) Zoning districts shall permit, by right, as many potentially compatible uses as possible, subject to performance criteria.
 - 6) Performance criteria shall protect the community's general welfare and assure compatibility of land use.
 - 7) Performance criteria shall be designed to provide a range of choices, flexibility, and options for development.
 - 8) Performance criteria shall be objective standards, easily administered by County staff.





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- 9) The ordinance shall contain provisions for its regular review and update.





5. Carrying out the following activities in preparing the new zoning ordinance:
 - Hold a Countywide symposium on the merits of land use guidance and regulatory practices (i.e. site planning, design guidelines, and zoning).
 - Hold community meetings throughout the County to inform the public and invite participation.
 - Meet with civic and professional associations in Fayette County to inform and invite their participation.
 - Disseminate information through printed and audio-visual means to inform the public.
 - Provide periodic progress reports from the Planning Commission to the County Commission.

C. Administrative Strategies for Fayette County

1. Status of Administrative Programs

The administrative framework to direct the new land development regulations and other actions is essential to effective plan implementation. The existing organization and administrative procedures were established prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Given the changes anticipated by the new Comprehensive Plan, new administrative procedures for assuring a continuous and up-to-date process of planning and implementation must be established.

Long-range planning is rightfully a primary function of the Fayette County Planning Commission. When this Comprehensive Plan is adopted, the need to continue long-range planning activities will become evident. Long-range planning includes the maintenance of planning information systems, updates to the Comprehensive Plan, coordination of functional plans for capital facilities and preparation of land development regulations.

The membership of the Planning Commission should be by geographic area. Its role in recent years has been increasingly active, particularly since the new comprehensive plan was being prepared. The activity level should continue to change as plan implementation gets fully underway. Increased technical expertise, a strengthened staff role, and a closer tie to the County Commission may be necessary as Planning Commission responsibilities become more visible and complex.





2. Administrative Program Recommendations

The County should take the following actions to implement the Comprehensive Plan:

- Organization: Review the County's present organization for implementing the Comprehensive Plan and administering regulations, recognizing three distinct functions of planning and implementation:
 - 1) Planning, which emphasizes long-range, comprehensive planning functions;
 - 2) Development Review, which emphasizes current planning functions; and
 - 3) Code Enforcement, which emphasizes plan enforcement functions.

In order to properly prioritize the activities in this Plan, seek necessary funding for projects and programs and ensure equitable geographic representation when selecting activities to implement, this Plan recommends that the Transition Team remain intact with a minor modification. The Transition Team should be comprised of sixteen members. Four members should be appointed from each of the four planning districts (Plateau, New Haven, Valley and Danese/Meadow Bridge).

The Transition Team will have quarterly forums to solicit input from the various districts on activity prioritization, plan implementation, progress, evaluation and exchanging information. The Transition Team will then advise the Planning and Zoning Commission on its findings.

- Appearance Improvement: Promote excellence in design and take measures to protect valuable natural, historical, and cultural resources. Pursue the establishment of an Appearance Improvement Committee as a subcommittee of the Planning Commission.
- Capital Facilities Planning: Prepare special planning studies dealing with land use issues of public facilities, such as landfills and water reservoirs.



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- Capital Facilities Review: Prepare staff review and reporting procedures for capital facilities review.
- Staff Reports: Continue staff review on all requests based upon the Comprehensive Plan guidelines and provisions of any new development regulations.
- Community and Area Plans: Set priorities and prepare a detailed community plan for community planning areas and in conjunction with adjoining jurisdictions.

V. PROVIDING FOR FLEXIBLE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS TO PROMOTE INNOVATIVE AND COST-SAVING DESIGN TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Following are several models for flexible development regulations to promote innovative and cost-saving design to protect the environment. Models one through four are useful for incorporating "rural clustering" into the planning and zoning program. The rural cluster models are a tool to guide the design of residential development in rural areas, where the Comprehensive Plan determines that assets such as rural character, farming and environmental quality must be protected. Model five is useful for "sensitive" areas protection.

1. **Model One** is a brief set of guidelines, goals, objectives and policies for incorporating rural clustering into the Comprehensive Plan.
2. **Model Two** is a hypothetical set of legislative findings. These findings are included to illustrate important substantive and procedural steps for adopting rural cluster ordinance as part of the County planning and zoning program.
3. **Model Three** offers a method for incorporating rural clustering into the County zoning ordinance. It uses the concept of an "overlay zone."
4. **Model Four** uses bonus density and design standards to encourage a specialized form of rural cluster zoning called "enclave" development.
5. **Model Five** focuses on protection of sensitive areas, uses bonus density, provides a formula for calculating open space requirements and allowable density, and is generally intended for areas having water and sewer.





VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS DESIGNATED FOR GROWTH IN THE PLAN THROUGH THE USE OF INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES

A. Introduction

Fayette County must recognize the very complex and competitive environment in which economic development is conducted. To yield the benefits of private sector activities in Fayette County, the County must thoroughly understand the language of business. This language includes knowing broad economic, as well as specific industry, trends and their applicability to the local environment. This language also recognizes the specific needs and necessary role for government in helping existing businesses and attracting new investment.

When devising a comprehensive strategy for enhancing economic development in Fayette County, it must be recognized that the County is a large and complex political subdivision. This complexity yields the County great advantages, while also providing certain formidable challenges that are found in a highly diversified economy and population. This diversity demands that a detailed and sophisticated strategy and work plan represent, in great detail, the various components and inter-relationships of the engine that is Fayette County's economy.

It is extremely important that such elements as tourism, small business development, commercial revitalization, agriculture, industrial development, existing business retention, and new/expanding business development be coalesced into an integrated and thoughtful economic development program.

This program should be forward-thinking and pro-active, and not just reactive to opportunities that may present themselves. Fayette County has the ability to provide the impetus for economic growth by properly convening the appropriate and necessary resources. To accomplish that, 4-C and Fayette County must adopt a broad policy direction and set specific objectives that can help facilitate and influence investment decisions.

For this Plan to be successful, it must be designed to be flexible and regularly monitored to make adjustments as unanticipated opportunities are presented. The County should therefore review this document on an annual basis to assess its continuing validity. It will remain absolutely crucial for the County to react quickly as broad economic trends and regional trends may dictate.





B. Business Retention and Economic Revitalization

The health of the County's existing economic base is of unquestioned importance. A highly diversified workforce and economy provides tremendous employment opportunities to County residents. The County government recognizes that it must place the highest priority on assuring that this base remains healthy. To that end, the 4-C Economic Development Authority and Fayette County Commission must establish and maintain close relations with representative business organizations. They must also be responsive to government process and regulatory hindrances, capital needs for expansion and modernization, and workforce skill development. Government, with the private sector, can also recognize the inter-relationships of industries in order to help existing business capitalize on growth of the County's existing business and new business development.

As such, a Business Retention Committee should be formed within 4-C for Fayette County and be a primary liaison to the County's existing business base. This Committee will have such diverse responsibilities as assisting small business development coordinating a multitude of projects that support the County's planning districts, and creating a broad growth policy. Additionally, this Committee will be a communications link between existing businesses.

C. Business Development and Special Projects

In order to position the local economy to enjoy prosperity in the coming years, a leadership role must be assumed by County government as well as the business and educational sectors. Once it is fully understood that the County has its own particular set of strengths and limitations, the County will have the ability to build substantial efforts to attract investment. At present, Fayette County has the opportunity to be a leader in positioning itself to attract various emerging industries in West Virginia that will drive tomorrow's economy. However, to attract these industries, the County must diversify its economy, assist businesses with the location of capital and financing, encourage entrepreneurship, focus on technology in its business retention and recruitment efforts, and develop an incentive package (tax and non-tax incentives) for existing and new businesses.

Toward this goal, a Business Development Committee should be created to concentrate on attracting new business and investment. The County should intelligently identify new opportunities and assemble supporting programs to encourage and influence investment decisions. This can be accomplished by creating specific industry strategies and





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the application of those for certain targeted areas. These efforts will be supported by developing the appropriate program that can help the County as well as the region emerge as leaders in certain growth industries.





This Committee will also oversee certain "special development projects" that evolve out of the capital improvement program and are supported by the community. These projects can represent very special potential in their eventual impact on the local economy and should be pursued with vigor. As such, the Committee must professionally administer these projects as unique and important elements of an integrated economic development program.

D. Tourism and Economic Development

This section focuses on implementing actions related to tourism. These items evolved out of the 2001 Corridor L Regional Tourism Conference. The outcome of the conference was the development of an implementation strategy to address Fayette County's seasonal paradigm in the next year through the implementation of these recommendations. The following recommendations key on areas where the County can experience success between the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan and March of 2002. In addition, critical steps have been outlined that will assist in reaching the goals. Timelines related to when the tasks should be accomplished have also been included.

1. Heritage Tourism

As stated at the conference, the Corridor L Board will take on the task of developing the Heritage Trails/Tours. The approach will be through maps, interpretive signage, driving tours and a marketing program that is folded into the Regional Marketing effort that will include branding, a slogan and packaging.

On the ideas broached for a Heritage Festival, the festival is further explained in the section titled "Event Management" and will be one of four flagship festivals proposed for the region.

The implementation strategy for the Heritage Trails is as follows:

- Convene steering committee consisting of Corridor L Board and local historic agencies (prior to June 1).
- Identify all heritage sites in the Corridor L area, categorize and identify any current interpretive efforts for those sites (by June 30).





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- Merge this information into information developed at the Conference (by July 15).
- Meet with potential funding agencies (Coal Heritage Area, Division of Tourism, TEA-21) to determine range of projects (by July 30).





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- Apply for funds to develop maps, signs, etc. (by August 15).
- Turn over to regional marketing team (by August 30).
- Produce first marketing products for trails (by December 30).
- Begin marketing of those products for summer 2002 (by January 15).
- Develop next steps, range of projects at 2002 Conference (March 26-27, 2002).

2. Hunting, Fishing, & Bird/Wildlife Watching

Please note that a number of festival type ideas arose from this category and that many of these have been incorporated in Event Management. The key idea in this category of tourism was the development of a world-class trail system. Following, is the action plan:

- Convene steering committee from Corridor L attendees, National Park Service, West Virginia Trails Coalition (by June 15).
- Review existing trail systems, abandoned rail corridors mapping, public lands mapping and state trail plan at initial steering meeting
- Turn existing trail information over to marketing team to develop program for 2002 season (by July 1).
- Develop short term, mid-range and long-range trail plan for the Corridor L region that links area with other existing trails in the state (by September 15).
- Prepare funding application for economic analysis and site plans (Parkways Authority) of development of that trail plan (by October 15).
- Segment plan into fundable elements at 2002 Conference and determine piece that can be turned in for TEA-21 implementation funds (March 26-27, 2002).

3. Event Management

It is essential that Fayette County develop a complete inventory of resources in the Corridor L area and come up with a marketing strategy to promote the wide variety of tourist opportunities. It is essential that the County work with the individual venues to see if it is possible to link them in terms of dates, so that the tourist can attend several festivals of a





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similar nature during one visit. All of this should revolve around a set of flagship festivals spread throughout the Corridor L area that fill critical white space during the four seasons of the year.





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The activities are recommended:

- Spring Festival - Botany and Birds of the New River Adventure Trail (Grandview). Suggested components are as follows:
 - 1) Competitive events that raise money for conservation.
 - 2) Elder hostel programs that link to week-long event.
 - 3) Presentations by well-known birders and botanists.
 - 4) Taste of the town at trophy presentations for winning teams.
 - 5) Micro-brews and tee-shirt sales at Taste (Swainson's Golden Ale - it is a warbler) (Nuttall Pale Ale - he is a famous botanist).
 - 6) Educational tours tying in schools.
 - 7) Juried art and crafts at Taste relating to theme.

 - Summer Festival - Captain Thurmond's Challenge (Fayetteville). Suggested components are as follows:
 - 1) Just make this bigger and better than ever.
 - 2) Expand length by tying in Beast of East event (similar to eco-challenge).
 - 3) Expand by having biking, boating clinics day before event.
 - 4) Expand by having family mountain bike ride day before event.
 - 5) Expand by having kayak rodeo around event.

 - Summer Festival - Coal, Oil and the Civil War - A Celebration of New River Adventure Trail Heritage (Carnifex Ferry). Suggested components are as follows:
 - 1) Civil War re-enactments at Carnifex Ferry, Fayetteville and Bulltown (week-long events with settlers at all three locations).
 - 2) Grand Civil War Ball at culmination of festival at as yet-to-be-determined site of Civil War significance.
 - 3) Historic presentation at beginning of week highlighting role of natural resources in West Virginia decision to secede from Virginia.
 - 4) Mini-fest on coal that ties in Exhibition Coal Mine, Jones Mansion, New River Company
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- Store, Whipple Company Store, New River Company Reunion, performance of Coal Camp Memories and John L. Lewis.
- 5) Driving tours of coal interest and Civil War interest.





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- Fall Festival - Bridge Day (Fayetteville). Suggested components are as follows:
 - 1) Just make bigger and better.
 - 2) Tie fishing event in day before or after with big-name, tournament and big prizes.
 - 3) Have fishing demonstrations at Fayette Station.
 - 4) BASE Jumper program day before or day after with equipment displays, videos, etc.
 - 5) Work with legislation to have Gauley release on Sunday after Bridge Day (already have it once every five years depending on calendar).
 - 6) Tie in Beast of East event that week.
 - 7) Schedule concert (Mountain Stage) Bridge Day evening.
 - 8) Have mini-fests in Fayetteville, Oak Hill, Ansted, Mount Hope.
 - 9) Revive Street Luge.

 - Winter Festival - Lighting Up the New River Adventure Trail (Beckley). Suggested components are as follows:
 - 1) Tie existing Beckley event to Lacy's Lights, Lights Along the Midland Trail, and other sites along Corridor L.
 - 2) Provide bus transportation from central points near lodging facilities to each night's venue.
 - 3) Following lights tours, have seasonal plays at Historic Fayette Theatre, Princess Playhouse, Hawks Nest, Soldier's Memorial.

 - Action items for development of these festivals are as follows:
 - 1) Convene Steering meeting of interested parties by June 1.
 - 2) Have sub-committee catalogue all existing festivals (including reunions) (by September 15).
 - 3) Work with existing festivals to link dates for 2003 (by November 15).
 - 4) Form individual committees to work on Flagship events (by July 15).
 - 5) Turn over individual plans to marketing team (by September 15).
 - 6) Develop marketing plan for flagships (by January 15).
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- 7) Fine tune at 2002 Corridor L Conference (March 26-27) for planned implementation for 2003.

4. Regional Marketing

A regional marketing team should further develop the slogan suggested at the Conference (Every Season - Fun Season) as well as come up with a plan to brand the Corridor L/New River Adventure Trail Logo and have it used by tourism providers in the area - perhaps using some of the information provided by Scott Standish about how they got individual businesses to join the program in Pennsylvania. They should then act as a repository and action team for plans developed in the other areas. Suggested action steps are as follows:

- Convene steering committee (by June 15).
- Formulate branding steps and refine slogan for presentation to tourism providers (by September 15).
- Host one-day presentation for that purpose (perhaps as economic development forum in conjunction with Chambers CVB's) (by November 15).
- Work with other committees on on-going basis.
- Attempt to find funding for event's coordinator to implement programs (we have a lead on this).
- Present plans to Corridor L Conference (March 26-27).

5. Other, Facilities Development, & Industry Expansion

Many of the ideas developed under the "Other" category are worthy of pursuing through the marketing committee and for folding into the already mentioned categories. On industry expansion and facilities development, many of these goals may be accomplished in one fell swoop if some things currently brewing come about. Fayette County should keep a watchful eye on the situation. If they do indeed come to pass, the County will know they are moving forward by the 2002 Conference. If they do not, the County should brainstorm these issues at that Conference.





This is an aggressive implementation program that will have a significant impact on the seasonality issue faced by Fayette County. But, like anything worth pursuing, this program will take time and effort. Seed money will be available for some of these projects. A competitive application process and form for these funds will be developed within the year after adoption of this comprehensive plan. The majority of the work, however, will be implemented via individual efforts.

E. Education and Economic Development

Fayette County must ensure that that its youth can handle the jobs of an increasingly technological workplace. They must be prepared for the jobs that exist and they must be flexible enough to move into new jobs as technology continues to work its will. To ensure that this goal is attained, the State and County must provide an education system that can impart the skills needed by workers and employers in the 21st Century.

Fayette County must be aggressive in the education of children in kindergarten through the 12th grade. Higher education, community colleges and a system of continuous training and retraining are essential. Moving people off welfare and attracting new business depend on having an education system that turns out workers to meet industry needs.

The more intensive and pervasive the community college programs in a region, the more industrial development one finds. U.S. Census information compiled in 1995 finds West Virginia near the bottom of the states in the percentage of total population enrolled in two-year colleges. With just 1.2 percent of its population in two-year colleges (including Fayette County and West Virginia Tech's two-year enrollments), the Charleston MSA is at the bottom of comparable regions around the country.

Companies will tell you their expansion in West Virginia is limited only by their ability to recruit qualified and trained workers. What the County should be doing is positioning the State for growth in the future. People thought only high-tech, biotech, and life science companies would need these skills. But warehouses, retail, and other small businesses will depend on the same knowledge base, information systems and increasingly on skill and education.





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Employers today are looking for very specific skills. Those with more dated technical skills will find opportunities more scarce, and typically, will have to look longer and harder to land jobs, and be more flexible when it comes to compensation. There is a growing disparity between those with in-demand skills and those with expertise in outdated technologies. Unfortunately, a stable job history is not as important today. If a person can show up at an employer's door with the right technical expertise to solve their immediate needs, they will be hired.

The first and foremost question employers ask is "Are you technically up to speed with what my company needs?" Secondly, they look at job history and the frequency of job changes. The primary concern of employers today is "...can they get the job done." Employers also appear less concerned today about "where" and "how" someone picked up their skills with new technology. Continuing education has a broader definition today in the high tech arena than it has in the past

Not to be overlooked in the focus on technical expertise is the continuing role non-technical skills play in the marketability of information management professionals. Written and verbal communication skills also weigh heavily. An individual must be able to stand on his/her own two feet.

The following implementation plan for education, as it relates to economic development, is the result of a forum facilitated by the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce at Oak Hill High School on 22 March 2001. The purpose of the forum was to converge local educational and economic development goals. A timeline has been assigned to a number of the activities developed at the forum.

MISSION STATEMENT FOR INTERNAL MARKETING

Improve our own perceptions about what is good in the county and leverage that improved attitude into creating momentum to make things even better.

ACTION: Encourage tourism entrepreneurs to offer one-time low-cost (\$10 range) opportunities for Fayette County residents to experience local recreation.

1. Form steering committee (3-5 members) by June 1, 2001.
2. Compile list of tourism providers (August 2001).
3. Develop incentives to participate in program (September 2001).





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4. Draft letter to providers asking for participation (October 2001).
5. Develop cooperative advertising/marketing campaign (December 2001).





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6. Market (January-April 2002).
7. Launch pilot (May 2002).

RESOURCES: New River CVB, Fayette County Chamber, SWCVB, WV Division of Tourism Matching Grant Program, Fayette Tribune, WV Professional River Outfitters Association, Climbing Access Fund, and the National Park Service.

ACTION: Work with WVU-Tech to improve image of community college and t to convey importance of their role in the new economy.

1. Form joint steering committee with WVU-Tech (by June 2001).
2. Develop regular visitation program in local schools (for 2001-2002 year).
3. Develop marketing program with local media (for 2001-2002 year).
4. Link with training programs for existing business (for 2002-2003 year).

RESOURCES: Whitewater Consortia (Jo Harris, chair), Bob Maroney, WVU-Tech Workforce Development Director, local media, and Fayette County Schools.

ACTION: Stress quality of life in our schools and make it a key component of our marketing strategies - develop guidelines and codes to assist in preserving this aspect of our economic development strategy.

1. Develop local video to show beauty of area (by April 2002).
2. Develop curriculum linking environmental preservation with economic development (by April 2002).
3. Develop speakers bureau of those who opened business here because of quality of life issues (by April 2002).
4. Get curriculum in schools (for 2002-2003 year).
5. Devise ordinances to protect quality of life (by October 2001).
6. Link video, curriculum with external marketing presentations (by April 2002).





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RESOURCES: Hometown Productions, Image Quest, West Virginia Division of Tourism, 4C Economic Development Authority, West Virginia Development Office, local tourism entrepreneurs, and Fayette County Planning and Zoning officials.

ACTION: Chamber work with local service organizations to revitalize them as a means of providing internal marketing. Also revitalize their links in schools (i.e. Junior Civilians) to reverse self-image in regard to lack of opportunity.

1. Develop list of existing county service organizations (by October 2001).
2. Contact organizations and make speakers bureau available to them for programs (by December 2001).
3. Organize joint meeting of organizations/Chamber to discuss membership issues (January 2002).
4. Involve civic organizations in Leadership Program (for 2002-2003 year).

RESOURCES: Local club presidents, state organizations, and Chamber membership committee.

ACTION: Work to intertwine specialized adult education and vo-tech programs with our retention strategies.

1. Develop list of current business activity in county (already complete).
2. Develop list of targeted industries (already complete).
3. Share lists with development leaders.
4. Form project steering committee (by June 2001).
5. Work with board personnel to formalize program possibilities (For 2002-2003 school year).

RESOURCES: 4C Economic Development Authority, Chamber, Fayette County Board of Education, State Board of Education, and the West Virginia Development Office.





MISSION STATEMENT FOR EXTERNAL MARKETING

To improve and coordinate outreach efforts to attract new economic entities to the area by promoting the positive aspects of the local environment, economy and people.

ACTION: Stress quality of life in our schools and make it a key component of our marketing strategies - develop guidelines and codes to assist in preserving this aspect of our economic development strategy.

1. See under internal marketing.
2. Develop marketing piece as addendum to our marketing package for development prospects (by April 2002).

RESOURCES: Same.

ACTION: Recruit teachers as aggressively as we recruit businesses.

1. Intertwine all internal marketing items with efforts to encourage local students to enter teaching field (on-going)
2. Intertwine component in Leadership Fayette County Program (for 2001-2002 year).
3. Use video production as means of luring teachers here.
4. Aggressively pursue WV Education Alliance programs that offers stipends, rewards for top teaching efforts.
5. Develop awards program to recognize top local teachers (for Chamber annual dinner in December 2001).
6. Pursue foundation grants to reward top teachers (initiate immediate search).

RESOURCES: Mountain RC&D (grant software), West Virginia Education Alliance, WVU-Tech EDA University Center (video funding), Chamber, and Image Quest.

ACTION: Develop speakers bureau for schools from those who have left area and would like to return.

1. Form steering committee (by June 2001).
2. Procure lists of reunion attendees (by August 2001).
3. Procure lists of Fayette County graduates of WVU-Tech (by August 2001).
4. Initiate contact (by September 2001).
5. Raise funds to assist with travel (on-going).





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6. Set events in schools.
7. Develop video presentation that includes those who could/could not come (for use during 2002-2003 school year).

RESOURCES: Local business community, reunion committees, WVU-Tech Alumni Office, and the Tech Foundation.

ACTION: Coordinate the planning of education curriculum, workforce development and infrastructure development so that the climate for economic development at the state level transfers down to the local level.

1. Form broad-based steering committee (by September of 2001).
2. Devise local needs/wants list (by December of 2001).
3. Approach local legislators seeking end-of-session interagency meeting.
4. Hold meeting with agencies (March 2002).
5. Designate individuals/agency to maintain contact with state-level agencies (by April 2002).
6. Host annual meetings with local governments (beginning in 2003).

RESOURCES: Region 4 Planning and Development Council, Fayette Transition Team, 4C EDA, Regional Workforce Investment Board, State Board of Education, and the Fayette County Board of Education.

ACTION: Work to develop video that showcases best things in schools, including teachers, current students and success stories and incorporate that video in all presentations to development prospects.

1. Form steering committee (by June 2001).
2. Develop script (by July 2001).
3. Procure funds for production (by August 2001).
4. Obtain footage (by October 2001).
5. Produce video/CD (by December 2001).
6. Link with other programs (ASAP).
7. Update footage (annually).

RESOURCES: Bill Wilcox, Image Quest, WVU-Tech EDA University Center, Fayette County Schools, Hancock County Schools (have similar product in place, and 4C EDA.

MISSION STATEMENT TO REDUCE BRAIN DRAIN





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To reduce the trend of top students leaving the area to find work elsewhere by providing the information and skills necessary to enable them to make choices concerning their opportunities at home.

ACTION: Organize immediate letter writing campaign to support PROMISE scholarship program.

1. Prompt education forum attendees, general public to send letters of support to local legislators (letter already complete - Keith should prompt by April 15).
2. Generate newspaper article/television appearance about need to seek legislative support (by April 15).
3. Continue effort should it not pass this year.

RESOURCES: Local legislators, Chamber of Commerce members, Education Forum attendees, local media, and Keith Spangler.

ACTION: Develop local speakers bureau from growth industries (health care, information technology, services) and make arrangements to get them into schools as quickly and often as possible.

1. Form steering committee (by May 2001).
2. Identify potential speakers (by June 2001).
3. Initiate contact (by July 2001).
4. Develop curriculum (by August 2001).
5. Present to Board of Education (by September of 2001).

RESOURCES: Fayette County Chamber and the Fayette County Family Resources Network.

ACTION: Chamber work with schools to offer more job shadowing opportunities.

1. Devise letter to Chamber members in support of job shadowing program (by May 2001).
2. Organize meeting with those members to answer questions (by July 2001) - provide incentives to attend.
3. Obtain commitments along with Gene Worthington for 2001-2002 year (by September 2001).

RESOURCES: Gene Worthington, Chamber Education Committee, and Participating Fayette County Businesses.

ACTION: Develop local business advisory council to schools.





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1. Form steering committee (by June 2001).
2. Seek/research model (by July 2001).
3. Meet with Board of Education representative to work out acceptable details/role (by August 2001).
4. Form council (by September of 2001).

RESOURCES: West Virginia Education Alliance, Fayette County Board of Education, State Board of Education, West Virginia Business Council, WV Chamber of Commerce, and the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce.

MISSION STATEMENT FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

To develop the skills that students and the local economy will need in order to thrive in the new economy - with an emphasis on providing skills and training that will enable our young people to succeed at home.

ACTION: Maintain an engaged business community by holding quarterly meetings with schools and students to develop entrepreneurial programs that include training, education and mentoring.

1. Form steering committee (joint committee of Chamber Education and Economic Development as well as representative from schools).
2. Develop format (by July 2001).
3. Kick off meetings schedule to coincide with 2001-2002 school year).

RESOURCES: Chamber committees, Board of Education, and the Fayette Family Resource Network.

ACTION: Chamber work with WV Education Alliance and individual teachers to leverage resources for targeted projects.

1. Form steering committee (by June 2001).
2. Meet with Education Alliance to determine extend of programs (by July 2001).
3. Devise program possibilities that mesh with Education Alliance guidelines, current curriculum and needs/desires of local economic interests (by August 2001).





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4. Make attempts to be part of county orientation for teachers and distribute information.
5. Follow-up with teachers with offers of additional resources (on-going).

RESOURCES: Fayette Chamber Education Committee, Bud Hill, West Virginia Education Alliance, Fayette Family Resource Network, Fayette County Chamber and the Board of Education.

ACTION: Revisit opportunities with WVU-Tech to provide training/lifelong learning opportunities for local business as a retention strategy - stressing high-tech applications in the service industry.

1. Form steering committee (by June 2001).
2. Devise survey for business asking their needs/interest (by September 2001).
3. Tabulate results (by October 2001).
4. Send survey on a regional basis (by December 2001).
5. Work with Tech to formulate marketing strategy (by March 2002).
6. Offer initial rounds of training (by summer 2002).

RESOURCES: WVU-Tech Whitewater Consortia, Bob Maroney, 4C EDA, and the Regional Workforce Investment Board.

ACTIONS: Develop a leadership training program for local high school students modeled after the Leadership West Virginia Program.

1. Contact Fayette County Leadership grads (May 2001).
2. Form steering committee from Leadership grads interested, Chamber members (June 2001).
3. Develop proposed curriculum (July 2001).
4. Develop application form (July 2001).
5. Raise funds for program (August 2001).
6. Line up presenters for 2001-2002 school year (August 2001).
7. Distribute applications in schools (September 2001).
8. Select class and publicize (November 2001).
9. Begin program (January 2002).

RESOURCES: Fayette County Leadership grads, WV Chamber of Commerce, Leadership West Virginia, and the local business community.





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ACTION: Place priority in school programs on verbal and written communication skills, development of business plans and tools needed to succeed as an entrepreneur.

1. Form steering committee (by June 2001).
2. Seek entrepreneurial curriculum already in place in state and/or nation (have by September 2001).
3. Present curriculum to Board of Education for consideration (by October 2001).
4. Seek joint meeting with State Board of Education (by December 2001).
5. Work to have program incorporated in state curriculum (for 2002-2003 school year).
6. Develop local volunteer organization to deliver program at no cost to Fayette County Schools centering on business plans/tools (for 2002-2003 school year).

RESOURCES: Fayette Family Resource Network, West Virginia Education Alliance, West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, West Virginia Business Alliance and WVU-Tech Small Business Development Center.

ACTION: Team up with Center for Economic Options to encourage micro-business development. Provide incentives for teachers to attend a micro-business fair.

1. Form steering committee (June 2001).
2. Meet with Center of Economic Options (July 2001).
3. Launch study on best local options for micro-business (to be completed by November 2001).
4. Develop incentives program (by November 2001).
5. Design fair (by January 2001).
6. Develop marketing plan for attendance of both teachers, students and general public (by January 2001).
7. Hold fair (April 2001).

RESOURCES: Center for Economic Options, West Virginia Division of Agriculture (Cindy Martel), and RESA.





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ACTIONS: Work to intertwine specialized adult education and vo-tech programs with our retention strategies.

1. See in Section 1.
2. Work with 4C EDA to form seamless network for delivery.

RESOURCES: Same.

VII. REVITALIZING COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

From the experiences of many communities across the nation, which have undertaken similar revitalization efforts, a set of factors has emerged which are critical to the success of this Plan. Each community along a commercial corridor should learn from these common experiences and tailor this knowledge to its own circumstances. It must be emphasized that successful revitalization does not occur overnight. Only through a sustained commitment can a healthy and prosperous commercial corridor be achieved. The following strategies and objectives are based on the precedent of other communities and should be studied closely in relation to the commercial corridors in Fayette County:

1. Establish a community-wide, commonly held vision for the future. This vision should be positive, action-oriented, and begin from a position of strength.
2. Develop a cooperative effort based upon a full public-private partnership that emphasizes responsible leadership, coordinated planning, and centralized management.
3. Promote a broad-based public awareness effort and the inclusion of extensive citizen participation throughout the process.
4. Organize an incremental and action-oriented series of achievable efforts designed to realize the greater vision - not a single grand project, but a multiple-task strategy of private and public actions which may be long- or short-range policies, programs, or projects, in scale with the community's ability to act.
5. Develop a strategy to capitalize on the natural strengths of the commercial corridor. These strengths include:
 - Mix of commercial, governmental, cultural, residential, and recreational uses;
 - Variety and diversity of merchandise and activities;





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- Central location in terms of neighborhoods and employment;





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- Traditional community support; and
 - Diversity of character and image, which reflect a community that, has evolved naturally over time.
6. Create a recognition of, and sympathetic response to, the distinctive qualities and characteristics of the community including the historical, architectural and natural assets.
 7. Provide for the incorporation of meaningful environmental art, performing arts, and cultural activities as a vital part of community life.
 8. Recognize a commitment to quality and design excellence as an integral part of the process, stressing not only an appreciation for historic qualities, but also a sensitive contemporary expression of our time.
 9. Promote a renewed emphasis on pedestrian needs and scale while managing vehicular circulation and providing adequate parking.
 10. Establish a mix of innovative and creative incentives and regulations to protect individual investments and the quality of the public environment.
 11. Lobby for the full participation of local financial institutions as well as the development of innovative financing and taxing mechanisms to meet revitalization needs.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE NECESSITY OF BUILDING AND HOUSING CODES

A. Housing Design

1. The County should develop or make available restoration guidelines to assist property owners in making design decisions that are appropriate for older and/or historic structures.
2. The County should adopt a Livability Code, with an appropriate phase-in period, and develop a companion Rental Housing Inspection Program for all rental units.





The purpose of the Livability Code is to protect public health, safety and welfare in residential structures and premises by:

- Establishing minimum property maintenance standards for basic equipment and facilities used for light, ventilation, heating, and sanitation for residential structures and premises and for safe and sanitary maintenance of residential structures and premises;
- Establishing minimum requirements for residential structures and premises for means of egress, fire protection systems, and other equipment and devices necessary for safety from fire;
- Fixing the responsibilities of property owners, operators and tenants of residential structures and premises; and
- Providing for administration, enforcement and penalties.

The Livability Code shall be construed liberally to protect public health, safety and welfare insofar as they are affected by the continued use and maintenance of residential structures and premises.

3. Fayette County needs to evaluate and adjust its housing market mix to ensure it can attract residents of all ages who have middle or upper incomes. The County should encourage developers to provide the appropriate recreational amenities, such as swimming pools, clubhouses, weight rooms and tennis courts in or near residential developments to attract those consumers.
4. In order to create a better sense of local identity, neighborhood design should go beyond meeting market demand for certain types of housing and the minimal requirements of zoning and subdivision regulations. Some of Fayette County's communities are made up of well-maintained dwellings. While the houses are of generally good quality, the settings in which they were built have not always complemented them. Greater attention must be paid to the built environment - buildings, streets, parking areas, and other elements of a development that have been consciously created and together create an overall setting.
5. The readjustment of balance of various design decisions (giving a local area its identity) can be achieved through redevelopment. Existing neighborhoods can be enhanced by giving them stronger identities, more usable social space, new public facilities or





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commercial areas, higher visual qualities, and public space amenities.





B. Abandoned, Foreclosed and Substandard Properties

1. Issues

Fayette County is freckled with dilapidated structures in nearly every neighborhood and along every road. There are an estimated 500 structures that need to be torn down and an even greater number that need repaired or cleaned up.

Prospective businesses and homeowners coming into the County are turned off by the dilapidated and trashy appearance of these structures. This is compounding a number of problems associated with business recruitment, because the County needs a major employer and has been losing population (reference the demographic profile in the Plan).

The citizens of Fayette County need to be made aware of how prevalent this problem is in their County and the impact of these houses, and the trash and cars that surround them, on the County.

2. Analysis of Existing County Program

There is resistance to changing the County's method of addressing concerns about dilapidated structures. The program is administered by a volunteer appointed by the County Commission. The official title of this appointment is the Chair of the County Beautification and Dilapidated Housing Commission. One of the many problems associated with the reliance on a volunteer, is if the individual becomes disinterested, or for some reason vacates the position, the program's operation will cease.

3. Program Recommendations

In considering the problems faced by the elderly or less fortunate, the County may want to apply for local, state or federal grants that could be distributed to families who do not have the financial resources to raze a structure. There are a number of individuals in the County living on fixed incomes who cannot afford to have dilapidated structures removed. These funds could assist these individuals.





The County could create a volunteer group similar to Habitat for Humanity that targets one house a year and razes a dilapidated structure for those who cannot afford the cost associated with razing the structure. An event of this nature could foster awareness of the problem in the communities where people have come to accept these structures. The wood recovered from these structures might even be suitable for re-use by underprivileged families with wood-burning stoves.

The most aggressive approach to arresting the problem of dilapidated housing would be to have the County employ a full-time building inspector. Funds for the position of a County building inspector would come from permit and inspection fees, augmented by the general fund. Because of the extreme situation in Fayette County, which has both an exorbitant number of dilapidated structures and an equally large number of structures that are unkempt or rapidly deteriorating, a County Building Inspector would also benefit the County by arresting the cyclical decline of substandard housing. Through aggressive inspections, a building inspector could reduce the number of eyesores and substandard structures, which would in turn eventually increase the County's property value and, thereby, tax revenue. Cleaner communities, with fewer sub-standard structures, would also attract homebuyers, which would bring more property taxes into the County, along with residents purchasing more goods and services within County.

Failing the creation of County Building Inspector, the County should adopt guidelines to address the problems associated with dilapidated housing. With a program established, it is possible that between the efforts of the Beautification and Dilapidated Housing Commission and the County Engineer's Office, actions could be taken that may approach the results anticipated if the County would create a position for a full-time County Building Inspector.

4. Analysis of Existing Ordinance

The County has an ordinance that follows the State Code. The County Engineer stated that the County has positive responses from most property owners early in the process. The need is in developing prevention programs to prevent a structure from falling into disrepair or eventually becoming abandoned. There are many homes that could be qualified as in "coal-camp" condition and inhabited by families on government assistance. Many of these people do not make necessary repairs to their homes.





5. Ordinance Recommendations

- The issue is complicated by the fact that County demolition procedures for dilapidated structures must follow state code, which is vague and requires mounds of paperwork. Elected officials are reluctant to strengthen the bill, Caudill said, because removing dilapidated structures is seen as harassing the poor or elderly.
- A program that returns abandoned or foreclosed properties to the housing stock in a timely and economical manner should be developed by the County.
- The County should pass a resolution that declares that there now exists in Fayette County, and may reasonably be expected to exist in the future, housing which is unfit for human habitation because of dilapidation; defects increasing the hazards of fire, accidents or other calamities; lack of ventilation, adequate lighting, or sanitary facilities; or because of conditions rendering such housing unsafe or unsanitary, or dangerous or detrimental to the health, safety, or morals, or otherwise inimical (hostile) to the welfare of the residents of the County; and that a public necessity exists to exercise the police powers of the County and other applicable laws, as now or hereafter amended, to cause the repair and rehabilitation, closing or demolishing of such housing in the manner provided in an adopted article describing livability standards; and pursuant to the exercise for the police power, the County Commission finds as fact and so declares that the ensuing sections of this article of established standards are necessary to the implementation of its purposes herein declared and that, specifically, but without limitation, the minimum standards of fitness for dwellings and dwelling units, as enacted in the article of established livability standards are reasonable and necessary for this community and are all reasonable and necessary criteria for determining whether dwellings and dwelling units in this County are fit for human habitation.
 - 1) Every building used in whole or in part as a dwelling unit or as two (2) or more dwelling units, or as a roominghouse or boardinghouse, should conform to the requirements of this article irrespective of





the primary use of such building, and irrespective of when such building may have been constructed, altered or repaired.

- 2) This article should establish minimum standards for occupancy and should not replace or modify standards otherwise established for construction, replacement or repair of buildings.
- 3) Neither this article nor any of its provisions should be construed to impair or limit in any way the power of the County to define and declare nuisances and to cause their abatement by summary action, or otherwise, or to enforce this article by criminal process or otherwise, and the enforcement of any remedy provided in this article should not prevent the enforcement of any other remedy or remedies provided in the County's Code or in other ordinances or laws.
- 4) Every dwelling and dwelling unit used as a human habitation or held out for use as a human habitation should comply with all of the requirements of this article. No person should occupy as a human habitation any dwelling or dwelling unit that does not comply with all of the requirements of this article.

C. Landlord/Tenant Education and Training

1. Educational programs should be sponsored by civic associations, preservation organizations, the County or the municipalities. Topics to be considered for these programs include home and yard maintenance, historic renovation, and landscaping and garden design. A "lending library" should be established for use by homeowners, civic associations, preservation organizations, and municipalities.
2. Develop a Landlord Association to establish standard leases, tenant screening, tenant selection, and education procedures.
3. Train landlords in property management record keeping, leases, tenant screenings, tenant selection, and eviction procedures.





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4. Encourage the establishment of neighborhood associations to become more involved in housing issues affecting the neighborhoods.





D. Housing Financing

1. Homeowners who are physically or financially incapable of maintaining their homes and yards (elderly, handicapped, and fixed or low-income owners) should be assisted by the community. Forgiveness of low interest loan programs or volunteer assistance should be pursued for targeted areas. The County should first identify relevant State and County programs which offer financial or technical assistance, then pursue national organizations that assist local communities to develop and implement programs.
2. In order to assist first time homebuyers, partnerships between the County's financial institutions and community representatives are recommended, to design specific programs that meet local needs. County and State programs should also be explored. The CRA (Community Reinvestment Act) requires lending institutions that are Federally chartered or covered by Federal insurance to make loans in local neighborhoods to individuals at all income levels when there are reasonable expectations of repayment.

E. Marketing

In order to attract new residents a promotional packet should be prepared by the County to include a neighborhood profile of demographics, housing stock, local stores, and public services, as well as local, civic, and business organizations. This material should be distributed to prospective homeowners and realtors in the area.

F. Design Guidelines for Existing Communities

Design guidelines, when effectively followed, increase the quality of visual appeal of the environment. They help preserve open space, improve circulation, define spaces and coordinate growth and expansion.

1. Encourage the use of public space as the focal point (meeting place) within communities in the County.
 2. Encourage active citizen participation in establishing community development in the addition of new plaza landmarks and streetscaping by keeping the citizens informed and involved throughout the development process.
 3. Develop comprehensive mixed-use plans that will tie in housing opportunities and modify the existing assistance programs to finance these plans.
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4. The County should work with property owners and developers to plan the redevelopment of the local commercial areas to make their areas a more positive landmark (aesthetic appeal focusing on parking lot designs that incorporate significant greenspaces).

G. Design Guidelines for New Communities

1. Use part of the open space requirements for residential subdivisions to create public common space, such as squares or landmark settings, to emphasize a strong sense of community in the design of neighborhoods.
2. Encourage use of small grids within communities instead of numerous dead-end cul-de-sacs to improve efficiency of circulation, impart a sense of organization of the public environment, and create opportunities for the highlighting of public uses.
3. Encourage better connections between neighborhoods as well as to a central community focus or commercial centers by providing pedestrian paths, greenspace links, and orientation of streets to a common focus to increase the sense of community.
4. Revise zoning requirements for residential districts to permit better opportunities to design at higher densities, through reduced front setbacks, architectural forms consistent with existing topography, parking lot designs that incorporate significant green space, and public landscaping based on more formalized designs within rights-of-way.
5. Establish design standards for apartments and townhouses to set them within the local network of "streets" rather than parking lots. Discourage large common parking lots in front of units along main streets and disperse parking to small lots at the side and rear of units.
6. Emphasize preservation of existing landscape resources.





H. Guidelines for Mobile Homes

Continue to permit mobile homes as a means of providing affordable housing in the County, with the needed performance standards to ensure their use creates a safe, sanitary, and comfortable living environment. Mobile homes, or manufactured housing, tend to be less expensive than most other types of single-family homes and, consequently, serve as a practical alternative to affordable housing. With zoning ordinances, subdivision ordinances, and other applicable ordinances, mobile home subdivisions and mobile home parks will be required to meet all the same standards as required for other single-family dwelling detached development. For example, road standards that apply to conventional housing will also apply to mobile home parks. Mobile homes should only be permitted in mobile home parks and subdivisions through conditional zoning where the infrastructure can support the density. Individual mobile homes on scattered sites should only be permitted in the rural areas to provide temporary shelter in case of emergency, for farm employees and family members, and for temporary shelter while building a home.

1. Suggested Limitations on Mobile Homes

- No mobile home should be occupied for dwelling purposes unless the same is located in a mobile home park, except as follows:
 - 1) On railroad rights-of-way for the purpose of supplying temporary housing for personnel engaged in emergency repair work, subject to the approval for the Zoning Administrator and the Health Department, for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days.
 - 2) As a temporary dwelling as provided for in Part 8 of Article 8.
 - 3) On a parcel of one hundred acres or more which is used primarily for agriculture, the Zoning Administrator may permit not more than one (1) mobile home as the quarters of a caretaker, watchman, or tenant farmer, and his family; provided that such use meets the following conditions:
 - Shall be located only in an Agricultural or Conservation District.
 - Shall be located not less than 200 feet from any public street, and not less than 100 feet from any abutting property line.





- Shall be connected to public sewer or an approved septic field, public water or an approved well, and to electricity.
 - Shall be located on the property of the employer, and the mobile home shall be titled by the property owner.
 - In conjunction with the approval of a special permit or special exception for a church, private school of general or special education, child care center or nursery school, mobile homes may be allowed as temporary dwellings for faculty, staff or students. Such mobile homes shall be connected to public sewer or an approved septic field, public water or an approved well, and to electricity and shall be subjected to the regulations of the zoning district in which located. In addition, the hearing body may impose such conditions and restrictions as it may deem necessary to assure that the use will be compatible with the use of adjacent properties. Such conditions and restrictions may include but need not be limited to, location, landscaping and screening, and time limitations.
 - Except as qualified in Par. H.1.a above, it shall be unlawful for any property owner, tenant, lessee or administrator of any real estate in the County to rent, lease or allow any mobile home that is to be used as a dwelling or living quarters to be parked on the land under their supervision unless such land is a legal mobile home park licensed in accordance with provisions established by Fayette County and maintained in accordance with provisions established by Fayette County.
2. General Provisions for Mobile Home
- The manufacturing, sale, and distribution of mobile homes should be permitted as allowed by zoning.
 - Mobile home parks should be defined and incorporated into the zoning ordinance.
 - Mobile home parks should also meet subdivision requirements. A subdivision ordinance for mobile home parks should be incorporated into a unified development code for Fayette County.
 - Mobile homes for non-residential uses should be defined and regulated Provisions addressing this condition should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance.
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- Mobile homes sited outside of a mobile home park should meet site planning guidelines. These guidelines should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance.
- The County should adopt a policy on how to address mobile homes that will be classified as non-conforming as a result of any ordinances that are adopted that affect mobile homes.
- The County should adopt procedures for special use permit reviews.





- The County should define temporary uses for mobile homes.
- The County should incorporate provisions in its ordinance to address unoccupied mobile homes.
- The County should identify the most appropriate locations in the County for mobile homes and mobile home parks.

I. Private Sewerage Systems

1. Recommended Procedures for Developing a House Lot to be Served by Private Water and Sewerage Systems.

- Overview of Process

The following is intended for use by people planning to develop an existing residential lot to be served by private water and sewage disposal systems. It is not intended for those planning to subdivide property or to develop commercial property.

New homes constructed outside the range of public water and sewerage in Fayette County should require considerable site evaluation and preparation before a building permit is approved. Careful site evaluation prior to construction is both in the interest of the potential homeowner and the public at large.

The following process is recommended to be implemented by the County Health Department.

1) Step One: Prepare a Scaled Site Plan

The first step in the approval process should be the preparation of a scaled site plan to be submitted in duplicate. The applicant should consider the placement of their house and then contact the County Planning and Zoning Office (304-594-42258) for guidance and setback requirements. The following site requirements exist from State and local health regulations, to protect the well and groundwater from contamination and to insure a functioning /maintainable septic system. One site plan will be returned to the applicant for future references.





- i. Well Locations should be:
 - At least ten feet from property lines.
 - At least fifteen feet from roads or dedicated rights-of-way.
 - At least thirty feet from a building foundation.
 - At least one hundred feet from septic systems or sewage disposal reserve areas.
 - At least one hundred feet from adjacent wells.
 - At an elevation higher or equivalent to the highest elevation of the septic system.

- ii. Septic System Reserve Areas should be:
 - At an elevation lower than the well and house.
 - At least twenty feet from the proposed house.
 - At least one hundred feet from adjacent wells.
 - At least 10,000 square feet in area for property subdivided.
 - At least ten feet from property lines or dedicated easements.
 - At least 200 feet from any stream or tributary of the New River, Gauley River, and Kanawha River.
 - At least one hundred feet from any water body other than the New, Gauley, and Kanawha Rivers.

The Planning and Zoning Office should develop minimum submission criteria.

2) Step Two: File for Percolation Test

This step involves filing for a soil percolation test. To file for a soil percolation test permit, it is recommended that an application be made at the Planning and Zoning Office. A fee schedule should be established.

The review should be made by the Planning and Zoning Office to determine the zoning requirements or restrictions. This office should also conduct the preliminary review





of the drawing prepared by the applicant. If details depicted on the preliminary plan are found to be in conformance with the siting criteria, the permit application is accepted.

3) Step Three: Arrange for Percolation Test

This step is arranging for percolation testing. The excavator or applicant must make arrangement with a Sanitarian from the County Health Department for an appointment for the percolation test.

4) Step Four: Well Driller Makes Application to Drill a Water Well

Upon completion and approval of the soil percolation tests, an application may be filed for a permit to drill a well. Well Permit applications should be filed by a licensed well driller.

5) Step Five: Arrange for Approval of Well Location on Site

Once an approved plan is filed, the applicant must call the Planning and Zoning Office for site approval of the well area. The Sanitarian will sign the well stake, if it is in conformance with the plot plan.

6) Step Six: Well Driller will Drill the Well

This step involves permitting the well driller to drill the well. The County Health Department should develop a yield testing procedure. This procedure should be documented in a pamphlet for distribution to the public.

7) Step Seven: Apply for a Building Permit

Only after the soil percolation tests and the water well yields have been approved should the applicant be permitted to build.

8) Step Eight: Preparation for Use and Occupancy Water Quality Test.

It is recommended that a Use and Occupancy approval be required prior to the applicant



moving into the house. This approval should only be granted after a water quality test is performed on the water supply.



To assure that the house will be ready for use and occupancy when desired, placement of a well pump and sanitary fixtures should be completed as far in advance of planned occupancy as possible.

9) Step Nine: Certificate of Potability (Water Well)

Approval of the Use and Occupancy Permit should constitute preliminary approval of a well water supply for Potability (safe to drink).

2. Proposed County Septic Tank System Manual

Homeowners should understand how a septic tank system works and what steps can be taken to protect it. A properly maintained system is essential to overall property value. Neglecting the maintenance of a septic system will result in costly repairs and damage to the environment.

The following steps should be required of all owners of septic systems:

- A plot plan or drawing of the lot improvements should be on record and available at the County Health Department or the County Planning and Zoning Office.
- Septic Tanks should be inspected at the end of the first year of occupancy, and every two years after that, by a reputable plumber, septic contractor, or sewerage scavenger.
- The septic tanks should be pumped whenever the property changes hands or as is mandated by the Health Department.
- Runoff should be diverted from the septic system area.
- Construction should not be permitted in the sewage disposal area.
- Trees or shrubs should not be planted over the septic tank system.
- Vehicles should not be permitted to park over the tank or any part of the septic system. Heavy vehicles should not be permitted to drive over the area as well.



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- The occupants of houses using septic systems should be given a pamphlet on what should not be flushed into the septic system.
- The same pamphlet referenced previously should promote water conservation as well.

3. Broader Options for Septic Sewage Disposal.

Significant land conservation benefits could accrue if the sewage disposal options available to landowners and developers were to be extended.

J. Home Occupations

Permit home occupations with performance standards to ensure protection to residential neighborhoods. This technique will allow a small businessman the ability to afford adequate housing, which he could not afford if he had to locate his business on separate premises. With stricter performance standards included in the zoning ordinance to control the scale and appearance of the operation, certain home occupations can be permitted by right.

K. Volunteerism

Coordinate local resources to rehabilitate and upgrade existing housing. One approach is to use apprentices in the building trades at vocation-technical centers to rehabilitate houses.

L. Self-help

Encourage the formation and operation of Self-help groups. One such organization is the Habitat for the Humanities. The County might consider providing money for these organizations.

M. Designing for Economy

Designing for economy can be achieved without sacrificing marketability. The County should pro-actively educate builders on techniques proven to save money and, when possible, reduce standards that will save money without sacrificing structural strength or aesthetic quality. In most cases, County building codes permit cost saving designs; however, there are opportunities for the County to relax standards. The County needs to evaluate the building code to ensure that unnecessary impediments are not preventing the use of economical designs.





N. Nuisances Affecting Housing Conditions

Fayette County does not have a mandatory garbage mandate. Citizens are required to pay a private garbage hauler to dispose their trash. If they choose not to use a private hauler they must take their garbage to a landfill in a neighboring county. Fayette County's landfill was closed seven years ago. Citizens that choose to dispose their garbage at the landfill must produce receipts stating that they used the facility. However, these two methods have not worked efficiently throughout Fayette County. Some citizens do not participate in either of the two garbage disposal methods. Consequently, this has the potential to create various health hazards and unsightly eyesores.

There are three approaches that Fayette County can take to eliminate the current garbage problem. The first option is contracting the private haulers to provide garbage pick-up service to all residents of Fayette County. The second option would involve the installation of green boxes (green boxes are large dumpsters that are used for basic household garbage and trash) throughout the County. The third option would be a combination of the first two options.

Mandatory garbage disposal regulations would reduce roadside dumping and other garbage related problems. Fayette County should consider adopting mandatory garbage disposal regulations.

1. Pros and Cons of Mandatory Garbage Regulations

Implementing mandatory garbage regulations is labor-intensive. It could also increase the amount of money that Fayette County citizens pay to dispose their garbage.

The benefit of mandatory garbage regulations would be that all garbage would be disposed properly; an action that is in the best interest of the County's health, safety, and general welfare. To ensure compliance with the mandate, it would be necessary to invoke sufficient fines on citizens that did not adhere to the mandatory garbage regulations.

Other issues that must be considered when considering mandatory garbage regulations is what type of garbage disposal system would best serve the citizens and who would be responsible for the payment and collection of such services.



2. Option One (Benefits)

Private haulers would ensure adequate and timely garbage disposal. It would be advantageous for Fayette County to contract the private haulers rather than purchasing a County-owned and operated garbage truck if a reasonable price could be reached between the County government and the private haulers. By contracting with the private haulers the County government would only have to make an annual payment to the private haulers. It would be the haulers responsibility to ensure pick-up, to answer customer inquiries, and to distribute billing statements.

3. Option One (Liabilities)

If the County chooses to contract the private haulers it could be difficult for the two entities to agree on a contract for services. Contracting with the private haulers may be considered a better option than purchasing a County-owned garbage truck. However, if a contract cannot be executed, the County would have to consider buying a garbage truck and staffing a waste disposal board.

4. Option Two (Benefits)

The system of using green boxes can be easily implemented and easily maintained. This system would require the placement of large dumpsters around the County where citizens could dispose their garbage. The price of operating the green boxes is estimated to be lower than paying private haulers to dispose garbage.

5. Option Two (Liabilities)

Citizens of Fayette County may not be satisfied with transporting garbage to the green boxes. The County would be required to obtain and/or build the green boxes. They would also be required to staff the green box facilities. The price of staffing the green boxes may cause the price of using the green boxes to escalate to a price that may make it unaffordable or unattractive to residents. If residents are required to transport their garbage it is imperative that the price of using the facilities is affordable.





6. Option Three (Benefits)

A combination of private haulers and the green box system would provide ample flexibility and a range of prices for garbage disposal in Fayette County. Although there would be mandatory garbage regulations for Fayette County, the combination of green boxes and private haulers would give residents a choice of methods for their garbage disposal.

7. Option Three (Liabilities)

The combination of green boxes and private haulers provides the most flexibility for the citizens of Fayette County; but it could be the most costly.

8. Recommendation

It is necessary that Fayette County adopt mandatory garbage regulations. This would be one of the most effective methods to clean up many of the nuisances that impact housing in Fayette County.

The combination of contracted private haulers and green boxes is the best option of Fayette County. This option would give the residents a choice in how they dispose their garbage. Although this option may be slightly more expensive than the other two options, it would be the most effective.

IX. TECHNIQUES FOR PROTECTING AND ENHANCING EXISTING HISTORICAL AREAS

Preparing a historic preservation plan is relatively simple, once the appropriate components are recognized and the planning process is started. Ensuring effective implementation of the plan, once adopted, is a more difficult challenge.

The process for preparation and adoption of the preservation plan is nearly as important as the plan itself in ensuring successful implementation of the plan and its ongoing use.

Preservation plans, not unlike preservation ordinances, are often drafted in response to the loss or potential loss of an important historic resource.

Successful implementation of a preservation plan would depend a great deal on the planning process. Local stakeholders must be brought into the process early on and their concerns must be addressed. In addition, those administering the planning process must look at this as an education process for the community.





Robert Stipe, Emeritus Professor of Design at North Carolina State University, identifies ten steps to effective implementation of a preservation plan after its preparation:

1. Make sure that the plan is officially adopted by resolution or ordinance of the local governing body, and specify that, in the event of a conflict between the preservation plan and other elements or ordinances, the preservation plan takes precedence.
2. Follow adoption of the plan with an Executive Order of the County Commission requiring each County department and agency "to give special attention to the needs of any historic resource under its jurisdiction."
3. Make sure that the resolution adopting the plan states that all public projects undertaken by federal, state or local government bodies that might adversely affect historic resources will be subject to review and comment by an appropriate entity, such as the local preservation commission.
4. Ensure that the planning department systemically considers the possible adverse impact on historic resources of all private projects reviewed by it for zoning approvals.
5. Include capital appropriations in the annual County budget for the preservation incentives or programs specified in the preservation plan, effectively ensuring that "preservation projects become part of the long-term capital budget."
6. Include annual maintenance appropriations in the annual County government budget for significant public and private historic resources. Include such basic items as street paving in historic districts to improve the general quality of life in historic districts and neighborhoods; again, effectively ensuring that specific recommendations in the preservation plan will be implemented.
7. Be certain that money is budgeted for public purchase of those historic resources that cannot be saved by private efforts alone.
8. Make sure that the preservation ordinance is effectively enforced. Work preservation review into such activities as "area zoning (intensity, use, off-street parking, etc.); health and sanitation; building construction and housing maintenance; the maintenance of vacant lots; the care and maintenance of trees; undesirable land uses; earth moving and disturbance; and other activities directly affecting the quality of life in every neighborhood.





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9. Be certain that the County gives special attention to areas and neighborhoods not yet qualifying as "historic", but which someday might be so considered.
10. Some entity must have the mandate to accomplish the plan's objectives and to ensure compliance with the preservation plan. The most effective way to implement the preservation plan is to make sure that both the local preservation ordinance and the preservation plan give the appointed preservation commission clear authority to become involved in such County activities as the budget process and the zoning review process, and to work with County agencies to implement the policies in the plan.

X. FAYETTE COUNTY 3 YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION OF BUILDING CODES

A. Introduction

This outline has been prepared to use as a guide and or template for the orderly implementation of enforcing the State of West Virginia Building Code. These standards are based on the West Virginia State Building Code, which is clear in its objectives. However, the County has authority over staffing, fees, etc., which can be used to set up a Building Code Office.

With the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, the County should immediately begin to create a timeline that outlines an implementation schedule, staffing requirements, and projected budgets for the Building Code Office. The County should not begin the actual implementation of this three-year plan; however, until all of the above elements are in place and the County Commission has adopted the Fayette County Zoning Ordinance.

The following are some of the items should be decided and/or completed and/or completed after the adoption of both the Comprehensive Plan and Fayette County Zoning Ordinance, but before the implementation of the three-year plan:

- Research budget requirements, including staff, facilities, training, hiring costs, printing, development of administrative rules and regulations, etc.;
 - Adopt a Building Code as prescribed by the State fire Marshal (which should be written so that as the State Code is updated, the County will automatically follows);
 - Research opportunities for development offered by area associations (and join any organizations that can be helpful in this endeavor);
-



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- Develop administrative rules, regulations and fee structure (visit/research Raleigh, Kanawha, and other counties to see how they have developed these items);
- Investigate joint cooperation with Raleigh and/or Kanawha counties for printing materials, joint ordering, and possibly even the hiring of inspectors;
- Finalize the office structure and requirements, and occupy the office space;
- Begin schedule of hiring and staffing; and
- Set the starting date for implementation as January 2, 2003.

B. Implementation Schedule

The purpose of building codes are to provide minimum standards for the protection of life, health, limb, property, environment and for the safety and welfare of the consumer, general public, and the owners and occupants of all structures regulated by these codes.

1. Scope

The provisions of the building codes apply to the construction, addition, prefabrication, alteration, repair, use, occupancy and maintenance of all structures. Compliance with the requirements of these codes may be considered as prima facie evidence of compliance with the adopted code.

2. Authority

The County shall designate and hereby authorize a "Building Official" who shall be directed to administer and enforce all provisions of the Building Code. The Building Official shall also oversee all staff and operations of the department.

3. Permitting

A permit shall be obtained before beginning construction, alteration, or repairs, other than ordinary repairs, using application forms furnished by the County. Ordinary repairs that do not require a permit include nonstructural repairs and do not include addition to, alteration of, or replacement or relocation of water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electrical wiring, or mechanical or other work for which a permit is required.



Typical examples of ordinary repairs are; painting, new flooring (carpet, etc), replacing a light, replacing a sink or toilet or repairing any major component of the structure as long as not more than 25% of the component is being repaired. This would include items like damage to a roof where you only have to make repairs and not completely re roof the structure or replacing a broken window, etc.

4. Permit Fees

The County having jurisdiction can set any reasonable fee it desires. However, please note that fees are to be structured to cover the cost of operating the department and can not be imposed merely as a revenue source. From a recent statewide survey, \$7.50 per thousand dollars of construction investment is an average permit fee being charged. It is recommended that Fayette County start at \$5.00 per thousand, with a minimum fee of \$30.00 that would cover all projects from \$0.00 - \$6,000.00. Thereafter, a fee of \$5.00 per thousand or portion thereof would be assessed. There are several ways the cost of construction can be determined. Some jurisdictions require the person applying for the permit to show a contract for the work being done. The contract amount is then used as the basis for assessing the permit fees. While this works well on large commercial and or industrial projects, it fails to cover most remodeling work, additions, and even new residential housing projects. This being the case, BOCA offers a chart for determining construction value, which is recommended for Fayette County because it keeps all permits valued on a consistent basis (**see ATTACHMENT "A" located at the end of this chapter**). BOCA updates this chart yearly or the jurisdiction can update the chart each year to reflect the inflation rate for the area. A copy of the building valuation chart can be found at the end of this section.

5. Adoption

The County will have to formally adopt the State Building Code in a manner prescribed by the State Fire Marshall. The method for adoption can be found at the end of this report (**see ATTACHMENT "B" located at the end of this chapter**)).

The State of West Virginia is proposing to update the building codes effective January of 2002. They will be updating to the 2000 ICC Codes. Depending on when the County decides to adopt the codes, you should



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contact the State Fire Marshall in Charleston to verify what editions are currently in force.



6. Memberships

Immediately upon adoption of the State Building Code in Fayette County, the County should join BOCA International and also the West Virginia Code Officials Association (WVCOA). Both of these organizations are very important components to enforcing the building codes. Being a member of BOCA affords you toll free code interpretation assistance from a staff of trained code consultants. Membership in the state WVCOA offers training sessions several times per year to keep your staff up to date. My suggestion is to contact Mike Westfall, Coordinator for the BOCA Mideast Regional Office. His phone number is (614) 890-1064. You can also contact Mike toll free by calling 1-800-323-1103. He will assist you in joining both organizations.

7. Forms and department paperwork

The County can create all the forms needed to run the department. However, I would suggest using the forms BOCA can supply you. They have permit applications, inspection reports, posting card, permit cards, labels, etc. They have everything you will need to get your department set up and they can even imprint them for you for an extra charge. I have already given some sample cards to Dave Pollard. Again, once you join BOCA, they will assist you in these areas.

8. Certification

As of present date, there are no mandatory requirements in the State of West Virginia for personnel to hold professional certifications. BOCA and the ICC do offer over twenty areas of certification covering all aspects of code enforcement. Tests are given at various locations in West Virginia on a monthly basis. All staff should have some form of certification. Once the County joins BOCA, the County will receive a detailed booklet outlining all the areas for certification. The following are the recommended minimum certifications for Fayette County:

- Building Official: Within three years, this person should have all of the residential certifications. They include 1A-Building, 2A-Electrical, 4A-Mechanical, 5A-Plumbing. This staff person should also be a certified Building Inspector. This certification requires passing



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three exams: 1A-Building, 1B-Building and 3B-Fire Protection.



In addition, he/she should also be a certified Zoning Inspector. This is a total of seven tests needed to hold the aforementioned certifications. These should be accomplished within a three-year period.

- Field Inspectors: All department personnel who will be performing inspections should strive to obtain certifications in all areas they will enforce. This may include all the ones mentioned above.
- Administrative: The person who will handle the paperwork and application process should obtain the Permit Technician certification.

It is recommended that when the County begins enforcing the property maintenance code, then all staff charged with the enforcement of this code should obtain the Property Maintenance/Housing Inspector certification. However, the County will have to look at the benefits of professional certification versus the costs of taking the tests and the classes that will be needed annually to maintain the certifications.

9. Department Equipment

In order to carry out the duties of the department, all staff personnel must have the following minimum equipment.

- A portable phone or two way radio to have contact with the office while in the field;
- A flashlight;
- A 100 foot tape measure to verify zoning setbacks ;
- A electrical circuit tester with GFCI trip switch;
- A level for checking plumbing slope ;
- A small tape measure;
- A calculator;
- A smoke test kit to test smoke detectors;
- Normal supplies such as pens, clipboards, etc. ; and
- A vehicle.

This list is not all-inclusive, but does represent a minimum amount of equipment needed to perform inspections. The County may require more equipment.



10. Staff

This plan recommends a three-year implementation plan for Fayette County. Each year the department should evolve and begin inspecting more facets of construction. An important thing to remember is until now, you were not performing any inspections. So, in year one, if you become twenty-five effective, it will be quite an improvement for construction quality in the county. The following are the minimum staffing requirements to accomplish a three-year implementation plan:

- First Year

- 1) Building Official: Will oversee the department, perform all plan reviews when necessary, and perform field inspections.
- 2) Field Inspector: Will perform the majority of field inspections; also patrol the County looking for unauthorized work, etc.
- 3) Administrative Assistant: Will provide office support by answering phones, greeting public, accepting applications for permits, filing, etc.

- Second Year

- 1) The amount of inspections should increase in this year, which will require the addition of another Field Inspector. Also, once the second field inspector is employed, the Building Official should work more in the administration area and do less field inspections. An average field inspector should be able to do 1,000 field inspections per year. A schedule of 1,000 inspections leaves time for office work, vacations, etc.

- Third Year

- 1) In year three, the department should be up and running to its full potential. This means more inspections are being performed and more permits being issued as inspectors are patrolling and looking for unauthorized work. In addition, this is the year the Office should begin enforcing the property maintenance code, which will probably require bringing a third field inspector on board. Using the 1,000 inspections per field inspector each year is a good barometer by
-



which to judge the need for additional staff. Depending on the workload, enforcing the property maintenance code also may require the jurisdiction to hire an additional administrative assistant. There really is no blanket answer for determining an adequate number of personnel, but the department must have adequate staffing to effectively carry out its function. Understaffing will result in poor morale and productivity. As the department grows, the jurisdiction must look at increasing the permit fees to help cover the cost.

11. Identification

It is a requirement of the West Virginia State Code that all Building Code Office personnel have proper identification. This can be accomplished by issuing all field inspectors a badge, but that is not recommended by this plan. Badges give the appearance of a very formal identification, like that of a police officer. A better suggestion would be photo identification cards. The cards are a less formal identification and are less threatening to the public. Also, the photo affords the public a higher level of safety, as they can match the face on the ID with the field inspector on their property.

C. Types of Inspections

The following types of inspections will give the County adequate coverage while it strives to finalize the three-year plan for complete inspection coverage:

1. First Year

- A zoning inspection to verify proper placement of structures on the lot, lot coverage, etc.
- A footing inspection prior to placement of concrete.
- A framing inspection to inspect framing members as well as visually inspecting electrical, plumbing, mechanical components.
- A final Use and Occupancy inspection to ensure compliance prior to occupancy. This final Use and Occupancy inspection should be performed on every permit issued.

2. Second Year



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Continue the four types of inspections instituted in the first year and add the following:

- A foundation inspection before the framing begins, a separate framing inspection followed by a separate inspection for electrical, plumbing and mechanical components.

3. Third Year

Finally, in addition to all the above, this is the year the Office should come full circle in inspections by adding inspections of:

- Foundation drainage;
- Foundation damp proofing, testing of the both plumbing components (supply and DWV) - types of tests required are listed in the Code books;
- Ensuring local gas company approval on mechanical components that will use gas;
- Water/well service lines;
- Sanitary/septic service lines;
- Insulation and drywall;
- Exterior covering and roof; and
- Final grade/landscaping.

By the third year the Building Code Office should be covering all aspects of code enforcement. This will equate to many more field inspections being performed. As the department develops, inspectors will learn what to look for during inspections and in the field. The Code Books give plenty of detail, there are classes that can be attended to attend that walk inspectors through the process, and BOCA has very effective preprinted checklists available.

Also, some permits will not require all the types of inspections listed above. For example, a permit issued to build a new deck would only require a zoning inspection, a framing inspection, and a final use and occupancy inspection. At the other range of the spectrum, some large commercial permits will require even more inspections, including those for signage, steel erection, etc.

Adopting the State Building Code and establishing a Building Code Office are important for Fayette County. By doing these things, the County is taking steps to ensure quality construction, which will contribute significantly to providing the County with a bright future and enhanced property values.



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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

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Capital Improvements Program





I. OVERVIEW

A. **What is a Capital Improvement?**

Capital improvements refer to the construction, expansion, or improvement of capital facilities. Capital facilities include relatively permanent, high-cost facilities such as public buildings, parks, roads, bridges, and water and sewer systems. Major equipment expenditures for such items as fire trucks and police cruisers are also considered capital improvements. Capital improvements involve extraordinary expenses that only occur on occasion. In comparison, operation expenses are the more routine expenses that occur every year.

A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is extremely beneficial for 1) carefully preparing for major expenses that will be needed over time, 2) determining priorities and methods for funding these expenses, and 3) successfully implementing projects in compliance with the most current Comprehensive Plan.

B. **Why Prioritize Projects?**

The purpose of the Capital Improvements Program is to indicate the County's funding and staging plans for future capital projects. This provides time for land acquisition as well as design and construction of new facilities, so that they will be available at the appropriate time.

In periods of rapid growth and consequent increased revenues, there is a natural inclination to add new capital projects or try to speed up capital projects in the Capital Improvement Program that are planned for completion at the end of the six-year cycle rather than toward the beginning.

One of the major problems in adding or speeding up new projects is the acquisition of land. Suitable sites at appropriate locations may be more difficult to find. Negotiations of purchase often take years. If the County has to condemn land, the legal procedures may take even more time.

Public consensus on the location and nature of capital projects is often another factor in the timing of these projects. The alignment or width of new roads and the location of libraries are examples of projects within a community that have substantial impact on land use and quality of life upon which decision-making may be drawn out for an extended period of time.





C. What is a Capital Improvement Program?

From time to time, Fayette County must make decisions concerning long-term capital investments, which are used to maintain or construct public facilities. The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a projection of a county government's capital investments planned over a six-year period of time and prioritized according to need by the Fayette County Commission. The CIP is both a fiscal and planning device of government, which will allow the County to keep track of all capital projects relative to cost, funding, responsibility, priority, and timing. Each year the Capital Improvements Program will be reviewed within the context of an ongoing County planning program guided by the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan. This planning program will serve as the starting point for the County's annual Operating and Capital Budgets.

The recommended CIP includes six years of projected capital needs. The first year of the program will become the Capital Budget, which authorizes expenditures for non-capital items (such as a new roof, basketball goal, or any non-capital project included in this plan). The remaining five years of the CIP will serve as a financial plan for capital investments. The Financial Advisory Committee will review the financial plan each year as the CIP is prepared and updated. Based on the FAC's recommendations, each year the County Commission will adopt both the Capital Budget, to correspond with the Operating Budget, and the five-year financial plan. This adoption will take place after recommendations have been received from the Financial Advisory Committee, County officials, and citizens at large.

D. Project Selection

Projects come into the Capital Improvements Program and eventually into the Capital Budget based on:

- Recommendations from individual residents and public officials who would like the County to address a community need such as a road with drainage problems;
- Recommendations from groups with special interests such as specialized recreational facilities;
- The need for routine maintenance and repair of existing facilities;





II. BENEFITS OF A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The process of Capital Improvements Programming will offer a number of benefits to Fayette County. It will:

- Allow large expenses to be funded over more than one budget year to avoid a major tax increase in any one year;
- Permit the County to hold bond issues to an absolute minimum in order to minimize the very high administrative and legal expenses of issuing a bond;
- Ensure that funds needed to replace major pieces of equipment will be available when pieces of equipment reach the end of their useful life;
- Allow planners to estimate the amounts of money likely to be available over time for capital improvements (including the amount of debt payments that the County may reasonably be able to afford) so that the County can realistically determine the extent of the projects that can be funded over time, without overextending the County's financial capabilities;
- Allow the County to plan projects in advance so that Fayette County is in the best position possible to take full advantage of any grant programs that may become available and take full advantage of periods of time when interest rates, construction costs, and land prices are at their lowest;
- Ensure that any needed engineering, architectural, and bid preparation work are completed by the time that the project will need to be "on-line;"
- Allow the County to compare different types of projects on the basis of need, costs, and benefits, so that the projects can be ranked by priority to make the best use of limited funds. Through a CIP, this comparison among different projects can be made not only by County officials, but also by members of the public at meetings when the CIP is being drafted and updated;
- Allow persons, neighborhoods, groups, and County officials seeking funding to fully understand the many competing demands on County funds;
- Allow the County to use creative methods of funding land purchases, such as agreements that involve making payments in installments and planning for joint purchases with municipalities or other counties. Also, planning for land purchases in advance can allow time to bargain with the property-owner;
- Permit funds to be set aside from annual budgets for a capital expense to avoid the need for expense borrowing.



III. THE UPDATING AND ADOPTION OF THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMS

A. Financial Advisory Committee

To guide the County in making necessary physical improvements, the County Code should require a Financial Advisory Committee to annually update the six-year recommended Capital Improvements Program. The Financial Advisory Committee is a County Commission-appointed body that should include the following representatives: the Fayette County Transition Team, Financial Officer for Fayette County, Community Resource Coordinator, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and a representative of a local bank.

The Financial Advisory Committee would be responsible for recommending to the County Commission a Capital Improvements Program, which is a complete list of physical improvements that the Financial Advisory Committee believes the County should fund and build during the six-year period covered by the program. The County Commission may, at times, receive requests from the public for any number of projects or programs. The County Commission, at its discretion, may refer these requests to the Financial Advisory Committee for consideration and prioritization on the Committee's list of physical improvements.

The Community Resource Coordinator's role would be to try to limit expenditures by seeing that, wherever possible, projects are coordinated with respect to function (for example, joint use of space), timing (to hold down construction costs) and location (to ensure that space is utilized to the County's best advantage). Also, the Community Resource Coordinator would try to minimize the County's share of construction costs wherever feasible, through Federal, State, or County participation.

B. The Updating/Programming Process

The capital programming process for a Fiscal Year should be initiated in early October of the previous year.

Members of the public, in addition to County officials, may request that particular projects be included in the new six-year Capital Improvements Program. The County will provide forms for this purpose. Information requested on the form will include a brief description, justification, and detailed cost estimate of the project being proposed. Applicants would also list appropriation requests, by funding sources, for the six-year program period. The person making the request should submit the forms to the





Financial Advisory Committee by the end of January prior to the beginning of the new Fiscal Year in June.

The Financial Advisory Committee would develop a recommended Capital Improvement Program by March 1st. During this period, the Financial Advisory Committee would rely upon the Community Resource Coordinator to make recommendations on each applicant's request. Before meeting with the Financial Advisory Committee, the Community Resource Coordinator would meet with each applicant to discuss his or her recommended project. The following criteria should be used in evaluating requested projects:

- **Relationship to the most current Fayette County Comprehensive Plan:** The relationship of the requested projects to the major policy statements and elements of the County's Comprehensive Plan.
- **Influence of County, State, and National Demographic and Economic trends:** Local, State, and National trends in the population and economy will have an effect on planning, financing, and construction of capital projects.
- **Risk to Public Safety or Health:** To protect against a clear and immediate risk to public safety or public health.

Comment: The project must identify a clear and immediate safety or health risk. Requests from departments that deal principally with public safety, such as the Fire and Police departments, do not automatically meet this criterion; they may be in the systematic replacement category, for example. Similarly, a department that deals principally with public objectives other than safety (e.g., Recreation) may have a request that meets this criterion.

- **Deteriorated Facilities:** An investment that deals with a deteriorated facility or piece of equipment. The action taken may be either: 1) reconstruction or extensive rehabilitation to extend its useful life to avoid or to postpone replacing it with a new and more costly one; or 2) replacement of the facility or piece of equipment with a new one.

Comment: This is the opposite of the Systematic Replacement approach (see below) and relies on a "deferred maintenance" approach, which allows equipment or a facility to deteriorate and be replaced only when it is worn out.





- **Systematic Replacement:** An investment that replaces or upgrades a facility or piece of equipment as part of a systematic replacement program. This investment assumes the equipment will be replaced at approximately the same level of service. Some increase in size to allow for normal growth or increased demand is anticipated.

Comment: The replacement program weighs carefully the cost-effectiveness of additional maintenance expenses against the cost of replacing the facility or equipment with a new one. This is the opposite of the "deferred maintenance" approach. A replacement that significantly expands or increases the level of service would be evaluated under the Expanded Facility or Improvement of Operating Efficiency criteria (see below).

- **Improvement of Operating Efficiency:** An investment that substantially and significantly improves the operating efficiency of a department, or an expenditure that has a very favorable return on investment with a promise of reducing existing, or future increases in operating expenses (e.g., introduction of a new or improved technology).
- **Coordination:** 1) An expenditure that is necessary to insure coordination with another CIP project (e.g., scheduling a sewer project to coincide with a street reconstruction project so that the street is not dug up a year after it is completed); 2) A project that is necessary to comply with requirements imposed by others (e.g., a court order, a change in federal or state law or administrative ruling, an agreement with another town or government agency); or 3) A project that meets established mission or goals of the County Commission or the Housing Authority.

Comment: When projects are "linked," a particular project may be advanced beyond its requested or scheduled year in order to be carried out in conjunction with a higher priority project.

- **Equitable Provision of Services, Facilities:** 1) an investment that serves the special needs of a segment of the County's population identified by public policy as deserving of special attention (e.g., the handicapped, the elderly, or low- and moderate-income persons); or 2) An investment that, considering existing services or facilities, makes equivalent





facilities or services available to all communities or population groups within the County.

- **Protection and Conservation of Resources:** 1) A project that protects natural resources that are at risk of being reduced in amount or quality; or 2) A project that protects the investment in existing infrastructure against excessive demand or overload that threatens the capacity or useful life or piece of equipment.
- **New and Substantially Expanded Facility:** Construction or acquisition of a new facility (including land) or new equipment, or major expansion thereof, that provides a service, or a level of service, not now available.

Comment: For evaluation purposes, this criterion deals with two types of expansion. One is a conscious and scheduled decision to expand the level of services offered.

- **Availability of financing from both County and Non-County Sources:** Among the factors considered is the County's capacity to borrow expected revenue from the B&O tax, anticipated Federal and State aide and anticipated motor vehicle revenue.

After the Financial Advisory Committee has reviewed the projects and chosen those found to be consistent with these criteria, it may determined that the total cost exceeds the funds available. In such cases, the Committee must prioritize specific projects or groups of projects. In determining priorities, the Committee assesses where the greatest needs exist and where the County will benefit most from a project.

The Committee should also consider the relative deficiencies in facilities or services operating in specific functional areas and serving specific geographic areas or specific age and income groups. It should also consider the relative effect a project might have in relation to various objectives of the County (for example, a new road might make vacant industrial land accessible and hence available for development). The Community Resource Coordinator and Committee should consider the impact of each separate project on the other projects and programs (for example, by constructing a recreation center adjacent to a school, the County may reduce the capital and operating costs for both facilities.)





On the basis of all these conditions, certain projects are included as requested in the program, others are rearranged within the six-year period, and the remaining projects are not recommended for inclusion in the six-year program.

During the Financial Advisory Committee's review of the Community Resource Coordinator's recommendations, agencies will be requested to make presentations of their programs to the Financial Advisory Committee. After weighing all considerations, the Financial Advisory Committee will adopt a six-year recommended program, which is forwarded to the County Commission for review and ultimate adoption.

The recommended six-year program is also forwarded to the County Commission to assist the Commission in its review of the capital budget by providing a reference document showing anticipated future projects.

IV. CONCLUSION

The CIP as recommended for Fayette County is an additional tool for the County Commission to have at its disposal in setting budgetary priorities. Without expansion of the current tax base, it will be difficult to fund new capital projects. However, when important projects and opportunities are available, the CIP and Financial Advisory Committee become an asset to the County Commission in determining how best to use any available discretionary funds. The CIP does not remove the County Commission from its role as conservators and dispensers of County funds, nor does it impose new standards for the budgetary process for established offices and agencies. What it does accomplish is to give the County Commission additional information on worthy projects that might otherwise have to be considered without adequate time or information. The CIP serves as a roadmap to the ongoing efforts identified during the planning process and identifies the financial aspects of how to bring these projects to fruition.





**CHAPTER SIXTEEN - CAPITAL IMPROVMENTS
PROGRAM**

**2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

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Funding Mechanisms





CHAPTER SEVENTEEN - FUNDING MECHANISMS

I. OVERVIEW

This chapter identifies sources of funding for implementing the projects listed in the Comprehensive Plan. The funding sources identified could finance much-needed improvements and programs in Fayette County. These improvements and programs will be a catalyst for planned, progressive improvements to the quality of life of citizens in Fayette County.

Capital improvements may be financed by various types of Federal and State grants as well as low interest loan programs. The State and Federal grants are more suited for larger capital projects. The following are the disadvantages of using Federal and State grants, especially for smaller projects:

1. Any spending on a project is often delayed for a year or more until grants are approved and contracts are accepted by the State and Federal agency.
2. The total cost of the project may be significantly increased if the grant requires that all contractors pay the "prevailing union wage rate," which is usually much higher than the market wage rate.
3. Significant staff time and a certain amount of expense may be needed to complete the applications and to meet the administrative and monitoring requirements of the grant.

II. PUBLIC FUNDING SOURCES

The following public funding sources have been categorized into three sections: (A) Sources for Community Development, (B) Sources for Housing Development, and (C) Sources for Small Business Development.

A. Sources for Overall Community Development

1. Rural Utility Service

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is the Federal "point" agency for rural infrastructure assistance in electricity, water, and telecommunications. As a Federal credit agency in the United States Department of Agriculture, RUS provides a leadership role in lending and technical guidance for the rural utilities industries.





The public/private partnership which is forged between RUS and these industries results in billions of dollars in rural infrastructure development and creates thousands of jobs for the American economy. Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) provides loans, grants, and loan guarantees for drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste, and storm drainage facilities in rural areas and cities and towns of 10,000 or less. Public bodies, non-profit organizations, and recognized Indian tribes may qualify for assistance. WEP also makes grants to nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and training to assist rural communities with their water, wastewater, and solid waste problems.

The RUS Electric Program makes insured loans and guarantees of loans to nonprofit and cooperative associations, public bodies, and other utilities. Insured loans primarily finance the construction of facilities for the distribution of electric power in rural areas. The guaranteed loan program has been expanded and is now available to finance generation, transmission, and distribution facilities in rural areas. According to USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) estimates, twenty-three (23) jobs are created for every \$1 million of Federal investment in electric infrastructure.

2. West Virginia Infrastructure Council

West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council. The council manages a \$300 million bond issue approved by voters in November 1994, to provide for water, sewer and economic development projects. Of the \$300 million, 80 percent is earmarked for water and sewer projects and 20 percent is directed to economic development projects.

3. Partnership Grants Program, Governor's Office of Economic and Community Development

The GOECD promotes, encourages and assists in the advance of business prosperity and economic welfare in the state of West Virginia through the Partnership Grants Program. The Partnership Grants Program provides supplemental assistance for public facilities and other community development projects for which other funding is not available.

The West Virginia University Institute of Technology EDA University Center offers a **West Virginia Economic**





Development Services Directory. The directory provides information financing, loans, business resources, development, education, grant assistance, housing, recreation, recycling and other programs.

4. Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

Congress established The ARC in 1965 to support economic and social development in the Appalachian Region. ARC helps fund such projects as education and workforce training programs, highway construction, water and sewer system construction, leadership development programs, small business start-ups and expansions, and development of health-care resources.

Programs provided by the ARC include: Appalachian Development Highway system (ADHS); Economic and Human Development Activities; the Distressed Counties Program; the Local Development District Program (LDD); the J-1 Visa Waiver Program; Research and Technical Assistance; the Entrepreneur Initiative; the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program; and the Business Development Revolving Loan Fund Program.

5. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

These federal grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, passed through the West Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, are generally required to relate to job creation for low to moderate income residents and/or the elimination of blight. They can also be used to upgrade infrastructure and provide civic services.

6. Small Cities Community Development Block Grant

This grant is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support community development programs. Programs funded usually provide a suitable living environment, expand economic opportunities, and create decent housing for persons earning low to moderate incomes. The activities that are financed by this grant must eliminate blight and deterioration or meet urgent needs of recent origin posing an immediate threat to the health of a community for which no other source exists.





7. Economic Development Agency (EDA)

The U.S. Department of Commerce, through EDA, promotes the long-range economic development of areas with severe unemployment and social problems related to families classified as low to moderate income earners. The program also aids in the development of public facilities and private enterprise to help create new, permanent jobs. These grants can be used for public services such as water and sewer systems, access roads to industrial areas, renovation and recycling of old industrial buildings, revitalization of central business districts, energy development projects, port facilities, railroad sidings and spurs, public tourism facilities, vocational schools, and site improvements for industrial parks. In order to qualify for this grant, the community must aim to:

- Improve the opportunities for the successful establishment or expansion of industrial or commercial plants or facilities;
- Assist in the creation of additional long-term employment opportunities; and
- Benefit the long-term unemployed and members of low income families.

8. Community Facility Loan

These loans support overall community development such as fire and rescue services; transportation; community, social, cultural, and health benefits; industrial park sites; access to sites; and utility extensions. Priority for funding is as follows:

- Projects that will enhance public safety such as fire, police, rescue, and ambulance services;
- Health care facilities which are necessary to conform with life/safety code;
- Public services such as community buildings and courthouses; and
- New hospitals and major expansion of existing hospitals. The statistical factor for eligibility is that towns or incorporated areas must have a population under 20,000.



9. TEA-21

A percentage of West Virginia's federal funds from the Transportation Program are set aside for enhancement grants through the West Virginia Department of Transportation. Eligible projects must relate to the intermodal transportation system and fall into one of various categories including facilities for bicycles and pedestrians, scenic or historic highway programs, landscaping and other scenic beautification, historic preservation, and rehabilitation of historic transportation buildings or facilities. Eighty percent of the project can be funded from the federal grant portion of the project.

10. Historic Tax Credits

In order to qualify for a Historic Tax Credit, the project must be a certified rehabilitation of a historic structure. These requests are made through the local State Historic Preservation Office and issued by the National Park Service. The building is required to be a depreciable property such as one used in trade or for the production of income. Owner occupied residences are not eligible for funding.

11. West Virginia Main Street

Main Street is a downtown revitalization program focusing on economic development, historic preservation, and marketing principles. Towns and small cities are selected on a competitive basis to receive technical assistance from both the state office and the National Main Street Center, a division of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Main Street* towns receive training in the principles of economic restructuring, design, promotions, and organization. An architect provides design assistance to property owners and loan programs are developed to encourage new business start-ups. In addition, the state office acts as a liaison between the towns and other government agencies as well as a marketing vehicle to promote community achievements.





12. Area Economic and Human Resource Development

This agency is funded by the Federal Government and provides assistance in developing a diversified economic base, creating a self-sustaining economy in order to increase employment opportunities and income levels of the people in this region. This grant can be used for the improvement or initiation of the following activities: basic infrastructure, access roads, job relevant training, basic skills development for adults and secondary level vocational students, child care programs for companies, housing, enterprise development, and multi-jurisdictional local government assistance.

13. Land and Water Conservation Fund

This fund is provided by the Federal Government or the National Park Service for the acquisition and development of high-quality, public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

14. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The Environmental Protection Agency offers construction grants for the construction of wastewater treatment systems (including privately owned individual treatment systems, whereby the County is the applicant on the owners behalf), which are required to meet State and Federal quality standards. Other examples of projects that can be financed by this grant include infiltration-inflow correction measures, new interceptors, new collector sewers and correction sewers, and correction of combined sewer overflows (CSO), including marine CSO projects.

The EPA's main aim is to increase the participation of interested parties in cleaning up and planning the productive reuse of contaminated sites (brownfields), to coalesce federal, state, and municipal efforts to examine new approaches to achieving cleanup and reuse, and to explore the potential of making these sites economically viable. During 1995 and 1996, the EPA plans to offer fifty grants of up to \$200,000 each, for brownfield projects, as part of a two-year demonstration and redevelopment solution.

15. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP)

Funded by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and Land and Water Conservation Fund





(LWCF), it engages in comprehensive statewide, outdoor recreation planning in compliance with federal LWCF Guidelines, which require preparation of a five-year state plan in order to receive federal funds for park and recreation projects.

16. Governor's Community Partnership Grant

This grant is funded and promoted by the Governor's Office of Economic and Community Development for supplemental assistance for public facilities and other community development projects for which other funding is not available. The program encourages and assists in the location of new business and industry, expansion of all types of business activities which tend to promote the development and maintain the economic stability of the State.

17. County-issued Industrial Development Bonds

- General Revenue Bonds: A method to finance revenue-producing facilities (i.e. sewer and water systems). Increased revenues for new facilities are used to pay interest upon and retire the bond's debt.

18. General Operating Funds

The County's General Fund is mainly funded by local taxes. Normally, the General Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund capital improvements in any one year. However, if costs of a project can be spread over two or three budget years, it may allow the County to save substantial amounts of money in interest.

B. Sources for Housing Development

1. West Virginia Housing Development Fund Construction Assistance Program

The CAP offers a construction loan option at below-market interest rates for builders to construct single-family homes for sale on builder-owned and builder-developed property, or on property owned or financed by the WVHDF.

2. Minority/Disabled Borrowers Program (Single Family)

A \$2 million pool of funds for loans to minority or disabled borrowers is available. The interest rate is 5.89% for twenty-five years for FHA, VA, and conventional loans. FHA loans will be at 6.28% for thirty years.





3. Single-Family Homeownership Programs (Single Family)

This is a twenty-five year, fixed rate mortgage at 6.49% interest rate for West Virginia residents who have not owned a home in the last three years (except in targeted areas), and who meet the applicable income limits. Loans on existing houses, newly-constructed houses, condominiums, townhouses, or manufactured homes are also available. No refinancing is allowed.

4. Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP) (Single Family)

This loan program consists of a \$250,000 pool for all owner-occupied dwelling units. Loans will also include a deferred payment concept for emergency/elderly clients and situations. The maximum loan available is \$15,000 with a sliding scale interest rate of 3% to 11% plus fifty basis points for FHA insurance. Deferred payment loans are charged no interest or payments unless certain conditions arise.

5. Secondary Market Mortgage Program (Single Family)

The secondary market loan origination and purchase process closely follows the current QMB procedure, except that the Housing Development Fund will resell loans to Fannie Mae and its sibling corporation, Freddie Mac, or some other secondary market player. This program is a positive alternative for the Housing Development Fund to continue to provide capital to West Virginia mortgage lenders.

6. Mortgage Credit Certificate Program - MCC (Single Family)

This program provides a dollar-for-dollar federal tax credit between 20% to 35% of the interest paid, depending on the amount of the mortgage obtained. A \$12,000,000 pool of funds for this program is available.

7. Building Revitalization/Reutilization Program - BRRP (Multi Family)

This program provides low-interest loans to rehabilitate older, unoccupied structures for rental or office use in order to stimulate downtowns and main street areas.





CHAPTER SEVENTEEN - FUNDING MECHANISMS

8. Construction Loan Incentive Program --CLIP (Multi Family)

This program provides below-market rate interest construction loan money in cooperation with the Farmers Home Administration's Section 515 program for low- and moderate-income multifamily/elderly housing in designated rural areas.

9. HOME/BRRP Program ((Multi Family)

This program provides low-interest loans or deferred payment loans/forgivable loans to rehabilitate structures for rental use of very low-income persons and families. There is potential for funds to be used for new construction. Funds can be used to leverage other resources.

10. Low-Income Assisted Mortgage Program (LAMP) (Single Family)

Through the creation of a trust, this program provides nonprofit agencies with resources to build homes for persons earning between \$6,000 and \$12,000 annually.

11. HOME Repair Program (Single Family)

This program offers low- or no-interest loans or deferred payment loans for households at or below 80% of the median income. Funds will be available to repair, install, add, and deal with asbestos.

12. Land Development Program

This program offers loans for infrastructure development of raw land, roads, and sewers.

13. Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

This program provides federal tax credits on multi-unit projects which provide low-income rental housing to qualified developers. These credits can be sold for cash to investors and then be used as developer profit, project equity, or project write-down source.





14. Special Needs Housing

This program works in partnership with nonprofit agencies for the benefit of those who require special physical, mental, or emotional services. The program targets two areas of dominance in the housing market in the State--homelessness and those not able to house themselves due to physical or emotional disabilities.

C. Sources for Small Business Development

The success of a small business often depends on the availability of appropriate financing at various stages of business development. This includes start-up financing, real estate loans, inventory loans, working capital loans, financing for machinery and equipment, funds to market new products, and money for employee training.

In many cases, the more successful the business, the more financing it requires. Although banks represent a major source of capital, many small business financing needs are not available from banks. As a result, private foundations and governments at all levels have created an array of small business financing programs. These programs are designed to promote the economic development of small communities.

1. Small Business Administration

The Small Business Administration offers various types of loan and management assistance programs to selected small business owners, generally through lending institutions. In some instances, loan guarantees are extended, providing lenders with collateral substitutions. For the small business owner, this increases the availability of loans through local lending institutions, as the perceived collateral and maturity risks are diminished from the viewpoint of the lender. Programs include Small Business Loans, Handicapped Assistance Loans, programs for minorities and women, loan guarantees, and technical assistance.





2. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

In addition to providing project grants through the Economic Development Grants for Public Works and Development Facilities program, the Economic Development Administration maintains a Business Development Assistance program. The objectives of this program are to sustain industrial and commercial viability in designated areas by providing financial assistance to businesses that create or retain permanent jobs, and expand or establish plants in redevelopment areas for projects where financial assistance is not available from other sources. Guaranteed/Insured loans are also offered. Through this program, the government will guarantee up to 90% of the unpaid balance of loans for the acquisition of fixed assets or for working capital.

3. West Virginia Economic Development Authority (WVEDA)

WVEDA's mandate is to help local communities upgrade their own economy by making loans available to industries for expansion or new construction within the State. Existing industries as well as new companies locating in the State are eligible to apply for these low interest funds, administered through a non-profit community development corporation.

4. Micro Loan Fund

The West Virginia Community Action Directors Association, through its Center for Rural Enterprise, loans small amounts (\$500 to \$10,000) for new, start-up and existing for-profit businesses that employ fewer than ten people. This program assists individuals with background, desire, capacity, and capability to operate a business, who cannot acquire conventional bank financing. The applicant is clearly required to demonstrate the creation or sustainable jobs or the retention of existing jobs. The loan may be used for equipment, machinery, working capital, leasehold improvements or inventory.

III. PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

Business Improvement Districts (BID) can be a valuable tool in ensuring merchant participation in the revitalization process and a source of revenue for promotions and marketing. A BID gives business association, in cooperation with local governments, the ability to manage their commercial district with a level of satisfaction similar to that of a shopping mall.





In communities with existing revitalization groups, a BID can create a more formal structure and increase the level of support among businesses in the area. It does so by making business association dues mandatory for all the businesses in the district. This relieves the association of the time consuming task of collecting voluntary dues and provides a steady and predictable revenue source. It also prevents non-participating businesses or absentee property owners from benefiting from the dedicated efforts of the active members of the association without providing any support for these efforts.

1. Bank Loans

It is often most cost effective to seek bank loans for modest amounts of money (less than one million dollars), then to issue bonds because of the high administrative, legal, and brokerage expenses that are increased with the issuing of bonds.

Other forms of private sources include local civic organizations, fundraising campaigns, donations, festivals, and other special events.





APPENDIX "A"



Cover Design Participants





COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COVER DESIGN PARTICIPANTS

SS PETER AND PAUL SCHOOL

Kelly Conley	Carter Proctor
Nick Gilbert	Joseph Rosiek
Jared Lively	Chelsea Seay
Amber Rader	Kristy Treadway
Lauren Booth	Levi Vestal
Brian Dixon	Anna White
Teddy Kania	Ian Wolf
Michael Murphy	Rebecca Pollard

ANSTED MIDDLE SCHOOL

Danny Pinkleton, Jr.	Halee Kalinoski
----------------------	-----------------

COLLINS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Megan Sanchez	Travis Willis
Steven Whitmore	Chris McKinney
Michelle Fisher	Jackie Parker
Brandon Geisbert	Laura Fernet
Tarron Bo	Josh Dennler
Jeanna Moore	Joseph Kelly
Amanda Nuckels	Trent Travis

NUTTALL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tommy Stull	Candice Hall	Christopher Gill
Justin Greene	Ryan Bowyer	Liz Taylor
Robby Sims	Ryan McCloskey	Chandra Smith
Justin Jones	Aaron Ramsey	Lacy Stolar
Jonathan Bailess	Josh Greene	Adam Roberts
Josh Hypes	Jessica Ward	Zeb Sevy
Montana Callison	Andrew Aldridge	Amber Owens
Waylon Maylon	Darrell Hypes	Brad Sevy
Ryan Barnett	Joey Ennis	Shawn Hornsby
Ashley Legg	Robert Chittum	Tim Drennen
Stephen Perry	Chris Syner	Tony Critchley
Lisa Jarrett	Cassie Manning	Derek McClanahan
		Daniel Cooper

MOUNTAIN VIEW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Nathan Edwards	Elliott Pritt
Mariah Ritterbush	Caleb Cushman
Elizabeth McKendree	Jess Morton
Chelsea Hinte	Kaylan Entinger

FAYETTEVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL





APPENDIX "A" - COVER DESIGN PARTICIPANTS

Joey Dean

FAYETTEVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

William Jennings	Rachel Lindsey	Jessica Rinehart
Alaina Cayton	Logan Kinder	Wes Lewis
Lisa Hudson	Hunter Krise	Sarah Mayes Kady Hall
John Lewis	Anna Vass	Khris Shillingburg
Lucie Law	Laura Kirk	Jonathan Miller
Sarah Boyd	Chase Calvert	Daniel Farrell
Brandon Holliday	Nick Gillman	Andy Johns
Jessica Weis	Joey Hunt	Whitney Hypes
Justin Jones	Brian Wheeler	Kayla Richardson
Erica Payne	Eli Yarber	Brittany Long
Jessie King	Jordan Roark	Robert Hernanole
Samatha Scarbrough	Casey Smith	Jay Layton
Andrew Phillips	Joshua Massey	James Proskin
Megan Oneal	Michelle Woodrum	Shane Milam
Debra Boley	Tiffany Ransom	Coty Proskin
		Christina Bowyer

MONTGOMERY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Adam Young	James Newkid	Amanda Scarbrough
Heather Hubbard	Zach Wiseman	Ashley Barber
Slade D'Andre	Steven Smith	J.D. Boyd
Terrell	Courtney Mitchell	Ivan Bickford
Samatha Roat	Christa Cottrell	Chris Mitchell
Ashley Queen	Mathew Belmont	Jessica Smith
Sarah Hamm	Bryant Murry	Dustin Keenan
Joe Austin	Jonna Hudnall	Ryan Watson
Josh Bickford	Brielle Tackett	Jordan Siders
Keysha Obey	David Reedy	Chris Harrah
Amanda Morton	Mallory Marsico	Richard Williams
Janelle Terrell		

MONTGOMERY MIDDLE SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

Adrienne Watkins	Rebecca Rosette
Chelsea Brown	Bobby Proctor
Michael Smith	Angela Johnson
Kristen Smith	Michael Austin
Tiana Stockton	Heather Williamson
Wayne Pennington	Raymond Barron
Lisa Pennington	Andrew Smith

MOUNT HOPE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ronald Bolen	Michelle Newton	Sydney criss
Heather Elswick	Gabrielle Putnam	Jennifer Davis
Christal Harron	Rufus Wallace	Felicia Haywood
Sarah Harron	Virginia Williams	Tiffany Harper
David Haywood	Donald Amick	Gary Hochstein
Justin Hundley	Alexandria Bower	Jason Hundley





APPENDIX "A" - COVER DESIGN PARTICIPANTS

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Samantha Mitchell	Jesse Tiscareno	Britiney Oakes
Jessica Newton	Ashley Underwood	Rigby Romage
Dianna Ovalle	Johnny Underwood	Michael Sill
Richard Patrick	Kevin Walton	Santanea Spahr
Harold Smith	Ashley Williams	Amber Stephen
Angela Hill	Tessa Adins	Lindsay Syner
David Jones	Katie Arednik	Tonya Williams
Jamie Mowell	Amber Armstrong	

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Attachments





CHAPTER TEN



Utilities Attachment "A" Action Memorandums



ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: Patrick Ford
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

FROM: Jennifer Logan
Landscape Architect
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

RE: **NPDES Permit Requirements and Hillside Development.**

WBCM JOB #: 1999.0642.000

DATE: 2 January 2001

- A. ISSUE:** What are the NPDES permit requirements as they relate to hillside development guidelines?
- B. PROBLEM:** Hillside with steep slopes are sensitive areas, which are frequently not able to tolerate land development as practiced on flatter land.
- C. ANALYSIS:** The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits (see attachment) do not specifically differentiate between flatland or hillside development. The NPDES permits regulate sediment containing storm waters associated with construction activity. The ultimate goal of regulating storm water runoff is to protect water quality standards and reduce pollutant loading to state waters. More intensive sediment control measures may be required for hillside than for flatter topography to attain the same results.

The Jefferson County, WV zoning ordinance, (Article 14 - see attachment) establishes county principles and guidelines for hillside development, which is separate from what the state currently controls. The guidelines include general objectives and a table, which indicates the percentage of land to be maintained in a natural condition, based on the percent slope of the land. The basic objectives include careful planning to preserve natural slopes, trees, rock formations, and other natural features in order to maintain the integrity and durability of a hillside. The hillside subdivision proposals are reviewed and considered on an individual basis by the Jefferson County Planning Commission.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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- D. RECOMMENDATION:** Fayette County should regulate hillside development. The

county should amend its zoning ordinance to include regulations for hillside development. Sensitive hillside development helps maintain viewsheds, diversity in the environment, wildlife habitat, and the structural integrity of the hillside. It also helps reduce non-point source pollution and degradation of streams. There are many environmental and quality of life issues that benefit from this type of zoning regulation. The drafting and enforcement of these regulations must be carried out in a sensitive manor to promote more livable communities. Hillside development, if done properly can be a little more expensive due to increased construction costs and potentially less development per acre. But these measures are typically an investment into the quality of the community and reduced environmental and structural mediation costs in the future.

Prior to writing the zoning amendment, similar ordinances within West Virginia and mountainous regions outside of the state should be studied (i.e. Jefferson County, West Virginia, and western counties in Virginia and Maryland). Experts in planning, environment, and economics should also be consulted in order to draw up a proposal, which would respond specifically to the needs of Fayette County.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN



Implementation Attachment "A"



ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: Patrick Ford
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

FROM: Jennifer Logan
Landscape Architect
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

RE: **Clearing of Trees**

WBCM JOB #: 1999.0642.000

DATE: 2 January 2001

- A. ISSUE:** Can the County regulate indiscriminate clearing of trees? Will regulations supercede State legislation?
- B. PROBLEM:** Property owners are clearing trees, which may have negative impacts on the natural environment as well as detract from the aesthetic appeal of the County.
- C. ANALYSIS:** There are three basic types of tree clearing to be considered. These include logging and timbering for commercial profit, clearing for construction and development, and removal of trees due to aging, disease, and for landscape objectives.

With regards to *timbering*, a county cannot develop legislation that supercedes State legislation regulating or granting private property owners rights to harvest timber on private land. Dick Waybright, of the WV Forestry Association, mentioned that Harrison County had tried to develop guidelines restricting private property harvesting. These guidelines did not pass. He knew of no West Virginia county that did have guidelines.

The West Virginia State Code, Chapter 19 1. B regulates harvesting, logging, and sales of timber primarily through licensing requirements. The State Division of Forestry also regulates logging practices with The Logging Sediment Control Act. This act does not limit the quantities of trees that may be timbered; instead it establishes water quality and sediment controls to prevent water pollution due to erosion caused by timbering.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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The State of West Virginia does not regulate tree *clearing* on private land for construction and development. Two state organizations have authority to establish limitations on clearing and burning of trees. In order to protect air quality and prevent forest fires The Office of Air Quality in the Division of Environmental Protection and the Division of Forestry in the Division of Natural Resources establish the times in which trees and brush may be burned.

Although there are no limits in quantities of trees that may be cleared, the State of West Virginia does regulate wooded subdivision development in the state code and in effect may reduce tree clearing. The state limits development of a wooded subdivision without a central water supply to one hundred households. This is primarily to help protect against fire hazards. There are significant loopholes in this code. Often wooded developments become much larger and denser than intended by the code.

The West Virginia State Code also includes a chapter that addresses Urban Forestry. This applies to trees along a city street or on a vacant lot within the city.

Typically clearing of trees on private land is regulated under local zoning laws. These regulations often take form as buffer requirements or canopy cover requirements for new development. The buffers are often designated strips that must be left undisturbed, or if disturbed must be replanted. These buffers follow areas such as property lines, traffic corridors, and natural features such as streams. Canopy requirements are specific numbers of trees that must be left, or be replanted within the interior of a site after new construction is complete. These are usually based on the specific zoning of a parcel and the amount of area to be developed.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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- D. RECOMMENDATION:** Fayette County can regulate tree clearing through

zoning in regard to buffers and tree canopy requirements in new development. The County can also utilize the Urban Forestry regulations to help develop guidelines within the County. The County is most likely going to have a difficult time drafting regulations which limit a private property owners rights to timber on their own property. One way to approach this is through research of environmental issues and partnerships with the state and national forestry departments.

The County should be very careful in drafting specific controls that limit a private property owner from managing there own trees because the County could potentially open themselves to lawsuits. For example, a property owner may sue due to damage caused by a tree that fell and was not cut down because the county would not allow it.

The Division of Forestry and the West Virginia Forestry Association would be able to help educated Fayette County in forestry management, scientific studies, and wording for developing tree conservation plans. Certain proposed legislation which falls under guidelines and laws regulated by the state should be approved by the The Forest Management Committee.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: Patrick Ford
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

FROM: Jennifer Logan
Landscape Architect
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

RE: **NPDES Permit Requirements - Waterways.**

WBCM JOB #: 1999.0642.000

DATE: 2 January 2001

- A. ISSUE:** What are the NPDES permit requirements as they relate to degradation of waterways.
- B. PROBLEM:** Construction activities and land disturbance, in particular, create pollution and sedimentation which may create adverse affects to natural water bodies and the environment. The removal of vegetation and disturbance of soil creates sediment-laden runoff during construction. After development, the land typically has more hardscape surface (i.e. pavement, roofs, and lawn instead of dense trees and groundcover) which allows stormwater runoff to travel more quickly with less water and sediment infiltrating into the soil. This in addition to the increased levels of pollutants that come with development (i.e. automobile oil, road salt, and gravel) increases particle and chemical pollution in streams and water bodies.
- Steeply sloping, and wooded areas, such as those in Fayette County, face an increased risk for runoff related pollution problems. Without adequate preventative measures development on a hillside will cause more pollution loading to waterways than development on flatter topography. The hillside is a more sensitive environment and has a very erosive nature if disturbed.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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- C. **ANALYSIS:** The State of West Virginia employees two basic permits to regulate storm water discharges associated with construction activity. The General WV/NPDES Permit requires any person proposing construction activity three acres or greater of land disturbance in size to submit an application for the permit. All permits are required to include an Erosion Control Plan and a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to be reviewed by the state Office of Water Resources. Upon approval, construction may begin. In 2002, at the Federal level, these permit regulations may become more stringent and require a NPDES permit for land disturbance of one acre or more.

The second permit applies to all land-disturbing activities of less than three acres when the activity occurs in a residential development. Individual Sediment Control Plans are required for land disturbing activities on individual lots: however, many times a Subdivision House Construction Agreement is acceptable. This agreement reduces the burden on the homeowner of having to prepare an individual plan.

Both of these plans allow many developments to be constructed without adequate runoff controls. Many smaller sites which do not require permitting still contribute to the pollution levels and may even add up to larger areas of total land disturbance and greater levels of pollution than a few large developments.

The Jefferson County, WV zoning ordinance, Article 8.2 includes more stringent erosion control guidelines. The West Virginia NPDES must still grant a permit for land disturbance in Jefferson County, but will not do so until the applicant has met all of the County's requirements and Jefferson County has given their approval. There are a few other counties in West Virginia who have drafted, or are in the process of drafting regulations, which are more stringent than established by NPDES.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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D. RECOMMENDATION: Land development in Fayette County will have an

impact on the environment. The steeply sloping topography and naturally wooded land are components of a delicate environment, which must be developed sensitively if the health of the environment is to be maintained. The General WV/NPDES permit is typically not a stringent enough guideline for counties which are rapidly developing or counties which have sensitive environmental situations to consider. Fayette County should incorporate more rigorous sediment and erosion control permitting regulations currently required by the state. The Jefferson County, WV zoning ordinance includes an example of the types of issues which must be addressed by the County to develop a county wide erosion control permit. Fayette County should develop erosion control guidelines based on their unique topography, vegetation, soil types and watershed characteristics.

Regulation and permitting of storm water measures by individual counties is looked favorably upon by the State, as it shifts some of the paperwork to the county level. Yet it creates more work for the county and may result in higher application fees to cover the cost of reviewing the application.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN



Implementation Attachment "B"



ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: Patrick Ford
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

FROM: Alecia Sirk
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

RE: **Dilapidated House and Abandoned/Junk Cars in
Fayette County**

WBCM JOB #: 1999.0642.000

DATE: 8 January 2001

- A. ISSUE:** Fayette County is freckled with dilapidated structures in nearly every neighborhood and along every road. Bill Caudill, chair of the County's Beautification and Dilapidated Housing Commission, estimates that there are 500 structures that need to be torn down and an even greater number that need repaired or cleaned up.
- Prospective businesses and homeowners coming into the County are turned off by the dilapidated and trashy appearance of these structures. This is compounding a number of problems associated with business recruitment, because the County needs a major employer and has been losing population for the last few decades.
- The issue is complicated by the fact that County demolition procedures for dilapidated structures must follow state code, which is vague and requires mounds of paperwork. Elected officials are reluctant to strengthen the bill, Caudill said, because removing dilapidated structures is seen as harassing the poor or elderly.
- B. PROBLEM:** How can Fayette County officials eliminate dilapidated structures and improve the appearance of current structures throughout the County?

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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C. METHODS: First and foremost, **the citizens of Fayette County need to be made**

aware of how prevalent this problem is in their County and how these houses and the trash and cars that surround them appear to outsiders and prospective employers. People generally do not see what they are accustomed to or what surrounds them. Caudill has received answers of fifty or sixty-five when he inquires about the number of dilapidated structures in certain parts of the County. The actual count is somewhere between 100 and 200. These numbers have a substantial impact on the appearance of the County and its ability to retain families and recruit businesses.

Based on our research, it appears that there would be resistance to changing the County's current method of addressing concerns about dilapidated structures. Caudill is doing an excellent job, but he is a volunteer appointed by the County Commission. If he becomes disinterested or for some reason leaves the position, the work that may be done in the future may not be as aggressive, if accomplished at all. In addition, County Engineer Larry Parsons said that the paperwork is not too laborious for his office. **Since it does not appear that a part-time person or payroll is needed, the County Commission may want to become more involved.** They might consider setting a quota for the number of houses that need to be razed or investigated every three to six months - just to ensure that the process continues to move at the pace that it has historically.

In considering the problems faced by the elderly or less fortunate, the County may want to apply for local, state or federal **grants that could be distributed to families who do not have the financial resources tear down a structure.** Caudill mentioned that there are some widows in the County living on fixed incomes who cannot afford to have dilapidated structures removed. These funds could help people in that situation and, ultimately, the County itself.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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Additionally, the County could **create a volunteer group** similar to Habitat for Humanity that goes out at least once a year and to tear down dilapidated structures for those who cannot afford it, or who need assistance doing it. This kind of event might foster awareness of the problem in the communities where people have come to accept these structures. The wood recovered from these structures might even be suitable for re-use by underprivileged families with wood-burning stoves. It would also make a good story for the media. Caudill said a group from outside the area came in one time and started work on tearing down several homes and finished none, so this kind of effort would have to be very specifically managed.

It appears that the County has a solid ordinance that follows the state code. County Engineer Larry Parsons said the County has positive responses from most property owners early in the procedure. **What is currently needed most are proactive ordinances that do not permit a structure to fall into disrepair and then be abandoned.** There are many homes that are still coal-camp quality and inhabited by families on welfare. Many of these people do not have their garbage collected and do not make necessary repairs to their homes. Caudill is currently drafting a universal garbage ordinance that should be pursued.

Also, a building inspector might be a worthwhile investment. Funds for the position of a County building inspector would come from permit and inspection fees, along with money from the general fund. **Because of the extreme situation in Fayette County, which has both an exorbitant number of dilapidated structures currently and an equally large number of structures that are unkempt or rapidly deteriorating, a County building inspector would also benefit the situation by arresting this cycle of dilapidation where it currently stands.** Through aggressive inspections, a building inspector could reduce the number of eyesores and substandard structures, which would in turn eventually increase the County's property value and, thereby, tax revenue. Cleaner communities, with fewer sub-standard structures, would also attract homebuyers, which would bring more property taxes

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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into the County, along with residents purchasing more goods and services within County. The improved appearance would also serve to instill community pride.

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Failing the creation of County building inspector, a system or set guidelines similar to that of the attachment from Little Rock, Ark., should be put into place to address this problem. With a concrete system established, it is possible that between the Beautification and Dilapidated Housing Commission and the County Engineer's Office actions could be taken that would produce similar results to the hiring of a County building inspector.

The **guidelines provided by the City of Little Rock were the most complete of any I found in my research.** They address dilapidated housing removal, the right of the city to withhold utilities from structures declared unsafe, the minimum requirements for a habitable dwelling, the presence and removal procedures of abandoned cars and the presence and removal requirements of unkempt property and/or poor sanitation.

Please find a copy of Little Rock's ordinances attached.

D. RECOMMENDATION: Also attached is an **abandoned/junk car ordinance** **from Jefferson County, Ky.,** that could serve as a model for addressing Fayette County's problems.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: Patrick Ford
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

FROM: Sosha Yokosuk, Project Planner
Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLC

RE: Universal Garbage Mandate

WBCM JOB #: 1999.0642.000

DATE: 1 March 2001

A. PROPOSAL: Should Fayette County Adopt Mandatory Garbage Regulations?

Fayette County does not have mandatory garbage mandates. Citizens are required to pay a private garbage hauler to dispose of their trash. If they choose not to use a private hauler they must take their garbage to a landfill in a neighboring county. Fayette County's landfill was closed seven years ago. Citizens that choose to dispose their garbage at the landfill must produce receipts stating that they used the facility. However, these two methods have not worked efficiently throughout various regions of Fayette County. Some citizens do not participate in either of the two aforementioned garbage disposal methods. If trash and garbage is not disposed of properly it can lead to various health hazards and unsightly eyesores.

There are three approaches that Fayette County can take to eliminate the current garbage problem. The *first option* is contracting the private haulers to provide garbage pick-up service to all residents of Fayette County. The *second option* would consist of Fayette County installing green boxes (green boxes are large dumpsters that are used for basic household garbage and trash) throughout the County. The *third*

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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option would be a combination of the first two options.

Mandatory garbage disposal regulations would reduce roadside dumping and other garbage related problems. Fayette County should consider adopting mandatory garbage disposal regulations. This *Action Memorandum* will explain which of the three aforementioned garbage disposal options would be most appropriate for Fayette County.

**B. ANALYSIS:
Regulations?**

Pros and Cons of Mandatory Garbage

Implementing mandatory garbage regulations is a labor-intensive project that will not necessarily be viewed positively by the public. One of the main reasons that it will not be viewed positively is because it could increase the amount of money that Fayette County citizens pay to dispose of their garbage.

However, mandatory garbage regulations would ensure that all garbage was disposed of properly; an action that is in the best interest of the County's health, safety, and general welfare. To ensure compliance with the mandate, it would be necessary to invoke sufficient fines on citizens that did not adhere to the mandatory garbage regulations.

Other issues that must be consider when discussing mandatory garbage regulations is what type of garbage disposal system would best serve the citizens and who would be responsible for the payment collection of such services. Much of the research for this action memo was gathered through meetings and telephone conversations with various officials in Pocahontas County, West Virginia.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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Pocahontas County has had a *universal garbage* mandate (mandatory garbage regulations) since 1995. There systems is directed by the Pocahontas County Solid Waste Authority. The system they have in place gives citizens the option of paying a private hauler or taking their trash to one of five green boxes. The cost of using the green boxes is \$80.00 per year.

Pocahontas County also has a landfill. Citizens may use the landfill to dispose large garbage items. The green box system has dramatically cut back the amount of garbage that is disposed of in the landfill.

The Solid Waste Authority is responsible for all aspects of the mandatory garbage regulations in Pocahontas County. The Solid Waste Authority send the green box bills with the annual property tax bills to Pocahontas County residents. This has been found to be the easiest way to send the bills to property owners. Pocahontas County sues all citizens that do not use a private hauler or the green box system.

Pocahontas County found that the majority of opposition to the mandatory garbage regulations was encountered when the price of the green box service increased from \$12.00 to \$60.00 and then eventually to \$80.00 per year.

Benefits of Options:

Option One:

Private haulers would ensure adequate and timely garbage disposal. It would be advantageous for Fayette County to contract the private haulers rather than purchasing a county owned and operated garbage truck if a reasonable price could be reached between the county government and the private haulers. By contracting with the private haulers the county government would only have to make an annual payment to the private haulers. It would be the haulers responsibility to ensure pick-up, to answer customer inquiries, and to distribute billing statements.

Option Two:

The system of using green boxes can be easily implemented and easily maintained. This system would consist of placing a certain amount of large dumpsters around the County where citizens could take their garbage. The price of operating the green boxes would be lower than paying private haulers to dispose resident's garbage.

Option Three:

A combination of private haulers and the green box system would provide ample flexibility and a range of prices for garbage disposal in Fayette County. Although there would be mandatory garbage regulations for Fayette County the combination of green boxes and private haulers would give residents a choice of methods for their garbage disposal.

Liabilities of Options:

Option One:

If the County chooses to contract the private haulers it could be difficult for the two parties to reach an agreeable budget. Contracting with the private haulers is seen as a better option than purchasing a county owned garbage truck. However, if a fiscally responsible contract cannot be obtained the County would have to consider buying a garbage truck and staffing a waste disposal board.

Option Two:

Citizens of Fayette County may not be satisfied with transporting garbage to the green boxes. The County would be required to obtain and/or build the green boxes. They would also be required to staff the green box facilities. The price of staffing the green boxes may cause the price of using the green boxes to be high. If residents are required to transport their garbage it is imperative that the price of using the facilities is low which may cause a County subsidy.

Option Three:

The combination of green boxes and private haulers provides the most flexibility for the citizens of Fayette County; but it could be the most costly.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

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C. RECOMMENDATION: How Fayette County Should Adopt Mandatory Garbage Regulations?

It is necessary that Fayette County adopt mandatory garbage regulations. This will be the most efficient way to clean up many of the garbage nuisances that Fayette County currently faces.

The combination of contracted private haulers and green boxes is the best option of Fayette County. This option would give the residents a choice in how their garbage is disposed. Although this option may be slightly more expensive than the other two options it will be the most effective.

TOOLS FOR FAYETTE'S FUTURE



FAYETTE COUNTY



Historic Fayetteville

