

A topographic map of Fayette County, North Carolina, showing a river network and terrain elevation. The map uses a color gradient from light green to dark blue to represent elevation, with a prominent river system winding through the landscape.

FAYETTE COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED – May 3, 2023

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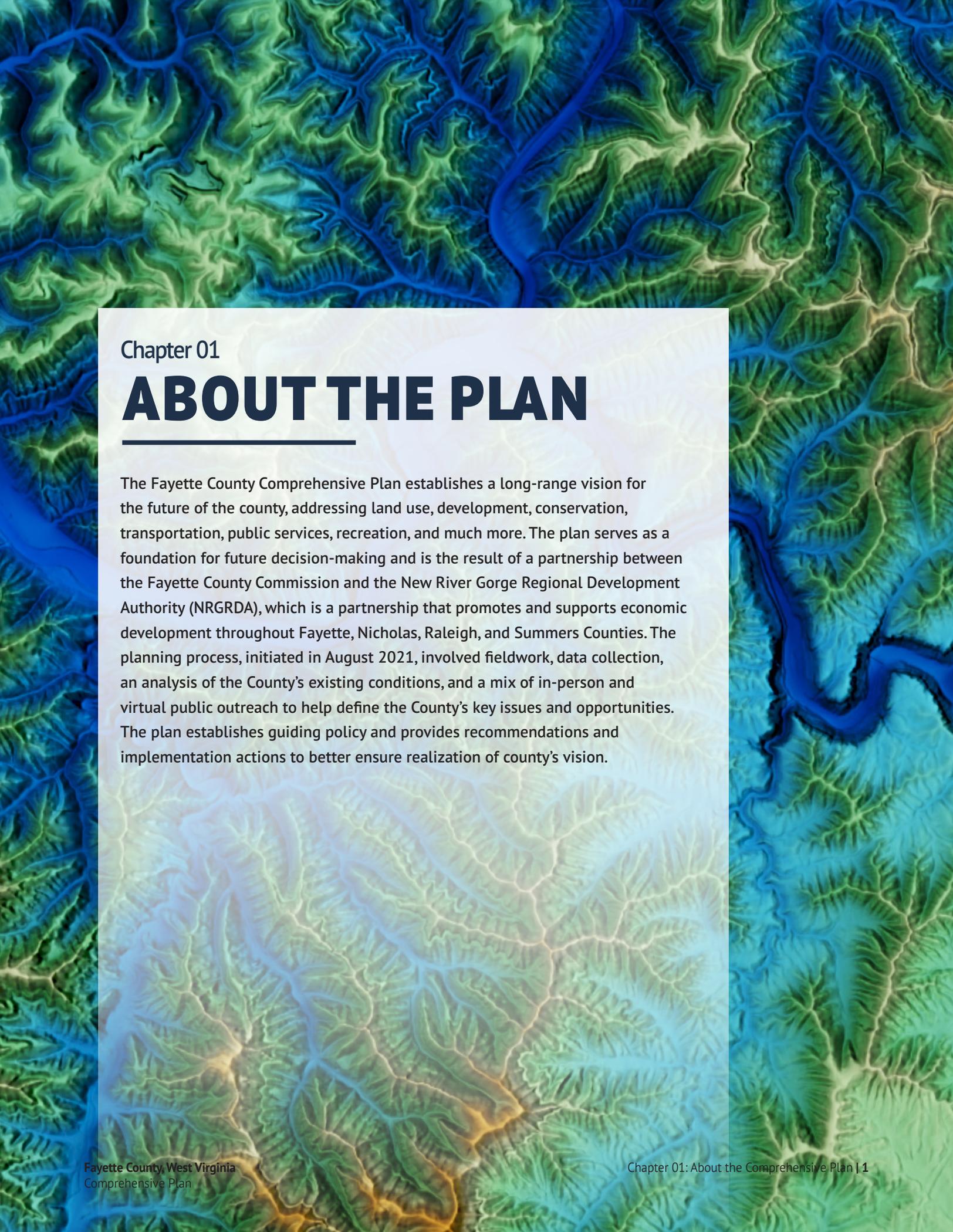
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Project Consultant





Chapter 01

ABOUT THE PLAN

The Fayette County Comprehensive Plan establishes a long-range vision for the future of the county, addressing land use, development, conservation, transportation, public services, recreation, and much more. The plan serves as a foundation for future decision-making and is the result of a partnership between the Fayette County Commission and the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority (NRGRDA), which is a partnership that promotes and supports economic development throughout Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh, and Summers Counties. The planning process, initiated in August 2021, involved fieldwork, data collection, an analysis of the County's existing conditions, and a mix of in-person and virtual public outreach to help define the County's key issues and opportunities. The plan establishes guiding policy and provides recommendations and implementation actions to better ensure realization of county's vision.



What is the Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan establishes a unified vision regarding how land should be used and developed and how the County should grow over the next twenty years. The Comprehensive Plan will be used to define actions the County's leaders and stakeholders should take to achieve the County's goals. It also serves as a foundation for decision-making for local boards and commissions, developers, residents, and stakeholders.

What can the Comprehensive Plan Address?

The Comprehensive Plan defines the County's policies and actions regarding a range of topics for the entire County outside the municipalities' boundaries. The plan's recommendations apply to issues including land use and development, economic development, transportation, parks and recreation, community facilities and services, and infrastructure. The State of West Virginia defines mandatory components for County comprehensive plan. More information on how the *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* addresses these requirements can be found in *Chapter 15: Implementation*.

While the Comprehensive Plan addresses a variety of topics, it is not a silver bullet for all public policy in the County. While a wide variety of issues and opportunities were identified during the County's outreach process, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to address spatial issues related to land use and development. Several issues identified during community outreach, such as drug abuse and quality of education, are not directly related to land use and development policy. For these issues, the Comprehensive Plan plays an indirect role by addressing how the County can play a support role for agencies and organizations that would take the lead on addressing these issues and by raising awareness of community priorities that need to be addressed outside the *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan*.



Why Plan for Fayette County?

Fayette County is at a critical point to plan for the County's future. In December 2020, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, which had been designated as a national river since 1978, was designated as a National Park. This new designation boosted the County's presence nationally as a destination for visitors and outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Though the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve's designation presents an opportunity to boost the local economy through tourism and visitorship, it also generates some areas of concern due to added pressure on businesses, housing demand, needed infrastructure and services enhancements, and how best to accommodate and leverage the addition of new visitors to the County. The County is at a pivotal moment for deciding how the community should direct and manage growth and change in response to the new National Park designation.

Additionally, residents expressed ongoing concerns related to the adequate provision of communications and broadband infrastructure, and the provision of water and wastewater infrastructure, as key quality of life concerns that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The continued loss of employment opportunities from the coal industry was also noted by residents as a key planning concern that should be addressed. Throughout the outreach process, the County expressed that new forms of economic growth are needed, including and in addition to the recently-emerging tourism sector, to anchor the local economy, provide quality jobs, and ensure that the County is an appealing and viable place for residents to live in the years to come.

Related Topics and Plan Integration

Several topics, concepts, policies, and recommendations within the plan are interrelated. For example, recommendations regarding housing type and tenure can better support members of the workforce looking to find a home near their places of employment, connecting housing and economic development goals. Stormwater management and flooding related recommendations, and policies regarding the preservation of natural features, will positively impact recreation opportunities in the County's state parks and the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. Broadband improvements are part of the County's critical infrastructure, playing a vital role in making Fayette County more desirable and sustainable for a growing cadre of remote workers. In short – the recommendations and policies of this plan should not be read in a vacuum, they are connected and frequently called out throughout the plan with associated pages, topics, and chapters identified for the reader.



Look out for these quote boxes! They contain quotes from public outreach that help to highlight key recommendation found throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

Use of the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan serves the following functions.

Inform Development Proposals

The Comprehensive Plan establishes desired use and development of land throughout the County. The Plan guides and assists public boards and commissions in the evaluation of development proposals and helps ensure that proposed development meets the County's long-term objectives.

Foundation for the Regulatory Framework

The plan serves as a foundation for the Unified Development Code (UDC) regulations and the official zoning map, which establishes precise rules by which land can be developed and used. Amendments to the UDC and zoning map should be consistent with the long-term objectives and policies established in this Comprehensive Plan.

Coordinate Initiatives

The Comprehensive Plan identifies and coordinates partnerships between different public, private, and nonprofit organizations at the municipal, regional, and state levels. These partnerships are typically aimed at improving the delivery of services, transportation, parks, and other amenities.

Future Studies

The Comprehensive Plan establishes a broad path forward for Fayette County, but cannot address every issue facing the county in sufficient detail. Issues such as broadband, service capacity, parking needs, and the design of parks and other amenities require further study beyond the goals and recommendations set forth in this plan. The Comprehensive Plan identifies where additional studies are needed to address specific needs in greater detail.

Inform and Educate

The County encompasses a large geographic area and includes many differing stakeholders. The Comprehensive Plan portrays stakeholders' views issues on opportunities and community's attitudes on different issues across these differing interests. This consensus-related vision provides a point of reference for the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Urban Renewal Authority, Farmland Protection, County Commission, and other local organizations. This broad spectrum of interests should use the Plan to inform the County and provide important information that can assist with future initiatives. The Comprehensive Plan is also an effective marketing tool that can be used to promote the County and highlight opportunities for investment.

Communicate the County's Vision

The Plan is a powerful statement of the County's vision for how it grows and changes over the coming years. The Plan identifies the County's priorities and charts a path for long-term growth that can be used by stakeholders and residents as they consider how best to address a variety of issues.

Planning Process

The Fayette County Comprehensive Plan is the result of a six-step process that proceeded over several months.

Step-by-Step Planning Process

The following is a summary of the Comprehensive Plan process.



What does the Planning Process Accomplish?

The comprehensive planning process was designed to do three things.



Define Where Fayette County is Now

This is accomplished in the beginning steps of the process and includes Project Initiation, Community Engagement, and Existing Conditions Memo.



Decide Where Fayette County Wants to Go

This takes place during the Visioning step of the planning processes and is based on the information gathered in the previous steps.



Create a Plan on How to Get There

The Preliminary Plan Elements and Policies step and the Final Plan Document Adoption steps lay the groundwork for how Fayette will achieve its vision for the future.

Community Outreach

The Comprehensive Plan process involved extensive outreach to various groups in the County, including residents, elected and appointed officials, NRGRDA staff, members of local boards, commissions, community groups, and other key stakeholders. The outreach effort entailed a total of **520 individual points of participation**, which included the following:

- 384 online surveys completed
- 16 printed surveys completed
- 66 DIY workshop participants
- 5 public facilities surveys completed
- 29 Map.Social maps created
- 35 key person and focus group interviews conducted
- 32 postcard surveys completed
- 49 LOT meeting attendance
- 4 TV interviews
- 4 radio advertisements
- 4 social media pages with multiple post
- 3 email blasts
- 3 Chamber of Commerce newsletter advertisements
- 2 newspaper articles in the Register Herald
- 4 public open houses

Local Outreach Team

A Local Outreach Team comprised of Fayette County community members was formed at the beginning of the planning process to facilitate the community outreach process. A total of **38 individuals** comprised the local outreach team and represented organizations including institutions such as the West Virginia University Extension, County staff and officials, municipal leaders, and local business owners in the County. The Local Outreach Team ensured that community outreach reached as many groups and members of the County as possible and that the outreach efforts remained robust during the limitations on in-person gatherings during the pandemic.

Outreach Events

This section describes the groups in Fayette County that participated in the public outreach efforts and the activities that were used to engage them.

Key Person and Focus Group Interviews

A total of **35 individuals** were interviewed to obtain additional information regarding local issues, concerns, and strengths. The NRGRDA identified the key individuals and groups to be interviewed. The interviewees included property owners, residents, business owners, and representatives from government, institutional, and civic groups.

Postcard Surveys

The LOT distributed postcards at **25 locations** throughout the County. Each postcard included a short survey for community members to complete and return to a drop box. Postcard drop boxes were collected in late November 2021.

Traditional and Social Media

The LOT coordinated outreach over a variety of traditional and social media platforms. Traditional and social media outreach includes a variety of media such as TV interviews, radio advertisements, email blasts, newspaper articles, and social media posts. The breakdown of the traditional and social media outreach efforts are as follows:

- 3 email blasts
- 4 TV interviews
- 4 radio advertisements
- 2 newspaper articles in the Register Herald
- 3 Chamber of Commerce newsletter advertisements
- 4 social media pages with multiple post each

Outreach by the Numbers

Multiple forms of outreach activities were conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process. Below is a summary of the outreach events, grouped by the type.





Fayette County is creating its new Comprehensive Plan, a roadmap for the County to direct future growth and development over the next 20 years. Your participation is key in the creation of the Plan—join us and tell us your vision! Click "Learn More" for more information.

[Learn More](#)

Get Involved

DIY

DIY Workshop Kits



map.social

QUESTIONNAIRE



Community Survey



Community Outreach

Project Website

The project website provided a single online location for all information related to the Comprehensive Plan. Members of the public and stakeholders could access upcoming events and engagement opportunities, meeting notices and summaries, and downloadable copies of draft documents.

Online Survey

An online survey was posted to the project website to garner feedback from Fayette County residents and business owners. The survey was designed to supplement other outreach activities and was not intended to be wholly representative of all stakeholders' opinions. The survey was available between August and December 2021 and collected participation from **381 participants**.

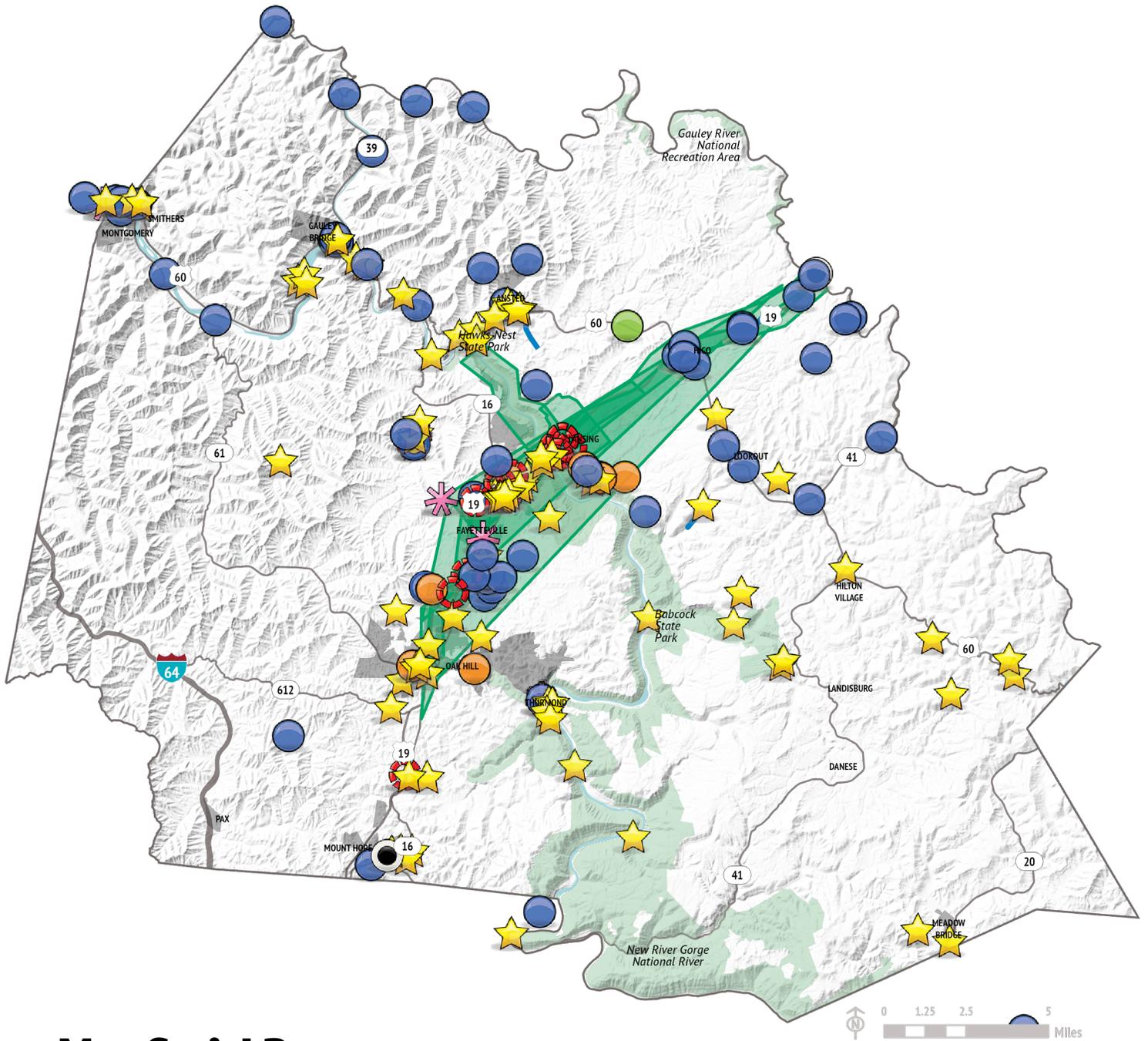
Map.Social

Map.Social is an interactive online map-based engagement tool that allows participants to show the issues that they feel should be considered in the Comprehensive Plan by locating the issues on a map of the county. For example, Map.Social participants can make maps showing the location of redevelopment opportunities, natural resources that should be preserved, key community assets, and locations where traffic safety is an issue. In total, Fayette County residents created **29 unique maps** containing **490 points and features**.

Community Outreach Summary

The Fayette County Community Outreach Summary, included in Appendix A of this Plan, summarizes outreach conducted during the initial phases of the planning process. It provides an in-depth summary of major talking points and online survey responses.

The key issues highlighted in the following pages summarize the major themes from outreach events and activities. This summary does not encapsulate in full detail. The Comprehensive Plan Appendix A details the full results of both the online and in-person outreach activities that were conducted throughout the process.



Map.Social Responses

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ★ Community Asset | ● Poor Appearance | — Roadway Improvement |
| ● Desired Use/Development | ⊗ Problematic Intersection | — New Bike Route or Trail |
| ★ Key Transit Destination | ● Public Safety Concern | ■ Development Priority Site |
| ⊗ Undesirable Use | ⊙ Other | ■ Preservation |

Community Priorities

The following overview discusses the top issues identified by County residents during the outreach process and indicates how they are addressed in the Plan. These issues informed the foundation of the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan, translating into Plan Priorities. In no particular order, Plan Priorities include:

- Addressing population decline
- Housing availability and affordability
- Short-term rentals
- Attract new industries to the County
- Development along Route 19
- Address vacant and blighted properties
- Roadway repairs and maintenance
- Missing transportation links
- Support education
- Access to infrastructure
- Identify available funding options

While the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan addresses a wide range of topics, it is not a “silver bullet” for all public policy and County initiatives. While a variety of issues and opportunities were identified by County residents during the outreach process, the Comprehensive Plan is geared towards spatial issues related to future growth and development.

Addressing Population Decline

Addressing the declining population was a frequently discussed topic throughout the planning process. Population trends touch nearly every aspect of a comprehensive plan, from how and where new development should occur to potential funding for improvements through tax dollars. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* acknowledges the County’s current population trends and provides a plan for growth and development that is context-sensitive.

Housing Availability and Affordability

County residents often noted the County’s supply of housing options, and specifically the lack of affordable housing options, as an issue. They expressed that the difficulty of finding housing deters both new residents and companies from locating in the County. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* guides appropriate locations for new housing development along with strategies on how the County should support the development of new, affordable housing options.

Short-Term Rentals

The number of short-term rentals within the County was also noted as an issue, which can be tied to housing availability and affordability. County residents noted that properties are frequently purchased and converted to short-term rental units which reduce the number of housing units available for long-term tenants. This shortage, in turn, increases the cost of the remaining units. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* acknowledges both the pros and cons that are associated with short-term rentals and provides guidance on how to strike a balance.



Attract New Industries to the County

Though coal is an important piece of the region's economy as well as its history, community members have recognized that the industry is not booming as it once was. It was expressed that the County needs to attract new businesses and industries to provide high-quality employment opportunities to residents. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* identifies potential areas that are appropriate for large employers and offers strategies for promoting the County as a business-friendly environment.

Development Along the Route 19 Corridor

Participants were divided on the future of the Route 19 corridor. While many expressed the desire to preserve the natural, scenic views, others noted that they would like to see additional growth and development along the corridor. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* identifies areas along Route 19 that would be most suitable for development while preserving the valued natural environment that helps make the County special.

Address Vacant and Blighted Properties

Throughout the outreach process, community members expressed that poorly maintained structures and properties are an issue. County residents expressed the desire to remove or rehabilitate vacant and blighted properties. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* identifies potential programs and resources the County can utilize to address problem properties along with strategies to address vacant and blighted properties in the future.

Roadway Repairs and Maintenance

The quality of roadways and the need for continued repairs and maintenance was frequently cited by County residents as an issue within the County. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* carries forward the roadway improvement projects that have been identified in the Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization (FRMPO) 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, and it identifies recommendations to guide priority transportation improvements.

Missing Transportation Links

The need to create transportation links was often noted by County residents. These links can include connections between the same mode of transportation such as connecting two different trail systems. They also can include connections between modes of transportation systems, such as connecting the Amtrak passenger rail to a public transit system.



Support Education

County residents noted the quality of school facilities and the limited number of school options as an issue within the County. While the County does not have the authority to make decisions regarding Fayette County Schools and the Board of Education, it can play a supporting role in improvements throughout the school district. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* acknowledges the issues that have been identified by County residents and guides how the County can be an effective partner to the Fayette County Board of Education.

Access to Infrastructure

Limited access to infrastructure such as water, sewer, and broadband in some areas of the County was noted as an issue. County residents expressed that the lack of infrastructure hinders growth in both housing and economic development. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* identifies how to plan for strategic housing and economic or commercial development, relying on infrastructure adjacency best practices.

Identify Available Funding Options

During outreach, participants noted the need to identify potential funding sources for recommendations found in this Plan as well as previous planning efforts. The *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan* identifies potential sources for funds as well as potential partners, resources, and programs that can help to facilitate future improvement projects.

Where Are the Community Priorities?

The following list identifies key areas of the Plan where each issue is further discussed.

<i>Growth and Development</i>	36
<i>Land Use Plan</i>	40
<i>Increase Housing Supply and Options</i>	48
<i>Pursue Housing Affordability</i>	50
<i>Understand the Cost and Benefits of Short-Term Rentals</i>	54
<i>Attract New Industry</i>	60
<i>Balance Development with the Protection of Natural Features</i>	66
<i>Eliminate Vacant and Blighted Land and Structures</i>	72
<i>Repair, Update, and Maintain Roadways</i>	80
<i>Create Pedestrian Connection</i>	87
<i>Support for Education</i>	98
<i>Provide Water and Sewer Services to Populated Areas</i>	118
<i>Increase Access to Broadband</i>	126
<i>Potential Financing Sources</i>	169

Leveraging the National Park

The New River Gorge National Park and Preserve encompasses over 70,000 acres of land along the New River. Designated a National Park in 2020, it is rich in cultural and natural history and offers an abundance of scenic and recreational opportunities. The park's centerpiece is the New River, one of North America's oldest rivers, which flows northward through stunning canyons.

A Special Place

The New River Gorge National Park and Preserve is special – a unique area of the County with benefits that extend beyond tourism to attract and retain residents and local businesses. The park interfaces with employment opportunities, the tourism economy, housing desirability, local recreation, and open space preservation. Additionally, the park provides environmental benefits, including preserving plant and animal habitats, decreasing air pollution, and promoting waterway best practices.

A Positive Impact

Access to regional recreation and natural resources has positive economic impacts on the community. The park draws visitors from near and far, bringing tourism revenue to local restaurants, bed and breakfasts, hotels, shops, and stores. It also hosts events such as Bridge Day (p. 152), bringing an additional boost to the local economy. Accommodating the National Park, its visitors, and the local infrastructure needed to facilitate access to the can generate financial returns even when maintenance costs are factored in. With the creation of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, the County will likely see additional funds to help develop more trails, parking, and other local recreation opportunities.

Potential Trade-offs

The National Park designation can have trade-offs. As the profile of the New River Gorge is raised, housing affordability can be impacted, and roadway infrastructure planning and maintenance can be more challenging to accommodate increased traffic. Locally loved trails, trailheads, campsites, and outdoor spaces can become overcrowded.

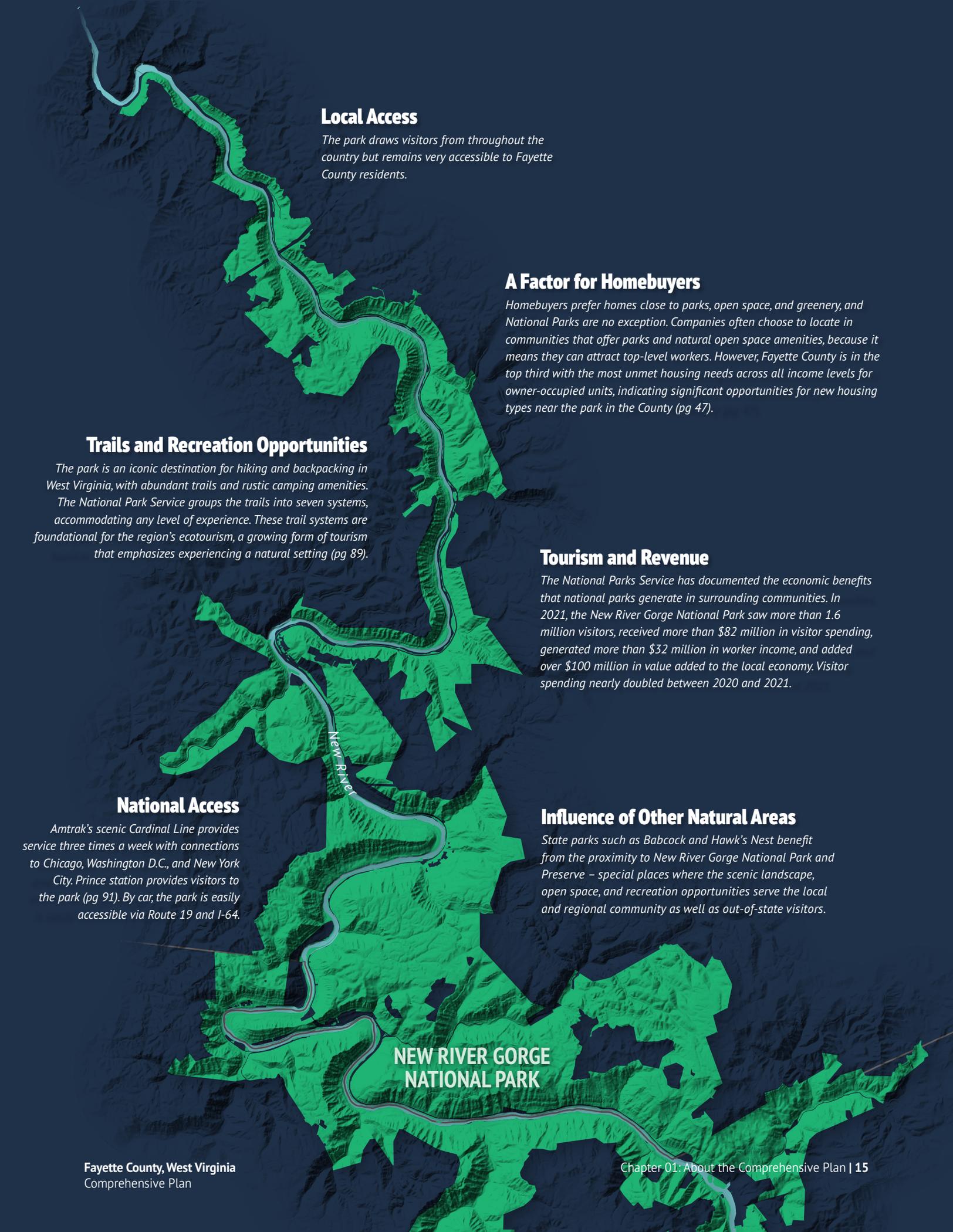
What Can the Plan Do?

The New River Gorge National Park and Preserve is maintained by the National Park Service, an agency of the United States federal government within the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages all national parks. Fayette County has limited influence on what takes place within the park, however, the Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the importance of the County's "crown jewel" – the primary driver of local tourism, and a factor in each of the plan's elements that impacts housing, economic development, transportation, community facilities, open space, and recreation.

Also See...

Several sections of the plan reference the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. Refer to the following for further discussion on how the County works with the National Park.

- *Improving traffic flow to and around the park (pg 85)*
- *Planning for off-street parking to accommodate visitors (pg 86)*
- *Improving bike and pedestrian connections to the park (pg 87)*
- *The benefits of Amtrak access (pg 91)*
- *Growing the ecotourism economy – a form of tourism that emphasizes experiencing a natural setting (pg 134)*
- *Conservation of wildlife and natural resources (pg 136)*
- *Celebrating Bridge Day (pg 152)*



Local Access

The park draws visitors from throughout the country but remains very accessible to Fayette County residents.

A Factor for Homebuyers

Homebuyers prefer homes close to parks, open space, and greenery, and National Parks are no exception. Companies often choose to locate in communities that offer parks and natural open space amenities, because it means they can attract top-level workers. However, Fayette County is in the top third with the most unmet housing needs across all income levels for owner-occupied units, indicating significant opportunities for new housing types near the park in the County (pg 47).

Trails and Recreation Opportunities

The park is an iconic destination for hiking and backpacking in West Virginia, with abundant trails and rustic camping amenities. The National Park Service groups the trails into seven systems, accommodating any level of experience. These trail systems are foundational for the region's ecotourism, a growing form of tourism that emphasizes experiencing a natural setting (pg 89).

Tourism and Revenue

The National Parks Service has documented the economic benefits that national parks generate in surrounding communities. In 2021, the New River Gorge National Park saw more than 1.6 million visitors, received more than \$82 million in visitor spending, generated more than \$32 million in worker income, and added over \$100 million in value added to the local economy. Visitor spending nearly doubled between 2020 and 2021.

National Access

Amtrak's scenic Cardinal Line provides service three times a week with connections to Chicago, Washington D.C., and New York City. Prince station provides visitors to the park (pg 91). By car, the park is easily accessible via Route 19 and I-64.

Influence of Other Natural Areas

State parks such as Babcock and Hawk's Nest benefit from the proximity to New River Gorge National Park and Preserve – special places where the scenic landscape, open space, and recreation opportunities serve the local and regional community as well as out-of-state visitors.

**NEW RIVER GORGE
NATIONAL PARK**

A topographic map of Fayette County, West Virginia, showing terrain and river networks. The map uses a color gradient from green to blue to represent elevation, with blue indicating higher elevations and green indicating lower elevations. The river network is shown in dark blue, with major rivers like the Kanawha and Mingo rivers visible. The map is centered on Fayette County, which is highlighted in a light blue color.

Chapter 02

FAYETTE COUNTY IN CONTEXT

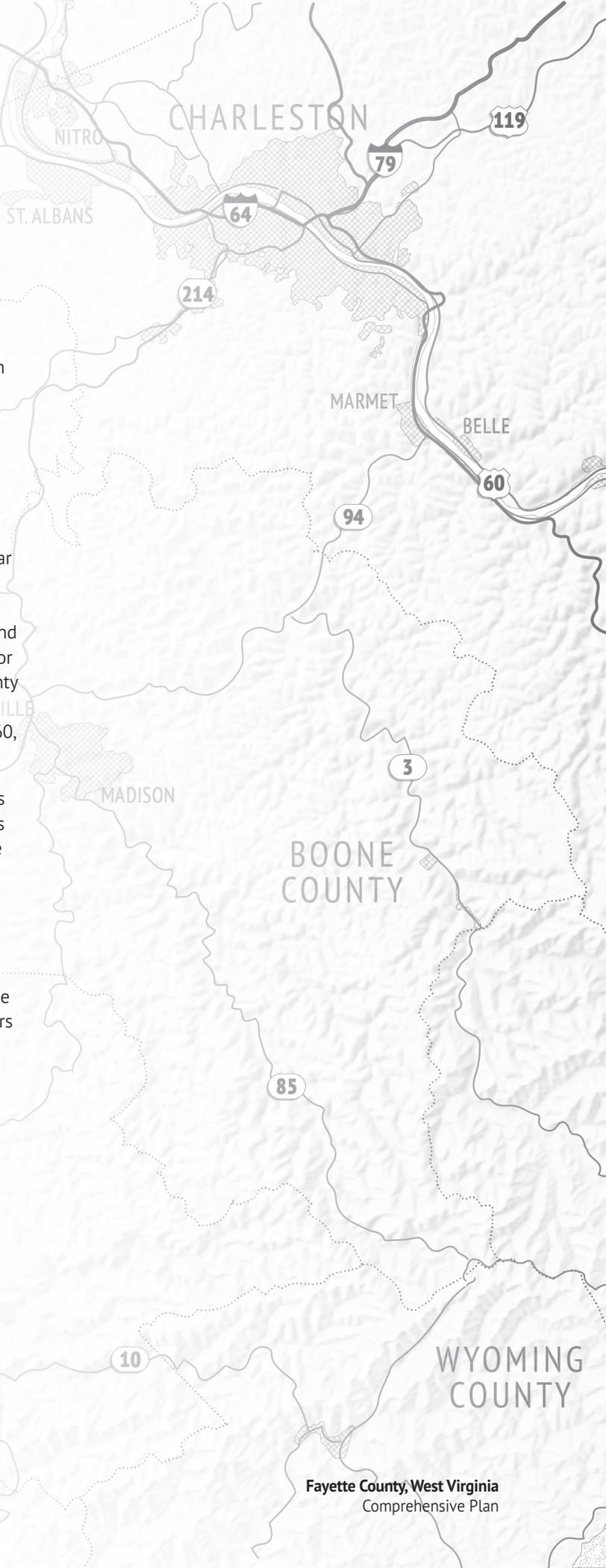
A clear understanding of the County's current conditions and past trends is needed as it plans for the next 20 years. This chapter provides a snapshot of the County's context within southern West Virginia and the trends that have influenced its development and growth over time. This understanding, together with community input from residents and stakeholders, help to define the County's planning influences, needs, and opportunities.

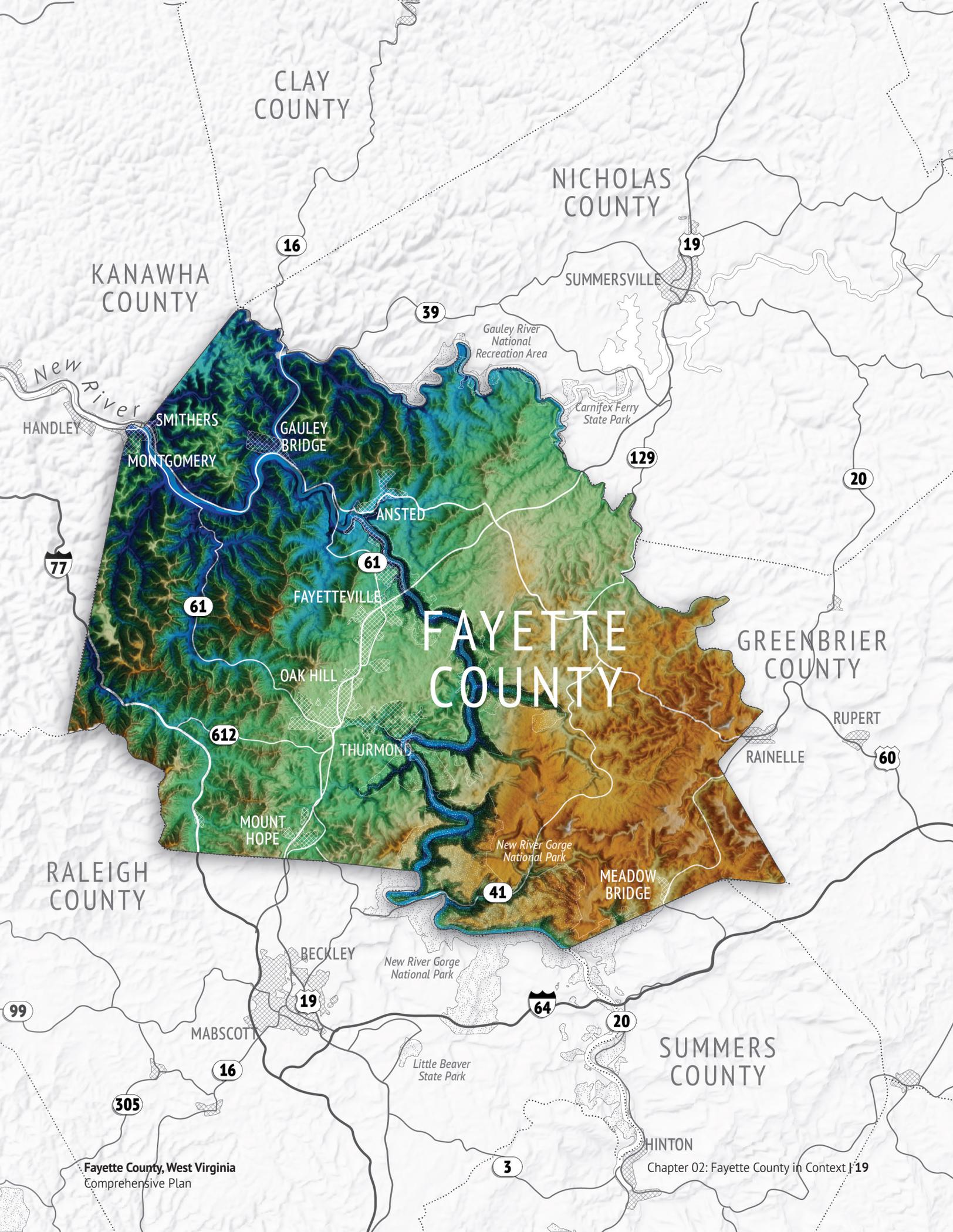
Regional Setting

With its location in southern West Virginia, Fayette County's mountainous terrain, woodlands, and abundance of waterways help shape the region's economy, character, sense of place, and culture. In 2020, Fayette County, with 40,488 residents, was the 13th most populous of West Virginia's 55 counties and is the 6th largest county by land area, encompassing approximately 660 square miles.

The County is bordered to the northwest by Kanawha County, the state's most populous County, which contains Charleston, the state's capitol and largest city. Fayette County is near two airports that serve the region. Yeager Airport, the nearest public airport to Fayette County, is in Charleston, which provides regular passenger and cargo service to major air hubs throughout the United States. Meanwhile, Raleigh County Airport is located just outside Beckley to the County's south and provides passenger and freight transportation. Fayette County has access to several major roadways; Interstate 64 and Routes 19 and 60 traverse the County and connect it to other neighboring communities. Fayetteville, the County seat, is roughly 51 miles from Charleston via Route 60, and only 21 miles from Beckley via Route 19.

Fayette County is bordered by Clay County to the north, Nicholas County to the northeast, Greenbrier County to the east, Summers County to the southeast, and Raleigh County, which includes the City of Beckley, to the southwest. Together, Fayette and Raleigh Counties comprise the Beckley Metropolitan Statistical Area, which means that the two counties' economies and labor forces are closely linked. In 2023, the Beckley Metropolitan Statistical Area was the 9th largest of West Virginia's 17 Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Fayette County also shares the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, which attracts over 1,000,000 visitors annually, with Raleigh and Summers Counties to the south.





CLAY COUNTY

NICHOLAS COUNTY

KANAWHA COUNTY

SUMMERSVILLE

New River

SMITHERS
MONTGOMERY

GAULEY BRIDGE

Gauley River National Recreation Area

Carnifex Ferry State Park

HANDLEY

39

19

16

129

20

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61

ANSTED

FAYETTE COUNTY

FAYETTEVILLE

GREENBRIER COUNTY

OAK HILL

RUPERT

612

THURMOND

RAINELLE

60

MOUNT HOPE

New River Gorge National Park

MEADOW BRIDGE

41

RALEIGH COUNTY

New River Gorge National Park

BECKLEY

64

20

19

MABSCOT

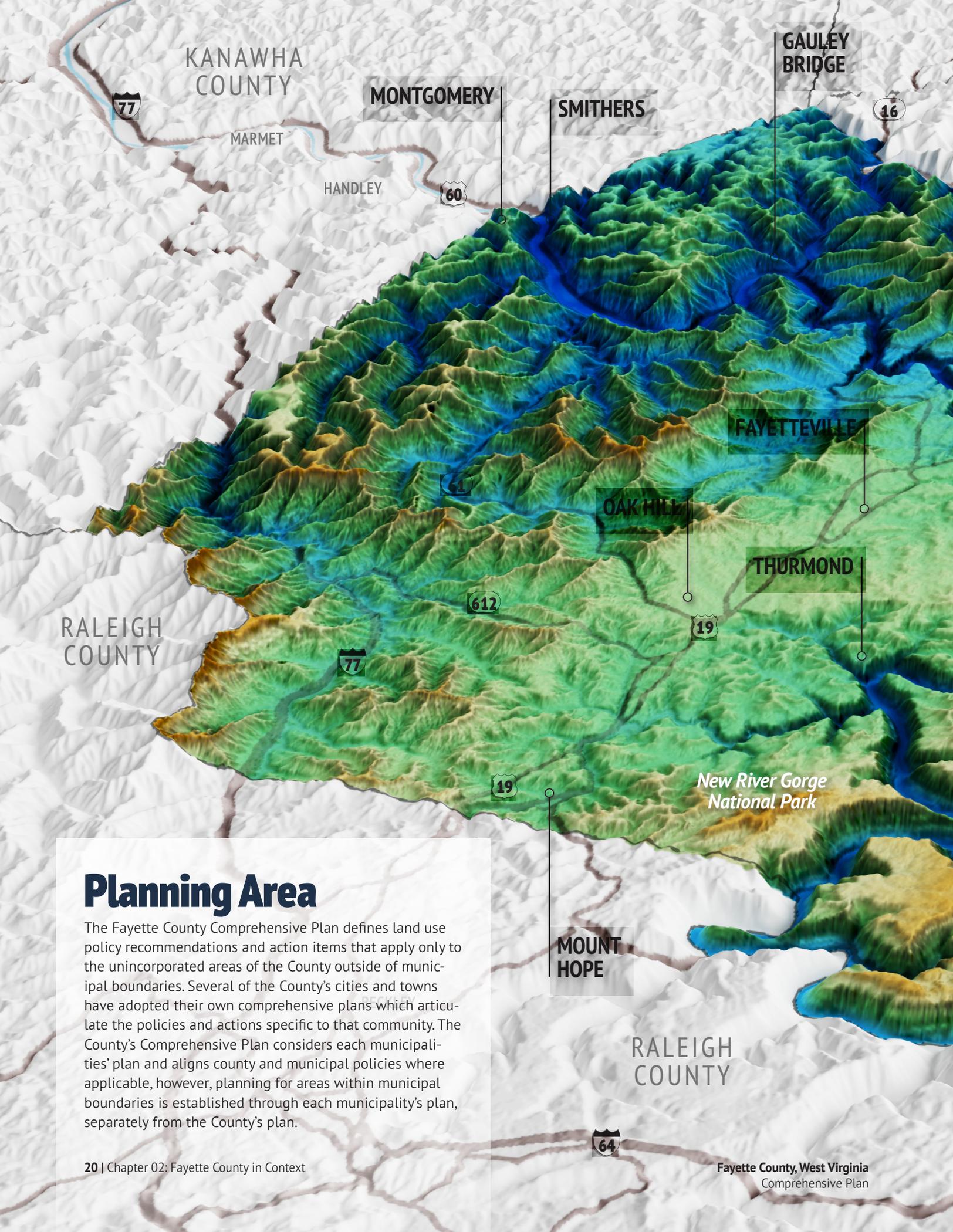
16

Little Beaver State Park

SUMMERS COUNTY

HINTON

3



KANAWHA COUNTY

GAULEY BRIDGE

MONTGOMERY

SMITHERS

MARMET

HANDLEY

16

60

FAYETTEVILLE

OAK HILL

THURMOND

RALEIGH COUNTY

61

612

19

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New River Gorge National Park

19

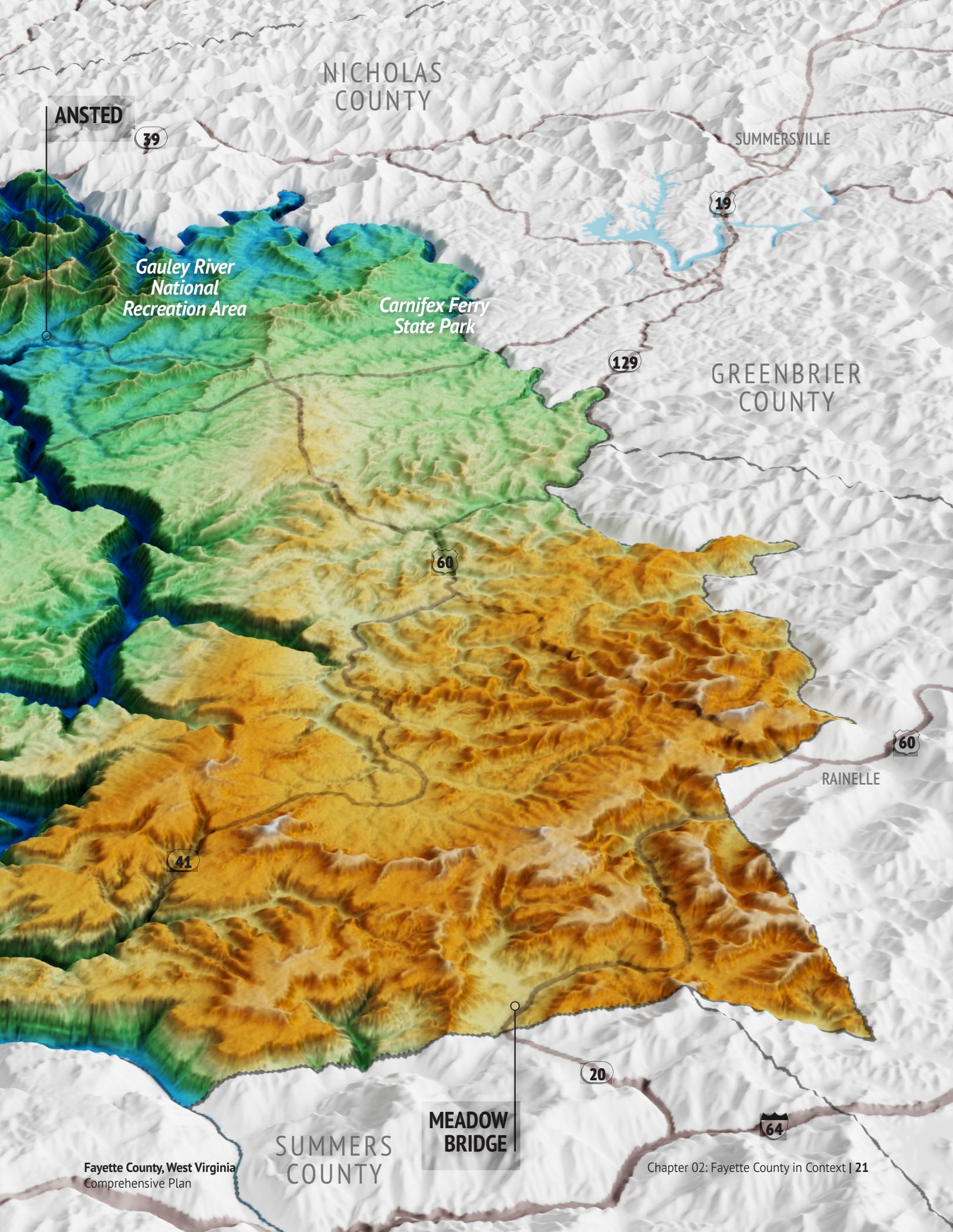
Planning Area

The Fayette County Comprehensive Plan defines land use policy recommendations and action items that apply only to the unincorporated areas of the County outside of municipal boundaries. Several of the County's cities and towns have adopted their own comprehensive plans which articulate the policies and actions specific to that community. The County's Comprehensive Plan considers each municipality's plan and aligns county and municipal policies where applicable, however, planning for areas within municipal boundaries is established through each municipality's plan, separately from the County's plan.

MOUNT HOPE

RALEIGH COUNTY

64



ANSTED

39

NICHOLAS COUNTY

SUMMERSVILLE

19

Gauley River
National
Recreation Area

Carnifex Ferry
State Park

129

GREENBRIER COUNTY

60

60

RAINELLE

41

20

64

MEADOW
BRIDGE

SUMMERS COUNTY



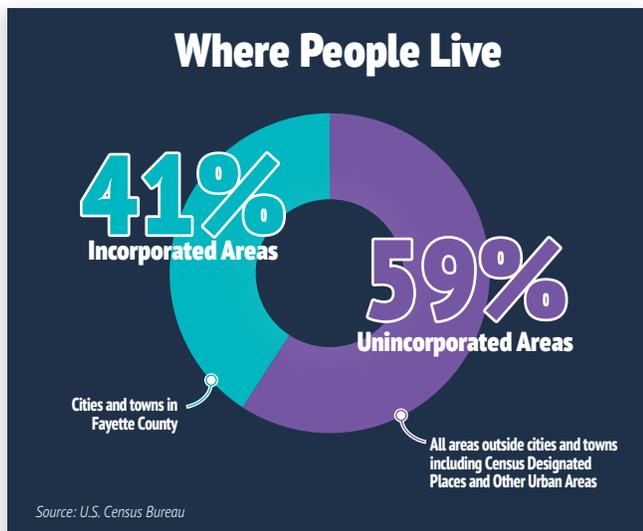
Fayette County Places and Districts

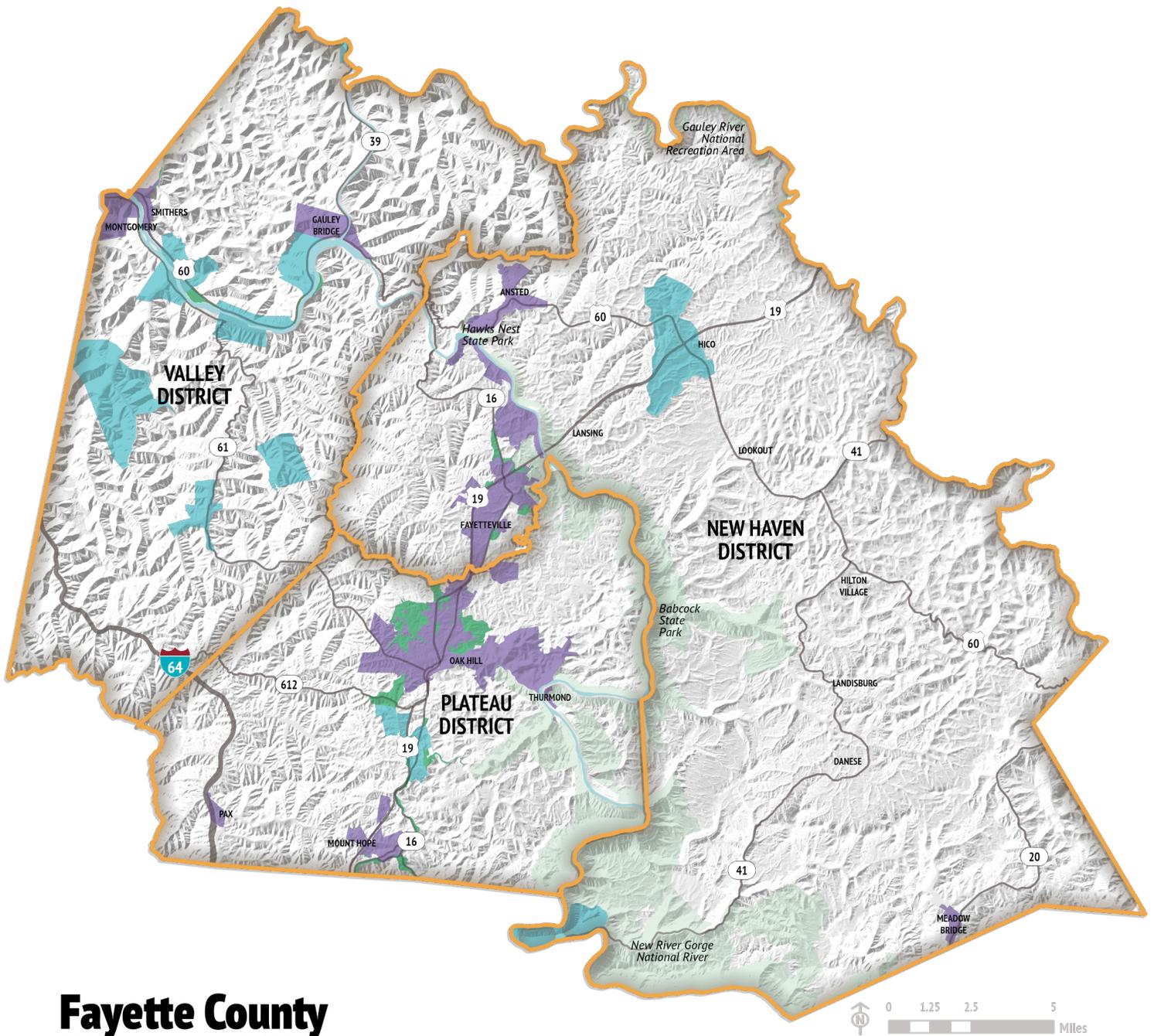
The *Fayette County Places and Districts* map shows Fayette County's cities, towns, census-designated places, and urban areas. The County contains ten municipalities, including four cities and six towns, each of which have the authority to tax and regulate land separately from the County. The cities and towns make up many of County's business areas and neighborhoods.

The County also includes twenty census-designated places, which are settled areas with a defined geography recognized by the US Census Bureau, but which lack a governmental function. The census-designated places include Deepwater, Falls View, Glen Ferris, Kincaid, Mount Carbon, Page, and Powellton. Urbanized areas are areas outside of the cities, towns, and census-designated places that have a densely built character.

The County is divided into three districts, each with a similar size and population per the West Virginia state code. While these districts do not possess jurisdictional or regulatory authority separate from the County, they are used to conduct elections, allocate officials on local boards, record land ownership, and assess property taxes. Fayette County's magisterial districts include the following:

- **New Haven District:** The New Haven District includes Ansted, Meadow bridge, and Thurmond.
- **Plateau District:** The Plateau District is the most populous district and encompasses the County's south and includes the municipalities of Oak Hill, Fayetteville, and Mount Hope.
- **Valley District:** The Valley District encompasses the lower-lying terrain in the County's west and includes Montgomery, Pax, Gauley Bridge, and Smithers.





Fayette County Places and Districts

- Incorporated Places (Cities and Towns)
- Census Designated Places
- Other Urban Areas
- Fayette County Districts



Community History

This section describes the County's historical trends that have influenced its growth and development over time. The County's history in the 19th and 20th centuries was closely tied to the coal industry, although the local economy has recently shifted its prioritization toward tourism and outdoor recreation, especially following the New River Gorge Nation Park and Preserve designation. Understanding these development trends is key to creating policies and actions to define the County's desired future.

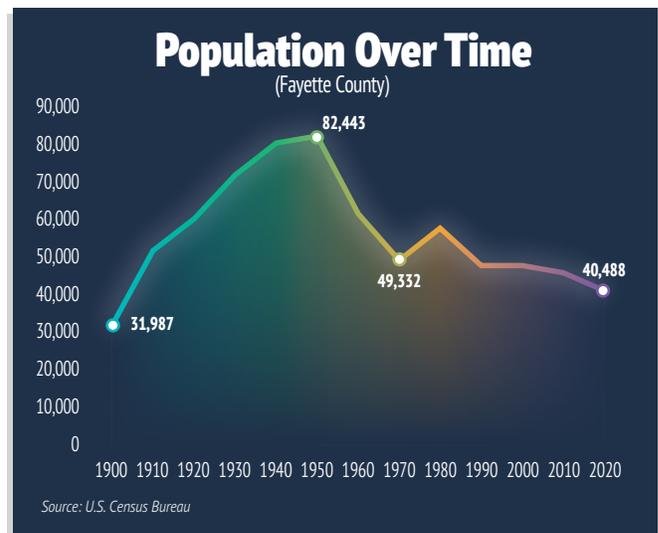
Foundations of Fayette County

Fayette County was originally formed in February 1831 from portions of Greenbrier, Kanawha, Nicholas, and Logan counties in the state of Virginia. The County was named for Marquis de Lafayette, a French Aristocrat that commanded American Forces in the Revolutionary War. The County separated from Virginia in 1863 to form the state of West Virginia. Though some settlement occurred before, widespread settlement began in the 1870s, when the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad constructed tracks in the New River Gorge. This infrastructure allowed the County to export bituminous coal to other regions in the US and caused population growth that lasted until the country began relying more on oil and gas in the mid-20th Century.

The County's population began to decline in the 1950s with the loss of coal industry jobs. This pattern of decline continued in each decade through 2022, except for in the 1970s, although the rate of population decline has slowed since 1990. Outdoor recreation and tourism emerged as new industries in the latter half of the 20th and beginning of the 21st Centuries, which have reinvigorated the economy and encouraged new residents and visitors to spend time in the area.

Coal Industry

Fayette County's economy, like much of West Virginia, was centered on the production, refinement, and shipment of coal for much of its history. Fayette County is known for its abundant seams of "smokeless" coal, which are among the longest- and hottest-burning coal in the world due to its natural properties. This resource drew many European immigrants to the region in the late 1800s, causing much of its growth, leading to the development of permanent communities across the County. The shift in economic focus changed much of the mountain culture that originally defined the region and decreased farming. The rich veins of "smokeless" coal were used around the world and burned from South America to the Mediterranean. Coal extraction remained robust through the early 20th Century, although it declined in the middle of the 20th Century. In 2020, Fayette County was 14th highest coal producing county in West Virginia, producing over 1,200,000 short tons in that year.





Native American History

The first people to live in West Virginia were Native Americans, with evidence of settlements as early as 10,500 B.C. The archaeological records show continuous occupation of the land that would become West Virginia until the 17th century, just before the arrival of European white settlers. However, the first white settlers of West Virginia found few Native Americans on the land, leading experts to believe that disease, conflict, and other hardships forced the inhabitants to migrate elsewhere. While this led to West Virginia having now federally recognized Native American Tribes or tribal lands, several tribes are closely associated with the state. These include the Cherokee, Shawnee, Delaware, and several other tribes that primarily spoke Iroquoian, such as the Seneca, Tuscarawas, Susquehannock, and Mingo.

The 2020 Census noted 37,689 people with Native American Ancestry currently living in the state. Several groups have been formed within the state to spread awareness, educate, and hold festivals. These include the Appalachian American Indians of West Virginia, the largest group whose members comprise 80 different tribes, the West Virginia Native American Coalition, the People of the Earth Organization, and the Native American History Council.

Bridge Construction

The New River Gorge Bridge is an impressive feat of engineering. Spanning 3,030 feet over the New River Gorge near Fayetteville, the bridge's arch is over 1,700 feet long, and is 867 feet above the river. With nearly 16,200 bridge crossings every day, it reduced travel time from one side of the gorge to the other from 45 minutes to about one minute.

Construction on the bridge began in 1974 by Michael Baker Company and was completed in 1977. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2013, fourteen years before its 50th anniversary due to its profound impact on local transportation and engineering significance.

State and National Parks

Fayette County is currently home to three world class parks and nature reserves. The newest is the recently designated New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, receiving this designation from the National Park Service in 2021. This park is over 72,000 acres, with a large portion of the New River running through it. With 1,000-foot cliffs, whitewater rapids, and thousands of acres of forests filled with diverse flora and fauna, this stunning region is one of the many natural assets found within Fayette County.

The second is Hawk's Nest State Park, found near Anstead. This 370-acre park is best known for its scenic overlook along Route 60, with stunning views of the New River 750-feet below. The gift shop and museum were constructed in 1967, and the park itself is home to a 31-room, 4 story lodge, restaurant, tram, pool, golf course, lake, and miles of trails. The land was originally purchased in 1935 and have continuously received infrastructural updates throughout the years.

The third major park within Fayette County is Babcock State Park. The trails and primary facilities on site were constructed from 1934 to 1937, and the park opened on July 1st, 1937. Since then, its 4,127 acres of land has been a huge attraction for the region. Its facilities are constructed of now endangered American Chestnut and locally quarried stone, making the original 13 cabins and picnic areas, the horse stable, headquarters, and superintendent's house, a glimpse into the past. Since the 1930's 13 more cabins have been constructed and 40 acres of campground have been cleared.

A topographic map of a mountainous region, likely Fayette County, West Virginia. The map uses a color gradient from green and blue in the lower elevations to yellow, orange, and brown in the higher elevations, showing a complex network of ridges and valleys. A prominent river or stream is visible on the left side, flowing through a deep valley.

Chapter 03

VISION AND GOALS

The vision statement and the goals define, broadly, how Fayette County should grow and change over the coming decades. They were developed by analyzing existing conditions and input from residents, businesses, stakeholders, and public officials garnered in this Comprehensive Plan.

The ***Vision Statement*** is a narrative that defines Fayette County's pathway to the future. The statement is a broad and ambitious concept to guide the County's continued growth and change over the next 15 to 20 years and is applicable across all planning topics. The vision statement informs the goals established throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

The ***Goals*** describe tangible, long-range results toward which planning efforts should be directed. Each goal identifies a specific way in which the vision statement can be realized.

Vision Statement

Over the next 20 years, Fayette County will build its reputation as a **top place to live, work, and enjoy the outdoors** in the Southeastern United States, providing access to jobs, amenities, natural areas, and a high quality of life for all residents and visitors.

The New River Gorge National Park and Preserve will continue to **emerge as a renowned destination that draws visitors from throughout the World**. The Park will be cohesively linked with state and local parks, pedestrian and bicycle trails, historic sites, and recreation businesses, allowing residents and visitors to easily navigate between points of interest and enjoy the County's many scenic, historical, qualities. The recreation system will **generate new employers, lodging, dining, and entertainment activity** in the County's towns, cities, and their immediate surrounding areas, expanding the quality of life for residents and growing opportunities for tourism. The County's growth will **be balanced, preserving the small-town character its residents value**.

The County's range of **high-quality housing will accommodate the needs of existing and future residents**. Numerous housing options will support low-income households, returning residents, young families, new homebuyers, seasonal workers, and seniors. **Short-term rentals will be managed** to ensure the available housing stock for long-term residents.

The County's public services and infrastructure systems, including its education, water, wastewater, broadband, healthcare, and transportation systems will **support residents' quality of life**. The County's **high-speed broadband will enhance the area's appeal to residents and visitors**, facilitate distance learning, attract new employers, and enable remote workers employed elsewhere to live and spend time in the County. Employers in **new industries will locate in the County and provide new high-quality jobs**.

With an array of recreational activities, historical sites, spectacular natural setting, and quality housing and amenities, Fayette County will **strengthen its appeal as an attractive place to live and work for long-time residents and new residents seeking Fayette County to call home**.

Plan Goals

Preserve the County's Natural Features: Preserve the integrity of the County's forests, state parks, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, County-owned green space and parks, and scenic corridors along Route 19 by directing development away from these features.

Distribute Growth Equitably Near Population Centers: Direct and promote development in cities, towns, and settled unincorporated areas to ensure that each community benefits from the growth and leverage existing infrastructure.

Reinvest and Redevelop: Promote redevelopment of previously developed sites, seek adaptive reuse of historic properties, remove dilapidated buildings, and support property maintenance to reduce blight throughout the County.

Increase Housing Availability and Diversity: Provide housing in suitable formats, prices, and quantities to meet the needs of current and future residents, including young families, first-time homebuyers, seasonal workers, and senior citizens.

Improve Housing Quality: Ensure that both newly constructed and renovated existing housing is of high quality to suit current and future residents' needs.

Attract New Industries: Attract new industries and actively develop the County's workforce to grow employment and serve new and growing industries, by diversifying the local economy.

Grow Tourism and Recreation Economy: Grow the tourism and recreation economy while ensuring the availability of jobs, goods, services, and amenities for all residents.

Expand the Transportation System: Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that supports the economy, improves visitor experience, and allows all users to travel by diverse modes of transportation between sites including healthcare, services, tourism, and employment locations.

Provide High Quality Services: Provide public services that enable the health, well-being, and safety for all residents, regardless of income, location, or age and that work to support the economic prosperity of the County and its residents.

Improve Active Transportation: Construct and maintain a connected system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that allows residents and visitors to easily navigate between points of interest and connects community amenities and services for residents.

Attract Residents: Attract new residents and workers to the County by providing diverse recreation opportunities, housing, and amenities.

Enhance Infrastructure: Enhance the County's water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, and broadband infrastructure to accommodate growth, preserve the environment, and provide for resident health and safety.

Preserve Agriculture: Preserve the County's farmland for continued agricultural activities to preserve its character and heritage and enhance the economy through agritourism.

Promote National, State, and Local Parks: Promote the use of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and state and county parks and ensure that the facilities continue to complement the County's small-town character.

Increase Access to Recreation: Increase local park and recreation amenities to encourage hiking, biking, camping, and other activities throughout the year for both residents and visitors.

Connect Recreation Assets: Link the recreation system, including local, state, and national amenities, and ensure safe access for all users.

Create a Cohesive Brand: Enhance the County's visual elements, including the creation of gateways into the County, preservation of scenic views, creation of a wayfinding system, and beautification of corridors and neighborhoods.

Promote Community Events and Identity: Promote and market arts, events, activities, historic resources, and identity that build on the area's Appalachian history, culture, and natural assets.

Preserve Historic Sites and Structures: Preserve the County's existing historic structures and sites while continuing to identify structures and sites for preservation.



Chapter 04

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

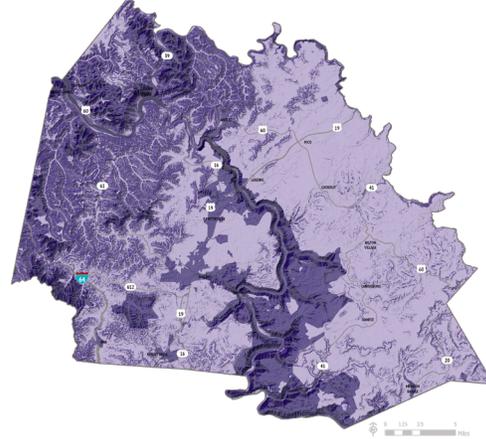
The Land Use and Development chapter is the core component of the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan, representing the building block upon which other plan components are structured. The chapter defines land use categories in Fayette County and provides direction for how the County will grow. The Land Use Plan describes areas that should remain as-is, in addition to areas where new growth and development should be supported.

Chapter Structure

The Land Use and Development chapter follows the structure outlined below.

Suitability Analysis

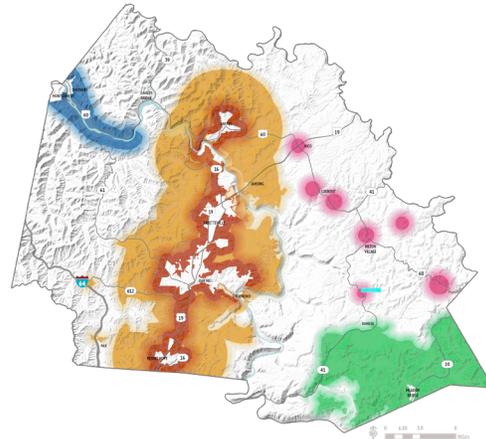
This section highlights the data-driven approach utilized to evaluate conditions, constraints, influences, and variables in the development of the Land Use Plan. Simply stated, suitability analysis is used to determine what areas of the county are suitable for what types of use. More information on this analysis can be found in *Appendix B: Suitability Analysis*.



Land Suitable for Development, see page 35

Growth and Development

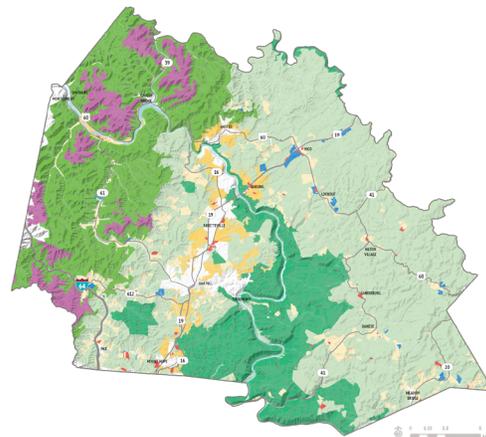
This section provides guidance for future growth and development within the County including identification of priority growth areas. Based on the results of the suitability analysis, areas are then prioritized for specific uses so that conservation and development efforts are targeted to the rights areas in a manner that accommodates the orderly growth of the county.



Priority Growth Areas, see page 39

Land Use Plan

This section details the Land Use Plan along with descriptions of each of the land use categories. The Land Use Plan ensures that every area of the county is designated for a specific land use, providing the appropriate mix of uses and development types to meet the needs of current and future populations.



Land Use Plan, see page 41

Suitability Analysis

A suitability analysis is the process used to analyze and evaluate the suitability of land for various types of use and development based on a set of weighted criteria, such as environmental conditions, topography, infrastructure, location, proximity to services, and more.

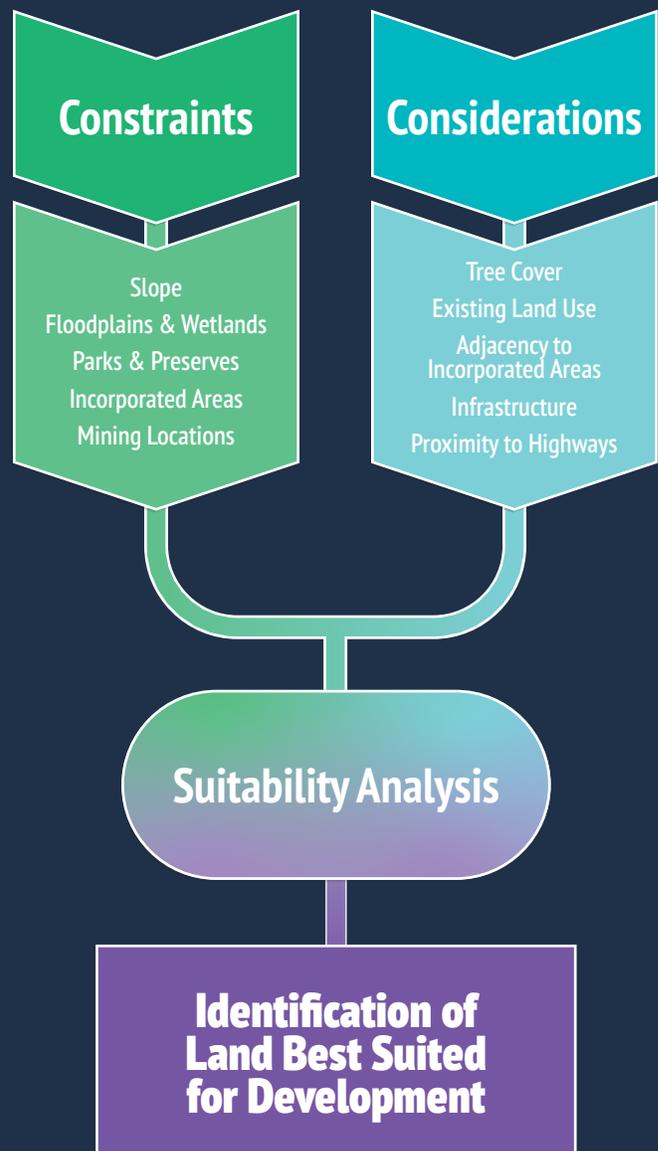
Use of a Suitability Analysis

Suitability analysis is used to rank and score sites based on these criteria. This data-driven approach can be utilized for a variety of purposes, including finding favorable locations for land uses, new facilities, roads, or areas designated for conservation.

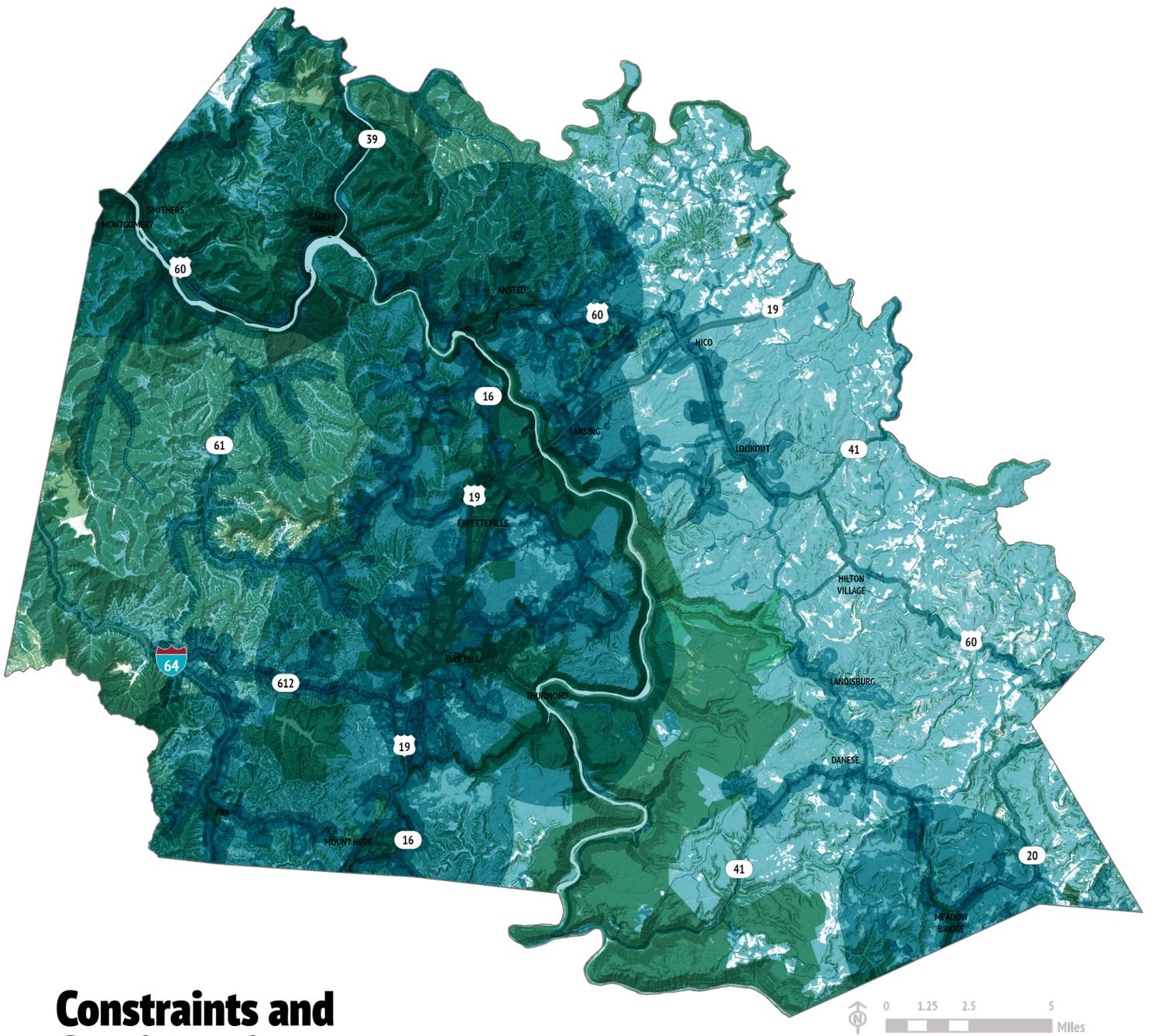
Suitability Constraints and Considerations

Several factors can limit development of an area, and thus significantly influence the overall growth and land use pattern for the county, such as steep slopes, access to infrastructure, and the presence of highly valued environmental features and natural areas. Assessing these constraints and considerations can determine the ideal locations for future growth and development within Fayette County. Layered together, these constraints and considerations helped to create a framework for the development of the Land Use Plan, ensuring the compatibility and viability of recommended development, while underscoring the importance of areas designated for conservation.

For more information on constraints and considerations, see *Appendix B: Suitability Analysis*.



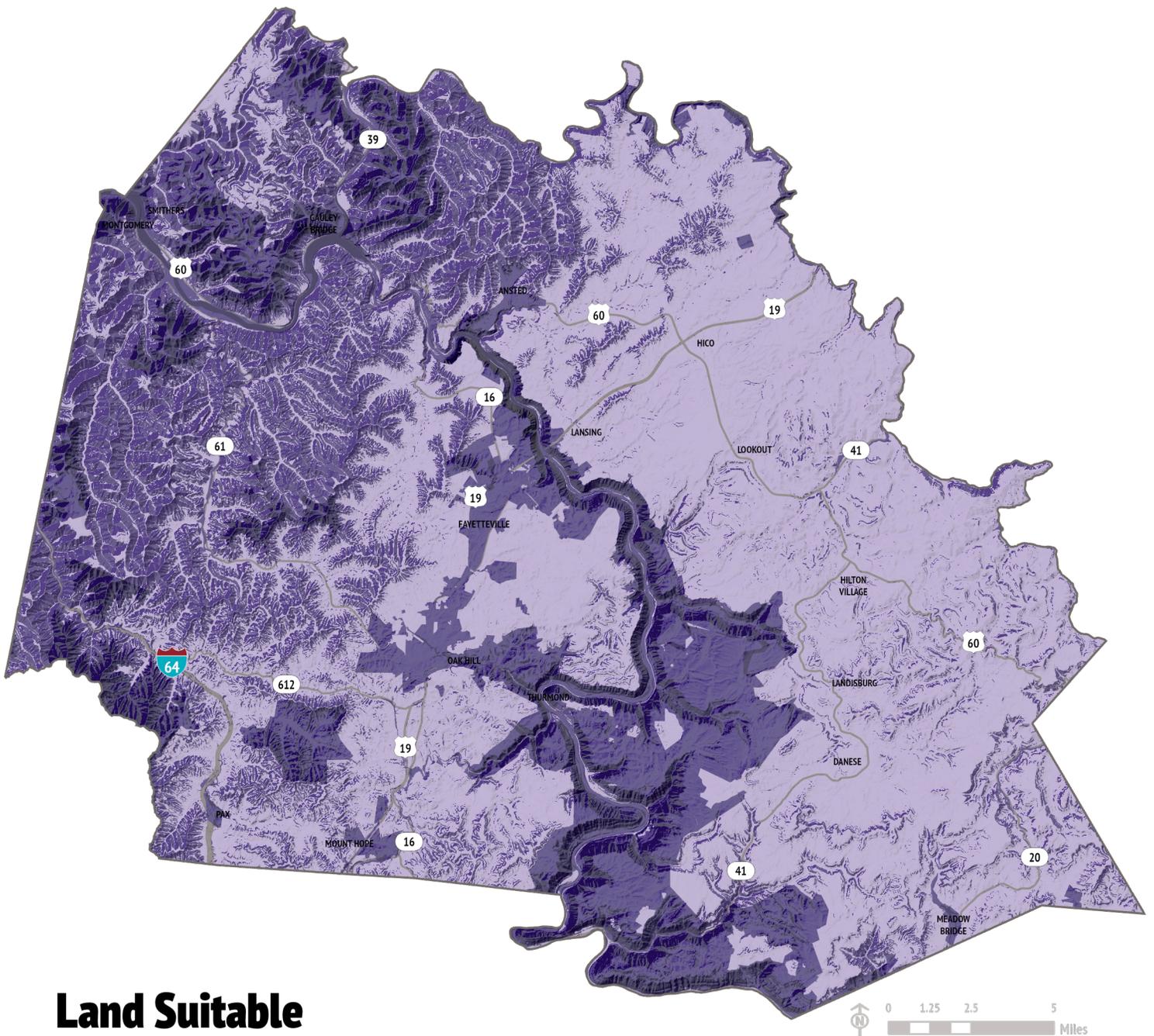
**See Appendix B:
Suitability Analysis for
more information.**



Constraints and Considerations

Constraints and consideration drive suitability. The green represents constraints and the blue represents considerations that are discussed in this section. Darker color signifies areas of overlap between these elements. The darker the color, the greater number of overlapping constraints and considerations, and the higher likelihood the area is not suitable for development.

- Consideration
- Constraint



Land Suitable for Development

The suitability constraints and considerations provided a framework for identifying sites within Fayette County that are most suitable for development. This map highlights the areas that have been identified as suitable and not suitable for development. Suitable areas account for 56% of the County's total area.

- Suitable for Development
- Not Suitable for Development

Growth and Development

The Growth and Development section provides general guidelines as to what areas in the County are best suited to accommodate future growth in the future and where such growth should be prioritized.

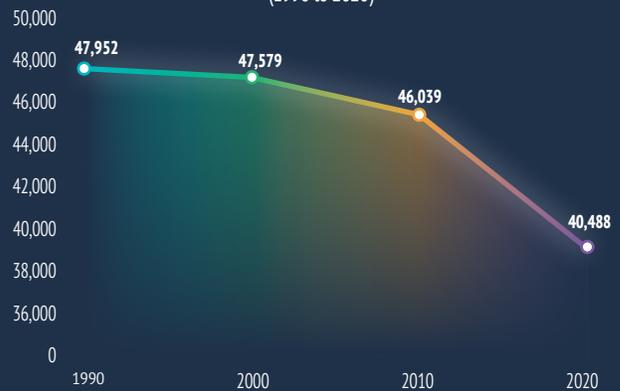
Population Decline

Fayette County, as well as the State of West Virginia, is losing population. Over the past 10 years, **Fayette County has lost about 7% of its population.** Much of the population loss has been among residents between the ages of 20 and 54, which are typically thought of as the prime working ages. Residents between 60 and 74 years old were the only age group to gain population between 2010 and 2020.

The issue of population decline is not unique to Fayette County. According to projections from the West Virginia University Bureau of Business and Economic Research, the state's population was projected to fall by nearly 50,000 from 2010 to 2030. However, the population has fallen faster than initially projected. In 2022, the population had declined by nearly 80,000 since 2010. The University of Virginia Demographics Research Group is now projecting a population for 1.66 million people by 2040.

While accepting the reality of population loss may be difficult, it is essential to creating a plan that is realistic and grounded in the current conditions of the County. The vision for the County and the goals outlined in this Plan are optimistic in that this course can be reserved and growth may occur under the right conditions. This section provides a general guideline as to what areas are best suited for new development over the next 20 years.

Population Change (1990 to 2020)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Change by Age Group (2015 to 2019)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Coordination with Municipalities

While not under the County's jurisdiction or within the scope of the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan, incorporated areas are critical to the County's planning efforts. Municipal boundaries do not limit development or its impact on surrounding unincorporated areas. Municipal development can significantly impact unincorporated areas in many ways, including traffic patterns, traffic volume, development potential, overall character, and strain on resources.

Given the impacts that municipal growth and development have on unincorporated areas, and the importance of infrastructure in the success of development, annexation is a key factor for growth in the County. Utilities, infrastructure, and public facilities are easier to manage, maintain, and access in a municipality. While growth in unincorporated areas may occur, areas with annexation potential should be prioritized. Future development should be annexed wherever appropriate, especially in established neighborhoods that would benefit from municipal services. Additionally, the County should regularly communicate with municipalities to discuss their plans for growth and potential annexation.

Directing Density and Growth

National trends show a growing preference for urban, higher-density development. Particularly among young adults and seniors, individuals desire dense, livable areas that offer convenient access to a range of goods, services, and amenities. Focusing growth and development into concentrated areas helps to preserve open space and limit unnecessary outward expansion while fostering vibrant neighborhoods, active commercial centers, and successful employment areas.

CASE STUDY

Addressing Population Decline

Westmoreland County, PA

Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania is in the southwestern portion of the state and has seen population decline of over 13,000 people in the last decade. Its population decline began in the 1980's with the crash of the steel industry and has continued for decades. Its smaller towns have seen a decline of over twenty percent, the issue worsening with birth rates slowing across the nation. However, after seeing the effects of this population decline, many city officials across the County implemented changes that have seen some success. For example, in North Huntingdon, the population grew by over one hundred people after new housing developments were constructed.

Other strategies include focusing on population growth through the County's comprehensive plan. In the County's comprehensive plan, the focus was improving the quality of life for local business owners and young people, encouraging them to move to the town by constructing more park space, prioritizing small, local businesses in the land use plan, and adjusting zoning laws to diversify housing types. These changes have shown growth in cities such as Murysville, which attracted over 300 new residents.

Priority Growth Areas

The priority growth areas identified in this section guide how and where the County should target growth. The priority growth areas aim to direct growth and development within or adjacent to existing development. Additionally, the priority growth areas acknowledge the need to encourage growth in all County districts, as opposed to focusing all future growth only along the Route 19 corridor.

Urban Infill

Infill areas adjacent to municipalities benefit from existing infrastructure and adjacency to other community amenities. These areas are a focus for reinvestment and fill in the gaps of established neighborhoods. Development should be focused on vacant lots within neighborhoods and commercial or employment areas already served by infrastructure. Additionally, urban infill areas should support a variety of housing options at a range of densities and price points.

Targeted Growth

The Targeted Growth priority growth areas encompass the areas that are within 3 miles of the existing development along the Route 19 corridor. These areas of the County are intended for residential neighborhoods that support the Urban Infill priority growth areas.

Potential Economic Development

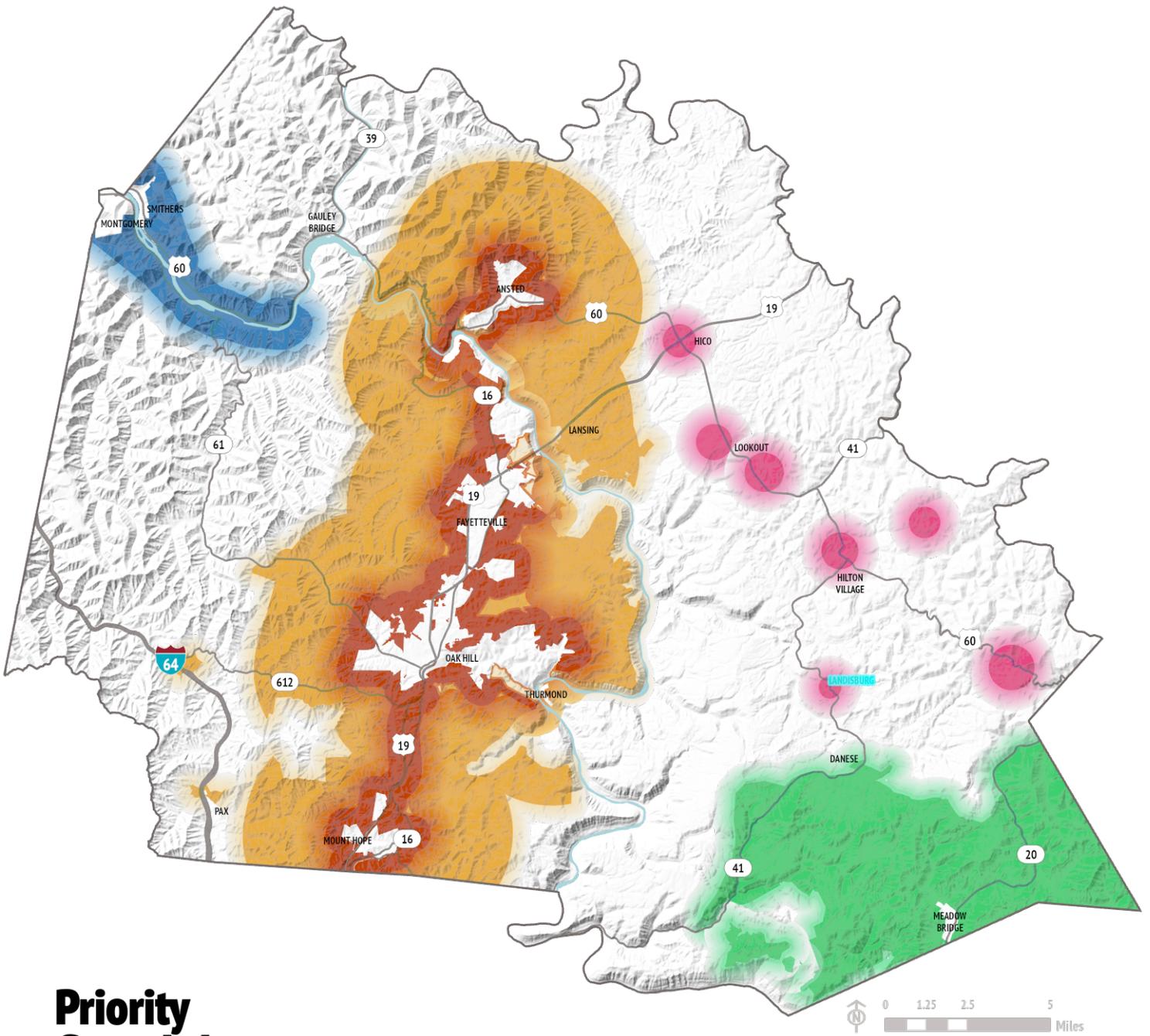
The Potential Economic Development priority growth areas are located along Routes 60 and 41 and are intended to be developed for commercial and employment uses. Target areas will help incentivize development while continuing to improve the County's ability to grow jobs, wages, and the economy. As these areas are proposed for development, consideration should be given to the overall economic benefits of the new development, such as the level of investment in the County and the number of jobs created. High economic impact development projects that can catalyze additional growth should be supported.

Western Route 60 Corridor

The Fayette Gateway priority growth area contains the Boomer, Mount Carbon, Kimberly, Falls View, Deep Water, and Charlton Heights communities. These unincorporated communities sit along Route 60, the primary gateway into Fayette County from Charleston. These existing neighborhoods benefit from scenic views, access to the Kanawha River, regional transportation access via Route 60, and existing infrastructure. Over the next 20 years, these areas should continue to develop, serving as beautiful neighborhoods, welcoming residents and visitors into Fayette County.

Unincorporated Development

The Unincorporated Development priority growth area is in the southeast corner of Fayette County, encompassing the Danese and Spring Dale communities. This area has existing development that is served by existing infrastructure. The Unincorporated Development growth areas encourage additional investment in this area of the County and continue to build on the existing development pattern.



Priority Growth Areas

Intended to guide growth and development throughout the county, five Priority Growth Areas have been identified to direct both infill development in established areas, as well as new development in future growth areas.

- Western Route 60 Corridor
 - Potential Economic Development
 - Targeted Growth Area
- Unincorporated Development
 - Urban Infill

Future Land Use Plan

The previous Growth and Development section defined the overall parameters for what areas should be prioritized for new development and reinvestment, as well as conservation. It answers the question of "where" development should go. Building from that, the Land Use Plan answers the question of "what" type of new development should be in those areas identified as suitable and prioritized for development.

What is a Future Land Use Plan?

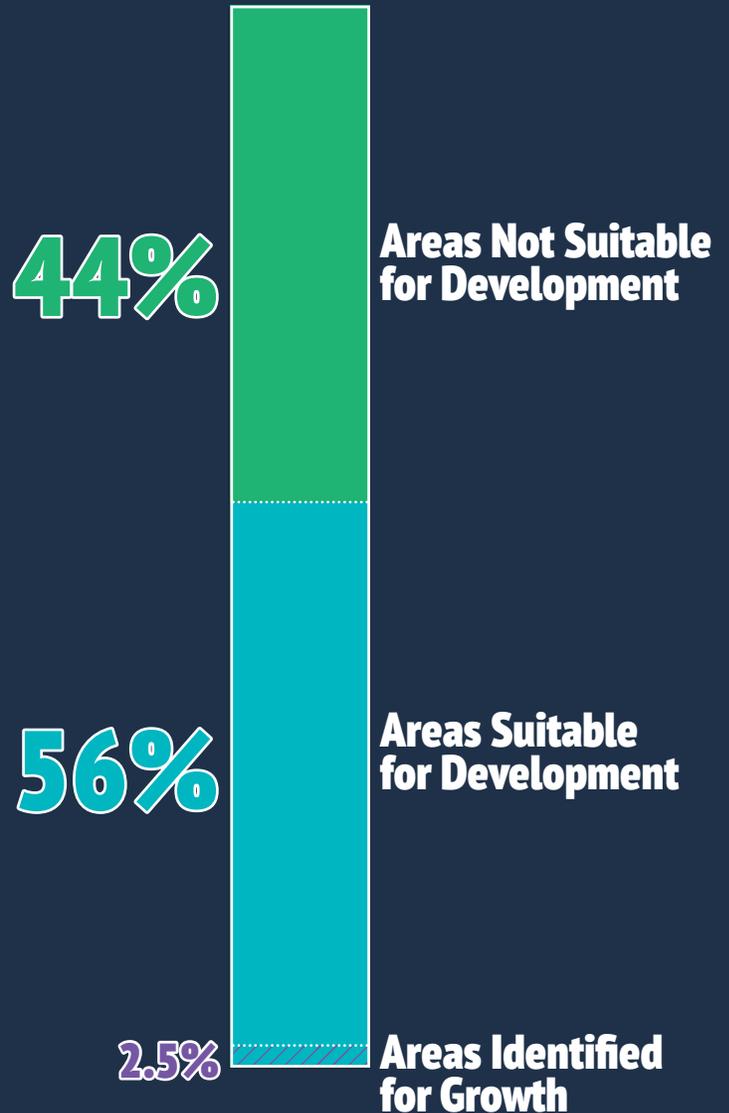
Land use planning is used by communities to establish designated areas for specific types of uses and development for the purpose of guiding and managing growth while ensuring overall development compatibility. Local governments create land use plans to respond to potential impacts, anticipated growth, and guide desired development. Fayette County's Land Use Plan establishes the vision for what the County will look like if the Comprehensive Plan's land policies, implemented to reach the desired future, are successful.

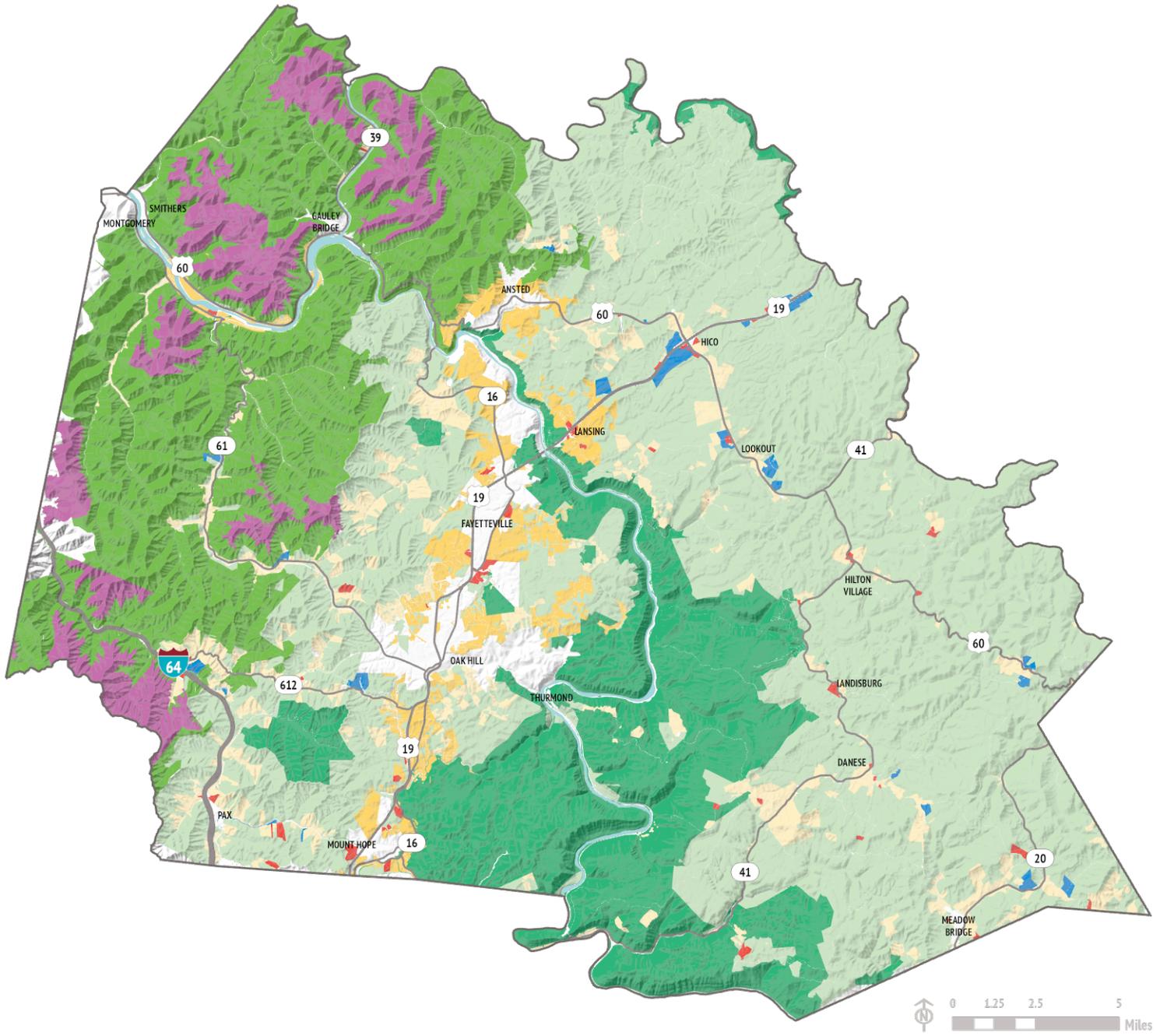
Areas of Change

The suitability analysis identified about 56% of the County as areas suitable for future development. However, this amount of development is unrealistic. Considering other factors such as local context and demographic and market trends, 2.5% of the suitable land has been identified for growth and development over the next 20 years. The areas that have been identified as areas of change are areas located within one of the 5 Priority Growth Areas found in the Growth and Development section of this chapter. Generally, they are located adjacent to existing populated areas and other areas currently served by infrastructure and along a major roadway. A number of these sites would require infrastructure improvements prior to development.

Land Use Categories

As a cornerstone of the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Use Plan is a general guide for growth and development within the County. Parcels within the County have been assigned one of eight general land use categories to serve as the basis for development review and approval, as well as to guide future zoning and development regulation amendments. A description of the different land use designations, along with appropriate primary and secondary uses, is provided for each general land use category.





Future Land Use Plan

Parcels within the County have been assigned eight general land use categories. A description, along with appropriate primary and secondary uses, is provided for each general land use category.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Rural Reserve | Commercial Node | Mountain Interface |
| Rural Residential | Employment Center | Mining Operations |
| Traditional Residential | Regional Open Space | |



Rural Reserve

Rural Reserve areas consist of the County’s established agricultural areas, and homes and neighborhoods within forested areas. These areas are primarily in the eastern half of the County and are distant from high-activity areas and incorporated places in the County. These areas are unlikely to develop further over the next 20 years. However, the County should remain open to development within these areas should the opportunity arise. Development within these areas should be served by infrastructure such as water and sewer.

Primary Uses

- Agriculture
- Single-family Detached Residential
- Forested Areas

Regional Example

The area along Bracken Road (40/3) off Route 41 is an example of the Rural Reserve land use. This area is forested with pockets of single-family detached homes and small-scale agricultural uses.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.



Rural Residential

The Rural Residential land use category consists of low-intensity residential development intermixed with agricultural uses. These areas are primarily along major roadways such as Route 41, 20, 61, and 612. Development patterns consist of agriculture, farms, or single-family detached homes on larger lots. As growth and development occur, a Rural Residential area may transition into more dense land uses such as Urban Residential.

Primary Uses

- Agriculture
- Farm/Homestead Residential
- Single-family Detached Residential

Secondary Uses

- Public/Semi-public Facilities
- Local Parks and Recreation
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service

Regional Example

Danese is an unincorporated community in Fayette County and is an example of a Rural Residential area. Danese is made up primarily of single-family detached residential homes, and farmland. The County also includes semi-public facilities such as the Danese Christian School along with commercial retail.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.



Traditional Residential

Traditional Residential is primarily comprised of single-family detached homes arranged along a grid street network, typically spaced apart in a generally consistent pattern. These areas can be considered traditional neighborhoods due to their setbacks, overall block/street configuration, and range of parcel size. Traditional Residential areas generally encompass existing traditional residential neighborhoods in the County.

In addition to residential uses, these neighborhoods include local stores and religious institutions that serve the immediate community members. Supporting land uses in the Traditional Residential category consist of higher density residential developments, schools, libraries, healthcare/emergency services, and local parks.

Primary Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential

Secondary Uses

- Single-family Attached Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Public/Semi-public Facilities
- Local Parks and Recreation

Regional Example

Charlton Heights is a census-designated place in Fayette County and is an example of an Traditional Residential neighborhood. Charlton is primarily made up of single-family detached homes on smaller lots than those found in Rural Residential areas, arranged in a grid-based street pattern. The neighborhood also includes public services such as the U.S. Post Office that serve the community.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.

Commercial Node

A Commercial Node provides residents access to essential goods and services such as grocery and convenience stores, restaurants, personal services, schools, places of worship, and post offices. A Commercial Node usually acts as an anchor or a gathering place that draws people from multiple neighborhoods within the county. Such uses are typically located along major roadways and intersections, or minor roadways that are more heavily travelled and frequented. Supporting land uses may include single-family, multifamily residential, and public/semi-public facilities.

Primary Uses

- Restaurant/Dining
- Commercial Retail/Service
- Office
- Entertainment
- Commercial Tourism

Secondary Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential
- Single-family Attached Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Public/Semi-Public

Regional Example

Craigsville, at the intersection of Route 20 and Route 55, in Nicholas County is an example of an ideal Commercial Node that may be emulated in Fayette County. The major intersection has several commercial uses including retail and dining, community pharmacies, and office uses. The Commercial Node is surrounded by a residential neighborhood with community facilities such as religious institutions, schools, and a library.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.



Employment Center

An Employment Center is characterized by areas for large-scale businesses that provide significant employment and economic development opportunities in the County. These areas are often adjacent to major roads but can be close to residential neighborhoods or developments. Visual screening or landscaped buffers help mitigate potential negative impacts on nearby residential areas. Land uses in an Employment Center primarily includes industrial uses, business parks, or offices.

Primary Uses

- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Business Park
- Office

Secondary Uses

- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service

Regional Example

The unincorporated community of Midway in Fayette County is an example of an Employment Center land use classification. The area has several light industrial uses clustered together with easy access to Route 19.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.

Regional Open Space

Regional Open Space is characterized by natural areas in the County that should be preserved and protected. The land use category includes natural areas such as national, state, and regional parks in addition to areas designated for conservation and large-scale recreation. Further, undeveloped areas within a regional open space consist of environmentally sensitive areas and undisturbed natural areas, including areas with denser tree canopies. Typically, Regional Open Space areas are managed by federal, state, county, or private entities. Such natural areas and open spaces are a regional draw for recreational tourism and a valuable economic resource for the County.

Primary Uses

- National, State, and Regional Parks
- Conservation and Natural Areas
- Large Scale Recreation

Secondary Uses

- Recreation Tourism

Regional Example

The New River Gorge National Park and Preserve is the County's highest-profile example of regional open space. The park includes campgrounds, trails, scenic views, and expansive natural areas.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.



Mountain Interface

The Mountain Interface includes areas in the County that preserve the integrity of its unique mountainous landscape. The area instills and preserves a sense of natural beauty in the region and protects the wildlife habitat. Mountain Interface areas can be characterized by the presence of large natural and open spaces where development is fairly limited due to steep slopes and expensive construction cost. While areas with slopes between 20-30 degrees might be suitable for select housing types, any area over 30 degrees would not be suitable for development.

Primary Uses

- Open Space
- Natural Areas

Secondary Uses

- Single-family Detached Residential

Regional Example

The western portion of Fayette County is an example of the Mountain Interface land use category. These areas are forested with little to no development.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.

Mining

The Mining land use consists of active mining sites or mine-related disturbed areas in the County. Typically, these areas are distant from residential or commercial uses and suitable as open spaces after a reclamation or restoration process. Such processes can help restore the watershed and wildlife dependent in these areas.

Primary Uses

- Active mining

Secondary Uses

- Natural areas

Regional Example

The Maple Coal area on the western edge of Fayette County is an example of the Mining land use category. This area consists of an active mining site, surrounding by forested areas.

Click [HERE](#) to view the regional example on a map.

A topographic map of a region, likely in West Virginia, showing a river winding through a valley. The map uses a color gradient from green in the lower elevations to yellow and orange in the higher elevations, with blue representing the river. The terrain is characterized by numerous ridges and valleys.

Chapter 05

HOUSING

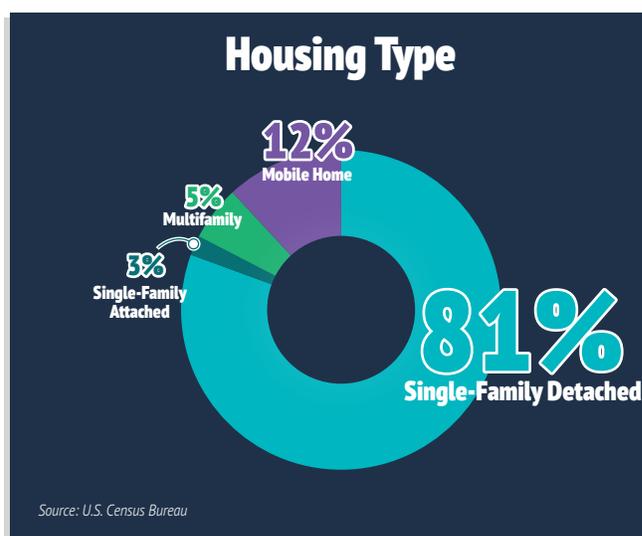
The Housing Chapter provides guidance on issues impacting Fayette County's residential areas. Building on the Land Use Plan established in **Chapter 04: Land Use and Development**, the chapter aims to diversify available housing options that are high quality and affordable. The Housing Chapter also identifies areas where the County should prioritize residential development.

Section 1

Increase Housing Supply and Options

About **80% of the County's current housing stock is made up of single-family detached homes**. This accounts for housing units within both incorporated and unincorporated areas. As many of the denser housing types, such as townhomes and apartment buildings, are typically located within Fayette County's municipalities, the share of single-family homes in the County's unincorporated areas is likely higher.

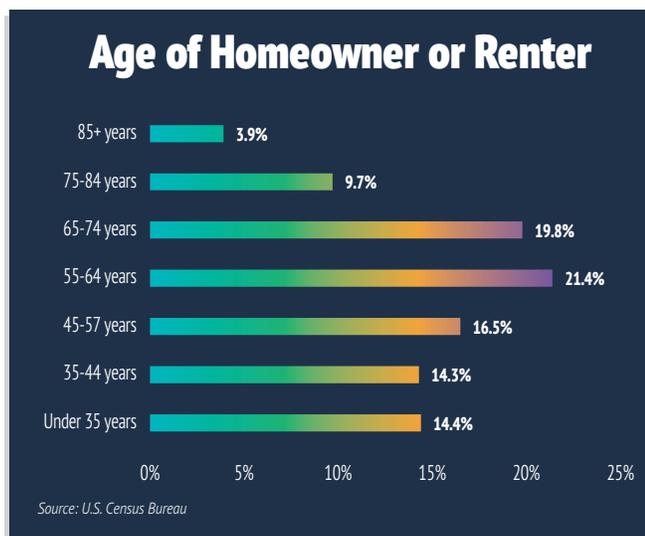
According to the 2019 Housing Needs Assessment for the State of West Virginia, of the State's 55 counties, **Fayette County is in the top third with the most unmet housing needs across all income levels for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units**. The study also noted that Fayette ranks 12th in most unmet needs for senior renters and 10th in most unmet needs for senior owners. Currently, **about 55% of the heads of household Fayette County are seniors**. A senior is generally considered to be anyone of retirement age, or a person that is 62 or older. The general housing supply and the housing options within the County will need to increase to meet the projected demand as the senior population within the County grows .



I am a young professional who moved to Fayetteville from out of state earlier this year. I want to stay, but there are little to no housing options for renters who want to be part of this community.

Aging in Place

Seniors and retirees continue to look to Fayette County as a desirable place to live. To fully capture the needs of its older population, the County should support developing housing types that are accessible, affordable, and attractive to seniors and aging residents. Housing options to better accommodate aging-in-place could include small-lot single-family attached and multifamily developments. The County should identify appropriate locations for senior housing near amenities for easy and convenient access. Age-targeted residential developments, including senior living communities and assisted living facilities, should be encouraged.



The most urgent need is senior independent living facilities. Next is multifamily units such as apartments, and third is planned affordable single-family home neighborhoods.

Recommendations

Different generations have varying preferences for housing options – from a traditional single-family home to an apartment above a restaurant. Providing these options can accommodate as many preferences as possible, allowing more people to live in the County. A variety of housing options throughout the County will help attract new residents to areas across Fayette County and allow them to stay as they progress through various stages of life. Defining the desired location of housing should also be considered in conjunction with access to education, recreation, healthcare, and transportation options. To accomplish this, the County should:

1. Analyze the specific housing market needs of the County with a local Housing Needs Assessment to understand strengths, weaknesses, and needs to help prioritize future residential development.
2. Update zoning ordinance to provide for a variety of residential types within residential districts.
3. Ensure the availability of housing in locations with access to education, recreation, healthcare, and transportation services.
4. Permit accessory dwelling units on single-family lots to expand and increase housing options and support aging in place for the County's senior population.
5. Communicate and coordinate with private developers, non-profit organizations, and other groups to ensure standards are met as they work to build and renovate housing across the County.
6. Host regular meetings with real estate experts familiar with the County to identify emerging trends, issues, and potential projects related to housing.
7. Work with municipalities to adjust zoning codes to allow for the strategic expansion of multifamily units and establish target goals for multifamily development and total units.
8. Work with developers to identify potential community enhancement districts for land that need infrastructure improvements.
9. Utilize WVU Extension to identify resources at WVU and other sources statewide, regionally, and nationally to support housing development needs.

Section 2

Pursue Housing Affordability

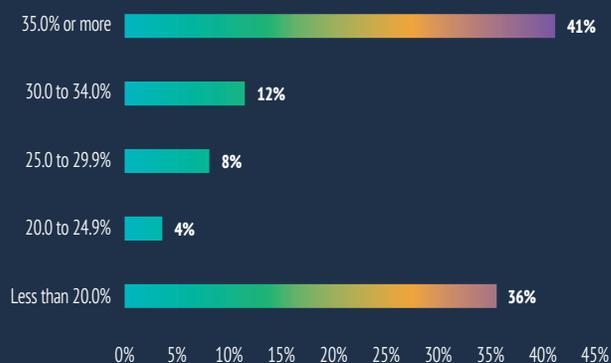
Over the past decade, the number of both renter and owner-occupied units has decreased. This is more notable in rental units. Between 2010 and 2020, **Fayette County lost nearly 500 rental units**. This drop in the number of units available for residents can drive up the cost of the remaining units and create a housing cost burden on Fayette households.

A household is burdened by the cost of housing when 30% or more of its monthly income goes towards housing costs such as rent or mortgage payments. **More than 50% of Fayette County renters are burdened by the cost of their monthly rental payments**. The majority of the households in Fayette County that are burdened by the cost of housing have an income of \$20,000 or less.

The Housing Needs Assessment noted that Fayette County has several census tracts in which over a third of renters are burdened by the cost of housing. The *Renter Cost Burden Map* shows that **in nearly all census tracts, 40% or more of renters are burdened by the cost of housing**. Most notably, 100 % of renters in Census Tract 201.02, which contains the northern half of Fayetteville, are burdened by the cost of housing.

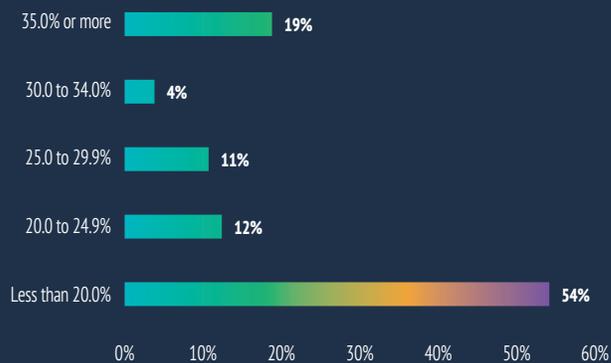
“There is a lack of affordable housing options and rentals for people wanting to move to the community for work.”

Rent as a Percent of Income

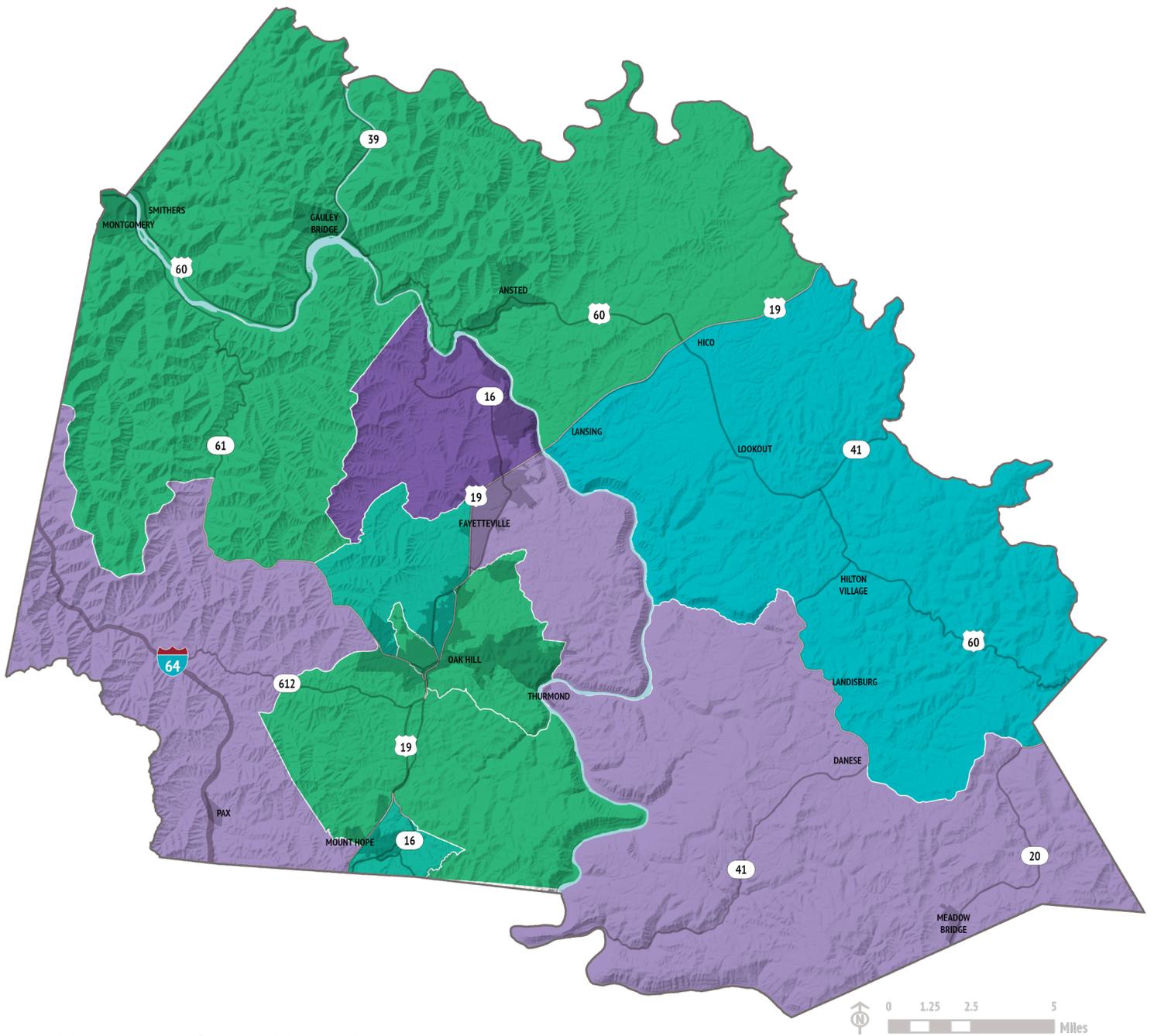


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Mortgage as a Percent of Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Renter Cost Burden

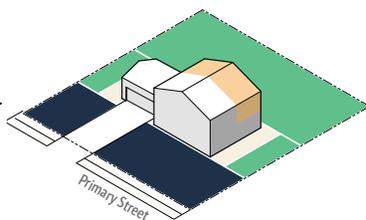
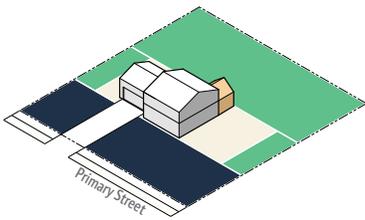
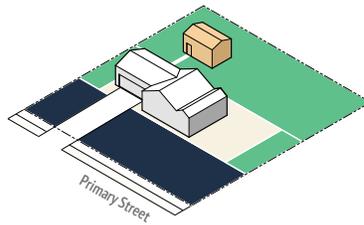
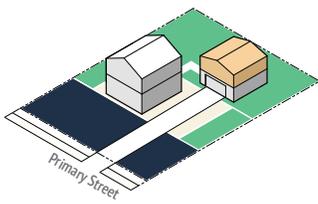
The Renter Cost Burden Map shows that in nearly all census tracts that 40% or more of renters are burdened by the cost of housing. Most notably, Census Tract 201.02, which contains the northern half of Fayetteville.

- No Renter Burdened by Cost
- 40% to 45%
- 45.1% to 60%
- 60.1% to 75%
- 75.1% to 100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Accessory Dwelling Units

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone single-family home. They can be designed and permitted through a variety of configurations. These alternative forms of density could provide more attainable housing units without changing the neighborhood character. They can work well for people in various stages of life, including students, young professionals, seasonal workers, and empty nesters.



Recommendations

The County should work to ensure that residents can remain while also encouraging new residents to locate in Fayette County. To accomplish this, the County should:

1. Work with local developers and contractors to repair and upgrade older homes, and to construct new low- and moderate-income housing. See *Chapter 07: Renewal and Redevelopment* for more information on the reuse of existing buildings.
2. Meet with local developers and contractors to evaluate incentives for developing affordable housing, such as density bonuses, expedited processing, parking reductions, and tax abatements. Amend zoning regulations, permitting and approval processes, and available incentives as necessary.
3. Consider encouraging alternative forms of density, such as small-lot homes or accessory dwelling units to provide more affordable housing units without altering neighborhood character. Accessory dwelling units can be promoted throughout the County in several ways, including fee waivers, pre-approved unit plans, assistance with the permitting process, and working with local lenders to ensure financing is available for homeowners wishing to build an accessory dwelling unit.
4. Promote infill within single-family neighborhoods to increase density while maintaining neighborhood character.
5. Encourage a variety of housing types including duplexes, townhomes, and multifamily housing.
6. Encourage affordable housing as a development option for infill sites, particularly near employment areas.
7. Prioritize County and other government-owned buildings and land as sites for development of housing that is affordable at 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) and below.
8. Promote innovative site design and construction techniques and encourage the use of modular housing to keep new development affordable.
9. Utilize the Urban Renewal Authority to pursue funding opportunities at the federal level and work with potential developers to build apartments, particularly to accommodate the needs of first-time renters.
10. Encourage universal design and accessibility in the development of all housing types and levels of affordability. Universal design is the design of buildings to make them accessible to all people, regardless of age, disability or other factors.
11. Engage major employers to understand the housing need for both seasonal and permanent workers.
12. Consider conducting a detailed housing study to get a clear picture of current and future housing needs in Fayette County.
13. Provide and promote a list of resources and volunteer/staff support to help homeowners utilize existing housing repair resources from organizations such as West Virginia Housing, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Section 3

Understand the Cost and Benefit of Short-Term Rentals

About **20% of vacant units in Fayette County are identified as vacant for seasonal, recreation, or occasional use.**

A property converted to a short-term or vacation rental unit results in one less long-term rental unit available for Fayette County residents.

There is growing evidence nationally to suggest that short-term rentals have an impact on housing affordability. High demand for housing drives up the price of the long-term rental options that remain. In Fayette County, a high number of short-term and vacation rentals can be coupled with the overall **loss of about 500 rental units in the past 10 years**, making it increasingly difficult for residents to find available long-term rental units.

Though short-term and vacation rentals typically decrease the number of long-term rental vacancies, they tend to sit vacant more often than if the unit was occupied by a full-time renter. This can add to the frustration of full-time residents looking for housing.

While there can be negative effects on the housing market, short-term rentals also provide benefits to local communities and the County in the form of additional tax revenue. In 2019, **the State of West Virginia instituted a 6% sale and uses tax on short-term leases and rentals.** Short-term leases and rental are also subject to county and municipal hotel occupancy taxes. Currently, **Fayette County has a 6% hotel tax rate.** According to the West Virginia State Code, the majority of revenues may be used for expenses directly related to the promotion of tourism and travel, including advertising, salaries, travel, office expenses, publications, and similar expenses. In addition to revenue gained through the hotel tax, rental guests can provide economic benefits, as they are likely to spend more on entertainment, activities, dining, and shopping than long-term residents otherwise would.



Short term rentals limit the number of available housing options for members of the community. Stricter regulations on these may be beneficial.

Recommendations

Pursuing legislation that restricts who can lease short-term rental properties, for how long, and under what circumstances is becoming increasingly common. The County should consider policies that would strike a balance between providing enough short-term rentals to meet the demand of visitors and tourists without pushing out existing and future long-term renters. To accomplish this, the County should:

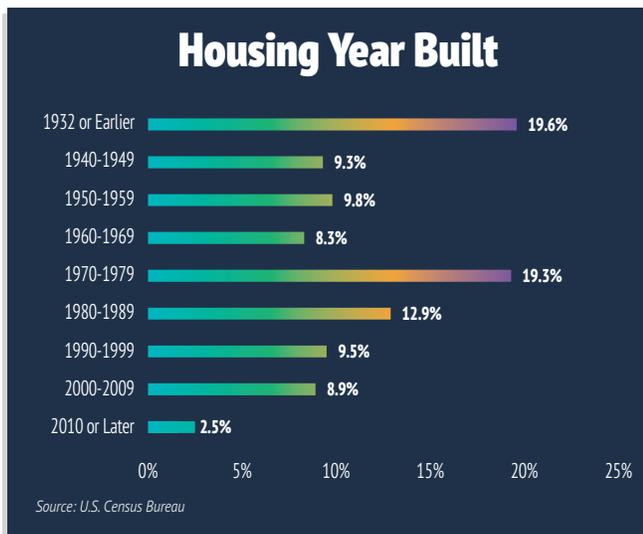
1. Partner with local governments to identify and assess existing seasonal, recreational, and occasional use units to determine their compatibility with the surrounding communities and if they are likely to enhance the County's desired characteristics. This information can be utilized to inform discussions on appropriate locations for short-term rentals, as well as potential short-term rental policies.
2. Review Chapter 7, Article 18, Section 14 of the West Virginia State Code to understand how revenues from hotel tax can be spent. Develop a strategy on how revenues may be spent to accomplish the goals and recommendations of the *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan*.
3. Identify the areas in the County where short-term rentals are most likely to enhance the qualities which attract tourism.
4. Assess potential policies and legislation on short-term rentals. Policies can include:
 - Implementing a lottery system that allows for a certain number of homeowners to receive a short-term rental permit per year. The number of permits can be determined per square mile.
 - Only allowing short-term rental of accessory units or partial home rentals of a primary residence.
 - Requiring homeowners to obtain short-term rental licenses each year.
 - Limiting short-term rental licenses to one per resident
5. Coordinate with the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority to conduct a study on the economic and housing impacts of short and long term rentals in Fayette County.

Section 4

Improve Housing Quality

The age of housing can be a good indicator of housing conditions as older homes tend to be in poorer condition. The Housing Needs Assessment has **ranked Fayette County 47 out of the State's 55 counties in terms of housing quality.** The assessment cited high poverty, a high percentage of older housing stock, and low housing values as determining factors.

Nearly 20% of housing in the County was built before 1940, while just 10% of the County's housing was built within the last 20 years. The median value of an owner-occupied unit within the County is \$95,100, which is about \$28,000 less than the State's median home value of \$123,200.



We need more new construction of quality homes for purchase and long-term rental. Short-term rentals are driving out folks who want to live in Fayette County.

Recommendations

The County should take steps to increase the quality of housing for existing and future residents. To accomplish this, the County should:

1. Work with the local governments to encourage the renovation of older existing homes through financial or tax incentives and regulatory tools such as zoning ordinances and zoning standards.
2. Hold property managers accountable for failure to maintain the property in compliance with minimum building standards.
3. Work with local churches to create programs to assist with housing repairs.
4. Mandate minimum building standards for low-income housing.
5. Prioritize the construction of new homes in areas with access to necessary infrastructure including sewer, water, and electrical as well as community services and amenities. New construction should meet the most current building standards. At the time of the adoption of this plan, the most current standards utilized by the County is the 2018 Building Code.
6. Improve existing housing and neighborhood quality by improving physical community facilities such as streets, sidewalks, and lighting in existing neighborhoods.
7. Preserve neighborhood stability through the strategic abatement of blighted or vacant properties.
8. Work with existing programs, such as West Virginia Land Stewardship Corporation, to map and prioritize managing blighted structures.
9. Work with the Urban Development Authority (URA) to develop opportunities for homeowners to have greater access to programs like the USDA Rural Development program.
10. The Urban Development Authority should prepare a Redevelopment/Reinvestment Plan, targeting blighted properties throughout the County. This Plan should include additional housing standards. See *Chapter 07: Renewal and Redevelopment* for more information on eliminating vacant and blighted structures.
11. Explore deed-restricted housing and other mechanisms that could promote housing availability for residents and workers.

Section 5

Housing Framework

The Housing Framework identifies policies and recommendations to strategically promote new housing development in keeping with the County's needs, expand the housing formats available, and promote affordable housing choice for residents.

Identifying Housing Priority Areas

Sites that are best suited for residential development are identified as part of the suitability analysis discussed in *Chapter 04: Land Use and Development (pg 40)*. Residential uses including farm/homestead residential, single-family detached and attached residential, multifamily residential, and auxiliary public/semi-public and parks uses.

Suitability Factors

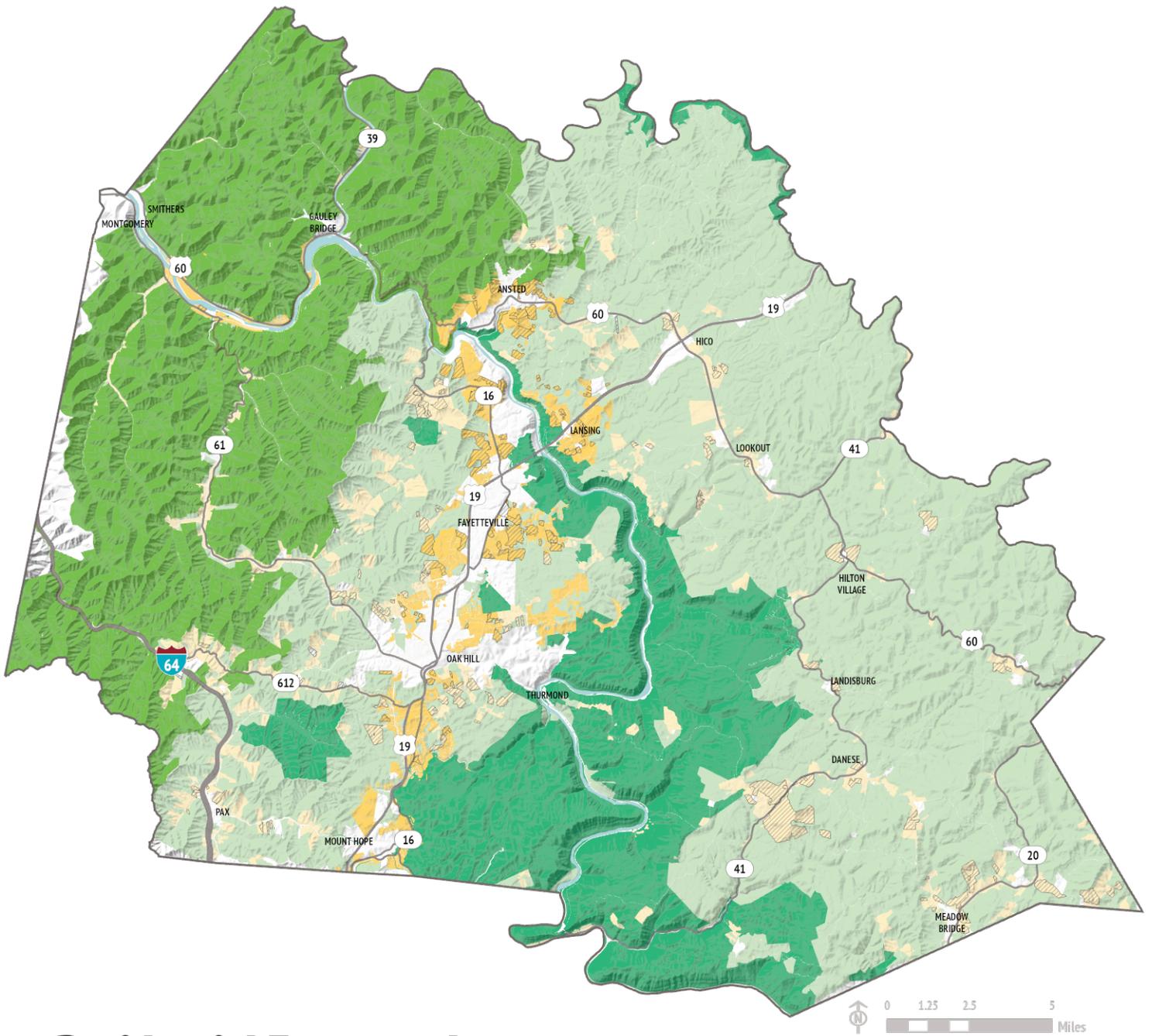
The following factors were used to determine residential site suitability.

- **Steep Slopes:** Areas with a slope less than 23:1 were preferred areas for development.
- **Floodplains:** Areas within floodplains were less favorable areas for development.
- **Tree Canopy:** Areas with 75% of tree cover or more are not favorable for development due to clear-cutting costs and a desire to preserve mature stands of trees.
- **Preserved Land:** Land within preserved areas such as state parks, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and wildlife management areas was not considered for development.
- **Existing Land Use:** Land that is currently being used for residential, agriculture, or is undeveloped is considered more suitable for residential development.
- **Adjacency to Incorporated Areas:** Areas adjacent to municipalities were considered more suitable for development.
- **Infrastructure:** Areas with access to water and sewer infrastructure were considered more suitable for development.

Recommendations

The following recommendations promote high-quality residential development and built form, integrate residential development within the surrounding community, and to allow for the development for residential uses while preserving natural features:

1. Allow residential development to be oriented with flexibility to preserve the natural terrain and mature vegetation that exists on-site to the greatest extent possible.
2. Where residential development occurs adjacent to existing or planned commercial nodes, provide pedestrian connections between the residential development and these adjacent areas.
3. Integrate existing or planned recreational trails into the overall design of residential developments.
4. Allow a flexible mix of housing types including single-family detached, single-family attached, and multifamily consistent with the residential designations in the land use plan.
5. Minimize dead-end streets to form well-connected neighborhoods that support pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
6. Support high-quality building design and materials and coordinate with property owners and local organizations to improve the appearance of housing as development occurs.



Residential Framework

The Residential Framework map highlights land use categories in which residential uses are appropriate. The map also calls out areas that are appropriate for new residential.

- New Residential Areas
- Rural Residential
- Mountain Interface
- Rural Preserve
- Traditional Residential
- Regional Open Space

A topographic map of a region, likely Fayette County, West Virginia, showing a network of rivers and streams. The map uses a color gradient from light green to dark green to represent elevation, with a prominent blue river winding through the landscape. The map is overlaid with a semi-transparent white box containing text.

Chapter 06

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development can generally be thought of as the focus of federal, state, and local governments to improve our standard of living through the creation of jobs, the support of innovation and new ideas, the generation of greater wealth for individual and families, and the creation of an overall better quality of life. Economic development is essential to Fayette County's growth and stability. The Economic Development Chapter identifies strategies to strengthen Fayette County's overall economy through business collaboration, workforce development, and expanded employment opportunities.

Section 1

Attract New Industry

Over the past 15 years, the number of jobs within Fayette County has decreased. Between 2005 and 2019, there was a **loss of just over 1,200 jobs**. Additionally, there is a general lack of large businesses within the County. About **62% of Fayette County businesses employ 1 to 4 people**, while just over 3% employ 50 people or more. Attracting larger businesses and new industries is key to creating jobs and diversifying, strengthening, and growing Fayette County's economy.

West Virginia Forward Strategy for Economic Development and Job Growth is a study conducted by the West Virginia Department of Commerce in collaboration with Marshall University and West Virginia University. The study identifies several industry sectors that should be the focus of industry retention and attraction:

- **Existing Industries with Growth Potential:** mining, agriculture, aerospace maintenance, automotive parts manufacturing, metals manufacturing, fulfillment distribution, and manufacturing of building products
- **New Industries with High Growth Prospects:** cybersecurity, cloud services, data centers, and higher-end tourism
- **Industries with Long-Term Prospects:** life sciences, automotive assembly

The study identifies industries for growth throughout West Virginia, however, it does not assess the conditions and define growth industries for Fayette County or the southern area of the state specifically. Despite the study's lack of specificity within the state, embracing these trends, innovation, and technology will be key in Fayette County. One example is the need for increased broadband capacity. This is essential to ensure Fayette County can attract modern and emerging industries and businesses that provide high-paying jobs that appeal to young professionals and college graduates. More information on increasing broadband access can be found in *Chapter 10: Infrastructure*.

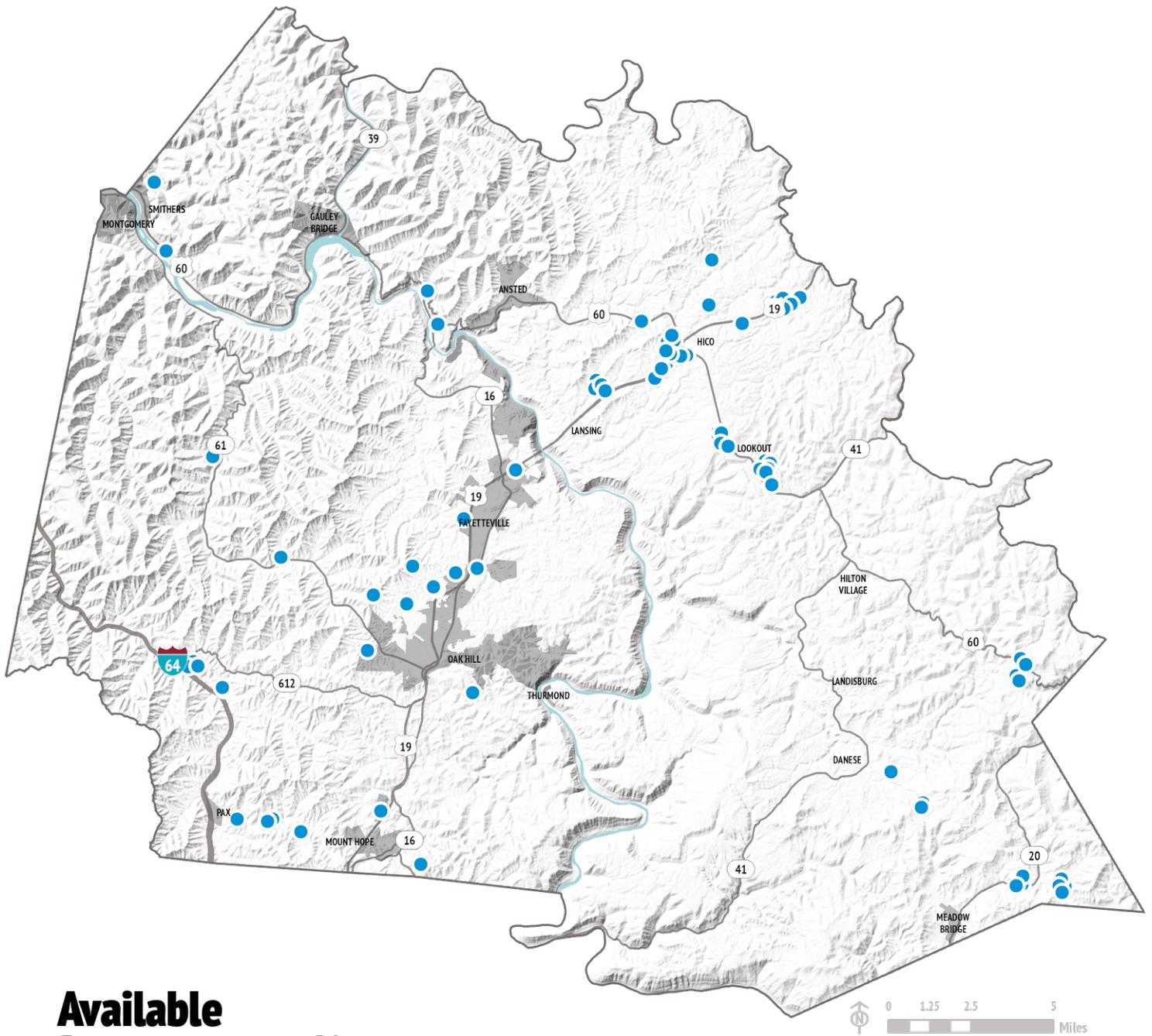
It should be noted that the *West Virginia Forward Strategy for Economic Development and Job Growth* was conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve designation. Other industries, such as recreation equipment manufacturing and textile manufacturing, may also be a focus for industry retention and attraction in Fayette County.

Currently, BSA has one of the most easily accessible, large tracts of property along Rt. 19 that would be prime for outdoor manufacturing businesses, recreation infrastructure, and would create a lucrative scenario for both BSA and Fayette county if prioritized for development. Both NRGRDA and Fayette County are eager to participate in a collaborative working group with BSA to bring the mutually beneficial structure to fruition.

Recommendations

Fayette County should work to market and promote the County to new industries. To accomplish this the County should:

1. Work with the economic development partners (Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, CRAN, and Region 4 Planning and Development Council) to host and promote a regular collaborative meeting for leading businesses in growing regional sectors.
2. Work with the economic development partners to identify and develop strategies to further expand growing industries.
3. Work with economic development partners such as the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority to create a job growth study for Fayette County.
4. Market and promote areas with enough land to support large companies that require a significant development footprint, as identified on the *Available Development Sites Map*, as locations for new industry. It should be that a number of these sites would require infrastructure improvements prior to development.
5. Advertise recent state efforts to create a more business-friendly environment such as tax reform that improves the cost of doing business in the state of West Virginia.
6. Create and maintain a public, web-based dashboard of County metrics for County residents, businesses, and potential investors, with relevant factors such as population, age, education level, and employment. Presenting this information in an accessible and easy-to-understand way will provide industries with the data that they need to consider Fayette County as a place to invest and keep residents and decision-makers mindful of where improvements are needed.
7. Partner with neighboring counties to achieve regional economic development objectives whenever possible. This may include hosting regular meetings to discuss economic goals that will benefit the region and coordinating strategies to achieve these goals.



Available Development Sites

This map highlights parcels available for commercial or employment center development, as identified by the Future Land Use Plan as well as the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority. It should be that a number of these sites would require infrastructure improvements prior to development.

- Available Development Site

Source: New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, chooseNRG.com

“ We have relied heavily on coal in our area, and we have seen the decline of that industry. People are driving over an hour or more to work jobs with good pay and others are working dead end jobs with low pay.”

Develop the Fayette County Workforce

Skilled labor refers to highly trained, educated, or experienced segments of the workforce that can complete more complex mental or physical tasks on the job. A skilled worker is any worker who has special skill, training, knowledge which they can then apply to their work. A skilled worker may have attended a college, university, or technical school, or alternatively, may have learned their skills on the job or through an apprentice program.

Skilled labor jobs in sectors such as warehousing and manufacturing are an important part of Fayette County's economy. About one-quarter of employed Fayette County residents work in a skilled labor industry. Additionally, according to the West Virginia Department of Economic Development, skilled labor industries such as **construction, manufacturing, transportation, and warehousing generate about \$280 million in sales in the County per year.** The County should invest in these industries and provide the foundation to support them. Efforts to promote professional trade jobs and other skilled labor positions could help attract students and generate interest in local industries and manufacturing careers.

The New River Gorge Area Economic Outlook

The *New River Gorge Area Economic Outlook 2023-2027* report, conducted by West Virginia University John Chambers College of Business and Economics, provides values insight into the current state of the region's economy and expectations for its economic future. This report touches on the region's deficit in workforce participation, noting the population's age, educational attainment, and effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as possible factors. However, the report forecasts the labor market's recovery to be the strongest during the first half of the outlook period. It noted that most of this growth will be driven by the region's service sectors, which will continue to see conditions normalize as more people enter the workforce post COVID-19 pandemic.

Post-Secondary Education and Economic Growth

As the economy continues to evolve and technology advances, it is likely that there will be a greater need for post-high school education. At present, **27% of Fayette County residents have an associate degree or higher,** compared to 28% of residents in the State of West Virginia and 41% of all residents in the United States.

Traditional two-year associates degree programs and four-year bachelor's degree programs are also key resources in growing a skilled labor force over time. Encouraging post-secondary education can provide avenues for higher wages and can lead to the creation of new businesses and more skilled workers in a local economy. Statistically, **those who earn a bachelor's degree earn over 65% more than those with only a high school education.**

Community and Technical Colleges

To be competitive, the County will have to increase its workforce population with advanced education, specifically in trade industries, as manufacturing continues to grow. Institutions such as the local Fayette Institute of Technology (FIT) provide education that allows students to acquire advanced career and technical training through high school and beyond. Programs include automotive technology, carpentry, computer technology, electrical technology, forestry, HVAC, tourism industries, and welding. FIT also offers pre-engineering and pre-pharmacy programs to prepare students for a two- to four-year college plan.

Bridge Valley Community and Technical College operates a small campus in Montgomery that provides dental hygiene classes and limited technical programming. The main campus in South Charleston and offers academic programs in welding, computers and information technology, engineering and manufacturing technology, and nursing, among other subjects.

Meanwhile, New River Community and Technical College in Beckley is one of the nearest post-secondary education institutions. It offers a variety of two-year programs including associates degrees in business, computer science, aviation maintenance, cyber security, industrial technology, and other professions.

West Virginia community colleges offer free tuition for state residents, which makes these programs an increasingly key economic development resource. Additionally, West Virginia University has a 2-2-4 that allows individuals that attend a West Virginia Community Technical College to transfer to a University like West Virginia University with a preferred acceptance process and a guarantee that the Community Technical College credits will transfer allowing you to gain a four-year degree for less.

West Virginia University, WVU Extension, and State Programs

West Virginia Institute of Technology, a divisional campus of West Virginia University, has a campus in Beckley, offering programs in professions including accounting, business management, sciences, and nursing, and often at a lower cost than other West Virginia universities. West Virginia University Extension also provides information on college scholarships and financial aid, college cost estimation, and a career readiness program that helps students have the skills necessary to enter the workforce. It also has a partnership with the West Virginia Treasurer's Office that helps families save for College with 529 Plans, which are state-sponsored plans that enables users to save money for a beneficiary.

The JumpStart Savings Program administered by the State provides tradespeople, entrepreneurs, and blue-collared workers a way to set aside money on the tools, supplies, and other expenses needed to pursue education in skilled trades and vocations.

Recommendations

Continued development of Fayette County's workforce is essential to growing the County's economy. The County should:

1. Partner with local schools to host a "career day" to connect students with local trade professionals from various industries to showcase career opportunities.
2. Create and promote a countywide job shadowing program that allows local students to explore different trade careers.
3. Support employment and job training programs in the hospitality and tourism sector.
4. Support existing post-secondary and trade school programs within Fayette County and in neighboring communities and work with these higher education institutions to maintain and increase program offerings.
5. Coordinate with local schools, businesses, and trade associations to develop a program to train students in skilled labor professions.
6. Establish an apprenticeship program to directly connect students to local companies and familiarize them with trades.
7. Develop a program that promotes, distributes, and provides information about materials, products, and goods that are manufactured within the County.
8. Work with organizations and institutions, such as the Fayette Institute of Technology, to expand existing workforce training opportunities and programs.
9. Work with West Virginia University Extension and other community development organizations to host focus groups with young professionals to understand their needs and ways to encourage them to remain in Fayette County.
10. Work in tandem with employers, groups of employers, and cross-sector partnerships with schools, community organizations, and other entities to promote a sustainable economy through hospitality training and workforce development.
11. Work with West Virginia University Extension to raise awareness of its programs that promote access to college education including information on scholarships and financial aid, cost estimation and reduction.
12. Facilitate communication between local schools and the West Virginia University Extension to implement the career readiness program with local students.

Section 3

Support Small Businesses

A supportive environment for Fayette County's small business community should help ensure thriving local economies, attract new entrepreneurs and companies, and foster a welcoming atmosphere for small businesses to prosper.

While large employers are desirable, a comprehensive approach to economic development will help further diversify the employment base. Such an approach should include implementing policies that nurture and cultivate small and mid-size businesses. The County should actively support efforts for existing small and mid-size businesses and new business startups through partnerships with local chambers of commerce and other economic development organizations. Many critical players, such as municipalities, government agencies, colleges and universities, potential investors, and experienced business owners have successful programs in place within their organizations. The first challenge is getting these organizations and individuals together to network and strategically plan for a local business climate that encourages and supports new ventures in unincorporated County communities.

The County should actively support the efforts of existing small and mid-size businesses and new business startups through partnerships with the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, WV Hive, and other organizations. These critical players should coordinate efforts and ensure that successful programs continue to be utilized. WV Hive, which services all of Fayette County, has opportunities for small business and entrepreneurs at all stages, including one-on-one business advising, cohort-based educational opportunities, and technical assistance. The Fayette County Chamber of Commerce's purpose is to generate more business activity for the community by initiating business-to-business commerce and opportunities for networking and connecting local professionals. Fayette County should continue to support local organizations engaged in growing the county's small business climate.



I think local businesses and their charm attract a lot of people here. We need more of them. We need retail but in a controlled way that does not kill the local business.

Recommendations

To help create a supportive environment for Fayette County's small business community the County should:

1. Develop a strategic plan that supports active collaboration with critical players such as the County's municipalities, government agencies, colleges and universities, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, and investors that encourages and supports local businesses.
2. Support the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority in the creation of an online database for resources to guide entrepreneurs in all stages of starting and growing a business in the County and promote these resources to new businesses.
3. Connect small businesses and local entrepreneurs to resources offered through WV Hive, including one-on-one business advising and training opportunities. Refer small businesses needing support to the WV Hive at 304-460-4483 or information@wvhive.com. More information about the Hive can be found at www.wvhive.com.
4. Support and leverage existing youth entrepreneurship programs, such as Leadership Fayette County, that exist at the state and local level.
5. Coordinate with local colleges and universities to offer a comprehensive range of classes and coursework related to entrepreneurship, business management, and starting a business.
6. Direct small businesses to loan programs such as NRGRDA's Revolving Loan Fund.
7. Explore the possibility of utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to establish a county-wide Small Business Grant Program, similar to the ALLKAN small business grant program of Kanawha County.



I would love to see more small/locally-owned business spaces developed to attract people to come and walk around. Instead of a strip mall, create a space with trails, a fountain, a place where families can come and wander around pleasantly.

Section 4

Appeal to Remote Workers

According to a national research panel, **62% of Americans worked from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.** Of those, **60% of them would prefer to continue to do so.** Appealing to remote workers can stimulate Fayette's economy by attracting a new workforce. Like any resident, remote workers spend money on housing, food, entertainment, and other local goods and services, and they pay personal income tax. The County would also benefit from property and sales tax from individuals moving to the county to work remotely. As the County's tax base grows, an individual's share of the tax burden shrinks. And with a more robust local economy and increased revenue from taxes, the County and its municipalities will have greater resource availability and more opportunities for public services and infrastructure improvements.

Remote work offers an opportunity to live in a greater variety of places within the county, including in more affordable areas and areas near major attractions or desirable natural areas. Fayette County has exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities, making it an appealing location for many. However, a challenge is providing the infrastructure and services necessary to accommodate working remotely. The County will need to improve necessary infrastructure, such as access to broadband and access to cell phone service, to make remote working a more viable and realistic option.

CASE STUDY

Remote Tucson

Tucson, AZ

Tucson, Arizona is aiming to attract remote workers who make more than \$65,000 a year through their Remote Tucson program. The program is a strategy to increase growth through a new community of remote workers. Eligible candidates will receive money for relocation costs and other benefits such as free internet.

<https://www.startuptucson.com/remotetucson>

Recommendations

There are several ways the County can market its desirable amenities and attract remote workers. The County should:

1. Prioritize the expansion, reliability, and availability of broadband and cell phone service throughout the county.
2. Continue to connect with existing programs such as Ascend West Virginia to explore the potential for expansion into Fayette County communities.
3. Continue to explore home-based, internet-related employment opportunities as a means of economic development with the goal of both recruiting companies that offer remote employment opportunities and encouraging those who work remotely to locate in Fayette County.
4. Offer financial incentives to attract qualified remote workers to purchase homes or rent in Fayette County for a designated period.
5. Identify locations such as available County-owned buildings and lots that are suitable for coworking spaces and solicit public-private partnerships to develop such spaces.
6. Work with Ascend WV to determine why Fayette County is not ready to support a remote worker community and how the County can resolve the issues that are identified.
7. Continue to prioritize improvements necessary to promote remote working in the County.
8. Implement the recommendations of *Chapter 13: Community Design*, such as gateways, wayfinding, improving arts and culture, and community beautification to ensure Fayette County is attractive and hospitable to newcomers.



If Fayette County wants to become a player in the remote worker world, upgrading broadband is an absolute MUST.

Section 5

Balance Development with Protecting Natural Features

Beautiful open space and an abundance of natural areas and features, such as the New River and the rolling mountains and wooded areas, contribute significantly to the overall character of Fayette County. These natural areas and features have a variety of benefits such as offering passive and active outdoor recreational opportunities, providing vital wildlife habitat, education and stewardship opportunities, cultural and historic resources, and generally support several aspects of a thriving tourism industry. Focusing development into concentrated areas helps to preserve open space and natural features and limit unnecessary and premature outward expansion while fostering active and vibrant communities.

County residents are generally in agreement with two key concepts regarding the future of the County:

1. The desire to protect natural resources.
2. The desire to see additional growth and development along major roadways.

Thus, a balance between these two priorities is needed. Sensible development along key corridors could bring businesses to Fayette County, without visually impacting the County's most scenic views. Throughout the outreach process, the County identified the scenic views along the Route 19 corridor as an area of importance that should be protected from encroaching development and billboard advertisements. While it is essential to balance new development with the conservation and enhancement of natural areas and features, specific attention should be paid to the Route 19 corridor in order to protect the cherished scenic views. In June of 2021 the Route 19 Corridor Management Plan and Overlay District were removed from the 2011 Comprehensive Plan. The County should consider developing a detailed Route 19 Corridor Plan to identify appropriate areas for development and preservation. The Route 19 Corridor Plan could include design guidelines to clearly describe the recommended use, scale, and location intended for future development.



It is imperative that new construction takes into consideration preserving Fayette County's natural resources. Development must enhance the beauty of the area and not destroy it.



Recommendations

To prioritize the protection of the County's treasured natural features while allowing for growth and investment the County should:

1. Identify specific areas of importance that should be preserved.
2. Consider establishing architecture and development design regulations that protect valued viewsheds, especially along Route 19, while providing some flexibility to developers.
3. Use the land use plan to guide development along Route 19 in a manner that balances preservation with growth.
4. Support development that protects the New River Gorge and its viewsheds, which serve as the cornerstone of the county's growing and sustainable tourism industry.
5. Establish a clear direction for increasing density in the County through adjustments to zoning regulations and land use planning.
6. Prohibit billboard signage that would impair scenic views.
7. Prioritize infill development to utilize vacant properties and existing infrastructure to decrease costs and sprawl.
8. Create a model zoning ordinance for open space preservation that can be implemented in the County and each of its municipalities.
9. Encourage adjacency and concurrency requirements to ensure all future development is within the bounds of existing infrastructure.
10. Consider developing a detailed Route 19 Corridor Plan to identify appropriate areas for development and preservation. The Route 19 Corridor Plan could include design guidelines to clearly describe the recommended use, scale, and location intended for future development.

CASE STUDY

Protecting Viewsheds

Monterey County, CA

Monterey County, CA is home to the Big Sur region of southern California. It has some of the most impressive coastal views in the country. Many developers want to develop the land along Monterey County's coast to use the view as an asset to their properties. However, the County has made preserving this coastline a development priority and has implemented a Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) system. Because land under these new regulations is no longer buildable, developers instead receive a development credit that allows them to transfer their development to a predetermined site within the region. The new site has adjusted zoning restrictions, providing the opportunity for larger developments with higher densities within the same region. This practice allows the county to preserve its natural resources and amenities, while developers receive adjusted zoning and faster processing for their projects. This practice protects the natural resources of the region from intrusive developments while continuing to encourage the development of residential properties.

Economic Development Framework

The Economic Development Framework identifies policies and recommendations for strategically increasing commercial development, improving consumer access, enhancing job opportunities and access, and expanding commercial uses in the County's unincorporated communities.

Identifying Economic Development Priority Areas

Sites that are best suited for commercial or employment uses are identified as part of the suitability analysis discussed in *Chapter 04: Land Use and Development (pg 40)*. Commercial uses generally include retail and service businesses as well as small-scale office uses. Employment uses include light industrial, heavy industrial, and large-scale offices or business parks.

Suitability Factors

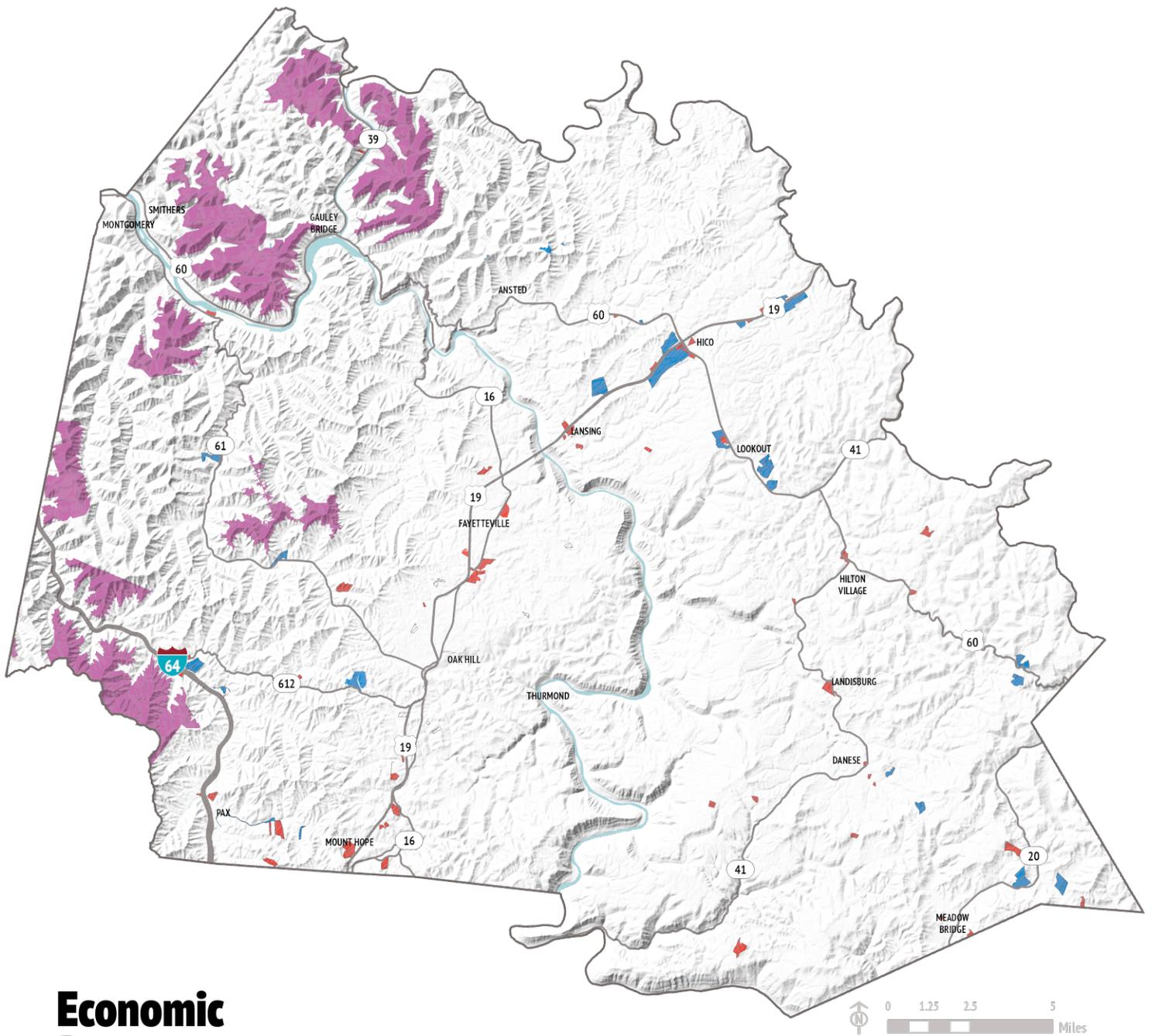
The following factors were used to determine commercial and employment center site suitability.

- **Steep Slopes:** Employment centers require large amounts of flat land. Areas with a slope greater than 13:1 are considered not suitable. Areas with a slope less than 23:1 are preferred for commercial areas.
- **Floodplains:** Areas within floodplains are less favorable for development.
- **Tree Canopy:** Areas with 75% of tree cover or more are not favorable for development due to clear-cutting costs and a desire to preserve mature stands of trees.
- **Preserved Land:** Land within preserved areas such as state parks, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and wildlife management areas was not considered for development.
- **Existing Land Use:** Land that is currently used for industrial purposes or is undeveloped is considered more suitable for employment center developments. Land that is currently used for commercial, agriculture, or is undeveloped is considered more suitable for commercial development.
- **Adjacency to Incorporated Areas:** Areas adjacent to municipalities are considered more suitable for commercial development.
- **Infrastructure:** Areas with access to water and sewer infrastructure are considered more suitable for development.
- **Transportation Network:** Areas with access to highways and major roadways are considered more suitable for employment development.

Recommendations

To guide high-quality commercial and employment center areas, the County should:

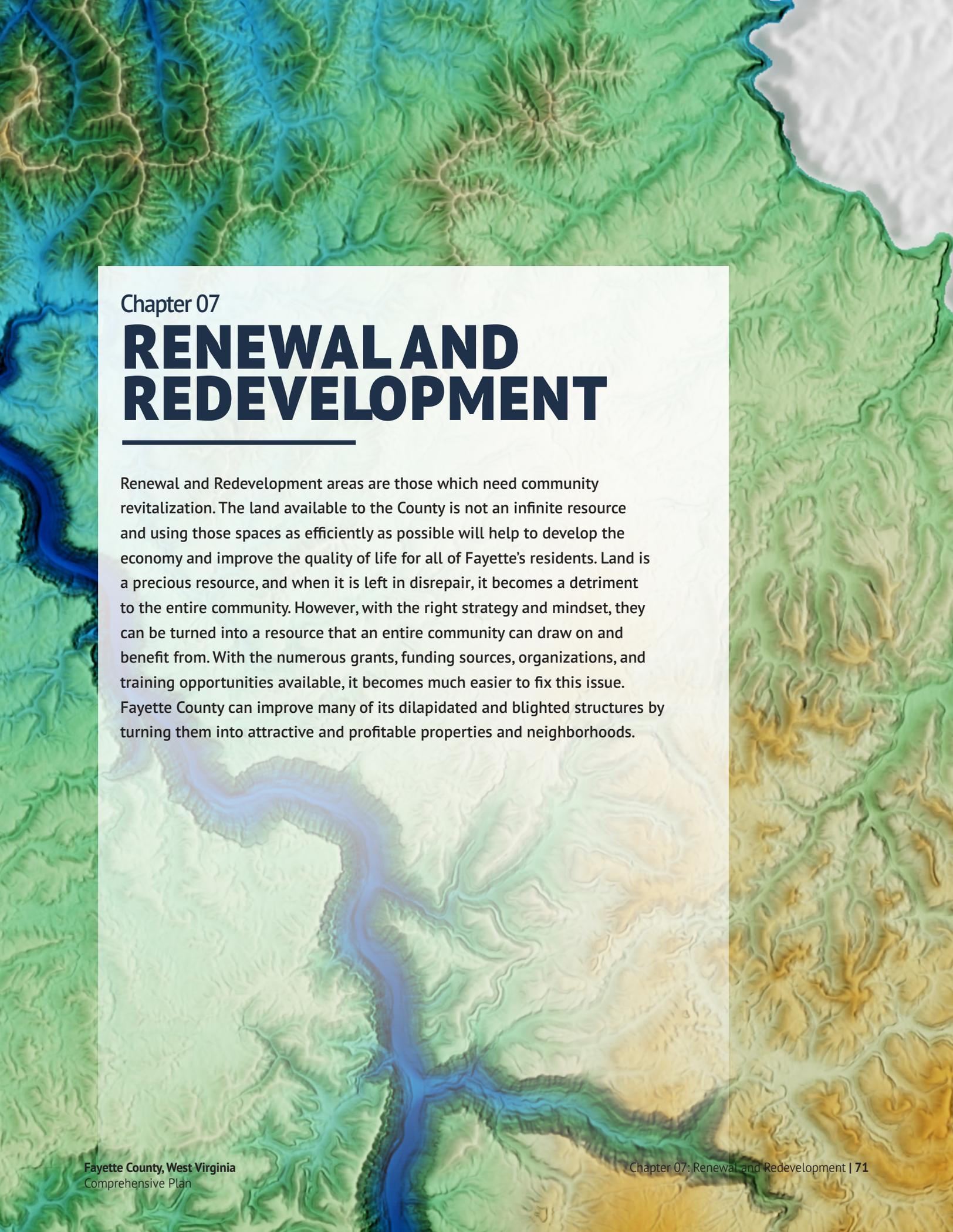
1. Require new development to adhere to conservation design principles whenever possible to better ensure that new development is respectful of and responsive to the natural environment and unique features of the area.
2. Ensure that visual screening or landscaped buffers mitigate potential negative visual impacts when located near residential areas.
3. Ensure that buildings, structures, and amenities are located to minimize the loss of scenic views when viewed from off-site.
4. Require that access to trail systems be provided whenever possible.
5. Require that cross access between adjacent commercial and employment center parking lots is provided.
6. Protect the County's residential neighborhood character from commercial and employment center uses and activities with appropriate site design, buffering, and screening.
7. Promote commercial and employment development east of the New River to better distribute these types of uses throughout the County.
8. Reserve highly visible and accessible properties for commercial uses.
9. Encourage entertainment businesses to foster more engaging activity and attract new residents and visitors.
10. Support the development of retail, dining, and lodging uses.
11. Ensure that commercial areas are connected to adjacent residential areas through sidewalks, trails, or paths to allow nearby residents to access goods and services without the need for a vehicle.
12. Ensure that employment center activities are organized by uses and concentrated within, or near, areas of similar or compatible uses.
13. Initiate programs to encourage the improvement and rehabilitation of older office buildings and areas that are becoming functionally obsolete including improvements to facades, signage, and parking areas.
14. Allow the flexible siting of buildings and structures, and amenities such as parking and loading bays that best use the site's existing topography if significant grade changes exist.



Economic Development Framework

The Economic Development Framework map highlights land use categories in which commercial, industrial, and office uses are appropriate. The map also calls out areas that are appropriate for new commercial and employment centers.

- New Commercial and Employment Center Areas
- Commercial Node
- Mining Operations
- Employment Center

A topographic map of Fayette County, West Virginia, showing a river valley and surrounding terrain. The map uses a color gradient from green (low elevation) to brown and tan (high elevation). A prominent river flows through the center of the county, with several tributaries. The terrain is rugged and mountainous.

Chapter 07

RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT

Renewal and Redevelopment areas are those which need community revitalization. The land available to the County is not an infinite resource and using those spaces as efficiently as possible will help to develop the economy and improve the quality of life for all of Fayette's residents. Land is a precious resource, and when it is left in disrepair, it becomes a detriment to the entire community. However, with the right strategy and mindset, they can be turned into a resource that an entire community can draw on and benefit from. With the numerous grants, funding sources, organizations, and training opportunities available, it becomes much easier to fix this issue. Fayette County can improve many of its dilapidated and blighted structures by turning them into attractive and profitable properties and neighborhoods.

Section 1

Eliminate Vacant and Blighted Land and Structures

Blighted buildings are a safety risk. They decrease property values and diminish the aesthetic of a community. Lower property values correlate to smaller tax bases and less funding to provide and maintain necessary services. Stabilizing, rehabilitating, or strategically demolishing blighted properties can restore and enhance neighborhoods across the County. Municipalities across the United States are employing innovative methods to remediate blight such as housing land banks, a mechanism which allows municipalities to be appointed as the responsible caretaker of deteriorated properties. Designated redevelopment areas are another tool that allows municipalities to initiate and support private investment and redevelopment of aging and obsolete properties, thus returning them to an active, revenue-generating space.

The issue of vacant and blighted structures is especially relevant in Fayette County, where **nearly one in every sixteen housing units is currently vacant**. These blighted homes and neighborhoods create economic stress by lowering property values and making neighborhoods less desirable. Yet they also provide an opportunity for investment and there are many ways in which the County can turn them into livable and attractive housing and neighborhoods.

CASE STUDY

Utilizing Land Banks to Eliminate Problem Properties

Logan County, WV

Tourism from all over visit Logan County for the Hatfield and McCoy Trails. In an effort “put their best face forward”, the County utilized a land bank to help clean up the vacant and blighted properties. The Logan County Economic Development Director is quoted saying “We want to be cleaner; we want to be neater; we want to be good caretakers of the area we are living in. It will create, essentially, more investment.” About half of the County’s blighted properties have been cleared by the land bank.

<https://www.wsaz.com/2021/08/13/land-bank-looks-revitalize-community/>

Recommendations

Blight is a proven problem for communities, and Fayette County should take the necessary steps to address it and improve the upkeep and desirability of the whole community. Leveraging existing funding and information resources will help the County work toward fixing blighted neighborhoods and properties. The County can begin to fight this issue using these strategies:

1. Continue to create and maintain a comprehensive database of the County's vacant and blighted buildings and land that is accessible to the public.
2. Gather all available data about individual vacant and blighted properties and ensure that the data is updated regularly.
3. Participate in funding programs that assist the community in combatting blight, such as the West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative, and aid those who wish to apply to these programs using financial incentives or other forms of assistance.
4. Conduct surveys of County properties and areas which are affected by blight, and promote resources which assist municipalities in assessing blight in their communities, such as the BAD buildings initiative.
5. Coordinate with local developers and contractors to repair and upgrade older homes in the community to improve the quality of the housing stock.
6. Work with Fayette County municipalities on a joint effort to eliminate and repair vacant or blighted properties.
7. Explore tax incentives and low interest loans to help rehabilitate blighted properties.
8. Establish and fund a land bank for Fayette County through the Urban Renewal Authority and a Land Reuse Agency.
9. Develop and adopt a countywide redevelopment plan to determine how to address vacant and blighted properties throughout Fayette County.

CASE STUDY

Leveraging Funding Sources to Remove Blighted Properties

Kanawha County, WV

In 2017, the Kanawha County Commission approved \$1 million to be spent demolishing 114 dilapidated homes throughout the County. Demolished homes were vacant, damaged, and met the requirements of the County's public nuisance ordinance. The County utilized funds from its building permit fees along with an interest free loan from the West Virginia Housing and Development Fund.

*The **West Virginia Housing and Development Fund's Property Rescue Initiative** is a loan program available to counties and municipalities that aims to aid removal of vacant and blighted structures.*

In 2021, the Commission approved another \$1 million in spending to remove more than 100 dilapidated structures. With this more recent effort, the County used \$500,000 in reallocated coal severance funds along with along with another loan from the West Virginia Housing and Development Fund. Kanawha County plans to repay the loan with monies generated from the purchase of building permits.

Section 2

Promote Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive reuse repairs existing blighted structures and changes their use to something the community needs or wants. Vacant and blighted structures are not limited to housing units. Old industrial and commercial buildings are significant contributors to urban blight. However, these structures provide opportunity and lower-cost options than demolishing every vacant unit and building something new. Adaptive reuse also saves interesting places and improves uniqueness and desirability.

Adaptive reuse has seen some success in West Virginia, including in Fayette County. Fayette County's Urban Renewal Authority, founded in 2006, is focused on finding opportunities for adaptive reuse and facilitating their development and occupancy. One significant project is the New Roots Community Farm. The original farm was purchased by the County, and turned into a new community space, working farm, food distribution site, and educational space. This project took a one-dimensional space and adapted its uses and structures to serve a much larger community.

“ We have abandoned schools due to consolidation and the empty schools should be repurposed for community centers and activities.

“ Abandoned buildings should be transformed into affordable housing.

Recommendations

Removing and demolishing unused or blighted buildings can be an expensive task. Employing adaptive reuse can help combat the impacts of blight while maintaining unique structures that provide character and history, and can be successful with the following strategies:

1. Register older buildings with the National Register of Historic Places to receive qualification for tax incentives and financial benefits that can assist in the reuse of the property. See *Chapter 14 Historic Preservation* for more information on preserving historically significant buildings and structures.
2. Support the Urban Renewal Authority in the development and implementation of the proposed Redevelopment/Reinvestment Plan. This plan should include a component specifically on brownfield redevelopment opportunities and detailed housing standards.
3. Provide resources to communities looking to redevelop existing buildings and neighborhoods. The County can create a database of programs, courses, grants, and other resources which will make redevelopment more accessible.
4. Identify historically significant buildings and underused buildings for possible redevelopment.
5. Use funding sources and tax incentives to repair and renovate the Soldiers and Sailors Building in Fayetteville, to create a community recreation center for the County. See *Chapter 12: Recreation* for more information on the County's need for community centers.

Section 3

Encourage Land Reclamation

West Virginia's primary export and largest economic sector is mineral resources, specifically coal. In 2019, **West Virginia produced more than 93 million tons of coal**, which represents a **50% decline from peak coal production in 1997**. The declining availability of coal and the mechanization of labor has left West Virginia with many abandoned resources related to mining. These leftovers can cause serious environmental issues, from water pollution to noxious gases, also known as non-point source pollution. This type of pollution is caused when many sources contribute to the pollution of a resource. The combination of runoff and solid waste from multiple mines creates a threat to the long-term health of many West Virginians who rely on these polluted resources.

CASE STUDY

Reclaiming Abandoned Mines

Mammoth Preserve, Fayette and Kanawha County, WV

*The Mammoth Preserve is a 5,000-acre former surface mine site on the border of Fayette and Kanawha County that is in the process of reclamation. The site is owned and managed by the **West Virginia Land Trust** will offer recreational opportunities such as hiking and mountain biking. The project also includes restoration of the land's forest and streams.*

Kempton Refuse, Tucker County, WV

*The Kempton Refuse project in Tucker County was made possible through the **WVDEP Office of Abandoned Mines Lands and Reclamation**. Proximity to state and national recreational and historic areas, as well as a continental watershed divide, made this project a prime candidate for reclamation. Hazards were removed, and extra attention was given to reclaiming the landscape and restoring the streams. The reclamation removed the many environmental and health hazards, such as removing highwall to prevent falling injuries, reducing the acidity of the streams and river that runs through the area to support more biodiversity and increase fishing opportunity, and reforested the area to encourage the repopulation of native species.*

The state is aware of this issue and has taken steps to combat the many elements that cause pollution. In Fayette County, the Comprehensive Public Nuisance Abatement Ordinance codified many environmental protection laws that the County can now enforce. This gives the commission the power to serve various orders to people and organizations to address environmental hazards they are responsible for. With the prevalence of abandoned mines and acidic rivers throughout the County and state, this legislation paves a path for the commission to make lasting changes for the people it serves.

Ensuring the usefulness of these lands is important to improving the overall quality of life in Fayette County. By removing pollutants and making these areas safer, this reclaimed land can benefit communities by becoming farms, parks, attractions, or any number of uses that add value. The history of the Fayette does not have to disappear, rather it can be changed and reclaimed into something that produces economic and social value.

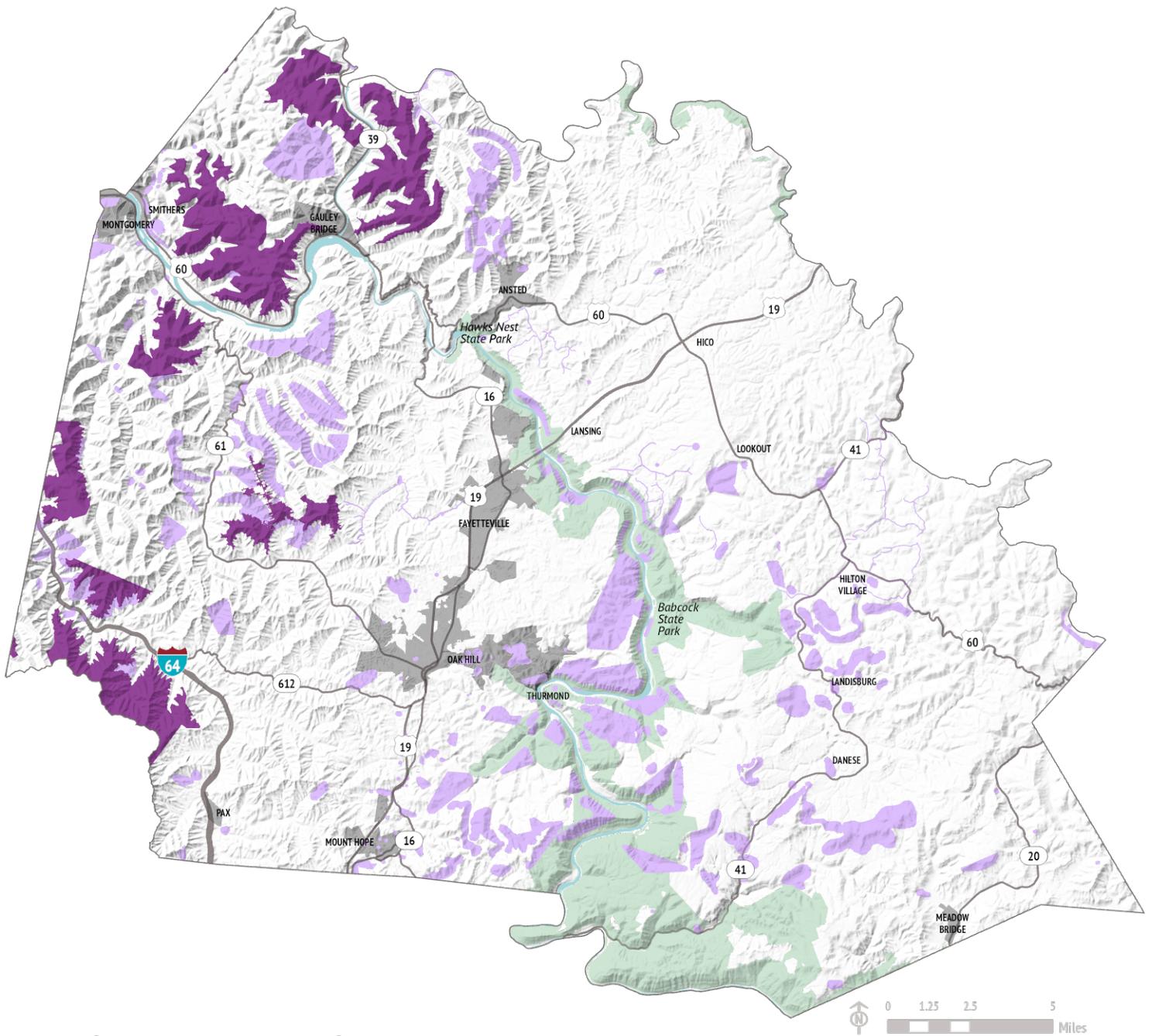


In 2019, West Virginia produced more than **93 million tons of coal**

which represents a

50% decline

from peak coal production in 1997.



Mineral Extraction

Underground mining limits represent the area within which mining is taking place, not the area which has already been mined. Abandoned mining lands provide an opportunity for land reclamation.

- Underground Mining Limits
- Abandoned Mine Land

Source: West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, Underground Mining Limits Updated 2017, Abandoned Mine Land Update 2022

CASE STUDY

Reclaiming Abandoned Mines

Tucker County, WV

The Kempton Refuse project in Tucker County was made possible through the WVDEP Office of Abandoned Mines Lands and Reclamation. Proximity to state and national recreational and historic areas, as well as a continental watershed divide, made this project a prime candidate for addressing health, safety, and environmental reclamation. The project aimed to address health, safety, and environmental reclamation. Hazards were removed, and extra attention was given to reclaiming the landscape and restoring the streams. While the area was used by a large hunting and fishing group before the changes, the reclamation removed the many environmental and health hazards, such as removing highwall to prevent falling injuries, reducing the acidity of the streams and river that runs through the area to support more biodiversity and increase fishing opportunity, and reforested the area to encourage the repopulation of native species.

Recommendations

The safety and well-being of Fayette County's citizens is a priority for the county, and eliminating harmful substances from the environment will keep people safe. Due to the many forms of non-point source pollution from the mining industry, the County can employ the following strategies to ensure the health of its residents:

1. Use funding from the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization program, the Brownfields Assistant Center, and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to address non-point source pollution and keep its residents safe.
2. Use funding sources to reclaim brownfields, waterways, and abandoned mines to turn them into developable and/or preserved, usable natural areas .
3. Employ Tourism Development Act funding to encourage public-serving entertainment and recreation businesses on reclaimed mine land or near the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve and in other priority areas across the County.
4. Proactively enforce the Comprehensive Public Nuisance Abatement Ordinance and other limits environmental protection laws.
5. Create and maintain a list of prioritized land reclamation areas, with weighted criteria such as proximity to residential areas, proximity to natural resources, and proximity to recreation areas.
6. Prepare an operation and maintenance plan that provides specific details concerning conservation practices following reclamation, such as soil testing, drainage maintenance, and vehicular traffic control to minimize land disturbance.
7. Use reclaimed mine land for repairing wildlife habitat, reintroducing native plant species, and/or planting orchards, gardens, and nurseries to provide for their associated communities.

A topographic map of a region, likely Fayette County, West Virginia, showing a network of roads and a prominent blue river winding through the landscape. The terrain is color-coded by elevation, with greens for lower elevations and yellows/browns for higher elevations. The map is partially obscured by a white text box.

Chapter 08

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation infrastructure allows Fayette County residents to travel to work or school, move freight, and access goods and services, and it provides scenic routes for visitors. The County's transportation network includes US Route 19, Interstate 64, and Interstate 77 as well as state and local roadways. The County's economy benefits from a network of freight rail lines and an Amtrak passenger line. Additionally, Fayette County boasts a growing network of trails and an increased emphasis on bike infrastructure for recreation and transportation. This section assesses the County's transportation system and establishes recommendations for its improvement.

Section 1

Repair, Update, and Maintain Roadways

In 2021, an **estimated 91% of Fayette County residents that commuted to work used an automobile alone or in a carpool for travel**, which is a higher percentage than in the United States as a whole. This shows that County residents are heavily reliant on automobile travel and highlights the need for a robust and well-maintained road network.

The quality of roads is an issue throughout Fayette County, particularly on secondary roads away from the major arterials and collectors. Further, large parts of the Valley District are inaccessible due to the poor quality of the local roads. The quality of roads affects the value of adjoining properties and contributes to lost time and greater expenses for residents and businesses through vehicle wear and tear. It also affects how land is used. Roads with high-quality pavement allow for more efficient and convenient access to properties for residents and emergency services vehicles than unpaved roads or those with low-quality pavement. Properties along high-quality roads are more suited for a variety of residential and commercial land development due to improved access.



91% of people

in Fayette County travel to work by car, truck, or van (alone or carpool)

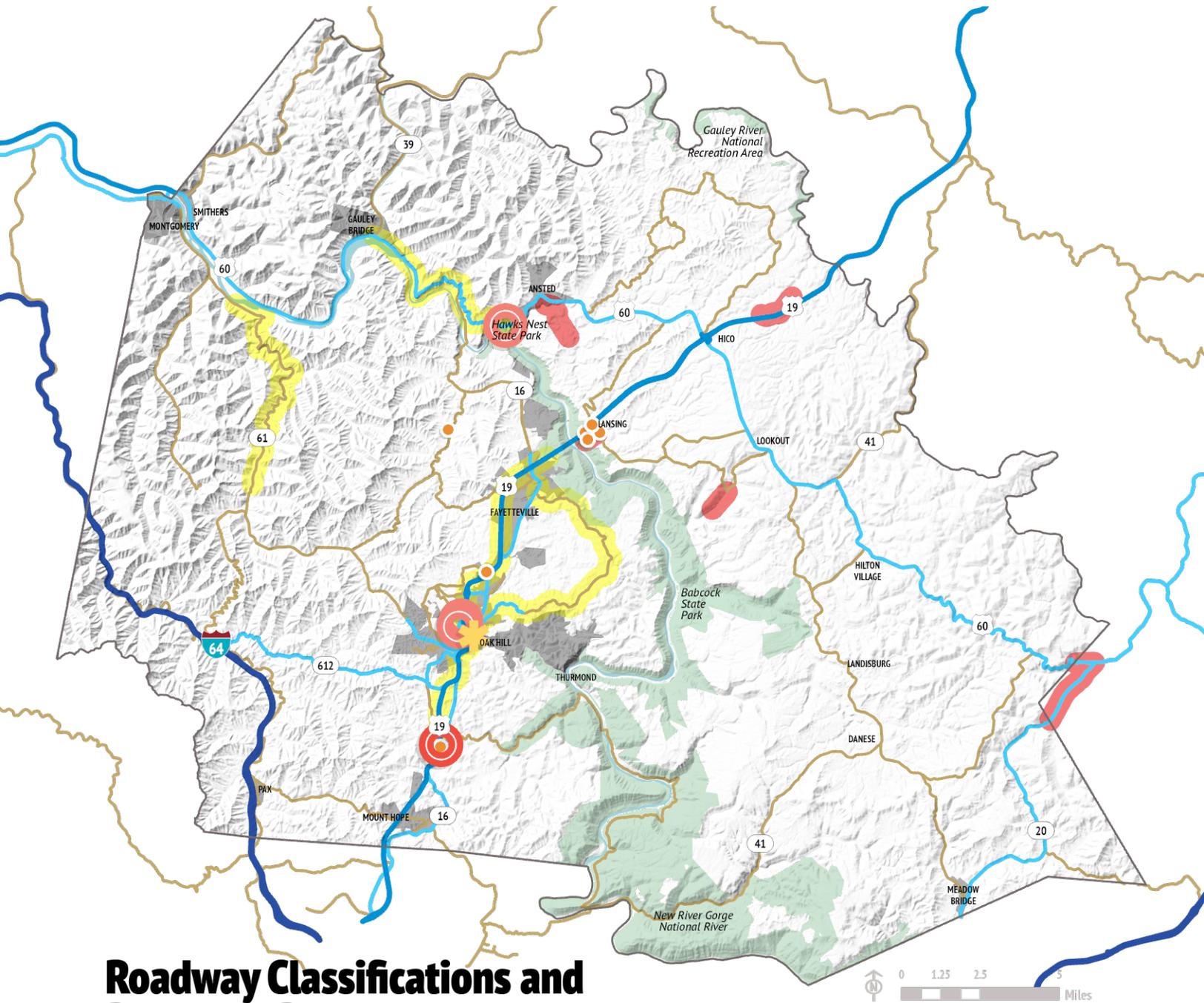
Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization (FRMPO) is a regional organization responsible for a coordinated, cooperative, and comprehensive approach to transportation planning for Fayette and Raleigh counties. The FRMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan provides a 25-year blueprint for transportation investments in the region, including streets and highways, bikeways and walkways, public transportation, rail, and aviation. The plan identifies roadway improvement projects across three different timeframes, along with their estimated costs. These projects for Fayette County are shown on the Roadway Classifications and Proposed Road Improvements Map and the Proposed Transportation Improvements Table. Route 19 in the County's center, Gatewood Road, Deepwater Mountain Road, and US Route 60 are each scheduled for safety improvements.

2045 Regional Transportation Plan Proposed Transportation Improvements

Road	From	To	Type of Improvement
Virginia St at Oylar Ave	-	-	Intersection safety improvements
Virginia St at Oak Hill Rail-Trail	-	-	Intersection safety improvements, incl. pedestrian crossing
Minden Road Underpass	-	-	Vehicle detection/warning with pullouts
US 60	Hawks Nest Lookout	New River Campground	Add shoulders and widen horseshoe turns for trucks and RVs. Add pulloffs for scenic touring and/or slow moving vehicles to allow passing.
US 60 at Hawks Nest Golf Course entrance	-	-	Intersection safety improvements
Gatewood Rd	WV 16 (E Main St, Oak Hill)	WV 16 (N. Court St, Fayetteville)	Add 4-foot shoulders, other safety improvements
WV 61	Page Bottom Rd	Baker St	Add minimum shoulders, safety-related signage and markings
US 19 Corridor Safety Improvements	WV 16 (Court St., Fayetteville)	Wood Mountain Rd (CR 19/19)	Safety improvements at US 19 intersections throughout Fayette County
US 19 / Glen Jean intersection	-	-	Upgrade to interchange

Source: Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization 2045 Regional Transportation Plan



Roadway Classifications and Proposed Road Improvements

Roadway Classifications

- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector

FRMPO Proposed Improvements

- Intersection Safety Improvement
- Interchange
- Vehicle Pullout
- Proposed Transportation Projects

County Resident Proposed Improvements

- Proposed Roadway Improvement
- Problematic Intersection

Source: Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning (FRMPO) Organization 2045 Regional Transportation Plan

At-Risk Roads

In 2016, the FRMPO engaged with local officials to study and map the roads most likely to be impacted by flooding. The study identified areas of concern throughout the County where roads are more prone to flooding in Beckley, Mount Hope, Fayetteville, Oak Hill, Pax, and the other communities. The study recommended that FRMPO take several actions to reduce roadway damage including problem identification, assessment of the current level of damage, identification of the party responsible for maintenance, and identification of repair activities and potential funding sources.

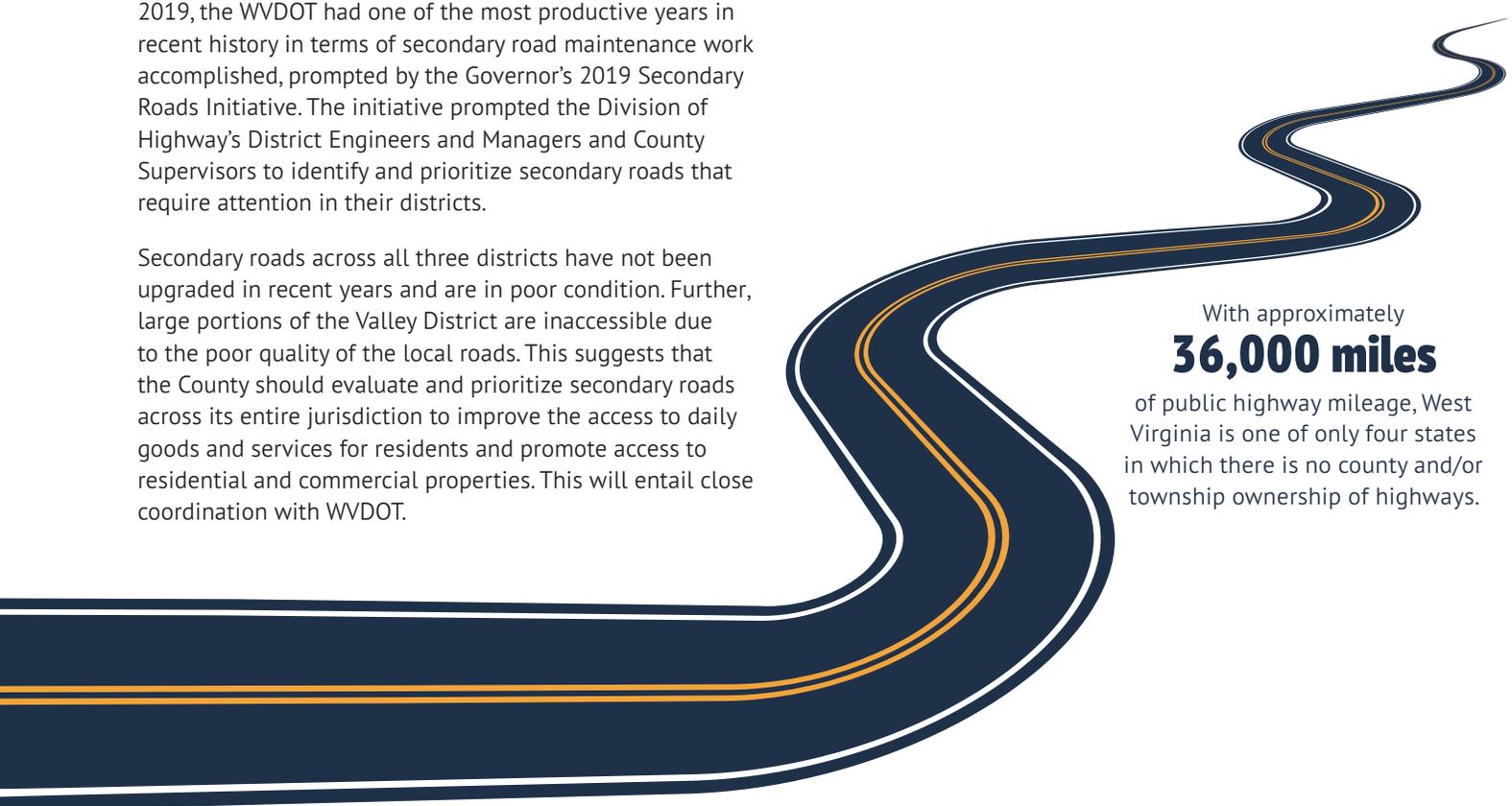
Secondary Roads

The State of West Virginia maintains a system of secondary state highways that serve local needs. Although these roads are often those that residents travel on daily, they are maintained by the State rather than the County. The quality of secondary roads poses a concern in the County. In 2019, the WVDOT had one of the most productive years in recent history in terms of secondary road maintenance work accomplished, prompted by the Governor's 2019 Secondary Roads Initiative. The initiative prompted the Division of Highway's District Engineers and Managers and County Supervisors to identify and prioritize secondary roads that require attention in their districts.

Secondary roads across all three districts have not been upgraded in recent years and are in poor condition. Further, large portions of the Valley District are inaccessible due to the poor quality of the local roads. This suggests that the County should evaluate and prioritize secondary roads across its entire jurisdiction to improve the access to daily goods and services for residents and promote access to residential and commercial properties. This will entail close coordination with WVDOT.

Orphan Roads

Orphan roads refers to roads that were built by subdivision developers but are not part of the municipal, County, or state road system, leaving property owners responsible for their maintenance. Many of West Virginia's orphan roads have deteriorated over time as homeowners associations lack the funding for their maintenance. The state legislature established a program that allows the West Virginia Division of Highways to acquire and maintain orphan roads and bridges that existed before 1998, are accessible and usable by the public, and are not maintained by any governmental agency, although the program was discontinued in 2001. A new plan to fix orphan roads was introduced in neighboring Kanawha County to help provide funding to fix road issues. The prospective program would help residents located along orphan roads to apply for grant money to help cover the costs of repairs and maintenance.



With approximately
36,000 miles

of public highway mileage, West Virginia is one of only four states in which there is no county and/or township ownership of highways.

Recommendations

The condition of roads and connections between different communities pose significant concerns within the County. County Commissions need to work together to improve roads throughout the State, particularly in areas of high tourism, such as Fayette County. The County should take the following actions to improve the roadway system and enhance vehicular travel.

1. Support the improvements planned in the Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization (FRMPO) 2045 Regional Transportation Plan as they are scheduled. Continue to monitor and understand needed improvements on roadways in the areas of concern identified by the FRMPO and identify and pursue funding sources for the repairs.
2. Prioritize the improvement of roadways in locations suitable for residential, commercial, and industrial development as identified in the *Land Use Plan* to promote adequate access to serve development. See *Chapter 04: Land Use and Development* for more information.
3. Inventory the quality of secondary roads throughout the County and work with WVDOT and FRMPO to prioritize the maintenance of secondary roads in degraded condition.
4. Consider prioritizing maintenance and repair of roads that carry higher traffic volumes as shown in the Traffic Volumes Map and those with only moderate levels of pavement degradation to prevent their deterioration to poor quality.
5. Explore the feasibility of a grant program to support the maintenance of orphan roads in Fayette County, similar to the program implemented in Kanawha County.
6. Explore a partnership with the Fayette Schools and the Board of Education to educate the public on the effects of litter and pollution and initiate/support a Safe Routes to School program.
7. Cooperate with local businesses and community organizations to raise awareness of the State's adopt-a-highway program to promote clean-up of the highways.
8. Cooperate with the Divisions of Highways and Natural Resources, New River Master Gardeners, and the West Virginia Garden Clubs to plant native vegetation and wildflowers at locations along highways that are visible to travelers.
9. Consider roadway improvements identified by stakeholders, including safety improvements and interchanges along Route 19 at intersections with cross streets and roads.
10. Support bridge rebuilding efforts by WVDOT throughout the area.
11. Identify and develop formal gateways on US Routes 19 and 60 at strategic locations in Fayette County in coordination with the New River Gorge Regional wayfinding strategy. These gateways would provide a sense of place and inform visitors of their arrival in the County. See *Chapter 13: Community Design* for more information on designing a unified gateway and wayfinding system.



The existing roadways are deteriorating with the influx of traffic from the National Park designation. It would be nice to have bike paths on the road and more sidewalks.

Section 2

Improve Traffic Flow

Based on WVDOT's latest available Average Daily Traffic Counts (ADT), shown on the Traffic Volumes Map, the highest daily traffic counts are on Interstate 64 and US Route 19, each of which have more than **20,000 vehicles daily counted at multiple locations**. Meanwhile, many local two-lane roads carry large traffic volumes **of between 1,000 and 4,999 vehicles daily**, including Gatewood Road, US Route 60, Beckwith Road, and Deepwater Mountain Road.

Traffic flow and congestion are growing issues in the County as visitorship from the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve and other local attractions grows. Traffic congestion has increased along Route 19 since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the designation of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The County should prepare for a continued increase in traffic overall, and especially on Route 19, as the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve continues to draw new visitors to the County. Ensuring that roadways are of adequate width to accommodate the anticipated traffic is a key measure to ensure the transportation system meets the needs of residents and visitors. Connections are missing between different populated areas, which inhibit convenient travel from place to place.



Traffic on 19 is getting quite bad with the increase in tourists. Roadways in Fayette County are not built to handle this kind of tourist traffic.

Recommendations

To improve roadway connection and create a safer, more efficient flow of traffic, the County should:

1. Identify locations and help fund the creation of park-and-ride lots to serve key destinations including the downtowns in Fayetteville, Mount Hope, and Oak Hill.
2. Work with the Department of Highways to widen the four-lane stretch of U.S. Route 60 from Quincy to Smithers.
3. Work with the West Virginia Department of Transportation and Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization to conduct a detailed study of traffic increase along Route 19 and identify potential improvements that are needed.
4. Study traffic flow redesign options in the Scarbro/Whipple junction of Route 612.
5. Conduct a study to identify and develop roads of appropriate scale and capacity to serve long-range traffic demands while respecting the environment. Ensure that the study considers the impacts of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.
6. Identify additional access roads for locations that are currently disconnected from the roadway network, including between Armstrong Creek and Mossey.
7. Coordinate with surrounding counties to facilitate repair and maintenance of major regional transportation routes, including project noted in the FRMPO 2045 Regional Transportation.



Traffic Volumes

The highest average daily traffic (ADT) counts through Fayette County are found on Interstate 64 and U.S. Route 19.

- Less than 500
- 500-999
- 1,000-4,999
- 5,000-9,999
- 10,000 or More

Source: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Updated 2019

Section 3

Ensure Adequate Parking

Adequate parking is essential to ensure the health of the County's economy by ensuring residents and visitors are able access sites of interest such as parks, recreation areas, and commercial areas. The County should plan for off-street parking to accommodate the influx of visitors anticipated due to the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The County should improve parking at tourist attractions, trailheads, and parks. Participants indicated that the safety and quality of parking should be improved at Nuttall Parking at the Endless Wall Trailhead along Lansing-Edmond Road, and Nuttallburg Parking which provides access to the Historic Coal Tipple. Stakeholders also expressed that more parking is needed in the downtown areas of municipalities including Oak Hill, Fayetteville, and Mount Hope.



Trails need more parking for the influx of people coming to the area.

Recommendations

The County should take the following actions to improve parking in accordance with the community's expressed priorities.

1. Update the off-street parking provisions in the Unified Development Code to reflect parking demand. Ensure that the updated regulations provide an adequate quantity of off-street parking while minimizing stormwater and environmental impacts.
2. Prioritize the repair of off-street parking areas at recreation destinations, trailheads, and parks, including Nuttall Parking at the Endless Wall Trailhead and Nuttallburg Parking.
3. Support the expansion of public transit to serve the needs of residents and visitors and thereby reduce the overall demand for commercial and recreational sites.
4. Support local efforts to identify off-street parking needs in municipalities and update their parking regulations accordingly to accommodate the anticipated demand in Oak Hill, Fayetteville, and Mount Hope.

Section 4

Create Pedestrian Connections

The County has several trails for hiking, walking, and biking through its natural and scenic areas. These include more than 56 miles of trails as part of the New River Gorge National River Trail System, which follows the river and branches to provide access to several scenic destinations. Other trail systems include the Hawks Nest State Park system and the Babcock State Park system. Existing trail types within the County include:

- **Recreational Trails:** Recreational trails are pathways that allow for cycling, walking, and other forms of nonmotorized recreation. The trails are primarily located within parks and along waterways, emphasizing the natural environment. Several of the County's recreational trails are long-distance trails that bring trail users from one part of the County to another and function as "spines" of the overall trail system. These long-distance trails accommodate multiple types of trail users including cyclists and pedestrians.
- **Rail Trails:** The County has benefited from its historic rail-centric economy by creating public paths from disused former railroad corridors. Rail trails are built on the long-established rights-of-way, making them easily accessible and a great way to enjoy the outdoors. Rail trails are ideal for walking, hiking, biking, and more. The Hawks Nest Rail Trail (1.8 miles) in the Town of Ansted, the White Oak Rail Trail (7 miles), and the Thurmond Minden Rail Trail (3.4 miles) are examples of these repurposed trails in the County.
- **Single Track and Stack Loop Trails:** Single track trails are off-road trails tailored to mountain bike riding. They can feature obstacles and technical sections for different skill levels of experience. They are approximately the width of the bike. These trails are not used for hiking or other types of trail users besides bicyclists. Stack loop trails are groups of single-track loops, allowing riders several options for extended riding routes.

The establishment of pedestrian and bicycle links between settled areas is an important measure to create recreational opportunities for residents and boost tourism by allowing pedestrians to travel between the County's settled areas, downtowns, points of interest, and parks.

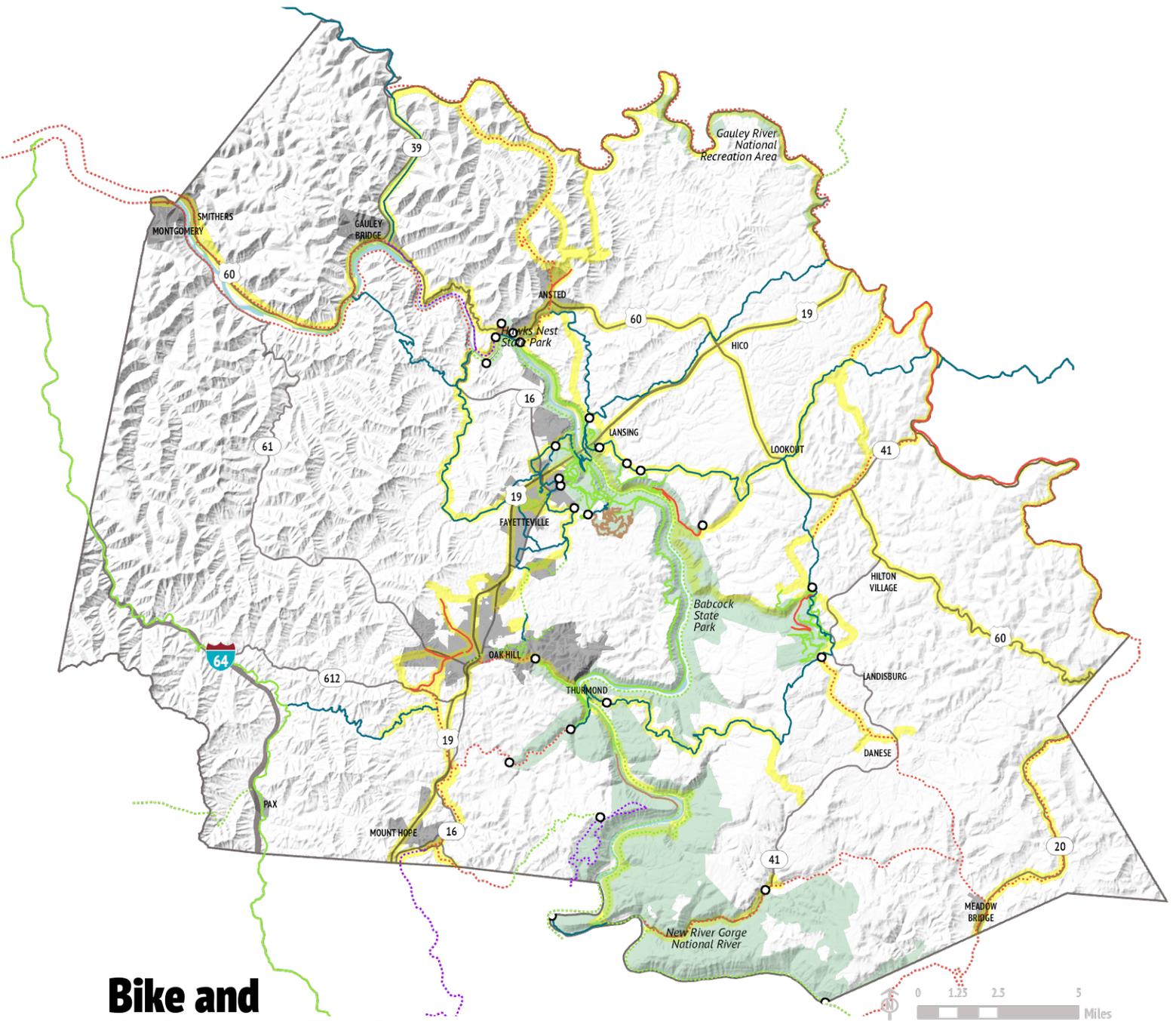
The County should improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between populated areas to support the area's economy and increase tourism and promote public health for the community. These amenities could further support public health by promoting physical activity among residents. Currently pedestrian connections are missing between many of the settled areas including the following:

- Mount Hope and Oak Hill
- Mount Hope and Beckley
- Oak Hill and Fayetteville
- Gauley Bridge and Ansted
- Gauley Bridge and Smithers
- Gauley Bridge and Montgomery
- Meadow Bridge and Hinton
- Meadow Bridge other cities and towns

The Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Map shows that many new connections are planned in the near future. For instance, rail trails are proposed between Mount Hope and Oak Hill and along the New River to connect Fayetteville with Gauley Bridge, Smithers, and Montgomery. Likewise, rail trails are proposed to connect Meadow Bridge with the other communities. Further, a recreational trail is proposed to connect Fayetteville and Oak Hill and link with the existing on-street bikeways system.

Nonmotorized Planning Efforts

Recent studies published by organizations within or outside the County have considered the establishment of new nonmotorized trails. In January 2022, the Fayette County Trail Coalition published its Soft Surface Trails Plan, which notes the County's lack of trail opportunities relative to the anticipated influx of visitors and establishes four new, non-National Park Service-hosted trail opportunities at Fayetteville Town Park, Needleseye Park, Fayette County Park, and Wolf Creek Park which would double the current trail opportunities. In 2012, the National Park Service published a study titled *Connecting the Parks with Their Gateway Communities*. The study established desirable locations to connect the New River Gorge National River with trails to Ansted, the Gauley River, Oak Hill and Mount Hope. The County should consider these previous planning efforts as it continues to construct nonmotorized trails.



Bike and Pedestrian Facilities

Fayette County's bicycle and pedestrian facilities contribute to local health and boost its image and identity as a scenic destination.

Existing Facilities

- Recreational Trail
- Rail Trail
- On-Street Bikeways
- Existing Single and Stack Loop

NRGTA Proposed Facilities

- Recreational Trail
- Rail Trail
- Single Track
- Other Proposed Bike Trails

County Resident Proposed Facilities

- New Bike Route or Trail
- Trail Connections

Source: New River Gorge Trail Alliance (NRGTA)

Connections Between Existing Trails

Though the County has an extensive network of on-street bikeways, recreational trails, and rail trails, many of these facilities are not well-connected. This fragments the overall system, making it difficult for recreators to string together a continuous trip. For example, connections are missing between the on-street bikeways south of Oak Hill on either side of Route 19 and with the on-street bikeways immediately north of Oak Hill.

Connections to Parks and Recreation

No pedestrian and bicycle connections exist between many of the key recreational destinations in the County. For example, an on-street bikeway is missing to connect Oak Hill with the New River Gorge and Babcock State Park to the City's southeast. Similarly, connections are missing between Smithers, Montgomery, Gauley Bridge, and the parks to the southeast. Further, no connections exist along the New River between Hawk's Nest State Park, Babcock State Park, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The County should pursue connecting these assets with pedestrian and bicycle trails to enhance the overall recreation system.

Recommendations

The County should prioritize the following actions to improve the connectivity and quality of the bicycle and pedestrian network. To accomplish this, the County should:

1. Use the National Park Service *Connecting the Parks with Their Gateway Communities* plan as a guide to add new bike trails, rail trails, and recreational trails throughout the County. Add the trails to connect existing recreational amenities including the state parks and New River National Park and Preserve and to connect the existing on-street bikeways, rail trails, and recreational trails.
2. Identify pedestrian and bicycle improvements to improve sustainability and diversity the travel options for residents and visitors traveling between trails, recreational facilities, and the County's communities.
3. Add new rail trails, bike trails, and recreational trails to connect the County's cities, towns, and unincorporated populated areas, including:
 - New rail trails in the County's southeast along to connect Meadow Bridge and Danese with existing on-street bikeways, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and other amenities.
 - Construct new rail trails in the County's south along Route 19 to connect Oak Hill, Mount Hope, and the existing on-street bikeways.
4. Continue to identify locations for new rail trails, bike trails, and recreational trails to add to the system on an ongoing basis.
5. Prioritize bike and pedestrian connections along the New River to connect Gauley Bridge, Smithers, Montgomery, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and to add recreational opportunities along the New River.
6. Coordinate with the New River Gorge Regional Wayfinding Strategy to develop signage to show the location of nonmotorized trails and create a map of the nonmotorized system and make the materials available to recreators.
7. Work with Fayette County municipalities and nonprofit organizations including the Fayette Trails Coalition and Mountain State Trails Alliance to create and implement a connected trail network throughout the County.
8. Coordinate the placement of new nonmotorized trails in coordination with the *Fayette County Trail Coalition's Soft Surface Trails Plan* and the National Park Service's *Connecting the Parks with Their Gateway Communities Plan*.
9. Coordinate local bicycle and pedestrian plans with the land use and development plans focus areas.
10. Support trails network expansion and improvement projects noted in the River Cities Trail Master Plan, Valley Recreation Plan, and the Fayette County Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization 2045 Transportation Plan Update.

Section 5

Implement Complete Streets Improvements

The term complete streets refers to streets that facilitate easy travel for all users, regardless of age, income, ability, or travel mode. Complete streets help ensure all residents and visitors can travel easily, supporting the vibrancy and quality of life in neighborhoods and business districts. In 2013, the West Virginia legislature passed the Complete Streets Act, which urges the WVDOT to consider multiple modes of transportation when considering road construction on state-maintained roadways. Also, several funding sources are available for bicycle and pedestrian improvements through the US Department of Transportation, including the Transportation Alternatives Program, Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program, and the Recreational Trails Program. These funding sources are explored in greater depth in the implementation Section of the Comprehensive Plan. The County can leverage these resources to implement its planned bicycle and pedestrian improvements and create complete streets.

What is a Complete Street?

A complete streets refers to streets that facilitates easy travel for all users, regardless of age, income, ability, or travel mode

The County and its municipalities can also consider implementing complete streets resolutions. These resolutions ensure that complete streets elements are considered when developing City plans, regulations, and making infrastructure improvements. As of 2023, Oak Hill, Fayetteville, Mount Hope, Smithers, and Montgomery have passed complete street resolutions.

Recommendations

To facilitate travel for all users throughout Fayette, the County should:

1. Take advantage of the Complete Streets Act to see that alternative modes are also accommodated when the State constructs new highway facilities.
2. Adopt a local Complete Streets Ordinance to encourage bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure with every road project on local roads, furthering the goals of the Complete Streets Act.
3. Use Active Southern West Virginia's Bike/Walk Manual within each community to engage community members and create bike and pedestrian master plans.
4. Encourage the use of available funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.



Section 6

Support Alternative Transportation Methods

Alternative transportation refers to modes of travel other than the privately-owned automobile, including public transportation, Amtrak train, ride sharing and taxis. These travel modes are key to facilitate transportation for a range of individuals and households in Fayette County including elderly individuals, low-income individuals, visitors and tourists, and those without cars. These alternatives to automobile transportation can also help increase community sustainability by allowing residents and visitors to travel without greenhouse gas emissions. These transportation modes are also key to ensure residents' access to youth programs and senior services, which are discussed in detail elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan. This section inventories issues and opportunities related to these travel modes in Fayette County and forms recommendations for their improvement.

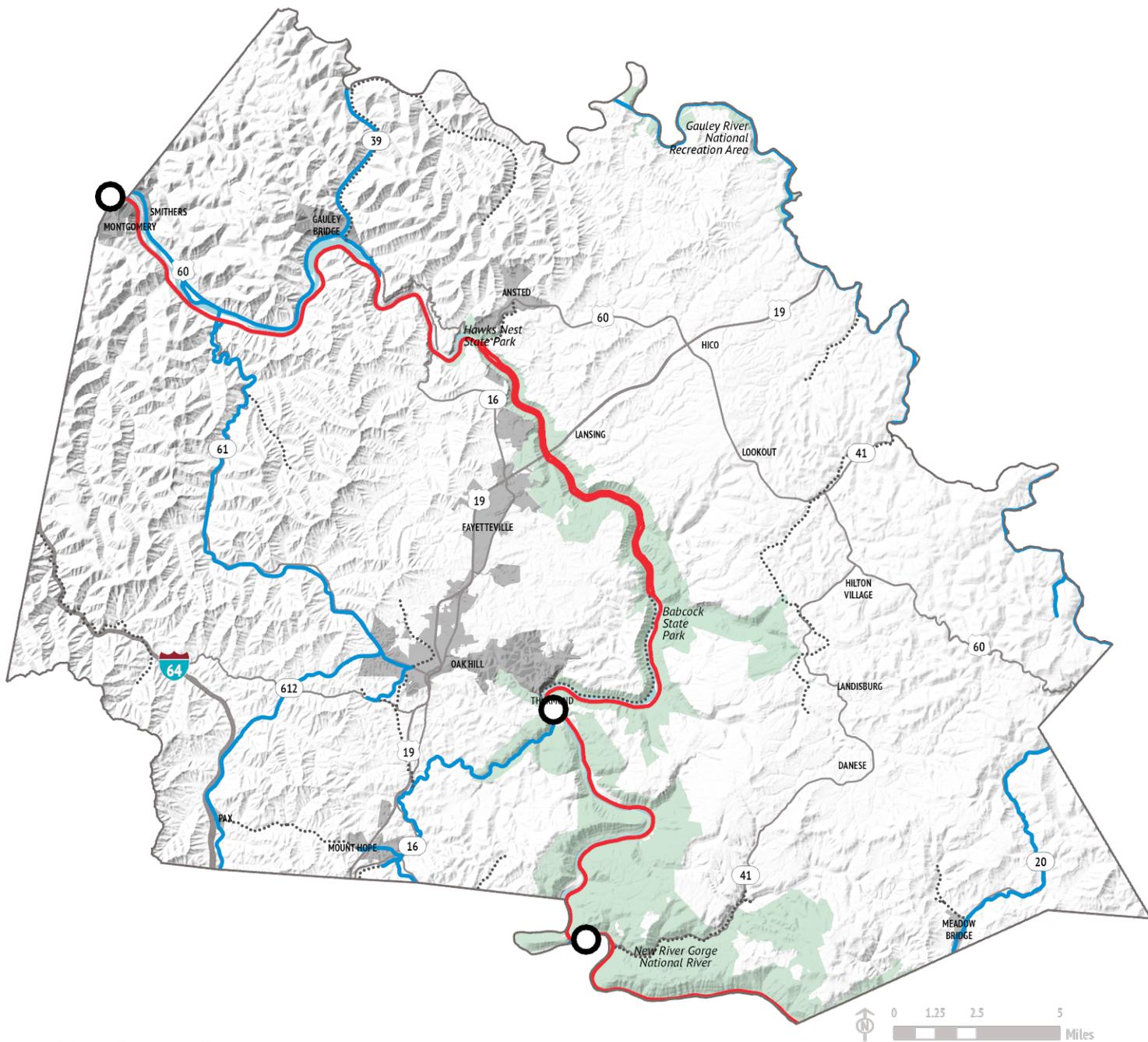
Amtrak

Amtrak's Cardinal Line, considered one of the most scenic of all Amtrak lines, provides service three times a week connecting Chicago, Washington D.C., and New York City. The train makes three stops in Fayette County, in Montgomery, Thurmond, and Prince. Thurmond Station provides visitors with the closest access to the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The 2045 Regional Transportation Plan notes that the Cardinal Line **ranks in the bottom third of ridership compared to Amtrak's other routes.**

The three Amtrak train stops are disconnected with other locations in the County, which makes it difficult for visitors to navigate from the train stops to other sites of interest in the County. For example, no businesses surround the train stop in Prince and no bus is available to take visitors from the train stop to other locations in the County upon their arriving. The Montgomery station has greater access to amenities due to its location in the City, however, and the Thurmond stop does contain a visitor's center operated by the National Park Service.



Amtrak is a great asset. Increased train access, and a train to airport, would be great transportation options for the area.



Railroads

The Amtrak train makes three stops in Fayette County, in Montgomery, Thurmond, and Prince. Prince provides visitors with the closest access to the New River Gorge National Park.

-  Amtrak Station
-  Amtrak Rail Line
-  Freight Rail Line
-  Abandoned Rail Line
-  1 Norfolk and Western Railway
-  2 Chesapeake and Ohio Railway
-  3 Cardinal Line
-  4 F and G Railroad

Source: West Virginia State GIS Technical Center and West Virginia Department of Transportation

Ridesharing

According to the U.S. Census, **83% of Fayette County residents take a car, truck, or van to work alone**. About **8% chose to carpool**, rather than drive alone. Public transportation is limited within the County, however, there are alternative means of transportation that the County can support to help to reduce the number of cars on the road and thereby ease traffic congestion, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, reduce parking demands, and reduce the amount of income devoted to transportation costs.

Ridesharing is often as simple as carpooling and presents a more efficient and cost-effective means of transportation to work. It can also include taxi and app-based services such as Uber and Lyft which can help residents access employment and basic services and move visitors from place to place within the County and its destinations. Currently, there are no ridesharing or taxi services within Fayette County.

Car Sharing

Car sharing is a model of car rental that allows people to rent cars for short periods, often by the hour. Households with access to car-sharing services, such as ZipCar, are likely to spend less of their disposable income on costs associated with car ownership. Currently, no car-sharing services are operating in Fayette County. The County should work with car-sharing companies to attract such services to the County and identify car-share storage locations – starting with the most populated areas in the local municipalities.

Ridesourcing

Ridesourcing refers to ride services that use a smartphone app to connect a community of drivers with passengers. Uber and Lyft are the most popular and well-known ridesourcing companies.

Low population density and lack of cellular service inhibit the development of ridesourcing and taxi services in rural areas. Several recent studies have found that these transportation options would appeal to residents in rural areas, especially to those with limited mobility or without a personal vehicle and some have suggested that rural areas could be lucrative for the development of ridesharing services.

In 2016, **West Virginia lawmakers approved ridesourcing services throughout the state**. Previously, Uber had only been operating in a few cities. Ridesourcing services can supplement the public transit system by providing an alternative to a personal car for short trips to location destinations, such as the grocery store or doctor's office. Communities have partnered with ridesourcing companies to subsidize a portion of the cost for rides that begin and end within the community. An example is Altamonte Spring, Florida which contributes to 20% of the cost of ridesourcing trips taken within the City. The goal of this program is to assess how ridesourcing can impact the City's overall mobility needs. The County should consider this type of partnership to provide an affordable alternative to owning a personal car and help close gaps in the public transit system.

Carpooling and Park-n-Rides

Park-n-rides are free parking in lots designed to provide individuals with a convenient place to leave their vehicles before using local or regional bus systems or joining a carpool. Park-n-ride locations can be integrated into local/regional bus routes and commuter train systems. Currently, several unofficial rideshare locations existing within the County at the intersections of Route 612 and Route 19, Lansing Edmond Road and Route 19, and Route 60 and Route 19. The County should work with WV DOT to identify additional locations for park-n-ride facilities.

Guaranteed Ride Home Program

Some people are not comfortable carpooling to work because it does not allow them to leave work at any time, for example, if they are feeling ill or there is an emergency. Communities can participate in a Guaranteed Ride Home Program that will cover the cost of a taxi or ridesourcing service if a carpooler needs to leave work early. The County should consider implementing such a program once taxi and ridesourcing services are established. The County should also communicate the benefits of the program to its municipalities.

Public Transportation

Public transportation service is a key resource to ensure that all residents can access daily needs and employment regardless of age, income, or ability. Public transportation is limited throughout the County, however, **very few working residents (0.3%) reported using public transportation to commute to work** in 2021, whereas the figure was 4.6% of workers nationally. Residents rely on their own means of transportation to travel between locations. Stakeholder identified the lack of public transportation as a key issue. Low population density and long distances between places such as schools, shops, and healthcare facilities are factors that limit the provision of public transportation services in the County.

Transportation for senior citizens throughout the County was also identified as a key issue. Only a couple of organizations provide transportation for seniors. It should also be noted that, according to the Region 6 Data Profile Prevention Planning Resource, about **9% of children were in kinship care or living with their grandparents**. In some cases, the need for senior transportation options also adversely affects the children that are in their care.

The Fayette Senior Services Life Enrichment Center provides non-emergency medical transportation that clients can schedule and provides prescription pick-up, meals on wheels, and voucher transportation service that allows clients to purchase vouchers for a nominal fee and arrange transportation for non-medical trips such as shopping. The Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources also provides non-emergency and emergency medical transportation for seniors.

2045 Regional Transportation Plan Proposed Transit Investments

Project	Description
Bus stop amenities (benches, shelters, signage, etc.)	Add or replace passenger amenities along regular transit routes
Enhance Fayette County deviated fixed-route service	Improve headways (frequency). Consider weekend service.
Transit hub in Oak Hill	Co-locate with public facility / parking
Bus stop amenities (benches, shelters, signage)	Add or replace passenger amenities along regular transit routes
Mini-hubs in Mount Hope and Fayetteville	Co-locate with public facility / parking
Connecting service to KAT (Charleston) and BAT	Provide service to a stop in northwest Fayette County where passengers can transfer between NRTA and KAT

Source: Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Organization
2045 Regional Transportation Plan

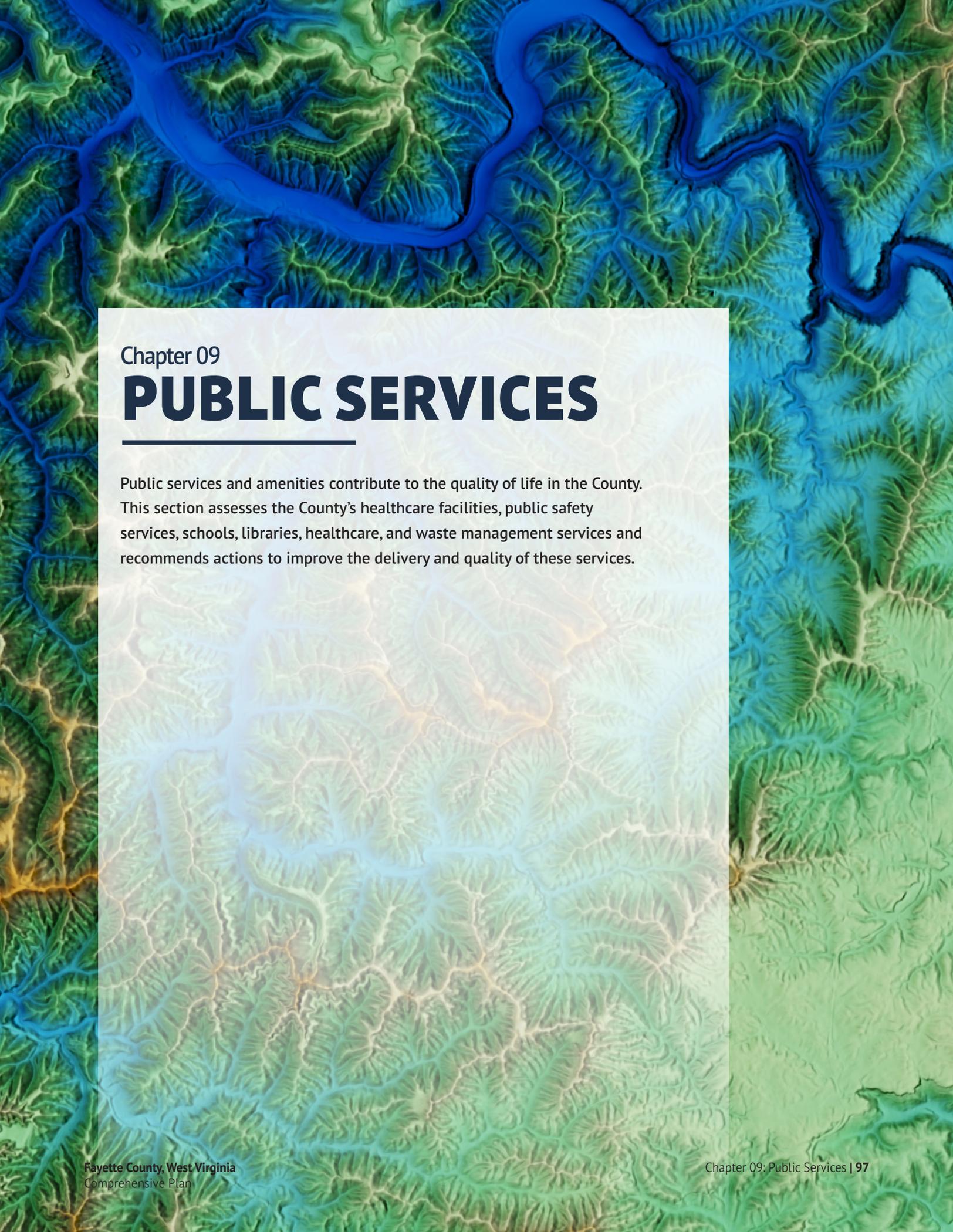


We need more transportation options. There are not enough public transit options. More public transport will help the local workforce, seniors, and others.

Recommendations

The County should implement the following measures to facilitate convenient and efficient transportation by air, train, and through public transportation.

1. Work to develop a baseline level of public transportation in all of the County's planning districts.
2. Consider working with partner agencies to establish a regular bus route from the three Amtrak stations to other sites of interest in the County, including the Cities and Towns and New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.
3. Study National Park visitor and Amtrak rider rates. Coordinate marketing through Amtrak, the National Park Service, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and other tourism related entities to promote Amtrak as a means of travel to the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.
4. Conduct an inventory of rail lines throughout the County to identify any additional abandoned railroad corridors. These abandoned railroad corridors may provide additional opportunities for rail trail connections.
5. Work with the National Park Service and CSX Rail to determine the ideal ownership and operation strategy of Prince Depot.
6. Encourage the development of amenities near the three Amtrak stations. Consider establishing a visitor center for the County at either the Montgomery, Thurmond, and Prince stations.
7. Explore a demand response para-transit system in the form of a shared ride transportation that is provided to passengers through advance notification.
8. Work with Fayette Senior Services Life Enrichment Center, the Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources, and New River Transit to improve the quality of senior transportation services.
9. Explore the feasibility of and funding sources for a centrally located, private airport to accommodate small-plane travel and that would provide New River Gorge tours, gliding and space to park private planes.
10. Consider establishing a second operations hub for regional transit system located in Fayette County.
11. Cooperate with state and regional partners to bring ridesharing and taxi services to Fayette County and recruit drivers for the ridesharing service to the region.
12. Identify and help fund the creation of park-and-ride lots to sites of interest and employment.
13. Work with municipalities to adopt zoning ordinances that prioritize multiple transportation modes, including ridesharing, park-n-rides, and car-sharing.
14. Work with WVDOT and the County's municipalities to identify additional strategic locations for park-n-ride facilities within the County.
15. Partner with ridesourcing companies to subsidize a portion of the cost for rides that begin and end within the County to provide an affordable alternative to owning a personal car and closing gaps in the public transit system .
16. Consider implementing in a Guaranteed Ride Home Program to provide carpoolers peace of mind when commuting.

The background of the page is an aerial topographic map of a mountainous region. The terrain is color-coded by elevation, with higher elevations in shades of green and yellow, and lower elevations in shades of blue and cyan. A prominent river network is visible, with a large, winding river in the upper left and several smaller tributaries branching out across the landscape.

Chapter 09

PUBLIC SERVICES

Public services and amenities contribute to the quality of life in the County. This section assesses the County’s healthcare facilities, public safety services, schools, libraries, healthcare, and waste management services and recommends actions to improve the delivery and quality of these services.

Section 1

Support for Education

The Fayette County Board of Education oversees public education within the County. As of 2022, the Fayette County Board of Education **manages 12 public school campuses throughout the County**. Aside from the Board of Education's Facilities, the County contains 4 private schools that provide independent, parochial, and religious education choices and are supported through tuition and student fees, grants, and donations.

Given the County's population decline in recent years, school consolidation has occurred to optimize the use of the County's resources. The Board of Education is planning several changes to its facilities in the coming years. The Board is planning to close its Divide Elementary and Ansted Elementary facilities to further the optimal use of resources. It also plans to construct a new elementary school facility at the Midland Trail High School campus. A consolidated school facility that will provide pre-kindergarten through 12th grade education is also planned in Meadow Bridge. Other planned improvements for school facilities in Fayette County include regular maintenance and upgrades.

Alternative education is another important educational asset. The Mountaineer Challenge Academy in Montgomery gives academically challenged teens an alternative way to achieve a High School Diploma in a quasi-military environment. The institution is operated under the National Youth Challenge program and is funded by the US Department of Defense and State of West Virginia.

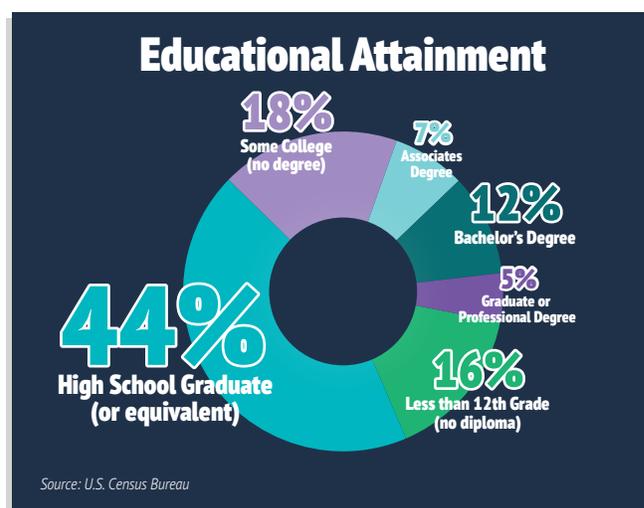
During the outreach process, it was expressed that the quality of education, condition of the school buildings, and limited range of educational options are concerns. County residents also noted that Fayette County has difficulty retaining teachers, which may further contribute to the perceived quality of education services issue. While the County does not oversee the Board of Education or participate in the decision-making process for the future of Fayette County schools, the County's role can be one of support, partnership, and advocacy.

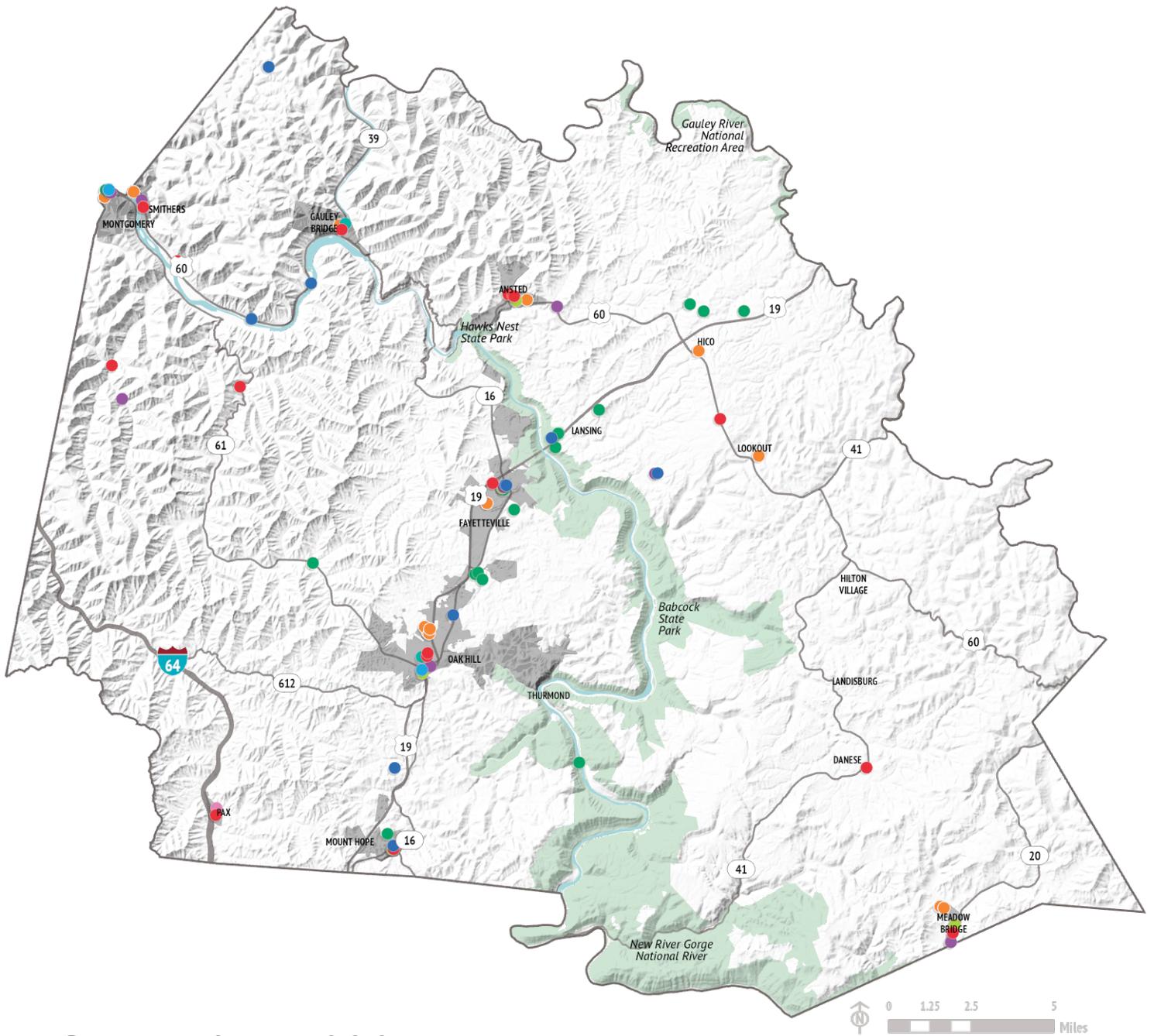
Post-Secondary Education

Though several post-secondary institutions are located near Fayette County, one is located within its boundary. Bridge Valley Community and Technical College operates a small campus in Montgomery that offers dental hygiene classes and limited technical programming. It also provides virtual access to main campus programming in medical fields, nursing, engineering technology, business, and veterinary technology. The Fayette Institute of Technology (FIT), located in Oak Hill, provides a variety of education programs that offer advanced career and technical training to students and adult learners. The facility offers adult programs in practical nursing, adult education, and electrical education.

In addition to post-secondary institutions, several organizations in the region promote access to post-secondary education through scholarships and other resources. The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation scholarships for new college attendees in the region. Meanwhile, the Beckley Area Foundation provides a variety of scholarship opportunities, including a scholarship for Fayette County students specifically to attend post-secondary institutions.

Post Secondary Education is further discussed in *Chapter 06: Economic Development, Section 2: Develop the Fayette County Workforce*.





Community Facilities

The Community Facilities map identifies locations of public facilities throughout the County.

- Federal or State Building
 - Schools (Includes Specialty)
 - Hospital
- Police or Fire Station
 - Post Office
 - Rail/Bus Terminal
- Library
 - Auditorium
 - Recreational/Health

Recommendations

The County's role regarding education should be one of support and partnership. The County should encourage educational access for residents throughout the County through consistent communication and cooperation with the public schools and administration, private schools, adult education and workforce training, and local employers, as appropriate. To support quality education the County should:

1. Support the Board of Education's planned facilities improvements, including consolidation of the Divide and Ansted Elementary facilities and the construction of consolidated campus facilities.
2. Partner with Fayette County Board of Education and Boy Scouts to promote summer activities for students in the County.
3. Communicate with local employers, the Fayette County Board of Education, and the Fayette Institute of Technology to define the gaps in education and job-related training.
4. Encourage a partnership between the Fayette County Board of Education, Fayette County Commission, and local recreation-related businesses to coordinate workforce training and support the recreation industry.
5. Partner with the Fayette County Board of Education and other local educational organizations to create links between local employers and schools including mentoring, summer internships, school trips to local employers, integrated school programs, and networking opportunities to ensure students are aware of career paths, as well as the skills necessary to obtain those jobs.
6. Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to identify the issues with retaining teachers and school employees. Support development proposals, housing construction, and quality-of-life improvements that accommodate the needs of teachers and school system employees as identified.
7. Form partnerships with local higher education institutions such as West Virginia University Tech and Bridge Valley Community Technical College to promote access to post-secondary educational programs within and outside the County.
8. Raise awareness of scholarships offered through local organizations such as The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation and Beckley Area Foundation.
9. Cooperate with the Fayette County Board of Education to identify locations in which students have difficulty with transportation to school facilities. Partner to facilitate transportation to these identified areas, potentially including a ride-sharing program for families.
10. Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to raise awareness of the Underwood Smith Teacher Loan Assistance Program.
11. Attract teachers to the area using incentives such as the Underwood-Smith Teacher Loan Assistance program.
12. Coordinate with the Fayette County Board of Education on all future residential planning efforts in unincorporated areas to ensure that the district can plan appropriately for any enrollment growth and provide proper staffing and facilities.
13. Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to identify demographic trends that may require new approaches to services or programs.
14. Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to employ technology in local schools.
15. Work with the school district to monitor school capacities and identify the need to consolidate school sites as necessary.



The quality of schools has been addressed but the quality of education needs to be improved.



We have closed schools due to consolidation and those should be used for community centers and activities instead of being abandoned.

Section 2

Strengthen Local Governance

Throughout the planning process, concerns were raised by residents and stakeholders regarding the need to improve and strengthen County governance. Governance is made up of the political and institutional processes through which decisions are made and implemented. Good governance is particularly important at the county/local level, where governments regularly interact with citizens and communities on a daily basis.

County governance, including the political and institutional processes currently utilized, is most effective when these processes are participatory, accountable, transparent, efficient, inclusive, and respect the rule of law. Strengthening governance of the County can be a vital tool in equitable allocation of resources, boosting economic development, maximizing administrative efficiency, ensuring stakeholder representation and awareness, and improving inclusion and stewardship.

Issues such as a lack of funding for public projects and a need for greater citizen engagement were specifically cited by stakeholders. Also noted was a lack of growth and development and unequal distribution of resources to the Meadow Bridge, Danese, and Valley communities, which can have an impact on the entire County's wellbeing.

Resources

Resources exist at the local level that could assist the County in strengthening local governance. For example, West Virginia University extension can assist with stakeholder analysis and public meetings, focus groups, and provide research and resources to improve community engagement, inclusion practices and advise on a variety of transparency processes. These resources can be provided to the public and governmental officials and groups.



There is a need for quality leadership to preserve the character of the County and build for the future.

Recommendations

Feedback from County stakeholders highlights a need to prioritize improvements to County governance in the areas of outreach and involvement, resource and funding distribution and prioritization, regulations enforcement, and economic development initiative. To do this the County should consider the following:

1. Actively promote opportunities for involvement through digital and in-person means in a variety of decision-making processes at the County level, including opportunities for positions on various County boards, commissions, and committees.
2. Leverage local events, festivals, civic groups, and community organizations to better inform and engage residents about how to get more involved in County governance.
3. Identify processes such as County budgeting and planning as opportunities for enhance citizen involvement.
4. Identify and mitigate factors that inhibit fair, effective, and consistent zoning ordinance and building code enforcement. Allocate funds in the annual budget and seek external funding to increase staffing as needed.
5. Work with the municipalities to identify and implement approaches to improving communication and transparency across jurisdictions.
6. Develop a capital improvements plan (CIP) to identify all public projects that require the expenditure of funds in the next five to seven years, particularly those identified in the comprehensive plan.
7. Use the CIP to establish priorities, catalog potential funding sources including external funding, and create a timetable for completion.
8. Establish and maintain on-going communications, including regular meetings, with the business and development community to effectively identify and take advantage of economic development opportunities throughout all areas of the County.
9. Partner with local organizations such as West Virginia University Extension to provide resources and education to the public and local officials to instill governance best practices in Fayette County.

Section 3

Strengthen Access to Social Services

Social services include a range of public services that provide support and assistance to disadvantaged households including individuals experiencing homelessness and those with Substance Use Disorder. The social services discussed in this section address substance misuse, homelessness, and public health.

Crime and Drug Prevention

Substance misuse is a difficult topic to monitor, and limited data is available to highlight the problem. According to data published by the West Virginia Board of Pharmacy, **17 drug-related deaths occurred per 100,000** people annually in Fayette County in 2016. Substance misuse is an issue in the County, more resources are needed in order to assist those suffering from Substance Use Disorder, including increasing the quantity and quality of support groups and social services.

Homelessness

Like Substance Use Disorder, homelessness is often difficult to measure due to limited data availability, and “hidden” people experiencing homelessness who move from place to place. A study published by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources in 2015 found that a total of 19 unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness were in Fayette County in that year, **42% of whom had a mental illness.**

According to the Region 6 Data Profile Prevention Planning Resource, there were **112 children experiencing homelessness** in 2021. The resource also notes that **33% of the population under the age of 18 were living in poverty**, while **18% of the population above the age of 18 were living in poverty.** Poverty status, which is defined by the Census Bureau based on the cost of living in a location and the number of individuals in each household, is often linked to homelessness and housing shortages. Resources to address homelessness are needed in the County including a greater number of homeless shelters and support resources.

Office of Drug Control Policy and West Virginia University

In 2019, the governor announced a partnership between the Office of Drug Control Policy and West Virginia University on a project in Berkeley and Jefferson Counties to strengthen and expand prevention and recovery resources available in the County. The project will engage medical professionals, health departments, first responders, law enforcement, faith community, behavioral health providers, schools, and recovery coaches to implement drug prevention activities including early intervention, treatment, overdose reversal, family support, and recovery. The project was the second partnership of this type spearheaded by the governor and involving the Office of Drug Control Partnership and a local university, following a 2018 project in Wyoming County. Fayette County should monitor opportunities to initiate similar partnerships to address substance abuse.



According to a 2017 study published by the West Virginia Board of Pharmacy,

36% of residents

had a controlled substance prescription, and

24% of residents

had an opioid prescription

According to the 2021 US Census Bureau ACS, an estimated

21% of residents

were in poverty, which is higher than 18% in the state of West Virginia and 14% in the United States overall



CASE STUDY

Drug Epidemic Pilot Program

Berkeley and Jefferson Counties, WV

In 2019, the governor announced a partnership between the Office of Drug Control Policy and West Virginia University on a project in Berkeley and Jefferson Counties to strengthen and expand prevention and recovery resources available in the community. The project will engage medical professionals, health departments, first responders, law enforcement, faith community, behavioral health providers, schools, and recovery coaches to implement drug prevention activities including early intervention, treatment, overdose reversal, family support, and recovery. The project was the second partnership of this type spearheaded by the governor and involving the Office of Drug Control Partnership and a local university, following a 2018 project in Wyoming County. Fayette County should monitor opportunities to initiate similar partnerships to address substance abuse.

Recommendations

The County should strengthen the resources to manage Substance Use Disorder and provide better support groups and social services. To do this the County should consider the following:

1. The County should continue to work with the Fayette Prevention Coalition and Fayette County Health Department to expand the range of support and drug prevention services and to continue to provide measures for the care and disposal of prescription drugs.
2. Continue to sponsor events to teach evidence based prevention strategies and foster positive community involvement for youth.
3. Continue to work with the Fayette Prevention Coalition and Fayette County Health Department to define barriers such as staffing or funding to expand programs.
4. Consider a partnership involving the Office of Drug Control Partnership, other neighboring counties, higher education, and healthcare providers in the region to implement drug prevention activities.
5. Continue to monitor state-level programs and initiatives intended to address substance misuse. Communicate with state experts to strengthen and expand prevention and recovery resources.
6. Partner with citizens, public officials, and the Fayette County Board of Education to define the need for and establish additional emergency or homeless shelters.
7. Support the Mount Hope Housing Authority's efforts to construct an emergency shelter in Mount Hope and support plans to construct an emergency shelter at the New Mount Hope Elementary School.
8. Raise awareness of the West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness and the emergency shelter grant program to make use of the program in local efforts.

“ There is a need for homeless shelters. This will help our community feel safer and cleaner and provide homes for those in need. ”

Section 4

Maintain Police and Fire Services

The Fayette County Sheriff's department provides law enforcement services across the County. The department employs **32 deputy sheriffs, one chief law enforcement officer**, as well as **several officers with specialized training**, including animal control officers. The West Virginia State Police also provide law enforcement throughout the County, while the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources provides limited law enforcement on its properties. Seven municipal police departments operate in Ansted, Mount Hope, Gauley Bridge, Smithers, Montgomery, Oak Hill, and Fayetteville. Providing funding to support law enforcement efforts should be a priority as development occurs. Fayette County also has **13 fire departments**, each of which operates from a small station located within municipalities or one of the unincorporated communities. The fire departments are staffed with volunteer firefighters. Access to emergency services is an issue throughout Fayette County. Providing adequate funding to support law enforcement and fire coverage should be a priority.

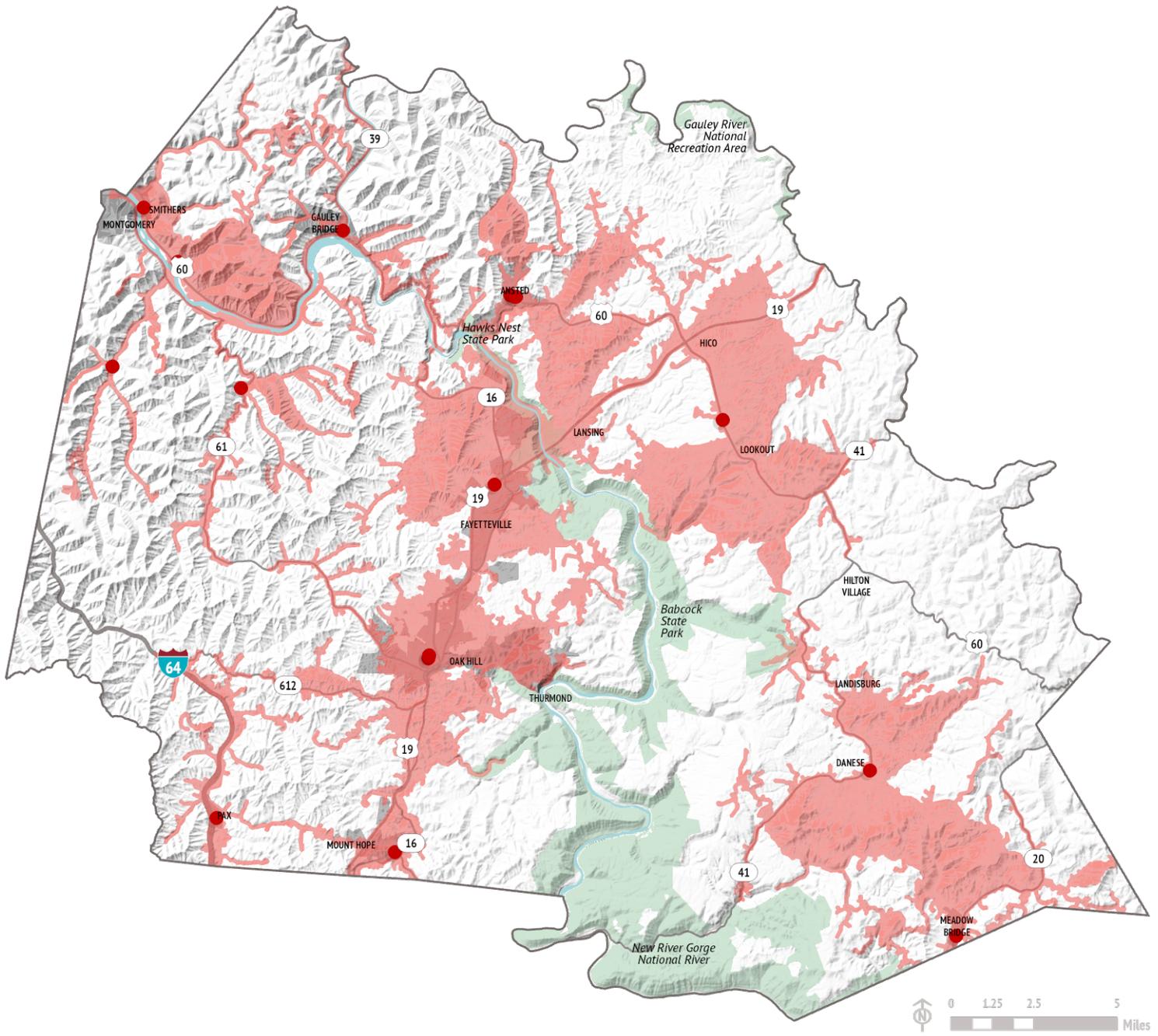


Policing communities is a must. The County sheriff's office does a great job, but they are policing a large area because municipalities are stretched thin due to the size and topography of Fayette County.

Recommendations

Fayette County should take the following measures to maintain and improve police and fire services within the County.

1. Ensure the provision of emergency services expands to address current and future needs.
2. Work with local law enforcement and fire departments to find appropriate sites for expanded facilities as new development and growth occurs.
3. Work with the Sheriff's department and local police departments to evaluate where increased funds are needed.
4. Work with the Fayette Prevention Coalition to continue to provide appropriate measures for the care and disposal of prescription drugs.
5. Work with the Fire Service Coordinator to request a fire sub-station within the district.
6. Work with local fire protection service providers to identify how water service lines should be resized and whether new fire hydrants are needed to ensure adequate fire protection delivery.



Fire Stations and Response Coverage

About 90% of the residential areas in Fayette County are within a 20-minute drive from a fire station.

- Fire Stations
- 20-minute Reponse Time Service Area

Section 5

Promote Public Health

The term healthcare refers to a range of services that exist to improve individual health through the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, amelioration, and cure of disease, illness, or injury. These services are essential to enhance residents' quality of life. In Fayette County, healthcare is provided through a range of governmental, nonprofit, and private service providers. This section inventories the issues and opportunities related to healthcare in Fayette County and defines strategies for the improvement of these services.

Public Health

Fayette County is served by two hospitals, Plateau Medical Center and Montgomery General Hospital. The County also has several small health clinics and primary care physicians, including school-based health centers. Inadequate access to healthcare and insufficient access to healthy food are significant issues in the County. The County lacks several specific forms of healthcare; for example, no birthing hospitals exist in the County. The County's households in poverty face the greatest challenges in accessing healthy food and healthcare. The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources published a study in 2016 that highlighted the County's health-related challenges and indicated that obesity rates were higher than in the state overall and indicated that access to physical activity is lacking.

The *Healthcare Service Areas Map* shows the portions of Fayette County that are within a ten-mile driving distance of one of the County's healthcare clinics, and areas that are outside a ten-mile driving distance to a healthcare facility. Households in areas outside the ten-mile drive distance from a healthcare have greater time and money costs to travel to a healthcare clinic and are considered underserved for the purposes of the analysis. Though many of the populated areas of the unincorporated Fayette County are near the cities and towns are within a ten-minute drive of medical clinics, large extents of the County's rural areas are underserved, particularly near the Lookout and Meadow Bridge communities. The County can work with healthcare providers to assess how new healthcare access can be expanded in underserved areas that have large enough populations to support them.

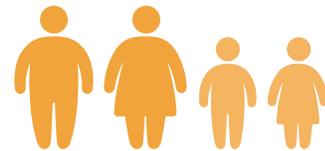
Public Health Organizations and Professionals

Public health organizations improve the health and well-being of communities through education and the promotion of healthy lifestyles in West Virginia. Public health professionals must continue to assume an important leadership role in promoting physical activity. Public health organizations, leaders, and professionals must promote physical activity by advocating for more opportunities, educating for greater personal responsibility, shaping policy, facilitating the adoption of evidence-based practices, and conducting surveillance and research on health promotion and physical activity programs. Work within business and industry and across societal sectors to increase support for local and statewide physical activity programming. Use policy to advocate the importance of a physically active workforce and provide employers with incentives to develop healthy business climates and communities.



36% of adults

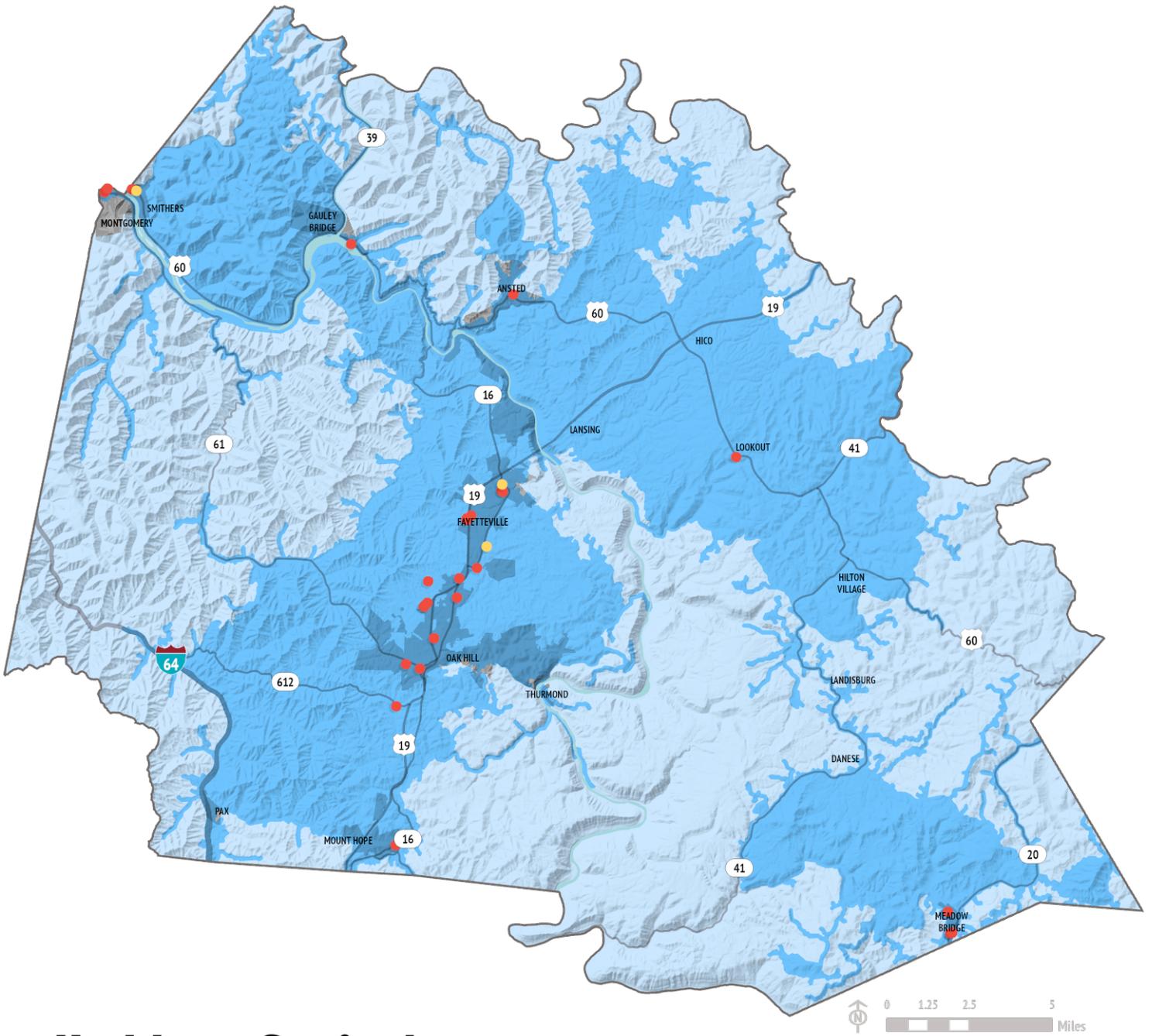
had no leisure time physical activity, which is higher than 31.8 percent in the state overall



According to a 2016 study,

40% of adults

were obese, which is higher than 34 percent in West Virginia overall.



Healthcare Service Areas

Households in areas outside the ten-mile drive distance from a healthcare have greater time and money costs to travel to a healthcare clinic and are considered underserved for the purposes of the analysis.

- Farmers Markets
- Healthcare Facility
- Within 10-miles
- Underserved Areas - Greater than 10-miles

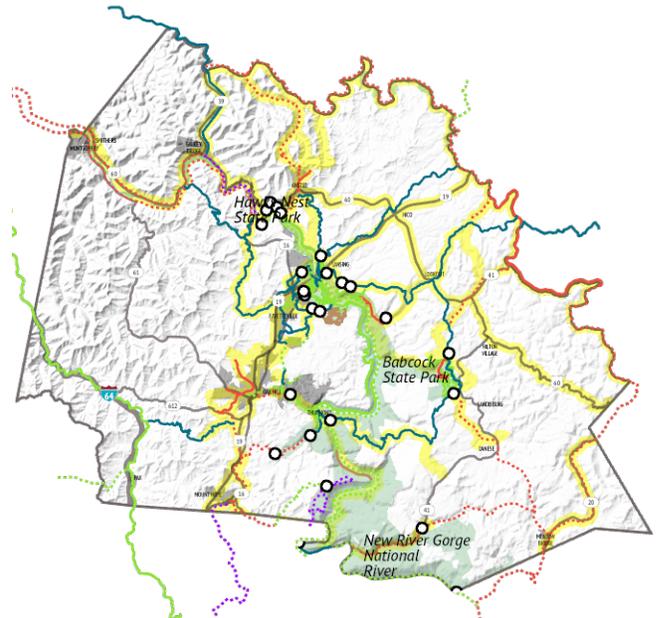
Preventative Care

The term preventative care refers to a range of services that help detect or prevent serious diseases and medical problems before they become major problems. This refers to annual check-ups with a primary care provider, immunizations, and flu shots, tests and screenings for preventable diseases, and screening and counseling for obesity, diet, and blood pressure. Preventative care is covered under most healthcare plans at no cost to the consumer. School-based health centers that offer primary care and dental and mental healthcare services to students are also located in several schools throughout the County.

Active Transportation

Transportation options that promote physical activity, including walking and bicycling are key in promoting public health by encouraging residents to get active to meet their day-to-day needs. Sidewalks within neighborhoods are key pieces of infrastructure that support active transportation. Recreational trails dedicated solely to cyclists, pedestrians, and nonmotorized recreation users are also key pieces of infrastructure. The County currently includes over 56 miles of trails as part of the New River Gorge National River Trail System and the Hawks Nest State Park and Babcock State Park system. Active transportation modes are described in-depth in *Chapter 08: Transportation*.

“There needs to be a focus on healthy activities, healthier restaurant options, and small group activities.”



Bike and Pedestrian Facilities

See Chapter 08: Transportation for more information on active transportation in Fayette County.

-  Recreational Trail
-  Rail Trail
-  On-Street Bikeways
-  Existing Single and Stack Loop
-  Recreational Trail
-  Rail Trail
-  Single Track
-  Other Proposed Bike Trails
-  New Bike Route or Trail
-  Trail Connections

Source: New River Gorge Trail Alliance (NRGTA)

Access to Food

Access to healthy food is an issue for Fayette County households. Access to fresh produce at grocery stores is a basic means to ensure residents' and households' health. In Fayette County, many of the areas which are served by grocery stores in the Plateau District lack choices, while the areas outside the Plateau District are completely underserved with healthy food.

Grocery Stores and the Fayette County Farmers Market

Though some basic groceries are provided at small convenience markets throughout the County, full-service grocery stores providing fresh produce and other fresh foods are lacking in the County. The County's grocery stores include Grant's IGA Supermarket and Kroger in Oak Hill, and Walmart Supercenter in Fayetteville, and are located in the Plateau District along Route 19 leaving large areas of the County outside the District underserved, including the New Haven and Valley Districts. Identifying potential sites for new grocery stores and allowing developers to establish them easily through the UDC is a common practice for communities to encourage new grocery stores.

The County can also consider several approaches to promote access to fresh food. Food cooperatives are an emerging trend, in which decisions regarding the production and distribution of its food are made by members, and often yield benefits to the local community through focus on local, organic, and sustainably-sourced products. Meanwhile, food trucks provide another approach to promote access to prepared food and the establishment of new restaurants by providing an incubator space for food entrepreneurs to test their ideas. Community gardens involve a piece of private or public land is gardened or cultivated by a group of people individually or as a group. Each individual gardener grows food within and is typically responsible for their own plot within the garden overall. Community gardens can promote access to healthy food and generate public health benefits.

The Fayette County Farmers Market operates from a site on Court Street in Fayetteville between May and October to provide access to fresh vegetables, eggs, and meat throughout the growing season. Other farmers markets also operate throughout Fayette County, including the Ansted Farmers Market, Gateway Farmers Market in Smithers, and New Roots Community Farm.

West Virginia University Extension and Other State Resources

West Virginia University Extension is a key partner in supporting access to healthy food. West Virginia University Extension works with the West Virginia Farmers Market Association, a membership-based organization that aims to strengthen the capacity of West Virginia Farmers Markets by providing Farmers Markets and their vendors with information needed to comply with existing rules and regulations. The organization has also been intimately involved with the Farm to School initiatives with the Fayette County Board of Education, including school gardens.

West Virginia University Extension provides a variety of community programming related to chronic disease prevention including a diabetes prevention course that is available to for public access. The organization also provides cooking and physical activity programs aimed at managing and improving individual health. The organization has a County Health Educator who teaches nutrition and physical activity in all Fayette County Schools and has a role in public health promotion county-wide.

Recommendations

Fayette County should consider the following actions to promote public health throughout the County and improve access to basic healthcare services.

1. Work with local healthcare providers to ensure that the range of services available at the County's small health clinics and primary care institutions, including those provided through the schools, offer the range of preventative care and specialized services needed to meet County residents' needs.
2. Ensure that grocery stores and food cooperatives are easy to establish in a variety of business areas to promote access to healthy food and amend the Unified Development Code as necessary to promote the uses.
3. Work with developers to identify sites for grocery stores, especially in underserved areas in the Valley and New Haven Districts, particularly near Meadow Bridge and Danese.
4. Consider allowing community gardens near residential areas to foster access to healthy foods and amend the UDC as necessary to promote these uses.
5. Consider allowing food trucks and farmers' markets, as temporary uses in commercial areas to enhance access to fresh food and amend the Unified Development Code as necessary.
6. Consider allowing food truck courts, or groupings of food trucks as a use in commercial areas or through an events permit process to support access to fresh food.
7. Ensure that health clinics are easy to establish in a variety of commercial areas. Consider allowing the uses in select residential districts. Assess the Unified Development Code to determine whether amendments are necessary.
8. Work with community agencies and healthcare providers to determine how access to healthcare services can be strengthened for residents of underserved areas, including identifying sites for new health clinics to expand access to healthcare throughout the County.
9. Support the farmers markets in Fayette County and communicate regularly with the organizations to understand their needs.
10. Support non-motorized transportation improvements as described in *Chapter 08: Transportation* to support active transportation options for residents.
11. Facilitate communication between the Fayette County Farmers Market, the West Virginia Farmers Market Association, and West Virginia University Extension to support the County Farmers Market's needs.
12. Work with West Virginia University Extension to raise awareness of its existing health-related programs including the diabetes prevention course and cooking and physical activity programs.
13. Build existing and explore new partnerships with the West Virginia University Extension, including support for individual local growers, efforts to create school gardens and provide education on nutrition through the Fayette County Board of Education, and the County Health Educator.



Healthcare options are very limited so residents almost always go out of the county for these services.

Section 6

Expand Senior Services

Senior citizens are the only age group in the County that increased in number in recent years. An aging population will affect many aspects of the County including health-care, housing, recreation, and the workforce and economy. As residents age, they often seek new housing options that allow them to stay in their community while downsizing their homes, often favoring low-maintenance units that are near basic goods and services. Understanding the changing needs of a growing senior population, including how to adjust the provision of housing, is essential and must be carefully considered and addressed.

Likewise, the provision of healthcare, assisted living, and elderly care facilities is a concern. Several nursing and assisted living homes and elderly care facilities are located throughout the County. Fayette Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and Amedisys Home Health Services are in Fayetteville, while Oak Hill Place, Kate Boone Care Home and Hidden Valley Center are in Oak Hill. Ansted Center, Montgomery General Elderly Care, and Hilltop Center are in Ansted, Montgomery, and in unincorporated land near Mount Hope, respectively. Montgomery General Hospital in Montgomery provides various senior medical care services. Many of the unincorporated areas outside the Plateau including Danese, Meadow Bridge, and Gauley Bridge do not have immediate access to nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or care facilities for elderly individuals. Transportation for senior citizens throughout the County is another key issue that stakeholders identified.



We need recreational facilities in the Upper Kanawha Valley. There is nowhere for seniors to go anymore.



There is a need for a centralized Senior Citizens Community center that provides meals, activities, classes, adult care.

Recommendations

The County should consider measures to strengthen the range of senior services available to residents to improve the availability of housing, transportation, and healthcare facilities available to support the needs of senior citizens. The County should:

1. Continue to work with Fayette Senior Services and the Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources to expand the scope and user-friendliness of transportation services available to seniors, particularly the timing and user-friendliness of the prescription pick-up and delivery services.
2. Coordinate with Fayette Senior Services to continue to improve the Meals on Wheels program and other senior programs offered.
3. Host regular outreach and social events with senior populations to identify current and emerging issues as well as potential solutions.
4. Coordinate with local law enforcement providers including the Fayette County Sheriff's Department and municipal police departments to provide wellness checks throughout the County. Provide training to support wellness check service delivery.
5. Work with individual municipalities to amend zoning ordinances to allow for a variety of housing types including accessory dwelling units, single-family attached, and small-scale multifamily uses to accommodate senior needs.
6. Work with municipal partners to identify locations that are best suited for senior housing based on proximity to related services and transit options.
7. Work with developers and municipal partners to seek state and federal funding to support the development of senior housing options that are affordable and amenity rich.
8. Amend the Unified Development Code to ensure that assisted living facilities and senior care facilities are easy to establish in various locations, including in the New Haven District near Meadowbridge and Danese. Consider allowing them in neighborhoods and commercial corridors.
9. Identify sites in the New Haven District outside the Plateau District that would be suitable for senior living facilities.

Section 7

Invest in Youth Programs

The need for youth involvement in the County and a greater range of youth activities in Fayette County arose as issues and concerns during the community outreach process. Currently, Fayette County's youth programs and activities are provided through various organizations. The Summit Bechtel National Scout Reserve, which opened in 2013, is another key recreational program provider for youth through the provision of activities and recreational amenities and is described in greater detail in the Recreation Chapter. A summer camp is available to area youth at the Summit Bechtel Reserve. In addition to science activities at each camp, activities such as rock climbing, bouldering, biking, archery, and zip lining are available to youth.

The WVU Extension Fayette County 4-H youth development program provides youth with leadership and life skill development, community service and engagement, and educational and recreational programming through projects, community service, clubs, and camps. Fayette County 4-H Camp is held annually at the Fayette County Park located near Beckwith. Fayette County's 4-H Clubs continually seek volunteer leaders to serve communities throughout the county but currently include:

- 0.50 caliber shooting sports
- Meadow Bridge Clovers
- Divide Elementary Blue Jays
- Fayette County Outdoor Adventures
- Fayette County Teen Leaders



We need more and better facilities for youth sports. Youth sports offer numerous benefits for a child's development, but we don't have adequate facilities.

Several other initiatives focused on youth programs or activities exist that the County could leverage. The Active Southern WV Kids Run Club is a free six-to-eight-week volunteer-led initiative designed to help youth develop a lasting enjoyment of exercise in West Virginia. Get Active in the Park is a partnership between the National Park Service and Active Southern West Virginia to deliver free beginner-level instructional programs to the New River Gorge National River region. Adventure Appalachia facilitates outdoor adventure experiences for adolescents and adults including whitewater rafting, kayaking, rock climbing, mountain biking, zip lining, and camping. Meanwhile, other programs in the County have been discussed in recent years in local planning efforts. Fayetteville's 2014 Comprehensive Plan recommends that a youth board be established to establish an organization for youth to present their ideas and promote involvement in the County.

Youth programs are closely tied to the availability of and access to recreation opportunities. See *Chapter 12: Recreation* for more information on increasing access to local amenities. See *Chapter 08: Transportation* for more information on creating pedestrian connections and supporting alternative modes of transportation.

Increase Childcare Options

A need for a greater range of childcare options arose as an issue in Fayette County. Stakeholders expressed that new childcare facilities should be explored and created however. Currently nine daycare facilities exist in the County. Because these facilities are largely clustered in Oak Hill and Fayetteville, and others are in Alloy, Mount Carbon, Kincaid, and other Valley communities, some of the New Haven areas are underserved. Inadequate access to or overly-expensive childcare can place strain on households' and inhibit the local economy by forcing parent to forgo work for childcare responsibilities. The County should take measures to increase the number and range of childcare facilities to ensure the adequate provision of these services.

Recommendations

Youth programs will be key assets that enhance quality of life in the County and attract and retain residents and household. The County should consider the following actions to improve youth programming.

1. Establish a partnership with youth organizations, faith-based organization, and community programs to identify and implement projects that are designed to improve the appearance and quality of life in Fayette County.
2. Work with the Boy Scouts of America to ensure that local youth have access to the property's amenities and activities.
3. Stakeholders within the district should work with the Boy Scouts of America to enhance the Leadership Fayette County youth leadership program and create additional opportunities for youth involvement at Summit Bechtel Reserve.
4. Continue to support partners such as the municipalities and Fayette County 4-H Club and Park that provide youth activities such as after school programs, camps, and other programs.
5. Support efforts to involve the youth in planning activities and events throughout the County, including but not limited to those related to recreation and tourism.
6. Support Fayetteville's initiative to develop a youth board to ensure that youth have the opportunity to present ideas for the County, discuss problems and needs, and promote youth involvement in the County.
7. Prioritize youth programs that do not rely on parent transportation. Engage with the Fayette County School Board to coordinate programming on school property and bus transportation.
8. Work to establish a sustainable funding program for youth activities and programs throughout the County.
9. Encourage the establishment of new childcare facilities. Assess the UDC to determine how and whether new childcare facilities could be encouraged through changes to the County's zoning regulations.
10. Advocate for adequate investment of capital by cities, towns and communities for accessible, affordable physical activity facilities and culturally relevant programming.
11. Collaborate with schools, communities, and local recreation partners to promote the value of healthy lifestyles and increase access to physical activity opportunities.

Section 8

Improve the Library System

The Fayette County Public Libraries provide educational, recreational, cultural, and informational services to residents. Each public library provides public wireless internet and contains at least four public computers with internet access. The libraries also include free programmed services, including storytime hours, summer reading hours, a notary service, and curriculum support. Rehabilitation of the County's library facilities, especially Meadow Bridge Library, is needed to improve these facilities' appeal and ensure access for all users. A total of **6 libraries exist within the County**. The County should explore how much of its 668 square miles of territory has insufficient access to these existing facilities. The Fayette County Libraries **table shows that all the libraries are over 35 years old in 2022**.

Fayette County Libraries		
Library Facility	Location	Year Constructed
Ansted Public Library	102 Oak Street	1976
Fayetteville Public Library	200 W Maple Ave	1959
Meadow Bridge Public Library	53 Monrado St	1985
Montgomery Public Library	707 Ferry Street	1977
Mount Hope Public Library	500 Main Street	1971
Oak Hill Public Library	611 Main Street	1968



A small library in the Nallen or Lookout area would be wonderful.

Recommendations

The County's libraries will continue to be community cornerstones. The County should consider the following actions to continue improving the library system.

1. Work with Fayette County Public Libraries to identify needed improvements to improve the condition of the County's libraries.
2. Collaborate with Fayette County Public Libraries and the County to identify gaps in program offerings for youth, adults, and senior citizens and develop the needed programs.
3. Work with Fayette County Public Libraries to determine whether additional library facilities are needed across the County to provide greater access for residents, or whether existing facilities should be consolidated.

Explore Expanded Garbage and Recycling Programs

The character and visual quality of Fayette County is a key community asset to residents and visitors. The presence of trash on properties throughout the County emerged as an issue throughout the County outreach process and was mentioned by the Fayette County Commission as an issue.

In 2013, the entire County had at least minimal access to curbside trash collection service, although some households reported bringing their solid waste to the Raleigh County landfill located near Beckley. Recycling services exist only at three drop-off locations at designated sites in or near Fayetteville. Currently, no private waste contractors provide curbside recycling services, although Fayetteville will pick up recyclable materials on-call from commercial establishments in the City. Residents indicated that new recycling programs would be key to support the County's sustainability. The County should explore a curbside recycling service and expanded recycling services at the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The County adopted a Litter and Solid Waste Control Plan in 2013 that assessed the feasibility of but did not recommend a curbside recycling program because the area's low-density character would make the program too costly to administer. Numerous other programs focused on trash and recycling exist in the County including small appliance pick-up and free dumpster days.

Recommendations

Fayette County should consider the following actions and recommendations to improve refuse collection services in the County and address refuse as it relates to property maintenance and aesthetics throughout the County. The County should:

1. Partner with the Fayette County Solid Waste Authority to explore new partnerships to promote proactive waste management.
2. Continue to assess the feasibility of implementing a curbside recycling service in the County. Determine whether such a service can be provided to specific areas such as urbanized unincorporated areas or the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.
3. Continue to raise awareness of the tire collection events, tire collection events, and dumpster days, and host new events to expand opportunities for tire collection and recycling in all areas of the County.
4. Continue to support and raise awareness of the other trash collection events, including small appliance pick-ups and free dumpster days.



We need a recycling program that is user friendly, with scheduled pick up days, receptacles provided.



Chapter 10

INFRASTRUCTURE

The adequate provision of infrastructure, including water and sewer services and broadband, is an essential component that allows land to be developed for commercial, residential, and industrial uses, and provides a minimum standard of living for residents. The provision of wastewater and water services is a key consideration in planning for the use and development of land and allows land to be proactively developed for use. Given the County's recent flooding events, stormwater management is also a pressing issue that can be managed through conventional infrastructure and green infrastructure. Further, a reliable and available broadband network is important to support a robust economy, attract and accommodate existing and emerging industries, and residents to work remotely. This chapter addresses issues and opportunities related to infrastructure and identifies actions for improvement.

Section 1

Provide Water and Sewer Services to Populated Areas

Providing adequate water and sewer services to Fayette County residents helps ensure a high quality of life and enables new land to be developed. Populated areas without water or sewer access, or with inadequate access to the services, is an issue throughout many areas of the County. The quality and reliability of existing water and sewer infrastructure, and the need to ensure the availability of clean water for all households, is an issue currently facing the county.

Much of the unincorporated areas surrounding Oak Hill and Fayetteville in the Plateau are not served with water and wastewater infrastructure. Properties that are not served with water infrastructure rely on alternative sources of water for their water supply. Many of these areas present some of the greatest potential for new development and redevelopment at higher densities. Similarly, many of the populated areas near Oak Hill, Fayetteville, and Mount Hope, which hold potential for development and redevelopment, are not served with wastewater infrastructure. Many of the areas that are unserved with wastewater infrastructure rely on private septic systems to manage wastewater, however some without septic systems rely on straight piping to discharge wastewater directly into the ground. The Fayette County Health Department requires that all septic systems being installed or modified be permitted, installed by a certified septic installer, and approved and inspected by a Sanitarian from the Department to ensure that they function adequately. If many of the areas currently served by well and septic were instead served with water and wastewater infrastructure, key areas of the county would be available for more intense development, including a greater range of housing options.

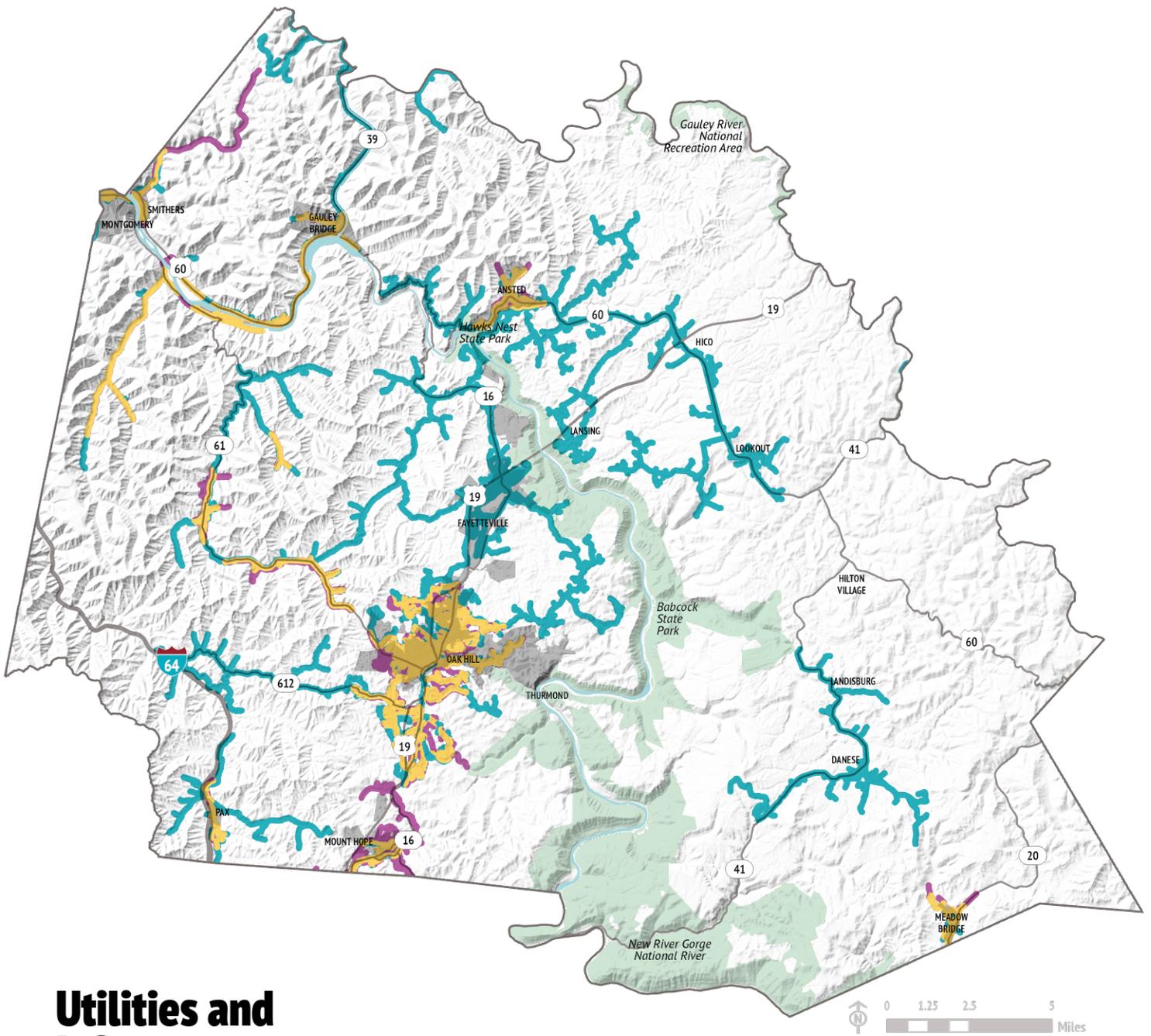
Strategies to improve and maintain the existing infrastructure will entail coordination with local and regional organizations and service providers. Additionally, the County can consider leveraging funding sources at the state level to support the improvement of existing water and sewer systems or the construction of new systems. Fayette County encompasses 670 square miles with hilly, and in some areas rugged, terrain that can be a challenge to providing infrastructure. Managing growth and development by targeting priority development areas will help ensure adequate access to infrastructure is provided in a cost-efficient manner to meet the County's needs. Because the extension of water and sewer infrastructure into areas currently not served will open up new development opportunities, the County should consider limits to new service areas in order to balance growth with the preservation of land along Route 19.

Small Capacity Wastewater Systems

Small sewage systems that serve ten thousand or fewer users or have an average daily wastewater flow of less than one million gallons can present a viable solution to manage wastewater in less populated areas. When terrain and slope limit the construction of a larger system, or when the areas that need service are geographically isolated or dispersed, these small, decentralized systems often provide an effective, low-cost alternative to a centralized system such as those in Fayette County. In Fayette County, the small sewage system that serves the Adventures on the Gorge campus can handle 32,000 gallons of wastewater daily and has proved effective. The County should consider similar systems in appropriate locations to effectively serve areas currently without such infrastructure.



The price of utilities compared to the quality of service provided is inconsistent in Fayetteville.



Utilities and Infrastructure

Large portions of unincorporated land throughout the County do not have access to water or sewer infrastructure.

- Served with Water and Sewer
- Served with Water Only
- Served with Sewer Only

Source: West Virginia Water Development Authority and West Virginia Infrastructure Jobs Development Council, Updated 2017

Recommendations

Fayette County should implement the following measures to improve the quality of water and sewer services throughout the County.

1. Locate new development where it can take advantage of existing or proposed water supply projects that would allow shared infrastructure costs.
2. Pursue all potential funding to expand and maintain infrastructure, including the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council, the West Virginia Water Development Authority, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, and the Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Grant Programs.
3. Engage Kanawha, Raleigh, and other neighboring Counties to explore the consolidation of sewer and water public service districts.
4. Monitor water main/pressure demands to incorporate replacements into the Capital Improvement Plan once one is developed.
5. Partner with the Fayette County Health Department to determine if the enactment of procedures regarding maintenance and regular inspection of individual, onsite septic systems is feasible.
6. Support the health department's efforts to educate residents regarding well and septic maintenance and best use practices.
7. Establish a menu of green infrastructure options for new developments to meet on-site stormwater management goals.
8. Establish and implement strategic plans for water quality management in partnership with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection Division of Water and Waste Management and consider leveraging resources such as the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.
9. Adjust stormwater utility fees as needed to account for additional infrastructure costs that may be recommended.
10. Pursue funding opportunities for the expansion of infrastructure through the West Virginia Jobs Development Council and the West Virginia Water Development Authority.
11. Extend a water and sewer infrastructure to areas identified for growth in the land use plan, including identified sites along Route 19 .
12. Consider developing a sewage collection and treatment plan to identify additional actions to improve wastewater management.
13. Consider the construction of small, low-capacity wastewater treatment systems to serve small, isolated areas of the County that require expanded access to wastewater systems.
14. Explore the consolidation of the County's water and wastewater entities to maximize each system's efficiency and achieve economies of scale.
15. Work with existing and potential new service providers to encourage the construction or renovation of water, wastewater, and broadband infrastructure simultaneously to serve new development. Identify locations for the simultaneous installation of water, wastewater, and broadband infrastructure.

Balance Growth and Infrastructure Expansions

Several of the County’s desired growth areas are not served by water or wastewater infrastructure. For instance, continued residential development, and some select commercial development on key sites, is planned for the areas surrounding Oak Hill, Fayetteville, Ansted, and Route 19 north of the New River. Many of these areas are not currently served with water or wastewater infrastructure, such as the land designated for residential growth east and west of Oak Hill. For these areas to appropriately develop to their full and desired potential, new infrastructure will need to be provided. The approach to providing adequate water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure in these areas will depend on the location, timing, and type of development proposed.

The areas with existing residential development northwest of Oak Hill along Bunker Hill Road, Summerlee Road, and Lochgelly Road, currently rely on private well and septic systems. For these areas designated for development, infill development consisting of single-family detached homes will likely be able to be accommodated with private septic and well systems, rather than requiring new water and wastewater infrastructure. Redevelopment and infill with multifamily or single-family attached areas, or other development that proposes increased residential densities, will likely require the extension of water and wastewater infrastructure.

Although the area along Gatewood Road east of Oak Hill is currently served with water and sewer infrastructure sufficient to accommodate existing development, the County should evaluate the upgrades that are needed to these services to accommodate new growth and development in this area over time. The County should work with local service providers to evaluate whether continued lot-by-lot development of single-family detached residential uses require major improvements to the level of service, or if the current approach is preferred and viable. The County should identify which infrastructure upgrades are needed to accommodate desirable development, such as multifamily or single-family attached uses, in priority areas.

Recommendations

Fayette County should consider the following activities to ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure to serve planned growth and development.

1. Work with local infrastructure service providers to extend water and sewer services to serve the County’s desired planned development and growth over time.
2. Explore partnerships with neighboring Counties to consolidate wastewater systems to maximize efficiency.
3. Identify and prioritize water and sewer projects that are needed to serve the growth and development anticipated in the land use plan.
4. Incorporate the priority water and sewer project into the capital improvements plan when it is developed.
5. Prioritize water and wastewater projects to maximize cost-effectiveness. Encourage development in locations that existing infrastructure can be extended.



The lack of infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) is the primary reason businesses and office parks have not been able to develop in some of the available commercial spaces.

Section 3

Manage Stormwater Impacts

Flooding and stormwater management are priority issues currently facing Fayette County. Heavy rainfall events led to severe flash flooding in Fayette and Kanawha Counties in August 2022, **which affected a 4.5-mile-long stretch of territory, and damaged cars, bridges, roads and over 100 residences**. The most severe impacts were in the Gauley Bridge and Smithers communities. The County's steep terrain causes stormwater to rapidly channel into low-lying areas along creeks and streams. In addition to flood damage, stormwater also generates water pollution concerns, as it collects and eventually runs off of parking areas and on other impervious surfaces, eventually discharging into waterbodies such as the streams, creeks, and rivers. This water discharge/runoff can impact the water quality, habitat, and overall health of ecosystems and riparian corridors throughout the county. Stormwater management and flood control is therefore a key consideration anywhere development occurs.

Currently, Fayette County's Unified Development Code (UDC) does not contain regulations that manage stormwater impacts as properties are developed. The County has a floodplain ordinance that governs the use of land and construction in floodplains. It limits development in special flood hazard areas, which have at least a one percent chance of flooding annually, as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It also contains standards regarding the construction, design, and placement of structures to prevent flood damage.

The County should take measures to control flooding and lessen the impact on natural systems as development occurs. The existing flooding and drainage issues present a concern throughout the county, however, the concerns will be compounded as residential and commercial growth pressures increase. Stormwater and drainage issues have the potential to damage properties and natural ecosystems such as the New River, unless appropriate regulations and management systems and protocols are put in place.

On-Site Stormwater Management

On-site stormwater management attempts to re-establish natural hydrologic processes in the built environment by employing a variety of "green infrastructure" systems and techniques. Stormwater management in Fayette County is a challenge due to the area's steep slopes, which lead to severe flooding risk in low-lying areas. Multiple techniques will be required to effectively manage stormwater. This can be achieved by using the following green infrastructure features, which can be incorporated in several different ways.

Bioswales

Depressed trenches with vegetation including shrubs or plants that are designed to hold stormwater, regulate the quantity of runoff onto adjacent sites, and facilitate the infiltration of stormwater into the ground. Bioswales are often successful when placed around the perimeter of parking lots to absorb automobile pollution.

Green Roofs

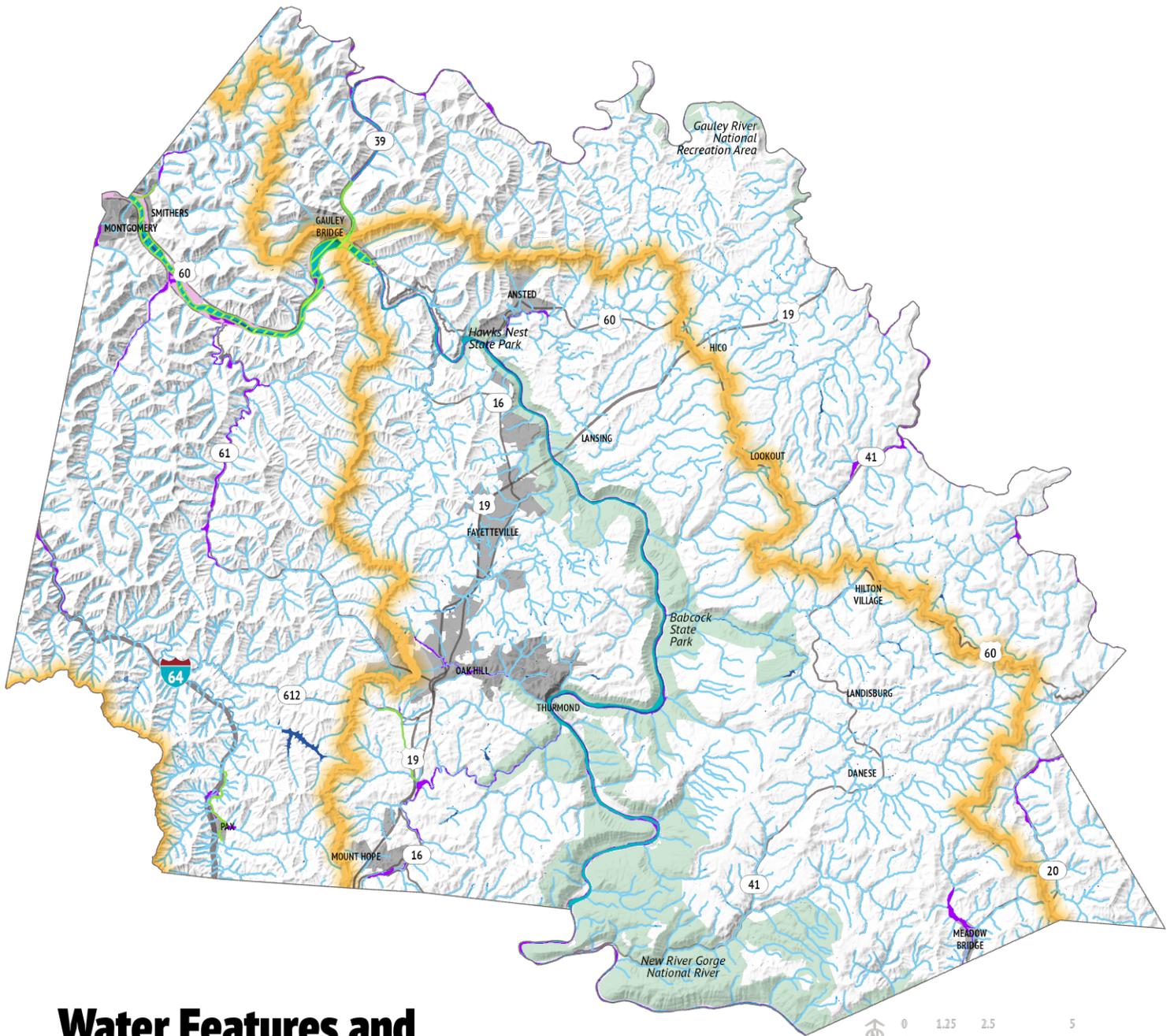
A layer of vegetation over a flat or slightly sloped roof and are effective in storing substantial quantities of precipitation, regulating the temperature of stormwater, and filtering contaminants. Green roofs can be installed on existing or new buildings.

Blue Roofs

Rooftop stormwater retention systems designed to temporarily store stormwater during precipitation events. The stormwater is temporarily stored and gradually released over time, which slows the overall rate of stormwater runoff across the County.

Naturalized Detention and Infiltration Trench

Shallow depressed areas designed to store stormwater runoff from adjacent soils and allow water to seep rapidly into the soil. Due to their linear character, detention and infiltration trenches are often installed parallel to roadsides or around parking lot perimeters.



Water Features and Flood Hazard Areas

Fayette County has three rivers: the Gauley River, Kanawha River, and the New River. The New River and Gauley River join to form the Kanawha River at the town of Gauley Bridge.

-  Creeks
-  Lakes and Ponds
-  River
-  Watersheds
-  Moderate Flood Areas
-  High Risk Areas
-  Floodway

Porous Pavement

Permeable pavement is made of a permeable material that enables stormwater to flow through it or non-porous blocks spaced to allow stormwater to flow between the gaps. Porous pavement can be incorporated as parking lots are constructed or reconstructed.

Rain Barrels

Rain barrels capture stormwater and hold it for later use to irrigate lawns, plants, or gardens. Rain barrels are a low-cost approach to improving stormwater management and do not require substantial site redevelopment to be implemented.

Rain Gardens

A depressed area in the landscape, typically containing perennial flowers and grasses, that collects rainwater from a roof, driveway, or street and allows it to soak into the ground. Rain gardens also filter pollutants in runoff and enhance site aesthetics.

These green infrastructure features each have unique advantages and disadvantages and are most appropriate in differing contexts. For instance, bioswales operate similar to a gutter, in that they store water and are most effective near parking lots but may be ineffective at retaining stormwater from rooftops. Conversely, rain barrels are more effective at storing stormwater runoff from rooftops and structures than parking lots and present a low-cost option that does not require substantial redevelopment of sites. These green infrastructure options will be key to ensure sustainability and environmentally friendly development as the County continues to grow over time.

Recommendations

The County should consider the following actions to improve stormwater management and reduce the impacts of flooding to residents, properties, and natural systems.

1. Update the Unified Development Code to enhance the existing regulations regarding stormwater management, including landscaping requirements around site perimeters, in off-street parking lots, and along building perimeters.
2. Review the off-street parking requirements to ensure that the construction of new off-street parking lots does not generate undue flood or stormwater concerns.
3. Incentivize rain gardens, bioswales, and other natural infiltration practices as private properties are developed to ensure that stormwater impacts are accounted for.
4. Construct green infrastructure features on public land, including parks, in public rights-of-way, and on public buildings to encourage greater stormwater retention.
5. Prioritize green infrastructure projects in low-elevation areas that are slated for continued commercial and residential development.
6. Provide public education on individual impacts to stormwater runoff, including positive steps homeowners can take, such as downspout disconnections from a pipe or paved area.
7. Establish a menu of green infrastructure options for new developments to meet on-site stormwater management goals.



Infrastructure need to be update or improved to prevent flooding county-wide.

Green Infrastructure Examples



Bioswale



Blue Roof



Green Roof



Rain Barrel



Rain Garden



Porous Pavement



Stormwater Drainage



Naturalized Detention Trench

Section 4

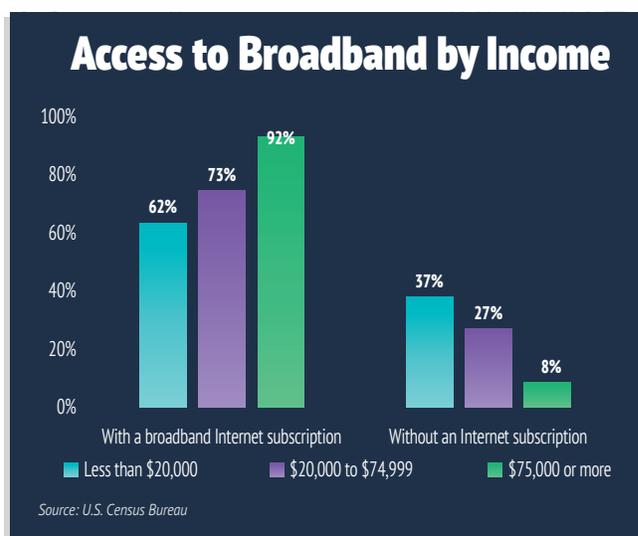
Increase Broadband Access

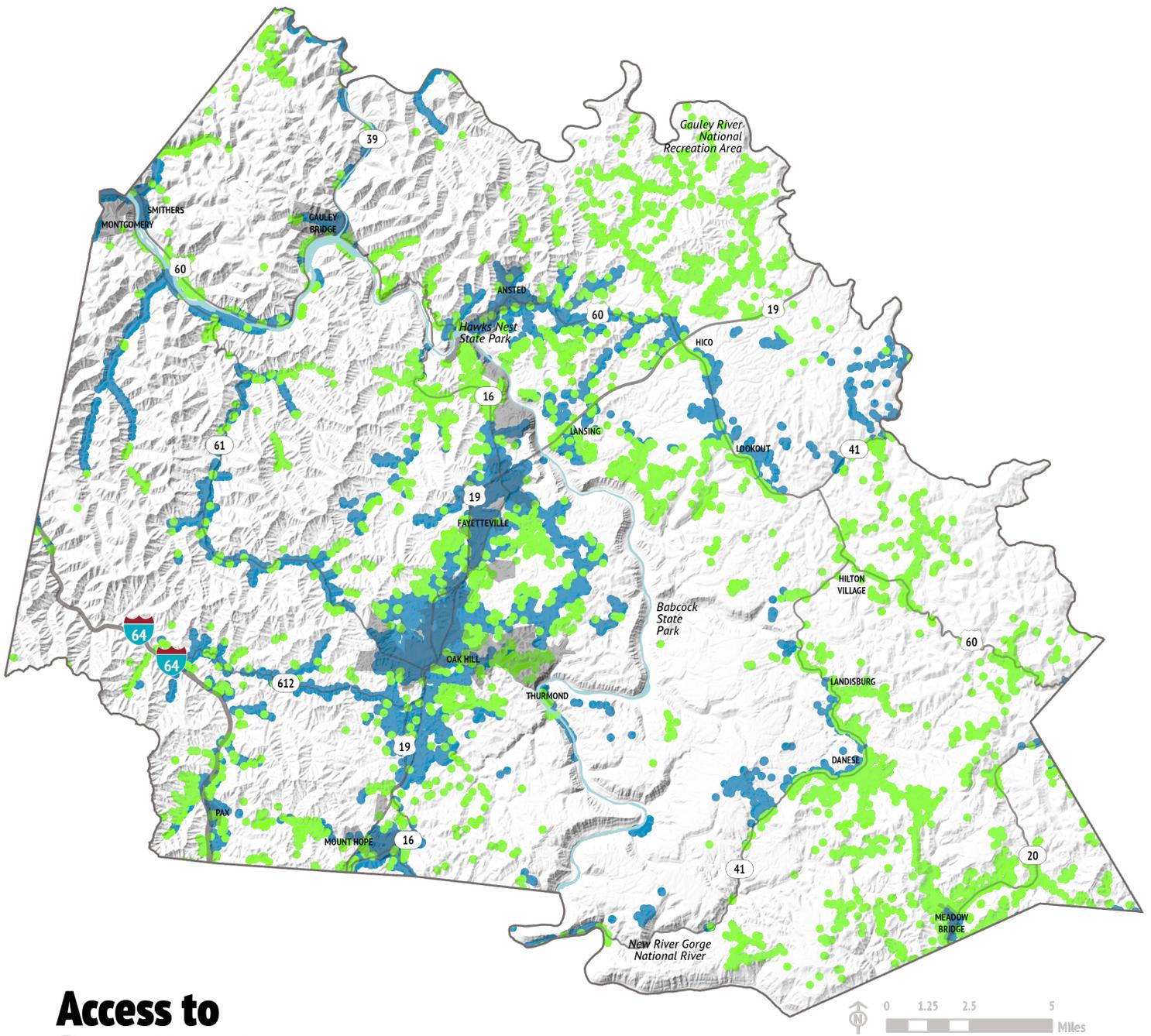
The internet is vital and essential infrastructure, just like roads and water. The internet is an increasingly integral part of nearly every aspect of life and supports the economy by linking businesses to the world, supporting all manner of financial services and transactions, enhancing customer access to global market, and allowing employees the ability to work remotely, thus enhancing Fayette County as a desirable and viable place to live. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2020, an estimated **4,264 Fayette County households (24.5%) do not have a broadband subscription**, which is much higher than 14.5% of US households without broadband subscription. Poor access to broadband disproportionately affects lower income households. Only **62% of households with an income of less than \$20,000 have access to broadband**, while 92% of households with an income of \$75,000 or more have access to broadband.

Wireless broadband refers to high-speed internet of at least 25 megabits per second delivered through a wireless network. Internet service providers often sell mobile broadband to consumers through a paid subscription to the service.

According to a recent broadband study conducted for Fayette County published by Design Nine Inc. Broadband Planners in 2018 the main internet delivery system is lower-speed and capacity DSL, which is often slow and unreliable. Few higher-capacity systems such as wireless, cable modem, and fiber are available and utilized in the county. Satellite internet is an option for remote areas of the County, but the service is also prohibitively expensive. West Virginia's low population density present barriers to the efficient provision of broadband services. It's mountainous geography can work for or against wireless broadband service; Towers located on tops of hills and mountains can provide service over a larger geography than normally, but steep terrain can also block signal.

The study defined the lack of broadband availability, slow speeds, and expensive service as key issues facing the county. The study stressed how broadband is essential to attract and retain young workers and accommodate employees that work from home. It highlighted the importance of fiber and improved wireless broadband services to support business and economic growth. The plan placed particular emphasis on improving wireless broadband by making community or county-owned tower available to Wireless Internet Service Providers and provisioning new towers in some underserved areas to support improved internet service. Expanding and enhancing the County's broadband infrastructure will work to close to digital divide, attract new businesses and industry, and promote the growth of existing businesses already in operation in the county.





Access to Broadband

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines high-speed internet/broadband as having a minimum download speed of 25 megabits per second (mbps) or 0.025 gigabits per second (gbps).

- Addresses with 25mbps or within an areas that has committed funding
- Addresses that are without access to 25mbps from either cable or fiber

Source: WV Office of Broadband

Cell Service

Cell phone service is also an issue in Fayette County that affects the community's desirability as a location for residents and visitors. In 2023, 99% of the County is served with wireless service, however the quality service is an issue. Though much of the Plateau, including Fayetteville, Oak Hill, and Mount Hope have access to 5G service, which is a minimum benchmark for quality service, some of the outlying communities in the Valley and New Haven Districts do not have access to 5G coverage.

“ I work remotely at my house. We have looked to move within the County several times, but the lack of internet makes it nearly impossible to find a place. ”

“ Broadband development needs to be one of the priority efforts made in the coming years. ”

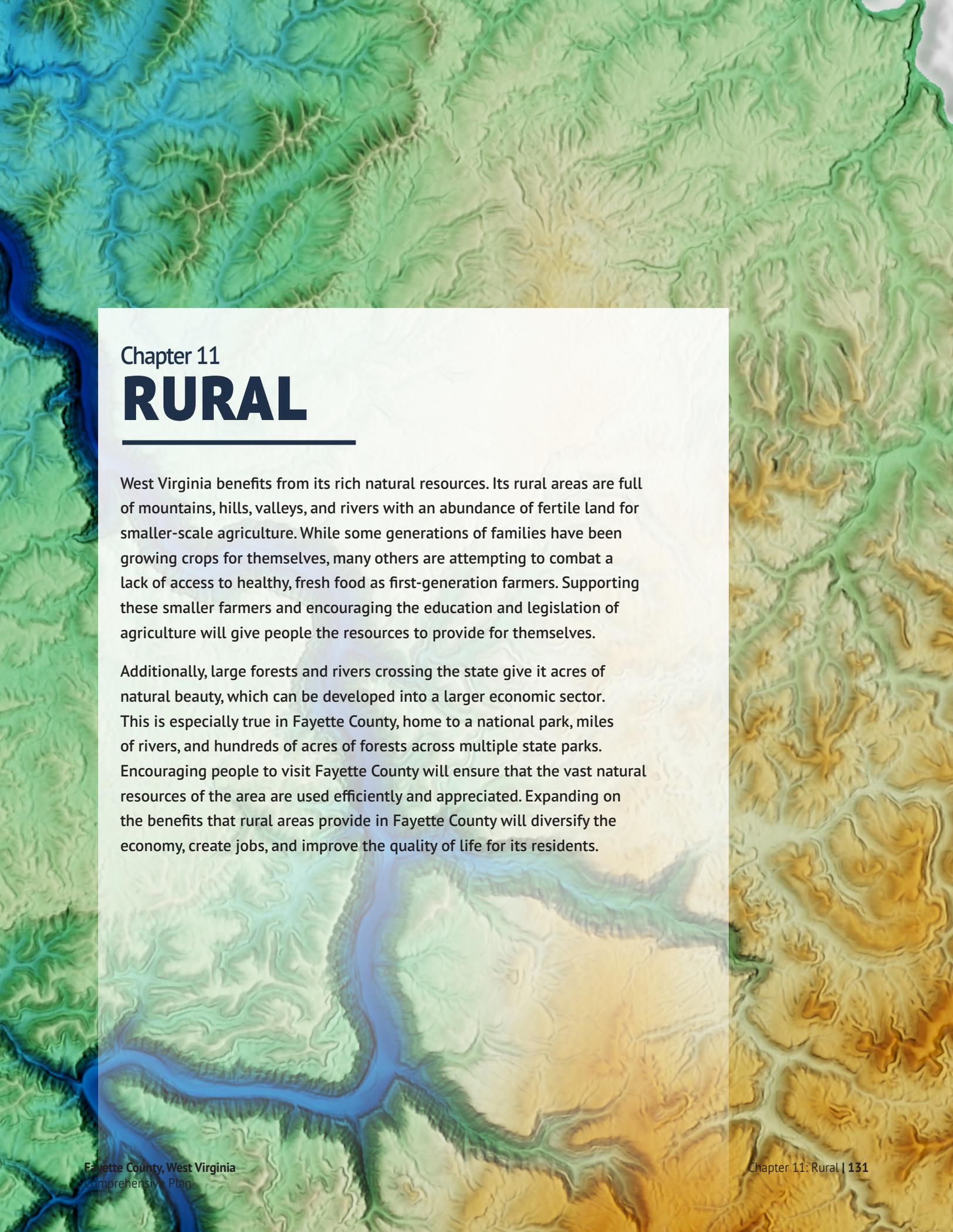
Federal and State Resources

Several funding opportunities are available at the federal and state level to assist with the expansion of broadband services in underserved areas. Fiber to the Home (FTTH) entails the installation and use of optical fiber from a central point directly to individual buildings such as residences, apartment buildings, and businesses to provide high-speed internet access of up to 1000 megabits per second. The Office of Broadband and West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council will have the tools to assist counties such as Fayette County to work with Internet Service Providers to expand FTTH through different federal grants. Presently there are several opportunities to receive Federal money when working with the Office of Broadband including American Retire Persons Association (APRA) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The IIJA has three pools of money including \$45 billion in the BEADs program, \$5 billion in the middle mile program. To qualify for this money the County needs to work with an Internet Service Provider and will need a 25% match. According to the Region 4 Planning and Development Council, at \$40,000 to \$75,000 a mile to expand FTTH, Fayette County will need approximately \$40 million dollars to connect under and unserved households.

Recommendations

Fayette County should consider the following actions to expand the availability and increase the quality of broadband services provided throughout the County.

1. Implement the actions defined in the 2018 Fayette County Broadband Plan to enhance broadband service and availability in the County, including those actions aimed to improve wireless broadband.
2. Identify sources of funding to support improvements to existing towers or build new towers to support wireless broadband service.
3. Partner with internet service providers and state-level agencies to promote access to resources such as the West Virginia Office of Broadband and West Virginia Economic Development Authority Loan Insurance Fund.
4. Utilize public and private agency partnerships to expand FTTH infrastructure and service throughout the County.
5. Keep informed on legislative efforts at the state and federal level to expand and improve broadband services in West Virginia.
6. Make county-owned towers available to Wireless Internet Service Providers.
7. Pursue funding through the West Virginia Office Of Broadband's State programs to obtain funding from sources like the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
8. Consider long-term funding strategies to support the expansion of broadband services, such as adding an increment to the 911 fee.
9. Define timelines and metrics for the actions defined in the to ensure the County is making progress to improve broadband access.
10. Establish a Broadband Development Team (BDT) comprised of local stakeholders meeting on a regular basis to work to proactively improve broadband in Fayette County. The Fayette County Broadband Plan identifies the following recommendations:
 - Identify funding sources and grant opportunities, and discuss which projects could qualify for grant funding;
 - Proactively identify new service providers that could be attracted to the area and should Meet with service providers to strategize on making towers available;
 - Meet with existing wireless service providers to invite them to join the effort;
 - Meet with the owners of existing towers to determine if they can support additional antennas; and
 - Develop a "first phase" project including first towers to receive improvements for service providers.
 - Work with the selected ISP to help determine the most cost effective routes and which connect the most households with FTTH network.
11. Seek and leverage federal resources available for the expansion of broadband services, including matching grant programs.
12. Partner with neighboring counties and communities, including Raleigh, Nicolas, Greenbrier, and Counties, and the City of Summersville to expand broadband access and level of service and to compete for funding for broadband expansion.
13. Work with an Internet Service Provider to obtain funding sources and the required 25% match.
14. Work with existing Internet Service Providers to provide Fixed Wireless broadband to remote areas.
15. Work with the Office Of Broadband and Generation of WV and other State agencies on adoption, job training skills and helping Fayette Countian's to overcome barriers and obtain all the benefits of a reliable broadband experience.
16. Work with Internet Service Providers to provide a reasonable speed connection at a reduced price and assist families who cannot afford a broadband connection.



Chapter 11

RURAL

West Virginia benefits from its rich natural resources. Its rural areas are full of mountains, hills, valleys, and rivers with an abundance of fertile land for smaller-scale agriculture. While some generations of families have been growing crops for themselves, many others are attempting to combat a lack of access to healthy, fresh food as first-generation farmers. Supporting these smaller farmers and encouraging the education and legislation of agriculture will give people the resources to provide for themselves.

Additionally, large forests and rivers crossing the state give it acres of natural beauty, which can be developed into a larger economic sector. This is especially true in Fayette County, home to a national park, miles of rivers, and hundreds of acres of forests across multiple state parks. Encouraging people to visit Fayette County will ensure that the vast natural resources of the area are used efficiently and appreciated. Expanding on the benefits that rural areas provide in Fayette County will diversify the economy, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for its residents.

Section 1

Preserve and Protect Farmland

Agriculture is still a developing industry in West Virginia. The state legislation surrounding the industry is updated infrequently, and some state experts have expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of funding for agricultural research. In its current state, **agriculture contributes \$800 million to the West Virginia economy**. However, the unique landscape of the state provides an opportunity to expand this sector of the economy using existing resources.

In Fayette County, steps have already been taken to increase the efficiency and scope of agriculture. Currently, the county has several hundred acres of established agriculture conservation easements, which protect the land from non-agricultural development. Agriculture easements also provide public benefits such as improvement environmental quality, historic preservation, and protection of wildlife habitat and open spaces. However, **agricultural land only makes up 10% of the county's 660 square-mile area**, so the small agricultural easements will need to be used in conjunction with other strategies to make agriculture more successful.

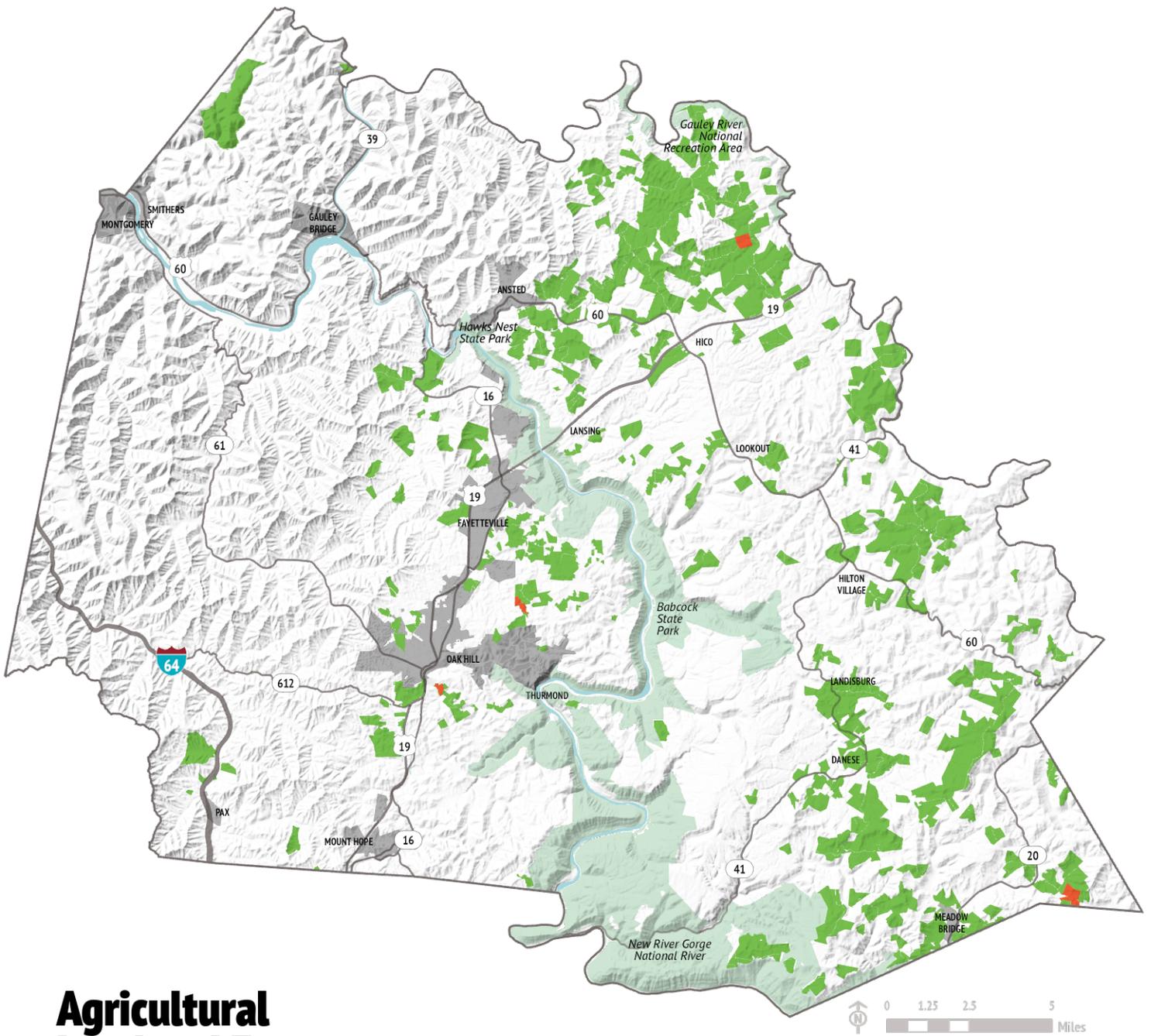
Increase Recognition of Farmland Protection Board

The Fayette County Farmland Protection Board is an important resource for farmers. The West Virginia Farmland Protection Board is funded through the US Department of Agriculture, creating standards which determine how much applicants can receive when applying to their various programs. This includes the establishment of conservation easements, or to pay the costs associated with ownership of a purchased or donated easement. This is inherently different from the West Virginia Land Trust, which is a non-profit, non-legislative organization which has the ability to establish conservation easements under the guidelines of the Farmland Protection Board. The Board needs to increase its outreach capabilities to gain more recognition and encourage farmers to take advantage of their available resources.

Recommendations

To establish agriculture as a profitable option for people in Fayette County, it will be important to ensure that the abundant natural resources in the County are available to new farmers for generations. To ensure that this resource is cared for, and profitable, the County should:

1. Create and support programs that connect new farmers to landowners and provide financial incentives for both parties to encourage the development of new farmland, such as purchasing and leasing subsidies, or grants to help turn non-agricultural land into farmable property.
2. Reclaim abandoned mine lands by clearing debris and removing pollutants throughout the county, and ensure their safety for use as urban gardens or other community resources.
3. Implement programs to recognize local farmers and their goods and create opportunities to promote their products to a wider audience, creating a wider market for local products that supports local farmers and helps them preserve their farmland.
4. Connect new farmers to educational and financial resources through established organizations, such as the Farmland Protection Board.
5. Work with the Farmland Protection Board to establish an agricultural land trust with a broad coalition of farmers, researchers, and County leaders collaborating with individual landowners to acquire agricultural easements and restrict nonagricultural development of valuable farmland.
6. Establish an agricultural heritage program, which would provide a voluntary, incentive-based process for permanently preserving small farms and agricultural lands that provide a public benefit.
7. Work with farmers and private landowners to identify and apply for federal funds in conservation and preservation programs.
8. Work with the Fayette County Farmland Protection Board to increase their outreach capabilities and connect with the County's farmers.
9. Create programs and incentives for indoor agriculture and coordinate with redevelopment strategies for vacant and underused buildings.



Agricultural Land and Easements

Agricultural land makes up just over 10 percent of the County's land area.

- Agricultural Easement
- Agricultural Land

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

“ Fayette County is a rural and remote place which contributes to its charm.

“ There is a need for more farming jobs, Fayette County still has some farmland left.

Section 2

Support Agritourism

Agritourism connects agricultural production and operations with tourism to attract visitors to a farm, orchard, or other agribusiness for entertainment, experience, and education. Agritourism ranges from farm tours and stays to “You-Pick” farm operations where visitors can participate in the harvest of a product. Monetizing agricultural industries and using existing resources for tourism falls under this category.

In Fayette County, agritourism has already seen success. The County hosts several barn venues on working farms that are used as wedding and event spaces, local breweries using local hops, farmers’ markets to showcase local goods, and farm-to-table restaurants. Expanding these businesses for the County is a perfect way to be efficient with available resources. Since the County, and the State, lacks the space and resources to grow cash crops, it is important to use available space in as many ways as possible while maintaining the integrity of the land. Employing agritourism allows people to promote their businesses to a wider audience and will help grow the agricultural economy of the County.

Partnerships with organizations at the local and state level, including the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau, an organization located in Oak Hill focused on building the area’s tourism economy, and Visit West Virginia, a state-level organization focused on tourism, pose opportunities to market and grow the agritourism in the County. West Virginia University Extension provides a variety of resources that could assist in promoting agritourism expansion including business retention and expansion services, a rural tourism program that provides research, planning, and training programs to support sustainable tourism.

The State recently adopted Chapter 19. Agriculture. – Article 36. Agritourism Responsibility Act of the West Virginia Code to support the development of Agritourism. The County should examine the State Code and identify potential amendments necessary to comply and support the State’s initiative.



There is a need for more farmers markets, street festivals, and food trucks.

Recommendations

Making sure that the natural resources of Fayette County are responsibly and effectively used for the benefit of its residents requires creative use of resources. Agritourism is a viable and profitable way for landowners to benefit from their resources. The County can assist these business owners in the following ways:

1. Promote and encourage people to take the Agritourism Training Initiative.
2. Ensure that business owners receive the education they need to run a successful agritourism operation.
3. Cluster agritourism operations near each other to create regional experiences for visitors. These clusters should allow for a range of experiences within a reasonable distance from each other. Offering different operations throughout the clusters will create a diverse range of opportunities for people coming to Fayette County.
4. Increase the number of conservation easements within the County. Provide financial incentives for people to operate agritourism businesses on their properties to diversify incomes.
5. Support farmers’ markets, farmstands, fresh food delivery trucks, food co-ops, fresh food programs in schools, and onsite sales from County vegetable gardens.
6. Create clear guidelines for how a working farm or agribusiness should safely prepare to host visitors.
7. Work with the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau, Visit WV, and other state partners to add a section for agritourism on the website.
8. Support local foods movement and agribusiness, agritourism development with support from WVU Extension.
9. Update the County’s codes and regulations to clearly define “you-pick” operations such as orchards, on-site farm sales, and similar uses.
10. Provides incentives to businesses that advertise and use locally grown produce and products to support the growing agricultural economy.
11. Coordinate seasonal marketing of local food experiences with local growers, hospitality businesses, and other providers to ensure availability based on harvest and tourism patterns.
12. Examine the State Code and identify potential amendments necessary to comply and support the State’s initiative.

Encourage Sustainable Agricultural Practices

As agriculture grows within Fayette County, it will need to consider the long-term effects of crops and livestock. Developing sustainable agriculture practices will ensure that the industry grows at a rate that does not negatively impact later generations. The USDA has outlined practices that define sustainable agriculture, including satisfying human food and fiber needs, enhancing environmental quality and natural resources, sustaining the economic viability of farming, and improving the quality of life for farmers. The expansion of agriculture in Fayette should consider these principles, and expand on them, to ensure the long-term success of the industry.

Rural Energy for America Program

Funding opportunities exist to help farmers implement sustainable practices. For instance, the Rural Energy For America Program (REAP) is administered by the US Department of Agricultural and provides financing for agricultural producers and small businesses to implement renewable energy systems.

Recommendations

To improve sustainable practices while also increasing the economic benefit from agriculture in Fayette County, it is important that new farmers quickly develop skills to ensure that their land and fields are sustainable for generations. The County can support new farmers in sustainable agriculture practices in the following ways:

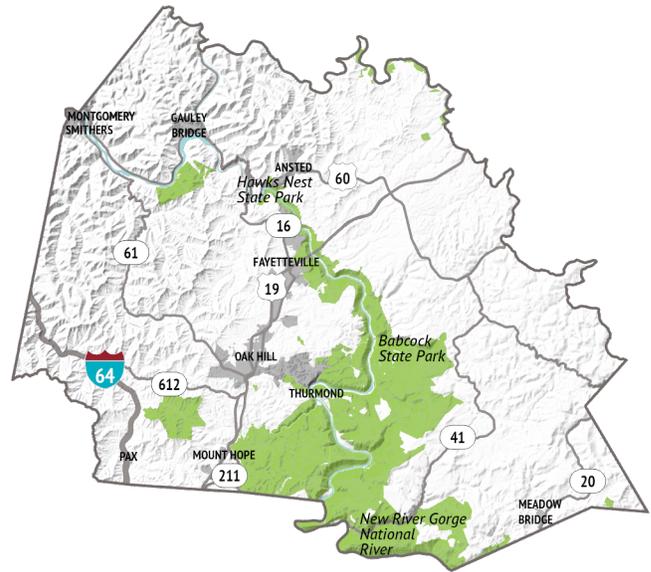
1. Support small-scale and introductory agricultural endeavors. Ensure that new farmers have resources available to ensure their success.
2. Assist in the development of experiential knowledge for farmers. Fund research and share findings with new farmers to establish a tradition of farming with the support of the County.
3. Support the Farmland Protection Board and promote their resources to farmers in Fayette County.
4. Assist farmers in the acquisition of grant funding from outside sources. There are ample financial opportunities at the federal and state level, including the Rural Energy For America Program (REAP). The County could help provide access to these resources by keeping track of available funds, who has received them, and other information that would help local farmers receive funding.
5. Promote the adoption of sustainable practices to mitigate impacts to surface water and groundwater quality, prepare for drought and extreme weather, and address pest and disease threats.
6. Offer tax abatements or variances to encourage private property owners to implement sustainable agricultural practices that maintain a high level of surface water and groundwater quality.
7. Promote rotational grazing, soil conservation, pest management, crop diversity, agroforestry, stream and creek protection, and other agricultural best practices.
8. Support agriculture business succession planning to connect experienced farmers and business owners with young farmers and entrepreneurs.
9. Support development of food aggregation and processing sites throughout the county to ensure freshness and access to all residents and businesses.

Section 4

Conserve Wildlife and Natural Resources

West Virginia has a renewed dedication toward conservation, considering the state's depleting mineral resources. The rural areas of Fayette County are different than traditional rural definitions, characterized by hills, mountains, valleys, and forests as opposed to large swaths of open farmland. The abundance of forests and rivers for hunting and fishing contribute to the County's reputation as a haven for outdoor recreation. The designation of New River Gorge National Park and Preserve as a National Park in 2020 adds another resource to the County's list of natural resources. About 200 of 660 Fayette County's square miles are made up of protected natural areas. These areas include the New River Gorge National Park, state parks, wildlife management areas, conservation easements, and Summit Bechtel Reserve. Fayette County needs to protect these areas because they are a defining part of its character and culture.

Already, the County contains several wildlife protection areas. The Beury Mountain Wildlife Management Area and Plum Orchard Lake are protected by the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources. These areas serve visitors and residents as undisturbed hunting, fishing, and recreation areas. The New River Gorge National Park and Preserve provides even more recreational activities and is a new resource for the County that should be promoted as much as possible.



Conserved Land

Areas of wildlife conservation includes the New River Gorge national park, state parks, wildlife management areas, conservation easements, and the Summit Bechtel Reserve.

 Areas of Wildlife Conservation

Source: U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Updated 2020; U.S. Department of Agriculture

CASE STUDY

Managing Kudzu

Farmville, VA

Kudzu was first introduced to the United States at a Philadelphia trade exposition in 1876. Originally meant to be ornamental, the vine quickly became a highly invasive species across the United States. It can grow up to a foot a day, rapidly covering acres of land and smothering plants that lie below. It is especially prevalent in the southeastern United States but has moved northward and can be found along roadsides, old fields, forest edges, and disturbed areas. The primary weapons against these plants are chemical herbicides, but it often takes several cycles to fully kill the infestation. While effective, chemical herbicides can have detrimental effects on other plants in the infested area and can negatively affect other resources.

Considering these negative effects, many municipalities and landowners are exploring new, sustainable methods of combating kudzu growth. The Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District in Farmville, VA used funds from the Virginia Outdoors foundation to protect the land at the edge of the Appomattox River using a new method of removing kudzu: goats. Using 40 adult female goats and 62 babies, a section of the creek was penned off to allowed the goats to graze for five days. The goats removed all the kudzu growth from the area and, while it did not fully kill the kudzu, it greatly reduced the amount of herbicide and work hours necessary to remove the invasive plant.

Recommendations

The rural landscape of Fayette County is one of its most important assets. Ensuring its long-term longevity and character should be a priority for the County. Some strategies to guide the protection of natural resources are found here:

1. Ensure that Fayette County is taking the proper measures to combat invasive species such as kudzu. Especially given the National Park designation of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, it is important to preserve native populations to ensure the long-term sustainability of the region.
2. Employ conservation design practices where possible to minimize environmental impact from new developments and infrastructural improvements.
3. Cooperate with the DNR Office of Lands and Streams to ensure that hunting and fishing regulations are enforced, and native species are being protected.
4. Utilize the work of various non-profits to prioritize wildlife and natural resource conservation efforts, and showcase their work within the County.
5. Work with non-profit and recreation groups to encourage conservation and recreation focus events in Fayette County



Chapter 12

RECREATION

Access to recreational resources has a great impact on a community's quality of life, providing opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the community and the outdoors. Not only do recreational resources improve the daily life of Fayette County residents, but they also increase economic growth in the County. Further, amenities such as a community recreation center often function as gathering spaces or “third spaces” in which residents interact and connect. These facilities are also key locations that support programming and activities for youth and seniors.

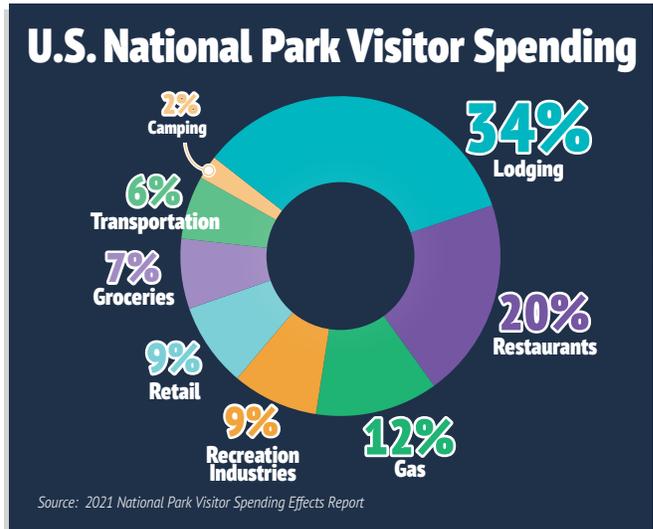
Section 1

Take Advantage of Natural Resources and Recreation

The County has access to numerous regional recreation and natural resources including the newly designated New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, Hawks Nest State Park, and Babcock State Park. Access to these resources provides the opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy recreational activities such as hiking, biking, climbing, rafting, camping, hunting, birding, and fishing.

Access to regional recreation and natural resources has positive economic impacts on the County. The National Parks Service has documented the economic benefits that national parks generate in surrounding communities. The study indicated that in 2021, the New River Gorge National Park saw more than **1.6 million visitors**, received **more than \$82 million in visitor spending**, generated more than **\$32 million in worker income**, and **added over \$100 million in value added to the local economy**. Visitor spending nearly doubled between 2020 and 2021. With the creation of the New River National Park and Preserve, the County will likely see additional funds to help develop more trails, parking, wayfinding, and signage, and other recreation opportunities given the influx of visitors to the park.

Though these resources provide a great benefit to the County and its residents, there are some drawbacks associated with the region's growing popularity, such as overcrowding, added pressure on infrastructure, and an increase in housing costs. The County will need to find a balance between the costs and benefits that come with great access to recreation and natural resources. The County should also consider identifying special areas of value and interest to create recreational opportunities including hiking trails and parking.

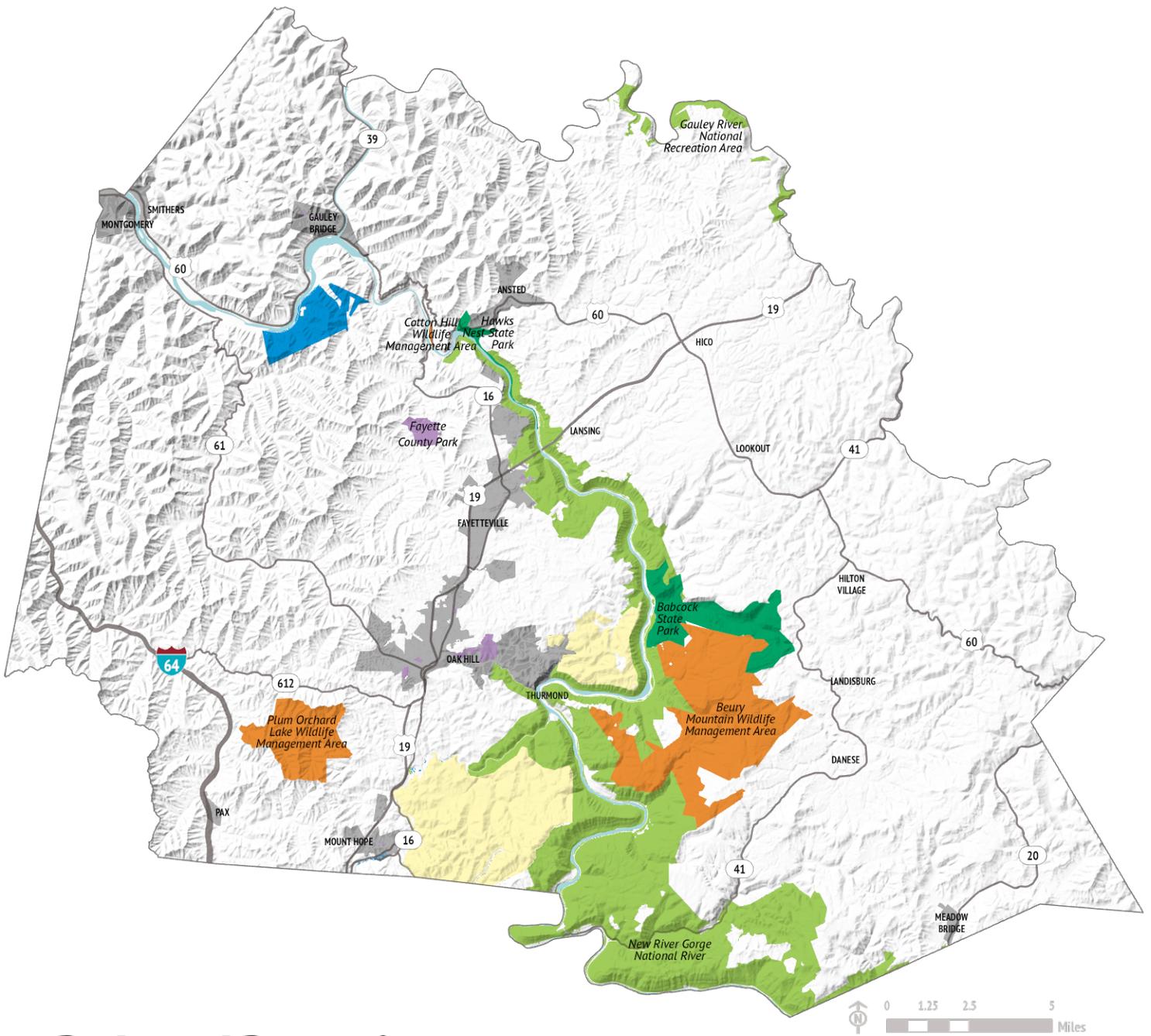


Recommendations

To alleviate some of the pressures that accompany recreation and natural resources the County should identify areas to improve recreation opportunities and work to distribute access to recreation throughout the County. To accomplish this, the County should:

1. Identify opportunities to expand recreation outside of the National and State parks such as County Parks and the Kanawha River. For example, the New River waterfront outside of the New River Gorge National Park remains underutilized.
2. Seek opportunities to develop new non-motorized trails to allow for greater access to scenic areas.
3. Develop gateway and wayfinding signage as recommended in Chapter 13 to help residents and visitors easily navigate to the parks and recreational amenities.
4. Partner with organizations such as the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau to advertise existing recreational opportunities throughout the County.
5. Invest in existing greenspace, including protections, maintenance, and enhancements, to optimize residents' usage and benefits to County residents.
6. Work with the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau and trail groups such as the Fayette County Trails Coalition to identify areas where hiking and biking trails could be better connected.
7. Coordinate with the National and State parks to improve existing facilities and build new ones associated with the park such as public parking lots, restrooms, and trailheads.
8. Identify funding sources such as grant programs to such the development of new trails and recreation opportunities.
9. Incentivize businesses that can provide recreational opportunities such as boat rentals and river floating.
10. Ensure that measures are taken to maintain and improve existing County owned recreation facilities, such as Fayette County Park, which is utilized by organizations such as Fayette County 4-H, Adventure Fayette County, and Active Southern WV.
11. Explore a partnership with West Virginia University Extension as it works with Fayetteville and other organizations in the region to develop Destination Management Plans to address current growth, future trends, growth management, and optimize resources for tourism-related development.
12. Work with water quality advocacy groups to develop solutions to non-point source pollution and ensure clean water throughout the county.





Parks and Recreation

Access to recreational resources has a great impact on a community's quality of life, providing opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the outdoors.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ Wildlife Management Area | ■ State Park |
| ■ Conservation Easement | ■ National Park |
| ■ County, Municipal, or Private Park | ■ Boy Scouts of America Property |

Source: U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Updated 2020; U.S. Department of Agriculture



Our parks draw people to our area. We are asking people to come visit our area and we are not able to accommodate the amount of people that will come. The parking around trail heads, climbing areas and natural areas are already busting at the seams.

Section 2

Create Four Seasons of Recreation

Fayette County's beautiful scenery is often experienced in the warmer months through activities such as whitewater rafting, hiking, mountain biking, and sightseeing. Because of this reputation, the winter months bring about fewer visitors due to the cold and the perception of recreational opportunities. Given the many natural amenities of the area, and the pristine beauty of the region in winter, the County should consider ways to expand winter offerings to visitors and residents.

Fayette County's existing amenities that can be leveraged and supported to encourage year-round visitors. ATV tracks can be used for snowmobiling, hills can be used for sledding, and hiking trails can be kept open throughout the year. Hunting, fishing, and camping offerings in the area are just as impressive as they are in warmer months. Supporting infrastructural improvements to existing amenities, such as constructing more winter-ready cabins and stays and promoting the many available winter opportunities will create better experiences for people looking to travel in the winter. Promoting the many available winter opportunities will create better experiences for people looking to travel in the winter. These opportunities need to be identified. This can include the many events that happen in the municipalities such as the polar plunge, holiday markets, themed events like Fayetteville's Harry Potter weekend.



Year-round recreation options such as a community center with fitness, climbing wall, and aquatic programming would be a great community-building hub. A sticking point for residents is the lack of recreation opportunities through the winter months. Having indoor options that are protected from the elements would create more consistent access to recreational opportunities and build a healthier, more resilient community.

Year-round recreational opportunities will also improve the quality of life for year-round residents and would be an opportunity to create jobs in the tourism sector throughout the year. More about this strategy can be found on page 62 in the *Develop the Fayette County Workforce* section of *Chapter 06: Economic Development*.

Recommendations

While winter months attract fewer tourists, there are many opportunities to create unique winter experiences for visitors and residents alike. To establish winter recreation infrastructure, the County should:

1. Explore opportunities to develop infrastructure built for year-round experiences. Increase the development of cabins and hotels to support year-round tourism and promote the beauty of winter in Fayette County.
2. Promote the abundant hunting and camping available during the colder months in Fayette County. Encourage the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau to highlight winter hunting, fishing, and camping opportunities.
3. Plan for trail upkeep to promote winter activities. Determine the most suitable trails for winter hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing and coordinate to ensure trails are properly groomed to promote the activities. Provide heated rest areas at major trailheads and at community amenities and construct parks with year-round activities in mind.
4. Construct indoor recreation facilities to encourage recreational activity during the winter months.
5. Work with local municipalities and the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau to market events and activities, such as outdoor markets and festivals, during the holidays and coldest months of the year.
6. Create a County-wide "vision for winter" to fully determine the locations for most viable winter opportunities including winter hiking, sledding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, climbing, "fatbiking" (winter mountain biking), and market the enthusiasm for these activities.
7. Provide access and equipment to residents who want to get involved in indoor and outdoor recreation.

Section 3

Increase Access to Local Amenities

Fayette County is in the heart of Appalachia, a region known for its beautiful mountains, gorges, valleys, rivers, and forests. Fayette County benefits from the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, Babcock State Park, Hawks Nest State Park, and its other forests and rivers. While these amenities are numerous and expansive, there are few County-owned and operated parks and recreation facilities. While outdoor recreation assets draw many visitors to the region each year, many county residents lack access to strategically placed park and community-based sports and recreational amenities that they can take advantage of regularly.

The County has a noticeable lack of pocket-parks, indoor recreation facilities, and urban greenspaces that are targeted toward local use. Increasing the availability of recreational opportunities that are aimed towards full-time residents would increase the quality of life for people in Fayette County. Having further outdoor access like trails and boat launches, more riverfront recreation opportunities, and permanent infrastructure such as community centers are investments in the current residents of Fayette County, and future generations that would call it “home”. Additionally, ensuring that any new amenities or any construction to existing amenities incorporates programming and infrastructure that supports education for youths. One of the most important steps in ensuring the longevity of Fayette County’s natural resources is educating future generations on the history and importance of those resources.

In addition to the need for local recreation amenities, there is a need for recreational assets throughout the County to be well connected and easily accessible to residents and visitors. See *Chapter 08: Transportation* for more information on creating pedestrian connections.

Develop a Community Recreation Center

County residents highlighted the need for a community recreation centers throughout the County to provide a space for residents to gather and participate in activities together. The Fayette County Park is a great amenity that currently has a softball field, 18-hole disc golf course, hiking trails, basketball court, tennis court, volleyball court, fishing ponds, horseshoe pits, and a pool. However, the Park is far from some County communities such as Danese and Spring Dale. There are areas of the County that currently lack such a public recreation facility that allows residents to gather. These facilities often function as “third places”; a location that allows residents to come together, spend time in groups, exchange ideas, and build relationships outside of home, often referred to as first place, and work, often referred to as second place.

Given the size of the County, the County should consider developing multiple Community Recreation centers to fulfill this need. The facilities should be dispersed throughout the County to ensure access to residents that live throughout the County and provide programs that serve a variety of age ranges and lifestyles. The County can also partner with existing facilities to provide more diverse recreational options. For example, senior centers are in Meadowbridge and Alderson to Fayette County’s southeast, which could provide recreational opportunities to the County’s eastern areas. YMCA centers are also planned in Montgomery and Smithers that would provide recreational opportunities to the community. The Neal D. Baisi Athletic Center in Montgomery has provided a gymnasium, a pool, and workouts paces, and stakeholders have discussed partnerships between West Virginia and the City to reopen the location in recent years. The County could consider facilitating partnerships with these organizations to expand recreation centers in the County.

Recommendations

Fayette County should look for opportunities to improve local amenities. The actions listed below will provide a framework for the County to develop its resources that can benefit residents and visitors.

1. Review and update zoning as necessary to ensure amenities such as trail access and open space are incorporated into the design of new residential and commercial developments. These developments should be directed for use by their local communities.
2. Identify locations for multiple local recreation centers to serve residents from throughout the County, increase the opportunities for recreation and sports for youth, and offer fitness programs for a variety of age ranges and lifestyles.

3. Partner with existing and planned facilities such as the senior centers in Meadowbridge and Alderson, the YMCA centers in Montgomery and Smithers, and the Neal D. Baisi Athletic Center in Montgomery to expand access to indoor recreation.
4. Activate low-impact recreation along the New River, with amenities such as a riverwalk park that serves the whole County.
5. Identify areas for additional local parks as the County grows.
6. Expand the Adventure Fayette County program to continue to help kids find local recreation interests.
7. Publicize the County's local recreation amenities and activities through all available channels, from the County's website to social media accounts.
8. Work with municipalities to create green spaces within urbanized areas.
9. Work with New River Gorge National Park and Preserve to identify recreation infrastructure to support tourism and local transportation.
10. Encourage development of low-impact recreation along the Kanawha River, with amenities such as an accessible riverfront walking trail.
11. Use funding sources and tax incentives to repair and renovate the Soldiers and Sailors Building in Fayetteville, to create a community recreation center for the County. See *Chapter 07: Renewal and Redevelopment* for more information on strategies for redeveloping existing buildings.
12. Facilitate consistent communication between the National Park Service, Fayette County, and local municipalities to coordinate improvements to the recreation system.

CASE STUDY

Developing New Recreation Opportunities

Oak Hill, WV

The City of Oak Hill, in partnership with the West Virginia Land Trust, purchased 283 acres of land to create Needleseye Boulder Park. The park is a natural area that provides recreational opportunities such as climbing, hiking, and mountain biking.

The project cost is estimated to be about \$600,000. The City contributed \$25,000 towards the purchase of the property. The West Virginia Land Trust and grants from the Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund provided the remaining funds. The Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund was created to invest in the conservation of unique and important wildlife habitats, natural areas, forest lands, farmlands, and lands for hunting, fishing, and recreation.

Chapter 13

COMMUNITY DESIGN

One of Fayette County's best assets is the quality of life for residents and businesses and the opportunities it offers for visitors. Supporting quality of life, the County's access to parks and recreation, natural beauty, and scenic views were the most frequently identified physical assets during community outreach. Additionally, the County's small town feel, community character, and community pride were identified as strengths. These strengths and assets can be further enhanced through establishing a clear identity and encouraging effective design elements.

Public and private realm improvements and activities identified in this chapter will contribute to Fayette County's community character and sense of place. Community Design ensures that the physical attributes that make the County unique are retained and enhanced. The chapter offers recommendations for design elements that respond to the County's physical setting, historical assets, and scenic and cultural amenities while acknowledging its potential for growth and change. Additionally, it considers community arts, culture, and events as building blocks that define the County. While recommendations relating to community character and design are found throughout the plan, the Community Design chapter is intended specifically to improve the appearance, character, and attractiveness of the County.

Design a Unified Gateway and Wayfinding System

Gateways and wayfinding identify entry points and places within the County, and direct people to them. They are a component of placemaking, branding, and beautification, as well as a tool for navigation.

Gateways

Gateways are **visual indicators to residents and visitors that they have arrived at a certain location**. Gateways are important components of community design because they create visible markers of community distinction and can echo details of Fayette County's established identity – such as its natural beauty, mining heritage, or historic railways. Gateway features can be achieved through signage at ground level or through unique architectural elements, with attractive landscaping and lighting used to complement the gateways.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding signage **assists people in finding important community landmarks while enhancing the streetscape and trail system**. Good wayfinding effectively guides bicyclists and pedestrians to points of interest throughout the community and adds to the sense of place, encouraging people to explore areas on foot. In conjunction with gateways, the County should develop a wayfinding system that directs people to key destinations and points of interest and improves visitors' ability to navigate the County. Efforts have been made to develop a unified wayfinding signage system at the regional level through the New River Gorge regional wayfinding strategy.

Recommendations

Placemaking, branding, and beautification all benefit from cohesive gateways and a clear wayfinding system. The County should:

1. Provide branded gateways within the public realm to announce entry into distinct parts of the County, such as its municipalities, unincorporated communities, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and other key designations throughout the County.
2. Design gateway elements in a manner that reinforces the County's identity through the use of local materials and historic features.
3. Undertake a wayfinding and signage study to develop a system that better directs residents and visitors to the community's notable places and natural assets.
4. Ensure new gateways and wayfinding provide a more unified image of the County and coordinate with the New River Gorge Regional Wayfinding Strategy.
5. Use wayfinding to direct people bicycling and walking for transportation and recreation.
6. Utilize the New River Gorge Regional Wayfinding Strategy that is being coordinated by the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, which includes an inventory of existing signage, to provide guidance for future signage improvements.



Section 2

Invest in Beautification

The character of Fayette County is appealing to residents who are looking to live in a scenic, mountain setting, as well as to visitors who come for the area's natural beauty. Natural assets and scenic views contribute to the County's aesthetic and character and are worth preserving, elevating, and enhancing. These represent a critical part of the County's character and identity. The County should continue to protect and enhance these resources. Communitywide beautification should specifically include cleanup efforts to mitigate unsightly litter on County lands and along roadways to ensure these community assets remain attractive.

As the County works to invest in the public realm through roadway beautification, private property owners should similarly contribute to the character of the County by ensuring that development is attractive and reflective of the broader vision for Fayette County. Where possible, this should include development patterns that preserve the County's natural beauty, features, and scenic views.

Urban Tree Canopy and Community Greening

The urban tree canopy includes trees in parks, greenways, river corridors, wetlands, public lands, and trees on private property. Street trees are also a critical part of the urban tree canopy that the County can influence positively. Located in the public right-of-way, they provide benefits that promote sustainability and help alleviate environmental problems. These include improved air quality, carbon storage, reduced noise, and aesthetic value. Trees can increase pedestrian safety along higher-speed roadways, acting as a barrier between vehicle travel lanes and the sidewalk.

Street trees are part of the community's green infrastructure. Urban areas typically have higher temperatures than their surrounding areas, due to extensive impervious surface and building coverage, known as the urban heat island effect. Street trees combat this problem by providing shade and decreasing building energy use. Trees also help urban areas control stormwater runoff because their canopy slows rain from reaching the ground and capture and store rainfall to be released later.

Dark Skies

Much like the rolling hills and beautiful vistas in Fayette County, the night sky is also a valuable asset. Keeping the night sky and stars visible to all is critical to sustainability and preservation efforts in areas around National Parks throughout the country.

Dark skies are defined as **places where the darkness of the night sky is relatively free of interference from artificial light**. Over the years, dark sky initiatives have been developed in order to reduce light pollution. Dark sky initiatives can help maintain the beauty of the night sky by combating the effects of light pollution, which also disrupts the habitats of nocturnal animals, wastes energy, and disrupts human sleep patterns. According to the International Dark Skies Association, **about 30% of all outdoor lighting in the United States is wasted, costing up to \$3.3 billion and releasing approximately 21 million tons of carbon dioxide annually**. A review and update of the County's codes can help better regulate and guide lighting to support dark sky initiatives. To focus conservation and sustainability on light pollution, the County should consider the following best practices for dark skies:

- Encouraging the use of quality, energy-efficient outdoor lighting that directs light downward, which reduces energy consumption and light pollution.
- Retrofitting light fixtures with motion sensors, dimmers, and timers to control outdoor light levels.
- Using warm-white LED lighting, which reduces illumination levels and conserves energy and money.
- Educating residents and business owners on the environmental benefits and cost savings of reducing outdoor light levels.
- Promoting dark skies through community activities, such as stargazing events.

Scenic Byways

Scenic byways are typically two-lane paved roadways or backways (single-lane paved or unpaved roadways) identified as part of a program administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in West Virginia. The Coal Heritage Trail, shown on the *Scenic Byways Map*, is a group of scenic byways that also encompasses the New River Gorge Scenic Drive, circling the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. US Route 60 is also known as the Midland Trail and is considered a National Scenic Byway - one of “America’s Byways,” the FHWA’s current official collection of 150 distinct and diverse roads designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. The County’s scenic byways provide opportunities to experience the New River Gorge and the New River. The West Virginia Department of Tourism’s website, wvtourism.com, promotes driving tours as a way to enjoy scenic byways throughout the state, and to enjoy “uncrowded, charming towns and through peaceful and awe-inspiring landmarks.” Capitol Circle is one such road trip, with stops identified throughout Fayette County.

CASE STUDY

Coal Heritage Trail

Fayette County, WV

For residents or visitors looking to experience scenic views, the County’s roads are recognized as some of the most scenic in the country. The Coal Heritage Trail is a group of scenic byways that also encompasses the New River Gorge Scenic Drive, circling the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The County’s scenic byways provide opportunities to experience the New River Gorge and the river itself.

Recommendations

Beautification is a broad term, but at the core it is about maintaining the assets and places that belong to the County or are visible to all. To encourage beautification on roadways, public land, and in the private realm, the County should:

1. Work with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) to establish and promote REAP beautification and cleanup initiatives for Fayette County’s primary corridors.
2. Promote neighborhood and building design, such as cluster development and natural building materials, which is responsive to the County’s unique natural environment, particularly to preserve scenic views around open spaces and the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.
3. Consider requirements that limit steep slope and hillside development as a means of preserving rural character, scenic views, and watersheds and retaining natural topographic features.
4. Create a scenic resources inventory to catalog the County’s character-defining features and evaluate remaining undeveloped land to identify significant scenic features such as corridors and mountains.
5. Continue to preserve established areas of natural beauty and scenic quality, such as the New Haven District.
6. Adopt a dark skies ordinance and implement the dark skies best practices to preserve the County’s natural and beautiful night skies.
7. Monitor the County’s street trees by conducting an inventory on a regular basis.
8. Work with a professional arborist to inspect street trees that are in poor or dying condition, and replace or maintain them.
9. Identify corridors and public rights-of-way with a low density of street trees and establish new trees in these areas.
10. Ensure trees are protected or removed and replaced during sidewalk and street construction projects.



Scenic Byways

The Coal Heritage Trail runs over 100 miles through the coal producing counties of Fayette, Mercer, McDowell, Wyoming, and Raleigh.

 Coal Heritage Trail State Byway

Source: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Updated 2021

Section 3

Bolster Events and Activities

Tourism is one of Fayette County's stronger industries with year-round events and abundant natural resources, drawing over a million visitors each year to the County. The New River Gorge offers numerous opportunities for outdoor activities, including, hiking, birding, biking, rock climbing, and whitewater rafting. A unique attraction to Fayette County is the Bridge Walk, a tour that takes visitors 850 feet above the New River underneath the New River Gorge Bridge on a catwalk.

Hospitality

Fayette County's hospitality uses include cabins and campsite rentals, motels, lodges, and bed and breakfast establishments along the Route 19 and Route 60 corridors, as well as numerous cabins and campsites throughout the County. Additionally, primitive camping (no water or hookups) is offered within the park on a first-come, first-served reservation basis. Primitive camping is a specific, desirable hospitality amenity for backpackers and nature enthusiasts and can be a defining asset of a local "ecotourism economy." Ecotourism visitors enjoy low impact activities in natural areas while also supporting local businesses. The County should continue to encourage hospitality in a variety of formats that contribute to tourism and support local entertainment attractions and businesses.

Canyon Rim Visitor Center

New River Gorge National Park visitor centers are starting points for visitors to the park, providing maps, information, and a bookstore to begin the experience. Canyon Rim Visitor Center is located in Fayette County at 162 Visitor Center Road in the Lansing community. The center offers information on the natural, cultural, recreational, and historic resources in the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.

Private Establishments

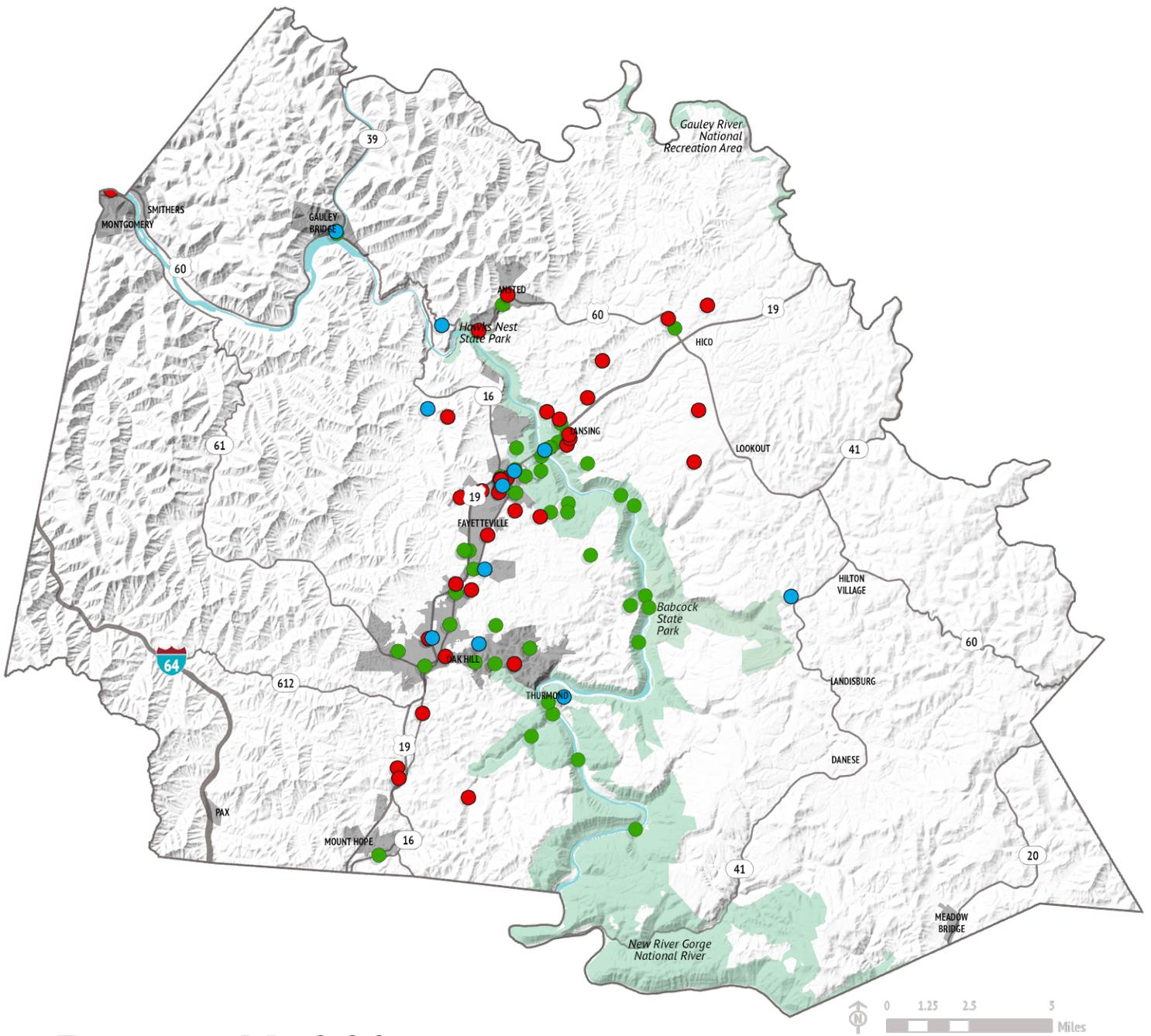
There are several dining establishments, shops, and outdoor outfitters or adventure companies located along the Route 19 corridor through Fayetteville and in Oak Hill. These private establishments benefit from the attraction of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve and its status as a National Park. The County should continue to enhance its image and reputation by leveraging local assets and positioning itself as a regional and national destination.

Ecotourism

Ecotourism, or "sustainable tourism," often takes place in preserved natural areas. Ecotourism can be considered sustainable in that it does not damage or disturb natural habitats and is intended to support conservation efforts. Ecotourism should be low-impact, with a focus on education, involving travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. A closely related subset of ecotourism is "adventure tourism," which emphasizes exploration and unique activities – water adventures, mountain biking, caving, hiking, climbing, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, and more. Ecotourism and adventure tourism are experiencing growth as people increasingly desire new and more unique experiences.



We have decent festivals, but we should focus on making our image more inviting for visitors. Diversity and inclusion should be a priority.



Events and Activities

Tourism is one of Fayette County's stronger industries with year-round events and abundant natural resources, drawing over a million visitors each year to the County.

- Activity to Do
- Sight to See
- Place to Stay

Source: Visit Southern West Virginia, visitwv.com

CASE STUDY

Bridge Day

New River Gorge, WV

Bridge Day is billed as West Virginia's largest single-day festival. Held every third Saturday in October, the event draws thousands of people to the New River Gorge Bridge to watch daredevils base jump into the Gorge. The ticketed event offers shuttles, merchandise tents, food, and family fun. In addition to watching the professional base jumpers, attendees can participate in the Active SWV Bridge Day 5K Run or take an exclusive shuttle into the Gorge to get a view of the base jumpers from ground level while riverside. Additional activities promoted on Bridge Day include rappelling (for those with previous experience), the Bridge Walk, and whitewater rafting.

officialbridgeday.com

Recommendations

The County enjoys several activities and events that make it special. To continue the slate of events, involve local businesses, and attract tourism, the County should:

1. Continue to enhance its image and reputation by leveraging local assets, such as the ones noted on the *Events and Activities Map*, and positioning itself as a regional and national destination.
2. Continue to work with the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, Visit Southern West Virginia, New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau, Fayetteville Convention and Visitors Bureau, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, WV Tourism, WVU Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative, and other organizations to promote and expand recreational events and activities for both tourists and residents.
3. Work in tandem with employers, groups of employers, and cross-sector partnerships with schools, community organizations, and other entities to promote a sustainable economy through hospitality training and workforce development.
4. Encourage dining, entertainment, and a variety of hospitality opportunities in proximity to the New River Gorge and throughout the County and coordinate with NPS and NRG Working Group to focus on areas to expand visitor experiences in/around the National Park
5. Support the growing “ecotourism” and “adventure tourism” economy by continuing to promote outdoor opportunities and activities, not only in the New River Gorge but throughout the County and coordinate with NPS and NRG Working Group to focus on areas to expand visitor experiences in/around the National Park
6. Work with partner organizations to ensure local businesses are plugged in and participating in Bridge Day and other County events and to facilitate more events and activities throughout the County to extend visitor rates throughout the year.
7. Continue to encourage hospitality in a variety of formats that contribute to tourism and support local entertainment attractions and businesses.
8. Coordinate with the National Park Service and New River Gorge Working Group to focus on areas to expand visitor experiences in/around the National Park.

Section 4

Create Cohesive Branding

A strong County brand will help Fayette County differentiate itself from the surrounding region and promote its unique characteristics. Long term, the way the community brands and markets itself will help attract investment and encourage people to put down roots, purchase goods and services, and visit and participate in activities within the County. Cohesive branding will improve the marketing of the County's image. Fayette County should convey its image and brand, promoting the County as a distinct and unique place in West Virginia.

Convention and Visitors Bureaus in Fayette County

West Virginia's convention and visitor bureaus are charged with representing a specific destination and helping the long-term development of communities through travel and tourism. There are several CVBs located within the National Coal Heritage Areas. The New River Gorge CVB in Oak Hill and the Fayetteville CVB are located in Fayette County.

New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau

The New River Gorge CVB aims to develop the area's tourism industry and advance Fayette County as a vacation, group tour, and meeting destination. The mission of the CVB is to promote Fayette County tourism, provide tourism public relations, serve as a resource for tourism business development, and assess tourism needs. Overall, the CVB aims to ensure that visitors enjoy themselves enough that they come back again for another visit.

Fayetteville Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Fayetteville Convention and Visitors Bureau welcomes visitors and provides information on lodging, activities, and dining. The CVB focuses on Fayetteville as the "edge of the New River Gorge," emphasizing that the Town and County seat is just minutes away from world-class rafting, hiking, biking, and climbing. Additionally, the CVB encourages visitors to explore the historic downtown and enjoy its shops, restaurants, bed and breakfasts, and other hospitality options.

Recommendations

Community branding is an opportunity for Fayette County to shape its own narrative and market itself over the next decades. To ensure cohesive branding that gets the story right for the County, the County should:

1. Convey its image and brand, promoting the County as a distinct and unique place in West Virginia.
2. Work with Visit Southern West Virginia to make sure the County, Fayette County communities, and the New River Gorge region are consistently marketed and branded.
3. As part of the NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy, work with the New River Gorge and Fayetteville CVBs, Official Bridge Day, and other organizations in Fayette County to ensure consistency in marketing and branding initiatives.
4. Work with the New River Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop and enact a professional branding and marketing strategy that builds on local outreach to capture the essence of the County.
5. Ensure that Fayette County branding is incorporated into the gateway and wayfinding system that is discussed in the *Design a Unified Gateway and Wayfinding System* section of this chapter.
6. Market the County's historical buildings and districts and signature architecture as part of its brand.
7. Continue to market the County alongside its signature assets, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and the New River Gorge Bridge.

Section 5

Promote Arts and Culture

Arts and culture bring life to the County, promote its rich heritage, and contribute to community vibrancy, acting as an engine of economic activity and development. Residents throughout Fayette County benefit from public art and its ability to reinforce neighborhood and community character. To increase the support for community arts and culture, the County should collaborate with the Convention and Visitors Bureaus, the Fayetteville Arts Coalition, and the County's museums and cultural places in a commitment to embracing local artists and supporting public art. The County should collaborate with community organizations and neighborhood groups to identify potential locations for local public art and increase local arts and culture. The following are a few of the County's notable museums and cultural institutions.

CASE STUDY

Tamarack Marketplace

Beckley, WV

Located just outside Fayette County in Beckley, West Virginia, Tamarack Marketplace is a regional showcase of more than 2,800 artists and artisans from all fifty-five counties in the Mountain State. The marketplace bills itself as a "social hub" featuring artist demonstrations, classes, and Appalachian cuisine. Tamarack includes a retail store, working studios for resident artisans, a fine art gallery, a theater, A Taste of West Virginia food court, and the Tamarack Conference Center.

tamarackwv.com

Ansted Culture and Heritage Museum

The Ansted Culture and Heritage Museum is a cultural institution that preserves and exhibits a large collection of artifacts from the Civil War, including muskets, powder horns, pioneer household equipment, Confederate money, and a variety of early financial records. The artist Sterling Smeltzer was responsible for turning the huge collection of unrelated objects into a series of displays detailing the history of West Virginia and the Midland Trail. Smeltzer's watercolor paintings and detailed notes are key components of the collection, bringing it to life. The museum is located on Midland Trail in Ansted and is open on weekdays.

Contentment Museum

Contentment, also known as the Colonel George Imboden House, is a historic home located in Ansted. It was built about 1830 and expanded to its present configuration after its acquisition by former Confederate Colonel George W. The Contentment Historical Complex serves as the museum and headquarters for the Fayette County Historical Society.



We need more active community centers that engage youth, teens, and adults alike with sports, crafts, continuing education, and arts.

Glade Creek Grist Mill

The Glade Creek Grist Mill is a new mill that was completed in 1976 at Babcock State Park. The mill is a re-creation of Cooper's Mill, which once ground grain on Glade Creek before Babcock became a state park. The mill was created by combining parts and pieces from three defunct mills across the state. The functional mill serves as a living monument to the over 500 mills which thrived in West Virginia at the turn of the century and provides freshly ground cornmeal and buckwheat flour for park guests to purchase.

Historic Fayette Theatre

The Historic Fayette Theatre is a former movie house built in 1937 and renovated in the 1990s by the Fayette County Historical Society. It remains one of the few Depression-era theaters still operational in southern West Virginia. Visitors can view the original movie projectors and enjoy paintings and pieces of art that depict life and entertainment from the 1930s. The theatre stages ten performances per year, along with special nights by request. The building is open for free tours on Fridays from late May until late October.

Thurmond Station

Thurmond Station is served by the Amtrak Cardinal long-distance passenger train, which runs three times each week between Chicago, Illinois, and New York City, New York. The 1905 building was built by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway and houses a railroad museum and a visitor center. The station is a contributing structure in the Thurmond Historic District.

Recommendations

Arts and culture can define the community. To enhance local arts and culture, regular collaboration with the community's artists and institutions will be key. To further embrace local arts and culture, the County should:

1. Identify sites and explore partnerships with the County's cultural institutions, CVBs, Coal Heritage Area Authority, and other organizations to develop a community venue where local artists can collaborate, and Fayette County residents can come together for performances and events.
2. Work with the County's cultural institutions, CVBs, and other organizations to connect artists, arts organizations, and arts-related businesses to grow local arts culture.
3. Collaborate with community organizations and neighborhood groups to identify potential locations for local public art and increase local arts and culture.
4. Promote and market events that support and encourage arts and heritage tourism.
5. Encourage performances, exhibits, and events in venues such as local museums and historic sites.
6. Establish an annual calendar of arts and cultural events and programs and work to fill seasonal event calendar gap.
7. Encourage the incorporation of more public art to enrich public areas of the County.
8. Involve Fayette County schools in art and cultural planning.
9. Support artist residency programs.

Chapter 14

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Fayette County's historic resources make the County unique and contribute significantly to its local character. They enhance a sense of place and community, stimulate the local economy, create opportunities for civic activities, and support tourism.

Outreach participants voiced support for historic preservation and identified the unique character and history of the community. Participants emphasized that the historic brick buildings in Fayetteville, Mount Hope, Oak Hill, Smithers, Montgomery, and other areas of the County are focal points that define the community's character. Participants suggested preserving these structures to promote new businesses and encourage visitors and residents to spend time in the County's communities.

The following section identifies the regulatory frameworks, commissions, and the County's existing historic assets that should be maintained and preserved.

Section 1

Utilize the Regulatory Framework

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the National Register of Historic Places. NPS guidance on local historic preservation law states, "When it comes to preserving private property in a historic district, most people are surprised to learn that a local law is generally stronger than a federal law—that only sharp local teeth can guard the historic character of a community." In Fayette County, a regulatory framework supporting historic preservation is well-established at the County and state levels. The Fayette County Unified Development Code and the West Virginia Code both set a standard of support and emphasize the importance of historic places and structures.

West Virginia Code

Both Chapter 8. Municipal Corporation and Chapter 29. Miscellaneous Boards and Officers provide policy concerning the preservation of historic assets.

Chapter 8. Municipal Corporations; Article 26a. Municipal and County Historic Landmarks Commissions

§8-26A-1 establishes that it is the public policy and the public interest of the state to engage in a comprehensive program of historic preservation, undertaken at all levels of government, along with the private sector. The article notes that West Virginia is endowed with numerous historic buildings, structures, sites, and districts representing the historical, architectural, and cultural heritage of the state. The code acknowledges that these assets are best preserved and protected at the local level and notes that this preservation serves local tourism, heritage, education, and general welfare.

Article 26A-4 authorizes any county or municipality to establish a historic landmarks commission, consisting of five members, and appointed by the county commission or mayor.

Chapter 29. Miscellaneous Boards and Officers; Article 1. Division of Culture and History

§29-1-1 reorganizes the previous Division of Culture and History and the office of the Commissioner of Culture into a new Department of Arts, Culture, and History. A historic preservation section is one of the five divisions of the department. From the list of purposes and duties conducted by the Department of Arts, Culture, and History, several historic preservation efforts stand out, including:

- Advance, foster, promote, identify, register, acquire, mark, and care for historical, prehistorical, archaeological, and significant architectural sites, structures, and objects in the state.
- Encourage the promotion, preservation, and development of significant sites, structures, and objects using economic development activities such as loans, subsidies, grants, and other incentives.
- Coordinate all cultural, historical, and artistic activities in state government and at state-owned facilities.
- Acquire, preserve, and classify books, documents, records, and memorabilia of historical interest or importance; and, in general, do all things necessary or convenient to preserve and advance the arts, humanities, culture, and history of the state.



We should focus on maintaining historical buildings and beautiful architecture. When we expand downtown Fayetteville, we should ensure that new construction enhances the character of the town rather than detracts from it.

Fayette County Unified Development Code

Section One of the County's Unified Development Code (UDC) identifies "Encourage historic preservation" as one of the ten top priorities of the Ordinance. The Ordinance defines historic sites or properties as any lot, parcel, historic structure, or designated area listed on the West Virginia Register or National Register of Historic Places. Regulatory support for the County's historic assets is woven throughout the language of the code, emphasizing the importance of preservation in any project or proposal.

- **Residential Districts:** Museums, shrines, and historic markers are reviewed as special uses in the R2, R4, and R8 residential districts.
- **Section 7 – Article 7001, Subdivision Regulations:** This article states that reasonable requirements for the preservation of outstanding natural features may be specified, including historic spots, exceptional views, and similar irreplaceable assets in which there is a public interest.
- **Section 9 – Article 9004, Tower Ordinance:** Article 9004 mandates that a copy of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) review shall be provided before the issuance of a tower permit.
- **Section 9 – Article 9005, U.S. Route 19, U.S. Route 60, and Route 16 Corridor Overlay District:** Article 9005 requires additional illustrations of adjacent properties to portray the community's scenic character for all development plans on sites within or adjacent to residential or historic developments.
- **Section 9 – Article 9007, Flood Plain District:** The article defines historic structures within flood plain districts and emphasizes the importance of additional review for projects which may impact or alter historic structures.

Recommendations

Local regulations protect historic asset destruction or insensitive rehabilitation. To ensure local laws continue to regulate and promote its history and unique architecture, the County should:

1. Work with the local historic landmarks commissions to regularly review the County's Unified Development Code articles on historic preservation, ensuring the Code provides the regulatory guidance needed to protect and preserve the County's historic structures.
2. Audit the County code to ensure it has the proper controls to address exterior modifications, remodeling, and demolition within a historic district.
3. Ensure the local regulations support the historic preservation purposes and duties conducted by the Department of Arts, Culture, and History at the state level.

Section 2

Empower Historic Landmark Commissions and Societies

Historic landmarks commissions work within the regulatory framework to spearhead historic preservation actions. These are advisory bodies, established in West Virginia Code §8-26A-5, which work with municipalities and the County to preserve and protect landmarks and districts. Historic landmark commissions rely on the State Historic Preservation Office and the various grant opportunities it offers to conduct critical preserve West Virginia's physical historic assets. Historic landmarks commissions are authorized to:

- Survey historic assets
- Prepare a register of local buildings, structures, sites, and districts
- Review applications for certificates of appropriateness
- Work with property owners on markers, buildings, structures, and sites
- Establish local standards for care and management
- Prepare and place historical markers
- Adopt commission rules and regulations
- Conduct additional activities to support local historic preservation

Fayetteville Historic Landmark Commission

The Fayetteville Historic Landmark Commission consists of five members appointed by the Mayor. Commission members serve for three years, approving all plans submitted to projects that lie within the Historic District. Experience or education in history, architecture, planning, real estate, or law is a requirement to serve on the commission.

Mount Hope Historic Landmarks Commission

The Mount Hope Historic Landmarks Commission is a certified local government organization that operates under the authority granted to landmarks commissions by the West Virginia legislature.

Fayette County Historical Society of West Virginia

The primary objective of the Fayette County Historical Society (FCHS) is to “Preserve the past for the future.” The FCHS was founded in 1926; it continues to publicize and support the County's historic sites. FCHS is active on social media, promoting historic tours and events that support the County's historic sites and assets.

Recommendations

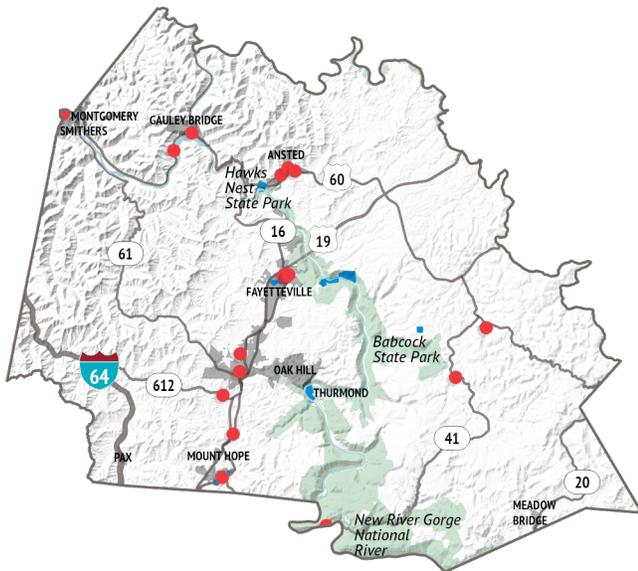
The County must rely on local knowledge and insight to inform decision-making regarding historic landmarks and districts. To ensure that the commissions have the right tools to assess historic properties, the County should:

1. Assist the commissions and historical societies with identifying, marketing, and advertising historic resource grants and funding that may become available.
2. Support the efforts of the commissions and historical society to save and restore historic and cultural resources important to the County.
3. Provide opportunities for collaboration across preservation efforts and locales in Fayette County, to ensure the whole community's historic resources are well-protected and treasured.
4. Ensure the commissions have County support as they work with property owners on preservation activities including landmark designation and protection.
5. Develop educational programs and materials to emphasize historic preservation and the benefits that can be obtained from owning and investing in a historic property.

Section 3

Preserve Historic Districts and Landmarked Buildings

The County's historic assets include **28 properties and districts listed on the National Register**. The first building in the County was listed on the Register in 1974, the most recent in 2020. Of the 28 locations, nine are districts. These include town and city districts in Thurmond, Fayetteville, Mount Hope, and Nuttallburg, as well as a standalone mine site (Kay Moor), and State Park Historic Districts. The New River Gorge Bridge is the only structure listed on the Register. The remaining property register listings are individual buildings.



Historic Districts and Landmarks

The County's historic assets include 28 properties and districts listed on the National Register. Of the 28 locations, nine are districts.

- Historic Site / Landmark
- Historic District

Source: National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service

Recommendations

The County's 28 historic assets and districts are preserved, but there are opportunities to identify more. Expanding historic preservation will require a collaborative approach, where the County works with local property owners, the commissions, and local municipalities. To do this, the County should:

1. Create a Countywide "most-endangered" list to identify currently unprotected historic properties, structures, and districts that the County wants to preserve.
2. Promote adaptive reuse that retains distinctive architectural styles for historic features using the funding sources and mechanisms identified in *Chapter 5 Renewal and Redevelopment*.
3. Create and regularly update a local register based on a survey and inventory of existing and potential properties, structures, and districts of historical and architectural significance within the County, providing a preservation status for each.
4. Work with the historic landmark commissions to create and publish guidelines for the care and management of historic buildings and structures.
5. Provide local incentives such as a façade improvement program or small homeowner grants for historically accurate exterior building improvements to landmark and historic district properties.
6. Provide local incentives for context-sensitive redevelopment of the County's historically significant properties.
7. Partner with the various historical societies and organizations throughout the County to update inventories of existing historic districts and structures.



Chapter 15

IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation Chapter identifies critical next steps to assist the County in implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. These funding sources, programs, resources, and partners, support the Comprehensive Plan as a primary resource for planning efforts and policy decisions within Fayette County. This chapter also establishes a foundation for fulfilling the goals and carrying out the actions identified in the Comprehensive Plan over the next ten to twenty years.

State Requirements for Comprehensive Plans

The State of West Virginia defines the mandatory components for County and municipal Comprehensive Plans in Section, 8A-3-4 of the West Virginia State Code. The state code requires that a Comprehensive Plan define the community's goals and objectives concerning present and future land development, establish a timeline on how to meet the short- and long-range goals and objectives, contain an action plan defining an implementation strategy, and recommend a financial program for goals and objectives that need financing. Section 8A-3-4 also defines a range of topics that Comprehensive Plans address must address, including land use, growth and decline management, and residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural development. The Comprehensive Plan chapters that address the topics required in Section 8A-3-4 are shown in the table.

The State also defines time horizons for the adoption and updating of Comprehensive Plans. Although the Comprehensive Plan determines a community's priorities and policies on a 20-year horizon, Chapter 8A requires that a Comprehensive Plan be updated every ten years following its adoption. The update process is meant to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan's goals, policies, and actions reflect the community's priorities as they change over time, and accounts for unforeseen influences that will occur.

Comprehensive Plan Elements and State Requirements Alignment	
Code Provision	Location in the Plan
Statement of goals and objectives	Chapter 3 - Vision and Goals
Timeline on how to meet short- and long-term goals and objectives	Chapter 15 - Implementation
Action plan with implementation strategies	Chapter 15 - Implementation
Recommendations of a financial program for necessary public funding	Chapter 15 - Implementation
Statement of recommendations concerning future land use	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
A program to encourage regional planning, coordination, and cooperation	Chapter 10 - Infrastructure, Chapter 15 - Implementation
Maps, plats, and/or charts that present basic information on the land, including present and future uses	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Land Use	
Different land uses including residential, agricultural, historic, conservation	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Population density and building intensity standards	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Growth or decline management	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Projected population growth or decline	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Constraints on development (including flood-prone and subsidence areas)	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Housing	
Analyze projected housing needs and types needed including affordable housing and accessible housing for persons with disabilities	Chapter 5 - Housing
Identify the number of projected housing units and land needed	Chapter 5 - Housing
Address substandard housing	Chapter 5 - Housing
Rehabilitate and improve existing	Chapter 5 - Housing
Adaptive reuse of buildings into housing	Chapter 5 - Housing
Transportation	
Vehicular, transit, air, port, railroad, river, and any other mode	Chapter 8 - Transportation
Movement of traffic and parking	Chapter 8 - Transportation
Pedestrian and bicycle systems	Chapter 8 - Transportation
Intermodal transportation	Chapter 8 - Transportation
Economic development	
Analyze opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses	Chapter 6 - Economic Development
Identify and designate economic development sites and/or sectors	Chapter 6 - Economic Development Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Identify types of economic development sought	Chapter 6 - Economic Development
Miscellaneous components	
Infrastructure	Chapter 10 - Infrastructure
Public services	Chapter 9 - Public Services
Rural	Chapter 11 - Rural
Recreation	Chapter 12 - Recreation
Community design	Chapter 13 - Community Design
Preferred development areas	Chapter 4 - Land Use and Development
Renewal and/or redevelopment	Chapter 7 - Renewal and Redevelopment
Financing	Chapter 15 - Implementation
Historic development	Chapter 14 - Historic Preservation

Use the Plan Regularly

The Comprehensive Plan should be used as the official policy guide for planning decisions made by the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority and the Fayette County Commission. The Plan should be used as a primary document in guiding policy formation, evaluating projects, and planning initiatives, reviewing development proposals, and prioritizing public expenditures. Referencing the Plan will ensure that future planning efforts and decisions align with the community's vision, providing a roadmap to achieving the goals of the County and its residents. Service providers and partner organizations are encouraged to use the Plan when considering new development, facilities, infrastructure updates, and programming, such that their efforts align with the future of Fayette County as outlined in this Plan.

Review and Update the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is not a static document and must be able to evolve and change over time. If residents' attitudes change or new issues arise that are beyond the scope of the current plan, then it should be revised and updated accordingly.

The County is required to undertake a complete review and update of the plan every ten years, per §8A-3-11 of the West Virginia Code. The County should consider intermittent evaluations every two to three years to identify smaller changes and should maintain a public list of the potential amendments, issues, or needs. Routine examination of the Plan will help ensure that the planning program remains relevant to the County's needs and aspirations. Partnerships with organizations that operate in the State and region, including West Virginia University Extensions should be pursued to provide education and facilitate the review process.

Review of Zoning and Development Controls

The County's Unified Development Code (UDC) is one of the primary tools it has to implement the policies and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. While the Plan is a policy document, the zoning and development controls are regulatory. Employing a zoning audit will allow Fayette County to critically reevaluate its zoning practices and find areas for improvement. Encouraging the County to adjust its zoning to reflect the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan will create a more cohesive vision for the County and make implementing the goals and recommendations of the Plan much easier.

Public Communication

The Comprehensive Plan community outreach program was designed to solicit feedback on issues and opportunities from residents and stakeholders. Public engagement included kickoff meetings, online surveys, conversations with key stakeholders, and an interactive mapping tool to engage with the residents. In addition to supporting the planning process, the outreach efforts helped foster stewardship for the Comprehensive Plan and communicate the importance of planning within Fayette County.

To continue public engagement, the County should continue to communicate with the public via online updates, announcements of major project achievements, and newsletters including information about planning and development efforts.

The County should maintain a way for residents and stakeholders to offer feedback and ask questions about planning initiatives and ongoing projects. Additionally, the County should consider hosting additional workshops and engagement opportunities in the future where residents could review the Plan and offer feedback about changing issues, opportunities, and trends.

Coordination and Cooperation

The Comprehensive Plan does not exist in a vacuum, and the recommendations, actions, and implementation strategies outlined in this Plan affect Fayette County, the municipalities within it, and the surrounding communities. The County should facilitate coordination and cooperation between neighboring counties and municipalities, ensuring that they work together to ensure the most efficient and effective solutions for successful regional implementation of relevant recommendations found in the Plan.

Specifically, projects such as broadband improvements, regional transportation issues, and tourism opportunities can, and should, be coordinated across counties to ensure the most effective solutions. Many actions will require coordination across the region and finding ways to create mutual benefit will ensure that Fayette County derives maximum benefit from any recommendation or action outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

The State of West Virginia and the Federal Government offer many forms of assistance and guidance that will benefit Fayette County as it implements the recommendations and actions outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. These resources include many grants and loans to help communities create economic opportunity, improve infrastructure, and develop housing variety and diversity, among many other things. Taking full advantage of these resources will offset the cost of many of the projects outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, and each governing body offers in-person and online resources to assist in the application and use of funds from these sources. Funding sources for the actions and recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan can be found in the Financing Sources section of this chapter.

Alignment Between County and Municipal Plans

The Fayette County Comprehensive Plan defines goals and objectives and guides development for the unincorporated areas of the County outside the municipalities' boundaries. Several municipalities in the County also have a Comprehensive Plan that growth and development within their jurisdiction. The County's Comprehensive Plan considers the recommendations in the municipal comprehensive plans, to establish consistent priorities between the municipal and County level and ensure that land uses remain compatible where municipal and County borders meet. The Plan considers the goals, actions, and partnerships recommended in the municipal plans to align the County's prioritized actions with those at the municipal level. For the cities and towns without Comprehensive Plans, the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan establishes goals, policies, and recommendations more directly.

Municipal Comprehensive Plans	
Fayette County Municipalities With Comprehensive Plans	Fayette County Municipalities Without Comprehensive Plans
Oak Hill Montgomery Mount Hope Smithers Fayetteville Gauley Bridge	Ansted Meadow Bridge Pax Thurmond

Potential Financing Sources

The following section is a review of potential financing sources that the County and its partners can pursue to support the implementation of this Plan. It is important to note that financing sources are subject to change over time. As such, the County should continue to research and monitor grants, funding agencies, and programs to identify deadlines, funding specifications, and new opportunities as they become available. These potential financing sources are organized by category. Please note that some sources they be applied to more than one category. The categories include:

- Land Use and Development
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Renewal and Development
- Transportation
- Public Services and Infrastructure
- Rural
- Recreation
- Community Design
- Historic Preservation

Land Use and Development

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants are provided through the US Department of Housing Development to the State of West Virginia for use in a variety of community and economic development projects. Funds provided by the federal government are disbursed to counties and municipalities for urban renewal, open space preservation, neighborhood development, public facility renovation, water, and sewer improvements, and many more uses. These funds are intended to improve the overall quality of life through physical infrastructure changes and land use changes.

Note: This financing source could also be applied to infrastructure improvements.

West Virginia University Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic

The West Virginia Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic works to improve the quality of life in West Virginia through land use planning, land conservation, and education. The organization has assisted communities to develop Comprehensive Plans, local ordinances, and has assisted land trust entities in acquiring conservation easements or ownership interests across West Virginia on properties with outstanding conservation values. It also provides real estate services to local governments to support emergency management, addressing dilapidated buildings, and developing recreational assets.

Housing

USDA Housing Repair Loans/Grants

The Rural Housing Repair Loans and Grants program provides funding to very low-income homeowners to repair, improve, modernize, or remove health and safety hazards in rural dwellings. Loans are arranged for up to 20 years at 1% interest. Very-low-income households that qualify for eligibility under the program include those with below 50% of the area median income. Eligibility for loans requires US Citizenship or permanent residency in a rural area. Grants are issued to those over 62 years of age who meet the requirements above.

Note: This financing source could also be applicable to the County's rural areas.

USDA Housing Preservation Grants

Housing Preservation Grants provide grants to organizations for the repair or rehabilitation of housing owned or occupied by low- and very low-income rural citizens. A total of \$16 million is available for a variety of services, including handicap accessibility, physical structure improvements such as electrical wiring and roofing, labor and materials, and administrative expenses.

Note: This financing source could also be applicable to the County's rural areas.

USDA Multi Family Housing Direct Loans

The Multifamily Housing Direct Loans programs provides financing for affordable multifamily rental housing for low income, elderly, or disabled individuals and families in eligible rural areas. Funds can be used to buy and improve land, create accessible infrastructure, and other services needed to construct these developments.

West Virginia Homeowners Rescue

The West Virginia Homeowners Rescue program offers funding for those who suffered economic hardship during the COVID pandemic. Funding ranges from mortgage payment assistance, down payment assistance, property charge alleviation, and utility assistance. It offers online applications, as well as a toll-free application hotline for those without regular internet access.

Administration for Community Living

The Administration for Community Living offers over one billion dollars in two types of grants: discretionary and mandatory. Discretionary grants provide flexibility to the applicant, allowing them control over the objectives and project goals. Mandatory grants are ongoing programs which require no application or competition. The Administration for Community Living does not provide grants to individuals.

Americans with Disabilities Act National Network

The Americans with Disabilities Act National Network offers funds for information, guidance, and training on how to implement the ADA to support its mission to "assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities."

Weatherization Assistance Program

The Weatherization Assistance Program helps low-income households in the State to reduce the costs incurred due to energy-related utilities. It implements an array of energy efficiency measures in the homes of qualifying households. Services include upgrading insulation, repairing malfunctioning home heating systems, and maintenance of supply and conditioning systems. The program is funded through the Department of Energy.

Economic Development

Tourism Development Act

The Tourism Development Act is administered by the West Virginia Department of Economic Development and provides financial incentives for businesses that promote or utilize the natural resources of West Virginia. Eligible businesses receive a 25% tax credit for qualifying projects or 35% for qualifying projects that reuse abandoned mines or are within a specific distance of a national park. Projects eligible for the incentives must meet a list of defined criteria, including that at least 25% of the visitors are from outside West Virginia.

Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program (GGWP)

The State of West Virginia's GGWP is administered by the West Virginia Development Office and provides new or expanding companies with technical assistance funds to support effective employee training strategies. The program offers training grants of up to \$1,000 per employee for eligible companies that create a minimum of ten new jobs within 12 months. Since the program's launch, more than \$54 million has been awarded to employers and approximately 200,000 employees have received training.

Competitive Improvement Program

The state program, which is administered by the West Virginia Development Office, targets small (50 or fewer employees) and medium (under five hundred employees) manufacturers. Grants, capped at \$1,000 per trainee, require a 50% cash contribution by each employer and require employers to document an in-kind contribution (usually wages paid to employees while being trained) toward the project.

Small Business Workforce Program

The program, part of the West Virginia Small Business Development Center system, reimburses the costs of pre-approved technology and technology training for eligible small businesses. The program can provide up to \$5,000 in grants designed to enhance competitiveness and expand markets, and up to \$10,000 in grants for technology businesses. To be eligible, companies must be for-profit, have 50 or fewer employees, have been in operation for at least one year, have less than \$2.5 million in revenues (\$3.5 million for technology businesses), and be in good standing with state taxing authorities.

Ascend West Virginia

Ascend West Virginia is a program aimed at attracting remote workers and was launched in April 2021 through West Virginia University's Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative and in partnership with West Virginia Tourism. The program offers \$12,000 in cash and additional incentives to workers willing to move to West Virginia for two years and provides a free outdoor recreation package and coworking space. The program has a goal of attracting more than 1,000 workers over five years.

Benedum Foundation

The Benedum Foundation is a region-specific philanthropic organization that offers flexible grants in economic development and education for West Virginia and parts of Southern Pennsylvania. The grants are offered on an application basis, and support projects which advance the economies of rural communities. Priorities include supporting entrepreneurship, technological advancement, new business, outdoor recreation, and cultural tourism. Grants range from less than \$50,000 up to \$1 million.

Jump Start Savings Program

The Jump Start Savings Program is a state-administered program that helps West Virginians save money to cover the costs of pursuing a career in skilled trades and vocations. Jump Start accounts do not have a maximum yearly contribution amount or maximum lifetime limit.

Renewal and Redevelopment

Reclamation of Abandoned and Dilapidated Properties Program

The Reclamation of Abandoned and Dilapidated Properties Program, administered by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, was established in 2021 to assist counties and municipalities in their efforts to remove and redevelop vacant and dilapidated structures. The WVDEP may assist in establishing prioritized inventories, offer reuse options for high-priority sites, and recommend actions to address vacant and dilapidated structures. The program has already begun to see success, awarding as much as \$300,000 to individual communities to address dilapidated and blighted buildings.

BAD Building Program/West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative (WVPRI)

The Brownfields, Abandoned, Dilapidated (BAD) Building Program is a five-step program through West Virginia University to address brownfields, abandoned, and dilapidated buildings. The program provides technical assistance and site analysis tools to enhance these properties in West Virginia communities, giving people the tools necessary to apply for grants, create policies, and combat local issues.

The West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative was launched in 2015 and provides loan funding to cities, counties, and other eligible borrowers to help communities combat urban blight. The loans can provide up to \$250,000 per year for cities and counties to purchase and address blighted properties. To receive funding, applicants must provide an outline of the project's scope, a list of properties to be addressed, how and why the properties were selected, and financial information.

Cultural Facilities and Capital Resources Grant

The West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History provides grant funding for development projects that create public access to the arts. Priority is given to projects which acquire or renovate existing structures and turn them into cultural and artistic facilities. This program will provide up to \$500,000 of applicable costs and has already been awarded to some projects. For example, the project team for the Columbia Club Building in Weston, West Virginia, was awarded \$47,000 to renovate a former church into a multi-purpose arts and culture facility.

Preservation Alliance of West Virginia

The Preservation Alliance of West Virginia is a part of the AmeriCorps initiative dedicated to the preservation and renovation of historic buildings. Many homes and buildings within West Virginia and Fayette County are over 100 years old and are not compliant with heating, plumbing, and electrical codes. The Preservation Alliance offers small loans between two- and twenty thousand dollars for advocacy, technical assistance, and the development of historic buildings. These buildings present an opportunity to transform older buildings that have fallen out of use into preserved examples of West Virginia's history.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, was signed into law at the federal level in 2021. The Bill provides \$725 million a year over 15 years to qualifying states for projects that rebuild roads, bridges, and rails, and expand access to drinking water. Additionally, Fayette County could use the funds to assist in the mitigation of abandoned mine hazards, the restoration of mine-contaminated water, and addressing emergencies related to abandoned mines.

Transportation

Roads to Prosperity

The State's "Roads to Prosperity" program leverages funds from an increase in fees and taxes to provide funding for new construction and maintenance of secondary roads. The funds are collected using a variety of fees and taxes that fund a general obligation bond known as the Roads to Prosperity Amendment, which is expected to generate \$2.8 billion for highway and bridge construction and maintenance throughout the state over the next several years. The funds were used for roadway projects such as Ames Heights Road resurfacing, Dunloup Creek Bridge repairs and updates, and the Redstart shortcut.

Transportation Alternatives Program

The Transportation Alternatives Program provides funding for smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. In 2022, the fund offered over \$1.3 billion in projects to regional and state transportation authorities.

Public Services and Infrastructure

Weatherization Assistance Program

The Weatherization Assistance Program helps low-income households in the State to reduce the costs incurred due to energy-related utilities. It implements an array of energy efficiency measures in the homes of qualifying households. Services include upgrading insulation, repairing malfunctioning home heating systems, and maintenance of supply and conditioning systems. The program is funded through the Department of Energy.

West Virginia Water Development Authority

The West Virginia Water Development Authority provides financing for the construction of wastewater and water facilities to local governmental agencies (LGAs). The organization coordinates the financing and closing of all infrastructure loans and economic development loans. Its programs are funded with proceeds from water development bonds issued by the Water Development Authority. The funds are loaned to local governmental agencies, including municipalities, public service districts, and other political subdivisions through the purchase of local revenue bonds or notes issued by the LGAs. In April 2022, the Water Development Authority created the Economic Enhancement Grant Fund, which appropriated \$250,000,000 of American Rescue Plan funds to the organization for use on projects across the state.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund is a funding program to address water quality problems through the construction, upgrade, or expansion of wastewater facilities. The program is charged with the oversight, fiscal management, and administrative compliance review of local governmental entities that receive funds. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund administers three financial assistance programs. The low-interest loan programs administer funds for municipalities and public service districts to build, upgrade, or expand treatment facilities and collection systems. Its Agriculture Water Quality Loan Program is a partnership with the West Virginia Conservation Agency developed to address pollution from nonpoint sources using best management practices. The money is loaned to participating banks, which offer below market-rate low-interest loans. The On-Site Systems Loan Program is a low-interest loan program established to address on-site sewage disposal problems.

Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Grant Program

The Appalachian Regional Commission is an independent federal grant program that represents a partnership between the federal government and the governors of thirteen states in the region. The grant program supports water, wastewater, broadband, and workforce development projects, among others. Federal grant applications are received annually, and funds are appropriated directly to the Appalachian Regional Commission annually by congress. The funding quantity allocated to the State of West Virginia varies annually but averages between eight and nine million dollars.

Gig Ready Program

In 2022, state-level agencies are working to create a new incentive program, coined Gig Ready, to expand broadband throughout the State. The program provides an opportunity for local government and organizations to dedicate funds available through the American Rescue Plan Act or other local funds. The program provides technical assistance to help communities scope projects, select private partners, and complete other steps. Participants may then be eligible for implementation funding through the program or other funding sources such as funds allocated through the State's Capital Projects Fund. Applicants seeking to implement a broadband project or expand broadband service are required to provide a 25 percent funding match. In early 2022, Fayette County leaders planned to use funds from the American Rescue Plan Act to provide the 25% match funding required by the State for a broadband project.

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants are provided through the US Department of Housing Development to the State of West Virginia for use in a variety of community and economic development projects. In 2018, Governor Jim Justice approved 1.5 million dollars in Community Development Block Grant funding for broadband projects in West Virginia. Through 2019, approximately four million dollars in funding was dedicated to these types of projects, which included the 2018 Fayette County Broadband Plan. Community Development Block Grants administered by the State will continue to serve as a potential resource to implement broadband-related projects in Fayette County.

Note: This financing source also applies to Land Use improvements for the County.

West Virginia Economic Development Authority Loan Insurance Fund

The State provides incentives for investors to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure through a non-lapsing fund administered by the West Virginia Economic Development Authority. The Broadband Loan Insurance Program ensures the repayment of debt on capital costs related to providing broadband service to underserved areas of the state or that links a segment of a network operator's core network to a local network plant that serves an unserved area or an area with no more than two wireless providers. Under the program, the West Virginia Economic Development Authority can insure up to 80 percent of a bank loan for a broadband infrastructure or development project .

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Grant Program offers funding to states \$42.5 billion for a variety of projects related to the expansion of broadband internet in rural and low-income communities. Funding covers costs such as planning, infrastructure deployment, provision of affordable connective devices, reduction of wi-fi costs for households, and physical changes such as the procurement and installation of fiber-optic cable and routers.

Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission receives funding to support a variety of projects, from business development loans to construction projects to improve the livelihoods of communities. Funds are Congressionally approved, with approximately \$180 million in funds available throughout 2021.

Rural

USDA Rural Business Development Grants

The program provides technical assistance and training to small rural businesses. Eligible businesses must have fewer than fifty employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenue. The money must be used to benefit rural areas or towns outside the urbanized periphery of any city with a population of 50,000 or more. There is no maximum grant amount, but smaller requests are given higher priority.

USDA Community Development Initiative Grants

RCDI Grants are awarded to help non-profit housing and community development organizations to support economic and community development projects in rural areas. This can be used for any place other than a city or town with a population greater than 50,000 or the urbanized area adjacent to such a city or town. The minimum grant award is \$50,000 and the maximum is \$250,000.

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture is a competitive grant program for agricultural sciences. The program awards AFRI research, education, and extension grants to improve rural economies, increase food production, stimulate the economy, mitigate the impacts of climate change, address water availability issues, ensure food safety and security, enhance nutrition, and train the next generation of the agricultural workforce.

USDA Farm Service Agency Loans

The USDA Farm Service facilitates a variety of loans, such as ownership, emergency funds, youth loans, microloans, operation loans, and many more. They come with a variety of interest rates, eligibility requirements, and funding amounts, but are primarily used to ensure that agriculture and food production are supported and further developed in rural communities.

Rural Energy for America Program

The Rural Energy For America Program (REAP), operated by the US Department of Agriculture, provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to implement renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may also apply for new energy efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing.

Recreation

National Recreation Foundation Grant

Through a nomination process, the National Recreation Foundation (NRF) awards grants to programs focused on youth development through outreach. They award funds through one of four grant programs: trustee grants, special grants, outdoor grants, and impact grants. The NRF does not accept unsolicited applications, but general criteria include non-profit status, must include leverage potential, and the ability to be replicated in multiple communities.

US Economic Development Administration Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program

The US EDA TTOR Program offers \$240 million in competitive grants to help communities that have been hit hardest by challenges facing the tourism industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds are used to invest in infrastructure, workforce, or other projects to support the recovery of the industry. Examples include the construction of multi-use paths, campgrounds, hiking and biking trails, investment in local businesses, and preservation of landmarks and recreation areas. These grants are funded through the American Rescue Program.

Community Design

National Endowment for the Arts Grants for Arts Projects

The National Endowment for the Arts offers many grants for arts and culture endeavors, the largest being the Grants for Arts Projects program. The program supports opportunities for public engagement with the arts and arts education, integration of the arts promoting health and wellness, and improvement of capacity and capability within the arts sector. Grants range between \$10,000 and \$100,000, with up to \$150,000 available for sub-granting. While grants cannot exceed 50% of the total project cost, the funds can be used for anything, including preserving cultural heritage, enhancing outreach, and supporting artists.

Challenge America

The NEA offers Challenge America grants to support small organizations for projects in all disciplines that extend the reach of the arts to communities with rich and dynamic artistic and cultural contributions that are currently underserved. The funds are meant to address potential barriers created by the lack of representation of these communities, and the grant itself requires an abbreviated application, a standard \$10,000 amount, and many avenues for technical assistance from the NEA.

Our Town

Our Town is the NEA's creative placemaking program, which supports activities that integrate arts, culture, and design into local efforts to strengthen communities. The grant requires collaboration between a local government and a non-profit, cultural organization, and should engage in partnership with other sectors, such as agriculture, economic development, housing, and transportation. Grants range from \$25,000 to \$150,000 to support projects such as artist residencies, arts festivals, public art, cultural/cultural district planning, business development, and public space design.

Historic Preservation

West Virginia State Development Grant

The State Development Grant Program is meant to enable the rehabilitation of properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a contributing property in a historic district, and/or an archaeological development of a site listed on the Register. Grants awarded will not exceed 50% of total project costs, with a grant minimum of one thousand dollars.

West Virginia Survey and Planning Grant

Funds from the Survey and Planning Grant can be used to conduct architectural/archaeological surveys, National Register Nominations, predevelopment plans, and other historic area activities. It is meant to support the preservation of culture within communities in West Virginia. Grants are awarded for up to 60% of the total project cost, while Certified Local Governments can receive up to 70% of total project costs.

Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant

The Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant, administered by the National Park Service, was created to support subgrant programs that enable the rehabilitation of rural historic properties at the National, State, and local level of significance, and rehabilitate, protect, and foster economic development in rural communities. Grants range between \$200,000 to \$750,000, and funds can be applied to any property currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or properties eligible for listing on the Register located in rural communities.

Programs, Resources, and Potential Partners

While Fayette County is generally responsible for initiation and implementing the Plan recommendations, the County will require the assistance of a variety of partners, programs, and resources to achieve the Plan goals. The following section provides a brief description of various programs, resources, and potential partners that could be of assistance to the County. The section is organized by category, which include:

- Land Use and Development
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Renewal and Redevelopment
- Transportation
- Public Services
- Infrastructure
- Rural
- Recreation
- Community Design
- Historic Preservation

Land Use and Development

West Virginia Land Stewardship Corporation

The West Virginia Land Stewardship Corporation is a land bank that takes on redevelopment and renewal projects and provides stewardship services for properties undergoing environmental remediation. The organization prepares and takes the legal title of these properties and works with local governments and private developers to prepare the land for redevelopment. It has completed demolition and rehabilitation projects through the WVU Bad Buildings Program, to address urban blight and the issue of dilapidated buildings throughout West Virginia.

West Virginia Land Trust

The West Virginia Land Trust is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the environmental resources of the state through strategies including conservation easements. They have permanently protected over 20,000 acres of land since 1994. The organization partners with public and private organizations to establish conservation easements or outright purchase land to ensure it remains protected. Its projects prioritize ecological, social, and economic benefits for the communities it serves.

West Virginia Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic

The West Virginia Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic provides legal and planning services to conserve land and water, support local land use planning, and provide educational opportunities for law students and West Virginia Citizens.

Housing

Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development provides several resources for those looking to rent or buy homes. This includes affordable housing search tools, public housing locations, housing voucher assistance, and a toll-free helpline to assist with the housing search.

hoUSed

The hoUSed Program attempts to advance policy to achieve large-scale sustained investments necessary to ensure that renters with lower incomes have an affordable place to call home. The program offers a database of resources, a policy action plan, and many other informational and organizational tools to assist renters in claiming affordable housing benefits.

Economic Development

Fayette County Chamber of Commerce

The Fayette County Chamber of Commerce is a group of local businesses that support the interests of the business community in the County. The Chamber promotes the image, retention, and expansion of existing businesses, economic vitality, and growth.

WV Hive

WV Hive was created to help new and existing businesses successfully grow and expand. The program provides one-on-one assistance, business advising, technical assistance, access to Makerspace, and connections to resources. The program also administers the County Roads Angel Network program. The Hive is sponsored and funded by several organizations and institutions, including the Appalachian Regional Commission, Community Transformation Project, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Region 4 Planning and Development Council, and Fruits of Labor.

West Virginia Extension

The West Virginia University (WVU) Extension program focuses on providing trusted and practical educational programs that improve health, education and prosperity. These programs help people, businesses and communities solve problems, develop skills and build a better future. These resources span economic development, agriculture, tourism, food and health, safety, youth programming, and much more. Its goal is to use the university's resources to assist the greater West Virginia community in whatever way it can.

Workforce West Virginia

Workforce West Virginia is the state government agency acting as the one-stop center for workforce resources, including assistance throughout the hiring process, support for employee training, tax incentives, and labor market information.

WVU Industrial Extension

West Virginia University's (WVU) Industrial Extension partners with small and medium-size manufacturers in West Virginia to support operational improvement and business growth. The WVU Industrial Extension focuses on developing consulting services to provide firsthand education. Programs include:

- Occupational Health and Safety
- Innovation and Growth
- Management Systems
- Continuous Improvements
- Workforce

New River Gorge Regional Development Authority

The mission of the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority (NRGRDA) is to initiate, facilitate, and support the community and economic development efforts in the New River Gorge region. The NRGRDA provides a multitude of resources to new and existing businesses, including new business attraction efforts. The NRGRDA assists potential businesses and investors throughout the process including:

- Site selection and negotiation
- Construction and design processes
- Financing arrangements
- Incentive negotiations
- Permitting navigation
- Workforce training
- Project management
- Technical businesses assistance
- Regional marketing advisement

County Roads Angel Network

County Roads Angel Network (CRAN) is a non-profit organization that is supported by the NRGRDA and administered through WV Hive, a business assistance program. CRAN recruits qualified investors to evaluate, invest in, and mentor start-up businesses.

Workforce Development Initiative Program

The Workforce Development Initiative Program encourages working partnerships between educational institutions and the business community. The program is administered by the Governor's Workforce Investment Division of the State. To qualify, community and technical colleges must establish their revolving fund dedicated to workforce development initiatives. The program requires a one-to-one match from the private sector.

Generation New River Gorge

Generation New River Gorge (GNRG) is a statewide organization that provides resources and tools to help residents find a career path. The organization offers different programs; GNRG's Network program provides mentorship opportunities, Career Connector connects job seekers and employers, Fellowship provides opportunities for professional development, and New Force builds software development skills.

Renewal and Redevelopment

Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority

An Urban Renewal Authority (URA) is a public body created to acquire, develop, and sell neglected properties. When communities fulfill the requirements laid out by the URA, which are adopting a Comprehensive Plan, resolution, and redevelopment plan, they can then purchase and redevelop the land based on public input and need. Currently, the organization has completed two major developments: the New Roots Community Farm and the Wolf Creek Business Park.

West Virginia Legal Education to Address Abandoned and Neglected Properties (WV LEAP)

WV LEAP is an effort of the West Virginia University College of Law to address abandoned and neglected properties. The program provides information to help understand the legal barriers and guidance on effective strategies to address blight in a community.

West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center

The West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center is a resource created to assist communities to plan and implement brownfield redevelopment projects. Fayette County is served by the branch located at Marshall University and offers technical support for many types of projects. Notably, the Center offers the Downtown Appalachia Redevelopment Initiative, which gathers a team based on the project requirements to provide a range of services meant to support the redevelopment of downtowns and historic corridors throughout Appalachia.

WVDEP Office of Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation

The Office of Abandoned Mine Land and Reclamation was created to manage the reclamation of lands and waters affected by mining before the passage of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act in 1977. The program provides federal grant funding to development projects on abandoned mining land.

Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) Program

The AMLER Program, also known as AML Pilot Program, is administered through the U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. The program aims to implement strategies that return legacy coal mining sites to productive use through economic and community development. The program provides grants and guidance on eligible projects.

West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center

The Brownfields Assistance Center was established to assist communities in planning and implementing brownfield redevelopment projects. The Center provides training and technical assistance, assists in site preparation efforts, and helps in grant writing and leveraging project funding.

Transportation

Adopt-a-Highway

The West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) sponsors an adopt-a-highway program that allows individuals, families, churches, businesses, schools, civic organizations, government agencies, and other organizations to adopt roads. Adopt-a-highway program members volunteer to pick up litter on the side of the adopted highway. Adoptions are for two years, during which time three cleanups are required annually. Adopted highways are identified by a sign at each end of the section bearing the adopt-a-highway logo and the name of the adoptee. West Virginia currently contains 25,000 volunteers who regularly pick up litter on 4,000 miles of highway.

Operation Wildflowers

The Divisions of Highways and Natural Resources and the West Virginia Garden Clubs joined forces in 1990 to form Operation Wildflower to plant native and naturalized wildflowers to beautify highways. The program began in 1990 under the Department of Natural Resources and in 2022 more than 250 acres of wildflowers grow on state roads, including sites on every interstate highway. This program not only beautifies the highways but also discourages litter, a problem identified in community outreach.

New River Valley Master Gardeners

The New River Valley Master Gardeners are volunteer educators within Floyd, Giles, Pulaski, and Montgomery counties that work to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. The Virginia Master Gardener program is an educationally-based service program of the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Local Highway Cleanup Efforts

Class VI - Mountain River and Adventures on the Gorge, both local recreational outfitters, have recently held highway cleanup events twice annually. In each event, these local groups have removed litter from local roadways.

West Virginia Rails to Trails Council

The West Virginia Rails to Trails Council is statewide advocacy and networking organization that helps connect people and communities with resources to plan, acquire, build, and maintain rail-trails in West Virginia and promote existing rail-trails to trail users. It supports local rail-trail initiatives throughout the state. It also supports linking rail-trails to create long distance trail networks across West Virginia and into neighboring states.

Fayette Trails Coalition

The Fayette Trail Coalition is a local organization dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles and economic growth through the development of outdoor recreation infrastructure. The organization provides expertise in sustainable trail design, building, and maintenance. In January 2022, the organization published its soft surface trails plan, which established a vision for new trail opportunities in the County.

Mountain State Trails Alliance

The Mountain State Trail Alliance is a nonprofit organization spanning seven counties in southern West Virginia, including Fayette County working to link recreational opportunities, people, and businesses through a unified trails system. The organization reviews and assists in the application and implementation of grants, coordinates monetary, information, and physical resources to develop trails, and encourages collaboration between land managers and trail users.

Public Services

Underwood-Smith Teacher Loan Assistance Program

The Underwood-Smith Teacher Loan Assistance Program helps teachers in high-need subject areas or in high-need locations to pay back federal student loans, which helps West Virginia schools recruit and retain teachers. The Fayette County Board of Education website contains a webpage that describes the program's offerings.

Leadership Fayette County (LFC)

The purpose of Leadership Fayette County (LFC) is to promote leadership and provide firsthand experience in the business, government, and tourism sectors to students in Fayette County. Students who complete the program are awarded a \$1,000 college scholarship.

Fayette County Health Department

The Fayette County Health Department offers referrals for counseling, inpatient treatment, Narcan doses, and Narcan training. The department is also part of an inter-organizational quick response team that can respond to overdoses and referrals from loved ones.

Mount Hope Housing Authority

Mount Hope Housing Authority provides housing assistance to low-income residents through the management of low-rent public housing. The program is based on income and eligibility guidelines defined by the department of Housing and Urban Development. In addition, the City of Mount Hope plans to construct an emergency shelter at the new Mount Hope Elementary School.

West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness

The West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness in Bridgeport West Virginia creates partnerships between state and local agencies to advocate for homeless services and issues, develop long-term solutions, and promote education, best practices, and advancements in the field. The emergency shelter grant program provides support to the West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness for rapid rehousing, street outreach, and housing management information system expenses.

Fayette Prevention Coalition

The Fayette Prevention Coalition provides is a network of individuals, organizations, and agencies working together to address substance abuse issues in Fayette County. The coalition collaborates with schools, organizations, and the County government to educate residents on the drug epidemic and the continuum of treatment options including prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery.

The coalition has also held successful prevention activities including the Walk for Hope, an event to reduce stigma, educate the public, and provide resources to County residents. Project: Adventure, a two-day event for fourth- and fifth-grade youth to familiarize them with outside-of-school and after-school activities, garnered participants from throughout the County. Other initiatives have included the "Save a Life Day" free Narcan distribution event, spring/summer youth passport to encourage youth to get outside and engaged, and the youth action team, which was created to empower teens to make healthy choices, teach prevention strategies, and gather input on the challenges facing Fayette County youth. The state police and sheriff's department coordinate drop-off days and many local pharmacies accept prescription drugs for safe disposal.

Jobs and Hope West Virginia

Jobs and Hope West Virginia offers support through collaboration between statewide agencies to provide career training and links to employment for West Virginians recovering from substance abuse.

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources provides a range of programs that divert low-level drug offenders to treatment and support rather than prosecution. The Department also provides overdose reversal and treatment and recovery resources. A local office of the State Department is in Oak Hill.

Local Healthcare Providers

Plateau Medical Center, located in Oak Hill, is a full-service hospital that provides a variety of services, including an emergency care facility, pulmonary services, and rehabilitation care. Montgomery General Hospital also provides general healthcare services from its campus in Montgomery. Several small health clinics are in the Plateau District, including two different New River Health clinics in Fayetteville and Scarboro, Appalachian Regional Healthcare and Plateau Clinic, both of which are in Oak Hill, and the Access Health clinic near Fayetteville. No clinics exist near Meadow Bridge, Danese, Ansted, Lookout, and Gauley Bridge, however, leaving these areas underserved.

West Virginia Farmers Market Association

At the State level, the West Virginia Farmers Market Association is a membership-based organization designed to strengthen farmers' markets through technical assistance online and other communication tools. The West Virginia Farmers Market Association provides resources to help Farmers Markets market themselves, advice for new vendors, training for Framers Market Managers, and other resources.

Fayette Senior Services Life Enrichment Center

Fayette Senior Services Life Enrichment Center provides non-emergency medical transportation in which clients can arrange for drivers to provide transportation to medical appointments. In addition, Fayette Senior Services Life Enrichment Center provides the following services:

- Prescription pick-up and delivery services and handicap-accessible transportation services.
- The voucher transportation service allows clients to purchase vouchers for a nominal fee and arrange transportation with one of Fayette Senior Services' drivers for non-medical trips including shopping, errands, and groceries.
- Meals on Wheels service to seniors in the County, which is delivered by a dedicated group of volunteers to individuals over 60 years of age.
- Life enrichment center for adults over the age of 50 to participate in fitness, educational, recreational, social, and entertainment activities.

Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources

The Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources provides non-emergency and emergency medical transportation for senior citizens from its location at Main Street in Oak Hill. The Department's range of services also includes Medicaid for long-term care, Medicaid premium assistance programs, supplemental nutrition assistance programs, and emergency assistance, many of which assist seniors.

Wellness Checks

Wellness checks refer to an in-person visit from one or more law enforcement officers in response to a request from a friend or family member that is concerned about another person's mental health. Welfare checks can be administered for a variety of reasons to ensure that the individual in question is okay. For instance, wellness checks can be used when a non-local relative has been unable to contact an individual for an extended period or when an elderly person has not been seen or heard from for some time. Police officers who perform welfare checks must be trained to act successfully, safely, and in compliance with the law.

Solid Waste Programs

Several private waste contractors provide curbside collection services for Fayette County households and businesses, including A&W Sanitation Inc., Dave's Sanitation Service, Inc., Oak Hill Garbage Disposal, Inc., Loup Creek Trash, Lusk Disposal Service, Inc., Waste Management of West Virginia, and Western Greenbrier Disposal Service. Small

Fayette County Solid Waste Authority

The Fayette County Solid Waste Authority was created in 1992 to protect public health and welfare by developing and implementing a program for solid waste, collection, handling, recycling, and disposal. The solid waste authority administers a litter control program that allows individuals to report open dump sites in the County in or outside of municipal limits over the phone or online. Under West Virginia state statutes, fines and prison time are punishments for the operation of an open dump site.

Pollution Prevention and Open Dump Program

The Pollution Prevention and Open Dump Program is a collaborative project between the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and the Fayette County Solid Waste Authority. The program uses landfill fees to clean up illegal dumps and to gather evidence to prosecute illegal dumping activity. By late 2010, the program had completed more than 15,000 projects, resulting in the removal of an estimated 147,000 tons of material which consisted of 26,000 tons of steel, 62,000 appliances, and over two million tires.

Tire Collection Events

The solid waste authority administers a tire disposal program in partnership with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, hosted on the third Wednesday of each month at Kevin's Auto Sales on Route 19 south of Oak Hill. In addition, other events including small appliance pick-ups and free dumpster days exist throughout the year.

ICE Collaborative

The Integrated Community Engagement Collaborative follows the Icelandic Prevention Model to reduce the rate of substance abuse in youth. It focuses less on drugs themselves, and primarily on creating strong communities around at-risk youth. They gather data from students in 7th-12th grade, and provide that data to researchers, providers, policymakers, and community members to support these youth.

Other State-Level Trash and Recycling Efforts

Other resources exist at the state level to support the effective provision of trash and recycling services. The Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan (REAP) provides technical financial and resource assistance to support cleanup efforts for illegal dumping and littering throughout the state. Greater detail on the REAP program is contained in the Community Design chapter.

Infrastructure

Region 4 Planning and Development Council

Region 4 provides technical assistance to Fayette and several other counties with the goal of economic growth. Duties include comprehensive planning for infrastructure, economic development, community development, health care improvement, resource development, transportation, and environmental protection.

West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council

The West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council was created as the state's clearinghouse for water and wastewater projects and to support infrastructure projects throughout the state. The council administers funds from its infrastructure fund, which consists of a mix of infrastructure revenues, appropriations, grants, gifts, contributions, loan proceeds, and other resources. The organization's technical review and funding committee reviews funding applications and determines each proposed project's cost-effectiveness and feasibility. Upon written recommendation from the Council, the Water Development Authority allocates funds and provides financial, technical, or other assistance to finance all or part of the cost of infrastructure projects.

West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Water and Waste Management (DWWM) exists to protect, preserve, and enhance the state's watersheds. The department administers the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which supports wastewater facility construction, upgrades, or expansion. The Department also administers Water Quality Standards, which are the foundation of the Clean Water Act and form the legal basis for controls on the pollution entering waters from industrial sites, wastewater treatment plants, and storm sewers. In addition, the Department administers the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, a program to address water quality problems through wastewater facility construction, upgrades, or expansion. The program oversees local governments that receive funds.

Local Service Providers

Water services are provided through a total of fifteen local entities. Four municipalities, Fayetteville, Mount Hope, Meadowbridge, and Pax each deliver water service within their boundary. Meanwhile, eleven public service districts, including Gauley River, Kanawha Falls, Armstrong, and Page Kincaid Public Service Districts provide water service in unincorporated areas. Similarly, wastewater services are provided by municipally run utilities within the cities and towns and public services districts such as the Winona wastewater system in unincorporated areas.

Service Area Consolidation

Though each district functions independently, many of their service areas either abut or neighbor one another. As growth and the development of new land continues in Fayette County, contiguous service areas will likely become more common. Contiguous service areas present an opportunity to increase access to and efficiency of these services through the consolidation of service districts, which can lead to lower service rates for the end user.

Partnership With Neighboring Counties

Opportunities exist to deliver efficient water and wastewater services through partnerships with adjacent Counties. Kanawha County has established a goal to modernize and consolidate its Public Service Districts to meet the demands of the 21st Century. Similarly, Raleigh County has proposed the consolidation of its water and wastewater public service districts. Given that the Kanawha and Raleigh Counties have proposed consolidation of their public service districts, Fayette County can consider similar efforts to achieve cost savings by partnering with Kanawha County to explore the consolidation of its public service districts.

Broadband, Water, and Wastewater Expansion

The provision of broadband, water, and wastewater services each require the installation of infrastructure such as pipes and cables underground in the public rights of way along roadways. This often presents an opportunity to achieve cost savings when these different infrastructure systems can be installed or replaced simultaneously by increasing efficiency.

West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council

In 2017 the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council was established to oversee the development of plans, processes, and procedures to extend broadband access to underserved areas of the State. The Council is charged with exploring ways to expand access to the middle mile, last mile, and wireless applications and maps broadband services available within the state. The organization makes legislative recommendations related to broadband at the federal level. The Council's initiatives will continue to affect the expansion and improvement of broadband in Fayette County.

Other State Broadband Efforts

Throughout 2022, the State of West Virginia announced several efforts to spur the expansion of broadband services across the state. For example, the governor announced the approval of over 20 million dollars in early 2022 to fund six major broadband expansion projects through the Major Broadband Strategies program . In 2019, West Virginia also passed legislation that provides for five years of reduced property taxation for communications towers erected between mid-2019 and mid-2024. Towers erected in this time shall be valued at salvage value for five years, meaning 5% of their original cost . The County should keep abreast of these initiatives and consider ways to leverage new state resources that come available.

Rural

Fayette County Farmland Protection Board

In West Virginia, the Voluntary Farmland Protection Act allows each county the ability to design, implement, fund, and administer a farmland protection program unique to their county. While the state-level organization sets minimum eligibility requirements, the counties can decide on their courses of action, giving them the freedom to customize their farmland protection. The Fayette County Farmland Protection Board oversees the funding and establishment of conservation easements to protect farmland in Fayette County under the West Virginia Farmland Protection Act.

West Virginia Grown

West Virginia Grown is an advertisement campaign by the state government to highlight products that are made in West Virginia. This provides free marketing and advertising for local farmers, helping them sell products and grow their businesses. Providing more recognition of the importance of farming in West Virginia will provide support to those in the agricultural sector, allowing them to further the reach of their products and continue to profit from their land and support their communities. The program is not well-funded, so the tags are not as widespread as originally intended. In the 2021 West Virginia Grown Directory, only two Fayette County businesses are listed: Mountain State Maple and Farm and Five Springs Farm.

West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition

The West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition provides resources and knowledge to West Virginia's farmers. Programs include Foodshed Development, which provides customized service to seventeen counties in five regions through dedicated coordinators. These programs include crop-specific grants and farm plans, assisting in passing legislation to help local farmers and provide agricultural education. Another program is SNAP Stretch, which collaborates with local producers and retailers to provide fresh food to people on SNAP benefits. These programs support rural farmers and encourage them to continue the practice. Developing farming as an economic sector will provide ample long-term benefits to Fayette County, allowing farmers to preserve their farmland for future generations.

Agritourism Training Initiative

The Agritourism Training Initiative at West Virginia University is an online course that prepares owners of agricultural resources for the operation of an agritourism business. It includes basic business principles, risk-management training, integrating entertainment, information on travel trends, and mentoring connections. Promoting safe and entertaining experiences within Fayette County will allow farmers to diversify their incomes and create better financial stability for this growing industry.

VisitWV

West Virginia's tourism outreach resource for visitors to the state. It provides a list of counties and the attractions at each place. Fayette is unique because of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve within its borders.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) West Virginia

SARE West Virginia is an organization funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. It offers educational programs and funding opportunities to the agriculture industry across the US through one national and four regional divisions. West Virginia belongs to the Northeast region, which is hosted by the University of Vermont. The organization offers six grants that are meant to fund agriculture advancement and research for farmers and professionals. It also helps applicants gather materials and submit grant applications.

West Virginia Farm Bureau

The West Virginia Farm Bureau provides educational programming and networking opportunities to farmers across West Virginia. This organization is dedicated to protecting the rights of farmers and offers educational programs to encourage new generations to participate in the agricultural industry. Its programming is directed towards developing new farmers and has mobile options to travel to schools, resources for veterans to start farms, and events for young adults to develop leadership skills through agriculture.

US Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA offers many resources to assist farmers and help them create profitable and sustainable farms. It invests in agricultural transportation, affordable housing, and economic development, and funds many grant sources in addition to providing its own. It has invaluable educational resources and is an important resource for every aspect of agriculture.

Agricultural Enhancement Program

The Agricultural Enhancement Program offers technical and financial assistance to implement conservation best management practices. It focuses on reducing pollution in the state's waterways both from and into agricultural land. The program is run through the West Virginia Conservation Agency which offers further programming in waterway cleanup, non-point source pollution reduction, and educational resources for all ages.

Conservation West Virginia

Conservation West Virginia is a non-profit organization that promotes legislation to ensure the conservation of natural resources within West Virginia. This includes clean air and water, combatting climate change, and the preservation of land and wildlife.

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources provides educational and legislative oversight of the state's natural resources. They distribute hunting and fishing licenses, spearhead conservation efforts for endangered native species, oversee recreational activities and manage the data for West Virginia's natural amenities. The many agencies under its oversight ensure that all can enjoy the resources of the state and ensures the long-term sustainability of those resources.

Recreation

Fayette County Trails Coalition

The Fayette County Trails Coalition advocates for outdoor recreation, education, and access throughout Fayette County by providing expertise in sustainable trail design, construction, and maintenance. They have worked with many organizations throughout Fayette County and West Virginia to provide their expertise in creating accessible and well-designed trails.

Appalachian Headwaters

Appalachian Headwaters is a non-profit organization aimed at providing environmental education and the reforestation of mined land in the center of Appalachia. The organization has several projects restoring thousands of acres of formerly mined lands in West Virginia to ensure they are restored to native forests and to improve water quality in streams and wetlands. These sites provide recreation opportunities and are open for public use. One of their notable projects is Mammoth Preserve, part of which is in Fayette County. This mountaintop removal mine is being turned into a natural recreational area with mountain biking and hiking trails.

Active South West Virginia

Active Southern West Virginia is a non-profit, regionwide initiative to motivate area residents, businesses, schools, and local governments to make physical activity a personal and regional priority. Active South West Virginia aims to create a healthy and active community that will attract new businesses, tourism, and jobs while developing a proud culture of wellness and physical activity in southern West Virginia.

National Park Service

The National Park Service manages and operates three parks in and around Fayette County. The New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, the Gauley National River Recreation Area, and the Bluestone National Scenic River. The National Park Service has adopted management plans for the area, including the Connecting the Parks with their Gateway Communities Concept Plan, which offers multiple types of trail connections to the parks they manage.

New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)

The New River Gorge CVB is a non-profit marketing and sales organization that is helping to develop tourism in Fayette County. They operate a website that contains information about local companies offering adventure trips, restaurants and hotels, event venues, and family-friendly experiences. More information on this organization can be found in Chapter 13 Community Design.

Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) are responsible for the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve, one of four High Adventure Camps the organization maintains. Of its 13,000 acres, 11,400 are located within Fayette County. The camp contains an 88,000-seat natural amphitheater, hotel, conference center, high-adventure team-building activities, ATV Trails, and a skate park. The Boy Scouts use the venue to host the National Scout Jamboree every four years, and its amenities are available to the public for recreational use. Their stewardship of the reserve and the mission of the BSA has given them a personal stake in trail connections, maintenance, and expansion throughout Fayette County.

Adventure Fayette County

Adventure Fayette County is a volunteer group that works to prevent youth substance use by engaging them in extra-curricular activities. These activities include arts and crafts, educational programs, and sports and recreation activities such as disc golf, biking, and fishing.

West Virginia Land Trust

The West Virginia Land Trust (WVLT) is a statewide non-profit that aims to protect lands with significant conservation values through the use of easements and real estate acquisitions. Since its creation in 1994, the organization has worked to protect over 20,000 acres of land. These lands created outdoor recreation opportunities, protected scenic views, and preserved historic sites and family farms.

The WVLT helps landowners establish conservation easements and assists in the creation of outdoor recreational amenities, and historic sites, and funds conservation research. It has already completed projects in Fayette County, partnered with the City of Oak Hill to purchase land for Needleseye Park, and helped establish the Gauley River Canyon Recreational Area.

Fayette County Trails Coalition

The Fayette County Trails Coalition offers expertise in trail design, construction, and maintenance. The coalition has already begun planning trail connections to the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve and has efforts planned for miles of trails between local amenities.

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

The WVDNR provides hunting and fishing licenses to the public. They offer permits for a wide range of game hunting in the winter, from bear to deer to quail. The WVDNR also stocks rivers and streams year-round, allowing for fishing throughout the winter.

Winter Cities Initiative

The Winter Cities Initiative is an organization dedicated to ensuring that cities with a colder climate can be as prosperous and adventurous as their southern counterparts. They have many resources related to leveraging winter climates into profitable and attractive places to live and visit.

American Trails

American Trails advances the development of diverse, high-quality trails and greenways for the benefit of people and communities. It offers resources, training, funding, and design assistance for the development and upkeep of trails throughout the country. The organization oversaw and funded the construction of the Allegheny Trail in eastern West Virginia.

Community Design

Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan (REAP)

Since 2005, the Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan (REAP) strives to clean up West Virginia and rid the state of unsightly litter. The REAP initiative harbors all of the state cleanup programs within the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection. REAP is the state's most comprehensive force in the campaign against illegal dumping and littering, utilizing efforts from both program staff and volunteers statewide. The program empowers citizens to take ownership of their communities by providing technical, financial, and resource assistance in cleanup efforts. REAP programs and initiatives include:

- Adopt a Highway Program
- Recycling and Waste Reduction Programs
- Pollution Prevention and Open Dump Program
- Make It Shine Statewide Cleanup
- Make It Shine Earth Day Celebration
- Great Kanawha River Cleanup
- Tire Collection Event

Coal Heritage Area Authority

This organization is one of 40 nationally designated heritage areas in the US. Through the National Park Service, it provides resource protection initiatives that rely on public partnerships and private ownerships to protect not only the physical structures, but the communities that these regions create.

Historic Preservation

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office offers a variety of services and programs relating to the preservation of the historic places and sites of West Virginia. In addition to grants, they coordinate the registration of sites on the National Register of Historic Places, complete archaeological studies of sites, and overall attempt to the historic richness of West Virginia.

AmeriCorp-Preserve WV

Preserve West Virginia is the grassroots organization dedicated to historic preservation which coordinates the AmeriCorp program. This national service initiative provides participants the opportunity to take on physical renovations of historic places, as well as provide educational outreach and sustainable guidelines to the communities they serve. It is a paid opportunity that provides leadership opportunities as well as trade knowledge.

Action Matrix

The following pages provide a matrix of the recommendations outlined throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Each recommendation has been refined for brevity and includes a prioritization element, a time estimate, and a summary of suggested partners, programs, and funding sources. This table is an effort to simplify the findings of the Comprehensive Plan and offer actionable tasks to accomplish the goals outlined in the Plan.

Recommendations

The recommendations found in the matrix are taken directly from the plan. They have been edited for brevity to emphasize actions the community can undertake to move the needle toward the Plan's vision and goals.

Priority

The Priority level of each task was assigned with consideration for cost and importance. Each is indicated with one of the following:

- **Priority 1:** Easier to implement; critical
- **Priority 2:** Harder to implement; essential
- **Priority 3:** Desirable, but not necessary

Time Estimate

Time estimates indicate, in years, how long it would take to complete a specific action. Descriptions of each timeframe are detailed below:

- **Short-Term:** Less than two years
- **Mid-Term:** Two to five years
- **Long-Term:** Greater than five years
- **Ongoing:** Requires immediate action and continued attention throughout the life of the Comprehensive Plan

Suggested Programs, Partners, and Resources

The Suggested Programs, Partners, and Resources section provides the names of suggested organizations and policies which could help in conducting the recommendations within the Comprehensive Plan. These include federal organizations, local non-profits, national programs, and other groups which offer partnerships that could assist in implementing the recommendations of the Plan.

Suggested Funding Sources

The Funding sources listed in the matrix are opportunities to receive grants and loans to complete the listed recommendations. These funds are disbursed by a variety of sources, such as federal loans and private grants, and can account for up to one hundred percent of a project's budget.

Recommended Action and Zoning

The actions highlighted in yellow within the Action Matrix represent actions that are related to Land Development Regulations. Please see *Chapter 16: Zoning Audit* for more information about these actions.

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
Land Use and Development					
04-01	Increase density in the county through adjustment of zoning regulations	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
04-02	Establish development covenants that protect viewsheds while providing some flexibility to developers	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
04-03	Prioritize infill development to utilize vacant properties and existing infrastructure to decrease costs and sprawl	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
04-04	Create a model zoning ordinance for open space preservation for County and each of its municipalities	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
04-05	Encourage adjacency and concurrency requirements to ensure future development is within the bounds of existing infrastructure	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
04-06	Protect the New River Gorge and its viewsheds	1	Ongoing	National Park Service, New River Gorge Development Authority, Boy Scouts of America, Region 4 Planning and Development Council, New River Conservancy, Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
04-07	Use the land use plan to guide development along Route 19 in a manner that balances preservation with growth	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission	
Housing					
05-01 Increase Housing Supply and Options					
05-01-01	Analyze the specific housing market needs of the County with a local Housing Needs Assessment	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
05-01-02	Update zoning ordinance as necessary to provide for a variety of residential types within residential districts	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
05-01-03	Ensure the availability of housing in locations with access to education, recreation, healthcare, and transportation services	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-01-04	Permit accessory dwelling units on single-family lots to expand and increase housing options	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
05-01-05	Help private developers, non-profit organizations, and other groups to ensure standards are met as they work to build and renovate housing across the County	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-01-06	Host regular meetings with real estate experts familiar with the County to identify emerging trends, issues, and potential projects related to housing	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
05-01-07	Work with municipalities to adjust zoning codes to allow for the strategic expansion of multifamily units and establish target goals for multifamily development and total units	3	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
05-01-08	Work with developers to identify potential community enhancement districts for land that need infrastructure improvements	3	Mid-Term	Local Developers	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
05-01-09	Utilize WVU Extension to identify resources at WVU and other sources statewide, regionally, and nationally.	3	Mid-Term	WVU Extension	
05-02	Pursue Housing Affordability				
05-02-01	Work with local developers and contractors to repair and upgrade older homes in the County	1	Ongoing	Local Developers, Contractors	USDA Housing Repair Loans/Grants, West Virginia Homeowners Rescue, USDA Housing Preservation Grants
05-02-02	Meet with local developers and contractors to evaluate incentives for developing affordable housing, such as density bonuses, expedited processing, parking reductions, and tax abatements. Amend zoning regulations, permitting and approval processes, and available incentives as necessary	2	Mid-Term	Department of Housing and Urban Development	USDA Housing Repair Loans/Grants, West Virginia Homeowners Rescue, USDA Housing Preservation Grants
05-02-03	Encourage alternative forms of density, such as small-lot homes or accessory dwelling units to provide more affordable housing units without altering neighborhood character	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-02-04	Promote infill within single-family neighborhoods to increase density while maintaining the neighborhood's character	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-02-05	Encourage a variety of housing types including duplexes, townhomes, and multifamily housing	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-02-06	Encourage affordable housing as a development option for infill sites	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-02-07	Prioritize County and other government-owned buildings and land as sites for affordable housing at 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) and below	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
05-02-08	Promote innovative site design and construction techniques and encourage the use of modular housing	3	Mid-term	Local Developers	
05-02-09	Utilize the Urban Renewal Authority to pursue funding opportunities at the federal level and work with potential developers to build apartments, particularly to accommodate the needs of first-time renters	1	Ongoing	Department of Housing and Urban Development, Local Developers	
05-02-10	Encourage universal design and accessibility in the development of all housing types and levels of affordability	3	Ongoing	Americans with Disabilities Act National Network	Administration for Community Living
05-02-11	Engage major employers to understand the housing need for both seasonal and permanent workers	1	Ongoing	Local employers	
05-02-12	Consider conducting a detailed housing study to get a clear picture of current and future housing needs in Fayette County	1	Short-Term	West Virginia Housing	
05-02-13	Provide and promote a list of resources and volunteer/staff support to help homeowners utilize existing housing repair resources	1	Short-Term	West Virginia Housing, U S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and U S Department of Agriculture (USDA)	USDA Housing Repair Loans/Grants, USDA Housing Preservation Grants
05-03	Understand the Costs and Benefits of Short Term Rentals				
05-03-01	Partner with local governments to identify and assess existing seasonal, recreational, and occasional use units to determine their compatibility with the surrounding communities	2	Mid-Term	City of Fayetteville, City of Mount Hope, Town of Ansted	
05-03-02	Review Chapter 7, Article 18, Section 14 of the West Virginia State Code to understand how revenues from hotel tax can be spent. Develop a strategy on how revenues may be spent to accomplish the goals and recommendations of the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan	3	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge CVB	
05-03-03	Identify the areas in the County where short-term rentals are most likely to enhance the qualities that attract tourism	2	Short-Term	National Park Service, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority,	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
05-03-04	Assess potential policies and legislation on short-term rentals. Policies can include, implementing a lottery system that allows for a certain number of homeowners to receive a short-term rental permit per year, only allowing short-term rental of accessory units or partial home rentals of a primary residence, requiring homeowners to obtain short-term rental licenses each year, or limiting short-term rental licenses to one per resident.	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-03-05	Coordinate with the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority to conduct a study on the economic and housing impacts of short and long term rentals in Fayette County	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
05-04	Improve Housing Quality				
05-04-01	Encourage residents to renovate older homes by offering financial incentives and adjusting zoning ordinances and standards	2	Mid-Term	hoUSed, Department of Housing and Urban Development	USDA Housing Repair Loans/Grants, West Virginia Homeowners Rescue, USDA Housing Preservation Grants
05-04-02	Hold property managers accountable for failure to maintain the property in compliance with minimum building standards	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
05-04-03	Work with local churches to create programs to assist with repairs	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
05-04-04	Mandate minimum building standards for low-income housing	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
05-04-05	Prioritize the construction of new homes in areas with existing infrastructure or community importance	1	Long-Term	Fayette County Commission	
05-04-06	Improve existing housing and neighborhood quality through infrastructural improvement	1	Long-Term	hoUSed	
05-04-07	Preserve neighborhood stability through the strategic abatement of blighted or vacant properties	1	Mid-Term	Department of Housing and Urban Development	
05-04-08	Work with existing programs to map and prioritize managing blighted structures	1	Mid-Term	West Virginia Land Stewardship Corporation	West Virginia Homeowners Rescue
05-04-09	Work to develop opportunities for homeowners to have greater access to programs like the USDA Rural Development program	3	Mid-Term	Urban Renewal Authority (URA)	Community Development Block Grants, USDA Rural Business Development Grants
05-04-10	Prepare a Redevelopment/Reinvestment Plan, targeting blighted properties throughout the County	2	Mid-Term	Urban Renewal Authority (URA)	Community Development Block Grants
05-04-11	Explore deed-restricted housing and other mechanisms that could promote housing availability for residents and workers	3	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
05-05	Housing Framework				
05-05-01	Preserve on-site natural terrain and mature vegetation through flexible residential development			Local Developers	
05-05-02	Provide pedestrian connections between the residential development and adjacent commercial areas			Fayette County Commission, Local Developers, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	Transportation Alternatives Program
05-05-03	Integrate existing or planned recreational trails into the overall design of residential developments			Fayette County Trails Coalition, American Trails	
05-05-04	Allow a flexible mix of housing types in the land use plan			Fayette County Commission	
05-05-05	Minimize dead-end streets to form well-connected neighborhoods that support pedestrian and vehicular circulation			Fayette County Commission, Local Developers	Transportation Alternatives Program, Roads to Prosperity,

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
05-05-06	Support high-quality building design and materials and coordinate with property owners and local organizations to improve the appearance of housing			Property Owners	Community Development Block Grants
Economic Development					
06-01	Attract New Industry				
06-01-01	Work with economic development partners to host and promote a regular collaborative meeting for leading businesses in growing regional sectors	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, CRAN, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
06-01-02	Work with economic development partners to identify and develop strategies to further expand growing industries	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, CRAN, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	Competitive Improvement Program, Small Business Workforce Program
06-01-03	Work with economic development partners such as to create a job growth study for Fayette County	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, CRAN, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
06-01-04	Identify and market areas that can support large companies requiring a significant development footprint	2	Short-Term	New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Local Developers	
06-01-05	Advertise recent efforts to create a more business-friendly environment	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce	
06-01-06	Create a web-based dashboard of County demographic metrics to provide industries with data to support the County as a place to invest and show to investors where improvements are needed	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
06-01-07	Partner with neighboring counties to achieve regional economic development objectives whenever possible	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Nicholas, Greebrier, Kanawha, and Raleigh Counties	
06-02	Develop Fayette County Workforce				
06-02-01	Host events with local schools to connect students to local trade professionals and showcase career options	2	Ongoing	Workforce Development Initiative Program, WV Hive, Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program	West Virginia Invests Grant, AmeriCorps, Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Development Program
06-02-02	Create and promote a Countywide job shadowing program	2	Short-Term	Workforce Development Initiative Program, WV Hive	Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Development Program
06-02-03	Support employment and job training programs in the hospitality and tourism sector	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Workforce Development Initiative Program, WVU Tech, New River CTC, BridgeValley CTC	Tourism Development Act, Benedum Foundation
06-02-04	Support existing post-secondary and trade school programs within Fayette County and in neighboring communities and work with these higher education institutions to maintain and increase program offerings	1	Ongoing	New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Workforce Development Initiative Program, WVU Tech, New River CTC, BridgeValley CTC	
06-02-05	Coordinate with local schools, businesses, and trade associations to develop a program to train students in skilled labor professions	1	Ongoing	Workforce Development Initiative Program,	Benedum Foundation
06-02-06	Establish an apprenticeship program to directly connect students to local companies	1	Short-Term	Workforce Development Initiative Program,	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
06-02-07	Develop initiative to distribute information regarding products and goods that are manufactured within the County	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce	
06-02-08	Work with organizations and institutions to expand existing workforce training opportunities and programs	1	Short-Term	Workforce Development Initiative Program, WV Hive, Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Development Program, Mountaineer Challenge Academy, Jump Start Savings Program	
06-02-09	Host focus groups with young professionals to understand their needs and ways to encourage them to remain in Fayette County.	1	Ongoing	West Virginia University Extension, Workforce Development Initiative Program, WV Hive,	
06-02-10	Work in tandem with employers, groups of employers, and cross-sector partnerships with schools, community organizations, and other entities to promote a sustainable economy through hospitality training and workforce development.	2	Ongoing	Local employers, Fayette County Board of Education	
06-02-11	Implement and raise awareness of programs designed to promote access to college education including information on scholarships and financial aid, cost estimation and reduction, and facilitate communication with local schools to implement the career readiness program	2	Ongoing	West Virginia University Extension	
06-02-12	Facilitate communication between local schools and the West Virginia University Extension to implement the career readiness program with local students	2	Ongoing	West Virginia University Extension, Fayette County Board of Education	
06-03	Support Small Businesses				
06-03-01	Develop a strategic plan that supports active collaboration with critical players such as the County's municipalities, government agencies, colleges and universities, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, and investors that encourages and supports local businesses	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, WV Hive, Workforce Development Initiative Program	Competitive Improvement Program, Small Business Workforce Program,
06-03-02	Create an online database for resources to guide entrepreneurs in all stages of starting and growing a business in the County and promote these resources to new businesses	2	Short-Term	New River Gorge Development Authority	
06-03-03	Connect small businesses and local entrepreneurs to one-on-one business advising and training opportunities	1	Ongoing	WV Hive	
06-03-04	Support and leverage existing youth entrepreneurship programs, that exist at the state and local level	2	Ongoing	Workforce Development Initiative Program, Leadership Fayette County, WV Small Farm Conference	Benedum Foundation
06-03-05	Coordinate with local colleges and universities to offer a comprehensive range of classes and coursework related to entrepreneurship, business management, and starting a business	2	Mid-Term	Workforce Development Initiative Program, West Virginia University Tech, and Bridge Valley Community Technical College	
06-03-06	Direct small businesses to loan programs such as NRGRDA's Revolving Loan Fund	3	Long-Term	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, WV Hive, County Roads Angel Network	
06-03-07	Explore the possibility of establishing a county-wide Small Business Grant Program	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, WV Hive	American Rescue Plan Act
06-04	Appeal to Remote Workers				

Action Matrix						
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources	
06-04-01	Prioritize the expansion, reliability, and availability of broadband and cell phone service throughout the County	1	Ongoing	Ascend West Virginia	Major Broadband Strategies program, Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Grant Program, Gig Ready Program, Community Development Block Grants	
06-04-02	Connect with existing programs to explore the potential for expansion into Fayette County communities	3	Short-Term	WV Hive, Workforce Development Initiative Program	Ascend West Virginia	
06-04-03	Explore home-based, internet-related employment opportunities as a means of economic development, and offer financial incentives to attract qualified remote workers to purchase homes or rent in Fayette County	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	Ascend West Virginia	
06-04-04	Offer financial incentives to attract qualified remote workers to purchase homes or rent in Fayette County for a designated period			Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	Ascend West Virginia	
06-04-05	Identify locations such as available County-owned buildings and lots that are suitable for coworking spaces and solicit public-private partnerships to develop such spaces	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority		
06-04-06	Determine why Fayette County is not ready to support a remote worker community and how the County can resolve the issues that are identified	3	Ongoing	Ascend West Virginia		
06-04-07	Continue to prioritize improvements necessary to promote remote working in the County	3	Short-Term	West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council	Major Broadband Strategies program, Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Grant Program, Gig Ready Program, Community Development Block Grants	
06-04-08	Implement the recommendations of Chapter 13: Community Design, such as gateways, wayfinding, improving arts and culture, and community beautification to ensure Fayette County is attractive and hospitable to newcomers	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Local municipalities, Regional stakeholders	West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative, Preservation Alliance of West Virginia, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	
06-05	Balance Development with Protecting Natural Features					
06-05-01	Identify specific areas of importance that should be preserved	1	Short-Term	WV BAD Buildings Program, WVPRI		
06-05-02	Consider establishing architecture and development design regulations that protect valued viewsheds, especially along Route 19, while providing some flexibility to developers	3	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission		
06-05-03	Use the land use plan to guide development along Route 19 in a manner that balances preservation with growth	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission		
06-05-04	Support development that protects the New River Gorge and its viewsheds, which serve as the cornerstone of the county's growing and sustainable tourism industry	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission		
06-05-05	Establish a clear direction for increasing density in the County through adjustments to zoning regulations and land use planning	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission		
06-05-06	Prohibit billboard signage that would impair scenic views	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority		

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
06-05-07	Prioritize infill development to utilize vacant properties and existing infrastructure to decrease costs and sprawl	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority	
06-05-08	Create a model zoning ordinance for open space preservation that can be implemented in the County and each of its municipalities	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
06-05-09	Encourage adjacency and concurrency requirements to ensure all future development is within the bounds of existing infrastructure	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
06-05-10	Develop a detailed Route 19 Corridor Plan to identify appropriate areas for development and preservation. The Route 19 Corridor Plan could include design guidelines to clearly describe the recommended use, scale, and location intended for future development.	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority	
06-06	Economic Development Framework				
06-06-01	Require new development to adhere to conservation design principles whenever possible to better ensure that new development is respectful of and responsive to the natural environment and unique features of the area	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
06-06-02	Ensure that visual screening or landscaped buffers mitigate potential negative visual impacts when located near residential areas	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission	
06-06-03	Ensure that buildings, structures, and amenities minimize the loss of scenic views when viewed from off-site	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission	
06-06-04	Require that access to trail systems be provided whenever possible	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Trails Coalition, American Trails	
06-06-05	Provide cross access between adjacent commercial and employment center parking lots	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Local Developers	Transportation Alternatives Program
06-06-06	Protect the County's residential neighborhood character from commercial and employment center uses and activities	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette County Planning Commission	
06-06-07	Promote commercial and employment development east of the New River	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, CRAN, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	Competitive Improvement Program,
06-06-08	Reserve highly visible and accessible properties for commercial uses	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
06-06-09	Encourage entertainment businesses to foster more engaging activity and attract new residents and visitors	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Development Authority	Benedum Foundation
06-06-10	Support the development of retail, dining, and lodging uses	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Development Authority, WV Hive	Benedum Foundation
06-06-11	Ensure that commercial areas are connected to adjacent residential areas through sidewalks, trails, or paths	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Development Authority	Transportation Alternatives Program, Roads to Prosperity
06-06-12	Ensure that employment center activities are organized by uses and concentrated within, or near, areas of similar or compatible uses	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Development Authority	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
06-06-13	Initiate programs to encourage the improvement and rehabilitation of older office buildings and areas that are becoming functionally obsolete including improvements to facades, signage, and parking areas	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program, WVPRI	
06-06-14	Allow the flexible siting of buildings and structures, and amenities such as parking and loading bays that best use the site's existing topography if significant grade changes exist	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
Renewal and Redevelopment					
07-01	Eliminate Vacant and Blighted Land and Structures				
07-01-01	Create and maintain a comprehensive assessment of the County's vacant and blighted buildings and land	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program, West Virginia Land Stewardship Corporation, WV Browfields Assistance Center	
07-01-02	Gather data about individual vacant and blighted properties update regularly	1	Ongoing	WV LEAP, WVDEP Office of Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation, BAD Buildings Program, West Virginia Land Stewardship Corporation, WV Browfields Assistance Center	
07-01-03	Participate in funding programs that assist the community in combatting blight and support those who undertake anti-blight efforts	1	Ongoing	WV LEAP	
07-01-04	Conduct surveys of County properties and areas which are affected by blight, and promote resources which assist in assessing blight	1	Mid-Term	WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program	
07-01-05	Coordinate with local developers and contractors to repair and upgrade older homes in the County	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program, WV Property Rescue Initiative	West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative
07-01-06	Work with Fayette County municipalities on a joint effort to eliminate and repair vacant or blighted properties	1	Long-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program	West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative
07-01-07	Explore tax incentives and low interest loans to help rehabilitate blighted properties	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program	West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative
07-01-08	Establish and fund a land bank for Fayette County through the Urban Renewal Authority and a Land Reuse Agency	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program	West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative
07-01-09	Develop and adopt a countywide redevelopment plan to determine how to address vacant and blighted properties throughout Fayette County	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program	
07-02	Promote Adaptive Reuse				
07-02-01	Register older buildings with the National Register of Historic Places to receive qualification for tax incentives and financial benefits that can assist in the reuse of the property	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, WV BAD Buildings Program	
07-02-02	Support the Urban Renewal Authority in the development and implementation of the proposed Redevelopment/Reinvestment Plan	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, WV BAD Buildings Program	Cultural Facilities and Capital Resources Grants
07-02-03	Provide resources to communities looking to redevelop existing buildings and neighborhoods	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, WV BAD Buildings Program	Cultural Facilities and Capital Resources Grants
07-02-04	Identify historically significant buildings, underused buildings for possible redevelopment	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, WV BAD Buildings Program	Cultural Facilities and Capital Resources Grants, Preservation Alliance of West Virginia

Action Matrix						
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources	
07-02-05	Use funding sources and tax incentives to repair and renovate the Soldiers and Sailors Building in Fayetteville, to create a community recreation center for the County	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, WV BAD Buildings Program	West Virginia State Development Grant, West Virginia Survey and Planning Grant, National Park Service Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant	
07-03	Encourage Land Reclamation					
07-03-01	Use funding from AMLER, the Brownfields Assistance Center, and the BIL to address non-point source pollution	1	Long-Term	AMLER, WV Brownfields Assistance Center, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, WV Land Stewardship Corporation	WV Department of Environmental Protection, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	
07-03-02	Use funding sources to reclaim brownfields, waterways, and abandoned mines to turn them into developable and/or preserved, usable natural areas, developable land and/or preserved, usable natural areas	1	Long-Term	AMLER, WV Brownfields Assistance Center, WVDEP Office of Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, WV Land Stewardship Corporation	WV Department of Environmental Protection, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	
07-03-03	Employ Tourism Development Act Funding to encourage public-serving entertainment and recreation businesses on reclaimed mine land or near the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve and in other priority areas across the County	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV Department of Tourism		
07-03-04	Enforce the Comprehensive Public Nuisance Abatement Ordinance and other environmental protection laws	3	Ongoing	Fayette county Commission		
07-03-05	Create and maintain a list of prioritized land reclamation areas	2	Short-Term	AMLER, WV Brownfields Assistance Center, WV Land Stewardship Corporation, NRRDA	WV Department of Environmental Protection, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	
07-03-06	Prepare an operation and maintenance plan that provides specific details concerning conservation practices following reclamation	2	Mid-Term	AMLER, WV Brownfields Assistance Center, WV Land Stewardship Corporation, WVU Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic	WV Department of Environmental Protection, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	
07-03-07	Use reclaimed mine land for repairing wildlife habitat and reintroducing native plant species and/or planting orchards, gardens, and nurseries to provide for their associated communities	1	Ongoing	AMLER, WV Brownfields Assistance Center, WV Land Stewardship Corporation, WVDNR	WV Department of Environmental Protection, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	
Transportation						
08-01	Repair, Update, and Maintain Roadways					
08-01-02	Prioritize the improvement of roadways in locations suitable for residential, commercial, and industrial development	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, FRMPO, WVDOH	Roads to Prosperity	
08-01-03	Inventory the quality of secondary roads throughout the County and work with WVDOT to prioritize the maintenance of secondary roads in degraded condition	2	Mid-Term	WV Department of Transportation		
08-01-04	Prioritize maintenance and repair of roads that carry higher traffic volumes and those with only moderate levels of pavement degradation to prevent further deterioration	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, WVDOT		
08-01-05	Explore the feasibility of a grant program to support the maintenance of orphan roads in Fayette County	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, WVDOT		
08-01-06	Explore a partnership with the Fayette Schools and the Board of Education to educate the public on the effects of litter and pollution and initiate/support a Safe Routes to School program	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Schools, Board of Education, Class IV-Mountain River, Adventures on the Gorge	Transportation Alternatives Program, WV REAP	
08-01-07	Cooperate with local businesses and community organizations to raise awareness of the State's adopt-a-highway program	3	Short-Term	WVDOH, Adopt-a-Highway		

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
08-01-08	Plant native vegetation and wildflowers along highways	3	Short-Term	Division of Highways, Department of Natural Resources, New River Master Gardeners, West Virginia Garden Clubs, Adopt-a-Highway, Operation Wildflowers	WV REAP
08-01-09	Consider roadway improvements identified by stakeholders, especially along Route 19	2	Mid-Term	WV Department of Transportation, WV Department of Highways, FRMPO	Roads to Prosperity
08-01-10	Support bridge rebuilding efforts by WVDOT throughout the area	2	Long-Term	Fayette County Commission, WVDOT	
08-01-11	Identify and develop formal gateways on US Routes 19 and 60 at strategic locations in Fayette County in coordination with the New River Gorge Regional wayfinding strategy	3	Short-Term	WV Department of Transportation, WV Department of Highways, FRMPO, Municipal Leaders	Transportation Alternatives Program, WV REAP
08-02	Improve Traffic Flow				
08-02-01	Identify locations and help fund the creation of park-and-ride lots to serve key destinations	3	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, WV Department of Highways	
08-02-02	Work with the Department of Highways to widen the four-lane stretch of U.S. Route 60 from Quincy to Smithers	3	Mid-Term	WV Department of Highways	
08-02-03	Work with the West Virginia Department of Transportation and Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization to conduct a detailed study of traffic increase along Route 19 and identify potential improvements	2	Short-Term	WV Department of Transportation, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization	
08-02-04	Study traffic flow redesign options in the Scarbro/Whipple junction of Route 612	2	Short-Term	WV Department of Transportation, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization	
08-02-05	Conduct a study to identify and develop roads to serve long-range traffic demands while respecting the environment, especially the New River Gorge Park and Preserve	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, New River Gorge Development Authority	
08-02-06	Identify additional access roads for locations that are currently disconnected from the roadway network	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
08-02-07	Coordinate with surrounding counties to facilitate repair and maintenance of major regional transportation routes, including project noted in the FRMPO 2045 Regional Transportation	1	Mid-Term	WV Department of Transportation, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization	
08-03	Ensure Adequate Quantity of Parking				
08-03-01	Update the off-street parking provisions in the Unified Development Code to reflect parking demand	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
08-03-02	Prioritize the repair of off-street parking areas at recreation destinations, trailheads, and parks, including Nuttall Parking at the Endless Wall Trailhead and Nuttallburg Parking	2	Mid-Term	National Park Service, WVDOH, WV State Parks, WV Tourism, FRMPO	
08-03-03	Support the expansion of public transit to serve the needs of residents and visitors and thereby reduce the overall demand for commercial and recreational sites	3	Long-Term	WV Department of Transportation, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization, New River Transit	
08-03-04	Support local efforts to identify off-street parking needs in municipalities and update their parking regulations accordingly	2	Ongoing	Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization, WVDOH, Municipal governments	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
08-04	Create Pedestrian Connections				
08-04-01	Use the National Park Service Connecting the Parks with their Gateway Communities Construct new rail trails in the County's south along Route 19 to connect Oak Hill, Mount Hope, and the existing on-street bikeways	2	Ongoing	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails,
08-04-02	Identify pedestrian and bicycle improvements to improve sustainability and diversity the travel options for residents and visitors	1	Ongoing	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-04-03	Add new rail trails, bike trails, and recreational trails to connect the County's cities, towns, and unincorporated populated areas	2	Mid-Term	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-04-04	Identify locations for new rail trails, bike trails, and recreational trails	1	Ongoing	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-04-05	Add new rail trails in the County's southeast along to connect Meadowbridge and Danese with existing on-street bikeways, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and other amenities	2	Mid-Term	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-04-06	Coordinate with the New River Gorge Regional Wayfinding Strategy to develop signage to show the location of nonmotorized trails and create a map of the nonmotorized system and make the materials available to recreators	1	Mid-Term	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-04-07	Work with Fayette County municipalities and nonprofit organizations including the Fayette Trails Coalition and Mountain State Trails Alliance to create and implement a connected trail network throughout the County	1	Long-Term	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-04-08	Coordinate the placement of new nonmotorized trails in coordination with the Fayette County Trail Coalition's Soft Surface Trails Plan and the National Park Service's Connecting the Parks with Their Gateway Communities Plan	3	Short-Term	Fayette Trails Coalition, Mountain State Trail Alliance, NRGRDA	Transportation Alternatives Program
08-04-09	Coordinate local bicycle and pedestrian plans with the land use and development plans focus areas	3	Short-Term	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-04-10	Support trails network expansion and improvement projects noted in the River Cities Trail Master Plan, Valley Recreation Plan, and the Fayette County Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization 2045 Transportation Plan Update	3	Long-Term	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	Transportation Alternatives Program, American Trails
08-05	Implement Complete Streets Improvements				
08-05-01	Take advantage of the Complete Streets Act to see that alternative modes are also accommodated when the State constructs new highway facilities	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization, WVDOT	
08-05-02	Adopt a local Complete Streets Ordinance to encourage bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure with every road project on local roads	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	

Action Matrix					
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08-05-03	Use Active Southern West Virginia's Bike/Walk Manual within each community to engage community members and create bike and pedestrian master plans	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, NRRDA, Active SWV	
08-05-04	Encourage the use of available funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian improvements	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Parks and Recreation	
08-06	Support Alternative Transportation Methods				
08-06-01	Work to develop a baseline level of public transportation in all of the County's planning districts	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization, WVDOT, WV Tourism	
08-06-02	Consider working with partner agencies to establish a regular bus route from the three Amtrak stations to other sites of interest in the County	2	Long-Term	Fayette County Commission, NRRDA, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization, WVDOT, National Park Service, Amtrak, West Virginia Dpt of Tourism	
08-06-03	Study National Park visitor and Amtrak rider rates. Coordinate marketing through Amtrak, the National Park Service, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and other tourism related entities to promote Amtrak as a means of travel to the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve	2	Long-Term	Amtrak, National Park Service, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau	
08-06-04	Conduct an inventory of rail lines throughout the County to identify any additional abandoned railroad corridors. These abandoned railroad corridors may provide additional opportunities for rail trail connections	2	Mid-Term	Rails to Trails Conservancy, Fayette Trails Coalition, American Trails, National Park Service, Mountain State Trail Alliance, WVU OEDC, WV Tourism	
08-06-05	Work with the National Park Service and CSX Rail to determine the ideal ownership and operation strategy of Prince Depot	2	Mid-Term	National Park Service, CSX Rail	
08-06-06	Encourage the development of amenities near the three Amtrak stations, such as visitors centers	2	Mid-Term	Amtrak, NPS	Transportation Alternatives Program
08-06-07	Explore a demand response para-transit system in the form of a shared ride transportation that is provided to passengers through advance notification	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization	
08-06-08	Upgrade and improve the quality of senior transportation services	2	Mid-Term	New River Transit, Fayette County Senior Services Life Enrichment Center, Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources	Fayette County Senior Services Life Enrichment Center, Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources
08-06-09	Explore the feasibility of and funding sources for a centrally located, private airport to accommodate small-plane travel and that would provide New River Gorge tours, gliding, and space to park private planes	3	Mid-Term	Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization	
08-06-10	Consider establishing a second operations hub for regional transit system located in Fayette County	3	Long-Term	Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization, New River Transit	
08-06-11	Bring ridesharing and taxi services to Fayette County and recruit drivers for the ridesharing service to the region	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, WV Hive	
08-06-12	Identify and help fund the creation of park-and-ride lots to sites of interest and employment	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization	
08-06-13	Work with municipalities to adopt zoning ordinances that prioritize multiple transportation modes, including ridesharing, park-n-rides, and car-sharing	2	Ongoing	City of Fayetteville, City of Mount Hope, Town of Ansted, Oak Hill, Pax, Meadow Bridge	Transportation Alternatives Programs

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
08-06-14	Work with WVDOT and the County's municipalities to identify strategic locations for park-n-ride facilities within the County	2	Mid-Term	WVDOT, City of Fayetteville, City of Mount Hope, Town of Ansted, Oak Hill, Pax, Meadow Bridge	
08-06-15	Partner with ridesourcing companies to subsidize a portion of the cost for rides that begin and end within the County to provide an affordable alternative to owning a personal car and closing gaps in the public transit system	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization, WVDOT, WV Tourism	
08-06-16	Implement a Guaranteed Ride Home Program to provide carpoolers peace of mind when commuting	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization	
Public Services					
09-01	Support for Education				
09-01-01	Support the Board of Education's planned facilities improvements, including consolidation of the Divide and Ansted Elementary facilities and the construction of consolidated campus facilities	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education,	
09-01-02	Partner with Fayette County Board of Education and Boy Scouts to promote summer activities for students in the County.	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Board of Education, Boy Scouts of America	
09-01-03	Communicate with local employers, the Fayette County Board of Education, and the Fayette Institute of Technology to define the gaps in education and job-related training	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education, West Virginia University Tech, BridgeValley CTC, New River CTC	
09-01-04	Encourage a partnership between the Fayette County Board of Education, Fayette County Commission, and local recreation-related businesses to coordinate workforce training and support the recreation industry	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Board of Education, Fayette County Commission,	Benedum Foundation
09-01-05	Partner with the Fayette County Board of Education and other local educational organizations to create links between local employers and schools including mentoring, summer internships, school trips to local employers, integrated school programs, and networking opportunities	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Board of Education, West Virginia University Tech, BridgeValley CTC, New River CTC	
09-01-06	Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to identify the issues with retaining teachers and school employees	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Board of Education	
09-01-07	Form partnerships with local higher education institutions such as West Virginia University Tech and Bridge Valley Community Technical College to promote access to postsecondary educational programs within and outside the County	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Board of Education, Benedum Foundation	Benedum Foundation
09-01-08	Raise awareness of scholarships offered through local organizations such as The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation and Beckley Area Foundation	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education, Benedum Foundation	The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, Beckley Area Foundation
09-01-09	Cooperate with the Fayette County Board of Education to identify locations in which students have difficulty with transportation to school facilities. Partner to facilitate transportation to these identified areas, potentially including a ride-sharing program for families	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education	
09-01-10	Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to raise awareness of the Underwood Smith Teacher Loan Assistance Program	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education	Underwood Smith Teacher Loan Assistance Program, Benedum Foundation
09-01-11	Attract teachers to the area using incentives such as the Underwood-Smith Teacher Loan Assistance program	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education	Underwood Smith Teacher Loan Assistance Program

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
09-01-12	Coordinate with the Fayette County Board of Education on all future residential planning efforts in unincorporated areas to ensure that the district can plan appropriately for any enrollment growth and provide proper staffing and facilities	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education, Benedum Foundation	Benedum Foundation
09-01-13	Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to identify demographic trends that may require new approaches to services or programs	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Board of Education, Benedum Foundation	Benedum Foundation
09-01-14	Work with the Fayette County Board of Education to employ technology in local schools	2	Long-Term	Fayette County Board of Education	
09-01-15	Work with the school district to monitor school capacities and identify the need to consolidate school sites as necessary	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education	
09-02	Strengthen Local Governance				
09-02-01	Actively promote opportunities for involvement through digital and in-person means in a variety of decision-making processes at the County level	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
09-02-02	Consider promoting opportunities for involvement at local events, festivals, and meetings of local civic groups and community organizations	3	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Local municipalities	
09-02-03	Promote citizen involvement in decision-making processes, such as annual budgeting and comprehensive plan updates	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
09-02-04	Identify factors that inhibit zoning ordinance and building code enforcement and Allocate funds in the annual budget to fixing zoning issues	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
09-02-05	Work with the municipalities to identify approaches to improve communication and transparency across jurisdictions	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
09-02-06	Develop a capital improvements plan (CIP) to identify all public projects that require the expenditure of funds, particularly those identified in the comprehensive plan	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
09-02-07	Use the CIP to establish priorities, catalog potential funding sources including external funding, and create a timetable for completion	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
09-02-08	Establish and maintain on-going communications, including regular meetings, with the business and development community to effectively identify and take advantage of economic development opportunities throughout all areas of the County	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Chamber of Commerce,	
09-02-09	Partner with local organizations such as West Virginia University Extension to provide resources and education to the public and local officials to instill governance best practices in Fayette County.	1	Ongoing	West Virginia University Extension	
09-03	Strengthen Access to Social Services				
09-03-01	The County should continue to work with the Fayette Prevention Coalition and Fayette County Health Department to expand the range of support and drug prevention services and to continue to provide measures for the care and disposal of prescription drugs	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Prevention Coalition, Fayette County Department of Health, Jobs and Hope West Virginia	
09-03-02	Continue to sponsor events to teach evidence based prevention strategies and foster positive community involvement for youth	2	Ongoing	Leadership Fayette County	
09-03-03	Continue to work with the Fayette Prevention Coalition and Fayette County Health Department to define barriers such as staffing or funding to expand programs	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Prevention Coalition, Fayette County Department of Health	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
09-03-04	Consider a partnership involving the Office of Drug Control Partnership, other neighboring counties, higher education, and healthcare providers in the region to implement drug prevention activities	1	Ongoing	Office of Drug Control Partnership	
09-03-05	Continue to monitor state-level programs and initiatives intended to address substance misuse and communicate with state experts to strengthen and expand prevention and recovery resources	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Prevention Coalition, Fayette County Department of Health	
09-03-06	Partner with citizens, public officials, and the Fayette County Board of Education to define the need for and establish additional emergency or homeless shelters	2	Mid-Term	West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness	
09-03-07	Support the Mount Hope Housing Authority's efforts to construct an emergency shelter in Mount Hope and support plans to construct an emergency shelter at the New Mount Hope Elementary School	2	Short-Term	Mount Hope Housing Authority	
09-03-08	Raise awareness of the West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness and the emergency shelter grant program to make use of the program in local efforts	2	Ongoing	West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness	
09-04	Maintain Police and Fire Services				
09-04-01	Ensure the provision of emergency services expands to address current and future needs	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
09-04-02	Work with local law enforcement and fire departments to find appropriate sites for expanded facilities as new development and growth occurs	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fire Protection Services	
09-04-03	Work with the Sherriff's department and local police departments to evaluate where increased funds are needed	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Sherriff's Department	
09-04-04	Work with the Fayette Prevention Coalition to continue to provide appropriate measures for the care and disposal of prescription drugs	2	Ongoing	Fayette Prevention Coalition	
09-04-05	Establish a fire sub-station within the New Haven District	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fire Protection Services	
09-04-06	Work with local fire protection service providers to identify how water service lines should be resized and whether new fire hydrants are needed	3	Ongoing	Fire Protection Services	
09-05	Promote Healthcare Services				
09-05-01	Work with local healthcare providers to ensure that the range of services available at the County's small health clinics and primary care institutions, including those provided through the schools, offer the range of preventative care and specialized services needed to meet County residents' needs	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Health Department, Fayette County Board of Education	
09-05-02	Ensure that grocery stores, including food cooperatives, are easy to establish in a variety of business areas to promote access to healthy food	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Health Department, WV Hive	
09-05-03	Work with developers to identify sites for grocery stores, especially in underserved areas in the Valley and in New Haven Districts, particularly near Meadowbridge and Danese	2	Mid-Term	WV Hive	
09-05-04	Allow community gardens near residential areas to foster access to healthy foods	3	Short-Term	Local municipalities	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
09-05-05	Allow food trucks and farmers' markets, as temporary uses in commercial areas to enhance access to fresh food	2	Short-Term	Local municipalities, Fayette County Farmers Market, West Virginia Farmers Market Association	
09-05-06	Allow food truck courts, or groupings of food trucks as a use in commercial areas or through an events permit process to support access to fresh food	2	Short-Term	Local municipalities, Fayette County Farmers Market, West Virginia Farmers Market Association	
09-05-07	Ensure that health clinics are easy to establish in a variety of commercial areas	1	Mid-Term	New River Health	
09-05-08	Identify sites in unincorporated areas for new health clinics	2	Ongoing	New River Health	
09-05-09	Support the Fayette County Farmers Market and communicate regularly with the market to understand its needs	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Farmers Market	
09-05-10	Support non-motorized transportation improvements as described in Chapter 08: Transportation to support active transportation options for residents	1	Mid-Term	Local municipalities, NRG Trail Alliance, WV Department of Transportation, Fayette Trails Coalition	
09-05-11	Facilitate communication between the Fayette County Farmers Market, the West Virginia Farmers Market Association, and West Virginia University Extension to support the County Farmers Market's needs.	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Farmers Market, West Virginia Farmers Market Association, West Virginia University Extension	
09-05-12	Work with West Virginia University Extension to raise awareness of its existing health-related programs including the diabetes prevention course and cooking and physical activity programs.	1	Short-Term	WVU Extension	
09-05-13	Build existing and explore new partnerships with the West Virginia University Extension, including support for individual local growers, efforts to create school gardens and provide education on nutrition through the Fayette County Board of Education, and the County Health Educator.	2	Ongoing	West Virginia University Extension, Fayette County Board of Education, West Virginia Farmers Market Association, Fayette County Farmers Market	
09-06	Expand Senior Service				
09-06-01	Expand the scope and user-friendliness of transportation services available to seniors	1	Ongoing	Fayette Senior Services, Fayette County Department of Health and Human Resources,	
09-06-02	Improve the Meals on Wheels program and other senior programs offered	2	Short-Term	Meals on Wheels	
09-06-03	Host regular outreach and social events with senior populations to identify current and emerging issues as well as potential solutions	2	Ongoing	Putnam County Aging Program	
09-06-04	Coordinate with local law enforcement providers to provide wellness checks throughout the County	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Sheriff's Department, Municipal Police Departments	
09-06-05	Work with individual municipalities to amend zoning ordinances to allow for a variety of housing types to accommodate senior needs	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
09-06-06	Work with municipal partners to identify locations that are best suited for senior housing based on proximity to related services and transit options	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
09-06-07	Work with developers and municipal partners to seek state and federal funding to support the development of senior housing options	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
09-06-08	Amend the Unified Development Code to ensure that assisted living facilities and senior care facilities are easy to establish in various locations, including the New Haven District near Meadowbridge and Danese. Consider allowing them in neighborhoods and commercial corridors.	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
09-06-09	Identify sites in the New Haven District outside the Plateau District that would be suitable for senior living facilities	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
09-07	Invest in Youth Programs				
09-07-01	Partner with youth organizations, faith-based organizations and community programs to identify and implement projects that improve the appearance and quality of life in Fayette County	3	Ongoing	Boy Scouts of America,	
09-07-02	Work with the Boy Scouts High Adventure Camp to ensure that local youth have access to the property's amenities and activities	3	Ongoing	Boy Scouts of America	
09-07-03	Stakeholders within the district should work with the Boy Scouts of America to enhance the Leadership Fayette County youth leadership program and create additional opportunities for youth involvement at Summit Bechtel Reserve	3	Ongoing	Boy Scouts of America, Leadership Fayette County,	
09-07-04	Continue to support partners that provide youth activities such as after school programs, camps, and other programs	1	Ongoing	Fayette County 4-H Club, ICE, Adventure Appalachia, Get Active in the Park, Active Southern WV Kids Run Clubs , WVU Science Adventure School	
09-07-05	Support efforts to involve the youth in planning activities and events throughout the County	1	Ongoing	Fayette County 4-H Club, ICE, Adventure Appalachia, Get Active in the Park, Active Southern WV Kids Run Clubs , WVU Science Adventure School	
09-07-06	Support Fayetteville's initiative to develop a youth board to ensure that youth have the opportunity to present ideas for the community, discuss problems and needs, and promote youth involvement in the community	3	Ongoing	Fayette County 4-H Club, ICE, Adventure Appalachia, Get Active in the Park, Active Southern WV Kids Run Clubs , WVU Science Adventure School	
09-07-07	Prioritize youth programs that do not rely on parent transportation. Engage with the Fayette County School Board to coordinate programming on school property and bus transportation	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education	
09-07-08	Work to establish a sustainable funding program for youth activities and programs throughout the County	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County 4-H Club, ICE, Adventure Appalachia, Get Active in the Park, Active Southern WV Kids Run Clubs , WVU Science Adventure School	
09-07-09	Encourage the establishment of new childcare facilities and assess the UDC to determine how and whether new childcare facilities could be encouraged through changes to the County's zoning regulations	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Planning Commission	
09-07-10	Advocate for adequate investment of capital by cities, towns and communities for accessible, affordable physical activity facilities and culturally relevant programming	3	Ongoing	Local municipalities	
09-07-11	Collaborate with schools, communities, and local recreation partners to promote the value of healthy lifestyles and increase access to physical activity opportunities	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Board of Education	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
09-08	Improve Library Services				
09-08-01	Work with Fayette County Public Libraries to identify needed improvements to improve the condition of the County's libraries	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Public Libraries	
09-08-02	Collaborate with Fayette County Public Libraries and County residents to identify gaps in program offerings for youth, adults, and senior citizens	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Public Libraries	
09-08-03	Evaluate whether additional library facilities are needed across the community to provide greater access for residents, or whether existing facilities should be consolidated	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Public Libraries	
09-09	Explore Expanded Trash and Recycling Programs				
09-09-01	Partner with the Fayette County Solid Waste Authority to explore new partnerships to promote proactive waste management	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Solid Waste Authority	
09-09-02	Assess the feasibility of implementing a curbside recycling service in the County, especially in urbanized unincorporated areas or the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
09-09-03	Raise awareness of the tire collection events, dumpster days, and host new events to expand opportunities for tire collection and recycling	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Solid Waste Authority, Pollution Prevention and Open Dump Program, Tire Collection Events	
09-09-04	Continue to support and raise awareness of the other trash collection events, including small appliance pick-ups and free dumpster days	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
Infrastructure					
10-01	Provide Water and Sewer to Populated Areas				
10-01-01	Locate new development where it can take advantage of water supply projects	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-02	Pursue all potential funding to expand and maintain infrastructure	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council, West Virginia Water Development Authority, Clean Water State Revolving Fund, Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Grant Programs
10-01-03	Engage Kanawha, Raleigh, and other neighboring Counties to explore the consolidation of sewer and water public service districts	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Regional Planning and Development Councils	
10-01-04	Monitor water main/pressure demands to incorporate replacements into the Capital Improvement Plan	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-05	Determine feasibility of regular maintenance and inspection of individual, onsite septic systems	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Health Department	
10-01-06	Support the health department to educate residents regarding well and septic maintenance and best use practices	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-07	Establish a menu of green infrastructure options for new developments to meet on-site stormwater management goals	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
10-01-08	Establish and implement strategic plans for water quality management	2	Mid-Term	West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection Division of Water and Waste Management,	Clean Water State Revolving Fund
10-01-09	Adjust stormwater utility fees as needed to account for additional infrastructure costs	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-10	Pursue funding opportunities for the expansion of infrastructure	2	Short-Term	West Virginia Jobs Development Council and the West Virginia Water Development Authority	
10-01-11	Extend water and sewer infrastructure to areas identified for growth in the land use plan	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-12	Develop a sewage collection and treatment plan to identify additional actions to improve wastewater management	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-13	Consider the construction of small, low-capacity wastewater treatment systems to serve small, isolated areas of the County	3	Long-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-14	Explore the consolidation of the County's water and wastewater entities to maximize each system's efficiency	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-01-15	Work with existing and potential new service providers to encourage the construction or renovation of water, wastewater, and broadband infrastructure simultaneously to serve new development	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-02	Balance Growth and Infrastructure Expansions				
10-02-01	Work with local infrastructure service providers to extend water and sewer services	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-02-02	Explore partnerships with neighboring Counties to consolidate wastewater systems to maximize efficiency	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-02-03	Identify and prioritize water and sewer projects that are needed to serve the growth and development anticipated in the land use plan	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-02-04	Incorporate the priority water and sewer project into the capital improvements plan	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	
10-02-05	Prioritize water and wastewater projects to maximize cost-effectiveness	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council	

Action Matrix						
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources	
10-03	Manage Impacts of Stormwater					
10-03-01	Update the UDC to establish new provisions for stormwater management, including landscaping requirements around site perimeters, in off-street parking lots, and along building perimeters	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council		
10-03-02	Review the off-street parking requirements to ensure that the construction of new off-street parking lots does not generate undue flood or stormwater concerns	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council		
10-03-03	Incentivize rain gardens, bioswales, and other natural infiltration practices as private properties are developed to ensure that stormwater impacts are accounted for	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council		
10-03-04	Construct green infrastructure features on public land	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council, National Park Service, WV State Parks		
10-03-05	Prioritize green infrastructure projects in low-elevation areas	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council		
10-03-06	Provide public education on individual impacts to stormwater runoff, including positive steps homeowners can take	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council		
10-03-07	Establish a menu of green infrastructure options for new developments to meet on-site stormwater management goals	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council		
10-04	Increase Access to Broadband					
10-04-01	Implement the actions defined in the 2018 Fayette County Broadband Plan to enhance broadband service and availability in the County	1	Short-Term	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program	
10-04-02	Identify sources of funding to support improvements to existing towers or build new towers to support wireless broadband service	1	Ongoing	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program	
10-04-03	Partner with internet service providers and state-level agencies to promote access to resources	2	Short-Term	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, West Virginia Economic Development Authority Loan Insurance Fund	
10-04-04	Utilize public and private agency partnerships to expand FTTH infrastructure and service throughout the County	1	Ongoing	Appalachian Regional Commission, Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Gig Ready Program	
10-04-05	Keep informed on legislative efforts at the state and federal level to expand and improve broadband services in West Virginia	2	Ongoing	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program	
10-04-06	Make community and county-owned towers available to Wireless Internet Service Providers	1	Short-Term	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program	
10-04-07	Pursue funding through the West Virginia Office Of Broadband's State programs				American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
10-04-08	Consider long-term funding strategies to support the expansion of broadband services	2	Short-Term	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, West Virginia Economic Development Authority Loan Insurance Fund
10-04-09	Define timelines and metrics for the actions to ensure the County is making progress to improve broadband access	3	Ongoing	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	
10-04-10	Establish a Broadband Development Team (BDT) comprised of local stakeholders meeting on a regular basis to work to proactively improve broadband in Fayette County	1	Short-Term	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program
10-04-11	Seek and leverage federal resources available for the expansion of broadband services	1	Short-Term	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program
10-04-12	Partner with neighboring counties and communities, including Raleigh, Nicolas, Greenbrier, and Counties, and the City of Summersville to expand broadband access and level of service and to compete for funding for broadband expansion	1	Ongoing	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council, Neighboring Counties	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program
10-04-13	Work with an Internet Service Provider to obtain funding sources and the required 25% match.	1	Short-Term	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program
10-04-14	Work with existing Internet Service Providers to provide Fixed Wireless broadband to remote areas	1	Ongoing	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	
10-04-15	Work with the Office Of Broadband and Generation of WV and other State agencies on adoption, job training skills and helping Fayette Countian's to overcome barriers and obtain all the benefits of a reliable broadband experience.	2	Ongoing	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council, Generation of WV	
10-04-16	Work with Internet Service Providers to provide a reasonable speed connection at a reduced price and assist families who cannot afford a broadband connection.	1	Ongoing	Office of Broadband, WV Broadband Enhancement Council	Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program
Rural					
11-01	Preserve and Protect Farmland				
11-01-01	Create and support programs that connect new farmers to landowners and provide financial incentives for both parties to encourage the development of new farmland, such as purchasing and leasing subsidies, or grants to help turn non-agricultural land into farmable property	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, New Roots Farm, Food and Farm Coalition, WVU Extension, WV Agricultural Commons	
11-01-02	Reclaim abandoned mine lands by clearing debris and removing pollutants and ensure their safety for use as urban gardens or other community resources	3	Long-Term	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Region 4 Planning and Development Council, WV Brownfields Assistance Center	
11-01-03	Implement programs to recognize local farmers and their goods and create opportunities to promote their products	2	Short-Term	WV Grown, New Roots Farm	
11-01-04	Connect new farmers to educational and financial resources through established organizations	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WVU Extension	USDA Farm Service Agency Loans
11-01-05	Establish an agricultural land trust to acquire agricultural easements and restrict nonagricultural development of valuable farmland	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Agrarian Commons	
11-01-06	Establish an agricultural heritage program, which would provide a voluntary, incentive-based process for permanently preserving small farms and agricultural lands	2	Long-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Agrarian Commons, New Roots Farm	Agriculture and Food Research Initiative,
11-01-07	Work with farmers and private landowners to identify and apply for federal funds in conservation and preservation programs	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Agrarian Commons, New Roots Farm	USDA Farm Service Agency Loans

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
11-01-08	Work with the Fayette County Farmland Protection Board to increase their outreach capabilities and connect with the County's farmer	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board	
11-01-09	Create programs and incentives for indoor agriculture and coordinate redevelopment strategies for vacant and underused buildings	3	Mid-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, WV BAD Buildings Program	
11-02	Support Agritourism				
11-02-01	Promote and encourage people to take the Agritourism Training Initiative	1	Ongoing	Agritourism Training Initiative, WV Tourism, NRG CVB	
11-02-02	Ensure that business owners receive the education they need to run a successful agritourism operation	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Hive, New River Gorge CVB	USDA Rural Business Development Grants
11-02-03	Cluster agritourism operations near each other to create regional experiences for visitors	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, New River Gorge CVB	USDA Rural Business Development Grants
11-02-04	Increase the number of agritourism businesses on conservation easements within the County	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Hive, New River Gorge CVB	
11-02-05	Support farmers' markets, farmstands, fresh food delivery trucks, food co-ops, fresh food programs in schools, and onsite sales from community vegetable gardens	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Farmers Market	USDA Community Development Initiative Grants
11-02-06	Create clear guidelines for how a working farm or agribusiness should safely prepare to host visitors	2	Short-Term	WV Hive	
11-02-07	Work with the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau, Visit WV, and other state partners to add a section for agritourism on the website	1	Short-Term	Visit Southern West Virginia, NRG CVB	
11-02-08	Support local foods movement and agribusiness, agritourism development with support from WVU Extension.	2	Ongoing	West Virginia University Extension	
11-02-09	Update the County's codes and regulations to clearly define "you-pick" operations such as orchards, on-site farm sales, and similar uses	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
11-02-10	Provide incentives to businesses that advertise and use locally grown produce and products to support the growing agricultural economy	3	Long-Term	Fayette County Farmers Market, Municipal governments, Fayette County Resource Coordinator's Office	
11-02-11	Coordinate seasonal marketing of local food experiences with local growers, hospitality businesses, and other providers to ensure availability based on harvest and tourism patterns	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Hive, New River Gorge CVB, New Roots Farm	
11-02-12	Examine the State Code and identify potential amendments necessary to comply and support the State's initiative.	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, Fayette County Commission	
11-03	Encourage Sustainable Agriculture Practices				
11-03-01	Support small-scale and introductory agricultural endeavors	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Hive, New River Gorge CVB	USDA Community Development Initiative Grants
11-03-02	Assist in the development of experiential knowledge for farmers and establish farming tradition in Fayette County	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, New Roots Farm	
11-03-03	Support the Farmland Protection Board and promote their resources to farmers	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, Fayette County Commission, Municipal Governments,	
11-03-04	Assist farmers in the acquisition of grant funding from outside sources including the REAP program	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, WV Hive, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
11-03-05	Promote the adoption of sustainable practices to mitigate impacts to surface water and groundwater quality, prepare for drought and extreme weather, and address pest and disease threats	1	Short-Term	WVU Extension, New Roots Farm, Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Resource Coordinator's Office	
11-03-06	Encourage private property owners to implement sustainable agricultural practices that maintain a high level of surface water and groundwater quality	1	Ongoing	WVU Extension, New Roots Farm, Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Resource Coordinator's Office	
11-03-07	Promote rotational grazing, soil conservation, pest management, crop diversity, agroforestry, stream and creek protection, and other agricultural best practices	1	Ongoing	WVU Extension, New Roots Farm, Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Resource Coordinator's Office	
11-03-08	Support agriculture business succession planning to connect experienced farmers and business owners with young farmers and entrepreneurs	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, West Virginia Farm Bureau, WV Hive, NRGRDA	
11-03-09	Support development of food aggregation and processing sites throughout the county to ensure freshness and access to all residents and businesses	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Farmland Protection Board, West Virginia Farm Bureau, WV Hive, NRGRDA, Food and Farm Coalition	
11-04	Conserve Wildlife and Resources				
11-04-1	Ensure that Fayette County is taking the proper measures to combat invasive species such as kudzu	1	Ongoing	Division of Natural Resources	
11-04-2	Employ conservation design practices where possible to minimize environmental impact from new developments and infrastructural improvements	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission, Region 4 PDC, NRGRDA	
11-04-3	Cooperate with the DNR Office of Lands and Streams to ensure that hunting and fishing regulations are enforced, and native species are being protected	1	Ongoing	Division of Natural Resources Office of Land and Streams	
11-04-04	Utilize the work of various non-profits to prioritize wildlife and natural resource conservation efforts	2	Mid-Term	Conservation West Virginia, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources	
11-04-05	Work with non-profit and recreation groups to encourage conservation and recreation focus events in Fayette County	2	Mid-Term	Conservation West Virginia, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources	
	Recreation				
12-01	Take Advantage of Natural Resources and Recreation				
12-01-01	Identify opportunities to expand recreation outside of the National and State parks such as County Parks and the Kanawha River	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Trails Coalition	
12-01-02	Seek opportunities to develop new non-motorized trails to allow for greater access to scenic areas	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Trails Coalition, Division of Natural Resources	
12-01-03	Develop gateway and wayfinding signage as recommended in Chapter 13 to help residents and visitors easily navigate to the parks and recreational amenities.	2	Ongoing	NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy	
12-01-04	Partner with organizations such as the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau to advertise existing recreational opportunities throughout the County	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau	
12-01-05	Invest in existing greenspace, including protections, maintenance, and enhancements, to optimize residents' usage and benefits to County residents	1	Short-Term	Conservation West Virginia	
12-01-06	Work with the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau and trail groups such as the Fayette County Trails Coalition to identify areas where hiking and biking trails could be better connected	2	Short-Term	New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau, Fayette County Trails Coalition, US Economic Development Administration Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
12-01-07	Coordinate with the National and State parks to improve existing facilities and build new ones associated with the park such as public parking lots, restrooms, and trailheads	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, National Parks Service	National Park Service, US Economic Development Administration Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program
12-01-08	Identify funding sources such as grant programs to such the development of new trails and recreation opportunities	1	Short-Term	New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Fayette Trails Coalition	US Economic Development Administration Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program
12-01-09	Incentivize businesses that can provide recreational opportunities such as boat rentals and river floating	2	Short-Term	WV Hive, New River Gorge Chamber of Commerce	
12-01-10	Ensure that measures are taken to maintain and improve existing County owned recreation facilities		Ongoing	Fayette County 4-H, Adventure Fayette County, and Active Southern WV	
12-01-11	Explore a partnership with West Virginia University Extension as it works with Fayetteville and other organizations in the region to develop Destination Management Plans to address current growth, future trends, growth management, and optimize resources for tourism-related development	1	Short-Term	WVU Extension, New River Gorge CVB, municipalities, Fayette County Commission	
12-01-12	Work with water quality advocacy groups to develop solutions to non-point source pollution and ensure clean water throughout the county	2	Ongoing	New River Conservancy, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Plateau Action Network	
12-02	Create Four Seasons of Recreation				
12-02-01	Explore opportunities to develop infrastructure built for year-round experiences	1	Ongoing	Winter Cities Initiative	
12-02-02	Promote the abundant hunting and camping available during the colder months in Fayette County	3	Ongoing	New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau, Division of Natural Resources	
12-02-03	Plan for trail upkeep to promote winter activities. Determine the most suitable trails for winter hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing and coordinate to ensure trails are properly groomed to promote the activities. Provide heated rest areas at major trailheads and at community amenities and construct parks with year-round activities in mind.	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Fayette County Commission	
12-02-04	Construct indoor recreation facilities to encourage recreational activity during the winter months	1	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
12-02-05	Work with local municipalities and the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau to market events and activities during the holidays and coldest months of the year	3	Mid-Term	Winter Cities Initiative, New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau	
12-02-06	Create a County-wide "vision for winter" to fully determine locations for the most viable winter opportunities including winter hiking, sledding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, climbing, "fatbiking" (winter mountain biking), and market the enthusiasm for these activities.	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Active Southern WV	
12-02-07	Provide access and equipment to residents who want to get involved in indoor and outdoor recreation	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Active Southern WV	
12-03	Increase Access to Local Amenities				
12-03-01	Review and update zoning to ensure amenities such as trail access and open space are incorporated into the design of new residential and commercial developments	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
12-03-02	Identify locations for multiple local recreation centers to serve residents from throughout the County, increase the opportunities for recreation and sports for youth, and offer fitness programs for a variety of age ranges and lifestyles	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Active Southern WV	National Recreation Foundation Grant

Action Matrix						
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources	
12-03-03	Partner with existing and planned facilities such as the senior centers in Meadowbridge and Alderson, the YMCA centers in Montgomery and Smithers, and the Neal D. Baisi Athletic Center in Montgomery to expand access to indoor recreation.	1	Ongoing	Active Southern WV, Putnam County Aging Program		
12-03-04	Activate low-impact recreation along the New River, with amenities such as a riverwalk park that serves the whole community	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority		
12-03-05	Identify areas for additional local parks	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Local municipalities, Fayette County Parks and Recreation		
12-03-06	Expand the Adventure Fayette County program to continue to help youth find local recreation interests	3	Short-Term	Fayette Prevention Coalition		
12-03-07	Publicize the County's local recreation amenities and activities through all available channels	3	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Local municipalities		
12-03-08	Work with municipalities to create green spaces within urbanized areas.	3	Ongoing	Local municipalities		
12-03-09	Work with New River Gorge National Park and Preserve to identify recreation infrastructure to support tourism and local transportation	1	Mid-Term	New River Conservancy, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, Plateau Action Network		
12-03-10	Encourage development of low-impact recreation along the Kanawha River, with amenities such as an accessible riverfront walking trail	3	Long-Term	Fayette County Commission, Local municipalities, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority		
12-03-11	Use funding sources and tax incentives to repair and renovate the Soldiers and Sailors Building in Fayetteville, to create a community recreation center for the County.	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority, WV LEAP, BAD Buildings Program		
12-03-12	Facilitate consistent communication between the National Park Service, Fayette County, and local municipalities to coordinate improvements to the recreation system.	1	Ongoing	National Park Service, Local Municipalities		
Community Design						
13-01	Design a Unified Gateways and Wayfinding System					
13-01-01	Provide branded gateways within the public realm to announce entry into distinct parts of the County	3	Short-Term	NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy, Local municipalities		
13-01-02	Design gateway elements in a manner that reinforces the County's identity through the use of local materials and historic features	3	Short-Term	NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy, Local municipalities, Coal Heritage Area Authority		
13-01-03	Undertake a wayfinding and signage study to develop a system that better directs residents and visitors to the County's notable places and natural assets	3	Short-Term	NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy		
13-01-04	Ensure new gateways and wayfinding provide a more unified image of the County	3	Short-Term	NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy		
13-01-05	Use wayfinding to direct people bicycling and walking for transportation and recreation	3	Short-Term	NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy		
13-01-06	Utilize the New River Gorge Regional Wayfinding Strategy that is being coordinated by the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, which includes an inventory of existing signage, to provide guidance for future signage improvements	3	Short-Term	NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy, Local municipalities		
13-02	Invest in Beautification					
13-02-01	Work to establish and promote REAP beautification and cleanup initiatives for Fayette County's primary corridors	3	Ongoing	WV Department of Transportation, Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan, Local municipalities		
13-02-02	Promote neighborhood and building design, such as cluster development and natural building materials particularly to preserve scenic views around open spaces and the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission		

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
13-02-03	Limit steep slope and hillside development to preserve rural character, scenic views, and watersheds	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
13-02-04	Catalog the County's character-defining features and evaluate remaining undeveloped land to identify significant scenic features such as corridors and mountains	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
13-02-05	Continue to preserve established areas of natural beauty and scenic quality, such as the New Haven District	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
13-02-06	Adopt a dark skies ordinance and implement the dark skies best practices to preserve the County's night skies	3	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
13-02-07	Monitor the County's street trees by conducting an inventory on a regular basis	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, West Virginia State University Tree Minders Program	
13-02-08	Work with a professional arborist to inspect street trees that are in poor or dying condition, and replace or maintain them	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
13-02-09	Identify corridors and public rights-of-way with a low density of street trees and establish new trees in these areas	2	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission	
13-02-10	Ensure trees are protected or removed and replaced during sidewalk and street construction projects	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	
13-03	Bolster Events and Activities				
13-03-01	Continue to enhance the County's image and reputation by leveraging local assets and positioning itself as a regional and national destination	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Visit Southern WV, New River Gorge CVB, Local municipalities	
13-03-02	Promote and expand recreational events and activities for both tourists and residents	1	Ongoing	Visit Southern West Virginia, New River Gorge CVB, Fayetteville Convention and Visitors Bureau, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, WV Tourism	
13-03-03	Create partnerships between businesses and schools, County organizations, and other entities to promote a sustainable economy through hospitality training and workforce development	1	Short-Term	Fayette County Board of Education, West Virginia University Tech, BridgeValley CTC, New River CTC, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, West Virginia State University Extension Service	
13-03-04	Encourage dining, entertainment, and a variety of hospitality opportunities in proximity to the New River Gorge and throughout the County	1	Ongoing	WV Hive, New River Gorge CVB, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, Visit Southern WV	
13-03-05	Support the growing "ecotourism" and "adventure tourism" economy by continuing to promote outdoor opportunities and activities	2	Ongoing	WV Hive, New River Gorge CVB, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, Visit Southern WV	
13-03-06	Work with partner organizations to ensure local businesses are plugged in and participating in Bridge Day and other County events to facilitate more events and activities throughout the County to extend visitor rates throughout the year	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, WV Hive	
13-03-07	Continue to encourage hospitality in a variety of formats that contribute to tourism and support local entertainment attractions and businesses	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, WV Hive	
13-03-08	Coordinate with the National Park Service and New River Gorge Working Group to focus on areas to expand visitor experiences in/around the National Park	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, NRG Working Group	
13-04	Create Cohesive Branding				

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
13-04-01	Convey its image and brand, promoting the County as a distinct and unique place in West Virginia	1	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy	
13-04-02	Work with Visit Southern West Virginia to make sure the County, Fayette County communities, and the New River Gorge region are consistently marketed and branded	1	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy	
13-04-03	As part of the NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy, ensure consistency in marketing and branding initiatives	2	Short-Term	Local municipalities, New River Gorge CVB	
13-04-04	Work with the New River Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop and enact a professional branding and marketing strategy that builds on local outreach to capture the essence of the County	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy	
13-04-05	Ensure that Fayette County branding is incorporated into the gateway and wayfinding system	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
13-04-06	Market the County's historical buildings and districts and signature architecture as part of its brand	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, NRG Regional Wayfinding Strategy	
13-04-07	Continue to market the County alongside its signature assets, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, and the New River Gorge Bridge	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV	
13-05	Promote Arts and Culture				
13-05-01	Identify sites and explore partnerships to develop a community venue	2	Ongoing	Coal Heritage Area Authority, Local municipalities	
13-05-02	Work with the County's cultural institutions, CVBs, and other organizations to connect artists, arts organizations, and arts-related businesses to grow local arts culture	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, Love Hope Center for the Arts, Coal Heritage Area Authority	National Endowment for the Arts Grants for Arts Projects, Challenge America, Our Town
13-05-03	Collaborate with community organizations and block groups to identify potential locations for local public art and increase local arts and culture	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, Fayette County Commission, Local municipalities	
13-05-04	Promote and market events that support and encourage arts and heritage tourism	2	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, Coal Heritage Area Authority, Fayette County Commission	
13-05-05	Encourage performances, exhibits, and events in venues such as local museums and historic sites	3	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, Coal Heritage Area Authority, Fayette County Parks and Recreation	National Endowment for the Arts Grants for Arts Projects, Challenge America, Our Town
13-05-06	Establish an annual calendar of arts and cultural events and programs and work to fill seasonal event calendar gaps	3	Short-Term	New River Gorge CVB	
13-05-07	Encourage the incorporation of more public art to enrich public areas of the County	3	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Visit Southern WV, Love Hope Center for the Arts, Fayette County Commission	National Endowment for the Arts Grants for Arts Projects, Challenge America, Our Town
13-05-08	Involve Fayette County schools in art and cultural planning	3	Ongoing	New River Gorge CVB, Coal Heritage Area Authority, Fayette County Board of Education	
13-05-09	Support artist residency programs	3	Ongoing	Love Hope Center for the Arts, Lafayette Flats	
	Historic Preservation				
14-01	Utilize Existing Regulatory Framework				
14-01-01	Work with the local historic landmarks commissions to regularly review the County's Unified Development Code articles on historic preservation	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	

Action Matrix					
#	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Recommended Programs, Resources, and Partners	Funding Sources
14-01-02	Audit the County code to ensure it has the proper controls to address exterior modifications, remodeling, and demolition within a historic district	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
14-01-03	Ensure that local regulations support the historic preservation purposes and duties conducted by the Department of Arts, Culture, and History	2	Short-Term	Department of Arts, Culture, and History	
14-02	Empower Historic Landmarks Commissions and Societies				
14-02-01	Assist the commissions and historical societies with identifying, marketing, and advertising historic resource grants and funding	2	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office	
14-02-02	Support the efforts of the commissions and historical society to save and restore historic and cultural resources important to the County	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office	West Virginia State Development Grant Program, West Virginia Survey and Planning Grant Program
14-02-03	Provide opportunities for collaboration across preservation efforts and locales in Fayette County	1	Ongoing	AmeriCorps-Preserve WV, West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office	
14-02-04	Ensure the commissions have County support as they work with property owners on preservation activities	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission	
14-02-05	Develop educational programs and materials to emphasize historic preservation and the benefits that can be obtained from owning and investing in a historic property	2	Short-Term	National Park Service, AmeriCorps-Preserve WV, Coal Heritage Area Authority	
14-03	Preserve Historic Districts and Landmarked Buildings				
14-03-01	Create a Countywide "most-endangered" list to identify currently unprotected historic properties, structures, and districts	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission	West Virginia State Development Grant, West Virginia Survey and Planning Grant, National Park Service Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant
14-03-02	Promote adaptive reuse that retains distinctive architectural styles for historic features	1	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	AmeriCorps-Preserve WV, National Park Service Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant, Opportunity Appalachia
14-03-03	Create and regularly update a local register based on a survey and inventory of existing and potential properties, structures, and districts of historical and architectural significance within the County, providing a preservation status for each	1	Mid-Term	West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, Fayette County Commission	
14-03-04	Publish guidelines for the care and management of historic buildings and structures	2	Short-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	
14-03-05	Provide local incentives such as a façade improvement program or small homeowner grants for historically accurate exterior building improvements to landmark and historic district properties	3	Ongoing	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission	West Virginia State Development Grant, West Virginia Survey and Planning Grant, National Park Service Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant
14-03-06	Provide local incentives for context-sensitive redevelopment of the County's historically significant properties	3	Mid-Term	Fayette County Commission, Fayette County Planning Commission, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	
14-03-07	Partner with the various historical societies and organizations throughout the County to update inventories of existing historic districts and structures	3	Short-Term	AmeriCorp-Preserve WV, West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, Fayette County Commission	

Chapter 16

ZONING AUDIT

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy guide that outlines the necessary actions for Fayette County to take to achieve the community’s vision for its future. It is designed to serve as a foundation for decision-making for County staff, elected and appointed officials, developers, residents, and other stakeholders. Despite the comprehensive scope of the Plan’s vision, goals, objectives, and recommendations, the Plan is not regulatory. The Plan itself does not have the “regulatory teeth” needed to require new development and redevelopment in the County to align with the community’s vision, or with the goals, objectives, and recommendations conveyed in the Plan.

Land development regulations are the rules that new development and redevelopment must follow, making them an essential tool in Plan implementation. Often, communities will adopt a plan with a clear vision, only to “pull the reins back” on the land development regulations needed to achieve their objectives. The common rationale for this is that stakeholders feel that such regulations will drive development elsewhere. However, properly drafted land development regulations that align with the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan can remove unnecessary barriers to investment by providing clear expectations and fair certainty. In this way, land development regulations offer an opportunity to implement the Plan by making preferred development easy.

What Do Land Development Regulations Do?

Land development regulations dictate how land can be divided, assembled, built upon, and used and include subdivision, zoning, and sign ordinances.

Zoning Ordinances

Zoning ordinances are the means by which local governments regulate land use. Local governments receive the authority to establish and adopt zoning ordinances by the state zoning enabling act to manage how land is developed and used in order to protect public health, safety, and welfare. There are several approaches to zoning, including but not limited to those detailed below.

Euclidean Zoning

Euclidean zoning is the traditional approach to zoning that divides a community into zoning districts based on the types of uses that are desirable in different areas and establishes rules for how land in each district can be developed and used. Euclidean zoning districts keep high-intensity uses that may impact surrounding properties, like manufacturing, away from less intense uses, like homes and schools. Each district establishes different rules that limit development activity, including which use types are allowed and how they are permitted as well as building size, where on a lot a building can be located, how much open space must be left over, and how much parking has to be provided.

Form-Based Zoning

Form-based zoning also divides a community into zoning districts, however, unlike Euclidean zoning, form-based zoning districts are based on the types of urban form and development patterns that are desirable in different areas. The foundation of form-based zoning districts in many communities is the rural to urban transect, which defines a series of areas that transition from rural areas utilized for agriculture to dense downtowns and urban cores. Form-based zoning primarily regulates what development looks like and secondarily how development is utilized. This is accomplished by establishing standards for different building types and how building façades relate to the public realm.

Incentive-Based Zoning

Incentive-based zoning is a type of Euclidean zoning that offers flexibility in standards and requirements in exchange for items that help a community reach its goals such as the provision of affordable housing and preservation of open space and environmental features. Increased density, height, or lot coverage are some of the most common types of incentives offered along with relief from requirements for parking and other development standards as detailed below.

Overlay Zoning

Overlay zoning is used in concert with Euclidean and form-based zoning to establish unique standards for specific areas that are otherwise governed by multiple zoning districts such as downtowns, commercial corridors, areas surrounding transit stops, and historic neighborhoods. In some circumstances, the overlay zoning district applies additional standards on top of the standards of the base zoning district, while in other circumstances the overlay zoning district standards supersede or replace the standards of the base zoning district. The standards established in overlay zoning districts often control building architecture and design, allowed density and development patterns, and other topics that make the area governed by the overlay district unique.

Development Standards

Development standards, often called standards of general applicability, are an integral component of Euclidean zoning. They include regulations that are relevant for all uses throughout zoning districts, such as off-street parking and loading, landscaping, fences, and buffer yards.

Use Specific Provisions

Use-specific standards are another integral component of Euclidean zoning. They include detailed regulations applicable to specific uses such as accessory dwellings, home occupations, food trucks, drive-throughs, or outdoor storage, regardless of the district in which they are located.

Planned Unit Development

Planned unit development (often referred to as PUD) is a development review and approval procedure that uses site development allowances for greater flexibility from underlying regulations in siting and design. Through the planned unit development process, a developer can request deviations from standards such as lot area, building height, mix of uses, and any other requirement of a base or overlay zoning district in exchange for tangible benefits to the development and community such as the preservation of open space, activation of public gathering spaces, higher quality architecture and design, and enhanced landscape.

Sign Ordinances

Sign ordinances manage the type, size, and location of permanent and temporary signs in a community. Where a sign ordinance is located within a municipal code varies community by community, but can often be found in the zoning ordinance, building ordinance, business ordinance, or as a standalone title.

In 2016, the Supreme Court of the United States decided in the *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* case that impacted the majority of sign ordinances throughout the country, Fayette County's included. This decision clarified that sign copy is protected speech under the first amendment and held that signs cannot be treated differently based on their communicative content. If a sign regulation can only be enforced by reading what the sign says, then that regulation is a violation of the first amendment. For example, signs that communities traditionally have established specific regulations for, such as real estate signs or political campaign signs, are no longer valid.

Unified Development Code

Unified development codes (often referred to as a UDC) bring together all land development regulations into one section of a municipal code including subdivision, zoning, and sign ordinances. Unified development codes help to streamline regulations and review and approval processes, making them easier to use, administer, and enforce. Fayette County already has a UDC that contains zoning, sign, and subdivision regulations together within one document.

Why should the County update its current land development regulations?

A comprehensive update to all of Fayette County's land development regulations should be conducted to ensure alignment with the Comprehensive Plan. This section contains initial recommendations regarding how the County should consider updating its Unified Development Code (UDC). The County should assess how well the existing zoning map aligns with the land use plan and whether the existing bulk and dimensional standards match existing lot sizes and widths throughout the community. These measures will determine more specifically how the zoning, subdivision, and sign regulations should be updated.

Ease of Use

Every Fayette County resident, business owner, or developer should be able to navigate and understand the UDC without the assistance of an attorney or a County staff member. One significant factor that detracts from the UDC's user-friendliness is its organization. Land development regulations should be organized in a manner that makes them straightforward to use and administer. User-friendly regulations include tables and graphics when appropriate and order sections depending on how frequently they are used and referenced.

The organization of information within the County's UDC is not intuitive for users to follow. For example, definitions are listed at the beginning of the document in Section 1002, however, the typical code user only refers to definitions when clarification on other provisions in the code is needed. Modern UDCs typically organize the most general regulations at the beginning of the document and the most specific regulations, such as definitions, at the end so that they can be referenced only as needed.

Information regarding the uses allowed within each district are currently scattered throughout the UDC. For instance, the allowed uses in the R-8 Residential District are in Section 2008, while the allowed uses in the R-O Residential Office District are located later in the document in Section 3001. Modern user-friendly UDCs typically organize information regarding allowed uses by district in a single easy-to-use table near the document's beginning that shows the allowed uses in each row and the zoning districts each use is allowed in columns.

Additionally, regulations that apply to specific uses, commonly called use-specific standards, are scattered throughout the UDC. For example, the use-specific standards for home occupations are in Section 1004 General Provisions, while use-specific standards for mobile home parks are established within 9006. Similarly, limitations on specific land uses, such as the allowed location for the display of materials and equipment on a lot, and the location of elderly housing within a building, are located at the beginning of the document in Section 3102 IV. Modern UDCs with a user-friendly format typically organize all use-related regulations within one Article.

Development Standards and Use-Specific Provisions

Development standards include requirements for development regardless of the district, such as off-street parking and loading, landscaping, screening, and fences. These standards are currently within Section 9 of the UDC. Updates to these regulations should be considered to reflect current best practices.

For example, the UDC currently establishes minimum quantities of off-street parking per land use, however, the Comprehensive Plan highlights that the provision of an adequate supply of parking is a concern. The County evaluates its existing minimum off-street parking quantities required per land use relative to national best practices used by communities to ensure that an adequate supply of off-street parking is provided. It can also consider setting a maximum quantity of parking per land use to limit impervious surfaces and reduce potential stormwater issues as recommended in the plan. Further, the UDC does not contain regulations regarding vehicular access and traffic circulation. Given that traffic congestion is a growing issue on major roads such as Route 19, the County should consider creating regulations to require vehicular cross access between adjacent nonresidential sites to improve traffic flow on roadways.

The UDC also contains several regulations regarding on-site landscaping, which is a common practice in many modern UDCs, however, many of the provisions are not precise or measurable. For example, 9003 (II)(3) specifies that landscaping within parking lots must be reasonably dispersed but does not specify the appropriate location or quantity of landscape elements, which creates uncertainty in how the provision applies. The County should consider requiring that parking area end caps containing trees and vegetation be provided at the end of each parking bay and that landscaped medians be provided between parking bays to clarify the requirements intent.

Given the recent flooding issues, the County should undertake a thorough audit of its floodplain ordinance and the existing sections of the UDC that contain stormwater regulations, such as those in 7001(B). These standards should be reviewed by a professional engineer and the County's Building Safety Department to determine the updates necessary to ensure adequate stormwater management. The County should also consider updating Article 9000 of the UDC to include green infrastructure requirements to further minimize stormwater and flooding. The County can consider adding requirements for rain gardens, bioswales, and other landscape options that help manage on-site stormwater in this Article. Additionally, the County can consider enacting limits on the quantity of impervious surface including buildings, driveways, and walkways allowed on-site to ensure that adequate pervious area exists to enable stormwater infiltration.

District-Specific Issues

The Comprehensive Plan's future land use map identifies the preferred land uses in the County and illustrates how the community envisions development occurring in the coming decades. Although the future land use map is not regulatory like the zoning map, it should be used as a guide for the County when considering development proposals or rezoning requests.

The County should consider amending the UDC text and zoning map to align with the future land use map. For example, the future land use map recommends commercial node development including grocery and convenience stores, retail, service, office, entertainment, and residential uses dispersed at key locations throughout the County such as along Route 19 north of the New River Gorge Bridge. None of the UDC's existing districts allow this diverse mix of residential and commercial uses together as envisioned within the plan, however. The County should consider creating a new zoning district to accommodate the envisioned commercial node development. Alternatively, it can consider adjusting existing districts such as the B-1 Neighborhood Business District to better implement the plan. For instance, allowing multifamily, townhome, single-family attached, and single-family detached uses in the district together with neighborhood-serving commercial uses can be considered.

The County could also consider other zoning map amendments in addition to those that bring it into alignment with the future land use map. For example, the UDC currently establishes an O-1 Office District, which allows office uses but not other service or retail uses. Similarly, the B-2 Local Business District allows commercial service and retail uses but not offices. Many modern UDCs allow commercial office, service, and retail uses in a consolidated district, given that these functions often complement each other and have a similar built form and impact on surrounding properties. The County should explore whether existing zoning districts that serve complementary functions can be consolidated to streamline the UDC.

Decision Making Processes

The development approval process is as much a factor in attracting local investment as development regulations that dictate allowed uses and development type. It is recommended that the County perform a thorough review of current procedures to identify barriers that create delay or unpredictability in the process. Restructuring these sections to identify the parties responsible for administration and enforcement and then differentiate between processes that are handled administratively and those that require Planning Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals approval would help to make the UDC more developer and business friendly.

Many of the procedures do not contain standards of review whereby the decision-making board evaluates and makes recommendations on applications. For example, Section 1007 (III)(C) specifies the procedure for special use permits but does not establish criteria by which the Planning Commission evaluates special use permit applications. Similarly, 1008 (VIII) specifies the procedure for variance requests but does not contain review criteria for the Board of Zoning Appeals to evaluate the requests. The County should consider establishing explicit review criteria for all procedures within the UDC to ensure that its Boards and Commissions use objective standards to evaluate each land use application. For example, the standards of review for special use permits should consider the proposed use's impact on neighboring properties and the long-term reuse of the subject property to ensure that each proposed special use fits its context appropriately.

UDC Action Table

The Land Development Regulation Action Table offers specific recommended zoning updates related to recommendations outlined in the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan. This table provides staff with a tool to identify and guide amendments to the UDC that will enable the County to begin implementing the Plan.

Relationship to the Action Matrix

The plan recommendations in the first column of the following action table are zoning-specific and are highlighted in the Action Matrix. Relative to other types of implementation tasks, zoning and regulatory-related items are relatively low-cost, can often be undertaken by County staff working with the Planning Commission and/or consultants, and can be completed in a relatively short timeframe.

Land Development Regulation Action Matrix	
Action	Zoning Action
Land Use and Development	
Increase density in the county through adjustment of zoning regulations	Explore reductions in the lot area and width standards in the residential districts including the R-2, R-4, R-5, R-8, R-12 Districts. Consider rezoning areas designated for Urban Residential development in the land use plan to higher-density residential districts.
Establish architecture and design regulations that protect viewsheds while providing some flexibility to developers	Amend the US Route 19, US Route 60, and Route 16 Corridor Overlay District standards to regulate specific architectural qualities. Consider regulations for façade design, building placement, site design, and landscaping to ensure new development is in line with the desired character of the corridor.
Prioritize infill development to utilize vacant properties and existing infrastructure to decrease costs and sprawl	Assess whether bulk and dimensional standards in the UDC such as building height and yard requirements, maximum densities, and floor area ratio should be adjusted to promote development on infill sites. Consider establishing infill development transition standards to ensure compatibility with the adjacent development and surrounding context.
Create a model zoning ordinance for open space preservation for the County and each of its municipalities	Work with municipalities to coordinate quantities of open space to be required in the subdivision process that requires that open space be provided in a usable format accessible to members of the public or residents of a development when provided.
Protect the New River Gorge and its viewsheds	Retain the LC-1 and LC-2 Land Conservation District zoning that applies to the land in the New River Gorge to continue restricting new development in the area. Establish requirements for viewshed preservation for new development.
Use the land use plan to guide development along Route 19 in a manner that balances preservation with growth	Establish land use plan alignment as a required finding of fact for all zoning map amendment requests.
Housing	
Increase Housing Supply and Options	
Update zoning ordinance as necessary to provide for a variety of residential types within residential districts	Allow a greater range of residential formats including duplexes, townhomes, small-scale multifamily, and upper-floor residential above ground-floor commercial uses in the UDC.
Ensure the availability of housing in locations with access to education, recreation, healthcare, and transportation services	Consider rezoning areas with access to services and designated for Urban Residential development in the land use plan to higher-density residential districts.
Permit accessory dwelling units on single-family lots to expand and increase housing options	Allow accessory dwelling units in the districts that currently allow single-family detached development including the R-A, R-R, R-2, R-4, and R-5 Districts.
Work with municipalities to adjust zoning codes to allow for the strategic expansion of multifamily units and establish target goals for multifamily development and total units	Coordinate the rezoning of areas designated for Urban Residential development in the land use plan with municipalities' strategies to promote multifamily development.
Pursue Housing Affordability	
Evaluate incentives for developing affordable housing, such as density bonuses, expedited processing, parking reductions, and tax abatements	Establish incentives for the provision of affordable housing within new housing developments. Consider reductions in required building height, yards, and off-street parking when a certain proportion of affordable units are provided.
Encourage alternative forms of density, such as small-lot homes or accessory dwelling units to provide more affordable housing units without altering neighborhood character	Allow accessory dwelling units in the districts that allow single-family detached development. Enact use-specific standards for accessory dwelling units to ensure that they blend with the character of the County's neighborhoods.
Promote infill within single-family neighborhoods to increase density while maintaining the neighborhood's character	Assess whether bulk and dimensional standards in the UDC such as building height and yard requirements, maximum densities, and floor area ratio should be adjusted to promote development on infill sites. Consider establishing infill development transition standards to ensure compatibility with the adjacent and surrounding context.
Encourage a variety of housing types including duplexes, townhomes, and multifamily housing	Allow a greater range of residential formats including duplexes, townhomes, small-scale multifamily, and upper-floor residential above ground-floor commercial uses in the UDC. Allow these formats in the appropriate districts such as the R-5, R-8, and R-12 Districts.
Encourage affordable housing as a development option for infill sites	Establish incentives for the provision of affordable housing. Consider reductions in required building height, yards, and off-street parking when a certain proportion of affordable units are provided.
Retain and provide standards to improve the quality of existing mobile home parks	Review the existing standards for mobile home parks in Section 9006. Identify which new provisions should be enacted to improve the design and appearance of mobile home parks.

Land Development Regulation Action Matrix	
Action	Zoning Action
Improve Housing Quality	
Encourage residents to renovate older homes by offering financial incentives and adjusting zoning ordinances and standards	Allow for administrative adjustments to lot size, building height, yards, and other standards of residential districts to minimize nonconformities and support reinvestment and renovation of older homes.
Prioritize the construction of new homes in areas with existing infrastructure or community importance	Consider proactively rezoning areas designated for Urban Residential development, which are served with existing infrastructure, to encourage new residential development.
Economic Development	
Appeal to Remote Workers	
Explore home-based, internet-related employment opportunities as a means of economic development	Consider allowing home occupations as a by-right use in a greater range of residential districts, including the R-5, R-8, and R-12 Districts. Ensure that individuals working remotely from home are exempt from home occupation permitting requirements.
Transportation	
Identify pedestrian and bicycle improvements to improve sustainability and diversity the travel options for residents and visitors	Establish requirements for pedestrian connections and bicycle parking for multifamily, mixed-use, and nonresidential property.
Public Services	
Promote Healthcare Services	
Ensure that grocery stores are easy to establish in a variety of business areas to promote access to healthy food	Allow grocery stores, depending on scale, by-right in all business districts.
Allow community gardens near residential areas to foster access to healthy foods	Establish community gardens as a specific land use within the UDC and allow them within a variety of residential districts.
Allow food trucks and farmers' markets, as temporary uses in commercial areas to enhance access to fresh food	Establish food trucks and farmers markets as specific land uses within the UDC and consider allowing the uses in a variety of commercial districts as a temporary use.
Allow food truck courts, or groupings of food trucks as a use in commercial areas or through an events permit process to support access to fresh food	Establish food truck courts as a specific land use within the UDC and consider allowing them in a variety of commercial districts as a special use. Establish a special event permit process to accommodate temporary groupings of food trucks.
Ensure that health clinics are easy to establish in a variety of commercial areas	Continue to regulate "medical clinics" as a specific land use. Consider allowing the use in additional districts including the B-1 and O-1 Districts.
Expand Senior Service	
Amend the Unified Development Code to ensure that assisted living facilities and senior care facilities are easy to establish in various locations	Revise the use categories for housing for the elderly. Ensure that both assisted and independent living facilities are allowed in higher-density residential districts including the R-5, R-8, and R-12 Districts.
Infrastructure	
Provide Water and Sewer to Populated Areas	
Locate new development where it can take advantage of water supply projects	Consider rezoning areas with access to services and designated for Urban Residential development in the land use plan to higher-density residential districts such as the R-5, R-8 and R-12 Districts.
Manage Impacts of Stormwater	
Update the UDC to establish new provisions for stormwater management, including landscaping requirements around site perimeters, in off-street parking lots, and along building perimeters	Update Article 9000 of the UDC to include requirements that parking area end caps containing trees and vegetation be provided at the end of each parking bay and that medians be provided between parking bays.
Review the off-street parking requirements to ensure that the construction of new off-street parking lots does not generate undue flood or stormwater concerns	Establish a maximum quantity of off-street parking allowed per land use to reduce excess impervious surface.
Incentivize rain gardens, bioswales, and other natural infiltration practices as private properties are developed to ensure that stormwater impacts are accounted for	Update the UDC to include incentives for the use of green infrastructure on-site. Reductions in the minimum quantity of parking required should be considered in exchange for bioswales, rain gardens, and other landscape features.

Land Development Regulation Action Matrix	
Action	Zoning Action
Rural	
Support Agritourism	
Support farmers' markets, farmstands, fresh food delivery trucks, food co-ops, fresh food programs in schools, and on-site sales from community vegetable gardens	Establish farmers markets as specific land uses within the UDC and consider allowing the uses in a variety of commercial districts as a temporary use.
Update the County's codes and regulations to clearly define "you-pick" operations such as orchards, on-site farm sales, and similar uses	Establish "you-pick" operations, farm sales operations, and similar agritourism uses as distinct land uses within the UDC. Allow the uses within the R-A Agricultural District.
Conserve Wildlife and Resources	
Employ conservation design practices where possible to minimize environmental impact from new developments and infrastructural improvements	Simplify and streamline the cluster development option. Consider allowing an increase in density and decrease in lot area requirements or maximum density limits when natural features such as wetlands, mature tree standards, farmland, or wildlife habitat are preserved.
Recreation	
Increase Access to Local Amenities	
Review and update zoning to ensure amenities such as trail access and open space are incorporated into the design of new residential and commercial developments	Incorporate connections to existing and planned non-motorized trails into the review and approval procedure for subdivisions. Consider enacting requirements for the provision of open space in proportion to the size and projected population of a development into the subdivision regulations.
Community Design	
Invest in Beautification	
Promote neighborhood and building design, such as cluster development and natural building materials particularly to preserve scenic views around open spaces and the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve	Simplify and streamline the cluster development option. Revise the PUD Planned Unit Development process to apply as an overlay district and tie the approval process to the standards of the base zoning district.
Limit steep slope and hillside development to preserve rural character, scenic views, and watersheds	Retain the LC-1 Land Conservation and RR Rural Residential District zoning that applies to the steep slope areas in the community's rural areas to limit new development. Consider requiring an increase lot area minimums on properties with greater slope to preserve the County's steeply sloped areas.
Continue to preserve established areas of natural beauty and scenic quality, such as the New Haven District	Retain the RR-Rural Residential District and R-A Rural Agricultural zoning that encompass the New Haven District to limit new development. Require development of a certain scale in the New Haven District to go through a discretionary approval process to ensure it has minimal impact on the natural beauty and scenic views of the district.
Adopt a dark skies ordinance and implement the dark skies best practices to preserve the County's night skies	Enact objective lighting standards to limit light trespass at property lines and require all lighting fixtures to be full cutoff. Consider standards to limit the color rendering and temperature for outdoor LED fixtures to ensure that outdoor lighting enhances the community's visual character. Consider establishing Backlight Uplight and Glare (BUG) standards for outdoor lighting fixtures to further limit light pollution.
Bolster Events and Activities	
Encourage dining, entertainment, and a variety of hospitality opportunities in proximity to the New River Gorge and throughout the County	Rezone select properties near the New River Gorge to the business districts as recommended in the land use plan to allow for the development of recreation-related commercial uses.
Historic Preservation	
Preserve Historic Districts and Landmarked Buildings	
Promote adaptive reuse that retains distinctive architectural styles for historic features	Establish the preservation of historic architectural features as a criterion for the approval of zoning compliance permits, special uses, and planned unit developments. Allow for administrative adjustments to lot size, building height, yards, and other standards to minimize nonconformities and support adaptive reuse.